Governmentality and Social Exclusion/Inclusion
in Australian Indigenous Policies

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Abstract

In 2008, the Australian Parliament issued a national apology to the Indigenous peoples of Australia. A year later, they reversed their previous dissenting decision against the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to support the Declaration. What do these two events signal about Australian society's feelings towards the Indigenous peoples? This capstone seeks to understand how the Australian state has historically treated the Indigenous peoples and how contemporary Australia is now treating them. It uses the theory of governmentality as proposed by Foucault and other scholars to investigate the social exclusion/inclusion methods used by the state towards the Indigenous. Through discourse analysis of current institutions' publications, it can be seen that although progress is being made to include the Indigenous peoples within society, there are still negative views in regards to the Indigenous peoples' ability to self-determination. The findings leave questions about the future of the Australian state and the place of the Indigenous peoples within the state.

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Research Question

This capstone looks at the relationship between government and social exclusion/inclusion. In order to explore this topic, the focus will be on the Australian government's treatment of the Indigenous people. The main question is: How does the Australian state behave towards the Indigenous peoples? This treatment will be studied through the lens of governmentality and social exclusion/inclusion. To answer this question will require exploration into two categories. First, a historical case of how the state government has treated the Indigenous peoples is needed to understand the basis of social exclusion/inclusion within the state. Then, the current state policies will be analyzed using the theory of governmentality to understand how those policies are attempting to reconcile the past treatment of the Indigenous peoples. To conclude, considerations will be made on how the policies of social exclusion/inclusion can be transcended in order to create a nation where both the mainstream society and the Indigenous society are equal.

Literature Review

Governmentality refers to the art and practice of government, i.e. the conduct the conduct. Government takes place through social institutions, laws, and policies. The management of society through government allows the society to continue to exist because it ensures that the people within the society are complying with appropriate standards. However, not everyone will fit into the mold society has defined as acceptable. Individuals outside the accepted realm must either adjust their behaviors or be seen as outsiders. Social exclusion is a form of showing what is and what is not appropriate – those individuals or groups that work within society are socially included, while those that do not fit are socially excluded.

In order to understand the Australian state and the Indigenous peoples in terms of

government and social exclusion/inclusion, it is first necessary to consider literature on colonialism in Australia. Then, the literature review will delve further into governmentality and social exclusion/inclusion. Finally, there cannot be a discussion on how the Indigenous peoples are to interact with the non-Indigenous peoples without literature on reconciliation and the prospects it holds for the future race relations in Australia.

Colonialism

Beate Jahn, in his discussion on John Stuart Mill's beliefs in regards to imperialism, draws the conclusion that the stage of development of a certain people determines the most appropriate form of government they should have (in the sense of institutions).[1] Jahn elaborates on Mill's belief that civilizational development will not occur unless it is actively pursued, which will occur only through either an Indigenous leader guiding the population or by a culturally superior force leading the Indigenous peoples to civilization.[2] The problem with this view is that it is judging 'civilization' from only one view point. It sees one culture as being more advanced and therefore holds all other civilizations up to those standards, without leaving room for differences in opinion. This difference in beliefs about which civilization is more developed, or which one is the correct form, leads to exclusion within the government as different peoples belong to different levels of sophistication.

This view is also closely related to work by Stanley Lierberson, who discusses a theory of race relations. He states, "The critical problem on a societal level in racial or ethnic contact is initially each population's maintenance and development of a social order compatible with its

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[1] Beate Jahn, "Barbarian thoughts: imperialism in the philosophy of John Stuart Mill," *Review of International Studies* 31 (2005): 601.
[2] Ibid, 603.

ways of life prior to contact."[3] To him, it is a matter of the different manifestations of social order that make the groups different. When these different groups come into contact, each tries to maintain its own social order. One group will have economic or political dominance. In the case of a migrant group being 'superior' to the Indigenous group, the Indigenous group will frequently fail to participate in the new economic and/or political life.[4] This failure leads to further marginalization and will make it more difficult for the Indigenous group to change the newly established social order.

What needs to be considered is how the colonial power was able to establish dominance in the new area. David Scott hypothesizes that this dominance is a form of governmentality, which he refers to as colonial governmentality. He looks at a colonial power's structure and how it projects itself into, and constitutes the domain of, the colonial.[5] The idea is that the new colonial government defines an end goal and works to put in place new conditions that will change conduct to make it more appropriate for that end goal.[6] The colonial governments were defining what knowledge was necessary for the colonies to continue to exist. By defining the knowledge necessary for power, the colonial governments held all the power over Indigenous peoples. The Indigenous knowledge was different and would not have been able to fit in with the colonial governments. Colonial government supplanted the Indigenous government, leading to Indigenous peoples' form of knowledge no longer being considered to be legitimate in the colonies as a form of power.

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[3] Stanley Lieberson, "A Societal Theory of Race and Ethnic Relations," *American Sociological Review* 26 (1961): 903.
[4] Ibid, 906.
[5] David Scott, "Colonial Governmentality," *Social Text* 43 (1995): 197.
[6] Ibid, 200.

Governmentality

In order to understand the latent differences between Indigenous peoples and mainstream society, one should start with the "essence of being" Foucault describes and upon which Todd May elaborates. May's general concept is that people with different histories could be considered different people altogether, having a different "essence of being." This essence ties in with the theory of governmentality proposed by Foucault. People are governed by the principles of government throughout their lives, which creates who they are at the very basic level. May states that Foucault's main divergence from other philosophers in the past originates with his belief of who humans are; their very basic element of being is not individual, but collective.[7] Therefore, "who am I?" becomes "who are we?" The collective sense of being is formed from histories: " . . . history makes us who we are just because it did, because at certain junctures it took one path as opposed to another."[8] History defines people because it is through their histories that they come to be who they are. May describes five features of this collective historical view to define who people are; one especially important feature is the idea that people's knowledge of how they know things, as well as how they act, is defined by historically given practices.[9] Therefore, people with different histories will know things differently and act differently.

How people come to interpret meaning is not just about what types of knowledge they have, but how they attain knowledge – the general framework through which they acquire knowledge. These histories create laws of sorts, or " . . . certain regularities that govern what can and cannot be said in particular practices at particular times."[10] It is simply a matter of how people have been raised to believe what it is they believe. It is in this set of collective histories

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[7] Todd May, *The Philosophy of Foucault* (Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006) 16.
[8] Ibid, 15.
[9] Ibid, 16.
[10] Ibid, 38.

that Indigenous peoples are fundamentally different from those of the mainstream society. While it is true that across different cultures there will be different histories, the histories of the Indigenous peoples are completely different from those of white society.

Governmentality reflects how a society guides the behavior of the general population. There is a concept of a 'common good,' which implies obedience to the law.[11] The purpose of government, then, is to ensure that the population adheres to the common good by performing their tasks for society. Government consists of the institutions, laws, and practices (put in place by the society) that control the society. Government is not, however, above the society. Rather, it is dependent on society, "It is society, not the state, that helps determine 'why there has to be a government, to what extent it can be done without, and in which cases it is needless or harmful for it to intervene' . . ."[12] Government arises from the need to manage larger and larger numbers of people in order to pursue a collective goal, but government can only exist in the realms where society has acknowledged the need for government.

While government influences the behavior and conduct of the society, society also has a certain amount of 'push back' on government. How the government chooses to act is a reflection of civil society and what they expect to be under the authority of the state. Hindess elaborates this concept further, with his analysis of Foucault's political reason, "He insists, in particular, that the work of governing the population and territory of a state is not performed only by the state itself, that it may be dispersed throughout the population and performed by a variety of public and private agencies."[13] This statement reflects how government occurs at different levels of

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[11] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality,* eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 94.

[12] Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (Newbury Park: SAGE Publication, 1999), 41.

[13] Barry Hindess, "Politics as Government: Michel Foucault's Analysis of Political Reason," *Alternatives* 30(2005): 390.

society, including various state institutions and elements of civil society. Hindess also comments that although some measure of discontent towards government is allowed, the state defines how people are allowed to show that discontent by determining in what ways it is socially acceptable to disagree.[14] Hindess stated this comment with regards to individuals within a society that try to change the way the current system of government operates. Because these people are working within the confines of the current system and the ways in which it allows for people to disagree, the people do not truly achieve changing the system. For people to actually change a product of the system of government, it would require a complete overhaul of the entire system. Finally, Hindess notes that there are certain individuals that can be governed through the promotion of certain kinds of free activity and the cultivation of suitable habits of self-regulation, but that those other individuals who cannot be trusted to their own self-management need to governed by other, different ways.[15] This idea of government based on difference can be directly applied to the treatment of the Indigenous peoples when Australia was first being colonized, as will be seen through the colonial governments' management of the Indigenous.

Mitchell Dean discusses how government is determined to be useful, citing Foucault's belief that society determines why there needs to be a government, what responsibilities government has, and in which cases government would be harmful.[16] It is the society that decides which parts of life they expect the state to control. Because the society already has norms and values they live by, Dean remarks that government depends on those expectations, values, and forms of regulation that are already present in civil society to govern the society.[17] Therefore, it is possible to see how state institutions and their goals are a reflection of the goals and beliefs

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[14] Ibid, 398.
[15] Ibid, 403.
[16] Mitchell Dean, "Liberal Government and Authoritarianism, " *Economy and Society* 31 (2002): 41.
[17] Ibid, 43.

of the society.

Dean also touches upon how certain individuals become 'wards' of the state. 'Wards' are people who do not possess the necessary traits and behaviors to exist within the governed society. The state would then need to form a separate system of governing in order to incorporate those people.[18] This view builds upon the belief that individuals who do not fit within mainstream society's view of proper conduct are individuals who need to be remolded to become working members of society. It assumes that the excluded individuals do not know the proper form of behavior, which is why the state must step in.

Social Exclusion/Inclusion

For the most part, discourse on social exclusion/inclusion relates to poverty and welfare. While being excluded economically is a part of social exclusion, there are other elements to which the socially excluded are not privy. Basically, there are some people who are excluded from enjoying the benefits the rest of mainstream society is able to enjoy. Social exclusion means being excluded from the social element of culture, including participation in local government, achieving similar life standards, and the right to assert one's culture. Exclusion stems from the difference in peoples as was stated earlier. In this case, Indigenous peoples are excluded from mainstream society on the basis that they are fundamentally different.

Ronald LaBonte, who writes on social exclusion/inclusion and its place within a community, questions the reason why social exclusion exists. He states that social exclusion defines disadvantage as an outcome of social processes, rather than a group trait.[19] He believes that a group does not necessarily deserve to be excluded, but rather societal structures lead to

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[18] Ibid, 47.
[19] Ronald LaBonte, "Social inclusion/exclusion: dancing the dialectic," *Health Promotion International* 19 (2004): 117.

exclusion. His solution, therefore, is not that the socially excluded should be adapted to fit into the socially included group, but rather that the focus should be on the socio-economic rules and political powers that created the excluded groups and how the included groups benefit from the exclusion of other groups.[20] Through this power relationship, it is possible to see the link between governmentality and social exclusion/inclusion – it is the system that governs people that creates the rules and norms that lead to social exclusion and inclusion. LaBonte's work also raises important questions in regards to reconciliation in Australia, for it challenges the notion that the responsibility for the social exclusion of Indigenous peoples lies solely with them. Through LaBonte's work, it becomes possible to understand the need for a change in the system of government to precede a change in social exclusion.

Giovanna Procacci's work on the government of poverty argues that the objective of governing is not to eliminate inequality, but difference.[21] She defines difference as " . . . a series of *different forms of conduct*, namely those which are not amenable to the project of socialization which is being elaborated . . . "[22] Because the Indigenous peoples are different, they become a threat to the state and the state's goal of managing the society as a whole. The views of the Indigenous peoples are different from the views that the state seeks to enforce throughout the society, which then leaves the state to find way to exclude Indigenous peoples. A separate form of government for the Indigenous peoples is necessary to keep their differing knowledge out of the realm of the mainstream society.

Social exclusion/inclusion can be seen as the way the state maintains its power over the society. Included individuals are seen as part of the normal, functioning society, whereas

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[20] Ibid, 120.

[21] Procacci, Giovanna, "Social Economy and the Government of Poverty," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 160.

[22] Ibid.

excluded individuals belong to the part of society that the state wants to show as dysfunctional, or how the normal society should not behave, "Within modern societies, membership is regulated by institutions. The selectivity of institutions constitutes a realm of normality."[23] Historically, this exclusion has been in reference to those individuals who do not contribute to the benefit of the state – the individuals who did not work. Although discourse exists on the far reaching definition of those excluded, what does it mean to be included? "The whole concept of social exclusion, including its localized geography, is defined by those who consider themselves qualified to determine their own social inclusion."[24] Inclusion is a matter of who is in charge and how they want to determine who is included. This inclusion method—making social inclusion a matter of who obeys and social exclusion a matter of who does not—further helps the state's goal of maintaining a stable society. Because the existence of the Indigenous peoples were historically and are currently guided by different social norms, they are deemed to be outside the realm of normality.

A major problem of social exclusion is, obviously, a group of people are prevented from partaking in the benefits that those who are socially included receive. The former are also excluded from participation in the formation and judgment of social rules and conventions. With no way to change the policies affecting them, excluded people are kept excluded. This problem can become a negative cycle, for "The action of exclusion becomes structural when it is repeatedly confirmed through social relations and practices."[25] When the state institutions have written into the laws how to treat the socially excluded, it then becomes much easier for the

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[23] Goerg Vobruba, "Actors in Processes of Inclusion and Exclusion: Towards a Dynamic Approach," *Social Policy & Administration* 34 (2000): 605.

[24] Angus Cameron, "Geographies of welfare and exclusion: social inclusion and exception," *Progress in Human Geography* 30 (2006): 401.

[25] Hilary Silver, "Social exclusion and social solidarity: Three paradigms," *International Labour Review* 133 (1994): 545.

socially included to perpetuate actions to keep the excluded out and the included in.

Although the literature discusses the terms of social exclusion/inclusion extensively, it does little to suggest how the issue might be reconciled. Framed within the context of governmentality, there are two options. First, the state could change the end goal it desires, allowing the formerly excluded to be included within the new state. Second, the state would need to no longer be threatened by the socially excluded. Neither of these options seems reasonable given the current context of states. Therefore, how can the relationship between the Indigenous peoples and the Australian state be composed?

Reconciliation

The idea of reconciliation is useful when there are two opposing groups that will have to co-habilitate with each other. A problem when considering reconciliation between an Indigenous group and a non-Indigenous group is that recognition or accommodation by the non-Indigenous group reinforces the legitimacy of the non-Indigenous group's power over the Indigenous group.[26] The recognition of Indigenous people (colonized) by the non-Indigenous group (colonizer) is the basis for power of one people over another. Instead of recognizing only Indigenous peoples' rights within the state, their rights to sovereignty must also be recognized, "A sincere attempt to address the historical injustice of colonization and its legacy cannot logically ignore Indigenous nationhood and sovereignty . . . because the exercise of sovereignty must be based on the consent of those affected by it."[27] This idea that sovereignty must be accepted by those under the rule of the state is also a reflection of their freedom, for, "A people

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[26] James Tully, "The Struggles of Indigenous Peoples for and of Freedom," in *Political Theory and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* eds. Duncan Ivison, Paul Patton, and Will Sanders (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 45.
[27] Damien Short, "Reconciliation, Assimilation and the Indigenous Peoples of Australia," *International Political Science Review* 24 (2003): 504-505.

are said to govern themselves, and thus to be a free people, when the laws by which they are governed rest on their consent or the consent of their representatives."[28] Through sovereignty and self-determination, people become empowered and capable of self-management. They are more capable of breaking free of chains of social exclusion when they influence government.

The meaning of reconciliation will differ between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples. Andrew Gunstone wrote extensively on the concept of Indigenous reconciliation in Australia. He argues that non-Indigenous state governments tend to view reconciliation as the need to improve socioeconomic factors, whereas Indigenous peoples see reconciliation related to issues such as Indigenous rights and the existing power relationships in the state.[29] How the state views reconciliation today is a reflection of the attitudes towards the Indigenous peoples and their inclusion into the state.

Research Design

Definitions and Methodology

The Australian state is responsible for Indigenous welfare and policies that affect the lives of the Indigenous. Unlike the mainstream society, which is considered capable of proper conduct and contribution to the state, the Indigenous peoples have historically been viewed as having improper behavior and, therefore, as outside the mainstream society. How the state manages the Indigenous peoples then becomes paramount in understanding the society's views towards the Indigenous. As was previously stated, the state is not an entity completely separate from society. The conduct the state enforces is a reflection of the norms, attitudes, and values the society considers appropriate. Therefore, by looking at the Indigenous policies of the state it becomes

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[28] Tully, 57.
[29] Andrew Gunstone, *Unfinished Business* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2007), 301.

possible to derive how the state and society perceive the Indigenous peoples in regards to their capability to belong to the mainstream society.

While there are two different Indigenous peoples of Australia, this paper will consider only the Aboriginals. 'Aboriginals' refer to the myriad Indigenous peoples on the Australian mainland, while other Indigenous group is the Torres Strait Islanders, who were the inhabitants of the islands to the north of Australia. While these two groups have similar treatments within the larger Australian society, they have different collective histories, making who they are different. Only the history of the Aboriginal people will be explored and references to Indigenous people throughout the rest of the paper will refer to the Aboriginals. The term 'mainstream society' refers to the rest of the Australian population who are neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander.

The first step necessary for the investigation of the current situation for the Aboriginals is to build a history of Aboriginals in Australia. Several history and anthropology books were consulted in order to gain an understanding of treatment of the Aboriginals as Australia was first colonized and then as it became a nation. The treatment can be seen to fit in with the social exclusion/inclusion policies of the state as the state considered necessary in order to maintain governance. This historical archaeology is a pillar of Foucauldian analysis: "We start with a known outcome, but what we need to do is find the precursors that lead to this outcome. The work is about putting together the various pieces of the puzzle so we can see sufficient conditions for the emergence of the problem or issue under investigation."[30] It is necessary to first develop the history of Aboriginals in order to fully comprehend the historical and contemporary social exclusion of the Aboriginals.

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[30] Gavin Kendall and Gary Wickham, "The Foucaultian Framework," in *Qualitative Research Practice*, eds. Giampietro et al. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2004), 145.

While it is ultimately Parliament that passes laws, there are several groups responsible for policies regarding Aboriginal welfare. The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), Reconciliation Australia (RA) and the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) are institutions and groups that deal with Aboriginal issues directly. FaHCSIA is the main department responsible for social policy in Australia; RA is a national organization that works to build and promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples; the AHRC is a statutory organization that reports to the Parliament on human rights and social justice issues. Publications referring to reconciliation by FaHCSIA, AHRC, and RA will all be considered for elements of social exclusion/inclusion. These documents will be analyzed using discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis is the process by which certain elements of speech are interpreted for certain meanings. Discourse is as much a part of the society as the written texts, for people, when writing the publications, are still governed by the norms, values and behaviors that society has deemed appropriate. These values become an inherent part of the discourse, or in this case, part of the websites' publications, "Discourse is basically understood as the result of collusion: the conditions of the political, social and linguistic practice impose themselves practically behind the back of the subjects, while the actors do not see through the game."[31] The analysis of the publications will require an investigation into the political and social conditions present in society of which the authors are a product. The purpose of discourse analysis is to identify the rules that make a text and use those rules to understand what is socially acceptable within a certain practice.[32]

The discourse to be analyzed for this research project was found via the websites of the

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[31] Ruth Wodak, "Critical Discourse Analysis," in *Qualitative Research Practice*, eds. Giampietro Gobo et al. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2004), 203.
[32] Ibid.

previously mentioned institutions dealing with Aboriginal affairs. The search started out with FaHCSIA, the main state government department. Publications were used from their website that dealt with Aboriginal welfare in terms of differences between the Aboriginal society and mainstream society and ways to reconcile those differences. From the FaHCSIA website, links were followed to other organizations that similarly dealt with Aboriginal affairs. These links led to the AHRC and the RA websites. Similar searches on these websites for publications dealing with reconciliation issues were conducted. The publications from the websites were then classified into three different groups: articles, which refer to general information posted on the websites; statements, which refer to speeches made by someone that were posted on the website and attributable to that single person; and reports, which refer to information that was synthesized into a copyrighted document. The final research consisted of four articles, four statements, and four reports. Only material published after the National Apology (February 2008) was considered because the Apology represented a turning point in the Australian government's stated position towards the Aboriginals.

Publications from FaHCSIA were chosen on the basis of a policy of action towards Aboriginals. Two thirds of the final research (three articles, two statements, and three reports) is from FaHCSIA. As FaHCSIA is the main department in charge of creating policies regarding Aboriginals, this majority makes sense. Of the remaining research, one article is from RA and two statements and one report are from AHRC. Although FaHCSIA, AHRC and RA are all institutions of the state, the approach Aboriginal affairs from different viewpoints. FaHCSIA is motivated by managing the Aboriginals, AHRC is concerned with human rights and justice, and RA focuses on how the state can move forward. Therefore, FaHCSIA will be analyzed separately from AHRC and RA.

Framework

A framework was adapted in order to analyze the publications and understand governmentality principles inherent to the texts. The framework looks at four questions aimed at extracting and comprehending the meaning of the publications:

1. How are Aboriginals named and referred to linguistically? What words are used to describe them and what do those words convey? How do those words contribute to the greater concept of social exclusion/inclusion?

2. What traits, characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to the Aboriginals?

3. What are the goals of the publications? How, if at all, are the goals attempting to change the behavior of Aboriginals?

4. What do the publications say about the future of Aboriginals in the Australian state? [33]

These questions seek to discover the attitudes inherent in the society and how they are then extrapolated into the responsibility of the institutions. The questions also consider the attitudes towards a state of reconciliation for the Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals.

Limitations

Limitations to the analysis must also be considered before progressing to the Aboriginal history and the analysis. First, the Aboriginal history was determined by the use of history as other authors had interpreted it. These interpretations are subject to influences in those authors' lives and, just as the publications are subject to the laws of government, so too are the historical records. Care was taken to ensure the history was an unbiased relation of the treatment of Aboriginals. However, without personally researching the government documents, it is possible

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[33] Ibid, 206-207.

that some elements of influence of the authors may be represented in the history. Second, publications were considered only if they were published after February 2008, it limits the amount of publications in the sample. Also limiting the size of the sample was the need for the publications to address reconciliation or social exclusion/inclusion. Because of the smaller sample size, the risk exists that these publications might not represent the whole current situation of Aboriginals in Australia. Finally, data, for both the history and the current policies, was researched and analyzed from the viewpoint of the mainstream society. There is little Aboriginal perspective besides that presented in the publications from AHRC.

Aboriginal History in Australia

Aboriginal history does not start with the introduction of the colonizers; rather, Aboriginal history starts tens of thousands of years earlier. It is estimated that the ancestors of the Aboriginals entered Australia around 50,000 years ago when low sea levels allowed the ancestors to cross from South East Asia.[34] In fact, it is estimated that the number of Aboriginals that had existed in Australia before colonization could number in the hundreds of millions, assuming a generation of twenty-five years over the 50,000 years.[35] Because of their isolation from the rest of the world, the Aboriginal peoples were able to continue a distinct culture, considered one of the oldest and purest peoples and cultures in the world.[36] Aboriginals were established throughout the entire Australian continent, with a multitude of groups, tribes, languages and customs. Although they did not have villages or towns, preferring instead to move throughout their lands, Aboriginals had extremely close ties to their lands.

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[34] Philip Clarke, *Where the Ancestors Walked* (Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2003), 5.; John Rickard, *Australia: A cultural history* (New York: Longman Inc., 1988), 4.
[35] Clarke, 10.
[36] Frank Welsh, *Australia: A new history of the great southern land* (New York: The Overlook Press, 2004), 16.

The supposed 'lack of civilization' led largely to the idea of *terra nullius*[37] perpetuated by the British when they came to Australia in 1788. Because the British saw the naked Aboriginals as lower on the civilization ladder, they believed them to have no right to the land, due to the facts that they would not cultivate the ground, build houses, remain stationary, or tend a flock of sheep.[38] This belief is one of the main problems between Aboriginals and the colonizers – because the British believed Australia to be no man's land, they did not engage in any treaties or land agreements during the acquisition of land or with regards to the treatment of Aboriginals. In fact, this original belief that the Aboriginals were inferior people started the entire concept of social exclusion/inclusion within the colonies and which was later incorporated into the state governments. The idea that 'these other people' did not fit into what the British society deemed proper to performing and living within society meant the Aboriginals were immediately seen as a threat to the British way of life.

Colonial governments built the knowledge of the colonies; they were defining what knowledge was and was not, which ultimately led to the colonies having power over the Aboriginals. In order for the colonial governments to have legitimacy, it became necessary to define what forms of knowledge were proper, or conducive to the common good. The settlers' knowledge was needed in order for settlers to have a functioning society. Therefore, Aboriginal knowledge became mostly useless in the colonial societies and settler knowledge became the knowledge needed to participate in society. In this way, the colonies were able to gain power over the Aboriginals by transforming the knowledge needed to succeed.

During the colonization of Australia, the Aboriginal population decreased to about one sixth of its original number, due to direct killings of Aboriginals and by diseases introduced by

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[37] Latin for 'land belonging to no one'
[38] Rickard, 53.

the colonizers.[39] Part of the violence towards the Aboriginals was attributed to fights breaking out over land and resources, however, part of the violence was indiscriminate killings.[40] The practice of indiscriminately murdering Aboriginals to teach them to leave settlers alone was particularly prevalent during the period of the 1840s to the 1880s. Although it did not have official support from the colonies, support was present because the colonial legislative councils[41] did nothing to stop the murders.[42] This indirect support shows how the perceptions of the people had been absorbed by the colonial governments and therefore was woven into the concept of what behavior was appropriate.

Mostly, Aboriginals were dealt with through Aboriginal Welfare Boards, which had the purpose of maintaining the existence of Aboriginals in certain areas and were run by an Aboriginal Protector.[43] Aboriginal Welfare Boards were formed by the colonial governments and were the main form of control over the Aboriginals. The Aboriginal Protector, who was in charge of a Welfare Board, was tasked with overseeing every element of the Aboriginals' lives. Separate areas of land, or reserves, were set aside for the Aboriginals to live while under the 'protection' of the Aboriginal Welfare Board.[44] Often, these reserves, along with European missionaries, tried to change the Aboriginal way of life so that it might be more palatable to settlers, however this result was rarely the case.[45] The Aboriginals were believed to be a dying peoples who would soon completely disappear from Australia. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and into the beginning of the twentieth century, the idea was to 'smooth the dying

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[39] A.A. Abbie, *The Original Australians* (New York: American Elsevier Publishing Company, Inc., 1969), 231.
[40] A.P. Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1964), 341.
[41] The legislative councils were the colonies' form of government. They are the precursors to the Parliaments in the states.
[42] Elkin, 341.
[43] Abbie, 233-234.
[44] J.C. Altman and W. Sanders, "From exclusion to dependence: Aborigines and the welfare state in Australia," in *Social Welfare with Indigenous Peoples* eds. John Dixon and Robert Scheurell (New York: Routledge, 1995), 207.
[45] Clarke, 201.

pillow.'[46] To the state governments, the belief that Aboriginals were inferior and needed to be taken care of further laid the groundwork for their exclusion from citizenship and a right to their own lands. They were regarded as a population that would hopefully no longer exist, allowing the state to have one form of government and not multiple ones to deal with the different peoples.

Indeed, in 1901, when the six separate colonies of Australia federated to become the Commonwealth of Australia, the constitution they adopted mentioned Aboriginals twice and only by way of exclusion. In Section 51 of the Constitution, it declares that the Commonwealth Parliament has the power to make laws with respect to any race except for the Aboriginal race in any state. This section leaves the power to manage Aboriginals with the individual state governments. Section 127 states that Aboriginal people are not to be counted in the census. This section means that for purposes of the Commonwealth's spending, Aboriginal peoples were not to be included as there were not seen as deserving of state money being spent on their welfare.[47] While neither of these sections of the Constitution denies the Aboriginals of their citizenship as British citizens or then further as Australian citizens,[48] the people of the state held the responsibility to ensure Aboriginal rights were being upheld, "Commonwealth and state parliaments, governments and bureaucracies systematically excluded Aboriginal people from basic citizenship rights and entitlements. They, rather than the Constitution, were to blame."[49] From this quotation it is possible to see how the state policies are a reflection of the attitudes of

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[46] Rickard, 62.
[47] Brian Galligan and Winsome Roberts, *Australian Citizenship* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2004), 165-167.
[48] All individuals in Australia born after 1869 were considered British subjects.
[49] John Chesterman and Brian Galligan, *Citizens without rights: Aborigines and Australian Citizenship* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 82.

society. Proper conduct towards the Aboriginals then became engrained within the state institutions.

The belief that Aboriginals were going to die out as a race was maintained through to the 1920s, evidenced by the continued use of welfare boards that viewed Aboriginals as wards of the state incapable of self-management. However, the numbers of full blood and mixed blood Aboriginals were beginning to increase, forcing the states to rethink their policies towards the Aboriginals.[50] Beginning around 1910 and continuing on for at least sixty years, the state Parliaments enacted a policy of taking Aboriginal children from their families and placing them in the care of white families. The purpose was to force the Aboriginal children to lose their 'Aboriginality,' allowing them to better fit in with mainstream society. In the mid 1920s, Aboriginal political associations began to form, with the Australian Aborigines Progressive Association in 1924 and then with the Australian Aborigines League in 1932.[51] While neither of these organizations was able to influence policy, they were at least able to give voice to a population that had been excluded and marginalized for the past 150 years.

By the late 1930s, as the states finally formally recognized that the Aboriginal population was not dying out but increasing, they turned to the policy of assimilation. The idea of this policy was to gradually phase out the Aboriginal race so that the Aboriginals would be more like the white population. The stated purpose of assimilation was to have the Aboriginals " . . . Attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs, hopes, and loyalties as other

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[50] Abbie, 235.
[51] Galligan and Roberts, 171.

Australians."[52] The actual purpose of assimilation was to force the Aboriginals to abandon their history, culture, language, and beliefs and instead adopt those of the mainstream society. They would be judged on their ability to fit in and conform to the standards of mainstream society. This policy was an attempt at reshaping the behavior of Aboriginals to fit in with what was considered acceptable within society.

The policies of assimilation continued through the 1950s and 1960s until a larger Aboriginal rights movement started. Spurred on by the Civil Rights Movement in America, Aboriginals began protesting their treatment by society and began demanding civil rights and land rights. Although there had been Aboriginal protest prior to the American Civil Rights Movement, Aboriginals were inspired by the similar plight of African Americans in America.[53] The use of non-violent protest to highlight to the mainstream society issues the Aboriginals faced was also encouraged by the American Civil Rights Movement.[54] In 1967 Aboriginals received national recognition – a referendum[55] was passed that repealed both Sections 51 and 127, effectively giving the Commonwealth government the right to legislate on behalf of Aboriginals, as well as Aboriginals being counted in the census.[56] Despite this 'winning of rights,' Aboriginals were still discriminated against and considered inferior within the white society. One example of their non-violent protest started in 1972, when, in order to show to both politicians and the mainstream society that their situation was as important as any other foreign peoples, Aboriginal activists set up a 'tent embassy' outside of Parliament.[57] In 1979 they demanded a

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[52] Dixon and Scheurell, 208.
[53] Rickard, 240.
[54] Galligan and Roberts, 177.
[55] Changes to the Australian Constitution, known as referendums, need to be agreed upon by the majority of the population of Australia in order to be passed.
[56] Galligan and Roberts, 175.
[57] Rosemary Neill, *White Out: How Politics is Killing Black Australia* (Crows Nest, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 2002), 5.

treaty calling for five percent of GNP to be applied to Aboriginal purposes.[58] Official state policies during this time had moved past assimilation and on to 'self management,' whereby the Aboriginals were expected to take advantage of the institutional welfare programs.[59] The late 1970s and early 1980s saw some Crown[60] land being given to Aboriginals, but these policies did not address the position of Aboriginals within the mainstream society. Having been excluded from politics and society for almost 200 years, merely allowing Aboriginals to have land would not stop the discriminatory and exclusionary practices that had become intrinsic to Indigenous policies.

The 1990s exhibited a change in behaviors towards the Aboriginals. In 1992, the High Court of Australia decided in *Mabo vs. Queensland* that Aboriginals possessed a native title to the land of Australia, overturning the original concept of *terra nullius*. In 1996, the Court decided that native title could exist simultaneously with contemporary land rights in *Wik vs. Queensland*. These two court cases not only gave Aboriginals a chance to return to their lands, they also reaffirmed the Commonwealth's constitutional power to override the individual states decisions about Aboriginal affairs.[61] In 1995, due to pressure from Aboriginal groups to expose the truth of previous policies, Parliament requested a formal inquiry into the state's Indigenous policies. Two years later, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission published a report detailing the treatment. One of the most important findings of the report was "Nationally we can conclude with confidence that between one and three and one in ten Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families and communities in the period from approximately

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[58] Welsh, 541.
[59] Dixon and Scheurell, 215.
[60] Land belonging to the Australian state
[61] Galligan and Roberts, 178.

1910 until 1970."[62] The report, which named the children the 'Stolen Generation,' was met with controversy, as some people believed that the number of Aboriginals and the negative treatment involved was overstated. Nonetheless, the report was significant because it exposed to the entire society that Aboriginal people had been discriminated against and considered incapable of managing their own affairs. Despite many people in Australia, white and Aboriginal, calling for an official apology from the Commonwealth Parliament, the political party[63] at the time believed that responsibility did not fall to them for the actions of the past. By not accepting responsibility for previous transgressions, the Commonwealth government was basically perpetuating continued discrimination against Aboriginals. Not acknowledging former wrongs gave passive acceptance to the previous treatment of the Aboriginals and did not condemn individuals within the society from behaving in the same way.

The political party in power continued the status quo treatment of Aboriginals through until 2007. The next significant denial of Aboriginal rights occurred in September of 2007, when the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration states, among other rights, that Indigenous peoples should have the right to self-determine their own identities and the right to their traditional lands. It requires states to consult with Indigenous peoples when adopting or implementing policies that might affect those peoples. It condemns forced assimilation, especially the removal of children.[64] Four countries voted against the adoption of the Declaration – Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States, seemingly the four most advanced nations that would stand to lose the most

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[62] Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*, (Sydney: Commonwealth of Australia, 1997).

[63] Australia has two main political parties: Labour, which is left wing and liberal, and Liberal, which is right wing and conservative.

[64] United Nations, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples" (New York: United Nations, September 13, 2007). See Articles 3,4, 8, 19, 26.

from having to treat their Indigenous populations differently. These four nations all cited similar reasons for their opposition to the Declaration, commenting that the articles on self-determination and Indigenous land rights would contradict their constitutions and current laws. However, in 2008, Australia decided to reverse their decision and support the adoption of the Declaration. It is through this reversal and other actions of the Commonwealth government that it is possible to see some efforts being made to attempt to be more inclusive of the Aboriginal population.

One of these efforts happened in 2008, when Kevin Rudd, the newly elected Prime Minister of Australia, officially apologized to the Aboriginal people. He recognized previous Parliaments supported the acts and laws against the Aboriginal people and specifically the Stolen Generation.[65] In addition to accepting responsibility for the actions of past Parliaments, he also stated that the apology alone was not enough and that progress would have to be made to have Indigenous and non-Indigenous people reaching equal achievement and living standards. Essentially, Rudd's apology acts as a way for the state to declare that former conduct and discrimination against Aboriginals is no longer acceptable and that every Australian needs to change their behavior towards the Aboriginals to be more accepting and inclusive their differences.

Regardless, Aboriginals today face lower human development indicators than that of the non-Indigenous people of Australia. According to a report by the U.N., the Human Development Index (HDI) of non-Indigenous Australians was third globally, while the Aboriginals' HDI was ranked 103.[66] The report found that Aboriginal life expectancy was about twenty years less than

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[65] Kevin Rudd, "Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples" (Speech, Parliament House, Canberra, February 13 2008).

[66] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* (New York: United Nations, 2009).

that of non-Indigenous people, in addition to Aboriginals falling behind non-Indigenous in virtually every other aspect of life. It is now important to examine the current policies of the state to discover if progress towards a state and society inclusive of Aboriginals is being achieved.

Analysis of Data

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

One of the most important elements of the discourse analyzed was the way that the various publications referred to the Aboriginals. Several different terms were used: 'Indigenous Australians,' 'Indigenous people,' 'Indigenous peoples,' 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,' 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,' and 'Australia's Indigenous population.' Mainstream society was referred to as 'non-Indigenous Australians' or 'other Australians.' These terms have significant meaning when they are considered within the context of governmentality and social exclusion/inclusion.

First, the term 'Indigenous Australian' reaffirms that while the Aboriginals are Indigenous and different from the non-Indigenous, they are still a part of the Australian state. The term is most often used as such, "The Australian government has made a strong commitment to Closing the Gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians."[67] This term reinforces the power and existence of the Australian state but at the same time recognizes that Indigenous peoples are different. It justifies different treatment towards the Aboriginals because they are different.

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[67] Department of Families, Housing Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs, "National Indigenous Representative Body – Update 2009," Commonwealth of Australia, http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/indigenous/progserv/engagement/NIRB/Pages/default.aspx last updated December 4 2009 (accessed April 14 2010).

While the terms 'Indigenous people'/'Indigenous peoples' and 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people'/'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' seem very similar, there can be significant difference in the use of 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' as opposed to 'Indigenous' as well as in the use of 'people' or 'peoples.' 'Indigenous' is a way to combine together all the individuals who are not non-Indigenous but at the same time do not have a distinct characteristic beyond that. By distinguishing between Indigenous and others non-Indigenous, it is easier to create a in-group/out-group dichotomy, which makes creating the principles of social exclusion/inclusion easier. "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" recognizes that these people are distinct and separate races who cannot be joined together as just Indigenous. Although this distinction is not always clear in the publications, there is one report which never interchanged the two terms.[68] This anomaly may present a growing recognition that Aboriginals are more than just an indigenous group of Australia but a race distinct to themselves. The use of the term 'people' is used as a general term for a collection of persons that have similar qualities: "Major reforms to employment programs are ensuring more Indigenous people can get the skills needed to get a job"[69] or "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise 2.5 per cent of the Australian population."[70] The use of 'peoples,' however, refers to a distinct and separate group. In respect to this definition, 'peoples' is used much less often and left out more purposefully. In the 2010 Prime Minister's Report on Closing the Gap, neither 'Indigenous peoples' nor 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' was used. This specific use of terminology is a way to deny recognition of a separate group of people whose existence could

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[68] Department of Families, Housing Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs, *Voices from the Campfires: Establishing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2009).

[69] Department of Families, Housing Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs, *Closing the Gap: Prime Minister's Report 2010* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2010) 7.

[70] Ibid, 6.

undermine the legitimacy of the state. Further still, the Prime Minister's Report used the term 'Australia's Indigenous population,' which maintains the Indigenous position as being a part of Australian society and non-distinct. Both of these uses of words are ways to deny Aboriginals their right to self-determine.[71]

Aboriginals are most often classified as being at a disadvantage when compared to the mainstream society, referred to as 'Indigenous disadvantage.' This term is speaking of the difference in living standards between the Aboriginals and mainstream society: "Our core business centres on closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage, one of the cornerstones of Reconciliation."[72] This disadvantage underscores the current policies of the state institutions and the stated goals. "Closing the Gap" is the main policy objective of the current political party and the program is aimed at raising Aboriginal living standards to the same levels as the mainstream society. This objective was reflected in many of the publications as the key to including the Aboriginals in with mainstream society. By holding Aboriginals to the standards of the mainstream society and implementing programs that work to secure the Aboriginals achieve those standards, the belief is that Aboriginals will be more capable of participating in Australian society. This desire was expressed in the Statement on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: "We want Indigenous peoples to participate fully in Australia's democracy. Australia's Indigenous peoples must be able to realise their full potential in Australian and international affairs."[73] This process is actually a method of taking the Aboriginals who have been historically excluded from the civil process and allowing them to, and ensuring they do, participate in their civic duties.

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[71] Tully, 55.

[72] Department of Families, Housing Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs, *Reconciliation Action Plan: July 2009 to July 2011* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2009).

[73] Jenny Macklin, "Statement on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (Statement, Parliament House, Canberra, April 3 2009).

Ideally, this process would allow them to become socially included – participating in society by exhibiting the proper economic and civic behavior. This concept ties in with another stated method of the Prime Minister's Close the Gap program: "The Government's commitment to closing the gap is driven by three policy imperatives: [to] address decades of under-investment in services, infrastructure and governance; *rebuild the positive social norms that underpin daily routines like going to school and work*, and which foster community-led solutions; and re-set the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians" (italics added).[74] Through this statement it is possible to understand one of the main reasons why Aboriginals were excluded – different social norms. The mainstream society, hundreds of years ago, decided that their way of life, or the norms that guided how they behaved, was the proper behavior. Now, the state is once more instilling the norms that conduct the correct behavior, by calling them 'positive' and stating that by absorbing the norms of the mainstream society, Aboriginals will be able to achieve higher living standards. It is possible to see the actual act of governing through this statement – the state is actively trying to change the rules that construct how Aboriginals behave. The purpose, of course, is to have Aboriginals fit in with the society at large. However, social inclusion cannot occur solely due to the programs – it will require a change in the attitudes of the society as a whole. The Social Inclusion Agenda addresses the promotion of social inclusion, stating that it rests on " . . . helping change attitudes and perceptions that underpin exclusion."[75] Even if Aboriginals achieve the same living standards as the mainstream society and exhibit the proper behavior, social exclusion relies on the attitudes of the society changing as well.

Besides the Close the Gap program, there is little mention of the future of Aboriginals. The belief is that by ending Indigenous disadvantage, Aboriginals will be on the same level as

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[74] *Closing the Gap: Prime Minister's Report 2010*, 3.

[75] Ursula Stephens, "Rudd Government's Social Inclusion Agenda" (Speech, Australian Parliament, Canberra, March 13 2008).

Australians. There is no mention of self-determination, the term which originally caused the Australian government to vote against the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. None of the publications analyzed expressly mentioned the Aboriginals and their right to self-determination. In the speech reversing Australia's decision on the Declaration, the only mention of self-determination is in reference to a part of the Declaration: "Through the Article on self-determination, the Declaration recognises the entitlement of Indigenous peoples to have control over their destiny and to be treated respectfully."[76] Other mentions of Aboriginals' futures in the Department's publications refer to Aboriginals' responsibility in managing their own affairs. Considered through the context of Aboriginal affairs within the state, this new involvement can be seen as a step forward. For example, the purpose of the National Indigenous Representative Body is in ". . . formulating policy and advice – to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people contribute to and play a lead role in policy and program development on issues that affect them and that an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective is provided on issues across the government."[77] This policy, however, is another way for Aboriginals to fit in with the society and the rules by which society is governed: "These challenging targets mean that it is critical that Indigenous Australians are involved in developing policies and programs to improve their lives and that their views are represented to Government through credible mechanisms."[78] Aboriginals will be able to participate in society, but only if they do so through the systems that have been developed by the mainstream society.

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[76] Macklin.

[77] Department of Families, Housing Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs, "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation," Commonwealth of Australia, http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/indigenous/pubs/healing/Pages/default.aspx last updated March 17 2010 (accessed April 14 2010).

[78] Ibid.

The Australian Human Rights Commission and Reconciliation Australia

Many of the same terms used by FaHCSIA were used by both RA and AHRC. The main difference was in the use of the terms 'First Australians' and 'First Peoples.' Clearly, these terms have different meanings, but both of them recognize that there were people who had a claim to Australia before it was colonized. The divergence in the terms comes with 'Australians,' which reinforces the legitimacy of the state and of what Aboriginals should become a part and 'Peoples,' which implies there was a separate and distinct group on Australia before it was colonized and that group has a right to a level of autonomy because of their first existence. The mention of 'First Peoples' was in a speech by Tom Calma, an Aboroginal man serving as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner.[79] His use of a term that accepts Aboriginals as a different people speaks to his background and his belief of what the appropriate terminology should be.

While there is still a focus on Indigenous disadvantage and closing the gap between Aboriginals and the rest of Australian society, there is also a focus on Aboriginal self-determination. Tom Calma states that the National Indigenous Representative Body will help to ". . . secure the economic and cultural independence of our peoples, and to enable us to truly experience self-determination, for the first time in this country."[80] In order to become economically independent, Aboriginals will have to interact within the mainstream society. This interaction will require them to exhibit the proper behavior, which should lead to social inclusion. At the same time, however, there is the desire for Aboriginals to be able to determine for themselves their place in society.

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[79] Tom Calma, "Kevin Cook Lecture – Looking Back, Looking Forward," (Speech, Sydney, January 26 2010).

[80] Tom Calma, "Our future in our hands" (Speech, National Press Club, Canberra, August 27 2009).

RA's goal is not self-determination, but rather an Australian state that recognizes Aboriginals as an integral part of Australia. While still maintaining the distinctness of the Aboriginal peoples, RA's implicit goal is one of social inclusion, "[Our vision is] An Australia that values and respects the special place, cultures, rights and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and where our relationships become the foundation for success and for our national wellbeing."[81] This form of social inclusion is interesting because it states that Aboriginals should be able to have a distinct position within Australian society. This position would allow them to become a part of the society while still maintaining a separate culture.

Conclusions

Current Australian policies show that the state has accepted that Aboriginals deserve every right that non-Indigenous Australians possess. However, the state still is not addressing the fundamental issue of self-determination. There can be no doubt that the Closing the Gap agenda is not helpful for the Aboriginal people. The state is taking actions to reduce the difference in life expectancy and other achievement standards. It will ensure that Aboriginals are as healthy, educated, and have the same capability to succeed in the mainstream society as every other Australian. Basically, the state is making concrete efforts to have the Aboriginals become a socially included group, capable of participating in society.

Is there a problem with following this policy? Without recognizing the Aboriginals as a separate and distinct peoples, yes, because the Aboriginals are expected to assimilate into the mainstream society. Assimilation would mean that while there is a recognition that the Aboriginals have a different culture, eventually Aboriginals would be expected to behave just as the mainstream society. Recognizing self-determination and Aboriginals as a separate and

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[81] Reconciliation Australia, "Who is Reconciliation Australia," Reconciliation Australia, available at http://www.reconciliation.org.au/home/about-ra/who-is-ra last updated February 2009 (accessed April 14 2010).

distinct peoples would allow them a form of autonomy within the society, while still accepting that they are not the same as the rest of society.

By instilling the proper behaviors and social norms in the Aboriginal peoples, the state will be able to have them behave within the institutions it has defined as appropriate. The National Indigenous Representative Body is one example of a result of exhibiting proper behavior. By approving this body, the state is recognizing that Aboriginals are different, but if the Aboriginals want to express their differing views, they must work within the system. Despite the new representation, Aboriginals will still be working within Australian society. This representation relates back to literature by Hindess and LaBonte, which stated that just allowing the formerly excluded to become included does not change the system that created the social exclusion/inclusion in the first place.

It was discussed earlier that the very essence of a person is shaped by their histories. At the beginning of colonization, Aboriginals and the settlers had completely different histories. However, over the past 220 years, Aboriginals and the now mainstream society influenced each group's history. There can be no going back to the original state, as both groups, but the Aboriginals especially, are fundamentally different. Australian society, both Aboriginals and mainstream, needs to recognize and embrace the differences that exist between the different peoples.

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