



The main challenge for those who agree with our findings is the poorly understood friction between bringing Indigenous Australians firmly into the national polity, and maintaining their exceptionalist status as inexorably different.

[Marcia Langton, 2013. "Indigenous Exceptionalism and the Constitutional 'Race Power'", *Space Place and Culture*.](#)

Nugget Coombs first provoked my thoughts on our disciplinary politics at an Institute of Aboriginal Studies conference in the 1970s. As the invited discussant on two days of ethnographic papers, he began, as I recall: 'One would never know, listening to all this anthropological research, that Aborigines are a colonised people'. The ethnographers had focussed on classical forms of Aboriginal culture rather than on temporal threats and strivings in relation to colonising forces.

Gillian Cowlishaw, "Tunnel Vision: Part One – Resisting post-colonialism in Australian anthropology." *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, August 2017.

In this paper I argue that decolonizing feminist theory requires that we foreground Indigenous struggles of freedom from settler colonisation, and hence that we foreground relationships to land and to sovereignty in our theories.

Allison Weir, "Decolonizing Feminist Freedom: Indigenous Relationalities,"

in Margaret A. McLaren, ed. *Decolonizing Feminism: Transnational Feminism and Globalization*, Rowman and Littlefield International: 2017.

Polities of

- body,
- kinship,
- Country,
- gender
- suzerainty

Peter8 HOURS AGO

Can we move out of the stone age and take our places in one of the world's richest, freest and successful nations.

The indigenous people can all have wonderful lives, if they look after themselves a little better. it is futile to complain about what happened 200 years ago, and time to look to the future. A lot of money, time and effort has been expended on these people for no meaningful gain. Yet, we know, they are as capable as any of us, and in many respects are athletically superior.

Dennis6 HOURS AGO

I wish some one would ask the aboriginal community Just what hasn't the white man given them over the years. Just about everything I would imagine.

Les5 HOURS AGO

An Indigenous Parliamentary Voice has been tried before - ATSIAC. And look how that ended. Indigenous Australians have the very same legal and constitutional rights as every other Australian, right now. They also have a raft of additional special rights as well. If only they could be convinced that their best interests lie in maximising the opportunities they already have.

Rodney6 HOURS AGO

Sovereignty, the Uluru Statement says, is "a spiritual notion: the ancestral ties between the land, or 'mother nature', and the ... people who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors".

this is the real difference between the western world and the indigenous belief system.

the western Christian based world believes the earth is an asset and we -own the earth-. the indigenous believe they are -OWNED by the earth-.

thus the 2 will never meet in agreement, hence the dilemma remains.

AND WE KEEP PAYING ALL THE COSTS.

Forne5 HOURS AGO

What I don't understand in all of this is unless you are a aboriginal of completely aboriginal blood lines then you also have another blood line which made you who you are today but that never seems to be acknowledged or taken into account. It just seems strange to me that some are in denial of their own family line.

As an Aboriginal person, my life is lived on two levels in relation to sovereignty: one is my *existence* within a nation (Australia) that regards itself as a sovereign state, and the other is as a *functioning* sovereign Indigenous being.

The identity of Aboriginal people was and remains formed through the cultural practices continued from ancestral inheritance, attachments to place through spiritual relationships and the communal structure of life.

... there is a sense and manifestations of being of a sovereign nation, no matter how depleted or damaged, and carrying the sense of belonging to that sovereign nation despite the historical and current efforts of the dominant culture and its remnant edifices of British imperialism.

Brady, Wendy. 2007. "That sovereign being: History matters", in Aileen Moreton Robinson, (ed.) *Sovereign Subjects: Indigenous Sovereignty Matters*. Allen and Unwin, Sydney. pp. 140-151.



In June of 1844, Richard Windeyer reprised considerations of the rights status that might be afforded Aborigines previously made in a public debate in 1842.

Colonial barrister and parliamentarian, Windeyer established an enduring legacy in his closing words: "*What means this whispering in the bottom of our hearts?*"



Movement towards recognition and treaty is significantly impeded with Windeyer's legacy extant, casting individual and national attention introspectively.

Historical Document
Richard Windeyer,
*On the Rights of the Aborigines
of Australia: A Lecture*

The following is the text of a lecture by Richard Windeyer, taken from the manuscript in the Mitchell Library, Sydney (Call No. MPL MA 1490). It is catalogued as c. 1842, however 1844 is more likely. On 29th April 1844 there was an advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald for a course of lectures at the City Theatre in Market Street arranged by the Commercial Reading-Rooms & Library: 'R. Windeyer Esq. M.C. June / Rights of the Aborigines'. Windeyer had spoken on the topic in 1842 in a debate, but what follows is the text of the later lecture in full. It has been prepared by Jim Windeyer, and is here presented with as little editorial intervention as possible. In the manuscript Richard Windeyer makes references to excerpts from other sources but does not transcribe them. As these passages are essential to his argument (and it is likely that he read them in his lecture), they have been included.

Ladies & Gentlemen

If it should at first sight appear presumptuous in me to select as the subject of a Lecture, 'The Rights of the aborigines of Australia', a topic recurring to particular course of study for its mastery upon which all are presumed to have settled opinions and with which you especially as Colonists of N.S.Wales are familiar, recollection of the absence of any systematic consideration of those rights and of the fruitlessness of all that has hitherto been said respecting them will perhaps supply a sufficient apology.

The Reverend Mr. Gunther, a missionary in connection with the Church of England established at Wellington Valley in his report for the same year has a passage on this subject not free from the misapprehensions but pregnant with meaning to those who really know aboriginal customs & character.

During the past year I have had particular opportunities to become acquainted with the nature of the absurd laws, the vile and superstitious practices of the aborigines and the unbounded sway which the old men exercise over their people to counteract every improvement. (p.176)



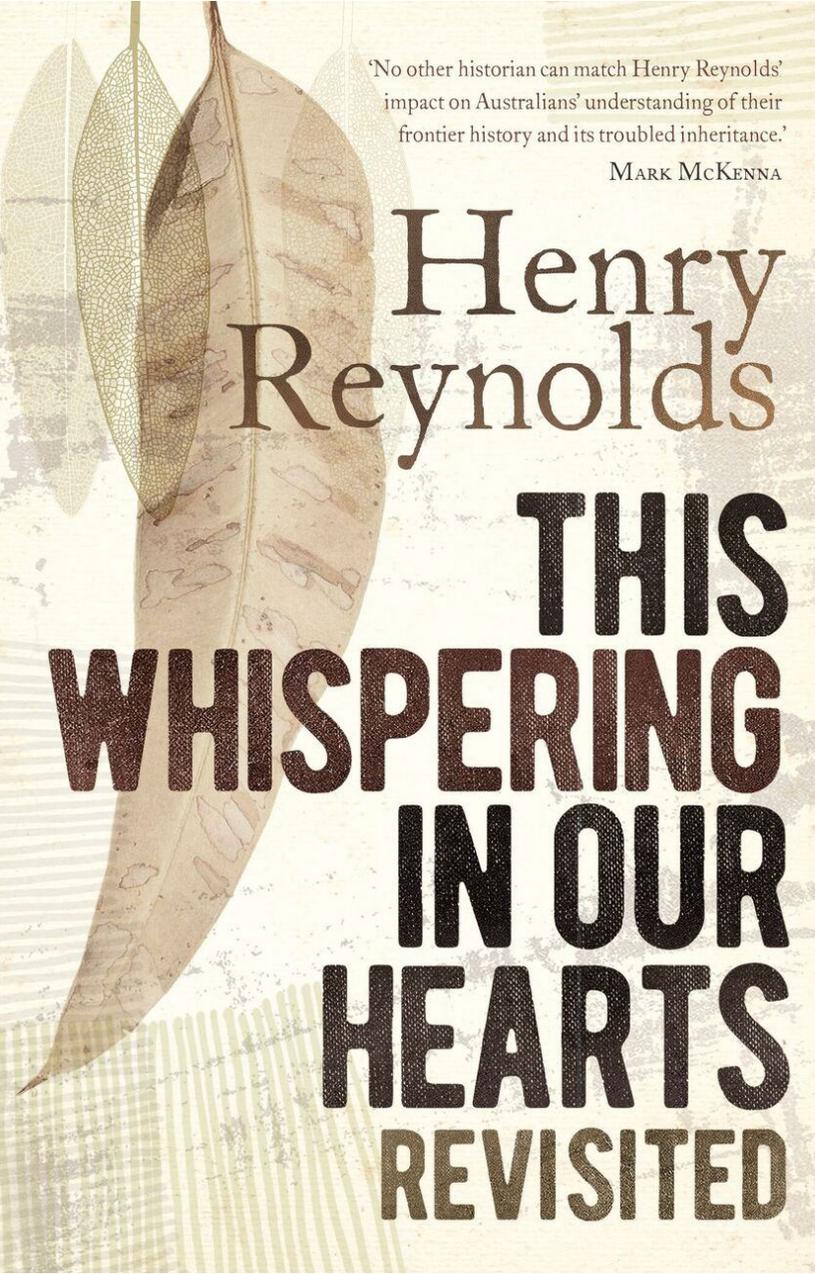
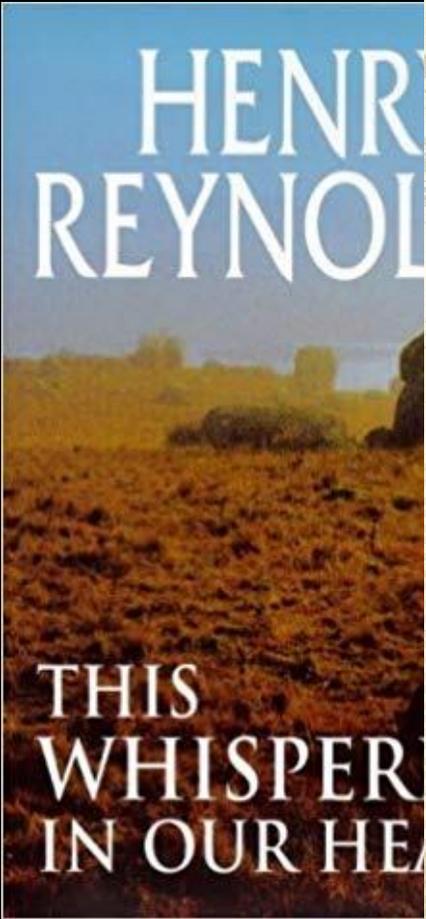
The Law of Parent & Child is not inconsistent with the rest of the Code under consideration. The facts I have hitherto brought before you I have verified both by my own experience and that of personal friends upon whose veracity I can rely. Those which I am about to state under this head I have had no direct experience of but they rest upon authority which cannot be doubted. The aborigines exercise the liberty not only of destroying but also of eating their children. (p.179)

... the discussion of which, Windyer sums up:

A hideous but true picture of the human mind unenlightened by religion or education – without knowledge of responsibility to God or to Man.
(p.181)

The consideration of the rights of the Aborigines to the enjoyment of their laws and customs, to the soil of the country, to its wild animals is closed. We pause – **How is it our minds are not satisfied? – What means this whispering in the bottom of our hearts?** – Conscience! What wouldst thou? Am I my brothers keeper?

I had intended to shew but that this lecture without so doing exceeds all reasonable length, what in my humble judgment might have been our answer and how it might yet be given. It must content me however if, on arriving at the end, you should feel we have only reached the beginning, for **the more debased, the more vile, the more wretched we have shewn the Aboriginal to be the more imperatively is the duty cast upon us by fit means of education to make him conscious of the dignity, the holiness of the *Mind* he shares with ourselves.** (p.194-195)



In 2015, Damien Freeman and Julian Leaser, now federal member for Berowra, established Uphold & Recognise. It prosecutes the case that upholding the Constitution and recognising Indigenous peoples are desirable and complementary objectives. Part of this proposal has involved finding a solution that would give effect to Indigenous aspirations whilst anticipating and addressing the concerns of constitutional conservatives. Uphold & Recognise therefore works in the moral tradition of Richard Windeyer.

David Allinson "This Whispering in Our Hearts", July 2017, (p.10)
<https://www.upholdandrecognise.com/publications/>

The logo features the letters 'UR' in a large, white, serif font. The 'U' and 'R' are connected at the top. The background is a dark teal color with a pattern of white hexagons that have a 3D effect, as if they are slightly raised or recessed.

HOLD & RECOGNISE

The proposal to recognise Indigenous peoples by giving them this voice in the parliamentary process, while also upholding the way in which the Constitution operates, has proven to be a popular one. Prosecuting the case at a referendum, however, will require that Australians see this as not only a practical way of redressing Indigenous disadvantage but also as an unprecedented opportunity to remedy our hardened hearts.

(Allinson p.13)





Like all true conservatives, Tony (Abbott) has a great appreciation of the importance of where we live and grow up for our understanding of ourselves and our values. **It's also telling that he's spent time in remote Indigenous communities, so that he can better understand what matters to them.** He also reminds us that as our sense of an Australian national identity strengthens, our British and Aboriginal heritage becomes incorporated into our sense of Australia, along with our multicultural society.

(Sean Gordon, "Claiming the Common Ground for Recognition", p3)
<https://www.upholdandrecognise.com/publications/>

“What we can’t do is endlessly subsidise lifestyle choices if those lifestyle choices are not conducive to the kind of full participation in Australian society that everyone should have,”



“If people choose to live miles away from where there’s a school, if people choose not to access the school of the air, if people choose to live where there’s no jobs, obviously it’s very, very difficult to close the gap,” he said.

“It is not unreasonable for the state government to say if the cost of providing services in a particular remote location is out of all proportion to the benefits being delivered,” Abbott said. “Fine, by all means live in a remote location, but there’s a limit to what you can expect the state to do for you if you want to live there.”

Tony Abbott, March 2015



Amid the chaos that was parliament's final sitting day for the year, Tony Abbott got to his feet and cleared his throat.

"Back when prime minister," he said, introducing himself with a descriptor as unnecessary as it was telling of what was to come,

"I used to observe that to live in Australia is to have won the lottery of life – and that's true, unless you happen to be one of those whose ancestors have been here for tens of thousands of years."

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/2018/12/08/abbotts-tour-himself/15441876007239>

The Expert Panel recommendations 2012:

- That section 25 be repealed;
- That section 51(xxvi) be repealed *and* a new section be inserted:

Section 51A Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

- That a new section 116A be inserted:

Section 116A Prohibition of racial discrimination

- That there be a properly resourced public education program to prepare for the referendum.



ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from 'time immemorial', and according to science *n* ago.

This sovereignty is a *spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our* the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty mill link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unpe cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our *torment of our powerlessness.*

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a *rightful place* in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.

Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: *the coming together after a struggle.* It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

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This sovereignty is a *spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or 'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty.* It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is *the torment of our powerlessness.*

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a *rightful place* in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

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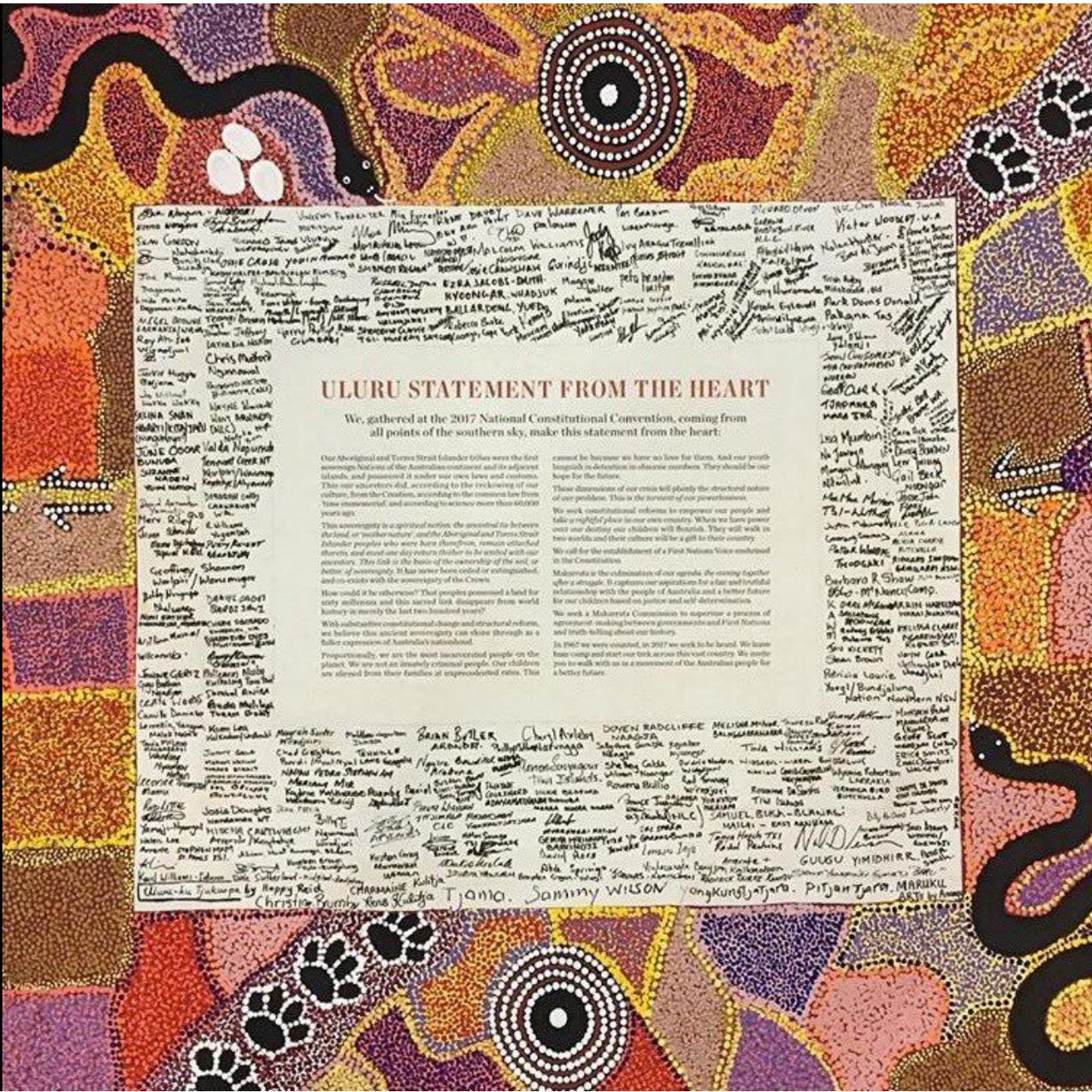


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The[Bakhtian] chronotope as a formally constitutive category determines to a significant degree the image of man in literature as well. The image of [The Aborigine] is always intrinsically chronotopic." (Bakhtin: 84 - 85)

The mobilisation of the chronotope that whispered in Richard Windeyer's heart distracts us from dialogue, and redirects us to focus again on what murmurs might be in our own hearts.



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This sovereignty is a spiritual notion, the ancestral law between the land, or 'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were here throughout, remain unchanged, abiding, and must one day return (either to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

Progressively, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are affected from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no law for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is the context of our powerlessness.

We seek constitutional reform to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny, our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.

Makarrata is the culmination of our struggle, the coming together after a struggle. It captures our aspirations for a fair and trusted relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were excluded, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We have been wrong and start our task across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a statement of the Australian people for a better future.

(The following names are arranged in columns around the text, representing the signatories to the statement.)

Alan Angwin, Andrew Baynes, Sean Gordon, ... (names continue in columns)

Brian Syler, Chris Arvanit, Doreen Radcliffe, ... (names continue in columns)

Uluru to Yulkoo by Happy Reid, Christiana Pambly, Roxa Kalka, Tjanaia, Jammy Wilson, ... (names continue in columns)

Whereas three stories make Australia: the *Ancient Indigenous Heritage* which is its foundation, the *British Institutions* built upon it, and the adorning *Gift of Multicultural Migration*:

And whereas Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the First Nations of the Australian continent and its islands, possessed under ancient laws and customs, according to the reckoning of culture, from the Creation, according to the common law, from time immemorial, and according to science for more than 65 millennia. This is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or mother nature, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with their ancestors. We recognise and honour the First Nations who discovered Australia as their sovereign possession, the oldest continuing civilisation in the world.

And whereas those who sailed the First Fleet landing at Sydney Cove carried upon their shoulders the common law of England, when the sovereignty of the British Crown was proclaimed. The rule of law, parliamentary government and the Australian English language have their provenance in Britain. From eyes on board ship, this was a settlement, and from eyes on shore, an invasion. We recognise the eve of the 25th and the dawn of the 26th January 1788 as a profound time for all of us, when Ancient Australia became the New Australia. We recognise and honour the Britons and Irish – convict and free – who founded our institutional heritage, making our Commonwealth from 1901, a great democracy of the globe.

And whereas peoples the earth over brought their multitude of cultural gifts to Australia. That we celebrate diversity in unity makes us a beacon unto the world. We recognise and honour our New Australians. When we renounced the White Australia policy, we made a better Commonwealth. We show that people with different roots can live together, that we can learn to read the image-bank of others, that we can look across the frontiers of our differences without prejudice or illusion.

Now therefore, with earnest and open hearts and strong desire to fill the lacuna, after more than two centuries, we make this *Declaration of Australia and the Australian People*, to see our reflections in each other, and recognise one and all:

Our history is replete with shame and pride, failure and achievement, fear and love, cruelty and kindness, conflict and comity, mistake and brilliance, folly and glory. We will not shy from its truth. Our storylines entwine further each generation. We will ever strive to leave our country better for our children.

We will honour the Uluru Statement from the Heart and make good upon it. Whilst English is the shared language of our Commonwealth, mother tongues name the country and sing its song-lines – and we do not want for them to pass from this land. They are part of the cultural and natural wonder of our country that is the campfire of our national soul, and the pledge of care and custody we owe our ancestral dead and unborn descendants.

After the battles of our frontier wars fell silent, diggers from the First Nations joined their Settler and New Australian comrades in the crucibles of Gallipoli, the Western Front and Kokoda, and there distilled the essence of our values:

- That our mateship is and will always be our enduring bond.
- That freedom and the fair go are our abiding ethic.
- That our virtues of equality and irreverence give us courage to have a go.
- That we know we can and always will count on each other.

Three stories make us one: Australians.



It's every performer's dream. To stand in front of the largest live audience you are ever likely to see and perform the national anthem. Last month I was invited by the AFL to sing Advance Australia Fair at the 2015 Grand Final.

I knew it was honour to be asked but I simply can no longer sing the words "for we are young and free".

DEBORAH CHEETHAM

The Conversation 20 Oct 2015

Over the past half-century Australians have come to realise much about the persistence, sophistication and success of Aboriginal Australia. The 1967 referendum, the [Bringing Them Home Report](#) (1997) and the [Apology to the Stolen Generations](#) (2008) have all caught the nation's attention and raised awareness of our shared history.

But many people have remained content to leave it there, to settle for what little information they received during school years. For such people, most of Australia's Indigenous cultures remain unwrapped, unacknowledged and unexplored. They are content to know that Indigenous culture exists without troubling themselves to find meaningful engagement. More worryingly, though not surprisingly, many still toil at a kind of all-consuming denial, which demands an extraordinary amount of commitment and energy to maintain.

Australians let us stand as one, upon this sacred land
A new day dawns, we're moving on to trust and understand.
Combine our ancient history and cultures everywhere,
To bond together for all time, advance Australia fair.
With joyful hearts then let us sing, advance Australia fair.

...

Australians let us all be one, with peace and harmony.
Our precious water, soil and sun, grant life for you and me.
Our land abounds in nature's gifts to love, respect and share,
And honouring the Dreaming, advance Australia fair.
With joyful hearts then let us sing, advance Australia fair.

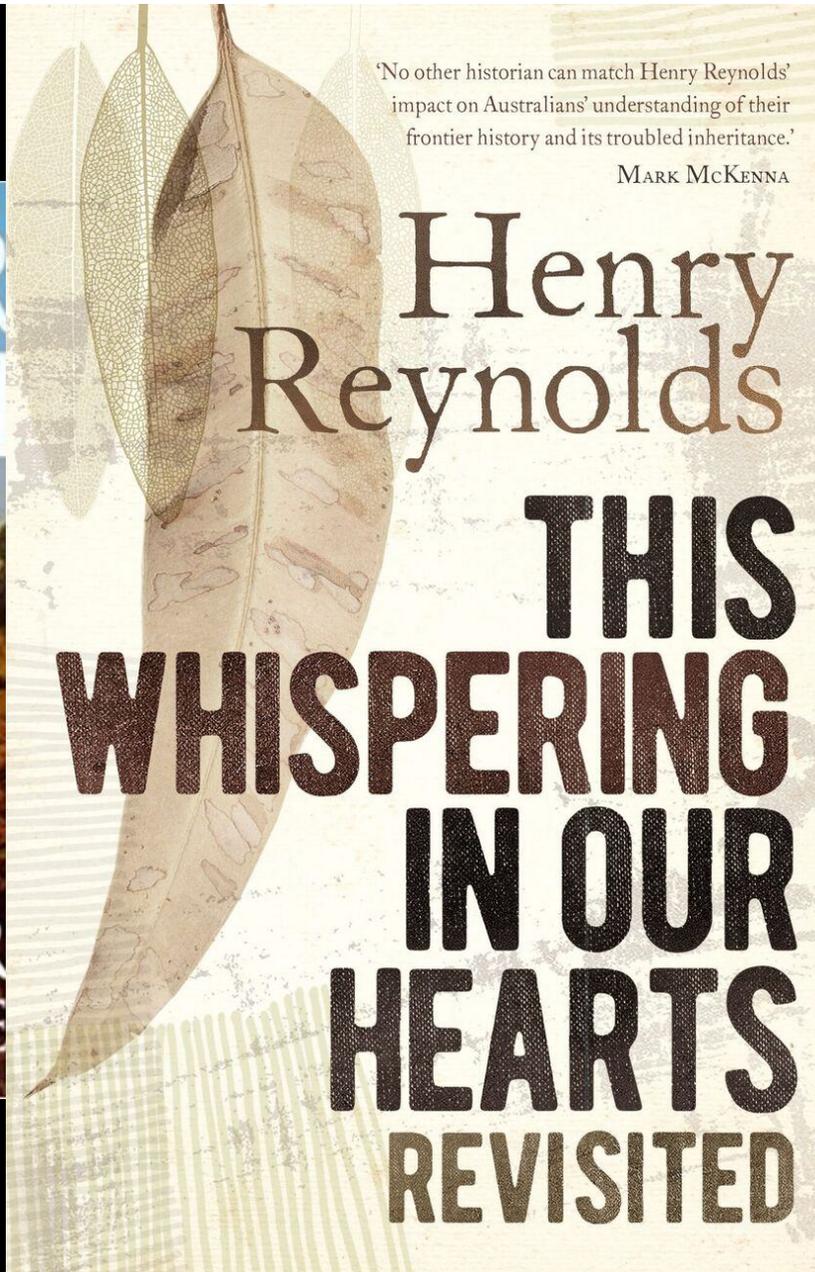
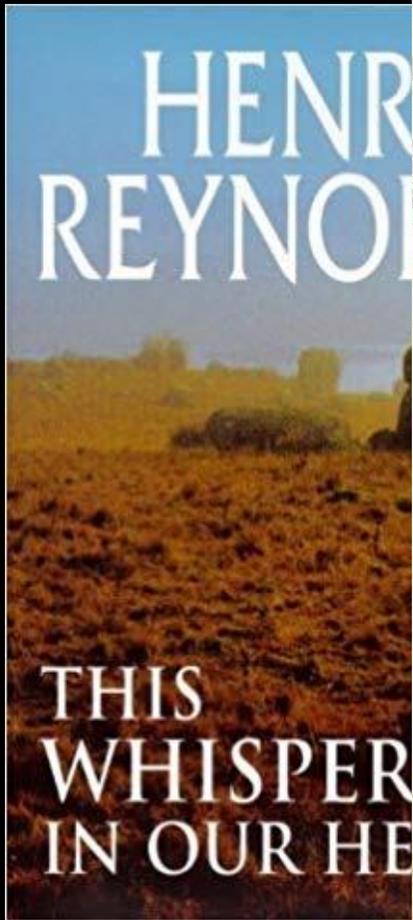
...

Australians let us strive as one, to work with willing hands.
Our Southern Cross will guide us on, as friends with other lands.
While we embrace tomorrow's world with courage, truth and care,
And all our actions prove the words, advance Australia fair,
With joyful hearts then let us sing, advance Australia fair.

...

And when this special land of ours is in our children's care,
From shore to shore forever more, advance Australia fair.
With joyful hearts then let us sing, advance . . Australia . . fair.

<https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2015/11/06/judith-durhams-new-anthem-lyric-contemporary-australia>



'No other historian can match Henry Reynolds' impact on Australians' understanding of their frontier history and its troubled inheritance.'

MARK McKENNA

Henry
Reynolds

**THIS
WHISPERING
IN OUR
HEARTS
REVISITED**

If true reconciliation is ever consummated in Australia and justice is not only done but seen to be done, the moment will without doubt be applauded from beyond the grave by all those men and women who hoped in their own time that such an outcome might eventually result from the European colonisation of the continent. And then, after 200 years, the whispering in our hearts will be heard no more. (p.248)

