

Newsletter of the APS Aboriginal Issues, Aboriginal People and Psychology Interest Group

Australian Psychological Society

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Update from the Convenor

At the last APS Conference an Interim Committee for the Aboriginal Interest Group was nominated until the next AGM scheduled for the APS Conference, September 2005.

The response to the call for support was overwhelming. It was very gratifying to see that the APS members see the necessity to have a focus on the needs of Indigenous people and a willingness to assist by putting their time into creating a vibrant and active presence for this concern in the APS.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, we have

an appeal for participation by psychologists with an indigenous background. In the meantime, our project is to ensure an authentic indigenous voice at the next APS Conference in Melbourne 2005.

Ruth Braunstein from the NSW Department of Education and Training and Kath Ellerman from Kids Helpline, Brisbane are the interim Co-Convenors, Kylie Cann from the Townsville Catholic Education Office is Secretary, Helen Kuelde, from Sydney is Treasurer. Committee members include Colleen Turner, Melbourne, who is looking

after our Webpage, Marie Joyce, ACU, Melbourne, Ailsa Drent, VIC, Peggy Lee, Caroline Musgrave and Rosemary Pynor, NSW, and Sue Berry, Student Member.

Members of the APS can contact the Interest group via email through Alex Bignell or through the executive committee members.

We wish all our members and supporters all the best for 2005. We look forward to a successful and productive year.

Best wishes,
Kath Ellerman,

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Invitation for Articles and Ideas:

If you have ideas or suggestions for the committee, please contact us.

Feedback from the last minutes

Members of the Aboriginal Interest Group last met on 18.10.04. Following some discussion among members, it was decided to rename the group to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Interest Group in order to

more accurately reflect our country's cultural heritage. This will go to the AGM in Melbourne, 2005. Committee members are currently researching possibilities and ideas to present to the APS Conference Committee for the 2005 APS conference to be held in Melbourne. The theme *Past Reflections, Future Directions* would seem particularly relevant to our indigenous communities.

APS Ethical Guidelines

The APS Ethical Guidelines include GUIDELINES FOR THE PROVISION of PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES FOR, and THE CONDUCT of PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH WITH, ABORIGINAL and TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA.

The Australian Psychological Society (APS) recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (indigenous) cultures and people occupy a special place in Australian society as the original cultures and people of Australia. Although current-day expressions of those cultures are diverse in many respects, they all share a common, unique place in Australian society as manifestations of its indigenous cul-

tures. Membership of those indigenous cultures is not prescribed by biological or life-style characteristics, as is often thought to be the case by non-indigenous Australians, but is a matter of individual and indigenous community affirmation.

Indigenous people, both individually and collectively, have been deeply disadvantaged by European settlement of Australia. Contact between these indigenous and European cultures has resulted in the alienation of indigenous rights to cultural autonomy and to land ownership, and of the basic human rights of many indigenous people. Consequently, psychological solutions to the current-day work, health, educational and social issues confronting

indigenous people are likely to be unsuccessful, unless political, legal and social solutions for the restoration of their cultures and individual human rights, privileges and dignity are also found. Specific Guidelines include:

- Guidelines for Psychological Research that Involves Indigenous People
 - General Guidelines for Provision of Psychological Services to Indigenous People
 - Guidelines for Psychological Testing of Indigenous People
 - Guidelines for Conducting Other Forms of Assessment with Indigenous People
- And more. For further information visit www.psychology.org.au

Research—International Perspectives

The following abstract is included due to its possible relevance for working alongside indigenous communities:

Responding to the effects of violence: Working with children in East Timor

Sanson, A. Australian Institute for Family Studies
ann@aifs.gov.au or visit

www.aifs.gov.au

ABSTRACT:

This paper outlines how non-government organisations working with children used a solid understanding of an ecological model of child development and the recent literature on risk and resilience, in developing and implementing programs to support children and their fami-

lies. The approach is holistic, focusing on the ‘whole child’ in their family and community context, is respectful of local cultural strengths and traditions, and aims to support the capacity of communities and families to provide for children’s needs. The complex role of an external consultant in supporting this work is exam-

Books

Jeff McMullen *A Life of Extremes: Journeys and Encounters*

In Chapter 15 “Coming Home”, Jeff writes:

“Petrol sniffing by indigenous Australians was the subject of my very first story for *60 Minutes* when I joined the Nine Network towards the end of 1984. It was also my first film

back in my own country after so many years as a foreign correspondent. After tackling racial injustice and the plight of indigenous people in many parts of the world, I now was confronted with our own sad record at home.” Jeff also writes: “As I left Amata some of the parents thrust a letter into my hand asking the federal govern-

ment to help them save their children. These are *our* children, I thought. Have we done enough for them?

In this chapter of *A Life of Extremes*, Jeff McMullen shares the success and sadness of our Indigenous peoples. A highly recommended read.

Websites of Interest

Stolen Generation

Bring them Home

www.austlii.edu.au/au/special/rsjproject/rsjlibrary/hreoc/stolen

Sorry Day (26th May)

<http://www.alphalink.com.au/~rez/Journey/>

Mabo Day (3rd June)

<http://www.atsic.gov.au/events/Mabo/default.asp>

Education

Torres Strait Books

www.torresstraitbooks.com.au

Indij Readers for Little Fullas, for Big Fullas

www.indijreaders.com.au

Sandtraks: Pathways to celebrating indigenous culture

www.sandtraks.com

Reconciliation

www.scholastic.com.au/schoolzone

Culture

Multicultural Affairs

www.premiers.qld.gov.au/about/maq/index.htm

First People's Project—Global Art Exchange

www.learn.ogr.au/fp

If you learn of interesting and helpful websites, please do not hesitate to forward them to the committee.

Resources

Pictured Feelings Instrument

Beth A. Schack Stone

Psychologist, MAPS, ATR-BC, MFT

ACER Press 2004

The Pictured Feelings Instrument (PFI) is based on a validated nonverbal vocabulary of 26 pictures of 26 specific feelings for use with children, adolescents and adults. The PFI is meant for use in clinical/counselling practice; assessment; emotion recognition test-

ing; education/training; and research. Emotions are communicated primarily by non-verbal expressions—facial and body expressions—according to clinical, social and neuropsychological research. Yet when it comes to accessing, communicating and measuring feelings, there has not been a nonverbal communication instrument which covers a broad range of feelings, is validated by free-choice labelling and is not based on culture-bound photos.

The PFI fills that need. The PFI has high validity across English speakers 5-65 years old. No differences were found for gender, occupation, language spoken at home or ethnic background. Age differences were found for four of the 26 Pictured Feelings. Available from ACER www.acerpress.com.au.

Ph 1800 338 402. Beth is at beths@psych.usyd.edu.au.

Upcoming Training Opportunities

Mawul Rom Project—Traditional and Contemporary Mediation and Leadership Training

Mawul Rom Project is a bi-cultural mediation project in Arnhem Land. The project is based around the use of a Yolgnu ceremony in the de-

velopment of a new bi-cultural approach to mediation. Participants are invited to attend a week long live in training session in July 2005 on Elcho Island. The participants will have an active role in ceremony and learn about the application of the ceremonial process to me-

diation and negotiation For more information

log onto www.mawul.com

or email paul.tolliday@mawul.com

Australian Psychological Society

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Melbourne, VIC 3000

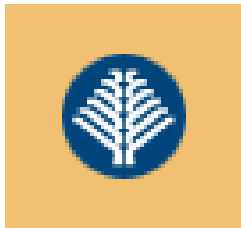
P.O. Box 38, Flinders Lane PO,
Melbourne 8009

Phone: (03) 8662 3300
1800 333 497

Website: www.psychology.org.au

Email:

contactus@psychsociety.com.au



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Interest Group

**We will soon be
on the web!!!**

ABOUT THE APS ABORIGINAL ISSUES AND PSYCHOLOGY

INTEREST GROUP

The APS has been involved in indigenous issues since the 1960s, when a Queensland Group became active with submissions to government on secondary education, child welfare and Aboriginal welfare. The original Group for Aboriginal Issues, Aboriginal People and Psychology was established primarily as a way of assisting the small number of indigenous members to the Society to network and to promote discussion of social issues with non-indigenous members. The APS interest group re-formed in 1992. The full history of this group is set out in Sandra Billard, Heather Gridley and Colleen Turner, 'Report from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and Psychology Interest Group of the Australian Psychological Society', Bulletin, Vol. 16, No. 4, August/September 1994, pp. 23-24. The Committee recognises the vast representation of indigenous tribes and clans across Australia and seeks ongoing input and guidance from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The interest group is concerned with promoting best psychological practice for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The interest group currently has 155 members.

Source: Cook, S (2000) A Meeting of the Minds: The Australian Psychological Society and Australian Psychologists. APS, Melbourne. (Provided by Alex Bignell and Henry Briffa)

Call for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Members of the APS

As an APS Interest Group focussing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, we are naturally concerned that the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members are heard and attended to.

We believe that we have 16 or 17 indigenous members in the Interest Group and the APS. But we don't know for sure! So, the Interim Executive is very keen to hear from any members who would like to contribute to and guide our deliberations. One way to do that is to join the Committee.

There are other ways of making a contribution, through providing advice and insights or through identifying resources

that the Committee may follow-up.

In consultation with the APS Conference Organising Committee, our major objective is to co-ordinate some key-note speakers and workshops for the Conference next September in Melbourne who will be able to raise issues and awareness and give guidance to Psychologists who may work with indigenous children, adults or communities.

So, we need all the help we can get. Interested? Give Kath Ellerman-Bull a call at Kids Help Line ((07) 3369 1588 or email her at Kathleen@kidshelp.com.au.



Walking Together

Quote

The spiritual dimension is something that Indigenous people have to offer Australia. Eddie Watkin in Weemala Indigenous Support Unit; The Spirit Within, Australian Catholic University 2004.