

After the Apology: responsive narratives and the 2008 Apology to Australia's Stolen Generations

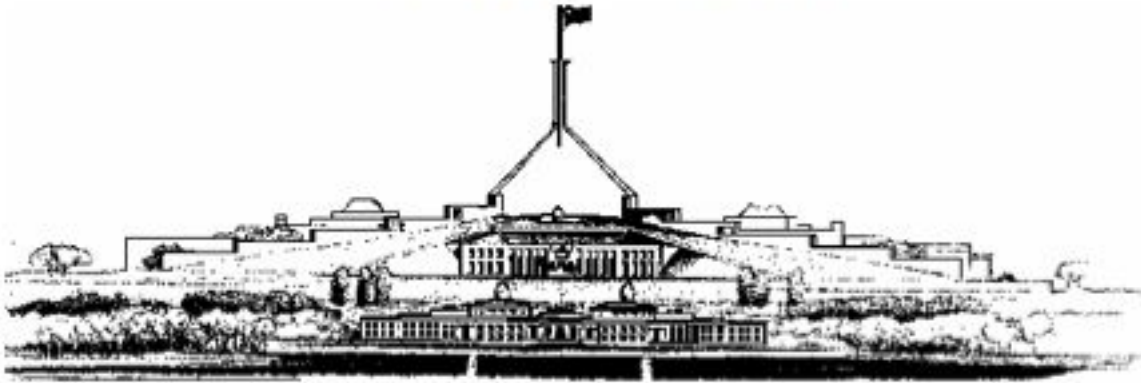
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COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**APOLOGY TO AUSTRALIA'S
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

SPEECH

Wednesday, 13 February 2008

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Wednesday, 13 February 2008
Page 167
Questioner
Speaker Rudd, Kevin, MP

Source House
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Responder
Question No.

Mr RUDD (Griffith—Prime Minister) (9.00 am)—I move:

That today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

We reflect on their past mistreatment.

We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were Stolen Generations—this blemished chapter in our nation's history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.

For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written.

We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians.

A future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again.

A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity.

A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed.

A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.

A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.

Mr Speaker, there comes a time in the history of nations when their peoples must become fully reconciled to their past if they are to go forward with confidence to embrace their future. Our nation, Australia, has reached such a time. That is why the parliament is today here assembled: to deal with this unfinished business of the nation, to remove a great stain from the nation's soul and, in a true spirit of reconciliation, to open a new chapter in the history of this great land, Australia.

Last year I made a commitment to the Australian people that if we formed the next government of the Commonwealth we would in parliament say sorry to the stolen generations. Today I honour that commitment. I said we would do so early in the life of the new parliament. Again, today I honour that commitment by doing so at the commencement of this the 42nd Parliament of the Commonwealth. Because the time has come, well and truly come, for all peoples of our great country, for all citizens of our great Commonwealth, for all Australians—those who are Indigenous and those who are not—to come together to reconcile and together build a new future for our nation.

Some have asked, 'Why apologise?' Let me begin to answer by telling the parliament just a little of one person's story—an elegant, eloquent and wonderful woman in her 80s, full of life, full of funny stories, despite what has happened in her life's journey, a woman who has travelled a long way to be with us today, a member of the stolen generation who shared some of her story with me when I called around to see her just a few days ago. Nanna Nungala Fejo, as she prefers to be called, was born in the late 1920s. She remembers her earliest childhood days living with her family and her community in a bush camp just outside Tennant Creek. She remembers the love and the warmth and the kinship of those days long ago, including traditional dancing around the camp fire at night. She loved the dancing. She remembers once getting into strife when, as a four-year-old girl, she insisted on dancing with the male tribal elders rather

than just sitting and watching the men, as the girls were supposed to do.

But then, sometime around 1932, when she was about four, she remembers the coming of the welfare men. Her family had feared that day and had dug holes in the creek bank where the children could run and hide. What they had not expected was that the white welfare men did not come alone. They brought a truck, two white men and an Aboriginal stockman on horseback cracking his stockwhip. The kids were found; they ran for their mothers, screaming, but they could not get away. They were herded and piled onto the back of the truck. Tears flowing, her mum tried clinging to the sides of the truck as her children were taken away to the Bungalow in Alice, all in the name of protection.

A few years later, government policy changed. Now the children would be handed over to the missions to be cared for by the churches. But which church would care for them? The kids were simply told to line up in three lines. Nanna Fejo and her sisters stood in the middle line, her older brother and cousin on her left. Those on the left were told that they had become Catholics, those in the middle Methodists and those on the right Church of England. That is how the complex questions of post-reformation theology were resolved in the Australian outback in the 1930s. It was as crude as that. She and her sister were sent to a Methodist mission on Goulburn Island and then Croker Island. Her Catholic brother was sent to work at a cattle station and her cousin to a Catholic mission.

Nanna Fejo's family had been broken up for a second time. She stayed at the mission until after the war, when she was allowed to leave for a prearranged job as a domestic in Darwin. She was 16. Nanna Fejo never saw her mum again. After she left the mission, her brother let her know that her mum had died years before, a broken woman fretting for the children that had literally been ripped away from her.

I asked Nanna Fejo what she would have me say today about her story. She thought for a few moments then said that what I should say today was that all mothers are important. And she added: 'Families—keeping them together is very important. It's a good thing that you are surrounded by love and that love is passed down the generations. That's what gives you happiness.' As I left, later on, Nanna Fejo took one of my staff aside, wanting to make sure that I was not too hard on the Aboriginal stockman who had hunted those kids down all those years ago. The stockman had found her again decades later, this time himself to say, 'Sorry.' And remarkably, extraordinarily, she had forgiven him.

Nanna Fejo's is just one story. There are thousands, tens of thousands, of them: stories of forced separation

of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their mums and dads over the better part of a century. Some of these stories are graphically told in *Bringing them home*, the report commissioned in 1995 by Prime Minister Keating and received in 1997 by Prime Minister Howard. There is something terribly primal about these firsthand accounts. The pain is searing; it screams from the pages. The hurt, the humiliation, the degradation and the sheer brutality of the act of physically separating a mother from her children is a deep assault on our senses and on our most elemental humanity.

These stories cry out to be heard; they cry out for an apology. Instead, from the nation's parliament there has been a stony and stubborn and deafening silence for more than a decade; a view that somehow we, the parliament, should suspend our most basic instincts of what is right and what is wrong; a view that, instead, we should look for any pretext to push this great wrong to one side, to leave it languishing with the historians, the academics and the cultural warriors, as if the stolen generations are little more than an interesting sociological phenomenon. But the stolen generations are not intellectual curiosities. They are human beings; human beings who have been damaged deeply by the decisions of parliaments and governments. But, as of today, the time for denial, the time for delay, has at last come to an end.

The nation is demanding of its political leadership to take us forward. Decency, human decency, universal human decency, demands that the nation now step forward to right a historical wrong. That is what we are doing in this place today. But should there still be doubts as to why we must now act, let the parliament reflect for a moment on the following facts: that, between 1910 and 1970, between 10 and 30 per cent of Indigenous children were forcibly taken from their mothers and fathers; that, as a result, up to 50,000 children were forcibly taken from their families; that this was the product of the deliberate, calculated policies of the state as reflected in the explicit powers given to them under statute; that this policy was taken to such extremes by some in administrative authority that the forced extractions of children of so-called 'mixed lineage' were seen as part of a broader policy of dealing with 'the problem of the Aboriginal population'.

One of the most notorious examples of this approach was from the Northern Territory Protector of Natives, who stated:

Generally by the fifth and invariably by the sixth generation, all native characteristics of the Australian aborigine are eradicated. The problem of our half-castes—

to quote the Protector—

will quickly be eliminated by the complete disappearance of the black race, and the swift submergence of their progeny in the white ...

The Western Australian Protector of Natives expressed not dissimilar views, expounding them at length in Canberra in 1937 at the first national conference on Indigenous affairs that brought together the Commonwealth and state protectors of natives. These are uncomfortable things to be brought out into the light. They are not pleasant. They are profoundly disturbing. But we must acknowledge these facts if we are to deal once and for all with the argument that the policy of generic forced separation was somehow well motivated, justified by its historical context and, as a result, unworthy of any apology today.

Then we come to the argument of intergenerational responsibility, also used by some to argue against giving an apology today. But let us remember the fact that the forced removal of Aboriginal children was happening as late as the early 1970s. The 1970s is not exactly a point in remote antiquity. There are still serving members of this parliament who were first elected to this place in the early 1970s. It is well within the adult memory span of many of us. The uncomfortable truth for us all is that the parliaments of the nation, individually and collectively, enacted statutes and delegated authority under those statutes that made the forced removal of children on racial grounds fully lawful.

There is a further reason for an apology as well: it is that reconciliation is in fact an expression of a core value of our nation—and that value is a fair go for all. There is a deep and abiding belief in the Australian community that, for the stolen generations, there was no fair go at all. There is a pretty basic Aussie belief that says it is time to put right this most outrageous of wrongs. It is for these reasons, quite apart from concerns of fundamental human decency, that the governments and parliaments of this nation must make this apology—because, put simply, the laws that our parliaments enacted made the stolen generations possible. We, the parliaments of the nation, are ultimately responsible, not those who gave effect to our laws. The problem lay with the laws themselves. As has been said of settler societies elsewhere, we are the bearers of many blessings from our ancestors and therefore we must also be the bearer of their burdens as well.

Therefore, for our nation, the course of action is clear, and therefore, for our people, the course of action is clear: that is, to deal now with what has become one of the darkest chapters in Australia's history. In doing so, we are doing more than contending with the facts, the evidence and the often rancorous public debate. In doing so, we are also wrestling with our own soul. This

is not, as some would argue, a black-armband view of history; it is just the truth: the cold, confronting, uncomfortable truth—facing it, dealing with it, moving on from it. Until we fully confront that truth, there will always be a shadow hanging over us and our future as a fully united and fully reconciled people. It is time to reconcile. It is time to recognise the injustices of the past. It is time to say sorry. It is time to move forward together.

To the stolen generations, I say the following: as Prime Minister of Australia, I am sorry. On behalf of the government of Australia, I am sorry. On behalf of the parliament of Australia, I am sorry. I offer you this apology without qualification. We apologise for the hurt, the pain and suffering that we, the parliament, have caused you by the laws that previous parliaments have enacted. We apologise for the indignity, the degradation and the humiliation these laws embodied. We offer this apology to the mothers, the fathers, the brothers, the sisters, the families and the communities whose lives were ripped apart by the actions of successive governments under successive parliaments. In making this apology, I would also like to speak personally to the members of the stolen generations and their families: to those here today, so many of you; to those listening across the nation—from Yuendumu, in the central west of the Northern Territory, to Yabara, in North Queensland, and to Pitjantjatjara in South Australia.

I know that, in offering this apology on behalf of the government and the parliament, there is nothing I can say today that can take away the pain you have suffered personally. Whatever words I speak today, I cannot undo that. Words alone are not that powerful; grief is a very personal thing. I ask those non-Indigenous Australians listening today who may not fully understand why what we are doing is so important to imagine for a moment that this had happened to you. I say to honourable members here present: imagine if this had happened to us. Imagine the crippling effect. Imagine how hard it would be to forgive. My proposal is this: if the apology we extend today is accepted in the spirit of reconciliation in which it is offered, we can today resolve together that there be a new beginning for Australia. And it is to such a new beginning that I believe the nation is now calling us.

Australians are a passionate lot. We are also a very practical lot. For us, symbolism is important but, unless the great symbolism of reconciliation is accompanied by an even greater substance, it is little more than a clanging gong. It is not sentiment that makes history; it is our actions that make history. Today's apology, however inadequate, is aimed at righting past wrongs. It is also aimed at building a bridge between Indigenous and non-Indigenous

Australians—a bridge based on a real respect rather than a thinly veiled contempt. Our challenge for the future is to now cross that bridge and, in so doing, to embrace a new partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians—embracing, as part of that partnership, expanded Link-Up and other critical services to help the stolen generations to trace their families if at all possible and to provide dignity to their lives. But the core of this partnership for the future is the closing of the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians on life expectancy, educational achievement and employment opportunities. This new partnership on closing the gap will set concrete targets for the future: within a decade to halve the widening gap in literacy, numeracy and employment outcomes and opportunities for Indigenous Australians, within a decade to halve the appalling gap in infant mortality rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and, within a generation, to close the equally appalling 17-year life gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous in overall life expectancy.

The truth is, a business as usual approach towards Indigenous Australians is not working. Most old approaches are not working. We need a new beginning—a new beginning which contains real measures of policy success or policy failure; a new beginning, a new partnership, on closing the gap with sufficient flexibility not to insist on a one-size-fits-all approach for each of the hundreds of remote and regional Indigenous communities across the country but instead allowing flexible, tailored, local approaches to achieve commonly agreed national objectives that lie at the core of our proposed new partnership; a new beginning that draws intelligently on the experiences of new policy settings across the nation. However, unless we as a parliament set a destination for the nation, we have no clear point to guide our policy, our programs or our purpose; we have no centralised organising principle.

Let us resolve today to begin with the little children—a fitting place to start on this day of apology for the stolen generations. Let us resolve over the next five years to have every Indigenous four-year-old in a remote Aboriginal community enrolled in and attending a proper early childhood education centre or opportunity and engaged in proper preliteracy and prenumeracy programs. Let us resolve to build new educational opportunities for these little ones, year by year, step by step, following the completion of their crucial preschool year. Let us resolve to use this systematic approach to building future educational opportunities for Indigenous children and providing proper primary and preventive health care for the same children, to beginning the task of rolling back the obscenity that we find today in infant mortality rates

in remote Indigenous communities—up to four times higher than in other communities.

None of this will be easy. Most of it will be hard, very hard. But none of it is impossible, and all of it is achievable with clear goals, clear thinking and by placing an absolute premium on respect, cooperation and mutual responsibility as the guiding principles of this new partnership on closing the gap. The mood of the nation is for reconciliation now, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The mood of the nation on Indigenous policy and politics is now very simple. The nation is calling on us, the politicians, to move beyond our infantile bickering, our point-scoring and our mindlessly partisan politics and elevate this one core area of national responsibility to a rare position beyond the partisan divide. Surely this is the unfulfilled spirit of the 1967 referendum. Surely, at least from this day forward, we should give it a go.

Let me take this one step further, and take what some may see as a piece of political posturing and make a practical proposal to the opposition on this day, the first full sitting day of the new parliament. I said before the election that the nation needed a kind of war cabinet on parts of Indigenous policy, because the challenges are too great and the consequences too great to allow it all to become a political football, as it has been so often in the past. I therefore propose a joint policy commission, to be led by the Leader of the Opposition and me, with a mandate to develop and implement—to begin with—an effective housing strategy for remote communities over the next five years. It will be consistent with the government's policy framework, a new partnership for closing the gap. If this commission operates well, I then propose that it work on the further task of constitutional recognition of the first Australians, consistent with the longstanding platform commitments of my party and the pre-election position of the opposition. This would probably be desirable in any event because unless such a proposition were absolutely bipartisan it would fail at a referendum. As I have said before, the time has come for new approaches to enduring problems. Working constructively together on such defined projects I believe would meet with the support of the nation. It is time for fresh ideas to fashion the nation's future.

Today the parliament has come together to right a great wrong. We have come together to deal with the past so that we might fully embrace the future. We have had sufficient audacity of faith to advance a pathway to that future, with arms extended rather than with fists still clenched. So let us seize the day. Let it not become a moment of mere sentimental reflection. Let us take it with both hands and allow this day, this day of national reconciliation, to become one of those rare moments in which we might just be

able to transform the way in which the nation thinks about itself, whereby the injustice administered to the stolen generations in the name of these our parliaments causes all of us to reappraise, at the deepest level of our beliefs, the real possibility of reconciliation writ large: reconciliation across all Indigenous Australia; reconciliation across the entire history of the often bloody encounter between those who emerged from the Dreamtime a thousand generations ago and those who, like me, came across the seas only yesterday; reconciliation which opens up whole new possibilities for the future.

It is for the nation to bring the first two centuries of our settled history to a close, as we begin a new chapter. We embrace with pride, admiration and awe these great and ancient cultures we are truly blessed to have among us—cultures that provide a unique, uninterrupted human thread linking our Australian continent to the most ancient prehistory of our planet. Growing from this new respect, we see our Indigenous brothers and sisters with fresh eyes, with new eyes, and we have our minds wide open as to how we might tackle, together, the great practical challenges that Indigenous Australia faces in the future.

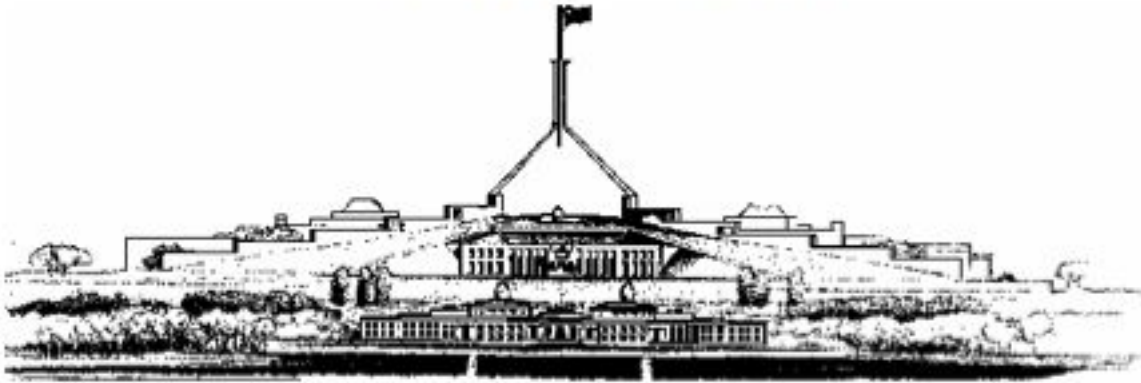
Let us turn this page together, Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, government and opposition, Commonwealth and state, and write this new chapter in our nation's story together. First Australians, First Fleeters and those who first took the oath of allegiance just a few weeks ago—let us grasp this opportunity to craft a new future for this great land, Australia. Mr Speaker, I commend the motion to the House.

Honourable members applauding—



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Speaker Nelson, Dr Brendan, MP

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Dr NELSON (Bradfield—Leader of the Opposition) (9.30 am)—Mr Speaker, members of this the 42nd Parliament of Australia, visitors and all Australians, in rising to speak strongly in support of this motion I recognise the Ngunnawal, first peoples of this Canberra land.

Today our nation crosses a threshold. We formally offer an apology. We say sorry to those Aboriginal people forcibly removed from their families through the first seven decades of the 20th century. In doing so, we reach from within ourselves to our past, those whose lives connect us to it, and in deep understanding of its importance to our future. We will be at our best today and every day if we pause to place ourselves in the shoes of others, imbued with the imaginative capacity to see this issue through their eyes with decency and respect.

This chapter in our nation's history is emblematic of much of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians from the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. It is one of two cultures: one ancient, proud and celebrating its deep bond with this land for some 60,000 years; the other, no less proud, arrived here with little more than visionary hope, deeply rooted in gritty determination to build an Australian nation for not only its early settlers and Indigenous peoples but also those who would increasingly come from all parts of the world.

Whether Australian by birth or immigration, each one of us as Australians has a duty to understand and respect what has been done in our name. In most cases we do so with great pride, but in others it is with shame. In brutally harsh conditions, from the small number of early British settlers, our non-Indigenous ancestors have given us a nation the envy of any in the world. But Aboriginal Australians made involuntary sacrifices, different but no less important, to make possible the economic and social development of our country today. None of this was easy. We cannot, from the comfort of the 21st century, begin to imagine what they overcame—Indigenous and non-Indigenous—to give us what we have and make us who we are. We do know, though, that language, disease, ignorance, good intentions, basic human prejudices and a cultural and technological chasm combined to deliver a harshness exceeded only by the land over which each sought to prevail.

And as our young nation celebrated its Federation, formality emerged in arrangements and laws that would govern the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The new nation's Constitution, though, would not allow for the counting of 'natives' or for the Commonwealth to pass laws in relation to Aborigines. Protection boards and reserves were established. Aborigines in some jurisdictions were excluded from public schools, episodic violence in race relations continued, assimilation underwrote emerging policies and churches heeded their Christian doctrine to reach out to people whom they saw in desperate need. Though disputed in motive and detail and with varying recollections of events by others, the removal of Aboriginal children began. In some cases, government policies evolved from the belief that the Aboriginal race would not survive and should be assimilated; in others, the conviction was that 'half-caste' children in particular should, for their own protection, be removed to government and church run institutions where conditions reflected the standards of the day. Others were placed with white families whose kindness motivated them to the belief that rescued children deserved a better life.

Our responsibility, every one of us, is to understand what happened here, why it happened and the impact it had on not only those who were removed but also those who did the removing and supported it. Our generation does not own these actions, nor should it feel guilt for what was done in many, but certainly not all, cases with the best of intentions. But in saying we are sorry, and deeply so, we remind ourselves that each generation lives in ignorance of the long-term consequences of its decisions and actions. Even when motivated by inherent humanity and decency to reach out to the dispossessed in extreme adversity, our actions can have unintended outcomes. As such, many decent Australians are hurt by accusations of theft in relation to their good intentions.

The stories are well documented, and I thank the Prime Minister for reminding us of Nanna Nungala Fejo's experience. I will repeat two stories. The first is from a submission given to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission inquiry, and I quote:

I was at the post office with my Mum and Auntie [and cousin]. They put us in the police ute and said they were taking us to Broome. They put the mums in there as well. But when we'd gone [about ten miles] they stopped, and threw

the mothers out of the car. We jumped on our mothers' backs, crying, trying not to be left behind. But the policemen pulled us off and threw us back in the car. They pushed the mothers away and drove off, while our mothers were chasing the car, running and crying after us. We were screaming in the back of that car. When we got to Broome they put me and my cousin in the Broome lockup. We were only ten years old. We were in the lockup for two days waiting for the boat to Perth.

In his black oral history, *The Wailing*, which I commend to every Australian, Stuart Rintoul recalls the thin pain of an Aboriginal woman from Walgett:

Something else that never left my mind, my memory, was of a family of children being taken away and this little girl, she must have been about the same age as myself, I suppose she might have been about six. But I can still see that little person on the back of the mission truck with a little rag hat on, and she went away and we never seen her any more. She was crying. Everyone was crying. Things like that never leave your memory.

It is reasonably argued that removal from squalor led to better lives: children fed, housed and educated for an adult world which they could not have imagined. However, from my life as a family doctor and knowing the impact of my own father's removal from his unmarried, teenage mother, I know that not knowing who you are is the source of deep, scarring sorrows, the real meaning of which can be known only to those who have endured it.

No-one should bring a sense of moral superiority to this debate in seeking to diminish the view that good in many cases was sought to be done. This is a complex issue. Faye Lyman's life is one of the *Many Voices* oral history at the National Library of Australia. Faye left her father when she was eight. She said this:

Personally, I don't want people to say, 'I'm sorry Faye', I just want them to understand.

It was very hurtful to leave Dad. Oh, it broke my heart. Dad said to me, 'It's hard for Daddy and the authorities won't let you stay with me in a tent on the river bank. You're a little girl and you need someone to look after you.' I remember him telling us that, and I cried. I said 'No, but Dad, you look after us.' ... But they kept telling us it wasn't the right thing.

She went on:

I don't want people to say sorry. I just want them to understand the hurt, what happened when we were initially separated, and just understand the society, what they have done ... You don't belong in either world. I can't explain it. It hurts so much.

There is no compensation fund for this—nor should there be. How can any sum of money replace a life deprived of knowing your family? Separation was then, and remains today, a painful but necessary part of public policy in the protection of children. Our

restitution for this lies in our determination to address today's injustices, learning from what was done and doing everything we can to heal those who suffered. The period within which these events occurred was one that defined and shaped Australia. The governments that oversaw this and those who elected them emerged from federating the nation to a century characterised for Australia as triumph in the face of extraordinary adversities unknown to our generation.

In offering this apology, let us not in our language and actions create one injustice in our attempt to address another. Let no-one forget that they sent their sons to war, shaping our identity and place in the world. One hundred thousand Australians in two wars alone gave their lives in our name and our uniform, lying forever in distant lands, silent witnesses to the future that they have given us. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians lie alongside one another. These generations considered their responsibilities to their country and one another more important than their rights. They did not buy something until they had saved up for it, and values were far more important than value. Living in considerably more difficult times, they had dreams for our nation but little money. There was a mesh of values enshrined in God, King and country and the belief in something greater than yourself. Neglectful indifference to all that they have achieved while seeing their actions in the separations only, through the values of our comfortable, modern Australia, will be to diminish ourselves.

Today our nation pauses to reflect on this chapter of relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia. In doing so, however, given that there are so many Australians who, perhaps unusually today, are focused on Aboriginal issues, spare a thought for the real, immediate, seemingly intractable and disgraceful circumstances in which many Indigenous Australians find themselves today. As we meet and speak in this parliament, Aboriginal Australians continue to die long before the rest of us. Alcohol, welfare without responsibilities, isolation from the economic mainstream, corrupt management of resources, nepotism, political buck passing between governments with divided responsibilities, lack of home ownership, underpolicing, intolerance by authorities and neglect and abuse of children that violates all for which we stand all combine to see too many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living lives of existential aimlessness.

Indigenous life expectancy is still stubbornly 17 years less than for non-Indigenous Australians. An Aboriginal baby born while we speak still has only a one in three chance of seeing the age of 65. Diabetes, kidney disease, hospitalisation of women from assault, imprisonment, overcrowding in housing,

educational underperformance and unemployment remain appallingly high, despite gains in some areas over the past decade. Annual Indigenous-specific spending by the Commonwealth has reached \$3½ billion a year, plus half a billion dollars this year on the Northern Territory intervention.

The sexual abuse of Aboriginal children was found in every one of the 45 Northern Territory communities surveyed for the *Little children are sacred* report. It was the straw that broke the camel's back, driving the Howard government's decision to intervene with a suite of dramatically radical welfare, health and policing initiatives. I cannot imagine the strength upon which she drew, but the Alice Springs Crown Prosecutor, Nanette Rogers, with great courage, revealed to the nation in 2006 the case of a four-year-old girl drowned while being raped by a teenager who had been sniffing petrol. She told us of the two children, one a baby, sexually assaulted by two men while their mothers were drinking alcohol. Another baby was stabbed by a man trying to kill her mother. So too a 10-year-old girl was gang-raped in Aurukun, the offenders going free, barely punished. A boy was raped in another community by other children. Is this not an emergency, the most disturbing part of it being its endemic nature and Australia's apparent desensitisation to it? Yet governments responsible for delivering services and security have resisted elements of a Northern Territory style intervention.

I ask the Prime Minister to report to this parliament regularly on what his government is doing to save this generation of Aboriginal Australians from these appalling conditions. I also offer on behalf of the opposition my unconditional support to participate in the commission for policy which he proposes. This is far, far more important than any of the things that would normally divide us as a nation in philosophy and politics.

Our generation has over 35 years overseen a system of welfare, alcohol delivery, administration of programs, episodic preoccupation with symbolism and, at times, even excusing the inexcusable in the name of cultural sensitivity, to create what we now see in remote Aboriginal Australia. With good intentions, perhaps like earlier generations, we have under successive governments created lives, in many cases, of misery for which we might apologise. I certainly do. The best way we can show it is to act, and to act now. I challenge anyone who thinks Aboriginal people get a good deal to come to any of these communities and tell me you wish you had been born there.

The first Aboriginal Australian who came to this parliament was Neville Bonner. A Yagara man abandoned by his non-Aboriginal father before his

birth on Ukerebagh Island in the mouth of the Tweed River, Neville was born into a life of hardship known only to some who are here today as visitors. He grew up in a hollow that had been carved by his grandfather under lantana bushes. The year before his mother's death when he was nine, she sent him to a school near Lismore. He lasted two days before the non-Aboriginal people forced his exclusion.

It was to his grandmother Ida he attributed his final success. Arguing that at 14 the boy must go to school, she had said to him: 'Neville, if you learn to read and write, express yourself well and treat people with decency and courtesy, it will take you a long way,' and it did. Through a life as a scrub clearer, a ringer, a stockman, a bridge carpenter and 11 years on Palm Island, it brought him to this parliament in 1971, as the events of this motion were nearing an end. He said in prophetic words to the Liberal Party members who selected him: 'In my experience of this world, two qualities are always in greater need—human understanding and compassion.'

When he was asked by Robin Hughes in 1992 to reflect on his life, Neville observed that the unjust hardships he had endured 'can only be changed when people of non-Aboriginal extraction are prepared to listen, to hear what Aboriginal people are saying, and then work with us to achieve those ends'. Asked to nominate his greatest achievement, he replied: 'It is that I was there. They no longer spoke of boongs or blacks. They spoke instead of Aboriginal people.'

Today is about 'being there' as a nation and as individual Australians. It is about Neville Bonner's understanding of one another and the compassion that shaped his life in literally reaching out to those whom he considered had suffered more than him. We honour those in our past who have suffered—many of whom are here today—and all who have made sacrifices for us by the way we live our lives and shape our nation. Today we recommit to do so—as one people. We are sorry.

Honourable members applauding—

The SPEAKER—Order! Whilst it might seem redundant, to signify their support, I invite honourable members to rise in their places.

Honourable members having stood in their places—

The SPEAKER—I thank the House. I understand that it might suit the convenience of the House if we pause whilst the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition pay their respects to people in the distinguished visitors gallery.

Applause from the public gallery as the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition and Minister

for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs meet with representatives of Australia's Indigenous peoples in the distinguished visitors gallery.

The SPEAKER—Rather uniquely, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, on indulgence.

Let the healing begin

Response to government to the national apology to the Stolen Generations

**By Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner,
Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission**

Wednesday, 13 February 2008

Member's Hall, Parliament House, Canberra

Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd; Opposition Leader, Brendan Nelson; the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, the Hon Jenny Macklin; former Prime Ministers, Professor Bruce Wilson representing the late Sir Ronald Wilson, Stolen Generations patrons Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue and Bobby Randall, NSDC Chair Helen Moran and SGA Chair Christine King, Ministers; Members of Parliament; Senators, members of the stolen generations and your families; my Indigenous brothers and sisters; and distinguished guests from around Australia and overseas.

May I begin by acknowledging the Ngunnawal peoples – the traditional owners of the land where we meet today and pay my respects to you and to your elders.

I have been asked by the National Sorry Day Committee and the Stolen Generations Alliance; the two national bodies that represent the Stolen Generations and their families, to respond to the Parliament's Apology and to talk briefly about the importance of today's events.

I am deeply honoured to be entrusted with this responsibility and to participate in today's proceedings.

I am particularly honoured to do so in my capacity as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner at the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. The inaugural Social Justice Commissioner, Professor Mick Dodson, was the Co-Commissioner of the national inquiry, along with the then President, the late Sir Ronald Wilson, that culminated in the *Bringing them home* report. The next Social Justice Commissioner, Dr Bill Jonas, contributed greatly to the understanding of the report and the importance of its findings.

Today is an historic day.

It's the day our leaders – across the political spectrum – have chosen dignity, hope and respect as the guiding principles for the relationship with our first nations' peoples.

Through one direct act, Parliament has acknowledged the existence and the impacts of the past policies and practices of forcibly removing Indigenous children from their families.

And by doing so, has paid respect to the Stolen Generations. For their suffering and their loss. For their resilience. And ultimately, for their dignity.

Let me tell you what this apology means to me. For many years, my family has been searching in vain to find information about my great-grandmother, May, who was taken at the turn of the 20th Century.

Recently, Link Up in Darwin located some information in the Archives. In a document titled 'list of half-castes in the NT' dated 2 December 1899, a government official named George Thompson wrote the following about my great-grandmother:

Half caste May is a well grown girl, is living with her mother in the black's camp at Woolwonga, her mother will not part with her, she mixes up a great deal with the Chinamen, she only has a narga on.

My great-grandmother's ordeal was not un-common and nor was the chilling account - 'her mother *will not* part with her'.

The is not about black armbands and guilt. It never was.

It is about belonging.

The introductory words of the 1997 *Bringing them home* report remind us of this. It reads:

. . . the past is very much with us today, in the continuing devastation of the lives of Indigenous Australians. That devastation cannot be addressed unless the whole community listens with an open heart and mind to the stories of what has happened in the past and, having listened and understood, commits itself to reconciliation.

By acknowledging and paying respect, Parliament has now laid the foundations for healing to take place and for a reconciled Australia in which everyone belongs.

For today is not just about the Stolen Generations - it is about every Australian.

Today's actions enable every single one of us to move forward *together* – with joint aspirations and a national story that contains a shared past and future.

It is a matter of great sadness that the experiences of the Stolen Generations have been used as a source of division among the Australian community since the release of the *Bringing them home* report. There are many individuals who have made their name as 'Stolen Generations deniers and rebuffers'.

This vitriol has re-traumatised many of the Stolen Generations. It has cast doubts on the integrity of many individuals, and ultimately has denied Indigenous people basic human dignity and decency.

These are not traits associated with ‘the Australian way’. Nor is it any way to respond to human tragedy.

Let us feel proud that we are now facing the difficult and dark experiences from our past in order to move forward.

Let us also feel proud that – as a nation - we respect our fellow citizens, we care for their plight and we offer our hand in friendship so that we may all enjoy the bounty of this great nation.

Prime Minister, can I thank you for your leadership on this issue.

It is far more difficult to try and unite people than to divide them.

Your efforts should be praised universally for attempting to create a bridge between the many diverse elements of our society.

To the leader of the Opposition, can I also acknowledge your leadership. It is of great significance that this motion was passed with bipartisan support.

For too long, Indigenous peoples have been used as a political football. More often than not, this has promoted fear, misunderstanding intolerance and inaction.

And to all Parliamentarians, I say – let today be a new beginning, not an end point.

Last month, I facilitated discussions between the government and Stolen Generations groups about the apology. The overwhelming message from those meetings was that this should be seen as the first step in a partnership.

The Stolen Generations have needs that have yet to be met, mainly due to under-funding of Link Ups and other support organisations. There remains a pressing need for specific assistance tailored to the particular circumstances of those forcibly removed from their families.

And there are many recommendations of the *Bringing them home* report that have not been implemented.

In fact, there has been little attempt to even consider many of these recommendations at the federal or state level in recent years, or for them to be implemented systematically across all jurisdictions. To the Premiers and state and territory government representatives here today, we urge you to join the partnership to address the unfinished business.

Prime Minister, I mentioned earlier that it is harder to try and unite people than it is to divide them. This is because if people have hope, they also have expectations.

The consultations between your government and Stolen Generations groups identified a number of elements to build upon from today. These include:

- committing to a partnership with Stolen Generations groups, as well as Link Ups and other service providers, with ongoing consultation and participation;
- committing to a comprehensive government response to the needs of the Stolen Generations, as identified in the *Bringing them home* report; and
- adopting a whole-of-government approach – across departments and across governments – to achieve this.

There is much hope that today's apology can create the impetus for a renewed partnership between the federal government and state and territory governments to fully implement the recommendations of the *Bringing them home* report.

It is timely that the federal government take a leadership role in developing a national process to make this happen.

Finally, can I acknowledge the support of the many millions of non-Indigenous Australians who have walked with us on the path of reconciliation and justice, and can I pay tribute to the members of the Stolen Generations, for your incredible resilience, stoicism and dignity in the face of untold suffering.

Let your healing, and the healing of the nation, begin.

Thank you.



PRIME MINISTER

26 May 1997

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER
THE HON JOHN HOWARD MP
OPENING ADDRESS TO THE AUSTRALIAN RECONCILIATION
CONVENTION - MELBOURNE**

E&OE.....

Thank you very much. To Patrick Dodson, the Chairman of the Council; to Your Excellency, the Governor of Victoria, Sir James Gobbo; the Premier of Victoria, Mr Jeff Kennett; Mr Beazley, the Leader of the Opposition; Senator Kernot; other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Can I say how very pleased I am to be here today to formally open this convention and let me also thank the Kulin people for the warmth and generosity of their welcome.

This Convention is a unifying event. It is an occasion for positive commitment to the future and a common avowal of the destiny we all share as Australians. It is an occasion also for frank speaking and there has been some today quite appropriately and in the same spirit I intend to speak frankly although I hope on all occasions respectfully.

Since the inception of the Council in 1991, the Coalition Parties have committed themselves to the reconciliation process and today, on behalf of the Liberal and National parties, I reaffirm that commitment.

At the heart of this reconciliation process among Australians lies three fundamental objectives:

- the first is a shared commitment to raise the living standards and broadening the opportunities available to the most disadvantaged group in Australian society and that is indigenous Australians - and that must be done as part of a broader commitment to providing equality of opportunity to all Australians

- a second objective is a realistic acknowledgment of the inter-related histories of the various elements of Australian society;
- and a third is a mutual acceptance of the importance of working together to respect and appreciate our differences and to ensure that they do not prevent us from sharing the future.

In meeting these challenges, the reconciliation process must focus on the future in a positive and principled way. Specific strategies need to be devised, specific priorities need to be identified and specific practical programmes need to be agreed and implemented. This process quite properly will generate debate and in some areas genuine differences of opinion amongst people of goodwill about competing priorities.

I hope that all who participate in this convention can find important areas of common ground on the best way of achieving the broad goals to which the reconciliation process is committed.

As Patrick has reminded us the Convention has been preceded by over 100 formal meetings attended by more than 10,000 people. Many of these meetings have focussed on what people in their own communities can do to advance the cause of reconciliation. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the essence of true reconciliation. Governments and leaders alone cannot make reconciliation happen simply through legislation, decrees, declarations or rhetoric. True reconciliation must come from the hearts and minds of the Australian people, in the respect they have for differences, in the attitudes they encourage in their children, and in their recognition of the common destiny we share together as Australians.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am an optimist about the process of national reconciliation in Australia.

I am an optimist about reconciliation because I believe in the decency, tolerance, generosity and common sense of the Australian people.

I am an optimist because I know that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are committed to preserving their unique culture at the same time as reaching out to non-indigenous Australians to build a shared future.

I am an optimist because I believe that the Australian people respect the right to a 'fair go' for all irrespective of colour, background or belief; and I am an optimist because I believe that these attributes have made Australia one of the fairest, most egalitarian and tolerant societies in the world.

But this optimism, my friends, about the reconciliation process cannot be blind. We must be realistic in acknowledging some of the threats to reconciliation.

Reconciliation will not work if it puts a higher value on symbolic gestures and overblown promises rather than the practical needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in areas like health, housing, education and employment.

It will not work if it is premised solely on a sense of national guilt and shame . Rather we should acknowledge past injustices and focus our energies on addressing the root causes of current and future disadvantage among our indigenous people.

Nor will the reconciliation process work effectively if one of its central purposes becomes the establishment of different systems of accountability and lawful conduct among Australians on the basis of their race or any other factor.

The reconciliation process will only work effectively if it involves and inspires all Australians.

Reconciliation is not helped if its critics are able to claim that resources directed towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are disadvantaged have not been well or wisely used.

However much some may wish to believe otherwise, there is evidence that some programmes designed to address indigenous disadvantaged have, in fact, encouraged dependency rather than individual initiative and personal responsibility.

Ladies and gentlemen there can be little doubt that the reconciliation process has been hindered by the divisiveness and misinformation generated by certain extremist views in our community.

It cannot seriously be argued that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not, as a group, profoundly disadvantaged.

To suggest otherwise is to ignore reality, substitute fiction for fact and unrepresentative anecdotes for credible statistical proof.

Equally, the cause of reconciliation is also damaged by those who are intolerant or misleading for the opposite purpose.

Calls for disruption of the Sydney Olympic Games and trade boycotts of Australia, baseless allegations about a return to White Australia policies and charges of racism relentlessly directed against those who disagree with a particular point of view have all been very counter-productive.

We need to reject extremist views on all sides. Australia's future will be best served by openness, tolerance, fairness and confidence in our Australian values. It will not be built on heavy-handed threats, cheap sloganeering or empty populism - whatever its source.

We need, my friends, to re-embrace the three great goals of the reconciliation process to which I have referred.

First, we need a renewed national focus on the true causes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage.

For my Government, this is the cornerstone of the reconciliation process.

It is why we have given such priority to programmes that directly target indigenous disadvantage in health, housing, education and employment.

It is why we are focussing Government resources on these areas in a way that will achieve the best outcome.

Our aim is for indigenous Australians to have greater control over their own lives and their own communities.

This will be achieved through sensitivity to the cultural needs of indigenous people and the ending of their cycle of dependency.

We have breathed new life into the COAG agreement on *National Commitment to Improved Outcomes in the Delivery of Programmes and Services for Indigenous people*.

Bilateral health agreements are now in place in all but two States and bilateral indigenous housing agreements are well advanced in most States.

We have boosted funding for indigenous business development and, through the new *Indigenous Business Incentive Programmes*, we will be assisting economic independence in the indigenous community.

Through a Commonwealth Government initiative, we have brought the Army, ATSIC and the Department of Health and Family Services together in a pilot program to address water supply and broader environmental health needs.

In a period of necessary and tight fiscal restraint, to which all areas of Government spending have been subjected, we have either quarantined the areas of greatest need in indigenous communities, or actually increased funding.

In overall terms we are committed to spend over \$428 million more on indigenous specific programs in our first four years than was spent during the previous four years. What we have sought to do is to target this expenditure at the areas of greatest need.

This practical, on-the-ground approach will remain a primary focus of our policy making. This is because we believe it will bring about true social justice for indigenous Australians.

Second, all Australians - indigenous and otherwise - need to acknowledge realistically the interaction of our histories.

Our purpose in doing so should not be to apportion blame and guilt for past wrongs, but to commit to a practical programme of action that will remove the enduring legacies of disadvantage.

At the same time, we need to acknowledge openly that the treatment accorded to many indigenous Australians over a significant period of European settlement represents the most blemished chapter in our history.

Clearly, there were injustices done and no-one should obscure or minimise them. We need to acknowledge as a nation what European settlement has meant for the first Australians, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and in particular the assault on their traditions and the discrimination and violence they endured over many decades.

This week the report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission inquiry into *The Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families* will be tabled in Parliament. Like all such reports, it will be subjected to proper analysis and scrutiny.

It will neither be uncritically accepted nor summarily swept aside.

However, let me make this clear. Personally, I feel deep sorrow for those of my fellow Australians who suffered injustices under the practices of past generations towards indigenous people. Equally, I am sorry for the hurt and trauma many people here today may continue to feel as a consequence of those practices.

In facing the realities of the past, however, we must not join those who would portray Australia's history since 1788 as little more than a disgraceful record of imperialism, exploitation and racism.

Such a portrayal is a gross distortion and deliberately neglects the overall story of great Australian achievement that is there in our history to be told, and such an approach will be repudiated by the overwhelming majority of Australians who are proud of what this country has achieved although inevitably acknowledging the blemishes in its past history.

Australians of this generation should not be required to accept guilt and blame for past actions and policies over which they had no control.

However, we must acknowledge past wrongs, understand that they still cause a great deal of personal distress and resolve to improve areas of indigenous disadvantage both now and into the future.

The third broad objective of the reconciliation process on which attention should be refocussed is the need to work together to ensure that our differences do not prevent us from sharing in a common future.

All Australians, irrespective of their background or colour or belief or religion, share a common destiny.

We all have rights and obligations as Australians.

These rights include the right to individual self-fulfilment and cultural freedom without discrimination and intimidation. They include the right of all Australians to dignity and self-respect.

We cannot share a common destiny if these rights are available to some Australians, but not all.

Likewise, we cannot share a common destiny together as Australians if different groups in our society have different standards of conduct and different systems of accountability.

I know that the goals of the reconciliation process have been subjected to tension and strain as a result of the current debate on Native Title issues.

You will all be aware that I have spent a great deal of time in trying to find a just, fair and workable outcome to the in response to the decision of the High Court of Australia in the Wik case. In working towards that solution, my Government's primary goal has been to strike a fair and reasonable balance between the rights of indigenous people and the rights of other Australians, in particular those in the pastoral and mining industries.

I have heard what has been said here today, I can only remark that the myths that were abroad in Longreach have been repeated although on the opposite side of the argument in some of the observations that have been made here today. I need to remind you in asking you to consider and to understand the approach of my Government for the Wik decision.

The recitals that were contained in the Native Title Act 1993, the declarations that were made about the impact of pastoral leases on Native Title by my predecessor, the Labor Prime Minister of Australia, and by a number of leaders in the indigenous community of Australia who are present in this auditorium.

I also need in the name of truth and in the name of a frank discussion of this issue to repudiate the claim that my ten point plan involves a massive hand-out of freehold title at taxpayer expense. That is an absolute myth, it is absolutely contrary to the fact and I absolutely repudiate it.

I believe that the plan which I have put forward provides an equitable balance between respect for the principles of Native Title, as laid down in the Mabo decision, and the very legitimate interests of pastoralists and others in securing certainty in carrying on and planning their activities.

I understand the heat and passions that this issue has generated on both sides of the debate and I believe that a fair and equitable outcome and I believe that my ten point plan provides the only basis of a proper approach.

I want to conclude my remarks today in the same tone as I began - with a vigorous reaffirmation of my Government's commitment to a successful and ongoing process of national reconciliation which is developed in a climate of mutual trust and confidence.

This is a process which draws on Australians from all walks of life and all kinds of backgrounds. What brings them together is a faith in the power of Australian values - the values of decency, tolerance, fairness and down-to-earth common sense.

What inspires the process of national reconciliation, and what gives it its enduring strength, is the conviction that we can, and must, develop our future together as Australians with mutual respect for, and appreciation of our differences and with a unifying commitment to promoting Australia's national interests.

That is what this Convention is all about. It is about our future together as Australians, and the kind of country we will hand on to our children.

I wish Pat Dodson, his fellow members of the Reconciliation Council and all others involved in this Convention my very best wishes for a successful, positive and purposeful outcome over the next three days.

I have great pleasure in formally declaring this Convention open.

Thank you.

AUSTRALIAN LAUNCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

*PM Paul Keating
Redfern Park, Sydney
10 December 1992*

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be here today at the launch of Australia's celebration of the 1993 International Year of the World's Indigenous People.

It will be a year of great significance for Australia.

It comes at a time when we have committed ourselves to succeeding in the test which so far we have always failed. Because, in truth, we cannot confidently say that we have succeeded as we would like to have succeeded if we have not managed to extend opportunity and care, dignity and hope to the Indigenous people of Australia - the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people.

This is a fundamental test of our social goals and our national will: our ability to say to ourselves and the rest of the world that Australia is a first rate social democracy, that we are what we should be - truly the land of the fair go and the better chance.

There is no more basic test of how seriously we mean these things.

It is a test of our self-knowledge. Of how well we know the land we live in. How well we know our history. How well we recognise the fact that, complex as our contemporary identity is, it cannot be separated from Aboriginal Australia. How well we know what Aboriginal Australians know about Australia.

Redfern is a good place to contemplate these things.

Just a mile or two from the place where the first European settlers landed, in too many ways it tells us that their failure to bring much more than devastation and demoralisation to Aboriginal Australia continues to be our failure.

More I think than most Australians recognise, the plight of Aboriginal Australians affects us all. In Redfern it

might be tempting to think that the reality Aboriginal Australians face is somehow contained here, and that the rest of us are insulated from it. But of course, while all the dilemmas may exist here, they are far from contained. We know the same dilemmas and more are faced all over Australia.

This is perhaps the point of this Year of the World's Indigenous People: to bring the dispossessed out of the shadows, to recognise that they are part of us, and that we cannot give Indigenous Australians up without giving up many of our own most deeply held values, much of our own identity - and our own humanity.

Nowhere in the world, I would venture, is the message more stark than in Australia.

We simply cannot sweep injustice aside. Even if our own conscience allowed us to, I am sure, that in due course, the world and the people of our region would not. There should be no mistake about this - our success in resolving these issues will have a significant bearing on our standing in the world.

However intractable the problems may seem, we cannot resign ourselves to failure - any more than we can hide behind the contemporary version of Social Darwinism which says that to reach back for the poor and dispossessed is to risk being dragged down.

That seems to me not only morally indefensible, but bad history.

We non-Aboriginal Australians should perhaps remind ourselves that Australia once reached out for us. Didn't Australia provide opportunity and care for the dispossessed Irish? The poor of Britain? The refugees from war and famine and persecution in the countries of Europe and Asia? Isn't it reasonable to say that if we can build a prosperous and remarkably harmonious multicultural society in Australia, surely we can find just solutions to the problems which beset the first

Australians - the people to whom the most injustice has been done.

And, as I say, the starting point might be to recognise that the problem starts with us non-Aboriginal Australians.

It begins, I think, with the act of recognition. Recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing. We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life. We brought the disasters. The alcohol. We committed the murders. We took the children from their mothers. We practised discrimination and exclusion.

It was our ignorance and our prejudice. And our failure to imagine these things being done to us. With some noble exceptions, we failed to make the most basic human response and enter into their hearts and minds. We failed to ask - how would I feel if this were done to me?

As a consequence, we failed to see that what we were doing degraded all of us.

If we needed a reminder of this, we received it this year. The Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody showed with devastating clarity that the past lives on in inequality, racism and injustice in the prejudice and ignorance of non-Aboriginal Australians, and in the demoralisation and desperation, the fractured identity, of so many Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. For all this, I do not believe that the Report should fill us with guilt. Down the years, there has been no shortage of guilt, but it has not produced the responses we need. Guilt is not a very constructive emotion.

I think what we need to do is open our hearts a bit.

All of us.

Perhaps when we recognise what we have in common we will see the things which must be done - the practical things.

There is something of this in the creation of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. The council's mission is to forge a new partnership built on justice and equity and an appreciation of the heritage of Australia's indigenous people. In the abstract those terms are meaningless. We have to give meaning to 'justice' and 'equity' - and, as I have said several times this year, we will only give them meaning when we commit ourselves to achieving concrete results. If we improve the living conditions in one town, they will improve in another. And another. If we raise the standard

of health by 20 per cent one year, it will be raised more the next. If we open one door others will follow.

When we see improvement, when we see more dignity, more confidence, more happiness - we will know we are going to win. We need these practical building blocks of change.

The Mabo judgment should be seen as one of these. By doing away with the bizarre conceit that this continent had no owners prior to the settlement of Europeans, Mabo establishes a fundamental truth and lays the basis for justice. It will be much easier to work from that basis than has ever been the case in the past.

For this reason alone we should ignore the isolated outbreaks of hysteria and hostility of the past few months. Mabo is an historic decision - we can make it an historic turning point, the basis of a new relationship between indigenous and non-Aboriginal Australians.

The message should be that there is nothing to fear or to lose in the recognition of historical truth, or the extension of social justice, or the deepening of Australian social democracy to include indigenous Australians.

There is everything to gain.

Even the unhappy past speaks for this. Where Aboriginal Australians have been included in the life of Australia they have made remarkable contributions. Economic contributions, particularly in the pastoral and agricultural industry. They are there in the frontier and exploration history of Australia. They are there in the wars. In sport to an extraordinary degree. In literature and art and music. In all these things they have shaped our knowledge of this continent and of ourselves. They have shaped our identity. They are there in the Australian legend. We should never forget - they helped build this nation. And if we have a sense of justice, as well as common sense, we will forge a new partnership.

As I said, it might help us if we non-Aboriginal Australians imagined ourselves dispossessed of land we have lived on for 50 000 years - and then imagined ourselves told that it had never been ours.

Imagine if ours was the oldest culture in the world and we were told that it was worthless. Imagine if we had resisted this settlement, suffered and died in the defence of our land, and then were told in history books that we had given up without a fight. Imagine if non-Aboriginal Australians

had served their country in peace and war and were then ignored in history books. Imagine if our feats on sporting fields had inspired admiration and patriotism and yet did nothing to diminish prejudice. Imagine if our spiritual life was denied and ridiculed.

Imagine if we had suffered the injustice and then were blamed for it.

It seems to me that if we can imagine the injustice then we can imagine its opposite. And we can have justice.

I say that for two reasons: I say it because I believe that the great things about Australian social democracy reflect a fundamental belief in justice. And I say it because in so many other areas we have proved our capacity over the years to go on extending the realism of participating, opportunity and care.

Just as Australian living in the relatively narrow and insular Australia of the 1960s imagined a culturally diverse, worldly and open Australia, and in a generation turned the idea into reality, so we can turn the goals of reconciliation into reality.

There are very good signs that the process has begun. The creation of the Reconciliation Council is evidence itself. The establishment of the ATSIC - the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission - is also evidence. The Council is the product of imagination and goodwill. ATSIC emerges from the vision of indigenous self-determination and self-management. The vision has already become the reality of almost 800 elected Aboriginal Regional Councillors and Commissioners determining priorities and developing their own programs.

All over Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are taking charge of their own lives. And assistance with the problems which chronically beset them is at last being made available in ways developed by the communities themselves. If these things offer hope, so does the fact that this generation of Australians is better informed about Aboriginal culture and achievement, and about the injustice that has been done, than any generation before.

We are beginning to more generally appreciate the depth and the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. From their music and art and dance we are beginning to recognise how much richer our national life and identity will be for the participation of

Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders. We are beginning to learn what the indigenous people have known for many thousands of years - how to live with our physical environment.

Ever so gradually we are learning how to see Australia through Aboriginal eyes, beginning to recognise the wisdom contained in their epic story.

I think we are beginning to see how much we owe the indigenous Australians and how much we have lost by living so apart.

I said we non-indigenous Australians should try to imagine the Aboriginal view.

It can't be too hard. Someone imagined this event today, and it is now a marvellous reality and a great reason for hope.

There is one thing today we cannot imagine. We cannot imagine that the descendants of people whose genius and resilience maintained a culture here through 50 000 years or more, through cataclysmic changes to the climate and environment, and who then survived two centuries of dispossession and abuse, will be denied their place in the modern Australian nation.

We cannot imagine that.

We cannot imagine that we will fail.

And with the spirit that is here today I am confident that we won't.

I am confident that we will succeed in this decade.

Thank you.

Speech was given by the then Prime Minister of Australia, Paul Keating, at Redfern Park in Sydney. Redfern is an inner city suburb of Sydney with a historically large Indigenous population.

Appendix 2a: URLs for the SLQ Response to the Apology videos

Listed alphabetically by surname

Natalie Alberts: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bK4Oh6YYeMo>

Herman Bambie: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Osrs4zRv2ug>

Tiga Bayles: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpJGyEx33As>

Anna Bligh: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryJkxgU6wtM>

Des Bowen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9kIbhLsdi8>

Estelle Bowen: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dB3zPQNfS60>

Quentin Bryce : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dB3zPQNfS60>

Valerie Craigie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IRAZs-GFnk>

Frankie Deemal: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbMymoBvio4>

Robyrt Felton: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cD3tWoa7l5E>

Dora Gibson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLAMZOgrtko>

Soraya Johnston : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCMdUdxZ0fU>

Barry Lea : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jc-0EQSqQMg>

Patricia Lees: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Anl5mX3BTVk>

Nadine McDonald-Dowd: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3lYJknzXA4>

Jasmin Minniecon: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VoPX66eY9g>

Terry O'Shane: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAqRbw_hSDs

Lila Pigliafiori-Baker: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dgAXFPEuWIE>

Jeremy Robertson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBVTiayNSRU>

Val Schier: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=moazGcXMO2Y>

Peter Scott: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShTFC-ZfW0Q>

Angeline Stevens: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4eOTevioe4>

Sam Wagan Watson: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Iu4H2_jTfQ

Mark Wenitong: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_TgiYhaz2Y

John Wenitong: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLAMZOgrtko>

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Note regarding transcripts

The following transcripts were initially downloaded from the SLQ website and then double-checked against the video story. Some minor corrections have been made. The short content descriptions were sourced from the SLQ catalogue (the catalogue item number is included in the title line of each digital video). Other details, such as the visual observations were documented by repetitively viewing the stories. The occasional portraits I have included were obtained by taking page snapshots of the videos. Initial analysis focused on those videos as preliminary studies and the visual observations for these select videos (as indicated by the inclusion of a photograph) are therefore more detailed. The URL provided is to enable viewing of the digital story at the SLQ YouTube channel. These URLs have also been provided separately in Appendix 2a. As explained in the research approach, YouTube provides a more stable viewing experience than the SLQ website.

(P=photo/still image)

2008 Project 7995 Brisbane pilot (7 stories)

Jeremy Robertson's response to the apology 2008-7995-1 (0:02:10)

- Published: 16 Oct 2008
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBVTiayNSRU>

Jeremy Robertson talks about his experiences at the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts (ACPA), contending with racial stereotypes and what Kevin Rudd's apology meant to him.

Transcript

My name is Jeremy Robertson and I grew up in New South Wales ah in a town outside of Wagga or Wagga Wagga, um, the town is called Coolamon. I did primary school moved back and forth from ah New South Wales to Queensland, New South Wales, Queensland, New South Wales, Queensland.

With my mum being Aboriginal and my dad being Chinese as well, I never really grew up on liking both sides either, I just stuck straight in one society.

Because I never grew up with racism or hate, or like, oh I grew up with plenty of hate, what kid doesn't right? But not growing up with racism or being torn by two worlds, white and black.

When I first came into to A.C.P.A, I thought everything was going to be cool that nothing about personal life or personal history were brought in, you were there to do a job, but being there for so long you get an awareness that there is racism, not just from one side but from both.

There are stereotypes of Aboriginal people but also stereotypes of other people as well.

I don't really call other people like ah there's only black and white because everybody

knows there's more than two colours in life, everybody has to live in grey, why should everybody live just black and white? But when it comes to talking about the Sorry Day and stuff like that, truthfully I didn't even know what the stolen generation was until basically last year I heard that it was something bad that happened in Aboriginal history, that something was going on and that people were taken, that's all I heard, I didn't realise it was stretched so far. Coming here and learning more about it I realised that Kevin Rudd didn't need to say it, shouldn't have had that responsibility, it should've been said when these terrible crimes actually happened.

Why did we need to wait so long? If the sorry was said back then and that next step was taken, where would we be now?

Visual observations

P1: portrait – Jeremy looking direct to camera, goofy smiling expression, head to one side (zooms in)

P2: same photo shoot – smiling more openly

P3: with a group of friends (night, party – happy birthday banner in the background) arm around an older man, two young women in front

P4: Jeremy in a home environment – headphones and black fingerless gloves, hoody, serious expression ('selfie'?)

P5: smiling in front of large Indigenous art work, jeans and check shirt. Pans across

P6: Play Poster – Reflections (director: Leah Purcell) – photo of Indigenous young man, in jeans but bare-chested, with his back to the viewer in front of faded background image of his face. Zoom out from extreme close up to full poster.

P7: another selfie – black and white – looking up into the camera – a little facial hair

P8: b&w, cap and earphones in. profile, serious

P9: historical Qld government legislation document – protection – wax seal in top left corner

P10: another selfie, coloured, red t-shirt, looking to camera, headphones in again, home environment in background

P11: front page of newspaper Our National Apology. Pans across close-up of the words of the Apology printed on the page. The Australian national crest is also printed in colour at the top of the page.

P12: outdoor portrait – sunny daylight leaning against red brick wall, serious expression, check shirt. Zooms in.

End: fade black.

Tiga Bayles' response to the apology 2008-7995-2 (0:03:01)

- Published: 16 Oct 2008
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpJGyEx33As>

Tiga Bayles reflects on attending the Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples at Parliament House, Canberra on 13 February 2008. He also talks about the experiences of members of the Stolen Generation and what the apology means for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Images from Tiga Bayles and the John Oxley Library collection.



Transcript

Well, the day of the apology was the 13th of February 2008. I was sitting in the press gallery in Parliament House watching the Prime Minister as he presented his Apology.

To look around that chamber and see the galleries full of people, black faces, white faces, people that I knew, people that I didn't know.

And then to look down on the floor of the chamber itself and see those Elders from the stolen generations that were acknowledged.

Those Elders representing many many more people of stolen generations. Seeing them sitting on the floor of the chamber, a few feet away from where the Prime Minister was presenting or delivering his apology.

It was an historical moment because for the last twelve years or more we have had a very mean spirited Prime Minister; sorry was not a part of his vocabulary. People were very emotional, blacks and whites had tears streaming down their faces, others just had a watery eye like meself. It bought a lot of tears to a lot of eyes, and I was thinking of my grandfather, Sam Watson, taken away along with a lot of other young boys of the same age group, he was taken away from Nebo, taken by white pastoralists that came around in a horse and cart, and those young boys were just grabbed and thrown in the back of that cart. He never saw his mum again.

And the impact on my mother and her brothers and sisters, it took them a long time to find out about their – their country their language, their songs and dances.

Our grandfather Sam was flogged by a dog chain, tied up by a dog chain, flogged by that dog chain if he spoke the language or sung any of the songs or done any dances, so that cultural business ceased when he was taken away.

And that's who that apology was meant for, people like Grandfather Sam Watson. And there's many of those people across the country almost every Aboriginal family in this country has that experience in their family somewhere along the line.

That step taken by the Prime Minister with his apology on that day has made a lot of mainstream Australians feel it is now okay to recognise the struggle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in this country.

As opposed to the previous Prime Minister, where we had racists coming out of the woodwork. It's created a change, it's a new era in our time and mind you saying sorry is only the very first step, but it's a major acknowledgement, it was a major event for us, but we've got a long way to go.

Visual observations

Title screen: Tiga Bayles (white text on black screen)

P1: close up of large Aboriginal flag, Parliament house in the background, zoom out

Tiga's voice is rich and warm and very Australian – it reminds me of Jack Thompson's narrator voice

P2: Parliament House guests – seated in the gallery. Photo taken from below right of gallery. At the centre of the image is Indigenous looking male with grey and silver hair and beard. Camera pans across the "black and white" faces in the photo, female and male.

P3: Rudd and senior Indigenous woman on floor of House. I think Rudd is holding the glass coolamon that had been presented to him. There is an ABC logo watermark in the bottom left corner of the photo.

P4: sepia image (historical) of young Aboriginal children (approx 3-7 years old) standing in a double row, facing forward, hands clasped in front, wearing white shirts and white or light brown pants.

P5: colour – protest march in city street, carrying variation of Aboriginal flag (green at bottom of the formal black and red with yellow sun design). People are dressed in casual clothes and in Indigenous ceremonial dress and paint. Zoom in.

P6: colour – old Parliament House lawns. Groups of people, Aboriginal flags draped over shoulders, perhaps same protest march as previous photo (same flags). Pans across group.

P7: Tiga Bayles in profile, shoulders up, looking off to the distance, outdoors, standing, sunglasses on his head, wearing a dark jacket. Other people in the background but no faces visible. Tall trees in the background also.

Zoom in.

P8: colour – two people (shoulder to hip – not faces) Aboriginal people holding hands. Difficult to tell if male or female. Red flag with white star in background.

Pans across to show a third person holding other hand of middle person.

P9: Aboriginal man, hip to mid-chest, bare chest, holding an open wooden vessel full of fresh gum leaves

P10: Bare chest with painted hand prints (ceremonial?) with newspaper clip superimposed transparently across chest: 'The native is very susceptible to all the physical and moral ills of our civilisation, and it is only by complete separation of the two races that we can save him from hopeless contamination and eventual extinction, as well as safeguard the purity of our own blood.'

P11: torso of person wearing a white t-shirt printed with red lettering 'are you as SORRY as we are?'

P12: protest march, tree lined street, Aboriginal flags, large white letters spelling out 'SOVEREiGNTY' carried above people's heads in the crowd. Pan across left to right.

P13: tent camp in background with colourful flags above tents including Aboriginal flag. Standing billboard in foreground on flat courtyard (?)— white board with hand painted black lettering: 'UNIVERSAL BILL OF RIGHTS = FREEDOM'

P14: Tiga standing in front of Parliament House, grass roof and 'spire' in background. Tiga is squinting at the camera, a serious expression, his right hand on hip. Zoom out.

P15: two men (mid-torso shown only) clasping hands in a thumb-crossing grip at chest height. One man has lighter skin than the other. Both are wearing black t-shirts. The man with darker skin seems to have similar shirt to the one that Tiga was wearing in other photographs. Fade to black.

Natalie Alberts response to the apology 2008-7995-3 (0:03:07)

- Published: 16 Oct 2008
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bK4Oh6YYeMo>

Natalie Alberts talks about how Government policies affected her family, growing up at Cherbourg, Woorabinda and northern Queensland. She recalls the emotion of organising an event at the Musgrave Park Cultural Centre on the day of the Apology.

Transcript

I think um for me looking at that, the news articles leading up to that week, wasn't till actually, you know, week out, getting close to that date, that I actually looked at it and heard and listened and then realised what it meant for my family you know, just bought up all those emotions, that pain, that old history of hurt and um, and you know, that experience of my mother, my grandmother and what her mother went through, and then to see that my family's today, looking at well where's my family been Cherbourg, and to Woorabinda another Mission, then up to Cairns region somewhere, whether it was Yarrabah or Mona Mona.

We never found that sister of my grandmothers, so I think just before we even got to that day where you know the Prime Minister said sorry, was just all that lead up and all that emotion that came out, um although it had been on for a number of weeks and leading up to that, it just sort of finally hit me that I listened to what was going to happen, you know like a milestone in this country's um history. I guess then for me after that, it was just full speed ahead to try and you know get this luncheon organised for the community in Brisbane. After getting all that infrastructure and that booking's happening, we thought well okay its coming closer to 12 o'clock and the community's gathering outside, so um as we actually came out of the office's, the people was just everywhere, you know the hall was full, outside on the lawn area people just everywhere, cars parked you know, you think well what does it mean for each and every person that was here?

My husband, he's been teaching some of the kids from the Southside education school, so I mean, there's a lot of groups that he'd been teaching so I said, here get a group together and they were going to come and do the Corroboree for xxxx on that day you know, so, and on the day then when the group got up to dance, Raymond asked 'anyone else wants to join the group?', so we had a few people just popping in off the floor, young people, old people to get up and dance you know, and so the significance in that corroboree, the song and dance and calling and making the connection for our ancestors you know, to bless the gathering and bless the people here and the business to be done at this gathering and it was real touching to see the young people are getting up and doing that.

And looking at that group you can see that some of those kids have been affected, cos their parents have been taken away, these kids grew up on missions, there families, their parents, you know, but you see their spirit still in them there, they were keen to get up, and they're hungry for that.

This is the start of it, saying sorry is the start, acknowledging what wrongs have been done so we want to see some genuine commitment from this government here to, to help and support in making a better, you know changes for the future for the children.

Visual observations

Title

P1: collection of newspapers, Courier Mail centre (headline: Now for the future), another has a front page with partial SORRY visible. Zoom in.

P2: Natalie, standing, wall in background, holding an old photo in one hand. Sad expression.

P3: four young girls in white communion dresses and veils, 3 with dark skin, standing on lawn in front of weatherboard house

P4: seated Aboriginal woman and young girl standing beside her, both in white, garden in background

P5: B&W aerial photo of mission, lots of figures in foreground, black shorts, white tops, some buildings in the background, on the perimeter of an open space, trees behind them.

P6: B&W group of Aboriginal women wearing white dresses, some carrying babies, standing in front of old-style shack, tin roof, wooden walls, open verandah, hard dirt ground, a couple of small trees to the side of the house over a bench. Not much other vegetation visible. Zooms in.

P7: colour portrait, looking off to the side, pensive. Zoom in

P8: middle-aged Aboriginal man at microphone, Aboriginal design black t-shirt, backs of audience heads, Indigenous art on the wall behind. Zoom in. Looks to be holding a message stick.

P9: senior Aboriginal man at microphone, previous man behind him. Holding a folder and looking to be reading from it. Pans across to Natalie standing to the side.

P10: older man in suit shirt and pants at microphone

P11: middle aged woman in red dress at microphone, backs of people's heads

P12: young Indigenous people, mid-dance, community hall, t-shirts and pants

P13: older Indigenous men, painted, mid- dance, lawn area with cars parked behind them

P14: community hall, three young people, rubbing fire sticks, cameraman in background

P15: same young group – photo from another angle

P16: young Aboriginal man holding and blowing on fire starter, a puff of smoke. He's wearing a t-shirt with Aboriginal flag with silhouette tree in front of the yellow circle and Mulgrave Park family fun day written on it.

P17: outdoor dancing group again, different, more active pose, man in background clapping, mouth open as if singing

P18: middle-aged Aboriginal man seated and playing the didgeridoo with a young toddler reaching over to hold it

P19: painting – Aboriginal symbols for meeting and hand prints with names written beside or over them

P20: two middle-aged Aboriginal women standing in front of above artwork – it's stretched long on the wall. They are smiling. Zoom in.

P21: Natalie and looks like her daughter standing together, soft smiles to camera, holding the old photo (same scene as earlier photo of Natalie).

Sam Wagan Watson's response to the apology 2008-7995-4 (0:02:25)

- Published: 16 October 2008
- URL: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Iu4H2_jTfQ

Sam Wagan Watson Jr. recalls working as a security supervisor on an industrial site the night before the Apology and how he came to process the meaning of the Prime Minister's speech.

Sam Wagan Watson's response was recorded in 2008 as part of the original Responses to Apology project. Acknowledgements are given to Helen Klæbe and Michael Rumic and for the images (those additional to the day's portraits) supplied by Sam.



Transcript

One of my first jobs was a law clerk in the 90's for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services in Brisbane.

I assisted the families of several people murdered in Queensland Police custody.

There was always something genocidal about those instances. And in those instances no police officer was ever charged and no police officer or politician ever said sorry.

By 2004 Prime Minister Howard was already resigned to the fact that he wasn't going to say sorry.

His government and his Australia would not be responsible for the past.

My great grandfather, the first Sam Watson, worked hard, him and my great-grandmother. He was granted an exemption from the act. They both missed out on a childhood, but no one in our family was ever taken away.

On 12th of February 2008, I pulled a fourteen to fifteen hour shift as a security supervisor on an industrial site in Brisbane. I knew there was something significant happening in Canberra, but when you're working the graveyard shift consecutively it just saps you.

I actually slept through the apology. Seven hours deep sleep and then back to work. But when I got to work, and I worked on a site that was predominately staffed by

Polynesian and Maori workers, the boys literally formed an honour guard when I walked in. Most of these guys had lived through significant political events involving Indigenous rights in New Zealand. These men were ecstatic about the apology, where I was still trying to process it.

And today even, I'm still trying to process the apology. Rudd said he'd do it and he did. What all Australians received that day was a chance to renew their vision of history. Some clarity about our national identity. And there is the clarity that the stolen generation deserve from an apology from a sincere Australian leader. I have trouble trusting any politician.

Any words, any forthcomings – they all have limited political shelf lives. As a writer I visualise words as living entities and it worried me to think that a generation of Australians through this would actually one day fear the word sorry, because in the present climate, more than ever, it belongs to the Stolen Generation.

Sorry belongs to a future of healing, compassion and hope.

Visual observations

title: Sam Wagan Watson Jr., white text on black screen

P1: still colour portrait of Sam, an Aboriginal man in his 30s, with neat dark hair and a black shirt. Sam has a pen in his hand, and this hand is to his chin, he is looking to the distance, as if thinking. The photo zooms out slowly. Sam's voice is clear and confident.

P2: newspaper-type clip/flyer promoting National Day of Action rally to support those the Palm Island Indigenous community and stop black deaths in custody

P3: colour image of protest march, large Aboriginal flag held by the first row of marchers, placards in the background.

P4: colour image of justice statue in front of large official-looking sandstone building, this image is shot from below so that the justice statue looks down at the viewer. Zoom out.

Photo: previous image, completely zoomed out so that we see an Aboriginal flag draped at the foot of the justice statue plinth, a young boy can just be seen in the bottom right corner

P5: image of Sam shot from above, he is seated at a wooden-topped table, he has his head in his hand, with this hand also holding a blue pen, an empty coffee cup is beside him and his other hand is resting on an open page notebook. His gaze is on the notebook.

P6: self-portrait of Sam, his chin is up, he is looking direct to camera, he is wearing a black security officer uniform and cap. There is a stop sign in the background, behind the green metal bar fence that he stands in front of. The sky is dark. Slow zoom in.

P7: handwritten script in blue pen on lined white notebook. The handwriting is neat with well-formed letters and equally spaced words, it is forward-slanted. These words are being spoken by Sam. Slow pan and zoom out.

P8: close-up of Sam from the side of his face, serious looking, head in hand, eyes staring into the distance. Slow zoom in.

P9: Sam at the table, shot from above and behind, focussing on his hands, his right holding a pen, the left resting on the open notebook, tattoo semi-visible on his left wrist, a silver ring on his left thumb, mobile phone on the right and coffee cup on the left. Pan and zoom out.

P10: Sam at table, shot from low-front, he is writing in the notebook, attention focussed on this, there is a green wall in the background and a window to a treed area. Zoom in.

P11: Close up of Sam holding pen over page of handwritten text. Zoom in.

P12: portrait of Sam looking direct to camera, wearing the black shirt and vest that he is wearing in the previous photos. His face stands out against the black background and his black clothing, his eyes are bright and gentle, he has a friendly closed mouth half-smile. Slow zoom in. Sam's voice is clear and confident.

Fade to black.

Nadine McDonald-Dowd's response to the apology 2008-7995-5 (0:02:26)

- Published: 16 Oct 2008
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3lYJknzXA4>

Nadine McDonald-Dowd remembers travelling to Canberra with her mother to attend the Apology. She talks about her mother's experiences and how the Apology helped her come to terms with her past.

Transcript

My mum's name had been put forward as a member of the stolen generation um and they, the National Sorry Day Committee, had kind of asked for names from across the country, to be pooled together and from there they would select the hundred people to sit in the Gallery while the Prime Minister made his address.

My mum raised us the way she did, especially with a lot of family, a lot of community, always being involved, always knowing who your cousins and your uncles and your aunties and having that sense of belonging and community because she never had that, she was very institutionalised, her life was run by the church, run by religion. I think the biggest fear for her was that the Prime Minister wasn't going to say sorry.

That he was going to get everybody there and disappoint everybody, and I said well you know, he wouldn't be that kind of man I don't believe to actually shame himself and not actually go through with what he's promising to go through.

And another part of that was that because they brought all these members of the stolen generation together, the other thing that she was scared about was having to talk about her own experiences to everybody again and bringing up that pain. When they had the dinner, she just seemed a little bit more at ease, because everybody else in that room had gone through the same experience.

She was able to sit and talk and talk and I think they all talked about anything and everything for three days straight. It enabled her to be a lot more comfortable around other people and share it.

At the orphanage they'd celebrate the birthdays on one day, just, there were too many kids, too many cakes. They'd celebrate on the same day, get the same present and there was always a little a matchstick doll and a little matchbox. She was just a number, even when you get your freedom of information, you're just a number.

You're not only just a number but you're pieces of paper with black wiped out on it.

'Mr Speaker I commend the motion to the house'

(Applause and cheers from the crowd assembled in the auditorium)

The apology for her on that day was a final kind of recognition was that I actually, I exist. My name is Veronica Anne McDonald.

(Cheers and claps continue in background)

Visual observations

Title

1. Wobbly **hand held camera footage** – window of plane? Looking down over Canberra
2. Live footage – people walking towards Parliament House in Canberra. Early morning. Grey sky
3. People gathering in corridor – camera moves around column to greet older Indigenous ladies – one looks to camera and smiles warmly
4. Rows of Aboriginal, and Australian flags flying in breeze
5. Line of people entering hall/chamber from a large foyer space. Backs of heads only but different ages, dress etc. Camera scans around sideways and behind to show us people walking in – long line of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. And back to the front as they walk closer to the entrance. Once inside, we can see it's an auditorium and there are two large screens at the front displaying a title frame 'National Apology to the Stolen Generations' and rows of chairs inside. Camera scans around as people enter and sit.
6. group of 5 young Indigenous women and 1 man dressed in Aboriginal flag inspired outfits posing with older Indigenous women and men (2/2) smiling for photographers who can also be seen to the right of the vid-cam's frame
7. back to the auditorium – it's almost full and there are still people moving around, settling in. the vid-cam operator is at the back left corner of the room.
8. group of people in auditorium – one woman is recording the crowd with her phone held high in the air - beaming. Buoyant atmosphere evidenced in people's smiles and the energy of movements
9. video screen – empty floor of chamber – a few people moving about
10. Rudd's voice and on screen in the hall, footage of Rudd closing the motion auditorium audience cheer loudly, clap and start standing, still clapping and cheering
11. photo – invitation addressed to Veronica Anne McDonald from the PM for morning tea in the members hall on the day of the apology

Anna Bligh's response to the apology 2008-7995-6 (0:02:35)

- Published: 14 Dec 2008
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryJkxgU6wtM>

The Premier of Queensland, Anna Bligh, shares her opinions on how past legislation has impacted upon Aboriginal people. She talks particularly about the removal of Aboriginal children from their families, and how a bipartisan apology is important for improving conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Transcript

For me as someone who has to make decisions in Government, decisions about laws and where we spend money one of the really powerful things about a bipartisan apology was that it really sort of settled the question of there was serious injustice done and as a result of that serious injustice many people in our community today are still struggling with the results of that.

So these are all things we are all living with, this is not a long time ago thing, this is now.

Our Parliament was sitting and given the daylight saving change, I thought it was too early for screens, people would still be on trains, and so we thought at the very least we would like to get a number of people who had experienced this in their own lives together, members of the stolen generation and some of their friends and family together at Parliament House for a breakfast as in the lead up to it.

So while I knew it was always going to be emotional, I have to say, until I stood in front of the crowd and saw so many of them with tears just rolling down their face, particularly a lot of the old people, you know, to see old people just openly weeping is very moving. Some of it was re-living old memories, but some of it was also tears of relief, finally after their waiting their whole lives, they were being recognised and they were being validated.

For me it was still disappointing on the day that there were still people including some people in the Queensland Parliament who were still wanting to talk about the fact that some Aboriginal children, that people were trying to do the right thing and take them away from bad circumstances.

There was already provision for that as there should be.

This was an entirely separate provision in the legislation that said the State can remove a child from their parents if they're Aboriginal full stop. It was a policy an active policy and captured in legislation and enforced.

[Noticeable pause]

This will now go into our history books, there many well be many Australians who are still not quite sure what it all means, but increasingly we will see I think, our schools teaching children about this moment in our history.

What I hoped on that day, what was in my heart on that day in the Parliament, was a real sense of renewed hope, and what I hope in ten years time is that we can look back

and say that was the beginning of things really starting to get better.

Visual observations

Title (The Honourable Anna Bligh MP Premier of Queensland)

P1: Anna holding a microphone to mouth, mid-speech, front of hall, govt banners in background, white suit. Zoom in.

P2: Anna, standing, hands clasped, addressing unseen audience, man & woman seated at table beside her (panel type arrangement). Qld govt/ATSI partnerships banner with smiling young Aboriginal man on it (larger than life) in background

P3: Anna seated beside Aboriginal man in black hat, she is wearing same red dress/top as previous photo (same event?), row of media microphones in front of them, ABC logo visible on one, ATSI banner in background

P4: previous panel arrangement – larger photo – Aus, Aboriginal and TSI flags on wall behind Anna, 2 other women and a man at panel. The banner from P3 is to the left.

P5: Anna standing with man in black hat looking at her, foyer area, people in background, she is making a hand gesture as she speaks, he has one hand holding the other wrist in front of his stomach

P6: car park ramp? A group of others in the distance. Early/late light. People's legs walking past – blurred, stutter treatment

P7: Anna seated in plush chair, table and chairs in background (formal office?) smiling, paying attention to unseen person

P8: group of Indigenous people (family?) 3 women and 2 men – looks like 3 generations of women, 2 of men?

P9: senior Indigenous couple and 2 bureaucrats?

P10: 2 young Aboriginal men, faces painted, standing, playing didg. One has shirt and pants on, the other is bare-chested but painted

P11: close up Anna's hands in a speaking gesture – same suit jacket & couch as P7

P12: Anna talking to interviewer (part of their shoulder at edge of frame), from couch as before, gesturing, legs crossed, one hand on knee, leaning into arm of couch, closed body language

P13: previous panel setting – Anna and another woman standing and talking together

P14: Anna seated with an Indigenous man, again gesturing and speaking, colourful painting on wall above them (same outfit as P13/P2 etc)

P15: Anna on couch, hands mid-air facing each other – measuring out a gap

P16: Qld lower house chamber, empty, photo from above

P17: another lower house angle – closer in and from front left of chamber looking towards back

P18: legal statute document with red seal in top left corner (featured in other stories too) over the P17

Black screen

P19: young Indigenous girls in traditional ceremonial dress and paint holding green leaves

P20: children's poster rainbow SORRY with a few names around it (Sabine, Lisa, Steve, Max)

P21: children's crayon sorry

P22: children's pencil sorry, also 'time to make amends'

P23: children's 'people united'

P24: children's 'sorry is the absolute least I can say'

P25: children's tree drawing

P26: sorry, sorry, sorry ... written inside a heart outline

P27: children's Aboriginal flag with sorry written across yellow circle

P28: three young Aboriginal children sitting happily together on playground animal feature shape. Tiniest one has two fingers up in bunny ears/peace sign

Quentin Bryce's response to the apology 2008-7995-7 (0:02:38)

- Published: 14 December 2008
- URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dB3zPQNfS60>

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, as Governor of Queensland, talks about her emotional response to the Prime Minister's apology, her role in Indigenous issues and how she first learnt about the Stolen Generation in 1978.

Quentin Bryce, the Governor of Queensland's, response was recorded in 2008 as part of the original Responses to Apology project conducted by the SLQ, QUT and the Qld Government. She was interviewed by Faith Baisden, additional photography by Bryan Crawford.



Transcript

I remember very clearly that it was a day that meant an enormous amount to me. I remember it as a day of quietness for myself and a sense of contemplation and reflection. I was very conscious of it being a very serious day for me and for all Australians.

I thought very deeply of my friendship with a wonderful person who in 1978, at Groote Eylandt, walking on the beach talked to me about the Stolen Generation. It was the first time I'd heard her story and the stories of that generation.

I thought of her all through that day and what she brought to my life, a depth and an understanding and a knowledge, over many years we kept in touch.

I remember a young man who was here for lunch one day with a group of young Indigenous leaders. I remember this very handsome young man who shocked me a bit when he suddenly said "what would you have to do to get the indigenous flag flying here at Government House?" I said to him, "I'll think about that."

I look back and I'm very glad that it was a day when we flew the indigenous flag on the roof of this building.

That was of significance to me as The Governor in a way of sending a message but what's very important about it to me is that I think it gives us a way forward, a new determination across the country to close the gap. The most powerful figure out of that is the horrific 17 per cent gap in life expectancy – those health issues. But I think it's a very good term, when we're thinking in our hearts about what we can do, every single one of us individuals, to address in 2008 and in our futures, the recognition of the dignity and worth of every person in our country.

Visual observations

Title: Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor of Queensland (2003-2008) currently Governor-General of Commonwealth of Australia. White text on black background.

P1: Quentin seated on a cream floral couch in ornate and formal sitting room, with interviewer's back (woman with pen and notebook in lap) to the camera on the right. Quentin is wearing a pale blue skirt suit, her hands are intertwined in front of her chest and she is smiling and engaging with the interviewer. Her voice is clear and calm. Zoom in.

P2: portrait-type image of Quentin on couch, elbow on couch arm with her chin resting on top of her softly closed hand. Relaxed warm expression, eyes to the interviewer. Zoom in.

P3: same context as previously, but with hands together, fingers pointing outwards and facial expression as if mid-speech.

P4: black and white image of beach taken from a distant height. There are small figures on the beach. The water is receding.

P5: Quentin on couch, mid-speech, attention to interviewer, hands gesturing – palms down and flat. Slow zoom in.

P6: detail of side of government house. White building with manicured green lawn and bright blue sky. Slow zoom in.

Smile in voice.

P7: Quentin speaking in front of room of cross-legged young people in casual/sports style uniforms, Indigenous and Australian flags arranged at her side, a mural on the wall shows a PC and an open book in the centre of coloured Aboriginal U-shaped symbols of people meeting.

P8: Quentin posing in front of cave structure, red dirt ground, with Indigenous children and teens (males) beside her, some in school uniform.

P9: Quentin posing with group of young women and men, all in school uniform, and older male teacher in front of Reconciliation Australia sign and blue wall of building.

P10: Quentin engaging, laughing, with young Indigenous children and adults in classroom environment

P11: Quentin at table with young Indigenous school children, leaning forward and engaging with them, her arm at the back of one child.

P12: Quentin leaning forward to accept handmade project poster and shaking hand of young Indigenous child, another excited looking child and a white female teacher looking on. Open air – ocean in background. Zoom out.

P13: Quentin talking to two adult women in office (?) with posters on wall. She is holding flowers, the woman talking to her is holding sheets of paper.

P14: Quentin in formal green dress and white hat, with adult Indigenous male, back to camera, in front of them is open country, dense low shrubs and flat rocks around them and hills in distance. Slow zoom in.

P15: Quentin in same blue outfit as before but outside now with flower bushes behind her. She is directing her attention at the interviewer, whose sleeve can be seen to the left, and her hand is gesturing palm down. She has a serious expression, head tilted to one side and her brow is furrowed.

P16: four people, one of them Quentin in a black dress, two other women and a taller man, standing at what appears to be a look out point facing the camera, a landscape of a river and hills in the background.

P17: people in formal evening wear

P18: sports auditorium full of standing children in different coloured casual clothing, and row of adults at front. Zoom in.

P19: Quentin in open space (front of building steps) speaking to group of people.

P20: Quentin and Indigenous man in cave, engaged in conversation

P21: Quentin and Indigenous man outdoors, she is looking toward him, he is looking at the camera. Zoom out

2009 Project 10042 Mt Isa (7 stories)

Patricia Lees' response to the apology 2009-10042-1 (0:02:39)

- Published: 5 Apr 2009
- URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Anl5mX3BTVk>

Patricia Lees gives her feelings about the apology and what it meant to her family. She also talks about the issues surrounding the apology, including the lack of consensus between the two sides of government, the lack of an impact it has made on the lives of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders and the need to think of future generations.

Transcript

Pattie Lees from Mount Isa. I've been here about 32 years. I'm considered a transplant, you know, you've got to actually be born here sometimes before you're accepted but my original thing is on the coast.

My mother's a Torres Strait Islander, Murray Islander. My father's an Irishman. So I'm just happy to, you know, be me I think. I was actually invited to, down to Canberra, one of the hundreds.

Rang up and said, "would you like to?" like that. And I declined, which was a bit of a shock to them and I said, "no I just want to offer solidarity with a lot of people I know that were similarly involved in that way."

So, anyway, I ended up on my own in a sick bed in this motel and the TV on. And then I got a little bit emotional. Not a bit emotional, I got really emotional because I was thinking about my mother and all the other mothers and the people that have since gone on and what the apology would mean to them. Could you go to the gravesite and take that there? Could it bring that loss? Would it restore the loss to me? And I got myself in quite a lather actually, I was really surprised and then I had the regret of saying well maybe I should've been there, because the kids would've liked to be able to say, "well Mum got invited and she was there."

But really wasn't, you know, I just didn't feel strong or comfortable enough and so, yeah, I was think of Mum and I was thinking about the symbolic and the reasons why I rejected the invitation, um, and wondering, thinking where was Kevin Rudd's apology going to, who was he apologising on behalf of? Because I read the papers about there was a bit of an argument getting consensus from the Coalition. I mean when they were in opposition, when they were in government, as I said, they couldn't get it right, so they came to, it wasn't a real, um, bipartisan support for the apology.

Has it made a difference? I think we still need to go out and test it in the broader community. And I don't think, myself, my own personal view, it's made one iota. I don't think it's improved race relations in this country and things like that.

We weren't responsible for what happened back then but we are responsible for the future. And even just yesterday when I come home my little grand-daughter's sitting on my lap. And she had a beautiful t-shirt on which made me really. She had a little t-shirt on said, "save the future for me." Now isn't that what it's all about?

Visual observations

Title

P1: profile, close up

P2: hands, close up, zoom

P3: another profile

P4: old colour photo, mother and daughter? Garden/trees background

P5: old colour photo, three men, three generations, home environment

P6: sorry hands from lawn of Parliament, close up

Live –

P7: old colour family photo

Live –

Edit/live –

P8: b&w photo, family

P9: young family, contemporary

P10: large multi-generational family photo

Live –

Edit/Live – different frame

Edit/Live – different frame (closer)

P11: girl toddler wearing a yellow t-shirt with ‘save the future for me’ printed on it in pink

Robyrtta Felton's response to the apology 2009-10042-2 (0:03:37)

- Published: 5 April 2009
- URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cD3tWoa7l5E>

Robyrtta Felton talks about the difficulties that previous government policies have brought to the lives of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders. She also talks about the need for the Government to take decisive action on Indigenous issues.

Robyrtta Felton was interviewed at MOB FM, Mt Isa, Queensland by Gavin Bannerman, a librarian at the SLQ.



Transcript

My name is Robyrta Felton. I was born on Mornington Island, I still live on Mornington Island.

It was announced that Mr Rudd would say sorry and both governments agreed and I sat there and I said “come on” [Robyrtta breathes out in a laugh] because we had past experience where governments make us a promise and they don’t uphold it, you know it’s forgotten.

A lot of people on the island saw the sorry business and a lot of them asked me, “do you think it is true” because we had so many letdowns by government so I would say that our people didn’t take it as true, you know?

My mother and her auntie and my mother and her two children and her auntie’s two children, they were sent to Mornington Island and I was born there in 1931.

When I hear stories from some of our women that were taken to Mornington Island when they were little sometime it makes you feel like to cry.

You know it still hurts a lot of people; it hurts me because now we are trying to get a family tree together but we have to go the (ah) Brisbane Archives to find. I only recently applied for birth certificate and they didn’t have any records other than a letter from the missionary saying a little girl was born here on such and such a date.

I’m 78 this year and I will be receiving my birth certificate to enable me to get pension that’s sad (!)

You know my children went to university and they thought they were Greeks and other one was a German and she said, “no (ahm) my mother – my grandmother was a black woman – Australian – Indigenous Australian, my mother and we come from this tribal group.” And she said the real true friends stayed with her but others parted because she admitted she was Aborigine, descendants of Aboriginal people.

When we saw the video of Mr Rudd apologizing to the whole Aboriginal nation, I felt very sorry for those people sitting there and I could see the tears flowing and (ah) you know, you see them hugging each other but it remains the same (pause) they’re sorry but our situation remains the same.

Actions speak louder than words so what action is he going to take after his words of sorry.

Visual observations

Title: ‘Robyrtta Felton’, white text on black background

two images of senior Indigenous woman: P1: turning to the left, she is seen at first in profile, outdoors, with light, sky and greenery reflected in her glasses and then P2: turned more towards the camera, she is half-smiling, a contented expression, looking aside, her hair is grey and reddish, her glasses are a round shape with two tone frames—red and clear. She is wearing an aqua blue top dotted with a repeated simple white floral motif

P3: red and yellow parliament-type building of federation period with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags flying in the wind

P4: leather jacketed torso holding small Aboriginal flag, appears as if part of a crowd

Robyrtta is now shown live speaking in a room, as she says ‘promise’, she gestures with her hands in an open punctuating gesture of containment, as if holding a ball—palms facing each other, relaxed arms, separated on either side of her body. Robyrta is now wearing a green and white patterned shirt, the wall behind her is almost the same tropical aqua-green, and there is another younger (40s?) woman on her right looking ahead and down, expressionless, and then to Robyrta and away. Robyrta is mostly looking and talking ahead, which is about 45 degrees turned away from the camera’s position at her left hand side, but she turns a little to each side as she speaks

P5: aerial photograph of Mornington Island from the window of a plane

P6 Robyrta’s hands poised as if finger counting, one hand open palm up and the other in an index-finger point at it

P2 (repeat) outdoors

Back to Robyrta in the room, she is now looking down at her lap as she speaks
at this point Robyrta looks up, serious

P7: black and white photo of island—trees and some open cleared land, water

return to Robyrta, the other woman is now facing towards Robyrta, eyes down, mouth serious, hands clasped in her lap, thumbs worrying at each other, Robyrta’s voice is a little softer as she speaks now

Robyrtta’s body language is protective, she has a slight wincing expression and her body makes a gesture of lightly curling inwards, shoulders towards stomach, as if to become smaller

-break-

Robyrt's voice is now brighter, the other woman is sitting up straighter, arms crossed tightly against her chest now, face more active as she looks towards Robyrta and away a few times. Robyrta looks down and up. Robyrta gestures with her hands on 'now' as if to make a large ball smaller, she looks up as she speaks clearly

Robyrt gestures with her thumb and index finger backwards over her shoulder
the other woman looks to her right with a smile

camera now records Robyrta linking her index and little finger as she punctuates what she is saying with these gestures

Robyrt says this with a slight incredulous tone, leaning in to the unseen interviewer and there is laughter from at least 2 other people not shown in the footage, the woman on the right was smiling before the camera shifts her from frame

woman's voice sighs/laughs

Robyrt states this in a matter-of-fact tone as if to correct, but warmly as if she also 'gets' the 'joke'

some laughter again

-break-

Robyrt has been looking down but she looks up at this point

P8: gathering of people in open space, city skyline in background, P9: Fed Square Melbourne screen

back to Robyrta speaking, she is alternating between looking up and to the side

Robyrt shakes her head in a small 'no' gesture

Robyrt draws out these words and gestures with her hands as if seeking comprehension

-break-

Robyrt makes this whole statement turned towards the camera, looking up above it, facing the camera in her most direct orientation of the whole recording. She emphasises this whole sentence, her voice is louder and she has a demanding tone. As she finishes talking she gestures with her hand, turning it from palm down to palm up, nods and looks away to the side, with some finality.

Barry Lea's response to the apology 2009-10042-3 (0:02:39)

- Published: 5 Apr 2009
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jc-0EQSqQMg>

Barry Lea, Production Manager at MOB FM, recalls the event that the radio station held at Mount Isa on the day of the apology. He also talks about his hopes for the future 12 months on from the apology.

Transcript

Barry Lea, originally from Hervey Bay but up here in Mount Isa currently working at MOB FM, here on radio as the Production Manager.

We did a live broadcast from just here, we had a barbeque and invited some of the members from the public just to come in and listen. And it was, it was, although I was cooking the barbeque, it was quite an emotional day for a lot of people.

Having not been affected personally but obviously some family members had been.

It's ah, and not really knowing that much about it, I think it was an important thing to do more so in the fact of not only apologising on behalf of himself, or behalf of Kevin Rudd as a person, but more so just acknowledging that these things did happen and the effects are still obviously, are affecting people today.

A lot of people reflected upon it as if they thought they had to personally apologise for those atrocities that happened. I think it was not really explained well, but not really taken on board by a lot of people.

Within the radio we haven't actually, I think it's too close to the heart for many people to actually get them on the radio to talk about that.

And so we wouldn't, to put people that were personally affected by it in that predicament. So it obviously brings up a lot of bad memories for them.

I think, you know, a lot of people when they were listening to the apology there were a lot of tears and emotions and stuff, but in some cases they were tears of joy that finally they could go forward, you know, it was just fact that OK we've acknowledged that these things have happened and now, you know, certain things, we'll try to put certain things in place so that we can go forward.

How they've gone, you know, from my personal view, I don't think they've really gone much, done much, in the last 12 months, hopefully they will in the next 12 though.

Visual observations

Title

P1: Barry, side profile, close up, looking up and out to the distance

P2: MOB FM sign

P3: Barry's hand at mixing desk

Live – Barry outdoors?, plants in background, wearing a MOB FM shirt, directing response to above right of camera

P4: Barry standing in radio booth?

Live -

P5: Barry at radio desk, headphones on, microphone, hands in the air, gesturing mid-speech

Live -

P6: Barry seated at radio desk, photo taken from standing position to left of Barry

P7: Barry's hand at mixing board

Live -

Jasmin Minniecon's response to the apology 2009-10042-4 (0:04:04)

- Published: 5 Apr 2009
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VoPX66eY9g>

Jasmin Minniecon talks about the experiences of her family, including her great-grandfather Sam Watson being removed from his family. She talks about what the apology means to her and what it would have meant to the previous generations of Aboriginal people.

Transcript

My grandfather, my great-grandfather Sam Watson, he was taken away from his family as well and placed as a station hand working for a very, from what the stories that I hear, this many was very cruel to him. Basically lived in slave-like conditions.

So I'd heard there was a big build-up to the day of the apology and everyone was very keen on hearing what the Prime Minister had to say and, you know, it'd been months of preparation for it. I come from, you know, the Watson family, you interviewed Tiga Bayles and young Sam Jr. I come from a family of people were in the land rights, you know doing a lot of the land right marches and lot of, they were activists. Looking back then and hearing the stories from then, they were looking for that apology of, you know, and they were looking for that recognition in that the Government did do this.

You know, colonisation did do this to our people.

They took away our culture, they took away our language, they tried to assimilate us into their society. And I think for me hearing that apology it really is, it doesn't take away that sort of, that pain of that. And it doesn't take away, you know, that story of my great grandfathers, you know, they were taken and that story will remain of happened to them and it will be passed down to generation to generation. And I'm just, I think, what really upset me, I was talking to my mother last night and she was saying, you know, it affects her still. And it'll surely affect generations to come.

And if you really think about it, that they couldn't be here to hear that, you know, to hear Prime Minister Rudd say sorry to them, my grandfathers, you know, they passed away at an early age, you know, in their lives. So they weren't here to experience that release or that freedom and to hear that acknowledgement.

At the moment it's really only words. I haven't seen an effect take place. There's no real, you know, like a new wave of hope that's spreading out through the whole of Australia and especially amongst the Indigenous communities. And I think for it to take full effect, you know, Prime Minister Rudd has to look at in these Indigenous communities, especially with places like in the Northern Territory, where the intervention is taking place, you know, to see what's been happening there it's just like going backwards.

He's I think for me, to not just say sorry, but to put words into action, you know, to find a better solution without having to go back to that time where it was under the Act, you know. And keeping, what you call it, like an eye on the Aboriginal communities. There's got to be a better solution. And I just, you know, feel that it's at this point in time, it's, sorry, you know the word "sorry" hasn't really taken full effect.

Visual observations

Title

P1: close profile, Jasmin looking away

P2: closely framed portrait (eyebrows to bottom lip), Jasmin mid-speech , eyes down

Live – greenery in background, facing forward, just off-side of camera, looks to both sides of the camera as if people there, also looks up – we can see a hand to the bottom right of frame momentarily – person standing to the side of camera might be asking questions

Edit/live – shakes head from side to side, looking down as she speaks

P3: Kevin Rudd mid-speech in Parliament setting

Live –

P4: tent embassy

P5: protest – people holding banner: ‘stop black deaths in custody’

Live –

P6: Jasmin’s hands in lap

Live –

Edit/live –

Edit/live –

Edit/live –

P7: skywriting – sorry

Lila Pigliafiori-Baker's response to the apology 2009-10042-5 (0:03:21)

- Published: 5 April 2009
- URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dgAXFPEuWIE>

Lila Pigliafiori-Baker talks about her Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, including the experiences of her mother living under the Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act 1897. She also talks about people with mixed backgrounds being accepted by individual communities.

Lila Pigliafiori-Baker was interviewed in 2009 at Mount Isa as part of the Regional Apology Project funded by OPAL. Images are from the John Oxley library.



Transcript

Hello, my name is Lila Pigliafiori, my maiden name was Baker. I am Aboriginal through my mother's heritage and I'm also Torres Strait Islander on my father's side, and my dad comes from Darnley Island.

For me on that day when I watched the apology, I don't think too much went through my mind except that I thought it was really nice to hear that somebody with so much power could get up there and finally make an apology to all Aboriginal people of Australia.

I was able to reflect back and think about my grandmother and her brothers and her sisters.

A lot of the history that we know today, or I know today as a young person, is just something I have had to read in books or listen to my mother pass on to me as best she could.

We know for a fact that her mum and all her brothers and sisters, they were removed under the Act, and I actually sat with mum last night and I talked to her and I said, "what did that mean did that mean that they could live like the white man?" and she said to me "no, it just meant they had a little bit more freedom to move around." And mum actually used to go with her Grandmother, and watch her go and report every day to the police station and give her thumb print, it was just shocking, she had to

record in a little book where she had to go and what she had to do that day, so if you call that freedom then no.

And when I thought about the apology that day and I looked at it, I thought freedom is so limited and it was limited to us as Aboriginal people.

For me it's very difficult to trace back my family line and to be accepted by people where my grandparents were born.

They were born up around Burketown, and we can trace that back, but to be accepted is a very difficult thing. So you see, while we hear an apology from the Prime Minister, he is one man standing there giving an apology, I think within our own racism, among our own people we all need to start reconciling too and getting together and accepting that. I will never know what my right was as a young girl or woman with my people because that was all taken away from us.

I mean we can only move on from here and move forward and my journey is to let my children know and never feel shame, because the shame is not on us, we shouldn't be shamed to be Aboriginal, we need to let them know that the shame rests with past governments and parliaments that removed a culture that we had that was so strong.

And I think the saddest thing too is that um, we don't have a language. We have lost our language and I look at all these other cultures, you can see the Chinese and the Germans and they have their language, we don't have one, it was taken away from us so we will never ever know.

For me 12 months on, I think well has it changed? And is it going to change? And quite honestly I'm not feeling too positive about the future.

You know it is important for us to take our stand and while we may be a minority group in Australia today we are still the landowners of this country.

Visual observations

Title: Lila Pigiliafiori-Baker, white text on black background

P1: Colour image of middle-aged Aboriginal woman, close portrait (top of shoulders and head). She looks to the side of the camera with a friendly closed-mouth smile and a smiling expression in her eyes, she is wearing gold and diamond jewellery and a red/pink shirt. Lila's voice is strong and clear.

P2: portrait of Lila, in the same shirt and jewellery, this time shot from the top chest upwards, she is smiling happily and openly, her eyes are looking to the side and beyond the camera as if engaged with another person.

Lila is filmed in person, there is greenery in the background, it is bright daylight. Lila is wearing the same shirt and jewellery as in the previous photo portraits and is filmed from the chest upwards. She is comfortably seated, speaking steadily and openly.

Lila is looking beyond the camera – to the person who may be there – as she speaks. Her expression is calm and direct. She is physically grounded - still.

P3: a large outdoor screen with Kevin Rudd displayed on it and people standing around watching.

Lila speaks beyond the camera, she punctuates 'grandmother', 'brother' and 'sisters' with small nods and leans forward as she does, each movement an accounting for.

P4: portrait, again not looking to camera. Lila is in a different outfit/jewellery but this photo is zoomed in entirely on her face – from just below her lips to just above her brows and it continues to slowly zoom in.

Lila speaks, her eyeline slightly down now, a small frown on her brow.

She emphasises ‘her’ and ‘all’ with raised eyebrows and looks directly to the person beyond the camera. She shakes her head gently from side to side (as if to say no or to disapprove) as she speaks.

Lila shifts on ‘actually’, head to the side, to look more directly at the person she is interacting with, raising her brows as she relates her question.

Lila shakes her head in a ‘no/disapproval’ movement, she is a little breathless, relating her account with an energy that dissipates and calms as she then speaks about her own thoughts.

P5: Lila’s hands resting together (same shirt can be seen). Slow zoom in.

P6: portrait in close-up profile, serious expression. Slow zoom in.

P7: portrait in profile, not as close up as the previous but similar serious expression, eyes downcast, thoughtful looking. Slow zoom in.

Lila speaks to camera, talking quite quickly, engaging sincerely and directly with person beyond camera then looking off to the side in a thoughtful manner

Lila takes a deep breath and returns her gaze to the person

Lila briefly looks to the other side of the camera and nods – as if to a person there

She looks briefly again to the other side of the camera at ‘cultures’ and ‘language’, shaking her head as she explains

-break-

The camera position has changed so that Lila is now centred with her eyeline forward, she looks down to the side and then up to beside/behind the camera.

Lila looks to the side – to the other person and back to the person behind the camera.

Lila looks down on future. The camera refocuses and zooms in on Lila so that most of the following speech is directed to camera. Lila nods in affirmation.

Valerie Craigie's response to the apology 2009-10042-6 (0:02:11)

- Published: 5 Apr 2009
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IRAZs-GFnk>

Valerie Craigie talks about the emotions that the apology brought up for her and the transgenerational effects that the removal of her family members has had.

Transcript

I was here, MOB FM actually aired it live, the apology, and we had the community come in and have a listen with us.

We had a breakfast, so there was a lot of people, there was a lot of crying, and you know that apology brought up a lot of feelings.

For me it was a time to think about my Grandmother and her being taken to Palm Island and some of the family didn't find, didn't see their mother until they were like 45, but she knew them instantly when she saw them. And her going away and the pain of being separated from country, you know never being able to really stay over there and coming back here and how she just loved our hills and she just pined you know for the country.

The pain that I really see with my Auntie, was she was taken away from Cloncurry, she said my Grandmother was actually cooking them dinner on the Cloncurry River and the police turned up and just took them away and she said they were put into a taxi and she was five years old and she was crying and that was the last that she remembers.

All the stuff is trans-generational, you know, so you are always affected by it, even though I am a great granddaughter.

I think about all the other people I know, I was thinking about my Grandma, my Dad's mum who worked in the Bedourie pub when she was a very young woman and I think what it must have been like for her as well.

You know while I thought the apology was wonderful but you just couldn't help but cry for my family and everyone that had been through that.

Robyrta: Well, our people they tell stories but they tell the funny stories and they laugh about it but beneath that is dreadful stories.

Valerie: Hm

Visual observations

Title

P1: MOB FM sign on wire fence

P2: Valerie reaching for phone on desk in office environment

P3: Valerie with phone to ear, smiling

P4: Valerie standing at desk with two Indigenous men older/younger seated behind it – looking at PC, small desk, crowded with office paraphernalia

P5: Valerie smiling to camera

Live footage – Valerie talking to person in front of her but being filmed from her left side. Indoor plant in background. She also looks to her left as she speaks, but to the other side of the camera. She looks serious and emphasises ‘going away’ and ‘pain’.

P6: coloured landscape

P7: hills and sunlit cloud in sky

P8: Valerie looking down, serious

P9: same situation as P8, slightly different position/expression

Live – Valerie, frowning, expressive, looking around room to unseen others as she speaks

Live – side on, same expressions/movements as above

Live – another edit of above

P10: Valerie and Dad? Aboriginal man in black hat and white t-shirt, both with warm expressions to camera

Live – larger frame – Valerie in same situation but we can see Robyrta Felton seated on her left and Patricia Lees on her right. There are cups and food plates on the table in front of them. She makes large gestures with her hands as she speaks – measuring, then crossing/cancelling palms down, then hands clasped to crossed knee

Robyrta on Valerie’s left, speaks, looking down, hand punctuating palm down – looks up to interviewer on ‘stories’ and camera focuses in. Hands up in the hair, smiling voice, fingers open at ‘laugh’, hand gesturing ‘underneath’, serious voice.

Valerie nods agreement, serious.

Soraya Johnston's response to the apology 2009-10042-7 (0:01:55)

- Published: 5 April 2009
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCMdUdxZ0fU>

Soraya Johnston recounts a story about not being able to watch the televised apology in her Science class at high school. She talks about the importance of being able to identify her country and family background.



Transcript

I'm Soraya Johnston and I go to Spinifex Senior in year 12 and I am doing a Cert III in broadcasting at MOB FM.

Well, my mum Valerie she works as the Manager in MOB FM and we originate from Mount Isa, Cloncurry, and we have like all sacred sites and everything.

Well when the apology was being made live, I was in Science and we had to watch a movie so the projector was up and I asked my science teacher if he could play, like stop the movie and play the apology first, you know, and he said that we couldn't but there were a few teachers listening on the radio and I said well, can I go and do that and he said no and we just had to watch the movie instead.

A majority of my classmates weren't Aboriginal so I don't think they really minded. It sucked that I couldn't watch the apology but.

Ever since I was little I have known like how important it is that we have lost our language and some people don't even know what tribe they are in and that's, I could not even begin to think of not knowing my tribe and not knowing like you know, only knowing what country they're in but not actually knowing where they are from.

He apologised and you know that was really nice and everything but you know we are still affected by it and nothing's changed.

Visual observations

Title screen: Soraya Johnston (white text on black background)

P1: colour image of Soraya, close frame, she is in profile, looking into the distance as if in thought, camera zooms out

Soraya's voice is clear and confident.

P2: Soraya at radio desk (taken from behind)

P3: another of Soraya at radio desk (taken from side on)

P4: Soraya and Valerie standing side by side, they are both smiling to camera, Soraya is about a head taller than her mother. They are wearing similar clothes.

P5: Mt Isa landscape, town, sunset (slow zoom in)

Soraya is now filmed live. She is seated outside (greenery and wooden deck in background). She is slightly left of screen and is looking to her upper left and direct to camera as she speaks. This gives the impression that the interviewer is positioned at her upper left.

P1 (repeat): earlier profile shot

P6: Soraya's hands and legs (knees?)

Soraya looks a lot to the upper left of the screen as she talks through these observations.

Soraya's voice is quite certain and assertive.

Fades to black.

2009 Project 10078 Cairns, Cooktown and Hopevale (11 stories)

Angeline Stevens' response to the apology 2009-10078-1 (0:02:43)

- Published: 29 Jun 2009
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4eOTevioe4>

Angeline Stevens talks about the fear amongst her family that her mother may be taken away. She also tells the story about how her sister was able to identify a long-lost relative by looking at their feet.

Transcript

I was home on my own, yes, I hope everyone out there is celebrating, and um they interviewed me and I said, "Oh well, it was a strategic command to take the half caste children away and confine them."

It was, I wrote a poem and I put, "It was the shame of the day", not admitting, you know trying to hide the fact that we were half-caste Aboriginal children.

The apology was a very important part in Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's life because he took a step in the direction no other Prime minister was ever going to do.

Prime ministers before him, thought probably the same way I did, there is no need to say sorry, we did it and that's it, you know.

I thought myself it was too late for my mother to hear it but I don't think it would have made any difference.

We grew up in fear of our mother getting taken away.

You know we were told, Dad used to say, "Look if anyone pulls you up tell them I've got my exemption card", and he got that in 1938, "and tell them to come and see me", he said "that's not stopping them from taking you and coming back and telling us we've got your daughter or son". You know I've got three brothers as well. So we grew up knowing that living in fear, of mum getting stolen away again because she didn't have a police number because she wasn't recorded, so she was an alien, and in the 70's she tried to get a pension and she couldn't get one. My sister and brother in law, he worked all his life so he used to support mum.

My sister used to recognize people by their feet, and when she spotted this old fellow in Malanda one day and she looked down at his feet and she said, "That looks like Granddad's foot", and she spoke to him and she found out that was his brother. She said "When I go down for holidays I will take you home with me". So after all those years, 48 years that he did end up meeting his brother. Yeah.

Images and other physical observations

Title

Live – outdoor garden/park setting, trees and grass and plants in background, sunny day. Angeline looks up to the left of camera and down to the ground, smiling, mostly looking down but also the right and to camera at times. Becomes more serious as she talks.

P1: portrait, close framed, looking up and away to her left

Live – she appears to be directing her response alternately to two people either side of the camera

Edit/live – different frame, she is back a little, to the left and the tree takes up more of the frame, she is looking between the two unseen people

P2: sepia photo, historical, young Aboriginal woman smiling to camera holding a baby, two girls beside her, man behind, all dressed in white, man has dark trousers on (bottom half of photo shown – we don't see man's head)

Live – sorrow

Live – Angeline's hands sorting through photographs/letters

P2: top half of photo

Live –

Live – Angeline holding P2 and pointing to it

Live –

Live – Angeline sorting old photos, we can see a b&w white of a group of 4 children

Live -

Des Bowen's response to the apology 2009-10078-2 (0:02:58)

- Published: 2 Jul 2009
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9kIbhLsdi8>
- 2:58 / 297 /

Des Bowen talks about watching the Apology in Cairns Hospital after injuring his foot. He tells the story about his workmates calling him up to offer him support after the Apology.

Transcript

So one Sunday afternoon I got up and put this stub axel and it rolled and I didn't have shoes on. It fell on my foot and it wasn't too bad then but the next day it was killing me because I'm a diabetic and my sugar was high too. So they had to spend few weeks to try and bring the sugar down.

Yep, they told me that the Apology was on and everybody was all excited and, yeah. I saw it on the TV at the hospital and it brought tears to my eyes too because I started thinking about my grandfather, George Bowen, when he was brought up from Proserpine, only about 12 years old and that was in 1903 and my grandmother, my mum's mum, she was brought from Chillagoe across and some of them went to I think Kuranda and Yarrabah and she was brought up to Hope Vale. Yeah, I thought about these old people, how they sort of, you know, felt.

My granddad only spoke about how he was brought up here and how some of them tried to run back to Proserpine, go back to Proserpine, you know only got as far as Cooktown and my grandmother she, she hardly spoke about it, only now and again you know, when she felt sort of comfortable, yeah.

To hear it from a top person, you know top man in Australia, say sorry, well that meant a lot to our people, meant a lot to me too, because I've had my non-Indigenous co-workers that we used to work out on the station with, well they rang me up and said, "you know Des, look, we're there for you," and but I knew they were there all the time, you know.

Visual observations

Title

Live – Des seated in a corner of the room (painted Besa brick walls, indoor plant)

He talks as if 3 people are in the room, gesturing with his hands, looking up towards them to his left and right

P1: Des looking down and away from camera, wearing same cap

Live –

P2: hand on leg

P3: portrait? Looks quite serious away from camera

Live –

Edit/live – closer frame

P4: hands

P5: sorry and Aboriginal flag signs stuck on window

Live -

Dora Gibson's response to the apology 2009-10078-3 (0:02:57)

- Published: 29 Jun 2009
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6c5Icte2Hc>

Dora Gibson talks about her grandfather, George Bowen, who came from Bowen to Hope Vale. She talks about self-identification and how people's names were changed according to their place of origin.

Transcript

I'm Dora Gibson, I'm a traditional owner for Hope Vale, Thupi Warra and I teach at the school.

I am a classroom teacher and at the moment I am doing Multi Lit this year. I do remember just stopping and sitting down and waiting for that time when Prime Minister Rudd said sorry, you know, and it just brought out all these emotions. We actually stopped and looked at it.

And at the actual time when he said sorry, we watched the camera scan around to the different people showing all the emotions and we got caught up with it as well. The fact that our Prime Minister actually did that, really did something for us that Australia is caring, and it is a big step in reconciliation.

I started thinking about my Grandfather, George Bowen, he came from the Bowen area, that is why he was given the surname Bowen, and that in itself, told me that we had lost our identity really. His surname was Emerson but we are now known as Bowens and you just lose touch with people from where they came from, you lose touch with the roots.

In the future I would like to see first and foremost would be Australia working towards reconciliation in a big way, I think more Indigenous input in our own affairs, not only from people who are up there but from the grass roots, people coming back and working with communities back here and listening to what we have to say.

I think you have to start small, you have to begin by creating little scenarios about being sorry, you know, and bringing out the feelings.

It will have a lasting effect if it is not just a small drop in the ocean and we forget about it, it needs to be continued, if it is to have an impact on our lives, it needs to be followed up, you know? Have ideas about what sorry is all about and keep it going, keep the momentum going don't just leave it there hanging in mid air.

Visual observations

Title

Live – besa brick wall behind Dora, a couple of traditional Aboriginal art posters, to camera and to person to right of camera

P1: town street with palm trees

P2: children performing to group of seated children, Indigenous children, adults in background

Live –

P3: crowds walking towards Parl house in background, people's backs

P4: side shot of crowd, older Indigenous lady holding up a framed photograph, TSI flag and A flag in crowd

P5: guests in Parliament balcony

P6: Rudd with Stolen Generations' elder Aunty Lorraine Peeters after she has handed him the glass coolamon

Live –

P7: senior Indigenous man, wearing an akubra, building has gum tree trunk posts, there is a table in front of him with some objects on it, old 50s ute in the background

Live –

P8: portrait, Dora looking away from camera, smiling

P9: town street, dirt road, cars, trees, fibro houses

Live –

Edit/live –

Estelle Bowen's response to the apology 2009-10078-4 (0:04:09)

- Published: 29 June 2009
- URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dB3zPQNfS60>

Estelle Bowen tells the story about her father, who was taken away from his mother at Lakefield National Park to Hope Vale. She explains how seeing the effects of her father being a member of the Stolen Generation has motivated her to be pro-active in keeping fostered children in their community.

Estelle Bowen was interviewed in 2009 at Hope Vale, Cooktown as part of the Regional Apology Project funded by OPAL. The images are from the John Oxley library.



Transcript

My Dad was from—ah—up at Lakefield National Park.

He was born up there in the 1930s.

And he was a half-caste boy, because in those days the Government took all the half-caste children away.

He's a Gugu Dhayban person. When his Mum used to, he remembered, his Mum taking him and then painting him with charcoal and so that he'd become black.

And he reckoned then he used to wonder growing up then, he used to wonder, how come his mother was painting him all the time. He said, "Mum, how come?" She said, "No, I've got to paint you because the police gonna come and take you away."

So, what she did, then, she had to give him over to the Shepherds, they were the sort of people who ran the station.

And it was him and another young lass who was also then because she was half-caste.

The Government then said that all these half-caste children had to be shifted away, but he said often then he cried then to say that I can't see my mother any more, can't see my father.

So, at the age of seven then, they bought him on a train. He said all he remembers doing is coming down on this train that was smoky.

And he came to Cooktown and he said “I remember coming down and then standing there and then these people came, they were white people, came and got me.”

And he said, “I remember my mother, she was a full blood woman, she was there crying, and then the police officers came over and said then, “Oh well, we’ve got someone now to take you.” And he said then, “After I remember then they took us over on this boat then over to Cape Bedford.” He never ever met his Mum then.

And every time we’d ask him, he’d say “Your grandmother was a dark woman, but I don’t know where she’s buried.” But tears used to fall down in his eyes, he used to start crying and we were saying now then no wonder why Dad was (pause) upset then, because he was one of the Stolen Generation.

There was sort of like, that’s why then I’m sort of like strong in child re-placement in that children’s service. That we were saying then, I feel that if my father went through it, that’s why then I’ve got on as a chairperson for ATSIC and working with Child Safety. That we don’t take these children away now, from their parents, because by us getting to put them into Cairns, they will lose their culture, so that’s why I’m strong to say we’ve got to have registered carers in the community. So that those children don’t lose their identity, they don’t lose their language.

Because as a person who, my Dad was a Stolen Generation, he lost his identity, he lost his language, now we have learned the Guugu Yimithirr, instead of learning our own tongue, or this Gugu Dhayban. So it’s sort of like I feel now that we need now to change it, that the children don’t become Stolen Generation.

At least then I’d like to thank Kevin Rudd for saying sorry. I think it was about time that Government turned it around, because I think they know the pain, how if they took their children away.

Visual observations

title: Estelle Bowen, white text on black

The recording starts with an Aboriginal woman, in her 50s, speaking to camera, which is to the right of her, so that she looks to her right, to her centre—down to her lap—as she begins to speak. Her voice is clear and certain. She is wearing a dark blue sports shirt with insignia and orange and bright blue features on the shoulders. She wears small oval shaped wire-rimmed glasses with a black cord. The framing is close, from her top chest upwards. In the background is a yellow painted brick wall with an indoor plant in its plastic pot in the corner.

Estelle shifts in her seat, which appears to be a soft couch, looking down to her lap and then to the right, past the camera to the person operating it. She then raises her left hand to her head and leans back into it as it rests on the couch arm. Looking directly to camera as she continues to speak.

P1: old legal document with Queensland government crest

P2: still portrait of Estelle, same environment, but taken from her left as opposed to the right, which is where the camera is filming from.

the recording returns to Estelle speaking; she is now looking to her centre right

Estelle uses a soft expressive hand gesture, palm down, waving as she describes this. On ‘charcoal’ she looks to the camera operator as if for an indication of acknowledgement or comprehension.

-break-

Estelle's voice becomes more expressive

P3: Estelle's hand(?) holding white tea cup of water.

P4: corrugated iron and wood and farm-type building with dirt ground and native trees around.

Estelle speaking to her centre, using her left hand to gesture as she speaks.

-break-

Estelle looks directly to camera as she says this.

P5: black and white image of steam train

Estelle - her left hand fingers together in a pinch as she punctuates what she is saying.

Estelle looks to camera again. Then away as she continues.

Estelle looks to camera on 'crying', then looks away again

to camera

-break-

P6: black and white image of wooden huts lined up on cleared land with treed hill in background

Estelle to camera, open hand, circular shape as if holding a ball

Estelle's hand turns palm down and flops on 'but I don't know'

Estelle's hand waves downwards to indicate these tears on her own face

P2 (again) portrait of Estelle

to camera, the framing has moved out to show Estelle from the waist up. Estelle's hand is again expressive as she says the following. She looks from the camera operator to another person (?) in front of her and to the camera

Estelle again looks direct to camera

P7: portrait of Estelle with a half-smile, taken from front

to camera, Estelle gives a deep nod on

'thank'

looks to camera operator for a moment on 'government'

Estelle shakes her head from side to side in small movements as she speaks

she then stills, the side of her head leaning to her shoulder

Frankie Deemal's response to the apology 2009-10078-5 (0:02:51)

- Published:
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbMymoBvio4>

Frankie Deemal talks about the event that was organised at the Hope Vale PCYC to view the Apology. He talks about the stolen generation as well as the entire community from Hope Vale that was removed to Woorabinda during World War II.

Transcript

My name is Frankie Deemal I'm a Guugu Yimithirr man from here in Hope Vale my clan's Thiithaarr, which is down at the coast there, so one of the clans, part of the Guugu Yimithirr nation.

We organized a do over in the PCYC we had a lot of people who were members of the stolen generation, obviously children of members of the stolen generation, grand children. We had the TV there, we had people speaking so all in all it was a good day.

I'm not one of those who disagree with the symbolism, you know I think symbolism is good, because it gives people hope, it is, sure people can be cynical and say, yeah but what is it, but I think it is an important first step.

There is nowhere in the country, where you have had a whole community removed, and from 1942 to 1950, the whole of the Guugu Yimithirr people were moved to Woorabinda, the Aboriginal Community west of Rockhampton, and I think the likelihood of people returning to present day Hope Vale was very, very minimal.

It was just the agitation of many of our older people, who continually agitated against the government and the church to be brought back to our own country, and these years of agitation eventually bore fruit and came back to this community. I think it is important for many new people to this community to understand that, that this community is not set up, just because of somebody's benevolence, it is set up and we are here because many of our old people refused to let the dream die of one day coming back to this country.

There is obviously a long way to go but we seem to be advancing better.

I don't think there is any Aboriginal family who is not affected by the kind of stolen generation matters we speak about, you know.

Visual observations

Title

Live – looks like a school room art supplies bench behind him, painted besa brick wall, bucket of paintbrushes and litre bottles of acrylic paint. He's wearing a cap and talking slightly upwards to the left of the frame

P1: stormy beach, palm trees

P2: portrait from right side, he looks off the distance away from camera

Live –

Edit/live –

P3: memorial? Names incl Bowen (7 different edits/frames)

Live –

P4: b&w farm fields

P5: b&w farm building

Live –

P6: same P3 memorial – shows words: Guugu Yimithirr people

Live – Frankie is quite animated, prosecuting

P7: colour - group of Indigenous people in front of weatherboard church, dressed up 60s?

Live –

P8: aerial shot of town and bush

P9: same town, different aerial angle

P10: 3 men in shirts and ties, two Indigenous?

Live –

Edit/live –

Herman Bambie's response to the apology 2009-10078-6 (0:03:52)

- Published: 29 June 2009
- URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Osrs4zRv2ug>

Herman Bambie recounts the story of his mother, who was taken away from Stonehenge and moved to the Cape Bedford mission. Herman also talks about his experiences growing up as a child in Woorabinda after the entire community at Cape Bedford was relocated there.

Herman Bambie was interviewed in 2009 at Hope Vale, Cooktown as part of the Regional Apology Project funded by OPAL. The images were from the 7676, Pastor Roennfeldt Collection at SLQ.



Transcript

My name is Herman Bambie, and I born around here and I lived ever since here.

This is my home and it is the traditional land of my father, the Thupi Warra clan and I am the eldest of the family.

Mum came from Stonehenge. She was taken away from there I think when she was 6 years old and brought to Cooktown and they had her in the watch house with her sister for a fortnight and then taken over to cape Bedford mission and she grew up there, didn't know the language, she had her own language but when she came there, while she was growing up she forgot about it.

When we came down to Woorabinda at wartime we came back timber cutting, that's been part of the job timber cutting.

Well I was in my prime then you might have said – in my 20s we are the ones that cut the timber for the church.

We used to – used to work for no money (a smile/laugh in his voice)

I still remember we used to line up out here for a – in a – roll call in the morning, and the only thing what we used to get was a plug of tobacco, they used to reckon it was Aboriginal juice – you know.

I still got the hurt today like for mum, when she passed away she never went back to her home she don't know – we don't know her surname.

I don't know where she got the name, they named her Lizzie and she had a sister Bessie, but I don't know if they named her over there at the mission or she went over there with that name.

And we travelled back to Stonehenge – just a few years ago to find the family but everyone we found there they reckoned they probably moved on.

But like the Prime minister has said sorry but I don't know what he meant by that. He said sorry but the hurt that I've got, you know I don't think that nobody will take that away from me.

I still think about her today hoping that one day you know someone will turn up to my home (swallows) and say I am one of your family but you know I am getting aged now, I am about 68 now – you know – and I don't know if I will ever see them, but if anyone see this strip here, they will probably know – you know – (pause) where I am coming from. They might be the family – you know –

But I will leave my phone number with you and take it, if they want to ring me up – you know.

Visual observations

title: Herman Bambie, white text on black

A senior Aboriginal man speaks to camera from a corner of a room, painted brick to his left, photos and a wooden cut-out Australia behind him on the right. He has pale grey hair and a close cut beard. He is wearing an open-necked pale cotton shirt. He is filmed from the mid-chest up. A small microphone is clipped to his collar.

Herman shifts and nods at the end of 'born' and 'lived', looking upwards to others opposite him in the room, before looking into the camera, speaking slowly in soft tones.

Herman shifts again as he states this and takes a deep breath

P1: open book with black and white photo of Aboriginal girls in white clothing. The vision zooms in—as Herman speaks—to focus on a group of three children.

The camera returns to Herman, looking away and speaking up to the other persons present—his eyeline appears to indicate that two others are present—and also looking down.

P2: black and white photo of small two door hut surrounded with gum tree and large stones in the foreground

back to Herman

-break-

P3: colour group photo of young men, some standing and some squatting in foreground, they have dark and light skin, wearing singlets, shirts, shorts. One man is shirtless.

P4: men in open workshop with mechanical saw, wearing long pants and shirts, some with Akubra hats, again they have light and dark skin

P5: log in saw mill in open country

a smile/laugh in his voice

P6: black and white, church in background, large group of people in foreground, most appear to be Aboriginal, though a few white men are in the foreground. The men appear to be wearing light shirts, and dark pants, some with ties, and the women are in summery dresses.

Herman to camera, leaning forward. The camera has come in closer to frame him from the shoulders up.

he points out to the front, past the camera

he nods

P7: coloured photo of large group of men scattered in outdoor space, most in blue shirts and khaki trousers with their arms behind their backs, some are wearing Akubras and nearly all appear to be Aboriginal

P8: colour - group of men (like members of previous group) on truck tray, as transport, some (appear teenaged) with legs dangling over sides, others sitting on full hessian sacks

Herman leans forward to speak earnestly to the interviewer

P1 repeat: footage returns to photo of girls in book

Herman leans back in his chair, his right hand waves, palm down, from side to side as he talks

Herman speaks to the camera operator, more clearly stating 'name' than 'surname'

Herman points his index finger down to his other hand as he says 'Bessie'

Herman marks these choices with his right hand, side to side

Herman stops gesturing and settles back into the chair, in a resigned expression

He looks up to the interviewer

-break-

Herman says 'sorry' with a sigh and looks down

Herman shifts his head to the side and looks up at the interviewer

Herman shakes his head from side to side

Herman takes a deep breath

Herman moves his chest from side to side, a small movement

he shrugs

Herman gives a small, almost imperceptible smile

He nods and is speaking directly to the interviewer

Herman gulps at the end of this line

John Wenitong's response to the apology 2009-10078-7 (0:04:26)

- Published: 29 Jun 2009
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLAMZOgrtko>

John Wenitong describes what he did on 13 February 2008, particularly receiving numerous emails and phone calls from friends and colleagues. John explains how private philanthropy increased dramatically as a result of the Apology and how important it is for Australians to be proud of their Indigenous people.

Transcript

My name's John Wenitong. I'm the National Indigenous Education Development Officer for the Cape York Institute, working with Noel Pearson here and I set up a program for the Cape York Institute called the Higher Expectations Secondary Scholarship Program, which looks after 18 communities from up, remote communities from up in this area. Primary school students who are going from primary to secondary school, it gives them a chance to get into the best boarding schools in Queensland.

When I first heard about the Apology, I'd heard about it quite a bit, as everybody does, working in the areas that we work in with Indigenous people. But I didn't take a lot of notice and a lot of my colleagues – I work nationally, so I'm on the phone and emailing colleagues from all around Australia pretty well every day – and a lot of my colleagues were the same, mature age colleagues were thinking another, you know, plastic thank you and whether it would do any good or not and then the strange thing to me was when it was going on I was at work, I was working pretty hard and I'd forgotten that it was even on and I started getting emails from all around Australia and phone calls from my colleagues and my relations and one of my relations was Ray Minniecon, the pastor from Redfern who was in the house that day when they gave the apology and he texted me from there and I got all these fantastic, upbeat messages from people that were very quiet about it before and were feeling the same way I was, that it was a little bit sarcastic about it I guess.

In my own family we've had a bit of children taken away as well.

My Mum's sisters were taken up to Woorabinda in the early days, but our family was very, very strong and ended up getting them back and wouldn't allow it to happen and they worked with the Government and did everything they needed to do and got those two young girls back to them.

But through that we got relatives at Woorabinda and a lot of the other communities around Queensland as well now.

I think the Apology for me was, for me personally, was a culmination of a life's work, to get Australian, the Australian public and Australia as a nation to see that without a public recognition of what happened, not only for the Stolen Generation, but for some of the other things as well, our people could never go on and advance, because they felt like second-rate citizens and I believe many of them still do and they'll tell you they still do.

In the scheme of things publicly for the majority of Australian mainstream people, I don't believe it's done that much to tell you the truth, but in the areas of government, and in the areas of philanthropy and corporate Australia, it has woken them up. It has

woken them up to, “Hang on a minute, something really bad did happen and our forefathers were part of that, our country was part of that”. That's starting to change, philanthropy, corporate and government attitudes to how they work with Indigenous people. I see that in my work all the time, that people 20 years ago, I'd go with great ideas and people would basically laugh at me and give me 74 forms to fill out and I'd have to do that every three months to get \$6,000 for that three months. Today, I can go to corporates, I can go to philanthropists. I'm up to \$7,000,000 in four years from philanthropy and close to \$750,000 of that is private philanthropy, private Australian citizens. Now when that Apology hit, the philanthropy in Australia jumped.

The Australian Government has now publicly said sorry to us and to the rest of the world for those, for that particular treatment, what I'd like the Australian Government to do and what many of my colleagues and my relations would like the Government to do now is to tell us that they're proud of us, to tell the world and the rest of Australia that they're proud to have us our first Australians, so that we can start building on pride in identity for our young people again.

Visual observations

Title

Live – outdoor garden setting, speaks to camera and to right of frame, wearing transition glasses that are semi-darkened

P1: with Noel Pearson, HEP promotional material

Live –

P2: portrait, close up, looking away from camera

P3: Wenitong? and 4 school girls in uniform holding certificates

P4: hand on mouse at Mac

Live –

P5: Wenitong at desk using Mac

Live – smiles, laughs

P6: Wenitong looking at wall of historical photos

Live –

P7: some of the photos from the wall – Indigenous women (one standing in yard, another sitting in formal portrait scenario)

P8: photos – Indigenous men (one with a guitar, another with a horse)

P9: photos – family

Live –

P10: Wenitong mid-speech

P11 Wenitong mid-action – standing and slightly leaning forward, looking down

Live –

Edit/Live – closer framing

P12: close up of HEP logo – 3 hands (black, brown and white) against yellow circle)

Live –

Edit/live –

P13: posed extended multigenerational family?

Live – serious determined expression to end

Mark Wenitong's response to the apology 2009-10078-8 (0:03:01)

- Published:
- URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_TgiYhaz2Y

Mark Wentiong describes his reaction to the Apology and how he feels it was important for the social and emotional wellbeing of Indigenous people in Australia. He also outlines how he feels government should be “closing the gap” between Indigenous and non-Indigenous life expectancy.

Transcript

My name is Mark Wenitong, I am the senior medical officer at Cape York Health Council, which is an Aboriginal community controlled health organisation in Cape York. At the same time I was the president of the Indigenous Doctor's Association in Australia and I do research and stuff as well and a fair bit of policy work in health.

On the day of the apology I was actually running a clinic at an Aboriginal medical service in Mount Isa and we had organized that morning for a breakfast for people to get together and in actual fact I think, I don't think any of us realized how significant it was going to be. At this particular breakfast there was another Aboriginal doctor so she and I both said because our mothers had just died in the previous month that gee it would have been fantastic for them to see something like this. I was genuinely surprised by the genuineness of the apology, something that is really different for Australia I think.

From my perspective there's probably three or four levels that the apology has made a difference. The major one for me was social and emotional well being of Indigenous people in Australia.

Things like the NT intervention and the domestic violence and the family violence stuff that was happening in central Australia and that being seen as part of Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal people feeling bad about themselves basically, particularly men.

So I think in that sense it's made a really big difference.

The other levels though have been really clear around policy, particularly from a non government organization's and an Aboriginal communities perspective, the way that we deal with other stakeholders now has changed. A lot of the other partner organizations that we dealt with, didn't have that much respect for Aboriginal people or issues or organizations, and that actually changed, it was a subtle change but you actually noticed almost overnight that there was a swing in that and you had a bit more control.

I think it would be great if we really could work on the whole 'Close the gap' campaign more strongly.

I still think we really need high-level engagement and high level legislated relationships with the Australian government and I mean maybe not a treaty but something that's similar to that where we are not at the whims of politics every time a new party comes in for this kind of thing to happen.

If you have something locked in at a higher level, they can't do that, and kids are safer for the rest of their lives, they have actually got something to live for rather than just surviving, and I think that is the big deal for me.

So I think the high level agreement is the most important thing and a lot of the other things will follow from that if we get it right.

Visual observations

Title

P1: portrait, profile, smiling, sunglasses on head

P2: portrait, more pensive, looking down and away

Live – to just left of frame, outdoor garden setting, painted water tank in background

P3: standing, sunglasses on, looking down

Live – looks above left of frame and nods as if to other person

P4: family photo, brothers, mother/grandmother?

Live -

Edit/live –

P5: examination room, young boy looking through auriscope at Wenitong's ear - he's smiling

Live –

P6: family group, painted faces

Live –

Edit/live – hands gesturing, crossed legs

Edit/live –

Edit/live –

P7: Wenitong wearing sunglasses, playing guitar

P8: close up, hands guitar

P9: Wenitong with little girl watching someone else play guitar

Live –

Peter Scott's response to the apology 2009-10078-9 (0:02:59)

- Published: 29 Jun 2009
- URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShTFC-ZfW0Q>

Mayor of Cook Shire, Peter Scott, talks about Cooktown being the first site of Aboriginal and European reconciliation in Australia and how that spirit has continued today in the Shire.

Transcript

The original reconciliation took place down here. Captain Cook and his blokes were stuck here for, you know, a month or so. They went out and found a whole lot of turtles and bought 'em back and the locals were upset that they weren't given any, so there was a little bit of a skirmish and carry-on and after that they then went back to a rock down behind the bakery, that big flat rock, called reconciliation rock we're going to call it.

Got together and parlayed and it was all sweet after that, so there was just an understanding sort of thing, so we reckon reconciliation started here.

You can't make big things of the inter-racial idea up here, because it's not, there's no friction, it's, I wouldn't say seamless but there's just a great understanding.

I also have in my past owned and run Alamanda Inn, which is a little guest house motel, and we used to get a lot of Aboriginal groups coming in and staying with us too. And I've had Aboriginals from up on the Cape coming up to me and saying, "Geez, Peter you've got good Murris around here." So it's just this understanding, if you walk downtown now, if you go and sit in the West Coast Hotel and sit next to an Indigenous person they'll turn around say, "how are you going," and you can have a yarn with them for as long as you like. It's just I think a real special, a special environment we've got here.

Look on that day there was nothing special happening. I guess that's the attitude and the approach that we take in Cooktown and Cook Shire to the whole the question of living together. Cooktown's a unique place, it's, the actual reconciliation side of things, we try not to use the reconciliation word because we don't feel there's a need for it in Cooktown and Cook Shire.

We've got Hope Vale out there, we've got Wujal Wujal down there. Cook Shire takes up 80 per cent of Cape York, so as such we interface with probably a dozen Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal shires and we've got a good working relationship just based on necessity, based on pragmatism.

So as far as day-to-day life goes, I've lived in country Western Australia, country New South Wales, country Queensland, Papua New Guinea for eight years, Cooktown's got the best black-white interface of anywhere I've ever been and it's a strength that we've got something that we're building on, so when it came to days of apology or that related stuff, we just don't feel it's necessary. I mean obviously there's ramifications for a lot of people out there that are hurting, but from my position, as I was a Councillor then, and as Mayor now, it's nothing that we had to hold up and wave around, because it's something that we practice on a day-to-day basis.

Visual observations

Title

Live – Peter seated at a desk, PC to his right, office paperwork in background, addressing comments to right of frame, then to camera, points to his right, where a window is

P1: statue of Captain Cook holding telescope at grass area overlooking harbour/river with sail boats moored. Pans L-R

P2: same scene but without statue, different frame, hills in distance. Zoom in.

Live –

P3: sketched map

P4: landscape, rocks, natural grasses, hills in distance

P5: town bitumen road, post office, parked cars, trees, power lines

P6: Cooktown Hotel/Pub building, colonial style, palm trees,

P7: Alamanda Inn sign, front of Motel

P8: Motel – reception sign, garden

Live –

Edit/live – closer in to frame face and shoulders, addressing speech to left of frame, a little to camera and right of frame

P9: welcome to Cooktown poster, colour aerial photo of town, hills, river, blue skies

P10: detailed map of Carpentaria with names visible – Hope Vale, Aurukun, Lockhart River, Cairns regional, Tablelands regional

P11: large modern building, tropical rock garden landscaping

P12: same building, entrance walk

P13: hands at PC keyboard

Live –

Terry O'Shane's response to the apology 2009-10078-10 (0:02:25)

- Published: 29 Jun 2009
- URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAqRbw_hSDs

Terry O'Shane talks about how growing up with a father who was Irish and a mother of Aboriginal descent, he was unable to go to Yarrabah and visit his relatives. He explains the inter-generational effects of previous Government policies and how a formal apology needs to seriously understand those effects for it to have any meaning.

Transcript

Yeah well my name's Terry O'Shane and I'm Chairman of the North Queensland Land Council. But I'm a merchant seaman actually, by profession.

Well see my situation was my mother married an Irishman, so she become an activist. So one of the problems that, I've got family just living over there at Yarrabah and I lived in Cairns and by law we weren't allowed to go to Yarrabah. I got other family living at Mona Mona. We weren't allowed to go to Mona Mona. We were not allowed to go on to any Aboriginal reserve and we're Aboriginal people and under the legal structure of this country and this particular state, we were classified as Aboriginal people and yet we weren't allowed to go and visit our own families. I went to Palm Island the other day and met my cousin for the very first time, three weeks ago, for the very first time in my entire life I met my cousin. It is unheard of in any other society where you're not able to freely move around and meet your family, but that's what happened to us. People say, "well it wouldn't affect you." It has a direct effect on us, has a direct effect on my children and my grandchildren, because they don't even know who their grandfathers are, who their uncles are, who their cousins are. And that's the impact of it, has actually destroyed our entire society, Aboriginal society and we have to mend that up. We have an Apology, the Apology should be giving back our identification, give back to us whatever has been stolen off us. And the way in which the policies of Government is moving, that's not giving back after the Apology. It's not giving back to us our identity, our life, our land, our culture and our traditions, it's not doing that.

When they talk about stolen, it's not just about the people being stolen of their parents, it's being stolen out of their, out of their history, out of their societies, out of their culture, out of their traditions, out of their language, out of their laws and customs. They were stolen in their entirety, the whole life has been absolutely destroyed from them being removed from their communities. And people think, "oh it's just stolen away from their Mum and Dad." No, it's a theft that occurred that is actually just destroyed their whole ... life, you know, it's just everything, it's almost impossible to explain to people and unless people understand, unless people understand people's culture and who they are and where they are and their identification to this world and in their community, and in their families. Unless they understand that then to talk about a stolen generation in sort of a glib way it doesn't pay any real respect to what really happened to the stolen generation.

Visual observations

Title

P1: portrait, Terry looking to frame right

Live - boat on river, old pier pylons

Live – Terry standing on grassed area, palms and buildings in background right frame, river? Boats to left of frame. Gesturing with left hand open and down, as he speaks. Address to left frame

P2: boats on water, island/hill in distance

Live –

P3: portrait, profile, looking to left frame

Live –

Live – water lapping at boat ramp

Live –

P4: portrait

Live –

Val Schier's response to the apology 2009-10078-11 (0:04:20)

- Published: 29 Jun 2009
- URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=moazGcXMO2Y>

Mayor of Cairns Regional Council, Val Schier talks about the Cairns Regional Council's previous engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and how she has worked to improve them.

Transcript

Well the 13th of February 2008 was actually a month before the local government elections in Cairns, so I had been really busily campaigning and I knew that I needed to stop on that day to be able to find some people to celebrate with.

I had read that Sydney Council was actually going to have giant screens and a sausage sizzle and that everyone was being invited and it was really going to be a real celebration of the day, and something that had taken a long long time to happen. And so of course in Cairns nothing, we had a council that didn't particularly have good relationships with Aboriginal people and so nothing was organized.

So the day before I contacted some Aboriginal friends to find out what might have been on and they informed me that the medical centre in Cairns, Wu Chopperen had actually organized to have some big screens and were inviting people to come along and share the day with them.

People were gathered around on the lawn, under trees, just quietly in small groups. There weren't very many non-indigenous people there at all, it was predominantly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I think everyone initially was very serious about it all and at that stage had no idea what Prime minister Rudd was actually going to say, and then when he actually said "Sorry" and "I'm Sorry" and said it again and again, it wasn't a trivial word at all, it was just something that really needed to be said to enable any chance at all of genuine reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia.

People cried, there were Aboriginal women next to me with tears welling out of their eyes, it just really was an event of huge significance for Aboriginal people.

The fact that the previous Prime Minister had been unable to say that word, was quite shocking really, he just did not understand how important it was, to just genuinely be able to say, "For what happened, I am sorry."

One of the first things I did when I became Mayor on the 15th March in 2008 was to actually plan the swearing in of Council and to ensure there was an Aboriginal Welcome to Country was a key part of that ceremony and that was something that had not ever happened in Council previously. Right from the beginning I wanted to signal that I was governing for everyone in this community and that included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

One of the other things that I did was to actually form an Indigenous Advisory Group again as part of that recognition that we need to be reaching out to Aboriginal people, listening to them, respecting where they come from and getting advice in relation to how we actually develop our policies.

I'm not sure how Aboriginal people feel about the aftermath of the apology, I think that there perhaps is a greater acknowledgment across Australia though with non-Indigenous people, most of whom have very little interaction with Aboriginal people on a day to day basis, that they were the traditional owners of the land, that they were disrupted in really terrible ways, and that their lives have been impacted on from those events that happened two centuries ago, and not even two centuries ago, I mean events that happened as recently as in a generation where there has been prejudice, disadvantage, discrimination on almost a daily basis.

Visual observations

Title

P1: Val smiling to another woman, outdoors

P2: kayaking, brown river/flood?

Live – office, bookshelf behind her, some Indigenous craft pieces, talks to left frame

P3: in office, using rolodex

P4: close up of hands on rolodex

Live –

Edit/live – closer frame, head and shoulders

Edit/Live – wider frame again

Edit/live – closer frame

P5: council chambers, Aus flags on wall, Val has mayor's medal around neck

P6: formal mayoral portrait

Live –

P7: Council group in chambers (posed)

P8: Val with Indigenous woman holding up election campaign marketing materials

Live –

P9: group walking – counsellors?

P10: Val walking on beach

P11: Val looking out to beach

P12: Val reading book on her lap, home environment

P13: close up of book on lap – looks like photos of Indigenous traditional or ceremonial dance groups

Live –

Appendix 2c: SLQ videos YouTube metrics

The following table presents details of the number of times each response video has been recorded as viewed at the YouTube platform.

Title/contributor	Date published	Views May 2013	Views May 2014
Anna Bligh	16-Oct-08	260	269
Jeremy Robertson	16-Oct-08	359	371
Nadine McDonald Dowd	16-Oct-08	171	222
Natalie Alberts	16-Oct-08	622	667
Quentin Bryce	16-Oct-08	2963	3068
Sam Wagan Watson Jr.	16-Oct-08	339	400
Tiga Bayles	16-Oct-08	1136	1335
Barry Lea	5-Apr-09	515	648
Jasmin Minniecon	5-Apr-09	228	274
Lila Pigliafiori-Baker	5-Apr-09	285	325
Patricia Lees	5-Apr-09	119	146
Robyrta Felton	5-Apr-09	62	77
Soraya Johnston	5-Apr-09	667	812
Valerie Craigie	5-Apr-09	225	240
Angeline Stevens	29-Jun-09	91	98
Des Bowen	29-Jun-09	168	200
Dora Gibson	29-Jun-09	401	456
Estelle Bowen	29-Jun-09	835	967
Frankie Deemal	29-Jun-09	777	934
Herman Bambie	29-Jun-09	374	519

John Wenitong	29-Jun-09	359	387
Mark Wenitong	29-Jun-09	483	563
Peter Scott	29-Jun-09	394	446
Terry O'Shane	29-Jun-09	515	562
Val Schier	29-Jun-09	245	266

Explanatory note

Public circulation figures: emotional resonance and cultural relevance

In the age of digital information, ascertaining the cultural relevance of published materials is partly a matter of attempting to understand how ‘popular’ these pieces are with their contemporary audience, and which can be seen as an indication of their emotional resonance. This follows emotion historian William Reddy (2013) who claims that the contemporary emotional resonance of movies can be reflected in box office takings. The YouTube website records ‘views’ – the number of times a video has been played online. These views are reported in the following table and provide some limited information about access and audience, yet will not necessarily provide meaningful figures of audience-viewing, for example a teacher may play a video to a class of 35 students and it will only be recorded as one view. Nevertheless, these views are worth recording at the time of writing as it is the only source of information currently available about the public circulation of these digital stories.

One video of the Parliamentary Apology published by Channel Ten on 12 February 2008, (there are many postings of the Apology on YouTube), has been viewed 162,503 times. The disparity between views of the Apology performed by Kevin Rudd, of which there are multiple publications on YouTube, and of the response stories, is marked and perhaps indicates a lack of circulation and promotion of response stories, but nevertheless demonstrates low audience interest. The further disparity between the views of the Apology and views of a contemporary political speech event, for example, the ABC’s video of ‘Gillard labels Abbott a misogynist’ – published 8 Oct, 2012, which received over 2 325 000 views by May 2013 – is additional indication of low levels of public interest or emotional resonance with the Apology.

Appendix 3: Research interview participants

Summary table provided in Chapter 2.

1. *Tony Birch*

Dr Tony Birch (56) was in an academic role at the University of Melbourne (Head of the Honours program in Creative Writing) at the time of our interview. He grew up in Fitzroy, Melbourne in a family of Aboriginal, West Indian and Irish descent. He has lived in Fitzroy, Carlton or nearby ever since and is married with children. Birch holds a PhD in Urban cultures and histories. Prior to studying and becoming an academic, Birch worked in fire fighting and union organising.

Birch has published numerous academic papers, critically acclaimed short story collections and fiction, and regularly contributes to public cultural life. In July 2015, he left Melbourne University for Victoria University, as the first recipient of the Dr Bruce McGuinness Indigenous Research Fellowship.

Interviewed: 19 July 2013, Melbourne

2. *Doreen Mellor*

Doreen Mellor (65 at the time of our interview) was living in Googong, NSW just outside the ACT border. She was born in Brisbane. Her father was a surveyor and the family lived in surveying camps until the children started primary school. She has a matriarchal Aboriginal family. Mellor studied to be a teacher in the public system, and she and her husband established a Steiner school in Adelaide. Mellor later became visual arts co-ordinator and curator at Tandanya, the National Cultural Institute in Adelaide, which led to a role as director of Flinders University Art Museum.

Mellor was Project Manager (and report editor) for the National Library of Australia project, *Many Voices: reflections on experiences of Indigenous child separation* (reported in 2002). She has been/is on the board of numerous cultural institutions, such as the Queensland Museum. She is a mother and a grandmother.

Interviewed: 1 August 2013, Canberra/Googong

3. Danielle Celermajer

Prof Danielle Celermajer (49) heads the Human Rights Masters program at Sydney University. Celermajer was born in Sydney and grew up there. Her parents, child Holocaust survivors, came to Australia in the late 1940s and 50s. They and their parents were the only survivors of their respective families.

Celermajer has degrees in philosophy and social policy. She obtained her doctorate from Columbia University in New York. Celermajer has worked in the human rights field in various settings since she was 25 (academia, government) including at the Australian Human Rights Commission between 1990-1998. During that time, the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from the Families was undertaken.

Celermajer's work has engaged specifically with the Apology and texts include: *The Sins of the Nation and the Ritual of Apologies* (monograph, 2009); 'Apology and the possibility of ethical politics' (journal article, 2008); 'The Apology in Australia: Recovenating the National Imaginary' (edited book chapter, 2006). Celermajer is the recipient of two grants from the European Union – (i) to establish a regional masters program on human rights and democratisation, and (ii) to run a project on the prevention of torture.

Interviewed: 7 August 2013, Sydney

4. Gavin Bannerman

Gavin Bannerman (31) manages the digital collections of the State Library of Queensland (SLQ). He was born and grew up in Brisbane, and his family has a British/Welsh/Scottish/Lithuanian background. Trained as an archivist, he started working at SLQ in 2005.

Bannerman worked on the SLQ digital video project, *Responses to the Apology*, analysed in this thesis. He has also worked with the oral history and digital storytelling collections of the SLQ.

Interviewed: 5 November 2013, Brisbane

5. Jackie Huggins

Dr Jackie Huggins AM (57) grew up in Brisbane. Huggins is a former Co-Chair of Reconciliation Australia, the former Chair of the Queensland Domestic Violence Council, and has been a member of the National Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, the AIATSIS Council, and Co-Commissioner for Queensland for the Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal Children. In 2001 she was awarded an Australia Medal (AM) for her work with Indigenous people, particularly reconciliation, literacy, women's issues and social justice. In 2007 Huggins was named University of Queensland Alumnus of the Year. She is spokesperson for the Recognise campaign and patron of the First Nations Australia Writers Network.

Huggins has published a wide range of essays and studies dealing with Indigenous history and identity. She is the author of *Sistergirl* (1998), and co-author, with Rita Huggins, of the critically acclaimed biography *Auntie Rita* (1994).

Interviewed: 6 November 2013, Brisbane

6. Len Tregonning

Len Tregonning (59) was born in the Aboriginal community of Lake Tyers and grew up in that area, living under the custody of an ex-policeman for two years and at a boarding school for four and a half years. Tregonning was among the first Aboriginal people as a group to attend a tertiary institution (1975) for the inaugural community organisation course at Swinburne college under Uncle Bruce McGuinness.

Tregonning has worked with the Koorie Heritage Trust for 15 years, leading walking tours and providing education for corporate, government and school groups about Melbourne's Aboriginal history and heritage. He is a father and a grandfather.

Interviewed: 11 February 2014, Melbourne

7. Anna Haebich

Prof Anna Haebich (63) grew up mainly in Wollongong. Her father was a Lutheran pastor. In the 1980s, Haebich came to live in Perth, met her husband, Darryl Kickett and became part of a large Nyungar family. She has worked in academic roles at Curtin University and Griffith University (receiving a senior fellowship).

Haebich authored a 700-page history of Australian settlement's impact on Aboriginal peoples, *Broken Circles* (2000), and the histories of assimilation, *Spinning the Dream* (2008), and *For Their Own Good* (1992). Haebich also worked on the National Library of Australia project, *Many Voices* (2002). *A Boy's Short Life: the True Story of Warren Braedon/Louis Johnson* based on a chapter from *Broken Circles* was published in 2013.

Interviewed: 14 February 2014, Perth (via Skype)

8. John Baxter

Uncle John Baxter (54) is a Latja Latja/Narungga man, born in Robinvale, he grew up in Box Hill. Baxter was bought up by people other than his family. He works as a consultant providing cross-cultural and financial training, primarily for Aboriginal communities but also on behalf of Reconciliation Victoria.

Baxter has represented Australia's First Nations Disabilities network at the Hague and continues to work on behalf of the Recognise campaign and to provide education services.

Interviewed: 10 March 2014, Melbourne

9. Bev Murray

Bev Murray (50s) was born and grew up in Melbourne, the youngest of eight children. She is Wamba Wamba and Yorta Yorta. Murray is currently the program manager for LinkUp Victoria, a service for Stolen Generations members and their families.

Interviewed: 20 March 2014, Melbourne

10. EvaJo Edwards

EvaJo Edwards (50) grew up in an institution in Kew and a group home in Box Hill. Placed at the age of five, she and her younger siblings were separated from their older siblings. At the time of the interview, EvaJo Edwards held an education role with Connecting Home, a Stolen Generations service.

Edwards is the mother of six. An active participant in Aboriginal rights rallies, she has a vision of organising a big rally for the 20th anniversary of the *Bringing Them Home* report's release (1997-2017).

Interviewed: 27 March 2014, Melbourne

11. Anonymous (male)

Anon M (60s) requested limited biographical information published. He grew up in Melbourne and has worked in Aboriginal Affairs for a number of years.

Interviewed: 17 March 2015, Melbourne

12. Anonymous (female)

Anon F (47) grew up in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne and has a postgraduate qualification. She was working as a counselling trainer at the time of our interview. Previously, she had worked for four years in child protection services in remote Aboriginal communities across the top of East Arnhem.

Interviewed: 20 March 2015, Brisbane (via Skype)

13. Alister McKeich

Alister McKeich (36) is a Legal Officer at the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service supporting clients to appear before the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse. McKeich was born in New Zealand and grew up in Australia. He has worked in Aboriginal communities in Victoria, the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

McKeich is currently undertaking studies towards a Masters of Law at Melbourne University. He also performs as Ali MC with New DubCity. His 'punk rock travel' book, *The Eyeball End*, was published by Xoum in August 2015.

Interviewed: 1 April 2015, Melbourne



Explanatory statement for interview participants: After the Apology (narratives of response to the 2008 Apology to the Indigenous Peoples of Australia)

<date>

Name

Address

Dear

This information sheet is for you to keep.

My name is Kate Maher and I am a PhD candidate from Monash University. My supervisors are Dr Michael Ure and Dr Mark Davis from the School of Political and Social Inquiry at Monash University. This project informs my work towards a Doctor of Philosophy (Arts), and I will be writing a thesis of 80 — 100,000 words.

Your contact details were

- Sourced from a public document/website
- Provided after I contacted you/your office by telephone on date

Or

- This explanatory statement has been provided to you to enable you to consider whether or not you might like to participate in this project. Should you wish to discuss or consent to participate, you are invited to contact Kate Maher (see contact details).

As a

- member of an Aboriginal justice organisation
- person involved with administering or managing an Indigenous-specific policy/program

your reflections and experiences relating to the 2008 Apology are valuable in furthering the understanding of the political effects of this Apology, including social and personal effects. I am

therefore inviting you to participate in this project and to meet with me at a convenient time for an interview.

Please consider the following information and confirm your participation by contacting Kate Maher at [REDACTED] or kjmah1@student.monash.edu.

The purpose of the research

The purpose of the research is to inform a deep understanding of the political effects of collective apology, particularly the Rudd Government's 2008 Apology to the Indigenous Peoples of Australia. My aim is to observe and understand the personal, social and political effects of the 2008 Apology by asking you to reflect on it, and talk about your recollections and observations and any effects this Apology may have had, both then and since.

Possible benefits

This research will contribute to an understanding of collective apology and the political action and participation related to such apology in the Australian context. This type of research is valuable since it will document the experiences and reflections of a number of different political groups - research that has not been undertaken in relation the 2008 Apology.

What does the research involve?

Your participation in the study will consist of an interview, requiring 30 – 90 mins of your time (the length can be your decision, or as much discussion as you are willing to have). The interview can be done face-to-face in a location of your choosing or at one of the meeting rooms at Monash University. It will be recorded with an audio device (sound only) to allow for your comments to be transcribed. You may request to review the transcript before it is included in the project. You may also request an advance copy of the questions that will be asked in this interview.

Other phases of this research project have involved the collection and examination of TV news stories and other recorded responses to the Apology from 2008-2013.

Your reflections and experiences can be reported anonymously, and include some anonymous background details, or they can be reported with your name. This decision is yours to make. Please see the consent form for detailed options.

Inconvenience/discomfort

This research involves discussion of the 2008 Apology, which may include reflection on the historical circumstances that have led to the offering of the Apology. This focus may revisit uncomfortable memories or emotions. Please note that participation in the research is voluntary and you may choose to skip any questions or withdraw from the research at any time during the interview.

Should you experience any discomfort during or after the interview you can contact:

- Your local doctor who can refer you to a counselling service
- Lifeline – 131 114
- Any of the services provided in a separate information sheet (obtainable from the researcher).

Can I withdraw from the research?

Participation in this research is voluntary. You are under no obligation to participate. However, if you do consent to participate in an interview, you may withdraw or cease the interview at any stage prior to or during the interview. You can also withdraw within one month of completing this interview if you wish. Please be aware that once a quotation from your interview has appeared in a publication or oral presentation, it cannot be withdrawn.

Confidentiality

Please note that the data will be collected and stored using the names of participants. A participant list and consent forms will also be held by the researcher. Only the researcher and her supervisors will have access to the names of the participants. All data (your experiences and reflections) will be reported as per your decision to be named or anonymous in any reports or publications.

Storage of audio recordings and transcripts

Storage of the data collected will adhere to the University regulations and be kept on University premises in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet for 5 years. At that time, the value of the data will be reviewed by the research team. If any data is to be included in further research by the research team, it will be subject to approval by the Monash Ethics Committee. If deemed no longer useful, the data will be destroyed. At all times any reference to your interview will be reported as per your consent.

Use of your contribution

Your interview may contribute to the preparation of journal articles, book chapters and books and other forms of communication in keeping with academic work, including teaching. Any reference to your interview will be treated as per your consent. You may choose to be informed or consulted regarding the publication of any information you contribute to the project. Please see the consent form for these options.

Results

If you would like to be informed of the aggregate research findings (thesis abstract), please contact Kate Maher on [REDACTED] or kjmah1@student.monash.edu.au. The findings will be accessible after submission of the final report (approximately mid-2015). You may also choose to be made aware of any publications arising from this research (see the consent form for these options).

If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator:	If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research (project number CF13/1042 - 2013000508) is being conducted, please contact:
Dr Michael Ure Tel: 03 9903 4588 Email: Michael.Ure@arts.monash.edu	Human Ethics Officer Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans (SCERH) Building 3e, Room 111 Research Office Monash University VIC 3800 Tel: +61 3 9905 2052 Fax: +61 3 9905 1420 Email: scerh@adm.monash.edu.au

Sincerely,

Kate Maher

Consent Form - Interview

Title: *After the Apology (responses to the 2008 Apology to the Indigenous Peoples of Australia)*

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researcher for their records, a copy may be provided for your records.

I agree to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I will keep for my records. I understand that agreeing to take part means:

1. I agree to be interviewed by the researcher ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. I agree to allow the interview to be audio-taped ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Please choose from one of the following (identified or anonymous participation)

3a. Identified participation

I understand that my contribution to the project will be identified. I understand that information provided to the researcher during the interview may be published in reports or findings. I understand that my contribution will be reported with my name.

☐ Yes ☐ No

3b. Anonymous participation

I understand that my contribution to the project will be anonymous. I understand that information provided to the researcher during the interview may be published in reports or findings. I understand that my contribution will be reported anonymously.

☐ Yes ☐ No

4. I would like to review my transcript before it is included in the project and I agree to meet with the researcher two weeks after being supplied with the transcript

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Please choose one of the following (various consent options for use of information)

5a. I provide consent for the use of information provided to the researcher to be published in reports or findings (including conferences, books, journal papers) ☐ Yes ☐ No

5b. I want to be advised when information supplied to the researcher is published in reports or findings (including conferences, books, journal papers) authored by the researcher

☐ Yes* ☐ No

5c. I want to be consulted and to provide further consent when information supplied to the researcher is intended to be published in reports or findings (including conferences, books, journal papers) authored by the researcher

☐ Yes* ☐ No

I understand that once material has been published, other researchers or authors may quote from the report without advising the project researcher and that if this happens, the researcher will be unable to provide further notice to me.

I understand that data from the interview will be kept in secure storage for a minimum 5 year period following publication. After that time, the data will be reviewed for ongoing research value and may be

destroyed or securely stored for use in future research (any future research would also report contributions as per my consent).

I understand that my participation is voluntary, and that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project up to and during the interview. I understand that once the interview has been completed, I can choose to withdraw from the project within one month from completion.

Participant's name:

Signature:

Date:

***Best ongoing contact details:**

Appendix 4c. Interview questions: After the Apology (responses to the 2008 Apology to the Indigenous Peoples of Australia)

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me...

As outlined in the explanatory statement and the consent forms (invite & respond to any questions about the research project or interview process)... I'd like to talk to you about the 'Apology to the Indigenous Peoples of Australia' also known as the 'Apology to the Stolen Generations' that was delivered in Federal Parliament on the 13th of February 2008, at the opening of the Parliament, by then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd.

Background questions:

- *Firstly, could you please introduce yourself and let me know something about...*
 - *How old are you and where did you grow up?*
 - *How would you describe your family background?*
 - *Please describe your current role and involvement*
 - *How long have you been working in this field?*
 - *Was this kind of work always something that you wanted to be involved in? Did you need any specific education or experience or background?*

Core questions:

- *Could you tell me about your experiences of the day of the Apology?*
 - *Where were you on the day?*
 - *Could you describe the place and the atmosphere?*
 - *What was happening around you?*
 - *Who else was with you? What did other people that you knew do?*
 - *What happened? What happened next?*
 - *What were your thoughts on the Apology before it was delivered? After?*
 - *What do think others were experiencing?*
 - *Did you talk about it?*
 - *What do you remember feeling during and after the Apology was delivered?*
- *What about your experiences in the days/weeks after the Apology?*
- *How do you think and feel about the Apology now?*
 - *Do you think the Apology has influenced anything? What kind of things?*
 - *Tell me more about ...*
 - *Does it come up in conversation?*
 - *Have you noticed any differences between then and now that you think have been influenced by the Apology? (relationships, policy, funding, program implementation, recognition, identity, involvement)*
 - *Could you explain this in detail?*
 - *Do you think your experience of the Apology has led to any changes in your life/career/activities?*
 - *Could you tell me more about those differences/samenesses?*
- *What do you think contributed to the Apology being delivered at that time in 2008?*
 - *Do you feel that your actions/work played a part in this?*
 - *What kind of part?*

- *What role do you think certain narratives played? (e.g. the narratives of the Stolen Generation as made more public by the Bringing them Home report)*
- *What would you say was the value in this Apology? The main effects of this Apology? (reference participant's responses to above questions if prompting needed)*
- *In the Apology motion, Rudd mentioned:*
 - *'closing the gap'*
 - *not letting similar injustices happen again*
 - *new solutions to old problems*
 - *mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility*
 - *equal partners, equal opportunities and an equal stake in Australia's future*
- *Have these things been made possible - have you experienced any of these in the last 5 years?*
- *How do you think the Apology has worked to make these types of social and policy changes possible? Not possible?*
 - *Explore how the Apology relates to these*
 - *What other changes might come of the Apology?*
- *For example, recently PM Gillard moved to hold a referendum on constitutional recognition and this has been tied to the Apology...*
- *During this interview, you've indicated/mentioned 'x' emotion, what role do you think 'x' has played in some of the effects/non-effects that we've discussed?*

Additional information: emotional distress

If, in the course of discussing your experiences, you experience emotional distress, please consider the following additional information:

Do you have an existing counsellor or psychologist?

If so, please consider making an appointment with them.

Do you have a supportive friend or family member that you can discuss this experience with?

If so, please consider making a time to see them and ask that they support you.

Would you like to access a counselling service?

You can do any or all of the following to arrange to speak to a professional and experienced counsellor:

- See your local doctor for a referral (ask about Medicare-funded referrals) to an appropriate counselling/psychology service in your local area
- Visit the BeyondBlue website for resources and support:
<http://www.beyondblue.org.au/>
 - see also their list of national Mental Health practitioners:
<http://info.beyondblue.org.au/MAHP.html>
- Make an appointment direct with a Counselling and Psychology Service – you can use the internet or your area's telephone directory to locate these services. Some examples of counselling service registers are:
 - http://www.theaca.net.au/national_register.php
 - <http://www.relationships.org.au>
 - <http://lifeline.serviceseeker.com.au/service-finder.shtml>
- Examples of Indigenous-specific counselling services are:
 - ACT: <http://health.act.gov.au/health-services/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander/information/health-services-in-the-act> ; Winnunga Nimmityjah
<http://www.winnunga.org.au/index.php?page=social-and-emotional-wellbeing>
 - Vic: <http://www.vahs.org.au>;
<http://www.atsihealth.org/www/758/1001638/displayarticle/1001754.html>
 - NSW: <http://www.aboriginalcounsellingservices.com.au/>; Arrunga
Gibalee Aboriginal Counselling Service
<http://www.nsw.relationships.com.au/en/ourservices/services-library/aboriginal.aspx>
 - WA: <http://www.yorgum.com.au>
 - SA: <http://www.ahcsa.org.au/>;
 - Qld: <http://www.gallangplace.org.au/>;
http://www.mycommunitydirectory.com.au/Queensland/Brisbane/Indigenous/Indigenous_Support_Services_Counselling/
 - Information about a range of Indigenous mental health and wellbeing services at: <http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/other-health-conditions/mental-health>
 - Programs run by the Healing Foundation:
<http://www.healingfoundation.org.au/our-work>