

JCU ePrints

This file is part of the following reference:

Petray, Theresa Lynn (2010) *Actions, reactions, interactions: the Townsville Aboriginal movement and the Australian state.* PhD thesis, James Cook University.

Access to this file is available from:

<http://eprints.jcu.edu.au/19028>



Actions, Reactions, Interactions

The Townsville Aboriginal Movement and the Australian State

Thesis submitted by
Theresa Lynn PETRAY
B.A. (Hons) St Lawrence University (NY)
in July 2010

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
School of Arts and Social Sciences
James Cook University

Statement of Access

I, the undersigned author of this work, understand that James Cook University will make this thesis available for use within the University Library and via the Australian Digital Theses network, and elsewhere as appropriate.

I understand that as an unpublished work, a thesis has significant protection under the Copyright Act and I do not wish to place any further restriction on access to this work.

Theresa L. Petray

(Date)

Statement of Sources

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is provided. Archival material is referenced in footnotes throughout the text, following the standards of historical writing.

Theresa L. Petray

(Date)

Statement on the Contributions of Others

This thesis was made possible by the following contributions:

Supervision

- Associate Professor Rosita Henry
- Associate Professor Glenn Dawes
- Cultural Mentor: Associate Professor Gracelyn Smallwood

Financial Assistance

- Endeavour International Postgraduate Research Scholarship
- Australian Federation of University Women - ACT Bursary
- Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Sciences Graduate Research Scheme
- Department of Anthropology, Archaeology and Sociology Postgraduate Grants

Other Assistance

- Adella Edwards, James Cook University Cartographer, who produced Figure 1.2, my fieldwork map.
- Rachael Cassells and Alf Wilson, who took several photographs which they have kindly agreed to let me reproduce here.

Every reasonable effort has been made to gain permission and acknowledge the owners of copyright material. I would be pleased to hear from any copyright owner who has been omitted or incorrectly acknowledged.

Ethics Declaration

The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted within the guidelines for research ethics outlined in the *National Statement on Ethics Conduct in Research Involving Human* (1999), the *Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice* (1997), the *James Cook University Policy on Experimentation Ethics. Standard Practices and Guidelines* (2001), and the *James Cook University Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice* (2001). The proposed research methodology received clearance from the James Cook University Experimentation Ethics Review Committee (approval number H 2695).

Theresa L. Petray

(Date)

Acknowledgements

Just as I write about the interconnectedness of social movements with their surrounding contexts, so to am I inextricably connected with those I have been lucky to know throughout my research.

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which I carried out my research, the Wulgurukaba and the Bindal people. More specifically, I am indebted to the generosity and openness of the people who live on that land and allowed me to work with them for my research. It is impossible to name everyone who helped, but I would like to single out Gracelyn Smallwood, Florence Onus, Janine Gertz, Lilian Willis, Stephanie Miller and Jim Gaston. Gracelyn was very generous in the way that she immediately accepted my research ideas and went out of her way to ensure I succeeded. She brought me along to meetings and events and made sure that I met a variety of people. Her enthusiasm for my research was sometimes greater than my own, but luckily Gracelyn's optimism is infectious and I am lucky to have worked with her. Everyone with whom I worked was equally generous with me, and I appreciate all that they have given me for this research. There are no doubt others who I am forgetting in this list, and for that I apologise.

The archival aspect of my research was much simpler than it could have been thanks to a number of people. The Australian Federation of University Women funded my accommodation in Canberra for several weeks of archival research, and Jocelyn Eskdale and the other women in ACT made sure I was comfortable and taken care of. Tilly Geary and other staff members at the Queensland State Archives expedited my search through the written history, as did the archival staff at the University of Queensland's Fryer Library, the

librarians and archivists at AIATSIS in Canberra and at the North Queensland Collection in the James Cook University Library.

More generally speaking, the process of doing a PhD is an intimidating prospect made manageable thanks to the support and guidance of those who have already made it through. In my experience, academics are a generous and inclusive group. Bob Torres and Abye Assefa, from my undergraduate university, made me realise that I could handle a PhD and gave me positive feedback even before my PhD journey began. At JCU, I have taken advantage of the presence of many people from various disciplines. Russell McGregor, Surin Maisrikrod, Robin Rodd, Marcus Barber, Brian Cheers, Doug Miles, Shelley Greer, Nigel Chang, and many, many more have listened to my thoughts and shared their own, helping with my thesis and confirming that academia is where I would like to end up. My travels outside of Townsville have confirmed that this generosity is not just a Townsville phenomenon. Sally Babidge opened up her Brisbane home to me more than once and gave lots of positive and encouraging feedback. David Martin and Julie Finlayson made me feel welcomed in Canberra and shared their personal memories on my research topic, giving me lots of leads to follow up. Many other anthropologists from around Australia have also given support and feedback during conferences which has helped me to clarify my thoughts and left me refreshed and excited about my research.

As helpful as it was to hear from those who have already been through the process, I am also grateful to those who went through it with me. My fellow postgraduate students have had a lot to do with my positive attitude throughout my research. From the start I have been surrounded by others who have given advice, kept me motivated, and sometimes commiserated with me. Lise Garond was very helpful as I tried to figure out just what a PhD student is meant to do, decided on my research topic, and made my way into the field. Later, the weekly morning tea session with other students helped to curb any feelings of isolation that are supposedly part and parcel of the PhD process. Chris Pam, Meegan Kilcullen, Diane Mobbs, Rhian Morgan, Laura Swanson

and Regina Andreasson-Vigo have all made the journey fun and interesting. Outside of JCU, Nick Osbaldiston has become a good friend as well as a co-author, and I appreciate his love of sociological theory.

But with regards to this thesis, the majority of assistance has come from my supervisors, Rosita Henry and Glenn Dawes. They have both been supportive and enthusiastic, despite the many, many drafts I sent their way. Rosita has heaped me with positive feedback and has gone out of her way to prepare me for life in academia. Rosita and Glenn have challenged my thinking, given me tips and hints, fixed my typos, helped me arrange my thoughts, and generally eased the process of learning how to be a researcher. They have also given me work, and made sure that I felt welcomed in the school and at conferences where I knew nobody.

Thanks are also due to those who helped me maintain a healthy work-life balance. My friends and family have always been excited for me, even when they are not quite sure what I am doing. Vivienne, Ruth and Heather have felt like a personal cheering squad and I appreciate the non-academic space they provide me with. My parents, Eve and Roger Townsend, my brother Ben Townsend and my sister Ann Higgs manage to bridge a 15,000 km distance and prop me up when I need it. And now that my parents are on facebook, they have a much clearer picture of what is happening in my life. My newest family members, the Coles, have also been welcoming and supportive of me and my work.

However, it is my immediate family, those I live with, who have had to endure all of the ups and downs that come with a PhD. My husband, Andrew Cole and the somewhat cantankerous Nacho cat have kept me grounded and happy over the last few years. Andy has been a sounding board for many of my ideas. A marine biologist, his scientific way of seeing things has been challenging and sometimes frustrating, but has ultimately resulted in a more clearly communicated argument. He has always been supportive, telling me on a regular basis that I am a rockstar and generally ensuring that I focus on the task at hand without burning myself out.

Thank you to everyone who has influenced me throughout the past 3 ½ years. Although the limitations and faults of this work are purely my own, they would be far greater if it were not for all of these people mentioned here, and many more I am sure.

Abstract

This thesis is an ethnographic exploration of the relationship between the Aboriginal movement of Townsville and the Australian state. This relationship is the sum of a number of actions, reactions and interactions between the state and the movement. The thesis rests on the conceptualisation of both the state and social movements as simultaneously structure and agent; that is, both states and movements are made up of individual actors but the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Rather than just being a collection of actors, states and movements are actors themselves. Because the key target of the Townsville Aboriginal movement is the Australian state, the two are inextricably and dialectically linked to one another on a number of levels. This thesis focuses on this relationship from the perspective of the social movement because I acted as a 'critically engaged activist researcher' while conducting field work in Townsville.

I begin my ethnographic analysis at the level of the individuals who make up the social movement. Through conversations with 'activists', I discuss what the term means and how they have come to that identity. In many cases, the activist identity is nurtured through state institutions, suggesting that the Australian liberal democracy is reliant upon public dissent for legitimacy. Next, I examine the ways in which these individuals form groups and networks. The shape activist organisational structures take is heavily influenced by the level of state engagement sought by activists, and unlike some international movements this state engagement is far more important than inter- and intra-movement links. Similarly, the tactical repertoires adopted by the Aboriginal movement are restricted to actions which are recognised as legitimate in liberal democracies, such as petitions and peaceful street marches. This thesis examines these actions, which become ritualised performances directed at a specific audience: the Australian state. Unlike many other

movements, however, the Townsville Aboriginal movement does not operate from a clearly discernible ideological framework. It is sometimes liberal, sometimes radical, more often both, and punctuated by autonomous spaces. I argue that this 'strategic nomadism', in which the movement changes its strategy depending on political and social factors, is a strength because it allows the movement flexibility.

Throughout this thesis, I argue that the Townsville Aboriginal movement and the Australian state are linked in a dialectical relationship. Activists are opposed to the state, but they seek their changes through the state. Moreover, states themselves need social movements to maintain their legitimacy as liberal democracies. This thesis provides an understanding of this dynamic relationship, expanding the conception of both states and movements by social scientists, and offering the Townsville Aboriginal movement an in-depth look at the way it operates.

Contents

ACTIONS, REACTIONS, INTERACTIONS	I
STATEMENT OF ACCESS	III
STATEMENT OF SOURCES	IV
STATEMENT ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OTHERS	V
<i>Supervision</i>	v
<i>Financial Assistance</i>	v
<i>Other Assistance</i>	v
ETHICS DECLARATION	VI
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	VII
ABSTRACT	XI
CONTENTS	XIII
FIGURES	XVI
ONE INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	5
<i>Social Movements</i>	5
<i>Aboriginal Resistance</i>	8
<i>Aboriginal activism and social movements</i>	13
<i>Field work in a regional city</i>	22
AIM AND SCOPE	27
<i>Parameters and Limitations</i>	30
STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS	31
TWO RESEARCH STRATEGY: THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO STATES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS	34
INTRODUCTION	34
POWER, POLITICS AND RESISTANCE	35
SITUATING STATES	38
<i>Liberal democracy in Australia</i>	38
<i>Capitalism, neo-liberalism and states</i>	39
<i>Individuality within the State</i>	42
INTERSECTIONS	45
<i>Structure or Agent</i>	45
<i>Protest in liberal systems</i>	46
SITUATING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS	47
<i>Definitions</i>	47
<i>Classifying Social Movements</i>	49
A GENEALOGY OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORIES	55
RELATIONAL THEORY	58
<i>Identity crisis</i>	60
<i>Doing relational theory</i>	63
<i>Problems with Relational Theory</i>	66
ACTIVIST THEORY	66

<i>Movement-relevant theory</i>	69
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	71
THREE RESEARCH TACTICS: METHODOLOGIES FOR ACTIVIST RESEARCH	74
INTRODUCTION	74
ANARCHIST ANTHROPOLOGY	75
ETHNOGRAPHY	77
<i>World-systems Ethnography</i>	78
<i>Emancipatory research</i>	79
<i>Indigenous research</i>	81
<i>Collaboration</i>	81
ACTIVIST RESEARCH	84
<i>Critically Engaged Activist Research</i>	85
<i>Critiques of Activist Research</i>	88
INSIDER-OUTSIDER	90
RESEARCH METHODS	93
<i>Participant Observation</i>	93
<i>e-Ethnography</i>	95
<i>Archives and Interviews</i>	95
<i>Interview Participants</i>	96
<i>Ethics</i>	97
THE STUDY SITE	98
<i>Historical Context</i>	99
<i>Political context of the field site</i>	102
PROFILES OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS	105
<i>Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group</i>	105
<i>Stolen Wages</i>	106
<i>Ngulumburu Boonyah</i>	107
<i>GAP Strategies</i>	108
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	108
FOUR IDENTITY POLITICS: SOCIAL MOVEMENT PARTICIPANTS AND ACTIVIST LABELS	111
INTRODUCTION	111
WHAT IS AN ACTIVIST?	112
BECOMING ACTIVIST	120
<i>Florence</i>	121
<i>Janine</i>	122
<i>Dan</i>	124
<i>Opportunities</i>	125
<i>Family</i>	127
ABORIGINAL ACTIVIST LEADERSHIP	133
<i>Charisma</i>	138
<i>Team work</i>	141
THE COSTS OF BEING AN ACTIVIST	142
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	144
FIVE SPINNING THE WEB: ORGANISATIONAL AND NETWORK STRUCTURES	146
FORMING GROUPS	147
<i>Formal structures: The Human Rights Group</i>	150
<i>Dis-organisation: Ngulumburu-Boonyah</i>	154
<i>Hybrid organisational form: GAP Strategies</i>	156
NETWORKING INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE ABORIGINAL MOVEMENT	159
<i>Case Study: Stolen Wages</i>	159
<i>Linking the Local</i>	162
<i>Queensland and National Networks</i>	165
BROADER NETWORKS	167
DIFFERENCE AND DIVERSITY	176
CHANGING CONTEXTS	183
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	188

SIX GETTING THINGS DONE: ACTIVIST TACTICS AND ACTION REPERTOIRES	191
INTRODUCTION	191
TACTICAL REPERTOIRES	192
<i>Aboriginal activist repertoires of action</i>	194
<i>Historical movement tactics</i>	197
<i>Protest</i>	201
<i>Proactive work</i>	204
<i>Cultural Revival</i>	205
<i>Advocacy</i>	208
TARGETS OF ACTIVISM	210
<i>Non-violent framing tactics</i>	212
ACTIVIST MEMORY	213
ACTIVIST PERFORMANCE	217
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	225
SEVEN SHIFTING FOUNDATIONS: STRATEGIES AND IDEOLOGIES OF THE TOWNSVILLE ABORIGINAL MOVEMENT	227
INTRODUCTION	227
DEFINING IDEOLOGY AND STRATEGY	228
RADICAL OR LIBERAL?	229
AUTONOMY	239
<i>The Black Community School</i>	242
<i>Black Spaces</i>	246
IDEOLOGICAL UNITY AND DIFFERENCE	250
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	258
EIGHT DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS: HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STATE AND MOVEMENT	261
HISTORICAL TRAJECTORIES	262
COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES	267
SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN A DEMOCRATIC STATE	277
THE STATE AND THE MOVEMENT	284
REFERENCES	291

Figures

FIGURE 1.1 TINDALE MAP SHOWING TRADITIONAL OWNER GROUPS IN NORTH QUEENSLAND _____	23
FIGURE 1.2 FIELD WORK MAP _____	24
FIGURE 4.1 COMMEMORATIVE TEE-SHIRT _____	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.30
FIGURE 5.1 STOLEN WAGES MARCHERS IN 2008 LABOUR DAY MARCH IN TOWNSVILLE _____	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.60
FIGURE 5.2 FLYER ADVERTISING PUBLIC FORUM IN TOWNSVILLE _____	1644
FIGURE 5.3 FLYERS IN SUPPORT OF LEX WOTTON _____	1688
FIGURE 5.4 NUMBER OF EMAILS SENT THROUGH TIHRG LISTSERV BY MEMBER _____	184
FIGURE 5.5 TOTAL NUMBER OF EMAILS SENT THROUGH TIHRG LISTSERV EACH MONTH _____	1855
FIGURE 6.1 TYPES OF TACTICS USED BY ABORIGINAL ACTIVISTS IN TOWNSVILLE _____	1955
FIGURE 6.2 PETITION TO THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT _____	1988
FIGURE 6.3 PUBLIC ART REPRESENTING TRADITIONAL ABORIGINAL CULTURE _____	2077
FIGURE 6.4 DEMONSTRATION OUTSIDE HURLEY APPEAL, SEPTEMBER 2008 _____	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.9
FIGURE 6.6 ACTIVIST COSTUMES _____	2211
FIGURE 6.7 PERFORMING TRADITION IN ACTIVIST TACTICS _____	2233
FIGURE 6.8 HISTORICAL COSTUME WORN TOWNSVILLE'S INVASION DAY MARCH _____	2255
FIGURE 7.1 IMAGE OF BLACK PANTHER PARTY _____	233
FIGURE 7.2 FLYER FROM QUEENSLAND BLACK RIGHTS TRIBUNAL _____	252

One

Introduction

Flags waving, banners raised, dressed in sloganed shirts, we marched. The 2008 NAIDOC¹ March, beginning at 10 o'clock on a Friday morning, wound its way through the inner-city streets of Townsville. Clap sticks throughout the crowd of more than 300 kept the rhythm steady, and occasional loud shouts expressed marchers' objections to government policies. Led by elders was a sea of people composed of school groups, workplaces, extended family groups, and sports teams, flanked on both ends by uniformed police officers. As we marched past the Townsville Magistrates Court and the Townsville Police Station, the procession paused while dancers, traditionally dressed and painted up², performed short and energetic shows.

Our tour of the city created a spectacle. Professionals in suits peered over balconies and window sills as we passed their office buildings. Construction workers paused, resting on the scaffolding with tools in hand, to watch the parade. Tourists and shoppers stood on the sidewalk, shading their eyes from the bright Townsville sun to get a better look at the scene. Journalists, contacted ahead of time, walked backwards alongside the march, filming and photographing the crowd. The parade ended at an inner-city park where participants spread out amongst information stalls, craft sellers, and jumping

¹ National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Celebration, which is now a week-long national event which occurs in the first week of July.

² Painting up refers to the traditional markings donned before performance or ceremony.

castles and were treated to guest speakers and a 'Reconciliation Concert' featuring local talent.

Social movement activities like this one are the site of numerous relationships between a number of agents. For instance, the NAIDOC march involved an intricate network of interactions between groups and individuals, such as event organisers, the police, the media, spectators, groups who marched, and the government. These relationships are neither simple nor one-sided. Rather, there is a complex web of influence. Activists are affected by their involvement in the social movement, and the movement is in turn affected by the participants. Movement actions are determined, in part, by public opinions and reactions; likewise the attitudes of the general public are influenced by social movements. Movements are constrained by, and opposed to, ruling powers, but they must work with them; these same power structures are forced to accommodate, or at least to acknowledge, the actions of movements.

The ruling regime most often engaged by Australian Aboriginal activism is the Australian state: the institutions governing on a variety of levels, from the local Townsville City Council to Queensland and Australian government institutions. States and social movements have similar structures. They are large and disembodied concepts which are spoken of as independent entities with agency. Yet, both states and movements are only in existence because they are peopled; their actions are designed and implemented by individuals. This localised aspect of the larger apparatus must be kept in mind, but it is important to remember that states and movements are more than a simple cluster of individuals; the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Despite their similarities, the state and social movements are inherently opposed to one another. The relationship between the two is contradictory; activists seek autonomy and they reject state power, but they do so mainly *through* engagement with state agents. At the same time, states and social movements are reliant on one another, locked in a dialectical relationship in which they legitimate one another despite their opposition. This thesis will examine these contradictions

and look at this dialectical relationship and at the notion of resistance in the current world-system.

The interactions between social movements and their targets are ever-present. They influence social movement actions and state reactions, and vice versa. They are present in the conception, planning and execution of movement actions. As activists look back on past events, their reflections become part of the movement's future decision-making. Following an event like the NAIDOC march, activists might ask the following questions: What was the point of the march? What impact did it have? What did it mean for the 300 people who participated? What did it mean for the spectators? Was it merely a hold-up in traffic for a short time? Was there a coherent message, and was that communicated to the spectators? What influence did this have on government decision-makers? What do we expect to happen, and what will we do if it does or does not come to fruition? These are the sorts of questions that activists ask themselves on a regular basis, although they are not always clearly articulated. Therefore, these are the questions I have set out to address in this thesis.

What follows is an in-depth examination of Aboriginal activism in Townsville, a small city in North Queensland. I was lucky to carry out my research at a particularly 'active' time³. Court cases, interventions, and a new Prime Minister all contributed to a feeling that change was just around the corner, if only we pushed hard enough. But even during these very active times, there are lulls. Quiet periods are a necessary part of activism which allow movement participants the opportunity to reflect and re-energise before organising the next event. The background work of education and public relations never ceases, even during the quietest of periods, because activism is a way of life for these movement participants. I critique the range of activities that are undertaken by activists, identifying a continuum from very public actions through to the work which occupies these lulls (Chapter Six). This range of

³ I am not sure that there are ever times that are not 'active'; as a recent expatriate from the United States I lack long-term knowledge of local activism but based on archival evidence, recollections from activists and published literature it seems as if the Aboriginal movement has had little rest in almost a century.

actions undertaken by Aboriginal activists in Townsville is actually quite small, in comparison to other Australian and international social movements, which is indicative of the way the movement is inextricably linked to the Australian state. Because the movement is so reliant on the goodwill of the government, their activism is generally non-confrontational in order to make it easy for the state to work with them to resolve issues.

How is one to decide what 'counts' as activism? During a conversation with a Cape York Aboriginal woman, incarcerated at the Townsville Correctional Centre, I was told that one of the most political things an Aboriginal person can do is simply to realise and learn about their history and oppression. That, she told me, was one major form of Aboriginal activism. Another woman told me that 'If you're born black in this country, you're born an activist. Otherwise you just lay down and die'. Similarly, a man told me that 'everyone is active in their own field' and explained that he is trying to make changes through his work for a government department. Essentially, these people argue that nearly any activity can be considered a form of protest against an oppressive system. However, can this 'activism' be identified as the actions of a social movement? One can participate in activism without necessarily identifying as an activist (Bobel 2007). In Chapter Four, I explore the differences between the self-identification of movement participants as activists (or not), and more analytical definitions of the term which encompasses even those who do not necessarily accept that identification.

This thesis is a study of Aboriginal activism, but I had to set clear limitations for myself. Thus, my research deals with actions which are considered activism by the people involved, and which are recognised as such by other social movement participants. The focus presented here is on public demonstrations and on the work that goes into planning these events. Some events are more obviously activism, such as marches on 'Invasion Day'; others are covert activism, like the opening of an Indigenous art exhibition with an activist as the guest speaker. Other forms of resistance, particularly those which are less visible, are undoubtedly worth further study, but they fall outside the

scope of this thesis. I refer, in this thesis, to the 'Aboriginal movement' (following Burgmann 2003; Mansell 2003). I have chosen this unifying and universalising term despite the very local focus of my research and the diverse nature of Aboriginal activism in Australia. In the same way that people refer to the diverse collection of 'green' ideologies as the environmental movement, or the many waves and varieties of feminism as the women's movement, I am uniting Aboriginal activism under the same term. The Aboriginal movement in Townsville is a movement with many goals, different styles of organising, and methods for achieving change, yet it maintains an overarching sense of cohesiveness. Movement participants, despite their sometimes considerable differences, all express a sense that they are 'in this together' and that the movement in which they take part is a singular movement with a clear ultimate goal: racial equality. As Merlan (2005: 488) puts it, all of the well-documented Aboriginal movements are focused on 'problematic relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples'. Moreover, the Townsville Aboriginal movement is both a part of, and independent from, the broader, national Aboriginal movement. There are links between the local and the national movements, but they remain distinct; the focus of Aboriginal activism in Townsville tended to be on local issues.

Background to the study

Social Movements

Social movements are a vibrant source of political change. They place new ideas on the public agenda which often go on to become mainstream debates. Their influence can be both political and social; they have the potential to change the way society as a whole thinks about an issue. For example, the women's movement made political advances that gave women the right to vote, and also made it socially acceptable for women to work outside of the home. The environmental movement has made global warming a government priority and a conversation topic around the globe. Social movements tend to spread

democracy by raising the potential for public discourse on many topics. Collective action has brought about social change for the entire span of the historical record. The specific factors which constitute a social movement will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Two.

However, it is worth pointing out a key characteristic of social movements which is implied by their very name: movement. Social movements are flexible, fluid organisations that are capable of change (Burgmann 2003; Crossley 2002; Blumer 1969). Cahill (2004: 50) defines social movements as 'dynamic social actors' which indicates the presence of change within these structures. Touraine (1988: 68, my emphasis) explains that 'a social movement is the *action*, both culturally oriented and socially conflictual, of a social class'. With this in mind, it is difficult to identify one particular movement which is clearly distinct from others. Rather, the boundaries of social movements are blurred, often overlapping with other movements. Further, there are many different facets to any movement, and the Aboriginal movement is no exception.

The methods undertaken by scholars of contentious politics⁴ have tended towards the 'grand historical' perspective. Many theories are formulated through the systematic study of historical episodes of contention, which allows for a bird's eye view⁵ (cf. Tarrow 1998; Tilly 1984). This method also makes it possible to compare different contentious episodes, which is necessary for the formulation or expansion of theories. Finally, it makes obvious the episode's connections with its political, social and economic contexts (cf. Tilly 2002). However, there is also a rich history of context-specific case studies of individual movements which have both provided the basis for those grand historical narratives and have tested and enhanced existing theories (cf. Canin 1997; Nash 1997; Fegan 1986).

⁴ Most scholars distinguish between social movements and other forms of contentious politics (revolutions, democratisation, strike waves, etc). The issues I discuss in this paragraph deal with more than one form of contentious politics, so for clarity I use the general term.

⁵ No matter how far one is temporally removed, however, they are by no means omniscient. Social movement scholars who take this approach are limited by the availability of historical material as well as their own biases.

For the most part, there is a distinct division between empirical and theoretical studies of social movements. Diani and Eyerman (1992: 2-3) explain the general misgivings held by movement theorists, that participant observation

...has permitted detailed accounting of the life within particular social movement organizations, but has contributed little or nothing to the reconstruction of patterns of interaction between the totality of actors involved in the networks that make up the movement as a whole.

However, Edelman (2001) argues that cooperation between these two methods could refresh and enliven research on social movements. Movement theorists, he says, would benefit from a better appreciation both of the 'historical and cultural processes through which some of their main analytical categories [...] are constructed' and of the experiences of movement participants (Edelman 2001: 309). Ethnographic accounts of movements are valuable for their detailed accounts of collective action, but their analyses of broader political or historical contexts are sometimes limited. The answer, Edelman (2001: 311) suggests, is to study 'the broader social field within which [the movement] operates'.

An anthropological interest in social movements has recently been on the rise. Marc Edelman's (1999) *Peasants Against Globalization: Rural Social Movements in Costa Rica* examines the networks and coalitions that have emerged in opposition to economic globalisation. June Nash collated several anthropological projects on social movements in her 2005 edited volume which examine activism in 14 countries. In 2009 anarchist anthropologist David Graeber released an ethnographic study of global justice activism, *Direct Action*. More locally, Barbara Glowcwski (2008) entered the realm of public anthropology with her contribution, *Guerriers pour la Paix, Warriors for Peace*, published first in French and then translated to English. Written with Aboriginal activist Lex Wotton, this book looks critically at the death in custody on Palm Island in 2004 but focuses in particular on the activism that surrounded this death, from the so-called 'riots' to the petitions and marches which eventually succeeded in calling for charges to be laid against the police officer responsible.

Aboriginal Resistance

Approximately 220 years before I began my research, Australia was settled, colonised, or invaded – depending on one’s perspective – by England. In the more than two centuries since then, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations have had a number of different government policies imposed upon them. In a keynote address at an international feminist conference, Florence, one of my research participants, declared that her people have been through invasion, extermination, protection, assimilation, integration, self-determination, reconciliation, and now they are back at invasion again. These historical eras were not all declared as official government policies, but the attitudes of government and the general population have certainly reflected her claims.

The history of race relations in Australia is complex, and although there were always local variations and exceptions to the rule, the overarching narrative is one of violence and oppression. Australia was established as a British penal colony in 1788. Colonisation began in the south, and North Queensland remained a sometimes violent frontier into the late 19th century. The history of Australia has parallels with other, similar, settler nations like Canada, the United States, and New Zealand. One striking difference is the lack of a treaty with the native populations. Although in many cases treaties were not honoured, they at least provide contemporary Indigenous peoples with legal avenues to address inequalities. The lack of a treaty in Australia has meant that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have tended to rely more on public protest than the court system⁶.

Government policy in various states started to take shape at the end of the 1800s. The first major policy phase was to ‘protect’ Aboriginal peoples. It was commonly accepted knowledge that Aboriginal people were a ‘doomed race’ and

⁶ The courts have played a role in some Aboriginal campaigns. The most obvious of these is land rights/Native Title – a process which took its shape through several major High Court decisions (Mabo 1992 and Wik 1996) and which now takes place almost entirely in the legal realm. For the purposes of this study, I am focusing on popular protest and demonstrations, which largely excludes land rights activism. While I recognise the importance of this movement to Aboriginal activism as a whole, it is such a complex issue that it deserves a thesis of its own.

they were soon to 'die out' because they were not physiologically or technologically advanced enough to compete with Europeans. Thus, the goal was to segregate Aboriginal people onto European-run reserves and missions to remove them from the negative influences of European life and to reduce the risks of miscegenation (McGregor 1997). Several decades later it became evident that the Aboriginal population was not becoming extinct. Policies shifted towards assimilation between the 1930s and 1960s, especially with regards to 'half-caste' children (Cunneen & Libesman 1995). Missions and reserves became training centres where inmates were forbidden to speak native languages. Family groups were often separated from one another, and light-skinned children were removed from their parents and raised in group homes or fostered out to white families (Pasco 2008; Rosser 1985). This practice came to light in the *Bringing Them Home* report (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997), which led to the 2008 apology by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to members of the Stolen Generations (Rudd 2008).

The removal of children was officially stopped in the early 1970s, when governments agreed to the principle of Aboriginal self-determination. Land rights and Aboriginal-controlled legal and medical services are the positive aspects of the self-determination era. However, many people, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are sceptical of self-determination policies (Maddison 2008; Anderson 2007; Tonkinson 2007; Mansell 2003; Lea 2000; Cowlshaw 1998; Hollinsworth 1996). The late 1980s saw the start of the official Reconciliation process which has taken many forms, from aims to decrease disparities in health and living conditions (Corbett 2007; Stafford 2007; Throssell 2007) and to increase job opportunities (Megalogenis 2007). Some Aboriginal activists and their supporters feel that Reconciliation is a means to co-opt the struggle for Aboriginal rights, by giving the government a proactive appearance when in actuality it does nothing to 'eradicate the vast material disparities between the quality of life for most indigenous people and the majority of the Australian population' (Bullimore 2001b: n.pag.).

As soon as white settlers moved on to their lands, Aboriginal people engaged in resistance. Frontier violence was a common form of community resistance, as was petty theft (Reynolds 1989; Loos 1982). It was extremely localised and small in scale, mirroring the nature of Aboriginal social groupings, and taking the form of guerrilla warfare. Covert tactics which were employed around the continent included the stealing of food supplies and livestock in response to white intrusion onto traditional hunting grounds (Reynolds 1989; Loos 1982; Robinson & York 1977). Some of these early resistance tactics can be described as 'everyday resistance' (Scott 1985) because there was no organised campaign but rather a loosely connected string of thefts and violence against settlers. However, not all of the resistance was as unobtrusive as petty theft. In at least one case, the small-scale resistance erupted in an all-out battle; the Kalkadoons in the area of Mt Isa carried out an intense campaign against white settlement that culminated in a show-down on Battle Mountain in 1884 (Armstrong 1980). In retrospect, some may consider this the pre-cursor to modern day activism, but the participants were not involved in a social movement as we recognise it.

The period of segregation gave rise to several instances of what would now undoubtedly be recognised as activism, though it was still localised and lacked any sense of 'pan-Aboriginal identity'. For instance, the people of Flinders Island conducted a protest against oppression which culminated in a petition, sent to Queen Victoria in 1846 (Attwood & Markus 1999: 38-9). Similarly, the people of Coranderrk wrote letters to politicians, to newspapers and to government ministers, and they actively sought the support of humanitarians who could help them with their struggle against eviction for the sake of white farmers (Attwood & Markus 1999: 41-51).

In the early 20th century, Aboriginal resistance became organised, with the establishment of several official groups aimed at improving the position of Aboriginal people in Australian society (Maynard 2008, 2005, 2004, 2003; Bullimore 2001a; McGregor 1993). The 1920s and 30s saw organised Aboriginal activism push for assimilation rather than protection, arguing that Aboriginal

people could be just as 'civilised' as white people. Interestingly, the membership of these groups was limited to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people only. White supporters could enlist as 'associate members' but were not allowed any decision-making roles in the organisations. Further, the existence of these groups was based on a sense of 'pan-Aboriginal' identity that had not existed previously. Despite the major aims of assimilation, many of these groups desired the maintenance of their unique cultural identity and special recognition within the Australian population. Aboriginal people and their supporters fought for land rights, civil equality, and an end to protectionism. The strategies that were utilised were similar to those used by white activists of the era – petitions, letters to the editor, and pamphlets (McGregor 1993; Maynard 2008). Soon after, the government changed its stance from protection to assimilation following shifts in both scientific discourse and public opinion.

Towards the middle of the 20th century, Aboriginal activism started to take a more confrontational stance. The Palm Island Strike of 1957 is one example of a very vocal action to shed light on the living conditions on Aboriginal reserves (Watson 2010, 1995). A group of Aboriginal and non-Indigenous students from Sydney planned a 'Freedom Ride' through rural New South Wales in 1965, to draw attention to the racist attitudes and segregationist practices there (Curthoys 2002; Perkins 1975). In 1967, Aboriginal workers at the Wave Hill cattle station went on strike, and then decided to establish an autonomous community at a traditional sacred site (Hardy 1968; Attwood 2000). In the late 1960s and 1970s, urban Aboriginal activists started an Australian Black Panthers group; the Black Power movement was influential in the establishment of Aboriginal legal and medical services (Lothian 2005; Foley 2001). In 1972, the Aboriginal Tent Embassy was established outside of Parliament, highlighting the fact that Aboriginal people were treated as foreigners in the land which they had occupied for millennia (Foley 2001).

At the same time, a battle was waged for public opinion. This was led by the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) and its local subsidiaries. The issue which received the

most attention from these groups was a referendum to change the constitution (Taffe 2005). These groups lobbied for several years in support of a constitutional referendum, and when it was finally called they increased their campaign to ensure its success. Two sections of the constitution were the focus of FCAATSI—Section 51 (xxvi) stated that the Commonwealth Government could legislate on behalf of ‘the people of any race, other than the Aboriginal race in any state, for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws’; and Section 127 declared that ‘Aboriginal natives shall not be counted’ in certain policy contexts, such as the drawing of electoral boundaries (Goot & Rowse 2007). FCAATSI and local Aboriginal Advancement groups lobbied for the removal of the phrase ‘other than the Aboriginal race’ from Section 51 (xxvi) and for the deletion of Section 127. They deployed a strategic advertising campaign which correlated a ‘yes’ vote with Aboriginal rights⁷. The strategy was to remain vague about the policy implications, instead focusing on inclusion and non-discrimination as qualities that the ‘Australian public’ could support (Goot & Rowse 2007). Newspaper advertisements, tabling and petitions around Australia, forums and debates⁸ led 90.77% of the Australian population to vote in favour of the constitutional change (McGregor 2008; Taffe 2005).

When the Australian government adopted an official stance of self-determination and then reconciliation, Aboriginal activism began to focus on legislative changes. Land rights and native title struggles became the focus of the media and scholarly work. At this stage, activism took an issues-based focus, often local in nature, but occasionally pan-Aboriginal rights were central to activist campaigns. For instance, the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane⁹,

⁷ Lloyd, J. ‘Aborigines Step Up Campaign’. Newspaper article, source unknown. 11 April 1966. QSA – SRS 505/1 File No: 1A/517 Box No. 98.

⁸ Monthly Bulletin of the Queensland Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Islanders. Volume 50, June-July 1967. QSA – SRS 505/1 File No: 1A/569 Box 7.

⁹ ‘Blacks plan Games row’. *The Telegraph*, 20 March 1981, p. 3. QSA – SRS 505/2 File No. 1A/1606 Box 79.

‘Kath Walker in Anti-Games Call’. *The Courier-Mail* (Brisbane), 6 July 1981, p. 8. QSA – SRS 505/2 File No. 1A/1606 Box 79.

the national Bicentennial celebrations in 1988¹⁰, and Expo '88¹¹ became rallying points around which Aboriginal people came together to demand land rights and an end to racism. In North Queensland, Aboriginal health, education, and housing have been the focus of activist activity, as have issues such as deaths in custody and stolen wages (Bullimore 2001a). My research is largely ethnographic and, thus, focuses on the present-day. However, present-day protests are bound up in their history, and analysing the historical roots of contemporary activism is crucial to an in-depth understanding; as such, I have expanded my research to include activism in the Townsville area for the past five decades, using the Palm Island Strike as a milestone from which to begin.

Aboriginal activism and social movements

Aboriginal resistance was largely ignored by early Australian historians, and it was not until the 1960s and 1970s that published works began to acknowledge the struggle put forth by the continent's original inhabitants. Since then, the literature on Aboriginal history, and specifically work on resistance and activism, has grown steadily and there is now a fairly substantial body of scholarly work available. However, very little of the research critically analyses Aboriginal activism as a social movement. More often, accounts are written from an historical, documentary, autobiographical or journalistic perspective. Most historical writing on the subject falls along a continuum, from politically detached histories to justifications of activism. Another significant group of

'Aboriginals threaten games over land issue'. *The Cairns Post*, 28 July 1981. QSA - SRS 505/2 File No. 1A/1606 Box 79.

¹⁰ 'One People Sing Freedom'. Media Release, Australian Broadcasting Corporation. 9 May 1988. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No. 01-015-010 Box 112.

'1988: Make a Treaty This Time...' Comic Strip copyrighted by Burrumbinga, distributed by Treaty '88 Campaign. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-005-009 Box 19.

¹¹ Smith, D. 'Black Plan to Disrupt Expo 88: Aborigines take their protests to the world'. *Daily Sun* (Brisbane), 18 November 1987, p.12. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No. 01-032-006 Box 239.

Maurer, T. 'Aborigines will urge Pacific to boycott Expo'. *The Australian*, 28 November 1987, p. 16. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No. 01-032-006 Box 239.

Rodgers, S. 'Aborigines plan protests, cultural events for Expo'. *Courier-Mail* (Brisbane), 9 February 1988, p. 12. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No. 01-032-006 Box 239.

literature includes autobiographical texts, written by activists about their lives or focussing on one particular demonstration. These texts are often more critical than many histories, because they allow activists to reflect on their participation in demonstrations in the hope of improving their practice.

The authors writing from a 'detached' perspective are largely historians, who present evidence which has long been ignored to add depth to the available history. Although they write 'objectively', the purpose of their work is to change the way that people think about the history of Australia, which is a politically charged act. In other words, while they limit their political commentary, the information they present has political implications. They have uncovered previously unpublished information and make it available to the public (cf. Kidd 1997). For instance, Attwood and Markus (1999) have published a book of reprinted archival materials detailing several instances of Aboriginal activism since colonisation. They offer very little in the way of commentary and let the documents speak for themselves. Henry Reynolds (cf. 2005, 2003, 2001, 2000, 1989, 1987, 1982, 1972) has published numerous books of a similar nature, which aim to upset widespread beliefs about the peaceful nature of European settlement. He provides evidence in the form of letters to the editor, correspondence between elected officials and other documents, interspersed with small amounts of explanation and analysis of these sources. Likewise, Noel Loos's (1976) *Aboriginal-European Relations in North Queensland, 1861-1897* details the settlement of North Queensland with the focus on resistance to that process. Although the material these historians rely on is largely one-sided – documents describing Aboriginal resistance which are written from the perspective of European settlers – this fact is acknowledged and the histories are written to at least partially address the lack of knowledge on Aboriginal contributions to post-settlement Australia.

Maynard's (2008) *Fight for Liberty and Freedom* stands closer on the continuum to the politically engaged historical account. Maynard chronicles and also justifies the formation of the first Aboriginal activist organisation, the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association (AAPA). He offers the political

context in which these early activists lived and argues that modern activism has been undeniably shaped and influenced by its predecessors. Maynard (2008: 2) admits his closeness to the topic:

I unashamedly acknowledge the deep personal significance of the story of Fred Maynard and the AAPA, both from the perspective of an Aboriginal man conveying an Aboriginal viewpoint of Australian history, and because Fred Maynard was my grandfather. I openly declare that the matter is close to my heart; my desire is to see the story told.

However, his book is academically rigorous and this familial interest leads to a very in-depth and personal account of some of the earliest examples of Aboriginal activism.

Jennifer Clark (2008) writes of more recent Aboriginal history, focusing specifically on activism. She situates Australian Aboriginal activism from the 1960s within broader international contexts. One of the key events which brought anti-racist activism to Australia, Clark (2008) argues, was the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre in South Africa. This event made apartheid nearly impossible to ignore and activists in Australia began to take notice. They urged the government to break ties with South Africa, with the most noteworthy campaign surrounding the 1971 tour of South African rugby team, the Springboks. The 1960s was also characterised by civil rights struggles in the United States which made global headlines and heavily influenced the activism surrounding Aboriginal rights. The combination of these international influences led to a fundamental shift in the way that white people viewed Aboriginal rights, according to Clark (2008), and profoundly shaped the present-day Australian state. Clark's (2008) history of this period is noteworthy because it refutes the common perceptions of Australia as isolated and parochial and shows significant links between international movements.

On the other side of the spectrum lie the unabashedly politically motivated texts which are actively supportive of historical Aboriginal activism. This seems to be an activist tactic in itself; justifying past resistance is equated with support for present-day activism. For instance, Newbury (1999: 10) has

collected a number of texts which discuss Aboriginal resistance. This booklet offers brief historical overviews and reviews of these texts which detail the 'horrific damage done to Aboriginal society by colonisation and dispossession'. Another key example of this politically motivated history is Robinson and York's (1977) *The Black Resistance*. They explain their objectives in the Author's Note, lamenting the lack of attention paid to Aboriginal dispossession and resistance in 'the official texts'; their aim, then, is to initiate discussion that will lead to 'the complete history of [Aboriginal] anti-colonialist struggles' (Robinson & York 1977). Robinson and York (1977) romanticise Aboriginal people, arguing the Marxist notion that their pre-settlement societies were the first forms of communism. Likewise, they vilify European settlers, referring to 'crude racist acts of terrorism' (12). Robinson and York (1977: 16) occasionally acknowledge the uneasiness of black versus white, good versus evil distinctions, particularly the existence of the Native Police and the 'domestication' of Aboriginal people as workers. However, their explanation is that these 'co-opted' Aboriginal people were probably working undercover to gather intelligence. This statement is made with no evidence to back it up and is purely conjecture, based on the personal opinions of the authors. Similarly, they explain the fact that Aboriginal people worked for hours for 'just a biscuit' by speculating that 'the Aborigines, in accepting the biscuits, were not consenting to those pitiful terms of exploitation, but rather had an expectation that the "settler" would return his labour in a reciprocal type of arrangement' (60). Thus, these authors have framed Aboriginal resistance as an anti-capitalist struggle:

Because the Aborigines held the land they had to be dispossessed. Because they resisted and refused to give up their traditional ways and become wage slaves, they not only had to be dispossessed, they also had to be exterminated. (21)

Although Robinson and York (1977) rely on archival sources for much of their historical analysis, they also make unsupported speculations and have used this book as a political tool in such a way that calls into question the academic validity of their research.

Autobiographical accounts by Aboriginal activists often provide a critical analysis of the Aboriginal movement. For instance, Charles Perkins (1975) gives a detailed account of his role in activism throughout his lifetime. In particular, his discussion of the 1965 Freedom Rides includes not just a description of events but also his thoughts on the participants and the way that they organised their actions. Curthoys (2002) was a white participant in the same action and she has written a whole book which documents and analyses the Freedom Rides in depth. Similarly, Robert Bropho (1980) discusses the difficulties and successes of his protest drive from Perth to Canberra to meet with politicians on behalf of Aboriginal fringe-dwellers in his autobiography. Speaking more broadly, Joe McGinness (1991) discusses the importance of non-violent activism and bases his argument on his years of involvement in organisations like FCAATSI and the Cairns Advancement League. McGinness (1991: 99) is not just reflective about the history of activism, he is also outspoken about the need for its continuation:

Call our individual leaders what you like, stirrers, activists, radicals and other derogatory names often used, but most of us are of the opinion that we have finally convinced most people that we are overdue for a new deal.

There are numerous autobiographies and Aboriginal-authored histories which include discussions of past Aboriginal activism. These authors are all supportive of the Aboriginal struggle, even though some may disagree about the different modes of activism undertaken. Rather than simple histories, they begin the work of theorising the movement. However, their analyses are often limited to their own experiences and these authors do not set out to provide a broader theoretical analysis.

In some instances, broader movement analyses have been attempted by several authors. Lorna Lippmann wrote an overview of the Aboriginal movement, first published in 1981 and then updated significantly in 1991 and 1994. Lippmann (1981) takes a broad view of activism, beginning with the very earliest stages of colonialism. She argues that resistance continued even during the protection era:

...warfare under these conditions was no longer feasible, but mockery and passive resistance could still continue on a large and prolonged scale. [...] In fact Aborigines often managed to maintain their law and pass it on to their children, even after dispossession. (11)

Lippmann (1981: 20) argues that Aboriginal historians who take control of their history and write about the untold story are continuing that early resistance. Lippmann analyses the different strategies and tactics which have been employed throughout the history of the Aboriginal movement. She ends hopefully, with faith that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission (ATSIC) and the Homelands Movement would allow Aboriginal people to make real and positive changes to their lives.

Aboriginal activist Michael Mansell (2003) has looked at what he views as the decline of Aboriginal activism since the 1980s. Mansell argues that the Aboriginal movement has lost effectiveness because it became socially acceptable. This acceptance was a result of government co-optation, namely influence in Aboriginal affairs via the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission (ATSIC). Because ATSIC was answerable to the government, the movement stopped making radical demands and started to 'imitate white people' (Mansell 2003: 29). Burgmann (2003: 50) attributes the powerlessness of the Aboriginal movement to 'numerical and political isolation of Indigenous Australians, combined with the effects of economic weakness and social dislocation'. Mansell (2003: 28) does not feel that these issues can be addressed legislatively: 'The more Aborigines enter the parliaments, the stronger is Australia's claim to legitimacy. And with legitimacy flows Aboriginal subservience'.

Mansell (2003) does not offer alternatives or suggest ways in which the movement may again be strengthened. Burgmann (2003), however, discusses the numerous avenues contemporary activists traverse, in particular focusing on the alliances they form with other movements. The focus of Burgmann's (2003) study is globalisation, so it is not surprising that she pays particular attention to the role of unions, environmentalists and feminists in the struggle for Aboriginal

rights. Burgmann's (2003, 1993) analysis of the Aboriginal movement is broad, both geographically and temporally. While she offers an excellent overview of the Aboriginal movement, the nature of her study is unable to go into depth on any one facet of that movement.

An in-depth look at the national Aboriginal movement was recently undertaken by Sarah Maddison (2009) in her book, *Black Politics: Inside the Complexity of Aboriginal Political Culture*. A non-Indigenous academic, Maddison takes an outsiders' perspective without romanticising the Aboriginal movement. She discusses the tensions facing Aboriginal activists, based on extensive interviews with 29 Aboriginal leaders, from nationally recognised to more local leaders. Maddison does not shy away from some of the internal disputes regarding activist strategies and ideologies, and provides a valuable overview of the national movement. However, her reliance on formal interviews limits the information she is able to discuss and ensures that her discussion stays general and national in focus.

Anthropological studies, however, allow researchers to intimately familiarise themselves with a setting and thus to discuss the in-depth workings of a social movement from all angles. Peter Sutton (2009) addresses the Aboriginal movement in his controversial book *The Politics of Suffering*, declaring the end of traditional, confrontational activism. The rise in prominence of Aboriginal intellectuals like Noel Pearson and Marcia Langton, who are willing to work with the government to make changes, argues Sutton, has superseded the need for angry protesters, the 'old guard' of activism. Sutton's pronouncements are based on several decades of ethnographic fieldwork with Aboriginal communities in Queensland, Northern Territory and South Australia, and personal involvement in the meetings and conferences where he identifies this shift occurring. However, as this thesis will show, the distinctions between 'old' and 'new' guards of Aboriginal activists are not as clear as Sutton depicts. Rather, many of those who self-identify as protesters are increasingly willing to work with the government. At the same time, the younger generation of negotiators are also aware that they often have to resort to demonstrations to get

things done. Moreover, Sutton (2009) argues that focusing on rights and equality is useless as it distracts the public from the more important matter of Indigenous living standards. However, all of the activists I have worked with explicitly argue that the two are not mutually exclusive and need to be developed concurrently, and their arguments with Sutton's work are reflected in the activism they do, which does not fit neatly within the 'old' and 'new' guards which Sutton (2009) identifies.

Merlan (2005) is another anthropologist who has taken up the task of looking at specific instances of Aboriginal mobilisation in close detail. She considers Aboriginal responses to colonisation, even those which are not typically thought of as activism, to be a part of a movement. Merlan (2005: 476) takes a relational position which does not deny the agency of movement participants but also acknowledges the impact of the state:

Aboriginal protest arises from the felt burdens of marginalization and oppression particular to indigenous social situations, but styles of activism and ideas that inform it arise from interaction with, and come to share much with, forms of thought and action central to the Australian socio-political mainstream.

She goes through several situations which typify the different types of movement since European settlement, from the creation of rituals which make sense of changed socio-political contexts, to land rights, to reconciliation. Her analysis is limited by her concentration on well-documented movements. Through this analysis, however, she has discarded the normal distinctions made between 'ritual-expressive' or prepolitical, and political mobilisations. Merlan's conclusions are that Indigenous movements are simultaneously shaped by and in opposition to non-Indigenous social actors.

Other anthropologists look at Aboriginal resistance more generally, interested not only in what is typically thought of as activism but also more latent forms of opposition to power. Morris (1989) takes a Foucauldian stance, arguing that Aboriginal people are not powerless, despite their seemingly disadvantaged status. However, in attempts to incorporate Aboriginal people into the capitalist culture they were considered undisciplined workers with no

instrumental worth (Morris 1989: 14). Thus, they were able to sustain 'a prolonged and systematic pattern of direct resistance to pastoralism' which was directed at the squatters' cattle (Morris 1989: 22). However, the pervasiveness of the 'romantic savage' imagery disempowered Aboriginal people and made the 'civilisation' attempts of the state necessarily take place under the 'authoritarian pedagogy of the church and/or state' (Morris 1989: 27). Even when 'civilised', however, Morris (1989: 40) argues that the Dhan-gadi, the New South Wales Aboriginal group he studied, maintained resistance by only being marginally incorporated into the local economy and thus retaining a degree of autonomy. But through this process they also became 'complicit in the Europeanisation of their world' (Morris 1989: 69). Similarly, Cowlshaw (1999, 1988) explores the complexities in race relations in several parts of Australia, exploring Aboriginal resistance to and complicity in racial discourses.

Sylvie Poirier (2010) has begun the rarely attempted work of combining locally-specific ethnographic knowledge with a broader, comparative focus in her analysis of the similarities and differences between Indigenous realities in Australia and Canada. Poirier (2010: 42) focuses on the relationships between each Indigenous group and their respective states, arguing that resistance in these situations

...could thus be understood as their desire (and most basic right) to sustain their difference and their own culturally constituted projects, and to remain true to their values and their ontological and epistemological principles. Resistance can also, at times, take the form of a refusal to comply with whatever is expected of them by the state and mainstream society.

This definition of resistance is similar to that commonly adopted by anthropologists studying power relationships, such as Merlan (2005), as it encompasses a wide range of actions and not just those typically considered 'activism'. Poirier (2010: 46) uses the concept of a 'relational ontology' in her discussion as a means of engaging with Indigenous world-views which cannot separate individuals from non-humans and from social contexts. In this way, she argues that Indigenous bureaucracy comes to mirror the state (Poirier 2010: 51).

However, these mirrors have not been adopted by all individual members of the community, and refusal to engage with things like local Councils can 'be read as a form of resistance and opposition both to the White system of administration and to an imposed institution that they refuse to appropriate fully for themselves' (Poirier 2010: 52). This is a useful study of resistance which highlights many similarities across two very different contexts while also respecting the differences.

The work of most anthropologists is locally specific and offers a very in-depth and useful look at a particular context. However, as Edelman (2001) has pointed out, this work rarely engages with social movement theories and concepts. The work by these anthropologists provides a good starting point, however, for understanding the relationship between Aboriginal people and power regimes in Australia. Coupled with the broader discussions of Aboriginal activism provided by social scientists, historians, and activists themselves, one can begin to comprehend the complex relationship which exists between the social movement and the state. This thesis aims to continue this work while marrying the two often discrete disciplines of anthropology and sociology for an in-depth understanding of a locally-specific movement.

Field work in a regional city

My field work was carried out from May 2007 until December 2008 in Townsville, North Queensland. The traditional owner groups of Townsville are the Bindal and the Wulgurukaba (see Figure 1.1). Townsville is a regional city located more than 1,000 kilometres north of Brisbane, the Queensland capital (see Figure 1.2). Cairns, the nearest regional city, is located approximately 350 kilometres north of Townsville. Sixty-five kilometres north of Townsville is Palm Island, an Aboriginal community and former penal colony accessible by ferry or plane from Townsville. Townsville's total population is more than 150,000, and 5.5% of that population identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander at the 2006 census—a total Indigenous population of nearly 9,000 people (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006). This is a considerable population when

compared with national numbers. Across Australia, a total of 517,200 or 2.5% of the total population identified as Indigenous at the 2006 census (ABS 2006).

North Queensland was populated at a much slower pace than the southeast of the continent. Noel Loos (1982) has argued that it was also a much more brutal frontier, because of the long, protracted settlement process and the distance from English law centres. This history is reflected in the current climate in North Queensland; the region is considered by many to be one of the most

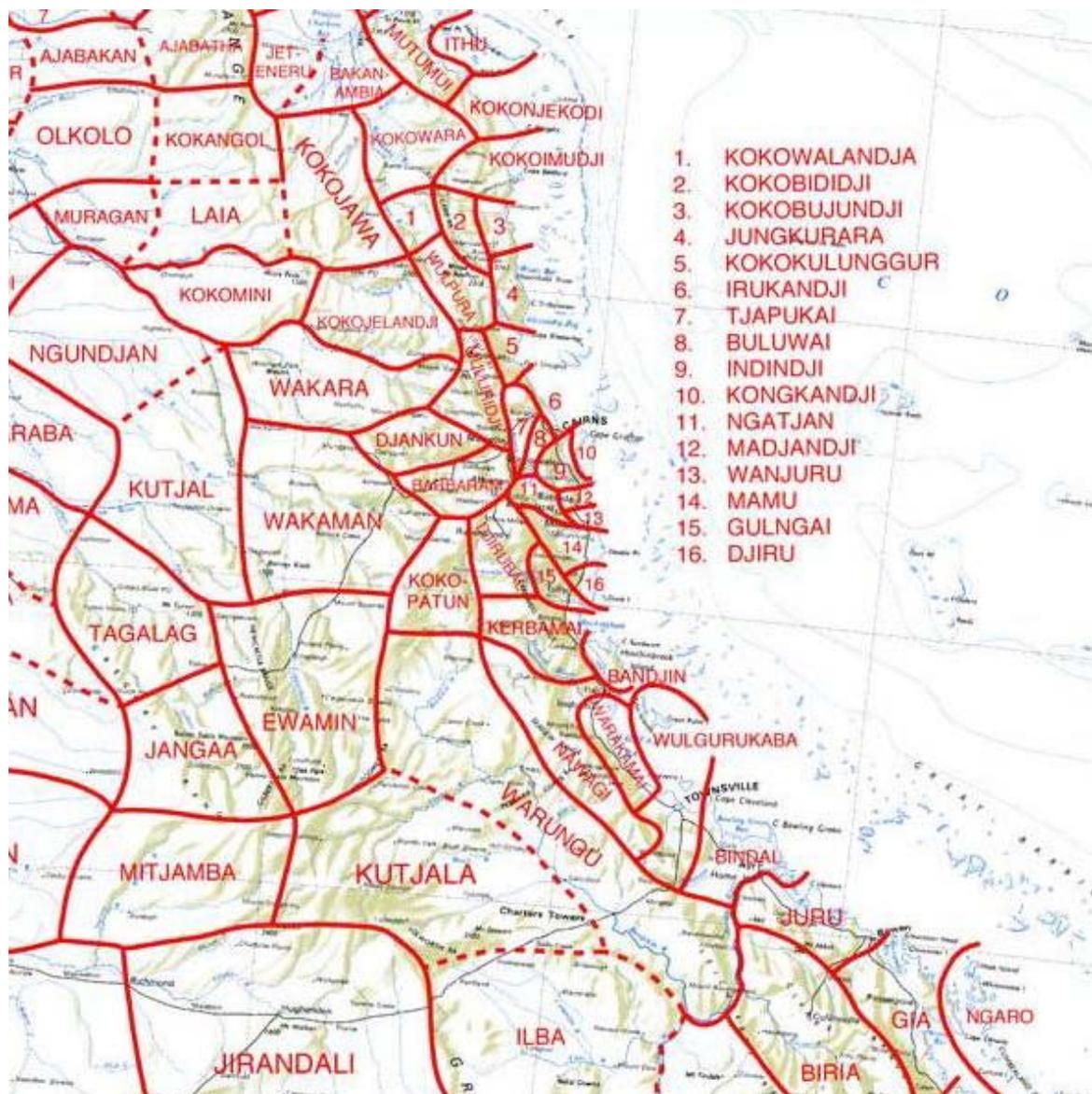


Figure 1.1 Tindale map showing traditional owner groups in North Queensland. From South Australia Museum.

racist in Australia (McKinnon 2007; ABC News 26 August 2004; Fickling 2003) and it is not uncommon to hear Townsville referred to as 'the deep north'. At one community meeting I attended, the non-Indigenous president of the group Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR) spoke of his early life in Townsville and his current life in Sydney; he said the things that most southerners know of Townsville are the Cowboys¹² and the racism. The racist label is not accepted by everyone, however; former mayor Tony Mooney refuted the claims that his city was racist several times in the national media (cf. ABC News 28 March 2007).



Figure 1.2 Field work map.

¹² The North Queensland Cowboys are the football team which use Townsville as their base. Interestingly, the Cowboys team has more Indigenous players than any other team in the league and is captained by an Aboriginal player.

Townsville's proximity to Palm Island also plays a large role in the city's racial climate. In 1918, Palm Island was established as a 'reserve' for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Because of its physical isolation, Palm Island became home to many 'trouble-makers' from other areas of Queensland. This led it to be viewed by Indigenous peoples throughout the state as a penal colony. It was brutally run, with hard work, meagre rations and excessive punishments the norm. In 1984, Palm Island and other former reserves were given reserve lands as Deeds of Grant in Trust (now known as DOGIT Communities). According to Poynton (1992), 'the DOGITs are unique local government structures, owned and controlled by indigenous peoples'. In 2005 the Queensland government began to transition these DOGIT communities to full shire council status, effectively integrating them into the wider system of local governance in the state. They are now considered 'Aboriginal Shire Councils' with structures that mirror other local government areas. However, the Aboriginal communities in Queensland have certain characteristics which make them unique from other local government areas. For instance, Palm Island is characterised by a 95% unemployment rate, an average life expectancy of 50 years, and overcrowded houses with an average of 17 people per house (Boe Lawyers 2009; Hooper 2008).

This social setting is the result of the historical and present-day relations between the state and Aboriginal people. The Queensland government was renowned for its harsh treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Chesterman & Galligan 1997; Cuneen & Libesman 1995). From the earliest stages of settlement, Aboriginal people have been marginalised. The Native Police were an integral component of expansion into North Queensland, often called upon to 'disperse' troublesome groups of Aboriginal people who resisted farmers, miners and pastoralists (Richards 2008; Loos 1976). The *Restriction of the Sale of Opium and Protection of Aborigines Act (1897)* legislated for the segregation of Indigenous populations on reserves, to be overseen by either government-appointed 'protectors' or Christian missionaries (Chesterman & Galligan 1997). These reserves were intended not just to segregate Indigenous people but also to

assimilate them into broader society. Inmates were denied the right to speak their native languages while family groups were split up, with children often housed in separate dormitories. Able-bodied inmates were forced to work, sometimes off the reserve, while the state held their wages in trust. Every aspect of life was controlled by protectors, from how much food each family received to who could marry whom (Chesterman & Galligan 1997; Kidd 1997; Cuneen & Libesman 1995).

The Queensland government's treatment of Aboriginal people is arguably the harshest in Australia, but this oppressive regime was not limited to the Indigenous population. Under the Joh Bjelke-Petersen government, which led Queensland from 1968 to 1987, dissent of any kind was discouraged – sometimes violently. For instance, the South African rugby team, the Springboks, met with considerable protest wherever they toured due to the racist regime of apartheid. To circumvent protests in Brisbane during the 1971 tour, Bjelke-Petersen declared a state of emergency across the whole state which lasted for weeks. Despite his efforts, demonstrations did occur and were violently repressed (Negus 2002; Hall 2004). In 1977 Bjelke-Petersen banned certain political street marches (Akers 1981). This actually led to a distinct movement of pro-protesters, who marched in demand of their right to march (Akers 1981). However, the repression felt by the general population must have been marginal compared with the treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people fighting for equality and land rights under this government.

In contrast, the Australian state as a whole has remained peaceful and stable since British settlement. It maintains an image of a democracy in which people can speak their minds freely without fear of repression. As Chesterman (2001a, 2001b) points out, Australia is known internationally as an equitable state which gives all citizens 'a fair go'. As with Piven and Cloward's (1977: 15) discussion about the United States, Australia relies on an electoral-representative system which has been socially and historically defined as 'the mechanism through which political change can and should properly occur'. This form of statehood simultaneously opens and closes doors for social movements; activists

can effectively utilise international public opinion to apply pressure on the Australian government (Chesterman 2001a, 2001b), but their protest tactics must remain peaceful and acceptable to public opinion in order to be taken seriously.

Aim and scope

The aim of this thesis is to examine the relationship between the Aboriginal movement and the Australian state, as the two constantly influence one another through their countless actions, reactions and interactions. I argue that the relationship between the Townsville Aboriginal movement and the Australian state is a dialectical one. Dialectical relationships are likened to dialogue, rather than debate, because there is a reliance on engagement between the two parties; rather than simply trying to convince another party (or an audience) that one's opinion is the correct one, dialectics are about the exchange of information and a shared attempt to find the truth (Plato 2003). Although this may seem an inappropriate way to define the relationship between social movements and states – after all, they seem to be in opposition, and each tries to change the other – they are in fact more reliant on one another than first appears. Marxist dialectics, in fact, argues that contradiction (in his example, between ruling class and working class) promotes development (Marx 1873). Thus, social movements and states contradict one another and in the process society is altered¹³. This relationship is not unique to the Aboriginal movement in Townsville but is a feature of social movements generally – they are inextricably linked to the power holders to whom they make claims. However, the precise nature of this relationship will always be unique, contingent on social, historical, political and cultural contexts. Thus, this research seeks both to enhance social movement theory and to fill an ethnographic void through an in-depth understanding of this local movement.

This study argues that the social movement is contingent upon the state for its existence and successes, particularly relying on political goodwill for any

¹³ Whether these changes are 'progress' or 'development' depends, of course, on one's perspective of the changes.

concessions. At the same time, I assert, the state relies on the actions of social movements for legitimacy. By allowing and occasionally responding to protests, the state retains its image as a benevolent and democratic entity which listens to its constituents. This thesis comes from the perspective that social movements and states are dynamic, socially constructed entities which are inextricably linked with surrounding contexts (cf. Tilly 2002; McAdam et al. 2001). Thus, the goal of this research is to situate Townsville's Aboriginal movement within broader cultural, political, social and historical contexts. This movement is intrinsically shaped by these factors, and the movement we recognize today has never existed in isolation. I base my claims on a combination of archival research and ethnography, particularly focusing on activism amongst Aboriginal people in Townsville. It is my intention to create a dialogue between activists and theory in an accessible manner, because an in-depth understanding of their own movement is very beneficial for activists, providing the tools for considered reflexivity. I have set out to address questions which are asked by movement participants, and my intention is to answer them both theoretically and practically. Such questions include: how do social movements maintain strength? What are the keys to movement longevity? How do movements ensure the creation of collective identity amongst movement participants? Furthermore, how does the relationship between the state and the movement assist activists in planning their tactics and their goals? In probing these questions, I utilise the local focus to address broader questions which are asked by social movement participants around the world.

Throughout this research I have committed to an approach called 'anarchist anthropology' (Graeber 2004), the main principle of which is ensuring that one's means are consonant with the desired ends. Thus, the researcher must remain reflexively critical of power relations which are inescapable in academic research projects. This approach has allowed me to act as a 'critically engaged activist researcher' (Speed 2006), where I worked in solidarity with research participants while retaining a critical, anthropological outlook on the situation in which I was embedded. Moreover, anarchist anthropology is committed to

combining theory with practice to ensure that academic research is applicable in the real world and can make positive changes in the lives of research participants. Rather than becoming lost in jargonistic 'High Theory', anarchist anthropologists seek 'a way of grappling with those real, immediate questions that emerge from a transformative project' (Graeber 2004: 9).

One means of engaging with people from diverse backgrounds is through story-telling. Charles Tilly (2002) writes about the importance of stories as a unit of analysis. Stories, he argues, are a universally understood way to convey meaning. However, focusing exclusively on stories can lead to a narrow study. Marc Edelman (2001) claims that anthropological inquiries into social movements are typically too local in focus, getting caught up in ethnographic detail and ignoring broader questions. On the other hand, social movement theories are based on sweeping historical views which do not account for local nuances. Edelman suggests that anthropologists should position themselves somewhere in between, using the local to illuminate theoretical notions of movements, and vice versa. I have attempted to ensure this in my research by relying on both ethnography and historical sources, as well as questioning how this local movement fits within broader structures.

In this research project, I wanted to explore the individual goals and motivations of local activists, to make my research applicable to them. I was a part of organising committees and was present at demonstrations. I also had discussions about movement goals outside of activist contexts, to gain responses which were more reflective and removed from the high tension (both positive and negative) of those contexts. Through the use of archival and historical research, I have compared present-day accounts of goals and motivations with those of historical Aboriginal activism. Thus, I have attempted throughout this thesis to include a combination of archival and empirical research and to discuss the similarities and differences between the two. By including both and situating a local movement in broader structures, I hope to occupy the middle ground that Edelman (2001) suggests will strengthen social movement studies.

Parameters and Limitations

It is important to remember that this study is very localised, both spatially and temporally. The focus of my research is on Aboriginal activism in Townsville. Townsville does not exist in a vacuum; activists here are intricately linked with other locations around Australia and the world. For that reason, I have occasionally ventured outside of North Queensland to see the ways in which networking happens around the continent. I am not trying, in this thesis, to analyse Aboriginal activism all around Australia. I doubt my analysis of Townsville itself is even very comprehensive. Due to a feeling of uneasiness between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Townsville, I decided early in my research to focus solely on Aboriginal activism. This does not mean that I excluded Torres Strait Islanders from my research, but I acknowledged that to focus on both would prevent an in-depth analysis of either. Moreover, this research was conducted from the perspective of the social movement, rather than from the state. Thus, my analysis of the relationship between the two may be skewed, but I would not have built up suitable rapport needed to conduct research with activists if I had been simultaneously working with the state.

A common theme that I hope I make explicit throughout the thesis is the limitations imposed by my role. As a young, white woman from the United States, I was in constant negotiation with 'insider-outsider' positions (see Chapter Three for a more in-depth discussion of this role). As an 'activist researcher', I made an early and overt commitment to the movement under study, and became somewhat of an 'insider' to local activism. Of course, I was never fully 'inside', because, simply put, I am not an Aboriginal person. So the perspective of this thesis is always from the outside looking in, and I expect that I have missed many details and interpreted events in a way that an Aboriginal researcher would not have done. However, my outsider perspective has also allowed me to keep a certain distance, even when I was most wrapped up in local activism, and so I hope that I have picked up on some things that went unnoticed by the 'true insiders' with whom I worked.

Structure of the thesis

The following chapters of this thesis explore the dynamics of Aboriginal activism in Townsville and its relationship with the state. The first section provides the background information necessary to understand the contexts of the study. The subsequent chapters deal more specifically with the research undertaken during the course of my PhD studies and are firmly grounded in ethnographic experience. The chapters are arranged thematically and use a variety of events to explain several components of activist movements.

Chapter Two explains the approach I have taken throughout my research. I critique different conceptions of terms such as 'social movements' and 'states', which is vital to understanding the remainder of the chapters. I also explore in depth the theories which have influenced my research, focusing particularly on 'relational theory' to explore the relationship between the movement and the state. In Chapter Three, I discuss the ways in which I went about my research, using 'critically engaged activist research' and 'anarchist anthropology' as guiding principles. Chapter Three also introduces the players in this ethnographic study. This chapter describes the key activist groups with whom I worked throughout my field work, offering background information on the issues around which they mobilise. I finish with a timeline of important political events which occurred throughout my field work, from deaths in custody, to a military intervention into Aboriginal communities, to a Prime Ministerial apology, and more.

In Chapter Four I examine the concept of the 'activist' and explore why some people adopt this label while others do not. I argue that movement participants are influenced not only by the movement but by the institutions which they oppose. This chapter uses stories told by activists to explain what influences one to become a certain type of activist, to remain involved with the movement, and in some cases, to become movement leaders. While I focus on individual stories in this chapter, I do so through the lens of broader cultural, political and social contexts, arguing that activists are constantly tied up with the system they oppose. Chapter Five contends that, while movements are

contingent on individuals, they are also more than just a collection of activists. Movements and states are both in a constant process of networking, building local groups, larger coalitions, and even creating opponents. One of the main tensions faced in the process of forming these organisations and networks is between homogeneity and diversification, and the ways these tensions are negotiated have implications for activist engagements with the state. This chapter argues that the Townsville Aboriginal movement has become adept at diversification, despite the difficulties, because of the social and political atmosphere in which it has developed.

Chapter Six examines the tactical repertoires used by Aboriginal activists in Townsville, using a continuum to illustrate the various actions which operate somewhere along the spectrum between public and privately-focused. This chapter argues that these 'action repertoires' become ritualised, with certain elements recurring no matter the context, and that these rituals sustain the movement and strengthen collectivity. Tactical repertoires provide a comfortable and familiar arena in which activists and the state can engage with one another. Thus, the tactical repertoires of Townsville Aboriginal activists are centred on low-risk and non-confrontational activities to ensure that this relationship is sustained. Chapter Seven discusses the strategies impelling Aboriginal activists. There has been little consensus on the overarching movement ideology which informs goals and tactics. Local groups, and even individuals, operate from a number of positions ranging from working with the state to seeking complete autonomy from it, which impacts on the way they organise and their actions. This chapter likens the ideological foundations of the Townsville Aboriginal movement to a nomadic group, shifting when it needs to depending on resources, climate and needs. This chapter comes towards the end of the thesis because my understanding of it was not made clear until I examined the other aspects of this social movement – the individual activists, organisation and networking, and tactical repertoires. Although all of these aspects are ultimately informed by movement ideology, this relationship is unclear, so I have saved the discussion of strategy and ideology until last, in the hopes that

the preceding discussions will help with clarity. Finally, Chapter Eight reviews the material from the previous chapters to re-examine the questions raised in the introduction. I look at the strengths and weaknesses of the Aboriginal movement in Townsville and its relationship to power.

In summary, this thesis offers an in-depth look at Aboriginal activism in Townsville, a relatively small city in North Queensland, Australia. It presents a discussion of one particular social movement of oppressed people who are struggling to achieve equality and self-determination. It examines the tensions that this movement constantly negotiates: it is in opposition to the Australian state yet forced to operate within the confines of the state, and often to work *with* the state. Although the ethnographic evidence comes from a particular local context, similar tensions are played out around the world. The growing trend of autonomous social movements as diverse as Rastafari (Petray 2009b), Indigenous movements like the Zapatistas in Mexico (Nash 2005), and the global justice movement (Graeber 2009; Juris 2005; Day 2005) are evidence of a widespread desire to extricate society from pernicious state power, particularly as the state's responsibilities are increasingly privatised and contracted out to corporations. Further, the dynamics of the relationship between those who have power and those who resist it has long held the imaginations of people around the world, and this thesis provides an examination of one instance of those dynamics.

Two

Research Strategy: Theoretical approaches to states and social movements

Introduction

This thesis offers an extensive critique of the relationship between the Aboriginal social movement in Townsville and the Australian state. Thus, it is necessary to understand just what is meant by these terms. States are commonly spoken of across numerous disciplines, and there are many ways to view 'the state'. Social movements may be less prominent, but the term is a taken for granted aspect of everyday life. I begin by expounding the concepts of power, politics and resistance, which provides the basis for discussion of both states and social movements. This chapter then provides an explanation of the understandings of states and social movements which underlie this thesis. I also present here a brief outline of social movement theories, explaining why relational theory, outlined by McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001), is the most appropriate means of examining the complex relationship between social movements and power-holders to which they make claims. While relational theory forms the structure of the theoretical framework upholding this thesis, it is supplemented and enhanced with other theoretical understandings. Following Maddison and Scalmer's (2006) activist-relevant approach, I will draw from a variety of movement and activist theories to create an articulate and in-depth analysis of Townsville Aboriginal activism which is useful both to academics and, importantly, to activists themselves.

Power, Politics and Resistance

Power is a complex part of every social system, and post-structural analyses like those offered by Foucault (1984) suggest that power exists within all levels of society. However, it does not operate the same in every circumstance, and it is imperative to recognise that some individuals and institutions have power which is more socially legitimate than others. Belshaw (1969: 92ff) defines power as the combination of authority, influence, and social wealth, which results in an ability to alter the actions of others. Power is not merely equivalent to force; Gramsci (1971) argues that coercion and consent work together, and unless society recognises one's power as legitimate, hegemony cannot be achieved. That is, subordinate members of society must accept their subordination. Althusser (1971) offers Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) as one means of convincing subordinate classes that those with authority deserve it. However, Graeber (2009) reasserts that power – particularly state power – is meaningless without the threat of violence. When I speak of 'power-holders', in this thesis, I refer to those individuals and institutions which maintain a legitimate claim to authority, such as the state. Social movements, while not powerless, are subordinated within mainstream arenas to legitimate authorities; they possess an entirely different form of power.

Beckett (1988: 3) points out that the state is never in full control of any situation, as 'even the weakest people have their small ways of frustrating the plans of the powerful'. Even in seemingly intensely oppressive situations, such as Queensland Aboriginal reserves, the possibilities for resistance are ever-present, and as Trigger (1992: 11) points out, hegemony is 'always more fragile than it appears'. Hegemony must be constantly re-created, negotiated and reinforced, and that process makes it possible for cracks to develop. Australian anthropologists have illustrated the everyday resistance (Scott 1985) used by Aboriginal people in their relationships to the outwardly total control by the state. Cowlshaw (1988) asserts that even something as simple as avoiding change or adapting slowly is a form of resistance. Morris (1988) similarly writes of the culture of resistance which emerged in tightly controlled Aboriginal

institutions. Trigger (1992: 53) notices such details as 'an Aboriginal repertoire of manoeuvres designed to avoid blatantly exploitative labour relations with non-Aborigines', or the avoidance of the mission as a means to keep children out of the dormitories (Trigger 1992: 74).

These notions of power and resistance, however, operate under the assumption that one party (the state, or to a lesser extent, the church via the mission) is clearly in control. The present-day situation regarding Aboriginal relationships with the state is not quite so clear cut. Perhaps more appropriate is Foucault's (1988: 13) discussion of power:

Power should not be understood as an oppressive system bearing down on individuals from above, smiting them with prohibitions of this or that. Power is a set of relations... It's clear that power should not be defined as a constraining force of violence that represses individuals, forcing them to do something or preventing them from doing some other thing. But it takes place when there is a relation between two free subjects, and this relation is unbalanced, so that one can act upon the other, and the other is acted upon, or allows himself to be acted upon. Therefore, power is not always repressive. It can take a certain number of forms. And it is possible to have relations of power that are open.

Resistance, in these relationships of power, must be more than just a negative, reactionary response. Foucault highlights the possibilities that a subject can act positively on himself or herself, indicating that resistance is a largely individual action. This is not, then, an appropriate lens through which to examine collective resistance like social movements, although Foucault's notions of power as everywhere and part of every relationship (cf. Foucault 1977) has become an almost taken-for-granted theoretical stance in contemporary social science. Further, Graeber (2009) provides examples of state power which are explicitly violent, calling into question Foucault's claim that this is not power. Protesters who are being attacked by police with tear gas and pepper spray are unlikely to argue that this is not a power relationship.

More helpful may be Rancière's (2006) expression of politics as an attempt to destabilise the sensible. Rancière says that societies are constituted through a partition of the sensible, which allots status and roles to its members, and

societies determine who has a voice and who does not. Politics, then, is distinguished from the social order, as an attempt to disrupt the existing partition of the sensible—an interruption of the current social order. Politics are when people who are not included want to become included. This opens a space for democracy/equality. In democratic societies, mass protests and demonstrations are a key mode of doing so.

Laclau and Mouffe (1985) are post-structuralists who challenged any notions of a fixed hegemony or economic system. Rather, they provide what is known as the suture metaphor for understanding hegemony. The hegemonic system is envisaged as a body which is constantly being cut by various forms of resistance. These cuts are sutured; in other words, the resistance is accommodated into the system. Reforms are made and the system makes superficial changes, but the body remains largely intact. By accepting challenges in this way, the system can stop the impact of the resistance and keep its structure intact. This metaphor introduces a more dynamic element which recognises the fluidity of the relationship between states and social movements.

Politics is an attempt to alter or negotiate power relationships. According to Rancière (2006), politics is an attempt by subordinated individuals and groups to become power-holders within the social system. In everyday language, however, politics refers to the formalised political structures in society: the government. Social movement activity easily falls into the first definition, but rarely into the second. Social movements use a variety of tactics and strategies to create a dialogue. Freire (1970) argues that dialogue makes it possible to challenge the standard monologue of power-holders. Dialogue is, in fact, the means of bringing about social change and liberation, because without dialogue there is only oppression. Conceiving of social movement activity as a dialogue is useful when examining the dialectical relationship between movement and state (discussed in Chapter One).

Situating States

Liberal democracy in Australia

Australia, along with the majority of western countries, is a liberal democracy. According to the website, AustralianPolitics.com¹⁴ (2009), Australia's government is based on the principles of defined and limited power; legitimacy based on popular support; justice through representative democracy, allowing all citizens to be treated equally; and relative freedom, with government-restricted prohibitions only in place for the 'general good'. This is the logic underlying state decisions and actions. Particularly of interest for this thesis is the second principle, that the liberal democratic state is legitimated by popular support through frequent elections. Some scholars consider Australia to be an almost uniquely successful example of European liberalism because of the linear and mostly non-violent history of democracy here (Rowse 1978: 10). Rowse's (1978) discussion of the history of Australian liberalism is a useful resource for understanding this liberal democracy and the way it is popularly understood.

In western societies, it is often the case that the electoral system is seen as the most (or only) legitimate way for social changes to occur. This is because the state is seen not as an entity with its own logic, but as a neutral instrument, which in the case of labour struggles, 'workers could seize and use through parliamentary representation' (Rowse 1978: 40). Graeber (2009) depicts the image of the scales of justice; rather than sitting on one side of the balance, the state is the hand which holds the scales; in other words, the state operates outside of the very frameworks it imposes. Expanding on W.K. Hancock (1961, cited in Rowse 1978), Rowse explains that Australian democracy is viewed through a utilitarian perspective: the state is a large public tool which is meant to ensure the greatest good for the greatest number, and particularly the upholding

¹⁴ This does not appear to be an official government-run website, however it is the first result in a Google search of the term 'liberal democracy' and is thus likely to be a popular reference even though it is not academic or official.

of individualistic rights. One of these rights, which liberalism holds important, is the right to culture; liberalism is open and attempts to encompass all beliefs and practices under its umbrella. However, certain practices are seen as too repugnant for the liberal state to allow, such as religious or cultural practices which can be interpreted as child abuse (Povinelli 2002). In these instances, the liberal state can justify the intolerance of these cultural practices by reminding the public of its job to uphold the greatest good for the greatest number of people. In other words, outlawing certain cultural practices or removing certain rights is acceptable if it is for the sake of protecting the children, as the Howard government illustrated with its Northern Territory Emergency Response, the Intervention.

Capitalism, neo-liberalism and states

The rise of liberal democracy is intricately bound up with modern capitalism. Although he developed his theories one and a half centuries ago, Karl Marx's critiques of capitalist exploitation provide a solid and still largely applicable foundation from which to explore capitalism. Of course, things have not remained static since the mid-1800s, so theorists have been appropriating and altering Marx's arguments since the time of his writing. Marx's (1858[1978]) materialist conception of history states that all societies move through a linear model of development from primitive to ancient to feudal to capitalist, and finally to communist. Capitalism relies on the division of labour between the working class, or proletariat, and the bourgeoisie, or those who own the means of production. Because this division is dependent on wage labour, it means an exploitation of the proletariat in the name of profits for the bourgeoisie. This linear, teleological view of history implies that all societies will develop along the same path—a notion which has been firmly refuted by many, especially dependence theorists (Wolfe 1997).

A common Marxist notion is that the economy shapes the cultural institutions of society. This is referred to as the base/superstructure metaphor, first articulated in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859[1977]).

This metaphor explains the idea that 'the mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life' (Marx 1859[1977]: 2). Thus, the economic context of a society is the foundation which underlies the 'material conditions of life' as well as the political and legal realities of society. Marx later goes on to clarify that the economic conditions only determine social realities 'in the last instance' (in Hall 1996: 418). Althusser (1971) expands on Marx's writings by discussing the role of Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) which function to normalise, reify and reproduce class structures. Althusser (1971) argues that the state rules through power and coercion. ISAs such as schools, churches, the media, and other social institutions indoctrinate people with the ideologies of capitalism and reproduce the conditions of capitalist production. In other words, these institutions work to shape children into their appropriate class identities and do so in a way that is seen as normal and taken-for-granted. One way of viewing the liberal state, then, is that it provides a 'general sanction of the social relations of capitalist exploitation' (Rowse 1978: 122), or even actively reinforces those social relations.

However, Povinelli (1993) points out that, while many early anthropologists agreed with this Marxian view, there were opponents. Australian Aboriginalist W.E.H. Stanner challenged the notion that 'primitive' economic systems meant simplistic social and religious culture. According to Povinelli (1993: 10), 'Stanner felt he had to demonstrate that economy and culture could be unhinged and that each differently influenced the shape and function of the social group'. Povinelli's (1993) work, based on extensive field work in Belyuen, Northern Territory, looks at the ways that economic and cultural action are intricately linked and work together to produce Aboriginal identities. Rather than relying on simplistic notions of cause and effect, though, Povinelli views the economic and cultural aspects of Aboriginal life relationally, tied up with each other, with history and politics and power relations.

World-systems theory is a contemporary reading of Marxism which juxtaposes traditional Marxist critiques of capitalism with an understanding of neo-liberal globalisation. A world-system is not necessarily a system that

encompasses the entire globe, but ‘systems, economies, empires *that are a world*’ (Wallerstein 2004b: 17, original emphasis). The current world-system is a global institution that has its roots in the 15th Century, and disregards political and cultural differences in favour of a free market. World-systems analysis looks at the global system as a whole, rather than at individual nation-states. Amin (1980, 1976) and Wallerstein (2004b) both conceptualise a global order characterised by a growing gap between the rich and poor nations – the core and periphery. This conceptualisation was originally contributed by Third World scholars analysing unequal exchange and underdevelopment (Wallerstein 2004b; Wolfe 1997). Rather than focusing on economic conditions, however, world-systems analysis fuses economic, political and socio-cultural analyses. World-systems theory relies heavily on classical Marxism, but also incorporates Gramsci’s (1995, 1971) notion of hegemony, allowing for this ‘grand narrative’ style of analysis.

As we live in an increasingly neo-liberal world, states are not the only actors on the world stage. Transnational financial institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organisation all operate above the level of the state, linking states across the globe with one another and with corporations (McMichael 2004, 1996). States are still the main local actors in terms of determining policy and regulating the everyday lives of citizens. And as Graeber (2009) argues, states still maintain the monopoly on using violence to enforce these regulations. However, they do so within the framework of global capitalism and undertake neoliberalising projects to better fit within this global system. Thus, we see an increasing prevalence of privatisation, as the state passes on its responsibilities in a user-pays system. This has potentially substantial impacts on the way state engagement and resistance occurs (cf. Buttel & Gould 2004; Keck & Sikkink 1998), but the current situation of Australian Aboriginal activism is that it remains focused largely on the state as the major target.

Individuality within the State

The role of the individual in society is also affected by the state and its economic policies. Rowse (1978: 15) explains the nature of consensus-based ruling in liberal democracies, stating that 'Society is conceived of as an ensemble of atomistic individuals, and the state's actions are taken to be a pursuit of the "collective interest" of that social ensemble'. In other words, liberalism is based on an individualistic view of society. But in a world of increasing multiculturalism, the 'collective interest' is hard to define. As more people claim identities based on cultural, ethnic, racial, national or other unique grounds, the state has to account for the differing demands and desires of these groups. The risk is that collective identity under the banner of multicultural citizenship 'can come precariously close to being refashioned as a collection of strangers who turn not toward but away from each other in the neighbourhood of radical alterity' (Povinelli 2002: 5). Thus, the position of the individual is firmly entrenched in Australian liberalism, whether by membership or by opposition to 'them', the Other.

In Marx's writings, the individual is largely unimportant. Marx's position on individuality is clearly illustrated throughout his work. In *The German Ideology* (1846[1978]: 163, my emphasis), he says that 'the real intellectual wealth of the individual depends entirely on the wealth of his real *connections*'. In other words, individuals are only important because of their relationality. He raises a similar point in *The Grundrisse* (1858[1978]: 222), where he specifically refutes the notion that individuality is a natural occurrence; in fact, he argues that historical man was inextricable from his clan or family—individuality is only a construction of the capitalist system itself. This is likely a result of his background as a Young Hegelian (Tucker 1972). Marx borrows Hegel's notion that individuals are only important in so far as they help push forward history and move society towards transcendence. This transcendence, Marx theorised, would take the form of communist revolution. In this argument, revolution must be global rather than individual because it is necessary to completely topple the economic base of society.

For Althusser (1971), individuals are the products of social classes, imposed upon people by Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs). Because the system is so pernicious, there is no escaping ideology; we are '*always already* subjects' of ideology (Althusser 1971: 172, original emphasis). Barrett (1991: 88-92) notes Althusser's belief that the concept of human nature is highly contentious, and that 'humanism' is 'theoretically bankrupt'. Therefore, there is little hope for individual agency in social change because it is impossible to remove oneself from an ideological position. Gramscian (1995, 1971) discussions of hegemony are more accepting of individual agency, and unlike ISAs, hegemony allows for the possibility of individual resistance (Gramsci 1995). Hegemony is maintained through coercion as well as consent (Dean 1999), and Trigger (1992) illustrates the way that both of these aspects were integral in the maintenance of stability in Queensland's Aboriginal reserves and missions like Doomadgee. He points out the ways that Aboriginal people attributed legitimacy to certain aspects of the state and mission system, often 'ambiguously' agreeing with the same ideologies which kept them subordinate. However, even this ambiguous consent remained distinct from the ruling ideology and allowed for minor forms of resistance.

Stuart Hall (1996) strives to apply the concept of hegemony to contexts other than simply the state. He finds this especially valuable in the discussion of race and ethnicity. First, Hall (1996: 435) argues that racism should be viewed in terms of historical and regional specificity, rather than theoretical abstractions. Additionally, it is important to avoid reductionism, both economic and racial; sociality is based on complex interactions between many factors and must be analysed as such. Hall (1996) suggests that a Gramscian perspective on hegemony, the state, and ideology offers a fruitful vantage point from which to analyse race. Hall (1990) uses this framework to critique the notion of identity; although he writes specifically in terms of diaspora, his argument is applicable to post-colonial subjects in general. Cultural identity, he argues, can be considered in two ways: it can be a shared, collective culture that gains unity through common historical experiences, or it can recognise the 'critical points of deep and

significant *difference*' between individuals and groups (Hall 1990: 394). Regardless of the view that one takes, identity is always constructed and ever-changing. In the case of collective identity, the shared historical experiences are almost always a result of colonialism—for example, Africans and Caribbean natives acting in unity on plantations, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from around Queensland going on strike together on a reserve like Palm Island (Watson 2010).

Wolfe (1997), although critical of post-structuralism, does feel that this theoretical paradigm offers a ground-breaking discussion of race. While critiquing post-colonialism's focus on representations rather than concrete conditions, Wolfe argues that these representations inform practical activity and render post-colonial and post-structural theories useful. Post-structuralism challenges representation to make obvious those things which are taken for granted, such as nationality, citizenship, gender and whiteness. For example, subaltern histories tell a different story of colonisation and problematise the historical discourses which stem from Western institutions. Rather than remaining within traditional dichotomies, post-colonialism embraces 'hybridity' (Bhabha 1994).

Subaltern individuals are often the focus of theorising about identity, but they are merely obvious examples of processes which occur across the whole of liberal society. Elizabeth Povinelli (2002: 3) writes of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory experiencing the pull of the liberal state in opposition to their 'traditional' common sense. She argues that

These people could neither be nor cease to be themselves in social conditions that maximize the impasse of discursive and moral orders... In other words, the contradictions and impasses of late liberalism are not found only in and among minorities and subalterns. They are a total social fact.

Questions of authentic identity are hard to answer as people around the globe are increasingly linked into world-wide networks via the internet, the government and the market. One challenge to 'authenticity' which many Australians face is what Povinelli (2002: 5) calls 'moments in which persons find

themselves simultaneously obliged to their moral sense and to reason, especially instances in which the two are not reconciled'. But Povinelli argues that new ways of understanding the self and society can unfold from these contradictory moments.

Intersections

Although states and social movements occupy opposing social roles, they have a number of similarities. Their make-up and the ways they operate mirror one another in many ways.

Structure or Agent

States are often referred to (including throughout this thesis) as entities which act according to their own logic and which have their own momentum. It is common to hear that 'states do this' or 'states operate in this way'. However, states are not simply independent actors; they are made up of individuals who make decisions and carry out the actions of the state. Likewise, Gledhill (1994: 190) warns anthropologists to avoid 'transforming social movements into unitary "actors" devoid of internal contradictions and contradictory tendencies, and isolating them from the larger social, cultural and political fields within which they experience their ebbs and flows'. Lea (2008) takes an in-depth look at the individuals who make up the state, focusing on health bureaucrats in the Northern Territory. She gives the state a human face: 'The state may be an artifice, but it is still one of human making' (Lea 2008: xvi). As Lea points out, even though these individuals may be critical of the state, they simultaneously uphold its ideology and keep it functioning as per usual. In short, they work *for* the state. Keck and Sikkink (1998) discuss transnational social movements, arguing that they are both structure and agent. Many theorists recognise that classes are not discrete social actors but are formed through a complex web of institutions (Rowse 1978: 193). The same can be said of both the state and social movements. It is hard to define just what fits into these social structures/actors and what falls outside. They are the result of their relationships to other

institutions, structures and actors. The state is a structure, encompassing the individuals, like those that Lea (2008) describes, who make the day to day decisions and keep the state running smoothly. But it is simultaneously an agent in its own right. It dictates the parameters within which those individuals can work, which decisions are acceptable and which actions will be followed through.

States and social movements have this nature in common. Like states, social movements are structures which encompass the diverse individuals and groups who do the work of the movement. And social movements also operate on their own momentum and cannot be changed on a whim. In both cases, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; states and social movements are far more than mere collections of individuals. The collectivity takes on a life of its own, but that life is reliant upon the individuals who constitute the collectivity. Both are overarching structures which encompass all the localities across Australia, but they are locally specific. In other words, the Australian state follows a certain logic wherever it operates, but it is also changed to suit local exigencies (cf. Mowbray 1986). Likewise, the Aboriginal movement manifests differently depending on the social, political, cultural and historical contexts of different locations.

Protest in liberal systems

Liberal governments must retain the right of protest. As John Locke (1690[1980]: 77-8, original emphasis) writes in his *Second Treatise of Government*, 'there remains still *in the people a supreme power to remove or alter the legislative*, when they find the *legislative* act contrary to the trust reposed in them'. Moreover, I suggest that democratic states are legitimated by protest; because democracies are governments 'of the people' they need social movements to provide an opportunity to respond to the demands 'of the people'. Piven and Cloward (1977: 184) recognised this over two decades ago, as they argued that state actions 'create and nurture the political forces with which the state has then to contend'. Rodan (1996: 4) takes this argument even further, claiming that civil

society—'the natural domain of personal and group freedoms, implicitly contrasted with the state as a set of naturally coercive power relationships'—is an integral part of states and the two are intrinsically related. Everyday state activities are intended to work for the collective interests of citizens, so it may seem as if this is sufficient for a liberal state to be legitimated. However, as Povinelli (2002) discusses throughout her work on Australian multiculturalism, there is a loss of collective interests in increasingly pluralistic societies. The state, then, works for the *majority* interest. Social movements are even more necessary in these situations because they give the state a clearly articulated description of what minority groups need. This makes it easier for the state to respond to these minority groups and maintain their status as liberal democracies which look after all citizens' needs.

Situating Social Movements

Definitions

Collective action is not limited to liberal democracies, although it is particularly important to their legitimacy, and has brought about social change for the entire span of the historical record. Social movements are one specific form of 'contentious politics' or collective struggle which involves governments as claimant, object to claim, or stakeholder (Tilly 2002; McAdam et al. 2001). Contentious politics is 'episodic rather than continuous, occurs in public, involves interaction between makers of claims and others, is recognized by those others as bearing on their interests, and brings in government as mediator, target, or claimant' (McAdam et al. 2001: 5).

Unlike spontaneous collective actions, social movements are purposive, sustained and deliberate (Castells 1997). They are made up of people who share a common interest in a set of clearly articulated goals. These people come

together to form an 'invisible community'¹⁵ (Tarrow 1998). In some cases, social movements arise from pre-existing communities (for example, the Aboriginal community), while at other times communities are formed out of social movements (for example, the Greens). In addition to sharing common goals, social movement participants gain a collective identity (Snow et al. 2004; Polletta & Jasper 2001; Friedman & McAdam 1992). By forging a sense of groupness and working together against a common opponent, social movements have the potential to effect social and political changes (Burgmann 2003)¹⁶.

Social movements can be differentiated from political groups because they work from 'outside of institutional channels' (McAdam & Snow 1997: xviii), and they represent subaltern, oppressed or subordinated interests. Although movements may make political demands, they do so from a position outside of politics (Burgmann 2003: 4; Escobar 1992: 43). In fact, according to some definitions, social movements represent only those people who lack political representation (Touraine 1988: 68; Tilly 1982: 26). As Wallerstein (2004b) points out, most movements of the oppressed begin as radically anti-systemic, but as they become larger and more mainstream, they lose their radical qualities and become reformist movements, or in some cases lose their movement status altogether and become political actors¹⁷. Direct, public action is a key characteristic of social movements (Snow et al. 2004; Burgmann 2003; Tarrow 1998; Tilly 1982).

¹⁵ Tarrow (1998: 44, footnote 5) replaces Anderson's (1983) term 'imagined' with 'invisible' when referring to social movement communities, because many movement participants 'would be surprised to learn that their interests were "imagined"'.

¹⁶ Following this definition, the sort of 'everyday resistance' that Scott (1985) describes as peasant activism would not be considered a social movement. They may fall under Gledhill's (1994: 190) 'cultures of resistance', though, as everyday resistance is 'historically enduring, despite the ebb and flow of mobilizations, crushing defeats and periods of temporary quiescence'.

¹⁷ There is a risk of co-optation with any movement success. This can be explained by Laclau & Mouffe's (1985) conception of the system: that by incorporating small parts of opposition and giving small concessions, hegemony weakens that specific resistance. Wallerstein (2004a: 630) concurs: the liberal system 'began to develop tactics that would appease some of the complaints put forward by the radicals without doing anything that would basically threaten the institutions of the world-system'.

Classifying Social Movements

Sociological theory is useful for providing a means for comparison between social processes. Analysing and critiquing an isolated incident may be interesting, but it offers little to the academic community. Separating similar social processes along a continuum, or into different categories, provides a basis for comparison, which can give better understandings of any social phenomena. Social movement theories are no different. Their purpose is to offer explanations that can be generalised across different movements. Thus, social movement theories have developed several typologies to differentiate between movement types. There are several different classificatory schemes, but they are not mutually exclusive.

A common distinction is made between old social movements and new social movements. These categories emerged out of European social movement theories after the 1970s. Old social movements are identified as class-based, Marxist movements which react to the 'old' system of economic exploitation. Old social movements are preoccupied with structures, they promote statist and hegemonic politics, and their goal is for broad, Marxist-style revolutions (Escobar 1992). New social movements, on the other hand, are cultural, identity-focused and are a reaction to the new society in which we live, described by Touraine (1988) as post-industrial, technocratic and pluralistic. In contrast to old social movements, these are focused on social actors and cultural concerns, they promote participatory, pluralistic, and egalitarian democracy, and they are striving towards reformation of everyday life and personal transformations (Burgmann 2003; Escobar 1992).

The distinction between old and new is not as easy to make as proponents of this classification would suggest. There is no clear temporal break. Non-class movements have existed for centuries; for example, the women's movement and the anti-slavery movement. 'Old' movements did not cease to exist in the 1960s. The only thing that seems to be old or new is the attention these movements received by social scientists. Further, as Burgmann (2003: 19) points out, new social movement theories implied that class-based activists were inferior and

narrow-minded. Escobar (1992: 31) has argued that the similarities between the so-called new and old movements are too often overlooked by theorists. For many movement participants, distinguishing class from culture is not an easy task. This is because class is inextricably linked with other forms of oppression¹⁸. Thus, many movement participants themselves make no distinction between class- or identity-based claims, and this distinction is both analytically and practically unhelpful.

A common distinction is made between reformist movements and revolutionary movements—this distinction is made by both academics and activists in some movements. Some scholars differentiate between social movements and revolutionary movements (cf. Snow et al. 2004: 13), while others view revolution as one type of social movement. For example, Goodwin and Jasper (2003: 3) define a revolutionary movement as ‘a social movement that seeks, at minimum, to overthrow the government or state’. However, this takes a macro view only, and ignores the micro scale of social movements. Not all revolutionary movements work on the political level; some seek cultural revolutions, or radical change in the way people think about issues like gender or race. These individual movements may ultimately lead to political change, but only incidentally as the focus of activism is on changing the minds of individuals rather than altering government. Graeber (2004: 45) defines revolutionary action in a much broader manner, as ‘any collective action which rejects, and therefore confronts, some form of power or domination and in doing so, reconstitutes social relations—even within the collectivity—in that light’. This clearly does not only apply to violent overthrows of state systems as this revolutionary action could take place in the most localised scales. It may be more useful to distinguish between movements which have a revolutionary *strategy* – a plan for

18 This point is made well by Balibar & Wallerstein (1991: Chapter 2). They provide a traditionally Marxist argument which posits that racism and sexism (as well as other -isms) are the result of capitalism. Or see Marx (1859/1977) for the original argument, known widely as the base/superstructure argument. For clarification, Hall (1996: 411-440) explains Marx’s argument in terms of hegemony.

bringing about change – versus those which are *ideologically* revolutionary, with a vision for the future which is radically different from the current situation.

Rather than revolution, the terms liberal and radical may be more appropriate; radical movements are those that seek to change ‘not just the content of the current modes of domination and exploitation, but also the forms that give rise to them’ (Day 2005: 4). For example, radical Indigenous movements challenge the notion of sovereignty, rather than aiming for inclusion within colonial governments. Day (2005: 5) explains,

...contemporary radical activism, then, pushes beyond the possibilities and limits of liberal reform, while not entirely discrediting attempts to alter the status quo—one can never be sure of the value of a strategy or tactic without reference to particular social, historical and political contexts.

The difference between liberal and radical is a common source of contention between movement participants. Epstein (2002) credits the tension between liberal and radical feminists with the decline of the women’s movement. The distinction between these two strategies is sometimes highlighted when police target radicals for repression, leading liberal activists to distance themselves from their former allies for fear of a similar fate (Graeber 2009: 244). This targeted repression can be thought of similarly to the ‘divide and conquer’ tactics used in colonisation, where existing fissures in groups are exacerbated by those seeking power over them.

Whether a movement is reformist or revolutionary, it works within a framework of hegemony. Liberal movements work within existing hegemony while radicals seek to substantially change the structure of hegemony. A distinction has been made recently between hegemonic and non-hegemonic movements. Non-hegemonic or autonomous social movements are movements which do not seek totalising effects across society, but ‘set out to block, resist and render redundant both corporate and state power in local, national and transnational contexts’ (Day 2005: 45). Autonomous activism is characterised by decentralisation and non-hierarchical organisation, as well as a continual process of reflexivity. Autonomous activists attempt to avoid falling into old, oppressive

structures by constantly and self-reflexively negotiating various 'movement tensions' (Deslandes & King 2006; Maddison & Scalmer 2006). Day (2005: 19) discusses the various forms which autonomous action can take, which include (1) dropping out of existing institutions; (2) subverting institutions, for example through parody; (3) impeding institutions by destruction of property, or blockades; (4) prefiguring alternatives to institutions, in the forms of protests; and (5) 'construction of alternatives that render redundant, and thereby take power from, the neoliberal project'. These five forms of non-hegemonic action are very broad because any action that challenges the system without seeking totalising effects is non-hegemonic, autonomous action.

Examples of autonomous movements and anarchic spaces are abundant, and tend to fall within the last two categories offered by Day (2005): prefigurative movements. That is, movements which envision alternatives and set about creating their desired social relations immediately, rather than waiting for society to change on a larger scale. One of the most visible and oft-cited examples is the revolt of the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico in 1994. A defining feature of this rebellion is that it 'demanded rights for the indigenous populations; it did not seek to obtain state power in Mexico' (Wallerstein 2004a: 632). In fact, the spokesperson for the rebellion, Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, envisions 'a world with space for many worlds' (quoted in Deslandes & King 2006: 317). Ruggiero's (2000: 176) description of the *centri sociali*, or squatter community centres that were created throughout Milan, indicates that they are non-hegemonic, autonomous movements as well: whereas traditional social movements are teleological in nature, the *centri sociali* 'are not a group of people building up a counter-power or fighting for the abolition of power' because they focus instead on creating spaces outside of commoditisation and power.

One potential problem with these pre-figurative spaces is their implicit lack of outreach (Deslandes & King 2006). Because autonomous social movements do not seek hegemony, they do not intend to convince others of their tactics and can become closed to outsiders. There is potential that they will alienate potential members because they are not actively trying to change the

system, but it is more likely that outsiders will simply be unaware of their existence. Day (2005) does not see this as a drawback, but rather one of the defining features of these movements. If they tried to change the way others think, they would become hegemonic in nature. However, there is no reason that autonomous movements cannot make their actions public and invite likeminded people to join them without trying to alter hegemony.

Maddison and Scalmer (2006) offer a more compelling and complex means for describing and discussing social movements, which is based on distinctions made by movement participants themselves, making it practically useful while remaining analytically sharp. Rather than two categories, they offer eight tensions which can be thought of as eight continua, offering a complex matrix within which social movements can be positioned. Maddison and Scalmer (2006) base their tensions on extensive interviews conducted with activists from numerous Australian movements. Because these tensions are based firmly in 'activist wisdom', it is expected that they will be relevant to activists themselves. Moreover, theories which recognise the diversity and dynamism of movements and account for the fact that most movements are made up of heterogeneous individuals and small groups which may be vastly different from one another are helpful for comparisons within, as well as between, social movements.

Although eight tensions are offered by Maddison and Scalmer (2006), they are not of equal importance and will change depending on certain contexts. For instance, choices must be made on a regular basis regarding whether movement actions should be expressive/symbolic which attracts attention and makes people think, or instrumental/practical which has the potential to bring about real changes. On the other hand, some movements have no problem deciding between organisation and democracy; for some, hierarchical decision-making structures are natural, while others see consensus as the only choice in order to make the means resonate with the intended ends. The tension between unity and difference has been discussed in terms of many social settings in addition to social movements, and concerns the need for collective identity versus the need

for a wide constituency. Tensions between counter-public and mainstream tactics may dictate how wide-reaching a movement's appeal is. Similarly, activists struggle between global and local tensions, and must decide whether to follow international trends or remain focused on nearby events and tactics. Another tension is one discussed by other scholars, that between reform and revolution. Maddison and Scalmer (2006) also mirror the Old vs. New debate with their identification of economic redistribution and cultural recognition. The final tension which is identified is that between hope and despair felt by activists and by movements as a whole.

Despite all these classifications, the reality is that most movements are comprised of diverse individuals all using different means. There is no requirement within movements that all participants will think and act the same, and one person's idea of a successful strategy will be slightly (or substantially) different to others'. A single social movement may fit into numerous categories over the course of its existence. In fact, Burgmann (2000) points out that strategic diversity often leads to greater movement success. When a movement has a radical arm which makes extreme demands, the more moderate arm often benefits through increased communication with the government. Simply put, 'moderate demands are best achieved not by moderate and respectable means, but by militant and disrespectful activity' (Burgmann 2000: 14). Moreover, the distinction between categories is not clear-cut. Take, for example, a definition of revolution offered by Graeber (2004: 56): 'a conscious rejection of certain forms of overarching political power which also causes people to rethink and reorganize the way they deal with one another on an everyday basis'. This definition is quite similar to that of non-hegemonic, autonomous movements. Are they therefore revolutionary, even though they do not seek to alter the structure of hegemony?

A Genealogy of Social Movement Theories

Coherent reviews of the history and development of social movement theories have been published by many, including Maddison & Scalmer (2006), and Edelman (2001). For In this chapter I will only provide a brief overview of the trajectories of social movement theory, and later I focus on the most useful of these: relational theory. It can be argued that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were the first noteworthy theorists of social movements. Their opinion was that class-based social movements are a necessary step in the progression of history. With a view to praxis, Marx and Engels (1848[1978]) wrote *The Communist Manifesto* as a way to stir revolution amongst the working class. The majority of early movement theories took this class-based view of conflict, and many still view Marx as a key movement theorist (cf. Nilsen & Cox n. d.).

In the late 1930s, psychological analyses of social movement participants became more prominent. Collective behaviour theory, as it was known, characterised social movements as frightening and irrational, and the participants were viewed as victims of anomie, uncertainty, and political incompetence (Maddison & Scalmer 2006; Goodwin & Jasper 2003; Crossley 2002; Tarrow 1998). This theoretical development has been all but thrown out more recently, seen as problematic because it views activism as a social ill, and activists in need of treatment for their pathology. This opinion was the generally agreed upon theory, and became especially prevalent during the 1950s. Burgmann (2003: 10) argues that these theories are an illustration of the conservative and complacent attitudes of that era; they were also a reflection of 'the traumatic recent memory of Fascism in its portrayal of social movements as potentially dangerous, or at least disruptive, intrusions into an otherwise functional society'. Theorists, then, were reacting to the negative social movements that had been so prominent during World War II.

In the 1960s, participation in social movements started to become socially acceptable, and almost mainstream. In the United States, issues like civil rights, women's liberation, and the environment all became major sites of mobilisation.

In Europe, students went on strike. In Africa and Asia, new nations struggled to overcome a history of colonialism. Marxism regained prominence as the Cold War escalated, particularly after the Cuban Revolution successfully installed a communist government (Wallerstein 2004b). Social movements became so prevalent during the decade that Wallerstein (2004b: 84) identifies a world revolution resulting from 'the combination of long-existing anger about the workings of the world-system and disappointment with the capacity of the anti-systemic movements to transform the world'. Social movements took on a new form, focusing more on cultural change than economic transformation (Maddison & Scalmer 2006; Wallerstein 2004b; Escobar 1992).

Mirroring real life, social movement theories took on a new form in the 1970s as well. No longer was the focus on curing alienated rebels. Rather, academics were often involved in activism, as were numerous other 'normal', 'rational' and 'respectful' middle-class people. At this stage, movement theories split, with a relatively clean distinction between American and European schools of thought. As can be expected, the two were expressions of the different histories, political situations, and social movement trends that were occurring on either side of the Atlantic. In America, freedom of speech and other rights were taken for granted because they are explicitly guaranteed in the Constitution. As such, there were few outwardly revolutionary movements. Instead, activists there took on interest- or identity-based causes. In Europe and especially in France, revolutionary activism has a long history. Formerly, social movement theorists there relied on 'big theories' of the system, like Marxism; but in the 1960s and 70s the old theories were no longer seen as valid, so new, but still big, theories had to step in (Maddison & Scalmer 2006).

American theorists tended to keep their distance from social movements, preferring to analyse and critique from above. Because of this, American activists often avoid academic theory; theories dealt with social movements as if they were independent entities, disconnected from the people involved in them and the system they challenged (Maddison & Scalmer 2006). The first main theory that came out of American social movement studies was Resource

Mobilisation Theory. This theory argues that social movements are organised and orderly activities carried out by rational actors. The focus of Resource Mobilisation theorists is on the costs and benefits of social movement actions; they argue that, because social movement participants are rational, the benefits must outweigh the costs in all instances (McCarthy & Zald 1977; Piven & Cloward 1991; Ferree 1992). Political Process was an expansion on Resource Mobilisation, and looked at the ways that political systems affect the flow of movements by opening or closing opportunities (Goodwin & Jasper 2003; Crossley 2002). The American theories have a tendency to reify movements and ignore cultural and individual aspects, reducing movements to almost economic equations.

European theorists, in contrast to Americans, tended to explain social movements in terms of the society from which they arose. European theorists conceptualised the 'New Social Movement', based on the argument that conflict is inseparable from culture (Touraine 1988)¹⁹. New social movements are considered to be a result of a new society which is post-industrial and pluralistic (Touraine 1988), and New Social Movement theory is focused on the subjective manner in which movements are experienced by individuals. This micro perspective ignores the structural aspects of movements, meaning that it, too, is insufficient for a complete understanding of this phenomenon.

Social movement theories have covered a vast range of questions and analyses, though gaps remain. Though many focus on Western theorists, significant research has come out of Latin America, India, and other non-Western contexts. But there is little recognition of these non-Western works by the most prominent Western theorists. This has prompted Boudreau (1996: 175) to state that 'the study of protest outside the industrial North is largely under-theorized'. Even within their own regions, studies are rarely undertaken of Indigenous

¹⁹ This was a key concept arising from the Manchester School of social anthropology (cf. Gluckman 1955), and in fact many concepts from New Social Movement theory have borrowed heavily from social anthropology.

movements²⁰. Additionally, social movement theories are often focused on highly-visible protests rather than small-scale or instrumental actions. Finally, theorists tend either to be completely disconnected from movement participants, or they get lost within post-modern identity politics (Burgmann 2003: 22). Few successfully negotiate between structural and phenomenological approaches (Edelman 2001), which is a severe flaw in the body of social movement theory, and one which is addressed more recently by emerging theories (cf. Maddison 2009; Maddison & Scalmer 2006; Tilly 2002; McAdam et al. 2001). The narrow focus of the majority of social movement theory, on either structural processes or on the problematic concept of 'identity' (cf. Brubaker & Cooper 2000), necessitates an alternative theory in order to fully understand the complex dialectical relationship between social movements and power-holders.

Relational Theory

After approximately 40 years of an American focus on 'mobilisation' theories, McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) formulated a new way to think about contentious politics (see also McAdam & Tarrow 2000; Tilly 2006; Tilly 2008). This program was extended by Tilly (2002) in his discussion of the interconnection between stories, identities and political change. The most important shift is that from the study of social movements to the study of contentious politics. Rather than compartmentalising movements from other forms of contention and from broader social contexts, this new theory can be broadly classified as 'relational' (Tilly 2008). Tilly (2006: 410, original emphasis) makes clear his belief that 'how things happen is *why* they happen'.

Instead of trying to explain a single contentious event (strike, social movement, etc) in its entirety, and thus reifying that episode, relational theory focuses on the dynamic interactions between contentious actors and opponents – the targets of activism, referred to in relational theory as claim-making targets – which happen within a 'fluid, and socially constructed, "field of contention"'

20 There are several exceptions in Australia. See the review of the literature in Chapter One for more information.

(McAdam & Tarrow 2000: 149). In this way, their hope is to understand the causal mechanisms and processes that operate across many different forms of contention. Still, the theory recognises that all movements are unique and contingent on environmental, cultural, historical and relational factors. Relational theory shares many similarities with world-systems theory, in the way that both use discussions of local events in order to describe broad processes. It is able to act as a middle ground between structural realism and social construction by embracing social transactions and relations as units of analysis (Tilly 2002: 5).

Relational theory does not entirely dispose of the concepts used by culturalist, rationalist and structuralist approaches, but it does reformulate them in more dynamic ways. Old concepts have been revised to act as interactive explanatory tools. For instance, strategic framing is a concept from resource mobilisation theory which implies a one-sided activity where an issue is 'framed' or presented to the public in a certain way by social movements. 'Social construction', on the other hand, is the relational term which allows for the complex web of interactions which contribute to the way an issue is perceived. McAdam et al. (2001: 50) also focus a good deal of attention on political identities, their formation and their importance within contentious episodes. Tilly (2002) argues for the importance of stories, which are crucial to understanding everyday social life but they are simultaneously limiting, as well. Political stories, Tilly (2002: xi) argues, are the result of 'contentious conversation' that happens during and especially after contentious episodes.

The first move within relational theory is away from structures and towards interaction. Rather than singling out 'insurgents' and the ways that they interpret environmental stimuli as threats or opportunities, relational theory sees 'challengers, members, and subjects as simultaneously responding to change processes and to each others' actions as they seek to make sense of their situations and to fashion lines of action based on their interpretations of reality' (McAdam et al. 2001: 46). Likewise, rather than viewing movement organisations as actors in and of themselves, relational theory recognises that

those organisations must be appropriated for activism – that they must be both structure and agent. That is, people who would like to take part in activism must either form an organisation or use one already in existence which can be transformed into an ‘instrument of contention’ (McAdam et al. 2001: 47).

Traditional mobilisation theory includes some discussion of interactive mechanisms, but these are quite limited. For instance, framing is seen as the way in which a movement’s goals are strategically formed. However, relational theory turns instead to social construction to explain many different aspects of contentious politics. Social construction recognises that conscious framing efforts are entirely reliant on ‘earlier and far more contingent interpretive “moments” in the life of a given contentious episode’ (McAdam et al. 2001: 48). Similarly, the notion of transgressive repertoires states that social movements pick and choose from a pre-existing set of tactics for resistance (Tilly 2002). Relational theory changes the focus to the ways movements use pre-existing tactics in innovative ways and shift the forms, locus and meaning of collective action (Tilly 2002; McAdam et al. 2001). It recognises the inherent limiting effects of history on this action, but views collective action as an improvisational performance – rituals or norms form the basic structure of contentious episodes, but the specific details of that episode are dependent on various factors. Tilly (2002: 209) points out that the shared rituals and norms which form the basis of contentious action ‘do not spring from primordial consciousness’ but from very context-specific historical and social conditions.

Identity crisis

In liberal societies, people are often viewed as citizens first, and further distinctions based on class, race or ethnicity are regarded as secondary (Rowse 1978: 15). In a multicultural and pluralistic world, some believe that people have so many social groupings that they have ‘no class allegiance nor any overriding allegiance to a *single* social group. The long-term loyalty is to society’ (Rowse 1978: 224). However, this is the view from those in power, who are not seen to belong to any particular social groups. From the perspective of racial or ethnic

minorities, this view of identity is highly flawed. Alternatively, world-systems theorists view individuals as products of a socio-historical process. Individuals do have agency and free will, but this 'freedom is constrained by their biographies and the social prisons of which they are a part' (Wallerstein 2004b: 21). Analysing these prisons allows for liberation, at least 'to the extent that we can be liberated' (Wallerstein 2004b: 22). Therefore, analysing the economic, political and socio-cultural processes that have historically constructed certain identities and relationships allows for the possibility of freedom within the system – another benefit of this theoretical project to movements themselves.

Although relational theory focuses quite heavily on identities, the emphasis is not individualistic but rather on shared contentious identities that come about during collective action (Tilly 2002). The notion of identity is often a contentious topic; as Tilly (2002: 10-11) points out, even dictionary definitions of the word struggle between shared characteristics and uniqueness. The lack of consensus for the meaning of 'identity' has led some to argue that social scientists should stop using the word altogether (cf. Brubaker & Cooper 2000). However, identities are vital to contentious action and to stop discussing them would be a glaring omission. Instead, Tilly (2002: xiii) posits that if we can recognise that identities are socially constructed, continuously renegotiated and consequential then we will 'get identity right'. Relational theory recognises that identities are socially constructed and highly fluid but are experienced as 'coherent, real, solid, and compelling' (McAdam et al. 2001: 55). A combination of relations, boundaries and stories works to create shared identities, rather than individual attributes (Tilly 2002).

No one is ever fixed to a solitary identity. Rather, identities co-exist and political identities emerge and change continuously as movement participants interact with each other and with outsiders. Tilly (2002) distinguishes between embedded categories like 'woman' or 'Aboriginal', which pervade routine social interaction, and detached identities like 'Australian' or 'socialist', which are rarely felt in everyday interactions. Both types of identities are socially constructed and they form, combine, divide, change and overlap with other

processes (McAdam et al. 2001: 58; Cowlshaw 1994; Archer 1991). However, political identities are integral to movement strategies and tactics. Existing identities are used to draw people into movements, but those identities are bound to change as the movement progresses (McAdam et al. 2001: 320). This can lead to disputes within movements over identities; it also means that identity mobilisation makes up a large part of collective action (McAdam et al. 2001: 56).

In this regard, relational theory differs from both structuralist and culturalist theories; political identities are neither neat and fixed, nor formed through 'self-deliberated emissions of individual energy' (McAdam et al. 2001: 56). McAdam et al. (2001: 57) point out the flaws in the rationalist perspective – that collective decision-making processes are simply a scaled-up version of individual decision-making. Structuralists are criticised for reifying social movements and political identities, for homogenising contentious groups, and for ignoring socio-cultural specificity (Tilly 2002). Culturalists or radical phenomenologists, on the other hand, argue that identity 'construction and interpretation take[s] place within people's heads' (McAdam et al. 2001: 57). With this view of identity, it is easy to disregard identity claims as 'self-expression, or even self-indulgence – what others do when they are too comfortable, too confused or too distressed for serious politics' (Tilly 2002: 207). However, identity claims by previously unrecognised groups are one of the key forms of social movements.

Graeber (2004) seems to agree with relational theorists as he points out the same flaws in theories of identity, though he extends the argument by stating that some identities are forced on people (cf. Jacobs 1994). For instance, race and gender are neither imaginary nor chosen²¹, and writing as if they are freely created does nothing to solve the problems of identity-based inequalities. These identities are literally physically inscribed on the body of an individual and are there for the rest of the world to see and interpret. Likewise, Beckett (1988: 3)

²¹ There is some room for choice in identities like race and gender, for instance, the increasing number of Australians who are choosing to identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander who avoided that identity in earlier years. However, this can only happen within very particular confines and is not something that can be picked up or dropped on a whim.

writes that maintaining Indigenous or ethnic identities puts individuals at the mercy of others as they lose the power to 'control who or what they are in the wider society'. In other words, these identities have external influences determining their social meanings. However, identifying as an 'activist' is generally a conscious choice and differs in some regard to those more imposed identity categories. Still, identities are only salient in response to some form of opposition. Shared identities are formed through a combination of external and internal relations, and representations and shared understandings of those relations (Tilly 2002: 10). Both rationalist and phenomenological views ignore the ways in which social interaction affects political actors and their identities. On the other hand, the relational perspective views social transactions as concrete entities which influence social sites and can be observed and analysed (Tilly 2002).

Doing relational theory

One of the main goals of relational theory is to explain mechanisms and processes that work across a broad range of contentious action. This calls for a change in focus from single-episode to multi-episode analyses. Rather than including comparisons as a mere sidenote, McAdam et al. (2001) call for these to become major explanatory models. They aim to change the pigeon-holing of different forms of contentious action (i.e. social movements, revolutions, and democratisation) and instead view them all as part of contentious episodes. Then, one can examine the relationships between contentious activities and environmental conditions.

Amongst several aspects of the relational program are numerous calls to broaden analysis beyond single-episode studies; in particular they recommend that scholars abandon efforts to explain every facet of a contentious episode. Instead, McAdam et al. (2001: 313) suggest that studies of single-episodes should 'specify what is distinctive about them and therefore requires explanation, identify mechanisms and processes that caused those distinctive features, then solidify that identification by comparing with at least one other episode that

differs with respect to that distinctive feature'. As they reiterate throughout their book, McAdam et al. (2001) look beyond the structural causes of contention and instead examine the mechanisms and processes which catalyse the episode and work throughout the contentious period to polarise contenders, form alignments and solidify identities.

Despite the broad scope of the relational project, there is still room to include local contexts within analysis. As Tilly (2002: xii) points out, social 'transactions' occur within previously existing boundaries like culture, shared knowledge and environment. In fact, McAdam et al. (2001: 345) are confident that their program is quite important for understanding specific social processes as well as general ones. Historical, cultural, and local exigencies can fit with more general analyses when broader explanatory principles are identified. In fact, Tilly (2008: 5) points out the importance of 'deep knowledge of the context' to understand contentious interactions.

An effective way to study specific episodes is to pay close attention to stories. Stories are one of the most common ways of communicating the details of a contentious event, so Tilly (2002: 8) strongly advocates for their inclusion in social analysis. He also recognises the limitations of stories; storytelling describes but does not explain, in fact stories require explanation themselves. But, Tilly (2002) sees the need to make room within general discussions of social processes for systematic explanations of storytelling. He argues that they are specifically important for the relational project because they avoid reductionism. Stories work to create histories, auto-biographies, justifications, mobilisation, agreement and documentation of movements and other contentious action. Social scientists need to contextualise stories by juxtaposing them with non-story components; we are also able to generate stories which incorporate description and explanation.

Life does not fit neatly into the structure of stories. As primary school children are taught, stories should have a beginning, middle, and end; they should have characters that develop throughout the plot; stories need complicating action followed by a climax and then resolution. Stories about

various social processes are told in this way. But the events which are described as neatly packaged rarely unfold in such a coherent manner. Instead, social movements and other forms of contentious action only take shape through retrospective observations (McAdam et al. 2001: 308). Many aspects of these social transactions do not fit into standard stories, for instance indirect effects of action or environmental limitations. When including stories as objects of analysis it is important to remember that they are social constructions which change through retrospective negotiation (Tilly 2002). Still, stories have a lot to tell us about what causes contentious action to start and to change as it goes, as well as the effects of contentious action on society. In this thesis, I rely on the telling of stories for my analysis of the relationship between the Townsville Aboriginal movement and the Australian state. Some of these stories were told directly to me, in the form of interviews; others were revealed through time as I came to know research participants well; still others are stories from my own perspective, based on my experiences as an activist researcher in this study site. Using stories as the primary unit of analysis has the added benefit of appealing to a wide audience, including those with whom I worked throughout my thesis.

Tilly (2006) has also pointed out the value of political ethnography to the study of contentious politics. Because politics are characterised by dynamic and contingent interactions rather than large structural roles, political ethnography is able to delve deeply into political processes, causes and effects. Most importantly, information can be gathered first-hand through interviews, conversation, and observations. As Tilly (2006: 410) argues, 'ethnography engages the analyst in looking at social processes as they unfold rather than reasoning chiefly from either the conditions under which they occur or the outcomes that correlate with them'. However, those ethnographies which are useful to relational analyses of contentious politics must be integrated with knowledge of the environment in which those politics operate. In other words, Tilly (2006) feels that good political ethnography needs to look beyond description of local contexts and focus instead on broader processes.

Problems with Relational Theory

Although this theoretical program is very different from those which came before, it is still a very academic body of theory. As such, Bevington and Dixon (2005) find that it has not gone far enough in addressing activist questions. Because relational theory is looking for causal analogies across time, space, and different forms of contentious politics, their questions are broader than is useful for many movement participants. Bevington and Dixon (2005: 188) indicate that while broad, this focus is 'decidedly constricted' because theorising only occurs above the level of individual movements. Edelman (2001) addresses a similar problem in his review of social movement studies within anthropology. He argues that anthropologists have too often ignored social movement theories, and that theorists likewise ignore the everyday realities that ethnography of a social movement can reveal. The answer is to use theory to explain localised ethnographies, and for these ethnographies to illustrate, illuminate, extend and generate broad, overarching theories.

Activist theory

From the point of view of movement participants, many academic theories are of little use. These theories have a tendency to reify movements and make them into isolated objects of study (Frampton et al. 2006). Some activists resent the 'vanguardist' feel of theory; as oft-cited activist-theorist sasha k (2006: n.pag.) explains, 'we don't need expert, specialized "theorists", we all need to be reflexive and theoretical in our own understanding of social change, not as some vague concept but as something intimately connected to our own desires for a different life'. Thus, a parallel body of 'activist theory' has developed amongst many movement participants. This theory can be defined as 'that knowledge which is consciously developed out of experience, which has been worked through using experience as a touchstone, which has become explicit and articulate, and which has been brought to a level where it can be generalized' (Nilsen & Cox n.d.: n.pag.). Activist theory, then, is based on shared experiences by activists and is often worked out in meetings, conferences, magazine and

online articles, 'zines, email listservs, and online discussion boards. On one hand, this makes it more accessible to other activists than if it were published in academic journals; but it can also limit the dissemination, particularly when theorising happens in person or in private discussion boards and email lists, and makes the discussions hard to collect and compile in future.

While generalisations about activist theory are difficult to make, there are some broad themes that arise in numerous discussions. For the most part, activist theory aims to maximise activist potential (cf. Camfield 2008; Shorter 2000). Nilsen and Cox (n.d.) explain the point of their article on activist theory:

We aim to develop a set of practices that makes it possible for us to tackle problems, overcome obstacles, resolve frustrations and respond to challenges successfully. In order to do so, we need to reflect on our (problematic, changing, local) experience and develop a more thorough understanding of it.

Essentially, activist theory is about improving activist practices. More specifically, activists seek and create theory which discusses 'tactics, strategy, goals and, above all, the role of the activist/organizer' (sasha k 2006). The shape this discussion takes depends on whether it occurs within Marxist, anarchist, libertarian, or other philosophical frames of reference.

Some academics have identified several 'waves' of activist theory (cf. Day 2005). 'Old' movements, as discussed above, used Marxism as their organising principles. 'New' social movements fell into a broadly post-structural or post-modern genre. The 'newest' social movements tend to be anarchist, or at least anarchistic. This is evidenced in the discussions activists have, the organisational structures they adopt and the theories they generate. Even those recent activists who identify with Marxism are 'in closer alignment politically' with 'various council-communist, humanist, autonomist and non-dogmatic Marxisms' which share many principles with anarchism (Nilsen & Cox n.d.: n.pag.). Again, one cannot definitively say that all contemporary movements are anarchist in nature, but there has been a noticeable influence of anarchism across a broad range of movements on a global scale.

For this reason, anarchist principles are at the heart of most recent activist theory. Direct democracy, and how to most effectively achieve it, is a popular topic (Fisher & Ponniah 2003; Abers 2002). For many groups, consensus-based decision making is the only answer (cf. South Dakota Democracy in Action 2008; Beam 1992); those which rely on hierarchy are considered 'old social movements' (Ward 2008). For the most part, however, recent activist theory accepts the need for broad-scale involvement and places limitations on hierarchy (cf. Guerrilla News Network 2006; Alston 2004; Garrigues 2002). The next step, then, is to ensure that everyone is involved. Shorter (2000: n.pag.) compares activism with traditional gift cultures; gifts are often given by those members of society who have an abundance of resources, relative to the rest of society. While traditional gifts took the form of food, decorative items, tools, and weapons, most members of 'our western society' can afford to give their time and energy to activism. Thus, in activist groups, 'tasks are chosen rather than allocated'. In order to sustain the giving, Shorter (2000) urges movement 'elders' to regularly recognise and appreciate movement 'newbies' so that they do not become disillusioned.

There are many other important concepts which are explored in activist theory. For instance, the notion of activist rights, both within the movement and within the system, is often discussed (cf. Activist Rights 2006). Similarly, how to respond to police and state oppression is both theorised and practiced through workshops, role playing, and theatre (cf. Activist Solutions 2007). The use of internet resources, and their contribution to a non-hierarchical group is regularly vocalised, but at the same time there are debates about how to include the majority of the population that lacks regular (or any) internet access (cf. OneWorld 2002). Different ways of confronting norms are another common topic of discussion. Activist theory is not only interested in the small-scale; a good deal of theorising surrounds broader concepts of global hierarchy and the place for activism within the world-system. This includes privilege based on race, gender, sexuality, age, nationality, and other sites of hierarchy.

Graeber (2009) points out that anarchist movements are prolific sources of this on-the-ground, activist-generated theorising. But there is a contradiction

here, because anarchism is non-hierarchical; anarchist theory and practice are about delegitimizing authority, including academic authority. By writing theory, anarchists are contradicting their own beliefs. To confront this contradiction, though, Graeber (2009) argues that anarchist movements are inherently playful. They remain silly throughout the process of grappling with complex theoretical questions, as a way to avoid taking themselves or anyone else too seriously. Thus, the core of most activist theory echoes Shorter's (2000) conclusion: 'Save the world and don't forget to have fun'. Some activists may find this conclusion one of privilege: how can activists have fun when they are working on such serious matters? But anarchist movements attempt to find joy in even the most serious of situations, for instance hugging and dancing while being blasted with tear gas and pepper spray (Graeber 2009). This joy comes through in actions and in theories which are generated out of this movement.

Movement-relevant theory

There have been some attempts at a synthesis between academics and activists. Bevington and Dixon (2005) call this 'movement-relevant theory'. Maddison and Scalmer (2006) rely on 'activist wisdom' for the evidence behind their general theories. Graeber (2004: 9) suggests that what is needed is 'Low Theory: a way of grappling with those real, immediate questions that emerge from a transformative project'. The justification for movement-relevant theory, rather than (or in addition to) activist theory, is that academics can study broader contexts than activists. As long as theory addresses questions which are important to activists, and simultaneously takes activists seriously, activists will take theory seriously (Bevington & Dixon 2005). Some pre-existing social movement literature is utilised by activists, namely movement histories and activist autobiographies. Although these sources are often not explicitly theoretical, they are valued because they discuss different methods of building 'radical, large-scale, genuinely diverse movements while successfully employing direct-action tactics and directly democratic organizing practices' and they 'deal with the often ignored issues of burnout, emotional conflict, motivation [and]

commitment' (Bevington & Dixon 2005: 194). Graeber (2009: 259) suggests that anarchist activists are voracious readers of theory, but that this theory has not been generated from the academy in recent years. Rather, activists tend to read pre-1968 French theory, rather than the post-1968 theorists like Foucault, who focus on failures of activism and conclude that revolution is impossible. Activists are clearly uninterested in theorising about their irrelevance. Any new directions towards movement-relevant theory, then, should attempt to address questions activists would like answered. Movement-relevant theory is a break from traditional movement theories because it rejects their narrow focus. However, it does not deny the importance of certain factors of those theories. Rather, it uses helpful facets from various theories and juxtaposes them with questions concerning activists to dynamically engage movement participants (Bevington & Dixon 2005; Barker & Cox n.d.). Thus, movement-relevant theory requires deep and dynamic interactions between researcher and movement participants²².

For Dorothy Smith (2005), doing research which was relevant to movement participants meant studying the ruling powers. This process, more a methodology than a theory, is called institutional ethnography. As Frampton et al. (2006: 3) explain, 'through an analysis of the institutional relations movements are up against, more effective forms of activism can be developed'. Smith's (2005) institutional ethnography values lived experiences—particularly those of oppressed groups—and uses those experiences to begin examining the world from outside of the structures imposed by the ruling discourse. This research stance comes from a feminist interpretation of Marx which moves beyond the static notion of base/superstructure; institutional ethnography understands the social as 'a world produced by actual people that could be researched as such and transformed' (Mykhalovskiy & Church 2006: 75).

From institutional ethnography emerged political activist ethnography, developed most notably by George Smith (1990), who was a student of Dorothy Smith. Political activist ethnography has also been advocated, discussed and

²² See Chapter Three for more discussion on researcher involvement.

extended through works such as Frampton et al.'s (2006) compilation, *Sociology for Changing the World*. Political activist ethnography asks very practical questions about achieving movement goals, and seeks to find answers. It is dynamic and changes with movements; as Frampton et al. (2006: 9) declare, 'Most important to us is that political activist ethnography not become a dogma'. There are several key characteristics, however. For instance, political activist ethnography recognises the agency of social movements. It also makes problematic the distinction between 'theory' and 'method' and focuses more appropriately on 'praxis'. While it eschews traditional notions of theory, political activist ethnography privileges social relations as 'a method of looking at how individuals organize themselves *vis-à-vis* one another' (Smith 1990: 55)—that is, social relations are not an object of study but a means of study.

All of these methods and theories share important similarities—namely, they aim to bridge the gap between traditional scholarship and movement participants. To do this, researchers must remain critical and aware of their role as activist-researcher. Uncritical adulation of a studied movement 'does not provide it with any useful information and does not aid the movement in identifying and addressing problems which may hinder its effectiveness' (Bevington & Dixon 2005: 191). Sometimes this may mean arguing points that are unfavourable to movement participants, but if the researcher shares a commitment to the movement, this can be done constructively. Finally, activist and movement-relevant theories are richer than traditional scholarship because, in addition to critique, they offer suggestions and ways forward which aim to strengthen and invigorate radical movements.

Summary and Conclusions

Understandings of the state and social movements are diverse and complex, and sometimes overlap. I argue in this chapter that the Australian state is characterised as a liberal democracy which upholds the role of the individual as paramount. However, notions of individuality, and the general business of the state, are constrained by international forces such as neo-liberalism and the

capitalist world-system. Both states and social movements share a common form – both are simultaneously structure and agent, where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. However, those parts play a crucial role in the everyday activities of states and movements, and influence the local manifestations of these nation-wide structures. Moreover, liberal democratic states *must* reserve a place for protest and dissent within their systems as a means of maintaining legitimacy.

Social movements have a long history of theorising, from functionalist perspectives which saw movement participants as anomic deviants, to rationalists who see movement activities as an issue of costs versus benefits, to interactionism which places emphasis on identities and meanings within post-modern social structures. More recent works try to blend the later two ideas, affirming the importance of social construction and agency within hierarchical structures of inequality. These ‘relational’ theorists see social movement activities as the product of endless negotiations between claimants (movement participants) and the objects of claims (the Australian state). Even these more relational and dynamic theories are still out of touch with many movement participants, and as such there has been a recent rise in activist theories which are concerned with everyday, on-the-ground realities of doing activism and confronting regimes of power. To try and bridge this chasm, several academics have entertained the notion of movement-relevant theory as a way of offering an academic perspective on these practical questions of activists.

Relational theory is about focusing on the things which make a movement unique. The political, social, cultural and historical contexts in which a movement operates are important to understand what a movement does – the changes it seeks, and the ways in which it targets power-holders in the process of making claims. As a movement of Indigenous peoples, the Townsville Aboriginal movement is both similar to other Indigenous movements, and a unique product of local exigencies. This uniqueness will be explored throughout this thesis, with the intention of illuminating social movement theory more generally.

This thesis will be guided by the relational and movement-relevant theories outlined in this chapter, as they offer the most potential for answering questions which are important to movement participants. That is, activists want to know how to make their movements more effective. The best way to answer this question is to have an in-depth understanding of what they are currently doing, and the relationship that exists between their movement and power-holders. Relational theory offers the most comprehensive means of exploring this dialectical relationship, teasing out the links between power-holders – state agents – and resistance – movement participants. In the later chapters of this thesis, I use relational theory to explore activist identification, organisations and networks, activist tactics, and strategic and ideological foundations of the social movement. Exploring the ways in which the relationship between state and movement (and other factors such as history, social context, and so on) inform these facets of social movement organisation provides an interesting analytical understanding of the movement. This can be used by activists themselves to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their current practices, and thus to improve their activism. Moreover, this in-depth understanding furthers the understanding of social movements as a general phenomenon because, while every movement is unique and shaped by history, social and cultural contexts, and their relationship to power-holders, conclusions can be drawn from specific examples like this one which illuminate the social phenomenon more fully. The next chapter will look more specifically at the way in which this research was conducted, which is intrinsically linked with the theories presented in this chapter.

Three

Research Tactics: Methodologies for activist research

Introduction

One of the benefits of qualitative research is the potential for researcher involvement. This involvement means data can be rich and personal, but of course, it will be partial. Involvement in the research topic has sometimes been seen as a limitation of qualitative research, because it necessarily comes from some particular perspective (Isaacman 2003; Taylor & Bogdan 1998; Goulder 1970; Becker 1967). This is, first and foremost, the perspective of the researcher. Becker (1967: 244) argues that those in power are able to speak for themselves, so social science should, as a rule, take the side of the less powerful. Admitting that one has become involved and researches from a particular perspective does not negate the credibility of the project; it simply makes the research practice more transparent to the reader. Lempert (2001: 26) extends this further, arguing that personal involvement can be the impetus behind one's best work due to a sense of obligation to research subjects.

Qualitative research has allowed me to explore Aboriginal activism in depth. Though I have not been able to 'collect data' from a large sample size, I have maintained a longer and more personal analysis of a specific research setting. It is impossible to remain uninvolved when dealing with such an emotionally charged topic (McNally 1973), so rather than trying to keep my distance, I became unabashedly involved in my research. In order to balance this

intense involvement with the research, I have tried to keep my focus historical as well as ethnographic.

In this chapter, I discuss the qualitative methodologies which have informed my research. I start with broad discussions of anarchist anthropology, as the ideological stance guiding the more specific approach I took to the research. Then I explore the issues involved with critical, emancipatory and Indigenous research, before moving on to a more specific discussion of activist research and the approach I settled on to undertake my research. This is followed by a section which grapples with the role of the researcher in activist research. In the next part of the chapter, I discuss the practicalities of the research. I explain the specific methods I used, such as participant observation, interviews, and historical study. In the final section of this chapter, I offer a discussion of the 'field site' where I studied. This section describes both the national and global contexts of the temporal and spatial exigencies of my field site as well as the immediate locations where I conducted my research. This is followed with brief descriptions of the groups to which I refer throughout the rest of the thesis.

Anarchist Anthropology

Anarchism²³ is the view that hierarchical authority is unnecessary and 'inherently detrimental to the maximization of human potential' (Highleyman 1995). Power, anarchists believe, leads to corruption—whether this power rests with the church, the state, or with patriarchal, racial or economic 'elites'. Those in control are more interested in maintaining their power than they are with maintaining their constituents. Rather than laws imposed by legal or moral authorities, anarchists feel that ethics should be based on a mutual concern for the well-being of others and of society (Marshall 1992).

²³ I have consciously used the term 'anarchism' as opposed to 'anarchy' for several reasons. One is that 'anarchy' conjures up images of chaos and riots, whereas 'anarchism' sounds more reasonable. My main reason for the distinction, however, is that 'anarchy' implies one singular entity, when in fact there are numerous ways of thinking about and practicing anarchism. *Anarchisms* would probably be more appropriate (Graeber 2004), but in keeping with other literature and for the sake of clarity, I have stayed with 'anarchism'.

Anarchism is much more complex than most people believe, with a rich and diverse body of literature spanning nearly two centuries. Many people understand the non-hierarchical platform of anarchism but cannot imagine states without government—a point on which they are likely to agree with many anarchists, who do not include ‘states’ within their ideal. The difference between Marxism and anarchism is similar to the distinction made between academic social movement theories and activist theory (Chapter Two): ‘Marxism has tended to be a theoretical or analytical discourse about revolutionary *strategy*. Anarchism has tended to be an ethical discourse about revolutionary *practice*’ (Graeber 2004: 6, my emphasis). While there may not be as many academic publications on anarchism as there are on Marxism, this is because anarchism is not just a theoretical standpoint but ‘an attitude’ (Graeber 2004: 4). Within that attitude are many different strands, such as ‘anarcho-syndicalism’, ‘anarcha-feminism’ or ‘social ecology’.

Anarchist theorists—no matter which strand they fall into—must begin from a common platform in order to produce theory which is useful to those who are trying to change the world for the better. Graeber (2004) discusses his hopes for an ‘anarchist anthropology’; by studying people in contexts different to our own, particularly those who live without the same forms of hierarchy as we do, anarchist anthropologists can become radical intellectuals capable of making positive changes to the world. Thus far, there is no defined program for anarchist anthropology, but it can be simply defined as research, particularly ethnography, into ‘anarchic spaces’²⁴ and the creation of a dialogue with other anarchic spaces, and with people desiring such spaces. Graeber (2004: 9-12) feels that any successful attempt at anarchist anthropology must rest on two assumptions. First, we must believe that lasting, radical change is possible, and second, we must actively avoid vanguardism.

²⁴ ‘Anarchic spaces’ are social settings which are not ruled by hierarchy or force but rather by consensus and mutual understanding. Examples of such spaces abound—for instance, food cooperatives, share houses, or affinity groups—but, as Graeber (2004: 34) points out, ‘the more successful they are, the less likely we are to hear about them. It’s only if such a space breaks down into violence that there’s any chance outsiders will even find out that it exists’.

The articulation of anarchist anthropology is recent and incomplete. But Graeber (2004) points out that there are examples of 'anarchistic' anthropology which can be drawn on. In particular, he discusses Marcel Mauss, a revolutionary socialist who conducted research on co-ops in an attempt to create networks which would, eventually, build an alternative, anti-capitalist economy. In his 'Essay on the Gift', Mauss (1925[1969]) argued that formal barter systems have never truly existed and instead, economies which did not utilise money were essentially gift economies. According to Graeber (2004: 17-18), Mauss used this to argue that 'socialism could never be built by state fiat but only gradually, from below, that it was possible to begin building a new society based on mutual aid and self-organisation "in the shell of the old"'²⁵. This bears striking similarities to the ideals espoused by autonomist Marxists (Dyer-Witford 1999) and many anarchist activists, who create anarchist spaces within the existing world-system (cf. Petray 2009b).

The important point to glean from Graeber's (2004) discussion of the anarchistic strands of traditional anthropology, though, is that ethnography is a useful tool for studying anarchic spaces, and the knowledge gained from such study could be useful to those striving to change the structure of our own society. Moreover, social science research can be carried out in anarchistic ways to work towards the notion that 'another world is possible'²⁶. By examining different ways of engaging with the state, of organising an economy, of gender and age relationships, it is possible to gain a wealth of insight into our own political, economic and social organisation.

Ethnography

Ethnography is a study of a very specific context, often a context quite different to that from which the researcher is familiar. Thus, the potential for

²⁵ Although he was taking a classical anarchist position, Mauss personally disliked anarchists. Graeber (2004: 18-20) explains that this was based on Sorel's (1950) anarchist theories which relied on irrational and violent vanguardism. Interestingly, Sorel moved towards Fascism towards the end of his life (Graeber 2004: 19).

²⁶ This was the text of a banner unfurled at the 2001 World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and is often used as a catch-cry by anarchists and other activists (cf. Fisher & Ponniah 2003).

learning new ideas is high, as Graeber (2004) argues in his call for anarchist anthropology. The researcher becomes deeply involved in the study site, and it is now commonplace for ethnographers to acknowledge their influence on that site—as well as the site's influence on the researcher. Specificity and reflexivity may mean that conclusions cannot be generalised, but a deeper understanding of any particular setting is important for its own sake because, as many scholars have pointed out, ethnography is the study of the specific (Small & Uttal 2005; Tsing 2005; Cowlshaw 1999). Moreover, in terms of social movements, larger systems emerge from specific, local settings. All social change begins with small-scale actions, which then become unified into a social movement by their 'penetration into practices and newly emergent common-sense understandings of the world realized at the level of the local' (Hyatt & Lyon-Callo 2003: 142). Therefore, the study of the specific is an important tool for all social scientists, but especially social movement scholars.

World-systems Ethnography

One major change that has affected ethnography recently has been the nature of field work. In the past, an ethnographer would travel to an exotic location and live in the study site for months or years at a time. This method was especially important for researchers who wanted to study 'isolated' groups of people. More recently, social scientists acknowledge the pervasiveness of the world-system and the utter lack of isolated people (cf. Wallerstein 2004b). Multi-sited ethnography, discussed in depth by George Marcus (1995), offers a method for studying this world-system. Marcus (1986: 171) explains that researchers begin with knowledge of a system and use ethnography to better understand that system in local, human terms. Today, multi-sited ethnography is most readily identified with scholars like Anna Tsing (2005), who has carried out studies of specific contexts which range across wide spatial scales.

Another form of ethnography that Marcus discusses is single-sited, but it situates that site within the world-system. This form of ethnography is more manageable, a 'compromised version' of multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1986:

172). Marcus' (1986: 172) single-sited ethnography of the world-system 'constructs the text around a strategically selected locale, treating the system as a background, albeit without losing sight of the fact that it is integrally constitutive of cultural life within the bounded subject matter'. Methods like working in the archives and applying macrotheory to local contexts, when combined with a 'rhetorical self-consciousness' make single-sited ethnography applicable to a critique of the world-system. Marcus' discussion of ethnography in and of the world-system resonates with Tilly's (2006: 411) call for political ethnography which combines the art of observation with 'systematic use of accumulated knowledge'.

An ethnography that focuses on the world-system illuminates the power webs that connect all aspects of the world. D'Amico-Samuels (1991: 70) found this methodology useful in her studies of Jamaica, because it allowed her to connect local-level inequalities with interstate power imbalances. Hale (2006: 102) was able to analyse the power webs between isolated Indigenous communities in South America and the World Bank. In the context of my research, situating the study site within the world-system means acknowledging the history of colonialism which gives Australia its current position as a core nation, despite the peripheral conditions experienced by its Indigenous peoples. Relationships with transnational institutions like the United Nations, the World Bank, other states, and foreign corporations all affect the lives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Australia (Burgmann 2003). Similarly, resistance is shaped by these systems as well as by its interactions with movements in other locations, or for other causes.

Emancipatory research

The concept of a liberatory anthropology or sociology has been very enticing for the past few decades (cf. Harrison 1991). Gordon (1991) speaks in terms of decolonised anthropology, concluding that an anthropology which does not serve the oppressors cannot be 'neutral' but must actively serve the interests of the oppressed. The main strains of emancipatory research have more specific

foci, namely feminist research, disability research, and Indigenous research. Emancipatory research is similar to 'critical ethnography'—a theory-based approach to ethnography that seeks to change the situation under study through the process of writing—in that its goal is to assist in the empowerment of oppressed people.

Emancipatory scholarship focuses on research as praxis, that is, a blending of theory and practice with the intention of making change happen (Lather 1991). Lather (1991) rejects the notion of an academic vanguard which will raise the consciousness of an oppressed group. Rather, she focuses on three methodological issues which allow the researcher and the research subjects to work together for mutual empowerment. First, she highlights the need for reciprocity, or collaborative research that 'gives something back' to research subjects. Second, dialectical theory building takes the place of theoretical imposition; the researcher must remain rooted in an empirical grounding which is open-ended and develops through dialogue with research participants. Finally, emancipatory researchers question issues of validity, arguing that research cannot be truly objective. To maintain rigour, Lather (1991: 66) suggests: triangulation of data sources, or the reliance on more than one type of research (i.e. ethnography as well as interviews and archival research) or more than one perspective (i.e. ethnography of both the oppressed and the powerful); systematized reflexivity, or a regular and in-depth questioning of the researcher's position in the project; and ensuring relevance to research participants.

Thus, emancipatory research aims for a high degree of collaboration, which should naturally lead to empowerment. As Barnes (2003: 13) points out, empowerment cannot be given, but must be achieved; therefore, collaboration is a very salient facet of emancipatory research. The particular approach of disability research is the generation of meaningful knowledge that is accessible to average people. Disability research is particularly interested in the empowerment of disabled people, however its methods can be applied to other situations of oppression. It aims to transform society through a structural

critique and subsequent barrier removal, and individual and collective empowerment. All emancipatory researchers must remain accountable to research participants, mainly by doing research that has practical outcomes (Barnes 2003). The reasoning behind emancipatory research has been summed up most eloquently by Edmund W. Gordon (1985: 132): 'Since much of establishment science seems to be about domination and exploitation, or their justification, we may have no choice but to be about emancipation'.

Indigenous research

One of the earliest and strongest calls for emancipatory research specifically geared towards Indigenous peoples came in the form of 'The Declaration of Barbados', issued by a group of mostly Latin American anthropologists in 1971. The declaration demanded that 'social scientists, primarily anthropologists, must assume the unavoidable responsibilities for immediate action to halt this aggression [of colonialism] and contribute significantly to the process of Indian liberation' (Bartolomé et al. 1973: 268). They sought to change anthropology's tendency to 'supply information and methods of action useful for maintaining, reaffirming, and disguising social relations of a colonial nature' (Bartolomé et al. 1973: 269). Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999: 9) advocates for the advancement of methodologies which have the potential to ensure that Indigenous research can be 'more respectful, ethical, sympathetic and useful'. Winch and Hayward (1999: 25) identify oral history, ethnography, participant observation, community study, collaborative inquiry, and action research as some methods which they claim are preferred by Aboriginal people in Australia.

Collaboration

Collaboration is, as with feminist and disability research, a key component of Indigenous research. Before starting a research project, Winch and Hayward (1999: 27) give some advice:

Listen to the people, send out messages on the 'bush telegraph', let people know that you are interested in writing about something which is important to them; leave time to think about it. Maybe wait for them to make the next move.

Unfortunately, this slow start is not possible for many academics, especially postgraduate students, who need to work within externally set deadlines. Further, collaboration raises issues of authorship and intellectual property rights. But collaboration runs parallel with self-determination, a value which has been identified as integral to all Indigenous peoples (United Nations 2006). Somehow, a balance must be struck between collaboration and rigorous academic research.

Certain research methods may allow for that balance to be met, at least to some degree. Luckily, the methods which are more collaborative are also those which are preferred by many Indigenous people. Those methods which allow for 'real voices' to come through are important to Indigenous communities. Winch and Hayward (1999: 26) advocate for the use of Aboriginal terms of reference because these terms encompass cultural knowledge and experiences which must be incorporated into Indigenous research. Further, Aboriginal research participants need to know the results of the research, including how it will be used and who it will benefit.

The success of emancipatory research rests heavily on collaboration with research subjects. If research involves the people it studies, they are empowered both by and through the research process and findings. Julie Hemment's (2007) 'critique plus' combines anthropology as critique with social change. To achieve this, she combines critical ethnography with Participatory Action Research. She used collaborative ethnography and developed her research in partnership with participants.

Small and Uttal (2005: 938) argue that a collaborative approach is common in almost all activist research (cf. Davis 2003), but what should one do when the research subjects are uninterested in collaboration? When I started formulating my research topic, I fully intended to hold several meetings with future research participants to involve them in the proposal process. I wanted to hear their opinions on what I should be studying, to ensure that my research focus was

important and useful to the people who would be offering the most to me. I planned on continuing this throughout the research, by presenting my findings, discussing my possible analyses, and hearing their opinions on what I wrote.

What I discovered was that people were simply too busy to become involved. The people I spoke with encouraged me to do the study, and they were happy with the topic. I heard from many people that 'it's about time someone did research like this', but they wanted *me* to do the research. My research participants were so busy living their lives as Aboriginal people in North Queensland that they saw the benefit of the research but did not have time to offer in actually doing it. As Angela Davis (1981) points out, black women are often so busy struggling to survive that they do not have time for activism. In the case of my research participants, they were busy struggling to both survive *and* be politically active, which left them no time for research. For example, one woman in the human rights group, in her 60s, was a carer for her elderly parents, her blind son, and her daughter with kidney failure. I was surprised she even found time for meetings and rallies, and I realised I would need to adjust my ideas about collaboration.

Collaboration has been found to be problematic by several other researchers, especially those working in Indigenous contexts. Henry et al. (2002: 9-10) discuss several problems with collaborative research projects. Collaborative research is a long and complicated process. Because of this, there can be a turnover in research staff which leads to a lack of uniformity in approaches. Further, collaborative projects which aim to include 'the community' can actually be quite exclusive, because Indigenous communities (or any communities, for that matter) are not homogenous and are susceptible to family or interpersonal feuds (Henry et al. 2002: 9-10). Further, the long process makes truly collaborative research projects difficult for students to undertake. The tight time-frame we are given, plus issues with co-authorship mean that many students forego collaboration.

Acknowledging these limitations, I decided I would be more useful to my research participants if I put my energies towards a more informal collaborative

process. Instead of holding meetings to decide on the details of my research and ethics proposals, I had casual conversations with individuals that shaped the project. I discussed my analyses and received feedback throughout the research in small pieces, asked for clarification when I needed it, sent drafts of papers and chapters to a few key consultants, and was told if I misinterpreted anything. The lack of formal collaboration meant that I was able to produce my thesis in a timely manner, but it is still pertinent to the people I studied and worked in solidarity with.

Activist Research

Before I started my research, I knew that any study of a social movement would lead to my deep involvement in that movement. I knew that by embedding myself within the movement I would be able to show my commitment to research participants, and would also achieve a much deeper understanding of the social setting. Glowczewski (2008) argues that this should be the role of the anthropologist—not 'scientific detachment', but rather solidarity, because emotional involvement does not necessarily equate to 'going native' in the traditional understandings of field work. This is sometimes known as activist research, though it goes by numerous terms—pracademics (Davis 2003), critique plus (Hemment 2007), engaged scholarship (Small & Uttal 2005; Isaacman 2003), activist scholarship (Lempert 2001), activist ethnography (Emihovich 2005), and so on—and it has been the subject of much discussion in recent years. There is, however, little coherence to the literature surrounding the topic and very few authors refer to one another's work, making this methodology a difficult one to research.

Activist ethnography is, simply, committed to bringing about change through the research process. Activist researchers 'attempt to be loyal both to the space of critical scholarly production and to the principles and practices of people who struggle outside the academic setting' (Hale 2006: 104). Activist researchers engage in processes of change throughout their research, and then use their findings to still further the cause. Activist research, as Hale (2006)

defines it, is a method through which researchers express solidarity with an oppressed group and collaborate with that group throughout the research process. Cultural critique, on the other hand, allows for the researcher's political alignment to show through in the analysis, rather than during the research. Hale (2006: 100) argues that cultural critique is 'theoretically important but methodologically limited'. As a result, researchers risk disappointing those they are meant to support.

Activist research fills in the gaps of cultural critique. It not only addresses the various issues raised in the discussion above, but it encourages involvement and overt solidarity. Rather than coming from the perspective of an all-seeing observer, I would ask questions from inside the movement. But this approach raised some questions in my mind. Would I really be able to involve myself in an Aboriginal social movement? Would Aboriginal activists accept the support and inquiries of a white American student? Would Aboriginal activists think I was trying to speak on their behalf?

Critically Engaged Activist Research

Before I started my research I discovered an approach best articulated by Shannon Speed (2006) which did not answer these questions, but at least gave me a starting point from which to think about them. Speed discusses her research in Chiapas, Mexico and its relationship to human rights activism. She argues that 'critically engaged activist research provides an important approach to addressing the practical and ethical dilemmas of research and knowledge production' (Speed 2006: 70). Critically engaged activist research can be separated into two terms: critical engagement and activist research. Critical engagement, or critical cultural analysis, has become the core of ethnography. It is no longer enough to describe and interpret social settings, but they must be critiqued in terms of global and local structures of power and control. Activist research is when the researcher becomes involved with the movement he or she studies. Speed (2006) argues that the two are too often kept separate.

Recently, many academics have tried to bridge the divide between theory and practice. Dana-Ain Davis (2003) calls this process 'pracademics', by which she means a bridging of theory and practice. Julie Hemment (2007: 309) uses the term 'critique plus', or 'the combined commitment to anthropology as cultural critique, and to engaging in collaborative projects for social change'. Hyatt and Lyon-Callo (2003: 143) argue that these divisions, while long-running, are meaningless for activist researchers. It is important that both aspects are met; otherwise, advocates can lose a critical focus and sometimes do more harm than good (Speed 2006: 67). Critically engaged activist researchers are committed to offer something to the movement through the research process (Speed 2006: 71). This solidarity is made explicit at the start of the research. By combining the two practices, activist engagement allows cultural critique to be merged with political action and therefore the knowledge that comes from the process simultaneously contributes to the struggle for social justice (Speed 2006: 75).

Allen Isaacman (2003) details a similar approach, which he refers to as 'engaged scholarship'. Engaged scholars are those 'intellectuals who challenge existing social hierarchies and oppressive institutions as well as the truth regimes and structures of power that produced and supported them' (Isaacman 2003: 3). The challenge is not simply a critique, but an attempt to change the status quo. Isaacman discusses several engaged scholars in the discipline of African Studies. One common thread that connects their research is that they do not try to speak on behalf of the oppressed people with whom they work. Instead, they document what activists are doing, and disseminate that information across wide networks. Most importantly, they provide support for these people. Similarly, Frampton et al. (2006) argue that one important facet of politically engaged ethnography is an active avoidance of 'monological voiceover'; since the researcher was present during the research, they should also be a part of the write-up.

Catherine Emihovich (2005) offers practical advice to activist researchers. She suggests it is important to develop an historical consciousness, sharpen theoretical foundations, and step outside the normal canon of readings. Both she

and Dana-Ain Davis (2003) regularly ask themselves what, exactly, they are doing to help make a practical difference. Anna Tsing (2005), in her version of activist anthropology, uses and encourages multi-sited ethnography, critiques of power, accessible story-telling, and a balance between critique and solidarity. Most importantly, Tsing (2005: 271) 'endorse[s] the fragment'; that is, she encourages ethnographers to pay attention to detail, because it strengthens all other methods.

Because the researcher becomes heavily involved when carrying out activist research, the boundaries between research, advocacy, and everyday life can become easily blurred (Lederman 2005: 323; Davis 2003: 153). It is for this reason that Anna Tsing (2005: xii) says,

My ethnographic involvement with activists taught me habits of restraint and care: There are lots of things that I will not research or write about. I do not mean that I have whitewashed my account, but rather that I have made choices about the kinds of research topics that seem appropriate, and, indeed, useful to building a public culture of international respect and collaboration.

Since her research and writing is her form of advocacy, and especially since her relationships with activists was quite personal, rather than detached, Tsing carefully chooses *what*, exactly, to write about. That is, she will write about topics that may be able to make a difference, or at the least, critique the status quo, while avoiding topics which are harmful or even useless to the research participants. Similarly, taking an anarchist approach led me to actively and continuously address my own privileged position as a white, American, student researcher. I hoped to avoid many of the pitfalls that are associated with academic researchers amongst Aboriginal communities. This reflexivity is essential for anarchist research, because as Graeber (2004: 6-7) points out, anarchism 'insists, before anything else, that one's means must be consonant with one's ends'.

Lise Garond has written (2008) about her experience in trying to justify her research to the community of Palm Island. She was asked to explain what she would give back to the community, but as a student it is hard to know what

you have to offer. People want more than an academic description of their community and their issues, and activist research makes it possible to give this to them. In addition to the academic knowledge which comes out of the research, the researcher gives herself as an activist to the cause. In my research, this was enough, and I was not asked about what I had to give back to the community.

Critiques of Activist Research

Several critiques have been raised in discussions of engaged activism. One is that the roots of the problems addressed by activists/researchers are economic and structural, and therefore have no easy solutions (Emihovich 2005: 306). As Isaacman (2003: 8) succinctly states, 'Since ultimately it is impossible to engage in value-free research in the social sciences and humanities, there can be no basis to dismiss engaged scholarship as inherently flawed, biased, or unworthy of serious scholarly consideration'. Other critics feel that activist research is simplistic, under theorised, and unproblematised (Hale 2006: 101). Hale (2006) points out that many of the arguments against activist research come from those engaged in cultural critique, that is, those who express solidarity through the knowledge they produce, rather than through their research methods. They therefore feel threatened by this more engaged approach (Hale 2006).

Many have discussed the difficulties and limitations inherent in activist engagement (cf. Hale 2006; Speed 2006; Isaacman 2003). The main difficulty stems from the critical engagement which is so important to this form of research. Activist researchers express solidarity with their research participants but simultaneously critique and analyse their social settings. The struggle is to remain critical of the cause even while supporting it. Graeber (2009) offers an excellent example of this research tactic in his ethnographic study of the global justice movement, with which he has been involved for many years. Graeber clearly loves this movement and wants it to succeed, but this does not mean that he presents it as flawless. Rather, he offers critiques for the sake of strengthening the movement (Graeber 2009: 11). The engaged researcher can never allow

herself to become blind to contradictions or problems within the movement she is studying. Hale (2006: 100) celebrates this tension, arguing that the space between utopian ideals and practical politics both compromises and enriches research. For Speed (2006: 72-3), this contradiction is about the essentialising of Indigenous identity, which was used as a political tactic by those with whom she worked, but with which she did not personally agree. Although this critique is explored in her writing, it did not affect her involvement with the movement. Isaacman (2003: 29) discusses how critical engagement strengthens research done by several African Studies scholars: 'Their analyses, critiques, and interpretations emerged precisely because of their engaged, passionate, and sometimes radical politics, rather than a commitment to objectivity'. Bevington and Dixon (2005: 190) make a similar argument when they state that activist involvement incites accurate and rigorous analysis. Direct engagement, they feel, allows the researcher to delve deeper into more nuanced understandings of social movements. Frampton et al. (2006) agree, arguing that there is no such thing as objectivity so researchers may as well choose the methods which give them 'insider knowledge' as much as possible.

An overt involvement with oppressed people from the beginning of the research process could lead to a limited, one-sided study of power relations within the social setting. Critically engaged activist researchers do not feel that this is a downfall; rather, they argue that this research approach should be judged on its own merits and not by the standards of objective research (Speed 2006; Isaacman 2003). Isaacman (2003: 29) feels that the difficulties of engaged scholarship make it just as valuable as any other research.

Politically engaged research can be messy, difficult, and even contradictory. Precisely because it is difficult to do well, it forces researchers to engage in self-reflection and raises the kinds of questions and doubts that are the mainstay of good scholarship. To be sure, a commitment to political causes can produce blind spots as well as insights.

Similarly, Speed (2006: 74) suggests:

Perhaps a better criterion for evaluating the success of activist research undertakings would be to ask ourselves whether they address the critical questions directed at the discipline. Do they address neo-colonial power dynamics in our research processes? Do they seek to engage rather than to protect our research subjects? Do they maintain a critical focus even as they make explicit political commitments, thus creating a productive tension in which critical analysis meets (and must come to terms with) day-to-day political realities?

These methodologies are working towards praxis, that 'revolutionary, practical-critical' activity espoused by Marx (1845[1978]: 143) a century and a half ago. They make theory inseparable from action and require researchers to make changes instead of just interpreting the way things are.

Insider-Outsider

As discussed above, I had to carefully navigate my position in the field. While I wanted to be heavily involved, I also needed to set boundaries for myself and my research, in order to remain focused and critical. In the end, I found that I was neither insider nor outsider, but rather, I fell somewhere in between in a role which allowed me an in-depth understanding of the setting, even though I lacked certain perspectives.

In a study of Aboriginal activism, I was inherently relegated to an outsider role as a white woman. But this role was more complicated than that. First, white women were integral to the groups I studied. Additionally, my heritage includes Native American: mainly Cherokee with a less prominent Mohawk ancestry. I was not raised with these cultures, and I have never experienced disadvantage as a result of my background. I have always been very careful to avoid calling myself Native American because of this. But in Australia, and specifically when working with Indigenous people, the question of heritage came up again and again. I rarely met someone new who did not ask 'So, what is your background?' I tried to explain that, while I had no cultural connections, I valued the heritage and wished that I had met my grandparents to learn about my background. Some people felt sorry for me; others compared me to the number of Indigenous Australians who 'don't identify'. For some individuals, the knowledge of my background was enough to make them open up to me

where they had not earlier. They could immediately identify with me in a way they could not when I was, to them, simply a white person.

A second and equally important factor was my nationality. As an American student, I expected to be further outside, constantly struggling to keep up with my lack of background knowledge. But in most cases I found that community members were more comfortable with me than they were with white Australians. Several elders were glad to hear that their fight was receiving international notice. Finally, my nationality created a perception of naïveté in the research setting, allowing me to gain added detail and explanations from research participants.

Another factor which complicated my role in the research was my age. Many of the activists with whom I worked were much older than me. I was often the same age – or younger – than their children. I rarely came across young activists, and those who I did meet were still a decade older than me. In some cases, this meant that I was looked at differently, as less experienced in activist terms. But at the same time, research participants assumed that I had youthful vitality and were happy to include me in every event, and often gave me tasks on top of just attending (selling wrist bands, setting up equipment, etc). These responsibilities gave me a deeper understanding of the research site and often gave me an ‘insider view’ of activist contexts.

Traditional discussions of ethnography have warned against the researcher ‘going native’. Rather than attempting to ‘go native’, though, activist researchers more likely operate from a position similar to that of the ‘native anthropologist’. One’s ‘nativity’ can be determined by culture, ethnicity, nation, place of residence, or linguistic group (Voloder 2008) and even professional background (Zaman 2008). While engaged researchers may operate from very different cultural backgrounds from our research participants, claiming the ‘activist’ label creates a shared identity which has the effect of closing some of the social distance that may exist. In other words, while I will never be an Aboriginal person, I can be an activist in the Aboriginal movement. Engaged researchers occupy an in-between space, simultaneously inside and outside the

research setting. Thus, during my research on Aboriginal activism in Townsville, I was never a true insider, but I was also never wholly outside.

In some sense, I conducted 'home work' rather than 'field work'; although I had only recently moved to Australia, I conducted research in the place where I lived, worked, and participated in the community. After spending a few months 'in the field', at home in Townsville, I became easily recognised as an 'insider' of the Aboriginal movement, that is, as a committed white supporter. My gradual 'initiation' into the Townsville Aboriginal movement was undoubtedly eased by my previous experience in activism and thus my shared identity with research participants. And while occupying a shared 'home' in Townsville helped close social distance, I was also helped by the 'outsider-ness' that I still possessed as an American. Sharing too closely with the identity of research participants can sometimes be a barrier to research (Voloder 2008; Zaman 2008; Petray 2011 *in review*).

Ghassan Hage's (2009) depiction of ethnographic vacillation places ethnographic researchers as ping-pong balls floating in the surf, tossed between three worlds. The beach represents the culture under study, which Hage calls the political realm; the ocean represents the discipline of anthropology, or the analytic realm; and the waves represent emotions, particularly political emotions, which develop through close connections with a field site. Engaged researchers are likely to develop a similar set of political emotions through shared physical experiences. The people we work with often struggle against some kind of oppression and injustice. Becoming a part of this community requires us to empathise with the injustice, which often entails identifying the 'oppressor' and developing negative emotions towards them (cf. Ost 2004).

I argue that researchers have more agency than the ball in Hage's scenario; while we may sometimes float freely, we can also swim against the tide. This is what activist researchers do when they purposefully embed themselves within the movement they study – after all, it is hard to work in solidarity with people when you are floating in the distance. When this happens, we get a really close-up look at what is happening around us. The trouble is, without stepping

back off of the sand, we will not know where that localised bit of beach fits within broader contexts. This ability to step back is really what makes a successful activist researcher – immersing oneself in a social setting so much that we experience the same political emotions as our research participants, but then moving back out to a distant position from which we can look at things from another perspective. As Hage (2009) argues, this vacillation between political, emotional and analytical states is not simply moving between various identities, but ‘it is a state of being in itself’. This is not an easy state of being to occupy, but it is important if activist researchers are to maintain the critical focus which makes our work worthwhile.

Research Methods

Becoming a critically engaged activist researcher hinged upon becoming an activist. Therefore, the bulk of my research was in the form of participant observation carried out with activists in Townsville. However, the activist community in North Queensland is not isolated from the rest of Australia and the world, so I likewise opened up my research to national and global networks, mainly via the internet. I also conducted several interviews to explore certain issues in depth once I established suitable rapport with research participants. In addition to these methods, I relied heavily on published research and archives, drawing on historical, anthropological, and sociological literature. This historical focus was intended to add depth to my localised study, as well as to provide a temporal comparison.

Participant Observation

Before entering the field, I had several meetings with individuals who are prominent in local activism. These meetings featured coffee and long conversations, and proved enormously helpful in the formulation of my research by allowing me to start building rapport and gauge opinions on what I had planned. They also opened the door to my field work; at my first meeting with my ‘key informant’ I was invited to join the Townsville Indigenous Human

Rights Group (TIHRG). I attended weekly group meetings, as well as irregular community meetings and events organised by the group. During these events and meetings I watched what was going on and tried to remain inconspicuous. This tactic did not work when my key informant, the chair of the group, was around. She put me to work – at meetings, I often found myself taking minutes. At events, I was enlisted to help her sell wristbands and raffle tickets to raise money for the group. At community meetings she would send me around with a sheet of paper to get contact details from everyone present. This failure to be inconspicuous was probably the best thing for my research; I was able to meet many people, and to become part of the group quite quickly (Petray 2011 *in review*, 2009a).

The group was not my only site of study, however. Focusing only on organised activism, or only on the Human Rights Group, would limit my research in ways that I was uncomfortable with. I attended community meetings which were organised by others, where I was able to sit towards the back and make detailed observations. As I met people at various events, I interacted with them whenever I got the chance. I also maintained relationships with members of various other groups in Townsville, such as GAP Strategies (Get Active and Participate) and a women's dance group, Ngulumburu Boonyah. At activist events, as well as at parties and community events, I had many long and in-depth conversations with people about what they think of activism; if they consider themselves activists; how they became involved in the Aboriginal movement; and what they think is important for the future. These in-depth conversations, while not formally scheduled or recorded, fulfilled the role that I thought interviews would play when I began my field work. I found that participant observation was a far more important part of the research than I had originally expected.

Basically, I took advantage of every opportunity to do field work that presented itself to me in the area. I took detailed field notes and maintained a field work journal, where I wrote down my impressions, hunches, and thoughts on analysis. Occasionally, I experienced researcher identity crises where I

wondered what I was doing and why; these crises were worked through in my field work journal, as well as through conversations with peers and research participants.

e-Ethnography

In addition to attending events and meetings, I also joined several email lists. In the case of the TIHRG, I set up and moderated this list at the request of group members. These lists offered members a forum to discuss issues, publicise events, and share news items. I also followed several websites and blogs which wrote about Indigenous issues and activism, and maintained email contact with several activists from further afield. In an increasingly technological world, websites and email lists proved a rich source of information about networking and movement priorities (Chapter Five). Throughout field work and afterwards, I saved all important electronic communications and have included them as an alternative source of data. Similar to interviews or focus groups, these items provide information in participants' own words, but they occur more naturally than interviews, during which participants are acutely aware of researcher presence.

Archives and Interviews

Throughout my field work, I visited the Queensland State Archives, the Fryer Library archives at the University of Queensland, and the archives of the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. This allowed me to access first-hand sources such as newsletters, letters to and between politicians, and police reports. Although reliance on archived sources limits historical re-telling to written documents (specifically those which were saved), it is one means of letting history speak for itself rather than relying on the interpretation of historians. Likewise, I listened to oral histories from the North Queensland Oral History Project in the James Cook University Archives. These oral histories are pre-recorded interviews that offered insight into an older

generation of Aboriginal activists. The histories which proved most relevant to my topic were largely from Palm Island, as well as the Torres Strait.

After about six months of field work, I undertook several in-depth interviews. The interviews were held with people who I had interacted with most heavily over the course of field work. In this way, I had built up rapport with these individuals and had a common understanding on which to base interviews. Interviews were very open-ended; I prepared a list of topics I would like to discuss, but remained flexible and responsive to the interviewee's interests and ideas. Although I had planned to rely heavily on interviews for this thesis, in the end I only conducted formal interviews with five people. Instead, my research involved more informal conversations and probing questions during my participant-observation. The interviews I did conduct allowed me the opportunity to probe in-depth topics which were raised as key issues throughout my field work. These interviews also gave me access to long conversations with activists who were often too busy organising events to have long informal conversations while I was in the field. Interviews were transcribed by me, and were then analysed by reading and re-reading transcripts to identify themes. Interview transcripts were coded according to the themes which arose, and ethnographic field notes were treated in the same way. Several key themes carried across numerous conversations and events, and these themes have become the chapters and subheadings of this thesis.

Interview Participants

Florence Onus is a 50 year old Aboriginal woman who works as the Indigenous Support person in the School of Law at James Cook University. She is also a key organiser in the Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group as well as an outspoken advocate for positive change; as such she is often called upon to chair community meetings and to represent the community in consultation with government bodies. In 2010 Florence was appointed as the first Chairperson of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Healing Foundation. She often gives guest lectures in various disciplines, speaking about

her personal experience as a member of the Stolen Generation. I attended one of these lectures, and formally interviewed Florence to discuss topics such as how she became an activist and the importance of networking.

Janine Gertz, an Aboriginal woman in her early 30s, was my second interviewee. Janine is a former public servant who now works on the Indigenous Employment Strategy for James Cook University. She has also been a member of two delegations to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Janine comes from a family with a rich history of activism, which was a key focal point of our interviews.

Dan is an Aboriginal man from Brisbane, in his 50s. He is a community leader there with a vivid history of radical activism. I first met Dan when he travelled to Townsville and attended a meeting of the TIHRG, so when I travelled to Brisbane to do research in the archives I set up a formal interview with Dan. We discussed networking within Queensland, across Australia, and globally, as well as Dan's personal history in activism.

Stephanie and Lilian, the founders of a woman's dance group in Townsville, spoke with me jointly. Both are middle-aged women from North Queensland, and our interview was simultaneously my research and a way for me to assist them with the development of a grant application. Following our interview, about the ideals of their group, the activities they take part in, and their goals for the future, I wrote their answers into the appropriate form and we submitted it as a proposal for funding to pay for the costs of attending a national healing and women's business gathering in central Australia.

Ethics

I have tried at all times to conduct my research in an ethical and culturally sensitive manner. The research proposal was given ethical clearance by the James Cook University Human Ethics Committee. I worked under the guidance of a 'cultural mentor', Gracelyn Smallwood, and tried to remain conscious of the guidelines offered by the National Health and Medical Research Council (2005; 2003) on ethical conduct in research into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

issues. Researching Indigenous communities can be a tricky process to navigate, and the same is true for research into political activists. Both groups have certain protocols and expectations of the research outcomes. Because of these expectations, I have differed from most ethnographic research in one notable regard: I have given research participants the choice over their confidentiality. This may be a risky strategy, but given the political nature of my thesis I realised early that certain activists would not want their hard work obscured by pseudonyms. Moreover, the historic and ongoing oppression of Indigenous peoples have often left individual Aboriginal people voiceless, a dynamic which I did not want to continue by removing all identifying information. Thus, I left it up to research participants whether or not they would like to be identified. In the event that I did not have the opportunity to seek formal permission, I have erred on the side of caution and provided pseudonyms. Further, I have used discretion, and in some instances have kept confidentiality although the research participant may be identified in other places.

The Study Site

For the most part, field work was conducted in Townsville, North Queensland. This regional site was deliberately chosen for its distance from Australian urban centres. No major policy-formulation occurs in Townsville, as it does in the capital cities. The relationship between the state and the movement will undoubtedly be different in a small, regional city than in a large government-centre. As such, activism must rely more on grassroots efforts than on institutional channels. Townsville activists generally aim to change attitudes rather than legislation. There are many occasions, however, when local issues are given a national scope; this is largely the result of creative strategising and networking by local activists.

On occasion, I travelled outside of Townsville during my field work. These trips were usually organised for a particular reason, either archival research or attendance at specific demonstrations which were also attended by other North Queensland activists. While travelling, I tried to take every

advantage of field work opportunities. I informally interviewed people and explored their local activism and their links to Townsville. This information provided an external view of the site I was so embedded in during my field work. My 'field trips' included Palm Island for a commemoration of an historically-significant event in June 2007; Ingham in May 2008 for a Community Cabinet meeting; Bowen and Ayr for a smoking ceremony and a tour of significant Aboriginal sites in the local area in July 2008; Brisbane, for a politically-charged trial in October 2008; and Canberra for the annual Aboriginal Sovereignty Day march in January 2009 (see Figure 1.1 for locations).

Historical Context

Social movements are products of history – the history of activism, as well as the more general historical contexts of the relationships of power. According to relational theory (Chapter Two), social movements are the accumulation of a continuous process of remembering history and improvisation based on what has happened in the past. Following from the brief overview provided in Chapter One, this section explains the historical contexts of Aboriginality in Queensland, and North Queensland in particular. This history is an important factor in the present-day political context, discussed below.

White settlement began in North Queensland in 1860 with the rapid expansion of pastoralism, agriculture, and mining (Fitzgerald 1982; Johnston 1982; Loos 1982). Several decades after the first colonisation of Australia, British sovereignty was well established. At that time, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were not included in the laws of Queensland, and had no rights to the land which they had lived on for generations. Colonists were granted land to use for their own purposes, and any resistance from the original inhabitants was harshly punished by settlers, police, and the Native Police (Loos 1982; Cunneen & Libesman 1995; Richards 2008). However, resistance did occur and impeded settlement in the early years of colonisation, but eventually resulted 'in the imposition of European authority, an authority that is still the key factor in relations between coloniser and colonised in Queensland' (Loos 1982: xviii).

During this period, some Indigenous people entered the labour force, working on pastoral stations, as domestic labourers, in pearling and bêche-de-mer industries, and in agriculture alongside indentured workers from the Pacific Islands known as 'kanakas' (Fitzgerald 1982).

Since colonisation of North Queensland began, the state was characterised by a level of regionalism not seen in other states (Fitzgerald 1982: 286-8). Queensland still remains the state in Australia with the most widely dispersed population, which no doubt influences the political decision-making and power-holding. For instance, because the Native Police had such a large area to patrol, they adopted a much more violent response than had been seen in the other states (Richardson 2008). It also allowed for a notable diversity in political climates between areas. For instance, in the years after World War I, Townsville was the seat of the most radical and militant activism of the Industrial Workers of the World (Fitzgerald 1984: 16-17). At the end of World War II, North Queensland was the stronghold of the Communist Party (Fitzgerald 1984: 121). Despite pockets of radicalism, however, Queensland was dominated by a conservative Labor government from 1915 until 1957, after which time the dominant party changed but social conservatism remained prominent (Fitzgerald 1984).

Different states in Australia had different policies on Aboriginal people, which were enacted at different times. Queensland's 1897 *Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act* set the benchmark for other states, given how extensively it legislated Aboriginal lives. This act established a system of reserve Superintendents who worked alongside the state Protector, and who made every decision about Indigenous lives (Cunneen & Libesman 1995). It also attempted to limit miscegenation, which had been rife since expansion into North Queensland, as evidenced by the rates of venereal disease (Fitzgerald 1982). By the 1930s, there was a general feeling within federal politics that policy should shift towards assimilation, instead of protection; this was not formalised in Queensland until the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Act* was established in 1965. Repealing some aspects of protection, Indigenous

Australians no longer required permission to marry, and had received state voting rights, and the act restructured the administration of Aboriginal affairs. Six years later, the 1971 *Aborigines Act* and *Torres Strait Islander Act* reaffirmed the policy of assimilation but retained Queensland's paternalistic control over Indigenous people (Cunneen & Libesman 1995).

Although the 1967 Referendum made it possible for the Commonwealth to legislate on behalf of Indigenous people, states retained control over their Indigenous populations. In 1972, however, the Whitlam Labor government determined to enable Indigenous self-determination, which was changed to 'self-management' in 1975 by the Fraser Liberal-National government (Cunneen & Libesman 1995). Both of these administrations clashed at times with Queensland Aboriginal policy, and the Bjelke-Petersen state government occasionally undermined these principles when they clashed with mining and other economic interests (Rowse 1997). Bjelke-Petersen, Queensland Premier from 1968 until 1987, was the head of a Country-Liberal Party coalition, well known for an intolerance to public dissent. In 1971 a state of emergency was declared throughout the state for one month, in anticipation of protests against the South African rugby team, the Springboks (Fitzgerald 1984: 247).

Attempts have been made to implement a limited level of self-management for Aboriginal people at a federal level, beginning with the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee (NACC) from 1973 to 1977, followed by the National Aboriginal Conference (NAC) from 1977 to 1985 (Sanders 1993; Coombs & Robinson 1996). These advisory bodies faced considerable limitations. Following consultations which met with mixed responses, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) was established, in 1989, with an aim to combine regional and national bodies of elected representatives (Sanders 1993). Forced to negotiate a dual responsibility to public perception and self-management (Sanders 1993), ATSIC faced many difficulties (cf. Dillon 1996; Finlayson & Dale 1996; Martin & Finlayson 1996; Rowse 1996; Sullivan 1996). By 2005, ATSIC had been disbanded by the Howard government, leaving a gap in representative government for Indigenous peoples.

Political context of the field site

The time period in which I carried out my field work was marked by several notable events. A month after joining the Human Rights Group, Senior-Sergeant Chris Hurley was tried for the 2004 death of an Aboriginal man, called Mulrunji for cultural reasons, on Palm Island. This was a ground-breaking event; Hurley was the first police officer charged with a death in custody in Australian history (Watson 2010; Glowczewski 2008; Hooper 2008; Waters 2008). Hurley's trial was held in Townsville, and many people came over from Palm Island to attend court. The Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group coordinated daily demonstrations featuring prayer, dancing, and smoking ceremonies outside the court house. My first month of field work involved planning for this event, and then sitting in the court room every day with people I had only just met. It proved to be a very quick way to build strong relationships with a number of people. In the end, Hurley was acquitted of the death in custody, but it was still considered monumental by many Aboriginal activists, because 'the whole world was watching Townsville' (Petray 2010b).

In the same week that Hurley was acquitted, then-Prime Minister John Howard and his Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Mal Brough, announced their intervention into the Northern Territory. This involved wide-scale reforms to Indigenous policies in the NT, including welfare quarantining, cancellation of Community Development Employment Programs (CDEP), revocation of the permit system which allowed Aboriginal councils to decide who entered their communities, alcohol bans, and mandatory health checks for children. They claimed that this intervention was justified by the *Little Children are Sacred* report which detailed high levels of child sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities (Anderson & Wild 2007).

The response to the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER, or more commonly, the Intervention) was mixed; most people I spoke with, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, felt that sexual abuse should be fixed but not in this way. Some thought the Intervention was justified (cf. Sutton 2009), and others called it a racist land-grab. This Intervention was the focus of activism for

several months, and even saw the brief formation of the National Aboriginal Alliance, a group of about 100 representatives from around the country who spoke out against the policies enacted in the intervention. Although the National Aboriginal Alliance was not long-lived, the Intervention has remained a key focus of Aboriginal activism for more than two years. In Townsville, several community meetings were held in response to the Intervention, and the outspoken members of the crowd were overwhelmingly opposed to the policies. The intervention occupied the minds of activists for several months, interrupted only by local sorry business²⁷.

November 2007 marked the three year anniversary of the death in custody on Palm Island, and was marked in Townsville with a small memorial rally outside the court house. National attention, however, was focused on the federal election between John Howard and Kevin Rudd. After more than a decade as Prime Minister, Howard was unseated and Kevin Rudd took his place as leader of Australia. Notably for the Aboriginal community, Mal Brough, Minister for Indigenous Affairs, was also removed from office. Kevin Rudd lifted the hopes of Aboriginal activists for several reasons. First, they expected the NT intervention to be lessened, if not revoked outright. But more importantly, a campaign promise of the Australian Labor Party was to issue a parliamentary apology to the Stolen Generations, as per one of the recommendations of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's *Bringing them Home* report.

This apology was issued at the opening of Parliament on 13 February, 2008. This national apology was not unanimously supported, but the overall feeling of media reports on public opinion was positive. Several individuals from the TIHRG attended the apology in Canberra, and also visited the Tent Embassy which was holding several days of rallies and protests against the NT Intervention. Those who could not make it to Canberra joined crowds in Townsville's city centre and at the Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health

²⁷ 'Sorry business' is the term used by Aboriginal people to refer to deaths and funerals. Several meetings of the TIHRG were intended to discuss the NT intervention but were interrupted by local deaths in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Service to watch a live broadcast of the apology and to celebrate with dancing, singing and food.

In May 2008, the focus of Queensland activists shifted to Stolen Wages. Ros Kidd's 1994 PhD thesis (revised and published in 1997) outlined the misappropriation and mismanagement of millions of dollars of Aboriginal wages which were never paid to workers. These workers were not paid directly for their labour; rather, the money was put in trust by the Protector of Aborigines (Kidd 2006). While small amounts of this money were paid to Indigenous workers on request, the majority of it was never paid and funded public works like hospital and road construction (Kidd 1997). In 2002 the Queensland government, led by Premier Peter Beatty, set aside \$55.4 million to make 'reparation payments' to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who could prove that they had their wages controlled under a Queensland 'protection' act (ATSIP 2009). After the applications closed and the payments were made, there was \$35 million left over in the fund. After the initial closing deadline of the reparations scheme, fewer payments were made than expected, due to low application numbers and a number of people deemed ineligible for lack of evidence. In 2007 and 2008 the government debated what to do with the remaining \$21.1 million and ultimately decided that the original payees would receive small 'top-up payments' and the balance would act as the foundation of a scholarship fund for Indigenous students. While Stolen Wages activists agreed with the importance of education, they felt that people had worked for decades without pay and that money should go to them or to their living relatives – and a scholarship fund should come from a separate source. In April 2008, a rally was held in Townsville to express dissatisfaction with the government decision. The following month, a group of Indigenous activists and supporters marched for the return of stolen wages in Townsville's Labour Day parade. Later in the month, the Queensland Cabinet travelled north for a 'Community Cabinet' meeting (see below).

The next major milestone came in October 2008, when Lex Wotton was put on trial for his role in the alleged riots on Palm Island following the death in

custody in November 2004. Out of 18 men, three women and two children charged, Wotton was the last to appear in court and was also the alleged ring leader of the violence. A national rally, supported by the Brisbane Aboriginal community and the Maritime Union of Australia, was held in the weekend preceding the trial. Supporters travelled to Brisbane from Townsville, Sydney and Melbourne and demonstrated outside of the courthouse for the early part of Wotton's trial. He was found guilty in Brisbane, and the sentencing occurred in Townsville in early November. A large rally took place that morning and supporters stayed outside the courthouse until the decision was made that Wotton received six years jail with a probable parole after less than two years.

In September 2008, Senior-Sergeant Hurley made an appeal to overturn the original coroner's decision which ruled him responsible for the death of Mulrunji on Palm Island in 2004. As a result, the inquest was re-opened and witnesses were re-called to give their accounts of events in March 2010. This highlighted the challenges of doing research 'at home'—even though I had finished my field work months earlier, and was in the final stages of revising this thesis, I was eternally drawn back to the field. Although I had reduced my contact with key participants to socialising, the process of activism continued on. As I had expressed my solidarity throughout my research, I could not ignore things that happened even after 'exiting the field'. It was not so much that my research participants brought me back into this milieu, but rather than I was drawn back to them by my own interest and concern for the people with whom I had spent so much of my time.

Profiles of Research Subjects

Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group

The majority of my research was carried out with the Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group (TIHRG). This group was started in response to the 2004 death in custody on Palm Island, and its early activism was focused solely on this case. Membership was originally limited to women, but eventually

opened up to include several men. Members were both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous; the two groups were evenly balanced at the start of my field work, but became skewed towards non-Indigenous members following the completion of the Hurley trial (Petray 2010b). TIHRG activities were focused on the death in custody and the riots that followed, especially the trials of those involved. This group was chaired by Gracelyn Smallwood, who said that she handpicked the members of this committee because it was a more effective way to achieve goals. At the start of my field work, Gracelyn explained that the group was not called something like the 'Justice Group' because we are radically opposed to the justice system; incorporating the name of an enemy into the group would look stupid and would compromise its effectiveness.

Stolen Wages

Although it had been waged in some form over several decades, and in its most recent incarnation since 2002, the Stolen Wages campaign reached a climax in mid-2008. The government, working through the Stolen Wages Working Group and the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, consulted with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people around the state to gather opinions on what to do with the remaining reparations money (discussed above). At the Townsville consultation, the young Aboriginal woman in charge of leading the process gave a powerpoint presentation, providing background to the issue. When it was time for a response, the message was vehement, and unanimous but for one person: give the money to the people who had worked for it. Suggestions were made to open up the process to more people who had been previously excluded, or who had opted not to apply in the first round of payments. Everyone present supported the idea of educational scholarships, but they argued loudly that the government should be providing that without entangling Stolen Wages with education. The facilitators said the same decision had been reached at their previous meetings in Rockhampton and Cairns. However, several months later the government announced its decision to make some small 'top-up' payments to those who had received previous reparations,

but that the majority would go into an education fund for young Indigenous people.

The timing of this announcement led to Stolen Wages becoming a major issue at the 2008 May Day march in Townsville (and several other locations around Queensland). A contingent of several dozen people, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, carried banners and placards and chanted 'Stolen Wages - Stolen Lives - Give them back!'. We marched up Townsville's Strand sandwiched between union groups from every profession and community groups such as Amnesty International and a public transport group. The march passed a number of people, and photographers and reporters followed along, walking backwards in front of marchers to take photographs and video footage. We finally ended by pouring into the beachside Strand Park, where food stalls, jumping castles, and a stage were set up. Stolen Wages organisers were invited to take the stage to speak about their cause²⁸, reaching a crowd of workers who might not normally hear about such issues. The Stolen Wages marchers even won the prize for best contribution to the parade, ensuring plenty of media coverage. Several weeks later, Premier Anna Bligh held a 'Community Cabinet' meeting in Townsville and Ingham. A contingent of activists from Townsville, led by Louise and Lilian (the North Queensland representatives in the Stolen Wages Working Group), travelled north to speak at the public meeting, and also scheduled private meetings with government ministers in both Ingham and Townsville. Support was provided by the Queensland Council of Unions (QCU) but the broad politicisation of the issue did not sway the government. The campaign is no longer active but the issue of stolen wages remains unsettled and activists regularly discuss reigniting their fight.

Ngulumburu Boonyah

A different form of activism, focused on cultural reclamation, was carried out by the Ngulumburu Boonyah women's dance group. Led by Lilian and

²⁸ As discussed in Chapter Four, choosing spokespeople was not a smooth process and caused considerable tension within the community for weeks.

Stephanie, this group publicly performed their dances at occasions around Townsville and North Queensland. They did not limit their work to dance, however; this group wished to help bring back traditional ceremony and women's business. They involved Aboriginal women of all ages in their group and especially focused on young women, in the hopes that they would grow up and be initiated at the proper age and would then carry on the traditions into future generations. The group had a dual focus on both cultural revival and public outreach, and worked closely with Townsville's Women's Centre to perform at International Women's Day and Reclaim the Night²⁹ events.

GAP Strategies

In early 2008 a new group was formed in Townsville, to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to 'Get Active and Participate'. This group started as a result of a conversation between Janine Gertz and two friends. The first event organised by GAP Strategies was a forum for candidates in the local council election to explain their stance on Indigenous issues. GAP Strategies is not a social movement organisation as traditionally understood and did not necessitate regular meeting times or membership, but rather was a means to organise events which would rely on networks when required.

Summary and Conclusions

Following the ideals of anarchist anthropology, this research has been guided by an emancipatory approach. I carried out critically engaged activist ethnography, and my main aim was to gain an in-depth understanding of the movement to answer questions of relevance to participants. In this way, the methodologies of my research project are intricately bound up with the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter Two. The research methods I have chosen—namely participant observation—reflect the importance of praxis, and

²⁹ Reclaim the Night is an international feminist protest against rape and sexual violence. The Women's Centre in Townsville holds an annual march and rally, coinciding with similar events around Australia and the world. The visits to the prison on this day were intended to promote inclusiveness and reach out to female prisoners despite their inability to attend the protest.

the anarchist ideal that the means should complement the ends. In other words, the process of collecting research which aims to empower should be conducted in a way which likewise empowers research participants. This requires a continual process of reflexivity to ensure that privileged positions - as a white woman, as an academic, and so on - are not taken for granted. Although I was unable to undertake a formal collaboration, the process of participant observation and interviews allows for the participants to speak in their own words about the issues which they find important. The remaining chapters in this thesis will present the issues which became apparent throughout the course of my research.

Four

Identity Politics: Social movement participants and activist labels

Introduction

Social movements are heavily influenced by the structural contexts in which they operate, but they are also guided and affected by the people who are involved in them. Theories which focus on the structural influences, such as world-systems theory and political process theory, have a tendency to deny human agency in the processes of social movements (Morris & Staggenborg 2004). While it is important to explore the broader contexts of a movement, it should be done in tandem with a more agentic view of the individuals who make up a movement, as offered by relational theory. In this chapter, I explore some of the issues affecting the building blocks of Aboriginal activism: the people. The Aboriginal movement in Townsville, like every other movement, is made up of individuals. Many, but not all, of these people consider themselves activists. Individual definitions of what an activist is, however, vary considerably.

Although there is no formula for what characteristics make someone an activist, there are several factors which have consistently arisen throughout my formal and informal conversations with activists in Townsville and around Australia. The two most profound influences which I explore in this chapter are educational opportunities (through traditional schooling or occupational training) and family histories of activism. Family memories, in particular, are crucial to the creation of both individual activist identity and a collective movement identity. Different factors affect who becomes a movement leader,

such as cultural status or simply charisma. I conclude this chapter by examining the costs of activism, as well as the ways that some activists mitigate or control for these costs. This chapter illustrates the extent of the dialectical relationship, in which activists are tied up with the institutions and agents of the state, simultaneously opposed to and reliant on the state.

What is an activist?

At the 'Aboriginal Sovereignty Day' march in Canberra in 2009, protesting the annual national celebration of 'Australia Day', the question of whether or not the participants should be called 'activists' came up more than once. When I first arrived, I introduced myself to a Torres Strait Islander man, Jeremy, whom I recognised from Townsville. I explained my research to him, and his response was quick: 'I'm not an activist. I like to think of myself as a catalyst. We get in there and we get things moving.' Later in the morning, those of us who were gathered for the march were joined by the 'Peace Walkers' – a dozen or so people who had walked nearly 300 kilometres from Sydney to Canberra to protest nuclear development and uranium mining on Aboriginal land. After they arrived, we all stood in a circle for a smoking ceremony, and several Peace Walkers spoke. Sam, an Aboriginal woman from Darwin, mentioned in her speech that some people were afraid to be labelled activists:

...But I hate to tell all of you, that if you're here, marching with us today, you're an activist. And that's not a bad thing. We're not radicals; we're just regular people who are trying to make a change. (Field notes 26/01/09)

On this day in Canberra, I encountered people who proudly claim an activist identity, but at the same time some actively reject the term – a distinction which was mirrored throughout my fieldwork in Townsville. In interviews and informal conversations, I was able to explore in more depth what people meant by the term 'activist', and I found that there was no clear definition. Janine, an Aboriginal woman in her 30s, discussed the challenge of defining activism:

So I guess it comes down to that definition we keep talking about, you know – activism, what is it, exactly? Because if standing up for your own

rights and using the system and the processes to go through the whole administrative process to actually access what you're entitled to... is that activism? Well, I guess, in a way. (Interview 11/11/08)

This difficulty in finding a concrete definition is not unique to Aboriginal activists in Townsville. A quick search of the internet provides many conflicting definitions of 'activist', ranging from 'a militant reformer' (WordNet 2006) to 'one who is politically active in the role of a citizen' (Wiktionary 2009). These are the definitions available to the average person using the internet to know more about activism. More nuanced definitions are available on activist websites, but there is still no consensus on what an activist is. Some sources portray activists in a negative light, such as Cienfuegos (2007: n.pag.) who describes them as reactionary and claims that activists 'are usually folks who jump from issue to issue - depending on what's hot at the moment and because they have leisure time'. This view sees the activist label as one attached to privilege—a common critique of the global justice movement in the United States (Starr 2004), which is probably what this author was responding to. Other definitions are more constructive, stating that 'activists are people who seek to create positive change' (Activist Rights 2006). A few weeks after my first discussion with Janine about defining activism, the topic came up again. After having some time to think about it, Janine said that, in her opinion, an activist is:

...anybody that really contributes to social change, in any way. There's ways to go about big social change, and that's some of the protests, rallies... that's to bring the issue to the public attention. But just stuff that people are doing, everyday... you know, just through the course of their own work, that contributes to that social change. And so while they're providing whatever service, they're also providing the feedback to the whole policy framework that hopefully will improve things for people. So if that... well, to me, that meets the definition of activist. Because, well, you're acting. You're acting, not passive. Having said that, I'm sure there's people that's involved in that that's passively going along with the whole system. But if you're working within it to change things, I think that's activist. (Interview 20/11/08)

Using this definition, Janine labelled her siblings, many of whom work as public servants, as activists, but noted that they would probably be 'horrified' with the label.

There are several articles and online discussion boards where finer details of the activist label are debated. In most cases, there is no concrete definition offered; rather, they argue that an activist *is* what she or he *does*. As the activist blog *Active Art* (2008) claims, activists are differentiated from others because 'the activist gets off his/her ass and works for change by motivating, agitating, and demanding until those with the power and the money finally begin to listen'. Many sites are quick to distinguish between activists and protesters. One activist forum refutes the myth that 'only protesters are activists', arguing instead that 'anyone can be an activist' (Activism.ca 2008). Similarly, the Australian group *Activist Rights* (2006) feel that activism 'includes the positive and courageous actions of ordinary people in their daily lives'.

Many of these discussions are inclusive, arguing that the label 'activist' is applicable to anyone, so long as they think they are making a change. Rather than an exclusive definition, these sites believe that 'each of us contributes in our own way according to our talents and our passions' (Active Art 2008) and that 'we all have our own, individual, forms of activism' (Activism.ca 2008). These sites encourage ordinary people to see beyond the mainstream media's portrayal of activists as militant and violent (Activism.ca 2008). In fact, they argue that this portrayal is 'a part of efforts to discredit and undermine support for social change and is often used to justify legal repression and police violence' (Activist Rights 2006).

However, some people feel that there needs to be a more complex definition of activist. For instance, an online discussion board for animal rights activists features debate about how much activism one must do to be considered an activist, arguing that activist activity must be sustained in order for the identity to be salient (VeggieBoards 2006). These definitions do not necessarily indicate the arena in which activism takes place; they are broad enough to include those who work in recognised political spheres as well as those autonomous activists who do not engage with the state. This is likely because many activists are not limited to one role. Rather, they operate within both spheres depending on the circumstances.

The people that I spoke with throughout my research had no clear definition of what an activist is. Some spoke in the broadest terms, such as Lilian who said to me 'If you're born black in this country, you're born an activist. Otherwise you just lay down and die'. In other words, simply surviving and thriving as a black person in Australia is a politically charged act, putting Aboriginal people in opposition to the state regimes which have been so detrimental to Aboriginal lives throughout the past two centuries. Most people identify activists by what they do—some positively, and others negatively. There is a common conception that activists are in the public eye, and that they must be conspicuous. Louise was committed to the Stolen Wages campaign, but she died unexpectedly in mid-2008. During her eulogy, her sons mentioned that she never wanted to be remembered as an activist, because she was not the type of person to be 'out in the streets, yelling and angry'. Rather, she considered herself a 'campaigner for justice' who used gentler tactics, and tried to remain persuasive instead of angry. Janine thinks this discrepancy may be because 'the activist label... it's kind of like the hippy label, it conjures up a particular idea of how you're supposed to be and act.'

However, a social science definition of activism is much broader: 'politically motivated collective action' (Jordan 2002: 11), or 'everyday acts of defiance' (Baumgardner & Richards 2000: 147). An activist is referred to in a similarly general manner as anyone who 'rights some glaring human mistake, or recognizes a positive model of equality and takes the opportunity to build on it' (Baumgardner & Richards 2000: 282), someone with an 'expressed desire to transform structures of power and privilege' (Renn 2007: 320), or someone who is involved 'with an organised group in struggle' (Hale 2006: 103). Although many people carried out what I consider activism, they wanted to disassociate themselves from the image of the protester and agitator that is commonly conjured by the term 'activist'. Likewise, Bobel (2007), working with members of the Menstrual Activism movement, found that not everyone who does activism identifies as an activist. There is, Bobel (2007) argues, a tension between 'doing activism' and 'being activist' because an activist identity is associated with a

perfect standard, an implication of status, and a level of rigor to which many feel they cannot live up. However, while some movement participants may not self-identify as activists, I have categorised them as such for the purposes of this study, because they met the analytical definitions of an activist.

Even some who self-identify as activists are careful to delineate between the 'marching in the streets type of activist' and other, more subtle forms of activism. Florence regards herself as more of an organiser, considering her strengths to be the 'pro-active' and 'groundwork stuff'. Although her preferred method is 'gentle', she is willing to use different tactics when necessary: 'I like to sort of sit down and talk to people, but then I guess if that doesn't happen then we do the protesting, that's the next step.' Likewise, Janine identifies as an activist but considers her activism is 'wanting to change people's minds through argument and reasoning'. She is not disrespectful of those who participate in more overt forms of activism; rather, she sees the need for both, and particularly feels that 'marching down the street' was vital in the contexts of past decades. She explains that, for the most part, things have changed since then:

But I think things have moved now that we do really need to be more politically savvy and use the media and influence thinking on a wider scale, really appealing to what I call the '*Current Affair*³⁰ type audience'. [...] So really, the face of activism has changed. (Interview 11/11/08)

She later clarifies her opinion on the two types of activism:

I wouldn't say I value one over the other, because there is absolutely a need sometimes to march down the street. You know... it's often a very effective way of showing broad support, you know, numbers support, and highlighting an issue and using the media to say 'oh this many people support it', you know that kind of thing. I think you have to do both. But, what I guess I started off as saying is some people are better at marching down the street, and some people are better at behind-the-scenes type stuff. (Interview 11/11/08)

Recognising the importance of both activist types, Janine sees the necessity of engaging with the state to bring about change. In our early conversations, she talked about the importance of political involvement and envisioned her own

³⁰ *Current Affair* is a television show which typically runs consumer-interest and personal interest stories.

eventual role as a politician. The following year, after a trip to the United Nations with a delegation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, her attitude had changed. While she still valued state engagement as the route for change, she placed more emphasis on the importance of outsiders to the political system. Janine reasoned that the political system is too confining for politicians and that change is stifled by party politics and the structure of the government, but that lobbyists and public intellectuals, like Les Malezer (chairperson of the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action, a organisation dedicated to using academic research to further human rights) or Mick Dodson (director of the National Centre for Indigenous Rights at the Australian National University, and 2009 Australian of the Year), were good role models for inciting change.

Some people, however, are perfectly happy to label themselves as activists or protesters and they do not feel the need to clarify the term. These are the people who 'came of age' in the era of public demonstrations, like Dan, from Brisbane, who was involved with the Australian Black Panthers in the 1970s; or Cindy, a Townsville woman who was involved with the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in the earliest months of its existence. Gracelyn claims 'Aboriginal activist' as one of her central identities. Thus, she considers nearly everything she does a form of activism, whether that is providing a Welcome to Country at a conference, meeting with organisations or officials, or taking part in a public protest demonstration.

However, there is some tension between the two kinds of activists as I have discussed. As I mentioned earlier, those who consider themselves 'catalysts' and 'campaigners' but rejected the activist label were typically unconvinced that confrontational activism 'in the streets' is worthwhile. They thought, rather, that this type of activism was likely to put people off and discourage mainstream support of the Aboriginal movement. Likewise, the self-proclaimed protesters did not always see the other, quieter forms of activism as true movement work. In their view, those who were not willing to publicly protest were not fully committed to the cause. While these tensions existed, and

occasionally surfaced as in-fighting, the majority of activists usually occupied the in-between space of appreciating both forms of work. Moreover, each group could typically see the importance of the other, as illustrated by Gracelyn and Florence often working together to play on their complementary strengths.

There is another important form of Aboriginal activism which is neither 'marching down the streets' or behind-the-scenes organising. A considerable, though not always conspicuous, number of people are focused on cultural preservation and revival. The Townsville women's dance and ceremony group, Ngulumburu Boonyah, is dedicated to the revival of women's business. They describe their objectives in a grant application I helped them develop:

Ngulumburu Boonyah's main objective is the healing of Aboriginal women. [...] Traditional cultural means have a powerful healing influence, so we rely on dance, ceremony, and cleansing to work towards the revival of strong, proud Aboriginal women. [...] Our group contains women and girls, and it is our hope that the young girls will go through Women's Business at the appropriate time and will be able to carry the culture and traditions on into the future.

Additionally, dance provides the perfect opportunity to reach out to the broader community. Dancing for non-Aboriginal women's groups has allowed us to educate women from around Australia on the history of this country, the culture of our people, and the difficulties we face. In most performances we invite all women in the audience to join in for certain dances, particularly those dances that assert the importance of women in Aboriginal societies.

This group operates in both public and private spheres, but these women did not always articulate their activities as activism.

In Rockhampton, south of Townsville, Peter is working towards cultural revival in a different way. He is interested in setting up a cultural institute and traditional knowledge centre, which would train local people in traditional skills and bring back ceremony. Peter was seeking an anthropologist to document the process, in the hope that other groups could follow his model if it proved successful. Recording the process was as important to him as was establishing the centre, so that his efforts could be meaningful even outside of his immediate social network.

As with the tensions between confrontational and background activists, there is a similar tension between those with a 'cultural' identity and those with a 'political' identity. Both groups feel that the other is lacking something. The activists with a strong cultural identity feel that political activists cannot adequately represent Aboriginal interests, especially when those activists operate outside of 'traditional' Aboriginal protocols which posit elders as the decision-makers. On the other hand, politically-focused activists are sceptical about the legitimacy and savvy of cultural activists within the movement. Again, these tensions are undercurrents and are rarely ever articulated, surfacing only during moments of stress and indecision, for instance when a hard-fought issue is unsuccessful, or when choices are made about which approach to take. Maddison (2009: 106) attributes these tensions to past government policies which have resulted in inter-generational 'postcolonial fracturing of previously intact identities'. Maddison's (2009) assertion implies a level of pan-Aboriginality in the pre-colonial period, which was then 'fractured'; however, this is a common romanticised, but ultimately misleading, portrayal of Aboriginality. She points out the tensions which arose between 'Tribal Law' and 'City Aborigines' in the 1930s and again in the 1970s. Maddison argues that some of this tension may have been caused by the anthropological interest in the 'real blackfella' who was in touch with his culture, which did not include the southern activists in the early half of the 20th century. This is also closely related to skin colour, as many southern activists were 'half-castes' and had very different experiences to Aboriginal people in areas which were differently colonised, like Far North Queensland or the Northern Territory (Reynolds 2005). In short, Aboriginal people around Australia have had a number of different socio-historical experiences, which are hard to encompass in a single movement. Thus, it is not surprising that tensions arise.

Interestingly, when I first met Lilian and told her about my research, she said she was not the person to speak to about activism, despite her involvement with both the Stolen Wages campaign and Ngulumburu Boonyah. I explained to her that I considered both of those things activism, and would like to speak with

her if she was willing. About a year later we were chatting at a community meeting where she made the statement that 'if you're born black in this country, you're born an activist'. What was different between these two moments? What makes someone adopt an activist identity, while others reject it outright? And what makes the same individual adopt an activist identity at one point but reject it at another?

In her book, *Stepping Out of Line*, Cheryl Hercus (2005) explores how some women come to label themselves as feminists. She describes individual involvement in collective action as a relational process which is based on four main aspects: knowing (consciousness), feeling (emotions), belonging (identity) and doing (action). Some women had achieved knowing and feeling, and were actively doing, but were reluctant to identify as feminists and 'belong' to the movement. Hercus (2005: 11) explains that the 'we' feeling of collective identity is sometimes rejected because of the stigma which is attached to labels such as 'feminist' or 'activist', and sometimes because of interpersonal tensions. Further, the process of identity construction is influenced not only by movement participants, but also by outside actors such as the media, other movements, governments, churches and families (Hercus 2005: 52). To better understand why some people claim activist identities, it is helpful to examine the process by which they became activist.

Becoming activist

During several in-depth interviews, I was able to explore the process of becoming activist with people who currently identify as such. Their accounts echoed themes that were raised regularly in demonstrations, community meetings, and informal conversations with other activists. In this section, I will highlight the stories of three activists: Florence, Janine, and Dan. These three people grew up in very different contexts. Florence is now 50, and was a member of the Stolen Generation and speaks openly about her experience; she was forcibly removed from her mother at the age of five and raised in a group home by a white, ex-missionary woman. She was returned to her mother's care

as a 13 year old and was then raised in Townsville. Janine grew up in a small town in North Queensland during the 1980s before becoming a public servant and living in various Australian cities. Dan was raised in Brisbane during the 1950s and 1960s. Despite the geographical and temporal differences in these three stories, they all share similarities, which I will discuss in depth below.

Florence

Florence was not always an activist, but she says that she was pre-disposed to this identity because of her family background. Taken away from her family at the age of five, and returned at 13 when her white foster mother died suddenly, Florence's childhood was characterised by uncertainty and upheaval. When she left high school at the age of 16, she adopted 'a pretty self-destructive lifestyle' as she became heavily involved in 'the party scene'. In retrospect, Florence recognises that this year of her life was her way of 'trying to find out who I was, you know who I was really, as a person', after which she found work for several years. When she was 22, Florence joined the first intake of the Indigenous Cadet program with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), where she was trained in all aspects of journalism. This training program, which consisted of Florence and three Indigenous men, established the first ever Indigenous-content shows on the ABC, *Radio Dreamtime* and *Walkabout*. She explains the benefits of the job:

Because we were the Indigenous unit we covered everything Indigenous. So the ABC paid for us to travel anywhere in Australia, cover all current affairs, all events, all the cultural events... Yeah, I just fell into that role as a political reporter... (Interview 28/03/08)

In this position, Florence was able to attend:

...the national land rights rallies, establishment of the DOGIT communities, establishment of ATSIC, Ayers Rock/Uluru handover, lots of major national historical events. (Interview 28/03/08)

She credits this experience as the start of her political education, since she was able to attend meetings and demonstrations focused on a number of different political issues:

...the good thing about being a journalist, you can just sit in the background and observe and listen and, you know, take notes and do your story and that, and that was my job so I learned a lot more and I observed and I saw a lot more and then I got introduced to who's who in the zoo, through Gracelyn [Florence's sister], who was part of that whole activism thing... (Interview 28/03/08)

Aside from the political training she received in her early 20s, Florence was inclined towards activism because she was always aware of injustices.

I've always had an interest in all those issues because they've impacted our lives personally... (Interview 28/03/08)

This awareness stems from knowledge of her family members' experience with racism and oppressive government policy.

My grandfather was a death in custody. He was killed in the 60s, the old people talked about it. He was someone that stood up for his rights. And he was found burnt to death in his cell...

My aunts and uncles were stockmen and had their wages stolen and my mother probably would have been too, she would have been a domestic servant. So I've always had an interest in all those issues because they've impacted our lives personally... (Lecture 25/03/08)

Finally, Florence feels obligated to be an activist, as if she owes it to those who fought for the rights and opportunities she has been lucky to take advantage of.

And I guess we do it a lot because it's... like with our elders, they fought for their rights, you know, and they really had no rights, no opportunities. And a lot of the opportunities that we have today they never had. [...] And, they were a voice for our people, and it's important for us to carry on that legacy because they passed the baton on to us, and it's up to our generation, rather than just do nothing. You know? (Interview 28/03/08)

Janine

Like Florence, Janine was always aware of political and social issues. Janine attributes this to regular and sometimes 'fiery' political discussion which

was a part of everyday life in her family. In retrospect, she feels that she became an activist while in high school, although she would not have identified as an activist at the time. Janine grew up in the small town of Malanda, in the Atherton Tableland, and feels that the rural setting played an integral role in helping her to become an activist *because of*—rather than in spite of—the conservative nature of the town. She was often ‘the only Murri kid at school’, and thus felt that she had to ‘argue the case for Indigenous issues’.

I felt often that I had to answer for the whole of Aboriginal people across Australia because I was the only Aboriginal kid there. But I didn’t mind doing that because I really came from a family that really had a tradition of standing up, and not being frightened of advocating and putting a point across, and doing that through winning your arguments and knowing your facts and figures and not having to resort to throwing your fist around—although you felt like you wanted to sometimes. (Interview 11/11/08)

Retrospectively, she did not identify as an activist at the time, but she ‘probably was doing the things that an activist would do’. It was not until later in life, when she moved to Townsville, that Janine

...signed up to trade unionism, and that really linked me up with a whole range of different organisations like Amnesty International, Oxfam, that sort of thing. (Interview 11/11/08)

It was at this stage that she began to identify as an activist.

Now that Janine is firm in her activist identity, she is influencing others, like her teenage nephew. She explained that, when he was a child, he was often present for activist planning meetings.

At different times when I’ve looked after him, you know, babysat for his parents, it was also a time when I was having meetings at my house. So from a small age he’s sort of been listening to what’s going on, and I don’t know whether he would regard me as his biggest influence or anything like that, I’m sure he’s developed his own reasons for involvement. But he certainly used to listen and ask questions. (Interview 20/11/08)

Rather than trying to mould him in her image, or shaping his way of thinking to match hers, Janine has encouraged her nephew to think for himself.

We had to be very careful because he would just regurgitate everything you said in terms of ideology. Like, he would just take it as that's the way it is. And you sort of think, no, you gotta try and encourage him to think why that's the case and why has he come to that position. You know, so I've really tried to train him in... not just myself, but uncles and aunties too, his uncles and aunties, so my brothers and sisters, around that thinking. Like, it's okay to have a position but why? What's brought you there, and make sure you can argue it. So he's, at this stage, developing those skills, but I think he'll get there. (Interview 20/11/08)

Janine does not want to take credit for her nephew becoming activist, pointing out that he has 'developed his own reasons for involvement', and she also credits her brothers and sisters for playing a role in this identity development.

Dan

Dan, on the other hand, says that he has always been an activist. He describes growing up in a political household.

Well, from the time I was walking, crawling, I've always been on the edge of the family circle. And my particular family and extended family were always, right through the 50s and 60s and 70s, were always right at the centre of the Aboriginal political struggle. People were involved in the battles of the 50s for equal wages; our mob were involved in the battle through the 60s which was the battle to get the Constitution changed, that led up to the 1967 Referendum. And then in the 70s when we first started to set up the Aboriginal organisations, again, I was there.

This political consciousness was not, however, limited to Aboriginal issues.

But, also, our mob were fairly aware of the global situation so, through the 50s and 60s, we... at home and at school I was always involved with debating groups. We had a small circle of mates who got involved with the students' political movement against Vietnam. And also we were active against the white Australia policy of the day because we had a number of Asian mates who used to cop a fair bit of cane. (Interview 2/04/08)

Dan went to a 'real working class school', where his activist identity was allowed to flourish.

So, in high school for example we used to have a student newspaper, and the teachers were great, the teachers were really good. They got us out of sport, they used to let us use the school PA system to give speeches and papers and debates on the big issues of the day. (Interview 2/04/08)

Dan feels that he really learned his politics while studying at university, and credits other students with helping this to happen. He still sees them often, and I was introduced to one of these people before our interview started.

Steve was one of my great mentors from back then. He was one of the leaders of the student movement right through the late 60s and early 70s, and I learned a great deal off people like Steve. Yup. (Interview 2/04/08)

However, Dan does not feel that the process of becoming activist is ever complete.

It's not a process that begins at A and ends at C; it's a process that's ongoing. Every day you look at situations in a different way. And, it's important to do that because you can't get too locked into a particular mindset, it's an ever evolving situation. (Interview 2/04/08)

Opportunities

All three of these activists have been presented with opportunities in which their activist identities were allowed to develop. They make some connection between becoming activist and education—whether school, university, or on-the-job training. For instance, Florence gained her political education while working as a reporter at the ABC and being asked to cover Indigenous news events around the country. Dan was nurtured throughout his schooling by teachers who gave him and his fellow students the opportunity to discuss political issues during school hours. He then credits his further development with friends from the student movement who have taught him 'a great deal'. Janine's activist identity also stems from her school days, but not because she was nurtured and encouraged by teachers and fellow students. Rather, her town was full of people who were 'not necessarily in favour of, you know, things like land rights issues and that sort of thing for Aboriginal people' and thus, she became an activist out of opposition to this. She later became firm in her activist identity through her involvement with the trade union movement.

Interestingly, these opportunities were all presented by institutions of the Australian state which are normally means of reinforcing hegemony (Gramsci 1971). It was through engagement with state agents that these three activists,

and many like them, were able to develop as activists and organic intellectuals (Gramsci 1971). This is, to some extent, subversive. But it is also something that the state requires. The public resistance that social movements perform effectively maintains the role of the democratic state. Western democracies purportedly nurture debate and allow for dissent (within specific guidelines), and ultimately make decisions based on the will of 'the people', via their elected representatives. Althusser (1971) argued that Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) like schools, churches and the media reinforce the system by indoctrinating the public to the capitalist world-system. The concept of 'governmentality' argues that contemporary governments work through freedom as well as domination, coercion as well as consent (Dean 1999). However, liberal democracies must allow for dissent to happen, creating spaces for resistance to flourish. I argue that Althusser's notion of the totalising ISAs is limited because of this need for resistance. ISAs must allow the space for dissent to occur and be contained. By allowing this dissent in public arenas, the democratic state is reinforced as a system which encourages free thinking and allows all voices to be heard. And by occasionally responding to this dissent and compromising with social movements, the state is upheld as an institution which caters to the interests of its constituents, even those which make up a small minority of the population, like Aboriginal people in Australia.

Many of the specific skills which activists utilise for their movements are also directly linked to the training they have received through these state-sponsored opportunities. Janine credits her media skills to the training received through her work:

I have to give credit to the Commonwealth Public Service for that training. I've attended media training on their time and using their resources so that's where I think the Commonwealth Public Service has contributed great help to the cause. (Interview 11/11/08)

Likewise, Florence considers one of her strengths as an activist to be her media skills. These skills were acquired during her time at the ABC:

I went to a Second National Indigenous Media conference in Alice Springs in 1982. Our first meeting was just under the gum tree, we got photographs of it, and it was amazing because all these blackfellas came from around the country and they had all these government officials and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and that. And I was the only one doing interviews and recording things. But then I realised everyone else was doing community radio and they didn't have the confidence or the training that we'd had, and so I was right in the middle and all the others were just sort of all watching, thinking, 'who's this girl', you know? And so I was just doing my thing and in everyone's face doing interviews and stuff, because every time you went somewhere you had to do a package and send it back [to the ABC]. [...] So we realised that a lot of the other broadcasters didn't have that confidence or that training. (Interview 28/03/08)

Again, these skills—which are used to oppose the state—were developed through state institutions. Janine and Florence have both become articulate and confident activists due to their training which was provided by the state.

Different opportunities lead to different forms of activism. Gracelyn was able to travel to several countries around the world for the purpose of investigating Indigenous health. In the course of these travels, she met with many Indigenous and Black activists who influenced her activism to the more radical side of the spectrum. The women from Ngulumburu Boonyah and Peter have all travelled to other parts of Australia where they have gone through different initiation ceremonies, and their activism is focused on cultural revival. These cultural activists have received opportunities which are not closely related to the state; likewise, the activism that they undertake is less focused on engaging with the state (see Chapter Seven).

Family

More important than training opportunities, however, was the family environment in which activists were raised. Every activist I spoke with had at least one family member who was also an activist. Janine comes from a long line of activists. She can trace her activist family tree through her parents and their siblings, through to her grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather. She sees her style of activism as stemming from her parents, who were more persuasive and gentle in their activism. Her maternal uncle, Ernie

Hoolihan, and his father Dick, however, were involved in activism during the days of 'marching in the streets' activism. They were both involved with labour unions and the Communist Party of Australia, FCAATSI and the campaign for the 1967 Referendum. Before them, her great-grandfather and his parents moved to North Queensland from Russia, where they had been ostracised for their political views. Once in North Queensland, great-grandfather Leandro Illin continued to 'stir the pot' by marrying an Aboriginal woman as well as remaining vocal on political issues through letters to the editor and regular correspondence with politicians (Govor 2000; *Pioneers of Love* 2005).

Leandro Illin was not solely interested in 'stirring the pot'; he was also involved in advocacy. He acted as a 'bush lawyer' for Indigenous people and other immigrants in North Queensland because of his ability to speak and write in many different languages. Leandro Illin, according to family stories, strongly influenced his daughter Flora and his son-in-law, Dick Hoolihan, who in turn stands as Janine's 'inspiration for activism'. She grew up hearing the stories about Dick's involvement in activism; she also grew up surrounded by regular and sometimes heated political discussion, to the point that 'it's something that's ingrained' into her mind (Interview 20/11/08).

Gracelyn often publicly traced her activist family tree, highlighting her father (Archie Smallwood), a labour unionist, and her grandfather (Eric Lymburner), one of the seven 'ringleaders' from the Palm Island Strike of 1957. Gracelyn also recalled the lessons she learned about public speaking—one of the skills which she considers vital to her activism—from her father. Florence draws from both sides of her family; she credits her activism both to her father (Archie Smallwood) and her maternal grandfather, who was burnt to death in a police cell. Florence also values the role her older sister, Gracelyn, played in her 'political education'. Florence jokes that at least one of her four daughters is bound to become an activist, because it runs in both sides of their family (Florence married into the Onus family, who have been historically active in Victorian Aboriginal activism). Dan cannot remember a time in his life when politics and activism was not important, because his family was 'always right at

the centre of the Aboriginal political struggle'. Even those who do not consider themselves activists are influenced by family networks; for instance, at Louise's funeral, after explaining her dislike for the term, her sons promised to take up the campaign that she left behind.

The type of activist identity adopted was also heavily influenced by their family members. For instance, Florence and Gracelyn have different mothers and this has impacted on the type of activist that each has become. Florence explains,

Gracelyn always says I'm more of the diplomatic one, that I take more after Dad. Because our father was an activist, and he took the more diplomatic route. And I think our women were a bit more verbal and forceful. (Interview 28/03/08)

Similarly, Janine considers herself an 'influencer' thanks to the example provided by her parents and her older siblings. She remembers her mother's style of standing up for herself.

Mum certainly was... she's a pretty assertive, sort of strong woman. She certainly, as an Aboriginal woman in a small, rural town... had no problem with taking on teachers and the whole school system if something was not happening, or if we encountered some sort of racist element to our school life. But it was always within the framework of how you could attack those things, you know, she just really took them on in a rational, reasonable sort of way, and I think that that was very powerful in a way. Because she really, then, was able to fix the situation for us and also make it okay for, on a much more ongoing basis. Like, if you... I guess what I'm trying to say is if you stir the pot too much, some of that trouble can sort of, it can make more trouble for yourself. (Interview 20/11/08)

These familial links are not simply a background influence; rather, the memories are actively and strategically performed by activists. Activists remember their family links in many contexts, but one that recurred on a regular basis throughout my field work was the memory of the Palm Island Strike (Petray 2008a). In 1957, Palm Island was under the oppressive administration of Roy Bartlam. In response to the harsh conditions imposed on residents, seven men organised a strike on the Island which lasted for five days, demanding improved conditions and increased autonomy. Early in the morning of June 10th,

police arrived from Townsville and arrested the seven 'ringleaders', who were moved with their families to other reserves in distant parts of Queensland (Thaiday 1981; Watson 1991, 2010).

To mark the 50th anniversary of the Strike, the Palm Island community hosted a celebration featuring market stalls, music, awards and a play. The play, called 'Strike of 57 - The Day Palm Island Fought Back', was written by Dulcie Isaro. She is the daughter of strike leader Willie Thaiday, and was a teenager at the time of the strike. The play was performed in both Townsville and Palm Island. In addition to the celebrations, the living relatives of Strikers marked the event by designing tee shirts with their family name and slogans like 'the day Palm Island fought back' in red, black and yellow (Figure 4.1). The tee shirts offered a visual means of showing kinship ties which were often verbally expressed in community meetings, conversations and at demonstrations.

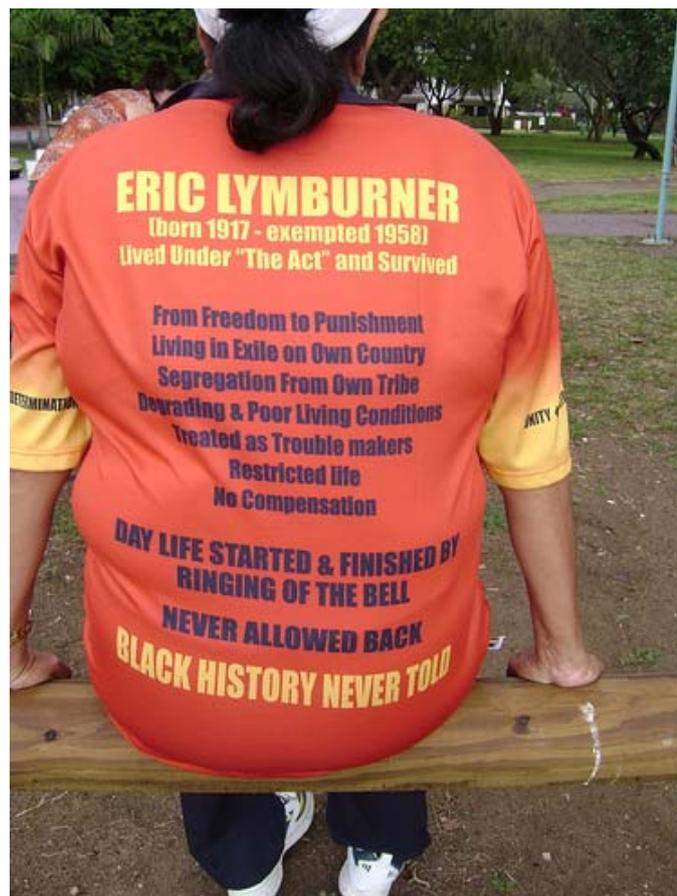


Figure 4.1 Commemorative tee-shirt. Made by the family of striker Eric Lymburner to mark the 50th anniversary of the strike. On the sleeves are the words 'Unity - Strength - Determination'.

Memories such as this one have been labelled as 'microheritage' or 'vernacular memory' by Healy (2008) because they are extremely localised and have not been adopted as part of the national memory. For instance, the play actors were from Townsville, many with close links to Palm Island. The Aboriginal director told me that while the actors she cast had little or no acting experience, many are relatives of the original strikers. Likewise, performers and speakers at the Commemoration on Palm Island articulated their links to the strike; Cathy Freeman, for instance, was there not as Olympic gold medallist but as the granddaughter of Sonny Sibley, one of the seven 'ringleaders'.

These vivid 'performances of memory' (Henry 1999), which I encountered so early in my field work and repeatedly since then, made me question what it is about this memory in particular which makes it so important to Aboriginal activists in Townsville. Social movements are made up of people who share a collective identity (Snow et al. 2004; Friedman & McAdam 1992). By forging a strong group identity, and positing 'activist' identities in opposition to a common 'enemy', social movements have the potential to effect social and political changes (Burgmann 2003). Even movements which arise from pre-existing communities need mechanisms to maintain that collective identity. History offers a rich basis for the foundation of collective identities. As Marc Edelman (2001: 294) points out, 'emerging movements of women, environmentalists, gays and lesbians, and oppressed minorities, as well as anticolonial forces in the Third World, sought to uncover hidden histories of their political ancestors in order to fortify their legitimacy and forge new collective identities'. This process is complemented by the complex kinship structures of classical Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, by which even those who are far removed can trace a connection to one of the strike leaders.

Memories of the strike work to draw together many different families and groups on both Palm Island and in Townsville. They also reinforce the link between Townsville Aboriginal people and Palm Island. People have largely forgotten Willie Thaiday's (1981: 34) memory of division:

During the strike a lot of our mates double cross us. They come and talk to us; then go back to Mr Bartlam and tell him what we say... I know all of them and can name them now.

In an article for *Green Left Weekly*, Nicole Watson (2006) states that 'the community rallied around' the strike. Similarly, in the play, schism is mostly forgotten—the double-crossers were all lumped into one character, implying only minor opposition to the strike. Tee shirts made by the family of striker Eric Lymburner feature the words 'Unity - Strength - Determination' on the sleeves. As Chris Healy (2008) argues, forgetting is a political act in the same way that remembering is. Forgetting the schism turns the strike into a positive memory of mutual action, and as Eipper (2008: 200) said, 'a memory becomes a fact when we speak of it and act upon it as if it were'. Public performance of memory offers a more dynamic process than published texts, and the subtle changes in this memory have allowed Palm Islanders from diverse backgrounds a shared history around which they can connect and act collectively.

As Shannon Novak (2006: 3) states, telling stories and relating memories can be a politically charged act—it can unify collective bodies because who 'we' are depends on who 'they' are. In memories of the strike, the 'us' and 'them' distinction is very clear, and it can easily be transposed onto present-day situations. Aboriginal activists are still opposed to oppressive governments. Memories like the strike are crucial for the solidification of collective identity, particularly because the characters in the strike memory are family members. Shared identity is a key characteristic in definitions of social movements (cf. Melucci 1989). Activists utilise performances of memory to cement this collective identity, and at the same time they are affirming the legitimacy of their movement. When present-day events share similarities with past occurrences, and when activists are calling for the same demands as their predecessors, the movement becomes part of something deeper. Rather than just a loud group of people, activists are rooted in history and they are carrying on an unfinished struggle. In fact, they have inherited the mistreatment of those who have come before them and it is their duty to continue the fight (Novak 2006).

Aboriginal activist leadership

Leadership is an important feature of many social movements, because leaders have a lot to do with influencing the strategies of movements, inspiring movement participants, and making decisions on movement tactics. A clear-cut definition of a 'leader' is hard to find in the literature, but for my purposes I will use the term to refer to those who are seen by other movement participants as ones who can be trusted to make decisions about the movement, and who motivate and engage others to action. Popper (2004) argues that it is necessary to conceptualise leadership as a relationship. Leadership is not a static moment, and needs to be studied through 'an integrative view of leaders, followers, and circumstances' (Popper 2004: 118).

Leaders are shaped and constrained by environmental contexts, just as the movement as a whole is limited by these factors. Further, movements are not structured in a simple Leader-Follower dichotomy; rather, there are multiple layers of leadership, and even those participants who are not leaders have important roles to play (Morris & Staggenborg 2004). Aboriginal activists often value leaders who come from the 'grassroots'³¹ level more than others. For instance, Noel Pearson is often referred to by activists as a 'coconut'³² because 'he is not in touch with the grassroots'; this claim is usually supported with references to the large salary he receives. Pearson has been an Aboriginal activist for several decades, playing a key role in the development of the Cape York Land Council in 1990 (Cape York Institute 2007). From Hope Vale in Far North Queensland, Pearson became a national figure through involvement in the Wik native title case, and the drafting of the Native Title Act in 1993. In 2000, Pearson delivered a speech which announced his changing views on Indigenous policy, essentially supporting a neoliberal agenda as the means of lifting Aboriginal communities from poverty (Pearson 2000). From 2004 until 2009, Pearson acted

³¹ The term 'grassroots' is often used by Aboriginal activists to refer to people who do their activism without pay. Those who are funded, especially through government jobs, are not typically considered 'grassroots'.

³² 'Coconut' is a derogatory term used by Aboriginal people, to describe those who are considered 'black on the outside but white on the inside'. In other words, this is the term for people who have 'sold out' to the state.

as Director of the Cape York Institute, which he helped found in partnership with the Queensland and Commonwealth governments and Griffiths University (Cape York Institute 2007). For most of the past decade, Pearson has worked closely with the Commonwealth Government, particularly with Liberal Prime Minister John Howard. These are the reasons to which people refer when discussing Noel Pearson's credibility as an activist.

Morris and Staggenborg (2004) study movement leaders and have found that few are representative of their constituencies. The majority of movement leaders are middle-class and highly educated, and almost all are male. The most important factor of these three was education, Morris and Staggenborg (2004: 175) argue, because the activities done by movement leaders (framing grievances, debating, liaising with media, writing, public speaking, etc) are 'primarily intellectual tasks'. This fits with the situation in Townsville, where many activist leaders have spent at least some time at university. Although Morris and Staggenborg (2004: 176) refer mainly to formal education, they do acknowledge that activist education can come from growing up in 'movement families' which enables activists to 'acquire skills and knowledge regarding organizing and leadership'. Thus, family ties are not only important for the foundation of activist identity, but also for the development of movement leaders. This informal education is the one more often publicly acknowledged by activists in demonstration settings because it affirms their status as 'grassroots'.

While Morris and Staggenborg (2004) found that women are rarely movement leaders, the generalisation does not apply to Aboriginal activism in Townsville. This is largely due to the layers of leadership within the national Aboriginal movement. The voices chosen to speak on behalf of Aboriginal people by the media or the government are typically (though with several notable exceptions) male. At the local, 'grassroots' level, however, women seem to dominate decision-making and organisational processes. In Townsville, for instance, the Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group (TIHRG) is a prominent activist group. This is a women's group, chaired by Gracelyn.

Another group that started during my field work, GAP Strategies, is headed up by a team of two women and one man. When I visited Brisbane to conduct archival research, I went to the office of the Musgrave Park Cultural Centre Committee, staffed by women. I told them about my project, and they suggested that I speak with several men whom they considered leaders. But as the conversation continued, they revealed the leading role that they play in planning and hosting large community outreach events. The Aboriginal Sovereignty rally at the Tent Embassy in Canberra was led by activist elder Isabel Coe. Isabel was later described to me by Florence as 'the last great activist from the 60s and 70s; she has a real fire in her belly, and she's passionate about Aboriginal rights'. Florence explained that Isabel is the person who has kept the Tent Embassy going for so many years.

The predominance of females in activism seems to be a relatively new phenomenon. Many of the activists who are currently involved in the social movement list fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and other men as inspiration. The reasons for the shift in leadership are undoubtedly complex. One aspect is the international feminist movement which was prominent in the 1960s and 1970s. The women who are currently leaders grew up in a time of social turmoil and their allies were often feminists. Further, feminist influences have made it more acceptable for women to occupy leadership positions. But more than just broader social changes, this prevalence of Aboriginal women in leadership roles is directly linked to the process of colonisation in Australia. Charlton (1984: 474) discusses the impacts of development on the family, highlighting the effect that work-related migration has on familial roles. In the protection era, many Aboriginal people, particularly men, were disempowered as they were moved around for work (Kidd 2000, 1997). In many cases they were separated from their families and women took on primary familial roles—this was 'an accepted or perhaps even desired family form for Aboriginal women and children' (Langton 1981: 18), given that their men were so transient. Moreover, when the government extended the right to receive welfare payments to Aboriginal people in the late 1960s, it was often in the form of parenting payments which went to

mothers (Pearson 2000; Langton 1981). The Australian bureaucracy privileged matrifocality, emphasising the important role of mothers and women in general (Barrett 2001). Langton (1981: 18) suggests that

mothers, grandmothers, aunts and other female relations provide a cultural core, remembering and passing on to their children the knowledge that provides them with an identity in a crowded impersonal urban environment.

This cultural knowledge, alongside the economic freedom associated with welfare benefits gave the women the ability to become educated, both academically and informally. Thus, a large group of women emerged with eloquent public speaking abilities, organisational skills and the necessary knowledge to critique the injustices facing Indigenous people.

In addition to socio-economic determinants, leadership in Aboriginal activism is also shaped by cultural exigencies. Aboriginal society rests on the leadership of elders (Pascoe 2008). In Townsville, the activists who are considered leaders are also considered elders. Several times throughout my research I heard older Aboriginal activists express concern at the lack of participation by the younger generation. I asked Janine, a young activist, about this, and she explained:

Traditional culture comes in there about respecting elders and people with more experience and knowledge. So, when we turn up to a rally or whatever, at my age I wouldn't expect to have to take on that limelight, in terms of speaking—that's an older person's job. But my job, I feel, my contribution is about taking other people to go, to just turn up, show numbers, you know, I guess at a certain point it'll come through my own standing and involvement and the building up of respect for my position on things so that, maybe, one day I'll take over that role. (Interview 11/11/08)

Rather than seeing a lack of participation by young people, Janine feels that it would be inappropriate to take on leadership roles at her age. She accepts the fact that, in these situations, she is not a leader, but she expects to grow into the role. However, young people are not merely followers; rather, they do activism differently.

So I think that younger people, and there's a whole group of people that I know here in Townsville that do things in a different way, and it's about using the media and tools like Facebook, that kind of thing, and there's plenty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of my age doing different things behind the scenes. (Interview 11/11/08)

Although they may not take on visible leadership roles, Janine's comments suggest that it is a mistake to assume that young people are not active in the movement. By adopting new technologies such as Facebook, young activists can spread a message broadly with little effort, possibly reaching a wider audience than traditional meetings and protest demonstrations (but see Chapter Five for an in-depth discussion of digital activism).

In addition to age, place is an aspect of traditional Aboriginal leadership which is paralleled in contemporary activism. In post-colonial Australia, it is common to meet Aboriginal people who do not live 'on country'³³. This is particularly the case in urban and regional centres. This can be explained in part by the reserve system, as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were removed from traditional lands and concentrated on centralised reserves like Palm Island. Despite the cultural diversity in these places, major decisions and leadership roles are often deferred to traditional owners. In Townsville, Gracelyn and Florence are Bindal women, descended from Traditional Owners and this bolsters their status as activist leaders. Not only are they deferred to for decision making in the area, but as traditional owners they are also invited to numerous events to perform traditional welcomes, which increases their public visibility and gives them a platform from which to speak about issues. Traditional owners are further advantaged because their extended family network in the area makes it easier for them to mobilise people and resources when needed. This dynamic makes outsiders wary of participating in certain areas, like Canberra, where the traditional owners are reportedly at odds with the Tent Embassy.

³³ Being 'on country' means living on the traditional lands of one's ancestors. This can be traced matrilineally or patrilineally, or both, depending on Aboriginal group.

There is a notable exception to this rule; when large numbers of people from one country congregate in the nearest urban centre, they can be found in leadership positions alongside traditional owners. They can rely on extended family networks in the same ways that Traditional Owners can. There are several large groups of people whose country is elsewhere that have congregated in Townsville. Among the groups who are well-represented in Townsville is the Gugu-Badhun. Members of this group, such as Ernie and Dick Hoolihan, have been important to activism in Townsville; other Gugu-Badhun people occupy (non-activist) leadership positions in institutions around Townsville such as the university. Janine, a Gugu-Badhun and Ngadjan woman, describes how her role as activist depends on place:

But I think I'm probably more comfortable in organising something here [Townsville] because I know who's who, how to go about it, that sort of thing and I've got more of a social status I guess, in terms of my place in the community. In the context of, you know, relationships, I suppose. Like being related to most of the people in town helps. But you know, in Canberra, in another peoples' area, you've gotta be really conscious of that sort of thing. So my activism [when I lived there] was probably more around support and participation. (Interview 20/11/08)

For Janine, as well as for others, her identity as activist was not changed based on place, but the extent to which she takes up leadership roles is.

Charisma

Although Aboriginal activism is different from other movements due to cultural and socio-economic exigencies, leadership still relies to a large extent on charisma. Effective leaders need the ability to mobilise people and resources when necessary to get things done (Morris & Staggenborg 2004). They need to maintain broad networks across which they delegate responsibility, but they also personally spend a significant amount of time on movement-related tasks. Leaders must use the media effectively, and similarly must frame the issues to appeal to a wide audience (Morris & Staggenborg 2004). In short, movement leaders tend to be charismatic. The term charisma was used by Max Weber (1948: 245) to apply to 'natural leaders' who have 'specific gifts of the body and

spirit' which are 'not accessible to everybody'. Unlike other forms of leadership, charismatic leadership is wholly dependent on the acceptance of that leader by constituents.

Gracelyn's position as a charismatic leader was confirmed in my mind after I attended a barbecue at her house in August 2008. In attendance were several members of the Indigenous Human Rights Group, as well as several non-Indigenous people whom Gracelyn knows from non-activist settings. Gracelyn asked several people to speak, and the overwhelming sentiment expressed by speakers is that Gracelyn is an amazing woman who does a lot of work, and that I am extremely lucky to have the opportunity to work with her for my PhD. An Aboriginal woman from the Indigenous Human Rights Group spoke with praise about all the work that Gracelyn does 'for the community and for the nation' and is glad that Gracelyn's voice is one that 'will not die until real changes have been made for our people'.

The sentiments expressed at this barbecue are backed up by Gracelyn's ability to get people to do things for her on a regular basis, her networking skills, and her media savvy. She recognises her own talents and regularly acknowledges that her skills are in areas useful to activist leaders. She has a deep understanding of the importance of framing issues so that they resonate with wide audiences. For instance, rather than naming her group the 'Justice Group' or something similarly related to black deaths in custody, she chooses to associate her struggle more broadly with human rights issues: the Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group (TIHRG, see Chapter Five for an in-depth discussion of its organisation, tactics, and targets). This is because Gracelyn equate 'justice' with the state system, and she is explicit about her opposition to the state. The concept of human rights is more universal, and more devolved from explicit state frameworks. She is often sought after by the media for comments and interviews because of her leadership status, but also because she is generous with her time when the media is involved. She is not afraid to take advantage of her close personal links with people in high places, from *The Australian* to the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

Interestingly, Aboriginal activists in Townsville are not discouraged from maintaining friendships with state agents. While some activists worry about 'selling out' or losing legitimacy if they are too close with state agents, this was not the case for activists in Townsville. Many activist leaders in Townsville were friends with politicians, bureaucrats, university administrators and businesspeople. I attended several activist parties where I mingled with the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament and the heads of several faculties at James Cook University. Rather than being suspect for maintaining these friendships, though, Aboriginal activists in Townsville see them as a bonus, despite the opposition which exists between the two groups on a theoretical level. This is indicative of the relationship between the movement and the state—they need each other, despite their opposition. From the perspective of the movement, the small minority that Aboriginal people constitute must be overcome, and these relationships make those in power more receptive to engaging with activists, which is a strength of the movement. Rather than shunning state agents, they engage with them. And from the perspective of the state, a movement with clear, charismatic leaders is likely much more desirable to work with than an acephalous group (like, for instance, the global justice movement; Graeber 2009).

Of course, charismatic leaders never convince everyone that they deserve their role. As Weber (1948: 248) points out, 'the nature of charismatic authority is specifically unstable'. Weber argues that, when authority is challenged, the charismatic leader 'may forego his [sic] charisma' and feel forsaken. In Townsville, Gracelyn's leadership was challenged at the height of the Stolen Wages campaign. Other activists had worked for several years on that campaign and were worried that their years of background work would be superseded if high-profile activists came on board. They requested that Gracelyn avoid talking to the media on the issue, and they did not invite her to speak at a rally for the cause. Gracelyn responded emotionally, and was deeply upset. In addition to her experience in activism, she saw her status as a Traditional Owner of Townsville as reasons why she should not be excluded in that way. She felt betrayed and questioned herself and her role in the movement. In response to

this exclusion, she decided to 'quit' activism, but later changed her mind as she found that it was an embedded aspect of her identity which was impossible to discard. To give up activism would destabilise Gracelyn's status as a respected leader, both within the Aboriginal community as well as (perhaps more importantly) to those outside the social movement.

Charismatic leaders are further at risk when they, as individuals, become the focus of media attention at the expense of attention to the movement (Morris & Staggenborg 2004: 187). This was the case in Townsville in November 2008, before the sentencing of Lex Wotton, convicted for inciting riot after the 2004 death in custody on Palm Island. Instead of focusing on the issue of rioting, or deaths in custody, or the legal details of the case itself, the *Townsville Bulletin* featured an opinion piece on Gracelyn's efficacy as an activist leader. The piece, 'Lack of dignity saddens' (Weatherup, 3 November 2008), minimised the activism surrounding this case as 'inflammatory', 'lamentably predictable', and nothing more than 'high-profile attacks on the justice system'. The article was not constructive and did not purport to represent the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It did, however, have the effect of trivialising the trial by media and activists alike.

Team work

More effective than individual leaders are leadership teams (Morris & Reger & Staggenborg 2006; Staggenborg 2004). Teams allow work, resources and skills to be shared and thus relieve some pressure from individual leaders. Morris and Staggenborg (2004: 184) found that teams combining insiders and outsiders are the most effective because they allow for both credible and salient connections with constituents, as well as the ability to reach elite and diverse audiences. In Townsville, most Aboriginal social movement organisations are led by leadership teams. The Stolen Wages campaign was run by Lilian and Louise, who were able to share the networking tasks and the work associated with the campaign. Lilian used a different skill set in her leadership of the Ngulumburu-Boonyah, which she leads along with several other women. The

GAP Strategies group is led by a coalition of three young activists, who are each too busy to occupy solitary leadership roles. The Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group, on the other hand, was 'chaired' by Gracelyn and had no formalised leadership team. Instead, Gracelyn strategically called on others to support her, depending on her needs. While this arrangement may have been the most compatible with Gracelyn's style of leadership, it may have been detrimental in periods of low activity when leadership teams are useful for their ability to creatively attract membership and participation (cf. Reger & Staggenborg 2006).

The costs of being an activist

Whether one is an activist leader or a minor movement participant, activism takes a lot of time and energy. The amount of time varies between individuals, and does not necessarily reflect one's commitment to the movement. In general, those who identify publicly as activist consider activism a part of their everyday lives. In these cases, activism is not an identity which is only displayed during demonstrations, but rather is carried through all aspects of life. Florence, for example, sees activism as a part of life from which she never takes a break.

Community activism and all that, that just continues on. It's just part of your lifestyle, it's not something that, yeah... It's just part of your lifestyle and that, so, it's just something that just continues on, throughout everything. (Interview 28/03/08)

Similarly, Gracelyn thought of all her activities as some form of activism. Midway through my field work, Gracelyn was hired by Professor Sandra Harding, the Vice Chancellor of James Cook University, to act as 'Advisor on Indigenous Matters'. Gracelyn was given an office and a part-time salary. She rarely used the office, considering that her job was to carry on her activism as normal, to make the university look progressive. She complained that she was doing a full-time job but only being paid for 40%, so she decided to document all of her 'work-related' activities via the online calendar attached to the university email program, in order to show the Vice Chancellor how much time she spent doing her job. She often asked me to enter the information into the system, and

offered her schedule in minute detail, including press interviews, family events, conferences, community meetings, funerals, and even other paid work. These activities, plus the more obvious demonstrations, are thought of by Gracelyn as activism, and thus, work. Moreover, Gracelyn's way of seeing the world means that each of these activities is a political act and so she engages with them as an activist. In other words, Gracelyn is never removed from her role as a political activist, even while she is working as a nurse or attending a funeral.

This type of activism comes at high personal cost. For instance, Gracelyn speaks openly about her reliance on family. She thanks her older sister for raising her children while she was busy working, studying and doing activism.

My achievements, however, would not have been possible without the support of my darling elder sister and her dear husband. (Smallwood 1980)

Gracelyn wrote this in 1980, when she was the sole parent of just one child. Over the years she had two more children, and she continues to express her gratitude to her eldest sister for helping to raise them while she was busy with activism. Now that her children are grown with children of their own, Gracelyn struggles to balance grandmothering with her other activities. Her children regularly ask her to step back from the movement. Although she is able to juggle her various responsibilities, it often comes at the expense of sleep or personal time.

Gracelyn seems to thrive on a lack of sleep and a constantly full schedule, but other activists feel the need to take breaks. Janine, who works full-time on top of her activism, told me that she once put herself in the hospital with exhaustion from doing too much.

Janine: I really try to keep up with everything that's going on, but you can only be at one place and one time, and you gotta pick and choose which things you go to and attend. I mean, I could be every night doing something, but... you have to look after yourself before you look after others, really. I have put myself in hospital.

Theresa : Really?

Janine: Yeah. So, I've learned my lesson about doing that. Basically it was hospitalisation from exhaustion and stress.... And, see, I reckon a lot of people say 'well what were you stressed or exhausted from' because

they couldn't see, it wasn't like an outward show of activism. But, you know, at home writing discussion papers and emailing things and phone calls, and all that kind of thing. That burns you out. (Interview 11/11/08)

Since then, she has become aware of the need for self-preservation, and she has realised that no matter how intensely one identifies as an activist, there is a limit to how much one individual can do.

Summary and Conclusions

Social movements, although reliant on collective action and identity, are populated by individuals. Activist identities, as I have discussed in this chapter, are shaped by personal histories, from educational or work opportunities to family histories of activism. The individuals who claim this identity will, in turn, affect the movement as a whole as they become leaders and decision-makers, shaping movement outcomes. Other factors, such as socio-economic or cultural, all impact on the actions and outcomes of a social movement, but the agency of movement participants must not be overlooked. To fully understand a social movement – the what, where, why and how – it is vital to understand the *who* of the movement. The individuals who compose the movement are in a constant state of negotiation. They have complicated life histories and family backgrounds which have led to the claiming of the activist identity – an identity which is, primarily, an opposition to power structures and thus (for many), the state. But at the same time, this activist identity is intricately bound up with state power. The activist identities I discussed in this chapter have formed through public schools and workplace training opportunities. Activist memories like the Palm Island Strike are primarily focused internally, but activists also seek government recognition of that event as a means of legitimating their struggle. On a personal level, activists are friends with politicians and lawmakers, and some are even involved with the creation of public policy themselves. However, activists themselves often assert their opposition to the state. Moreover, a cursory look at social movement activities may indicate a significant level of antagonism between the movement and the state; activists often hold marches and rallies in which they protest state policies, structures, or agents. Their

identities may appear to be anti-state power, but they are simultaneously reliant on the state for the creation of those identities.

Relational theory highlights the accumulation of interactions which lead to social movement activity, and this chapter has focused on the interactions which influence individual activists. History is one important relationship which leads one to identify as an activist – the accumulation of personal and family memories of injustice are commonly told stories explaining one's activism. Interpersonal relationships, too, are key factors, as evidenced by the importance of activist kinship networks; that is, activists often refer to their own family members who were also movement participants, but also to other activists who acted as mentors to them. The role of the state is another implicit component of activist identification. Most of the activists I worked with throughout my research, particularly those who occupy leadership positions, developed the skills which make them effective movement participants through state-sponsored programs such as employment with the public service.

Regardless of the type of activism with which one identifies, they all have in common the political nature of identity assertion. Social movement involvement is a way of publicly declaring pride in one's Aboriginality and demanding recognition of that identity in a state framework. Of course, if activists are purely individualistic, then a social movement does not exist. Activists need to link up with one another and agree on a shared goal and choose strategies and tactics to meet that goal. The movement then becomes greater than the sum of its parts. This chapter offered a glimpse of this collective identity formation, through shared memories and family networks. In this next chapter I will explore activist network in more depth, looking at both intra- and inter-movement networking.

Five

Spinning the Web: Organisational and Network Structures

The previous chapter examined the notion of activist identities, but the activist identity is highly reliant on *collective* identity, which stems from participation in activist networks. Terms like 'network' are used often within discussions of social movements, but as Edelman (2005) has pointed out, the term is imprecise and is often the source of debate. Further, networks are typically studied quantitatively and viewed as two-dimensional diagrams. This view of networks ignores the experiences of the people who actually make up a network and 'feel the tug of disparate demands' from various network levels (Edelman 2005: 36). For instance, Diani (2003: 6) broadly defines networks as 'sets of nodes, linked by some form of relationship, and delimited by some specific criteria'. Nodes, ties and boundaries are the focus of study in this view of networks, whereas I am more interested in the relationships which link the individuals to one another. However, the notion of networking is very important to activists, and strong networks are seen as vital to movement longevity. Real-life networks are not static, two-dimensional diagrams; rather, they emerge from shared interactions linking emotional communities and political activity (Lacey 2005) and they are dynamic, acting largely as communication structures (Pickard 2006; Keck & Sikkink 1998; Castells 1996). Further, the concept of networks is helpful for understanding social movements because it does not require homogeneity and instead allows for a diversity of ideologies, strategies, and identities (Pickard 2006; Lacey 2005). Social movements, like the Townsville Aboriginal movement, are constituted

by networks of individuals and organisations. The Townsville movement is itself a node in the broader national Aboriginal movement. Moreover, Aboriginal movements nurture coalitions in which their networks are linked with other networks.

Despite the diversity of most social movements, they (along with nearly every social grouping) tend towards homophily. Homophily refers to the principle that people who share certain characteristics will associate more with one another than they will with dissimilar people (Petray 2010b, 2008b; McPherson et al. 2001). This is especially pronounced in the localised formations of activist groups; although the movement as a whole may be quite diverse in terms of demographics, ideology and tactics, local groupings tend to remain congregations of people who share similarities.

This chapter qualitatively explores the networks of the Townsville Aboriginal movement. I utilise some of the theories offered by formal network analysis, but I use them loosely to paint a descriptive picture of the networks in this socio-cultural context. I look at the ways in which individuals come together to form activist groups on a local level. I discuss the ways activist groups work together – or do not – in local, national and transnational settings. This chapter also considers the complicated issue of difference and diversity in Aboriginal activism. This chapter argues that the Townsville Aboriginal movement has become adept at diversification, despite the difficulties, because of the social and political atmosphere in which it has developed. Finally, I look at changes in the ways that networking happens, particularly in terms of the recent rise in use of the internet.

Forming groups

Social movement scholars have spent a lot of energy discussing social movement organisations (SMOs), focusing on formally organised, hierarchical organisations (cf. Olzak & Ryo 2007; McCarthy & Zald 1977). SMOs have been positioned as the main focus of study by several schools of thought in social movement theory, including resource mobilisation, political process, and

framing theories (Morris & Staggenborg 2004). SMOs, argue Edwards and McCarthy (2004), have been created as the only viable response to a world dominated by large bureaucracies. Reger and Staggenborg (2006) found that, for several chapters of the National Organization of Women (NOW) in the United States, formal organisational structures led to better integration of new members and retention of movement participants than groups which were informally organised. SMOs are viewed by some scholars as actors which possess agency, often ignoring the role that individuals play in social movement processes (Morris & Staggenborg 2004).

Another current in the study of social movements has looked at 'dis-organisations' which are decentralised, non-hierarchical, fluid and 'rhizomatic' (cf. Harding 2009; Graeber 2009, 2005; Lacey 2005; Keck & Sikkink 1998; Piven & Cloward 1977). This term is self-consciously contradictory; it highlights the tension which exists between a desire to work together as a group without imposing rules or hierarchy in order to accomplish goals. Dis-organisations are not necessarily disorganised, though they may be, but rather make a concerted effort to avoid what these activists see as the negative aspects of organisations. As opposed to SMOs, dis-organisations do not have formal membership (Lacey 2005). These dis-organisations explicitly reject hierarchy in favour of loose, horizontal networks. These loosely-bound networks are not limited to local areas, and demonstrate that 'spatially disparate activists can share strong ties and act politically together over distance' (Lacey 2005: 290). Lacey (2005) expands on Deleuze and Guattari's (1977) analogy of the rhizome, arguing that rhizomes are not divisible and have multiple entry ways, much like the activist networks which she researches. These entry points can be place-based, but are increasingly forged over electronic connections, allowing geographically or physically isolated people to become a part of a much broader network.

Dis-organisations value diversity and messiness and stand in conscientious opposition to the 'political party model of organising [...] which emphasises for the most part the need to create and follow a single line in planning for action' (Harding 2009: 1). Instead, these networks are

characterised by radical democratic practices (Pickard 2006). This organisational style is itself a political statement, argues Lacey (2005: 298), who says that 'Interaction through networks allows activists to escape the organizational replication of the dominant mode of interaction against which they are struggling'. This critique of power structures is considered a new innovation by many scholars (cf. Harding 2009) but has been around for decades. For instance, at the turn of the century, Rosa Luxembour (1913[1951]) argued that formal organisational structures were an inefficient way to achieve social change. Piven & Cloward (1977: xii) made observations over three decades ago about the shortcomings of formal organisations:

Organizers not only failed to seize the opportunity presented by the rise of unrest, they typically acted in ways that blunted or curbed the disruptive force which lower-class people were sometimes able to mobilize.

These dis-organisations, then, are a concerted attempt to avoid this inefficiency attributed to organisations, and they focus their energy on the process of activism as an important step in achieving goals. That is, these groups rely on consensus-based decision making and focus on prefigurative politics (Harding 2009).

More recently, attention has been paid to networks as a hybrid form of organisation (cf. Edelman 2005; Diani & McAdam 2003; Keck & Sikkink 1998). This line of enquiry focuses mainly on networks of organisations which form coalitions to address regional or transnational issues. These networks are similar to councils, such as the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), which act as 'shell' organisations encompassing other, smaller groups (Edelman 2005). These hybrid networks can tend towards the non-hierarchical, as with the global Independent Media Centre network (cf. Pickard 2006), or towards the 'arborescent' and formal, as with bureaucratic organisations like the ACTU. Again, this type of organisation is by no means a new innovation. For instance, Aboriginal rights organisations formed the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) in the late 1950s as a way to build connections between like-minded groups and other

supporters, such as churches. FCAATSI was an alliance between these groups in an effort to work together to accomplish nation-wide goals, but individual members still carried out their own, localised activities and maintained their own leadership and organisational structures (Taffe 2005). Recently, however, these network coalitions have taken advantage of technology to coordinate themselves quickly and across widely divergent physical and ideological spaces (Pickard 2006). As hybrids, these networks offer a formal organisational structure within which there is space for a substantial amount of 'dis-organisation'.

Here I discuss three different activist groups in Townsville, each of which demonstrates a different form of organisation, from the formal and hierarchical, to the egalitarian and de-centralised, to the loose network form of organisation.

Formal structures: The Human Rights Group

In response to the 2004 death in custody on Palm Island, a Community Justice Committee was formed in Townsville. Florence remembers the feelings of tension after the death and the riots which followed:

It was all like a volcano erupting, you could feel it, in the community, the tension. I thought 'well I've gotta do something to defuse that'. And so that's what we did. I got together with a community group, we formed a committee, and said we need to hit this on the head, we need to diffuse it so the people know we're taking some sort of action, we're not just sitting by not doing anything. (Interview 28/03/08)

This committee was an attempt to harness the overwhelming emotions that many people felt in reaction to the government response to the Palm Island riots. Florence and other activists saw the need to publicise this case and their activism played an important role in the charges which were eventually laid against Senior-Sergeant Chris Hurley for the death in custody.

This committee was solely focused on bringing Hurley to trial, and was likely to dissolve once the issue was decided in the courts. To avoid this, Gracelyn, Florence and other activists transformed the committee into the

Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group (TIHRG). This new group intended to incorporate all of the original members, and to follow the same structure as the Justice Committee but focused on broader issues of Indigenous human rights. I joined the TIHRG shortly after it formed, while it was still in the transition-phase from the Justice Committee. The TIHRG utilised the hierarchical structures of a formal organisation; there was a chairperson and a treasurer, and when members spoke up in meetings they often preceded their comments with the statement 'Through the chair...' Minutes were taken every week, and at the start of each meeting the previous week's minutes were presented for approval. Motions were moved and seconded, and then decisions were made by informal votes.

I noticed in the early meetings that there was a reluctance to accept new members. The group was not an open group which anyone could join. Rather, new people had to be invited by others. This was not something the group articulated, but an unspoken rule. I first met Gracelyn over coffee at the university, and we were joined by another friend of hers. Gracelyn invited both of us to come along to the TIHRG meetings, and we were quickly accepted as group members and given tasks to do. A few weeks afterwards, I became aware that this was not the case for everyone; another white woman had heard about the group and came along uninvited. There was a noticeable tension at that meeting, and her presence was acknowledged when Gracelyn looked at her and said that new members were welcome to join us. Although she verbalised this sentiment, the unarticulated feeling that I got from the group, including Gracelyn, was one of unease, as if they did not trust the newcomer. After a few weeks, she was made more welcome when she shared her personal reasons for her involvement in the group. Her gradual welcome was not extended to everyone, however. To mark 'Close the Gap Day' in 2008 and to pressure the government to make improvements in Aboriginal health standards, Oxfam supported a number of local events to illustrate nationwide support for the cause – they put out a national call encouraging local groups to host meetings under the Oxfam banner, but had little to do with the events

which were held. With the permission of the group members, I posted our regular weekly meeting as one of these events. That week we were joined by three newcomers, and only one of these, a middle-aged white male, continued to attend further meetings. He was never welcomed by the group members, who remarked to me privately that they could not trust him and they found him overbearing and bossy.

When I first joined, I often wondered why the Human Rights Group operated so formally, though I recognised that my personal experiences with non-hierarchical organisations influenced my dislike for formal structure. I was surprised at how closed-off the group was in its membership, and how meetings seemed so official. In one meeting we even discussed the prospect of becoming a formally incorporated group; the benefits, some members pointed out, were that we would be eligible for funding, and we would be taken more seriously by government organisations. Formal structures are a way to assert legitimacy within the frameworks presented by the state. As Martin and Finlayson (1996) point out, incorporation brings with it the need for accountability. But within state frameworks, accountability is purely a financial matter and does not take into consideration the need to be accountable to community or constituents. In fact, Martin and Finlayson (1996) argue that accountability is potentially at odds with the notion of self-determination, at least in very local terms, as the organisation in question is no longer in control of its internal structures and auditing processes. As the TIHRG members discussed in that meeting, incorporation comes with an expectation that the organisation will be run like a business, and the group has responsibilities that an ad hoc organisation does not (Edwards & McCarthy 2004; McCarthy et al. 1999).

Alvarez (1998, in Edelman 2005) called this trend towards incorporation exhibited by groups like the TIHRG 'NGO-ization', based on her analysis of the convergence of 'popular organisations' and NGOs in the Latin American feminist movement. Social movement organisations feel compelled to become 'official' in order to be seen as truly legitimate by the structure which they

oppose. Martin and Finlayson (1996: 10) claim that Aboriginal organisations exist in the 'ambiguous and fraught zone between two political and cultural systems', and the strategies needed to succeed in one are not always compatible with the other. Successful formal organisations, then, are seen to be 'unrepresentative' and at odds with Aboriginal tradition and culture. Martin (2003: 10) thus calls for the development of 'distinctively indigenous organisations which nonetheless facilitate effective engagement with the dominant society rather than limiting it'. The idea is that Aboriginal organisations can draw their structures and principles from both political and cultural systems for a uniquely effective way of incorporation. However, this has yet to be achieved and the TIHRG was more interested in its own sustainability rather than challenging taken-for-granted notions of incorporation. As such, the TIHRG operated under pre-determined notions of authority and recognition, even though it had articulated its opposition to the state.

Eventually the group decided against incorporation, but agreed to consider the issue again in future. Afterwards, the TIHRG struggled to remain a formal organisation and had trouble maintaining its legitimacy. Following the Hurley trial in May 2007, membership did not remain steady; some weeks' meetings were attended by a dozen or so Indigenous and white activists, but more often only Gracelyn and a handful of white supporters made it to meetings. Decisions were made by a small number of group members with little group consultation. The explanation for this ebb in activity was that everyone was tired after three years of activism around the Palm Island death in custody. People wanted a break, especially the Aboriginal women in the group. Meetings became less and less frequent in the twelve months following the Hurley trial until they stopped altogether in mid-2008. Since then, community meetings have occasionally been called on behalf of the TIHRG, events have happened under the group's banner, and plans are constantly made to 'start meeting again soon'.

Tarrow (1998) offers a useful discussion of 'cycles of protest', or broad-scale ebbs and flows in contentious activity. These cycles are not only experienced on a movement-wide level, however; rather, they are felt acutely by individuals and groups, as evidenced by the fatigue experienced by the Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group. This happened despite the group's initial tendency towards hierarchical structure, suggesting that this organisational style was not suited for the membership and the activities of the TIHRG. Even when the group had stopped meeting altogether and was in the low-period of its cycle, there was always something happening. Some members still met informally, and contact was maintained via telephone and email conversations. And when an issue arose which needed attention, certain members of the group were able to respond individually, under the banner of the TIHRG³⁴. Perhaps a more consciously-chosen egalitarian structure would have suited the TIHRG better; however, these structures are time consuming to implement and maintain, which may explain their lack of prevalence.

Dis-organisation: Ngulumburu-Boonyah

Although they were the least formally structured, the women's dance group, Ngulumburu Boonyah, was probably the most consistently organised group that I worked with during my field work. The lack of hierarchy is a conscious decision made during the earliest stages of the group's formation. Most of the members of Ngulumburu Boonyah were previously members of another dance group. The original group, however, became too hierarchical; Stephanie and Lilian feel that this formalised, top-down structure was interfering with their goals, so they broke away and began Ngulumburu Boonyah. In this group, they did not want to get caught up in debilitating hierarchy, so they determined that decisions would be made by the group as a

³⁴ The group members who could act independently on behalf of the group were all Indigenous and tended to be those who were considered 'leaders' in the activist community. When other members of the group publicly commented on issues or advocated on behalf of a community member, it was done so as a distinctly individual activity.

whole and not left up to one person. The group is now made up of a number of women and girls who have varying levels of involvement.

During my field work, the three main group members considered themselves equal co-coordinators, and they were the most invested group members in terms of time and personal costs. They make important decisions together, generally in consultation with other group members. Minor decisions are made by anyone in the group—for instance, Stephanie can agree to perform at a function, but that commitment does not obligate other members to participate if they do not want to or cannot. Ngulumburu Boonyah do not have regular meetings, although they do get together to practice their dances in the lead-up to performances. This style of organising means that members are less likely to ‘burn out’ because they can take breaks whenever they need to. There is no obligation to participate in all activities or to meet on a regular basis. Likewise, members of the group are unlikely to become disillusioned with group leadership—because there is no official leadership structure.

Ngulumburu Boonyah has many similarities with the ‘dis-organisations’ which are typically associated with the contemporary global justice movement. For instance, their work is largely prefigurative—although the women from Ngulumburu Boonyah may not articulate it as such. That is, Ngulumburu Boonyah aims to create a space, even if only inside the group, in which members realise the changes they seek externally. David Graeber (2004: 45) discusses the revolutionary potential of prefigurative actions: ‘any collective action which rejects, and therefore confronts, some form of power or domination and in doing so, reconstitutes social relations—even within the collectivity—in that light’ is a revolutionary action. The goals of Ngulumburu Boonyah are to legitimate women’s experiences of oppression and domination, and to revive dance and ceremony as a means of asserting the strength that Aboriginal people possess despite their historical oppression. The group also hopes that women from all cultures can work together, respectful of cultural differences, to improve the status of women everywhere. Their hopes are to achieve these things on a broader scale, and their activist tactics are an attempt

to do just that. But in the meantime, Ngulumburu Boonyah members ensure that these things happen within their group and throughout their activities. For instance, Ngulumburu Boonyah became involved in a 'Cultural Fusion' dance group with international students from the university, which gives them an opportunity to familiarise the students with Aboriginal culture, but also to learn about cultural practices and beliefs which are new to them. They also highly value links with other indigenous peoples, attempting to incorporate traditions from Native American groups into their own ceremonies. This prefigurative dynamic is highly valued by many groups throughout the world because it is 'perceived to open up cracks in the dominant order and allow change to creep through' (Harding 2009: 3).

The difficulty with this organisational type is that dis-organisations risk becoming victims of what Freeman (1970) calls 'the tyranny of structurelessness'. Freeman wrote in response to the increasing tendency of women's rights groups in the late 1960s to adopt loose, unstructured organisational forms. Freeman argues that no groups are actually structureless, although they may be flexible and equitable, and that clinging to the notion of structurelessness 'becomes a smokescreen for the strong or the lucky to establish unquestioned hegemony over others' (Freeman 1970: n.pag.). In order to achieve a truly egalitarian group, Freeman argues, the structure must be made explicit. In addition to an explicit structure, goals and tasks must be clearly articulated in order to achieve group stability. Ngulumburu Boonyah have created a loosely structured organisation by positing three women in equal roles as co-coordinators, and their goals have been well articulated since the start of their group, so they are unlikely to suffer from the pitfalls that Freeman (1970) describes in the US women's liberation movement.

Hybrid organisational form: GAP Strategies

GAP Strategies is situated somewhere in between these two forms of organisation. GAP Strategies exists as a formalised structure, but without official membership or meetings it retains many qualities of a dis-organisation.

Its main goal is to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Townsville to 'Get Active and Participate'. Janine and two of her friends were discussing the need for Indigenous people to have a more important role in the political process. They decided to form an activist group which organised events, such as a forum in which all mayoral candidates in the local council election were offered a chance to address the Indigenous community. The point, Janine explained, was to reach out to people who are not involved in activism for whatever reason and to show them that there is another way to participate in politics. GAP Strategies was formed following a conversation on Australia Day – or Invasion Day, as many Aboriginal people call it – in January 2008 and this forum was held in March that year. Since then the group has not organised other events, but it has operated 'behind the scenes' such as lobbying the new Mayor of Townsville for increased support for NAIDOC activities.

GAP Strategies is not a social movement organisation in the traditional sense of the word. It is not really even a group. Rather, the three co-founders act as the hub and they rely on the spokes of their network for support. Janine had a hard time categorising GAP Strategies:

I don't really see it as a ... an organisation that we want members – we want supporters, and people that would help but I see it more as an event coordination for specific... I don't know if that makes sense?
(Interview 11/11/08)

Unlike the more formalised coalitions, like FCAATSI or trade union councils, GAP Strategies is informal and operates without clearly articulated structures for leadership, representation and decision-making.

The potential drawbacks of this loose form of organisation are that there is no clear structure to assure accountability, democracy and representation – although this is more likely to affect transnational networks than place-based activist groups like GAP Strategies (Edelman 2005: 41). Further, the lack of regular meetings and broad membership may lead to a stagnation of the group, with a limited source of new ideas and motivation for activities. Social movement groups which decide not to have membership lack 'strong ties to a constituency that, potentially, could be mobilized for mass collective actions'

(Edwards & McCarthy 2004: 137). However, these same issues plagued the Human Rights Group despite its formal, hierarchical structure, implying that hybrid networks like GAP Strategies are no more disposed to these problems than traditionally structured SMOs.

Moreover, the same potentially problematic characteristics of this type of organisation may also be beneficial. Because there is no expectation to meet on a regular basis, the organisers of GAP Strategies are less likely to feel burnt out and exhausted by their involvement with the group. Likewise, the lack of formal membership means that the organisers can request assistance from broad social networks, rather than relying too heavily on a few official members, as happens with many groups. They practice delegation, which Freeman (1970) identifies as a key principle for political effectiveness, particularly when tasks are allocated rationally based on abilities, interests and responsibility. Given the nature of Aboriginal kinship systems, activists are at least loosely connected with a wide subsection of the local Indigenous population. Activists regularly joke that they are related to 'half of Townsville' or that they know everyone in the area. While they sometimes complain about this because 'everyone knows your business', it is beneficial to activism. Keck and Sikkink (1998) have found that dense networks with many links between a large number of groups and individuals are the most effective in transnational activism, and the same is likely to be true of the sort of organising undertaken by Janine and the other leaders of GAP Strategies.

Further, these broad networks allow information to be diffused quickly and often, and with a limited reliance on state structures. Keck and Sikkink (1998) discuss the value of transnational networks, which I suggest are mirrors of smaller and localised networks like GAP Strategies. They claim that 'in a world where the voices of states have predominated, networks open channels for bringing alternate visions and information into international debate' (Keck & Sikkink 1998: x). Thus, networks like these, which act as voluntary, reciprocal and horizontal models of communication, are most likely to form around issues where information is scarce, restricted or untrustworthy (Keck &

Sikkink 1998). GAP Strategies originally formed as a way to engage the local Indigenous population in political issues, because they identified a lack of information-sharing. While they may begin as means for sharing information, these hybrid networks also act to frame issues and to promote the adoption of new norms and standards in the form of policy and public interest. Keck and Sikkink (1998) identify four types of work done by activist networks: information politics, symbolic politics, leverage politics and accountability politics. GAP Strategies has been partially involved with both leverage and accountability politics through their work with local politicians. They used the Mayoral Candidate Forum as a means of leverage, indicating the importance of Indigenous issues to hopeful councillors, thus giving their cause more leverage in the local political arena – candidates from all teams and many independents turned out for the event, many with specially produced fliers highlighting their Indigenous policy ideas. GAP Strategies has also held the elected councillors accountable by maintaining contact with them since the election. But the most important tactic of GAP Strategies is information politics; as Freeman (1970: n.pag.) points out, 'the more one knows about how things work, the more politically effective one can be' – which is why the group was initially started.

Networking inside and outside of the Aboriginal Movement

Social movement groups, whether formally organised, or dis-organised, or network-based, do not exist in isolation. They are often linked with other groups within the same social movement and in different movements on a local, national and international scale (Soule 2004). I will now look at one example in depth before continuing on to discuss different forms of networking more generally.

Case Study: Stolen Wages

The Stolen Wages Working Group (see Chapter Three for a background of the issue) is one facet of the Townsville Aboriginal movement which has spun a broad network. Officially, the Working Group was government-

initiated and was made up of representatives from several geographical areas around the state of Queensland. Townsville had two representatives in the Working Group, Louise and Lilian. Unofficially, the two local representatives worked with their friends and family members on the issue; community meetings were held, a 'working bee' was organised to paint banners and placards before a march, and deputations were organised to speak with local politicians. Although the Stolen Wages Working Group was originally set up to act as a consultative body with the Queensland government, it became a mechanism of local grassroots activism around the issue of stolen wages.

Louise and Lilian did not limit their local networking to the Indigenous community; rather, they saw an obvious affinity with the labour movement and worked closely with the unions whenever possible. Thus, the Stolen Wages group was invited to march in the May 2008 Labour Day parade down the Townsville Strand, alongside all of the local unions and several other community groups (Figure 5.1). At the 'Family Fun Day' following the march, Lilian was asked to speak about the issue to an audience of local labour union



Figure 5.1 Stolen Wages marchers in 2008 Labour Day march in Townsville.
Photo from *Townsville Bulletin* 6 May 2008.

members – many of them blue collar workers who are generally outside of the target audience of Aboriginal activists. Lilian likened the former government practice of keeping Indigenous wages in trust with slave labour and argued that it denied Aboriginal people their ‘economic footprint in this land’. She then introduced Mike (one of the leaders of GAP Strategies), suggesting that it is now time for his generation to take over the fight. Mike appealed to the history between unionists and Aboriginal activism:

There’s been an injustice. And the one group that has stood up and helped Indigenous workers to gain their rights have been the unions. So I want to, on behalf of all of us who recognise that, I want to thank you as unions for helping us out. (Field notes 5/05/08)

Mike continued by suggesting that this is not an issue of race, but rather one of justice, and called on the largely non-Indigenous crowd present to support the issue.

But I’m sorry to say that we can’t move forward unless we increase the participation of the majority to help us out. So those of you who are strong, who can walk strong, move back and help those who are struggling to get on their feet because a fair day’s work earns a fair day’s pay and Indigenous people earned that money. Black people in this country want a hand up, not a hand out, it’s up to you to help us up, we’re proud, we’re strong and with your help we can be stronger. (Field notes 5/05/08)

At the end of the day, the Stolen Wages contingent was awarded the prize for best parade group, attracting further media attention to the cause. This local networking achieved its desired goal, because several weeks after the Labour Day events, the Queensland Council of Unions (QCU, a representative body of all the labour unions in the state) came to Townsville to meet with the local Indigenous community. They explained in this meeting that they would be adding the issue to their platform, which was considered a major win by the local group because the QCU had far more resources than the local, un-funded group.

Stolen Wages was even brought to international networks from time to time. Louise was in contact with a Native American woman who had successfully brought a lawsuit against the United States government for a

similar instance of unpaid wages. Louise was adamant that the same thing could happen locally, and she was slowly pursuing the possibility. Unfortunately, she died unexpectedly only a few months later, but her husband and children have vowed to keep up the fight on her behalf. In May 2009, Janine travelled to New York and brought the issue (among others) to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Although she was not directly involved with the Stolen Wages Working Group, she has long been connected with the labour unions and Aboriginal activism generally, so she was well placed to speak on the topic. And, unlike issues of sovereignty, which are difficult to answer under the current legal system, stolen wages is a seemingly clear-cut issue: workers have not received the money they earned. Thus, it is an easy issue to receive support, which is likely why the Stolen Wages campaigners were able to broaden their networks so successfully.

Linking the Local

As the case study illustrates, the Aboriginal movement in Townsville has never been completely isolated. Rather, it is often one hub of concentrated activism on Queensland- and Australia-wide issues. For at least several decades Aboriginal activists have worked closely with other Aboriginal activists around Australia. Conferences were a very popular means of networking in the 1970s, with a national conference held in Townsville in 1971. This gathering was organised by a group of Aboriginal women who felt that their husbands were unsuccessful in their struggle for Indigenous rights. These women invited other 'women of colour' from international embassies within Australia to discuss issues such as health, education and housing³⁵. Likewise, in 1974 the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) hosted their annual national conference at James Cook University in Townsville. The conference discussed issues such as getting Aboriginal people into parliament, and the merits of a designated

³⁵ 'Aboriginal wives plan conference'. *The Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 27 November 1971. QSA SRS 3501/1 File No. 1A/1022 Box 533.

Indigenous seat in either house of parliament³⁶. Moreover, Townsville activists often travelled further afield to attend national conferences, such as the Land Rights conference attended by Gracelyn, and many other activists from North Queensland, in 1982³⁷.

The use of conferences for political organisation still occurs in large cities, as evidenced by several national Aboriginal movement listservs which often advertise conferences, but they rarely have funding available to assist delegates from regional Australia, so Townsville activists have not been in attendance. When there are local conferences, however, Aboriginal activists seize the opportunity for networking. Moreover, the local Aboriginal movement still takes advantage of their national and international networks to enhance the local community. For instance, a discussion forum in 2008 was organised shortly before Lex Wotton was sentenced in Townsville. Gracelyn utilised her personal networks to secure speakers including Bob Weatherall, a national activist from Brisbane, and Runoko Rashidi, an international expert on the slave trade from the United States (see Figure 5.2). Prominent local demonstrations are also attended by activists from outside of the community. The daily demonstrations outside of Senior-Sergeant Chris Hurley's manslaughter trial in 2007 were attended mainly by Townsville and Palm Island supporters, but several people travelled from Brisbane and Cairns to attend the rallies and the trial. More notably, Lex Wotton's trial in Brisbane and sentencing in Townsville were attended by people from Townsville, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

³⁶ Conference Program, Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders Annual Conference, 12-15 April 1974. QSA SRS 505/2 File no. 1A/517 No. 2 1967-1978. Box 6

³⁷ Video footage of speakers at Land Rights Justice conference, Griffiths University Union of Students, 26-27 June 1982. Held in audiovisual department of AIATSIS, LV 3545.

The Struggle for Black Justice Continues!

JCU
JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY

The Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group invites you to attend a public forum featuring a range of black & white activists, academics & advocates

Date: Wednesday the 29th of October, 2008
Time: 5:30pm—8:30pm
Venue: Central Lecture Theatre, JCU Douglas

Featuring:

- Dr. Runoko Rashidi, USA
- Mr. Bob Weatherall Chair of Provisional Government
- Associate Professor Noel Loos
- Associate Professor Gracelyn Smallwood
- Counsellor Alf Lacey, Mayor of Palm Island
- President Kiel Shuttleworth, JCU Student Association
- Elder Renata Pryor

Proceedings will be followed by a BBQ, Drinks & Entertainment at the JCUSA Club from 8:30pm

Please contact Gracelyn Smallwood on 0438-004-777 for further details.

Figure 5.2 Flyer advertising public forum in Townsville during the lead-up to Lex Wotton's sentencing for inciting riot.

Local activists do not limit themselves to networking with only Aboriginal activists, however. They have also taken advantage of other sympathetic groups. The Townsville section of the movement has built up particularly strong links with the labour movement. In 1960, the Superintendent of Palm Island reported to his superiors in Brisbane about an item in the local newspaper, particularly noting that

The Trades and Labour Council, Townsville, stated that they will join Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders Advancement League [sic] pushing forward their citizenship claims including stressing their right to own land.³⁸

The unions have not stopped supporting Aboriginal activism, as the case study above illustrates. The benefits of forming coalitions with other causes is that it broadens the issue; these other groups are often linked to national organisations, so these local connections can be more important than they first appear.

Queensland and National Networks

Townsville activists often express their intentions to link with other groups around Queensland and Australia generally to spread the message as far as possible. They are also interested in hearing about the work that is being done by activists around the continent. However, in practice, formal networking seems to be a difficult thing to achieve. This may be due to the distance from major centres, but for significant events activists have found ways to be involved. For instance, in 1988 up to 200 Indigenous people from the Townsville area travelled on buses to Sydney to take part in the Bicentennial protests. Those who could not make the trip staged a solidarity march in Townsville to show their support for the protesters in Brisbane³⁹. More recently, Townsville activists have made and maintained connections

³⁸ Telephone message from the Superintendent of Palm Island Settlement at 2 pm on 11 August 1960 regarding news item from 4QM Townsville. QSA 505/1 File No. 1A/517 No 1. Box 98

³⁹ 'Protesters head south for march'. *Townsville Bulletin* 19 January 1988. QSA SRS 505/1 File No. 1A/1636A Box 187.

with people from different movements, and with Aboriginal activists in different regions. But these seem to be informal, for the most part, based on friendships or broad-scale email lists. Still, these informal links have many important effects. Many activists in Townsville are prevailed upon by others to help. Gracelyn was often asked to be a guest speaker in places like Cairns, Brisbane and Darwin; Florence gave a keynote address at an International Feminist Summit held in Townsville in 2007; Janine sometimes acted as a liaison between the labour movement and Indigenous people. But the actual process of making movements work together for a common cause seems to be limited in Townsville. The notable exception to this was the ability of the Stolen Wages Working Group to engage with the labour movement, though that is likely due to the clear affinity between the issues.

When I travelled outside of Townsville, however, it seemed as if these inter-movement networks were more prevalent. For instance, the Canberra Aboriginal movement was closely linked to the Peace and Anti-Nuclear movements; all three had teamed up for the Peace Walk to demand an end to the NT Intervention as well as a halt to uranium mining in Australia and global nuclear development, culminating in an 'Aboriginal Sovereignty March' on the 26th of January 2009. Likewise, I visited Brisbane in October 2008 for the trial of Lex Wotton, charged with leading the 'riots' on Palm Island following the death in custody in November 2004. There, the issue was heavily supported by socialist groups from Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. These groups, and many mainstream labour unions, gave financial and human resources in support of Lex Wotton. Lex Wotton's trial was held almost four years after the initial death in custody and his was the last case to go before the courts in relation to the alleged riots. Lex's case was also unique because he was the alleged 'leader' of the event. Aboriginal activists and labour organisers alike used Lex as a symbol for the struggle against Indigenous oppression generally. Further, the socialist groups which supported the struggle framed the riots generally as a legal means of expressing opposition to racism. They referred to the event as an anti-racist protest, rather than a riot. Flyers were distributed

which asked supporters to 'Stop the Racist Political Persecution of a Palm Island Aboriginal Hero' (see Figure 5.3). The Maritime Union of Australia even funded a bus to transport supporters from Sydney to Brisbane for the daily rallies outside of Lex's trial. Because they framed the riot as a struggle against the capitalist state, the involvement of the labour movement was in its own self-interest, as well as beneficial to the Aboriginal movement. These networks seem easier to form in larger cities, where other groups are abundant and more active than they are in Townsville.

Broader networks

There is a sense of urgency to participate in coalitions that extend beyond the Australian Aboriginal movement. Keck and Sikkink (1998) have written about the rise of international networks as a social movement form, though they point out that international networks are not an entirely new phenomenon. In fact, Aboriginal activists have long recognised the importance of an international audience, as Chesterman (2001a, 2001b) has argued. Aboriginal activists in the middle of the 20th Century brought international attention to Australia's treatment of Indigenous peoples and pressured the Commonwealth with the fear of international embarrassment. Activists in the movement at the time, with their non-Indigenous supporters, built alliances with groups such as the British Anti-Slavery Society and the United Nations. Chesterman argues that the domestic activism of the 1950s, 60s and 70s was internationally recognised because of these coalitions, and this is what led to civil rights reforms in Australia.

In addition to coalition building, the activist tactics adopted in Australia often mirrored international actions. For instance, the establishment of the Australian Black Panthers was modelled on the US version (Lothian 2005), with their constitution closely resembling their American counterparts'⁴⁰. Likewise, in 1965 a group of students including Aboriginal activist Charles Perkins set off

⁴⁰ Black Panther Party Australia. Platform and Program. January 1972. QSA SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-069-008 Box No: 533.

**Defend the Right to Oppose
Racist State Brutality!**

**Drop the Charges Against
Lex Wotton!**



Stop the racist political persecution
of a Palm Island Aboriginal resident!

Rally on Oct 4

Musgrave Park Brisbane

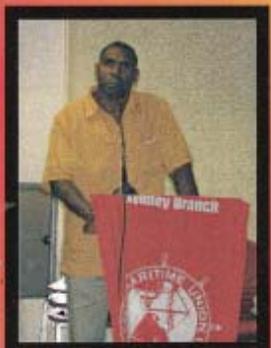
Gather from 9am Oct 4 for
actions to continue through to Oct 6.



The Maritime Union of Australia Sydney Branch
will be arranging bus transport to take
supporters from Sydney (leaving from Redfern's
The Block) to the Brisbane actions.
Bus leaves Sydney 9am October 3rd and returns from Brisbane 9am October 7.



To book yourself on the bus (book now!) and for information call 0404 298 588



Poster donated by the Maritime Union of Australia Sydney Branch- Proud to be Union, Proud to Support Lex Wotton!

Figure 5.3 Flyers in support of Lex Wotton from the Maritime Union of Australia. (a) Advertising a rally in support of Lex Wotton to be held the weekend before his trial began.

(b) Front and back of a leaflet providing information on the case.

DEFEND THE RIGHT TO OPPOSE RACIST STATE BRUTALITY! DROP THE CHARGES *against* LEX WOTTON!

On November 2004 the Palm Island Aboriginal community responded to years of racist state violence and the death in police custody of Mulrunji with a defiant demonstration demanding justice. The immediate trigger for the protest was the release of the first state inquiry into Mulrunji's death which, while noting that his liver had been ruptured, whitewashed the death as being the result of a "scuffle." Finally, almost two years after the death a second Coronial inquiry confirmed what everyone already knew: that at the Palm Island police station Senior-Sergeant Chris Hurley had struck Mulrunji with such force that it caused the Aboriginal man to die.

Four hundred people took part in the 2004 Palm Island anti-racist action - over 10% of the entire island's population! The large demonstration marched upon the centres of racist injustice on the island - the police station and courthouse. Queensland authorities responded with vicious repression (the QLD Tactical Response Group armed with taser and machine guns) and singled out individuals for persecution. The state continues to target respected Palm Island man Lex Wotton who they allege was the leader of the protest. They have outrageously singled out Wotton with a "riot" charge that could lead to a jail sentence in excess of ten years.

Far from being a "riot," the November 2004 protest was a *completely justified* act of anti-racist resistance. The struggle, like the Redfern resistance nine months earlier, brought the question of state racism in Australia to national and international prominence. It was a big factor in why in this one case from Palm Island (unlike in hundreds of earlier black deaths in custody) a policeman who was responsible for the death of a black person in custody had to face court: the first policeman to face trial over the killing of an Aboriginal person in the entirety of this country's colonial

Rally on October 4 at Musgrave Park, Brisbane

history! The fact that the courts acquitted Hurley (and that the QLD government secretly gave him over \$102,000 in "damages"!) is once again confirmation of how stacked the legal system is against black people and how justified it was for the people of Palm Island to stand up to the institutions of this racist system in November 2004.

The state's attempts to jail Lex Wotton are aimed at intimidating all future opposition to racist persecution. Today, governments are trying to scare people away from responding to the whitewash of Mulrunji's killing. They want to frighten people away from resisting Australia-wide racist police brutality towards Aboriginal people and want to discourage strong opposition towards the discriminatory welfare restrictions that target Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory - and increasingly throughout the whole country. The subjugation of Aboriginal people is an extreme form of the repression that the authorities are also unleashing against trade unionists who stand up for workers' rights. The ABCC construction industry police are spying on and intimidating CFMEU construction union members and continue to initiate jail-carrying charges against individual union activists.

But on September 22, 2007 in Redfern's The Block up to 150 Aboriginal people, trade unionists and anti-racists demonstrated to demand the dropping of charges against Lex Wotton. The black activists from Sydney and North Queensland leading the action called for a huge protest in Brisbane to coincide with the start of Wotton's trial (now scheduled for October 2008.) Following on from this, the Sydney Branch of the Maritime Union (MUA) held a function to show their support for Wotton. The MUA officials that addressed the function defended the Palm Island Aboriginal struggle as 100% justified and vowed that the MUA would do all it could to defend Lex Wotton.

Let's all start mobilising for the Brisbane protest that will occur in the days leading up to the start of the trial on October 6.

Rally on October 4 at Musgrave Park, Brisbane

Gather from 10am, October 4 for actions to continue through to October 6, the currently scheduled start date for Lex's trial.

THE MUA WILL BE ARRANGING BUS TRANSPORT TO TAKE SUPPORTERS FROM SYDNEY (LEAVING FROM REDFERN'S THE BLOCK) TO THE BRISBANE ACTIONS. TO BOOK ON THE BUS (**BOOK NOW!**) AND TO CONFIRM TRIAL/RALLY DATES CALL 0404 298 588.

Stop The Racist Political Persecution of A Palm Island Aboriginal Hero!

on a bus tour of rural New South Wales to highlight the discrimination towards Aboriginal people. These 'Freedom Riders' were inspired by the bus tours challenging segregation laws throughout the southern United States (Curthoys 2002).

In the 1980s, the focus of activism shifted from major civil rights battles to land rights. This issue, clearly a case of injustice in the eyes of Aboriginal activists, was more ambiguous in an international arena. Land rights are a legally complicated issue involving questions of sovereignty and ownership. This did not stop Aboriginal activists from taking their struggle to the international stage, however, and in the 1980s they were presented with several opportunities to do so. The 1982 Commonwealth Games were held in Brisbane, and were protested with marches, demonstrations and a tent city. These protests were intended to bring attention to the racism within Australia, including the lack of land rights and the poor living standards of Indigenous people. International eyes were again on Australia in 1988 for both the national Bicentennial celebrations and the World Expo, hosted by Brisbane. In the lead-up to the Bicentennial, a symbolic demonstration was held in Paris where models wearing 'Aboriginal clothing' walked along the runway to 'Aborigine music' in a Paris department store. This was a call to 'the international community to oppose next year's celebration of the 200th anniversary of Australia's colonisation'⁴¹. Prior to Expo '88 activists encouraged the leaders of other Commonwealth states, particularly those in Africa and the Pacific, to boycott the Australian games in protest of the marginalised status of Aboriginal people⁴². Queen Elizabeth was in Brisbane for Expo '88 and she was greeted by chanting protesters. Three children attempted to present her with a petition signed by 250 people, seeking changes to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, but they were stopped by police. Gracelyn, in Brisbane for the event, explained to the press that they targeted the Queen's

⁴¹ 'Blacks' plight on show'. *Northern Territory News*. 3 June 1987. p. 21. QSA SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-005-009 Box 19.

⁴² Maurer, Tracy. 'Aborigines will urge Pacific to boycott Expo'. *The Australian*. 28 November 1987. QSA SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-032-006 Box 239.

visit because they wanted to 'capture the attention of the international media'⁴³. The goal of these internationally visible actions was to attract support from a wide variety of people and other movements.

More recently, Aboriginal activists have worked in coalitions within Australia as well as internationally. Aboriginal leaders joined with animal rights activists to protest kangaroo slaughter in Canberra in 2008 (Mcguirk 2008; Trad 2008). Townsville Indigenous activists often called upon the local Greens party for support, and when Greens leader Bob Brown spoke in Townsville in mid-2009 there were a number of local Indigenous activists in the audience. Likewise, environmental activists utilise Indigenous ideologies as support for their own cause, as Trigger (1999) discovered when environmentalists spoke to him about the 'sacred spaces' of the forests and wilderness. Townsville activists also worked closely with the local Amnesty International group, successfully framing their cause as a human rights issue. This was taken up by the James Cook University branch of Amnesty International, who organised a panel discussion on the Northern Territory Intervention in March 2009. This panel discussion was well attended, with more than 100 interested students and community members turning out. And of course, as the Stolen Wages Working Group demonstrated, the labour unions are still a powerful connection for Aboriginal activists to maintain.

International networking is still a desirable factor in social movement tactics as well; a delegation of anti-Intervention activists spoke to the United Nations in early 2009 to call for UN sanctions following the suspension of the Racial Discrimination Act (Newhouse 2008). In May 2009 and again in 2010, Janine was part of a large delegation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who travelled to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Several months after these representations in this international forum, Australia was visited by a United Nations Special Rapporteur, James Anaya, to investigate the status of Indigenous peoples here. He found that many

⁴³ 'Black demonstrators confront the Queen'. *The West Australian*. 2 May 1988. p.4. QSA SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-032-006 Box 239.

measures of the Northern Territory Emergency Response, the Intervention 'overtly discriminate against aboriginal peoples, infringe their right of self-determination and stigmatize already stigmatized communities', and further went on to claim that the government needs to become more consultative and culturally sensitive generally (Anaya 2009).

The importance of inter-movement links is not always agreed upon, however. For instance, the environmental movement is sometimes welcomed by Aboriginal people but other times considered 'green oppressors'. Outspoken Aboriginal leader Warren Mundine argued that environmentalists 'treat Aborigines like hairy-nosed wombats that need to be saved and protected' and he argued that this was as oppressive as the original wave of white colonisation (Karvelas 2009: n.pag.). Mundine supported Noel Pearson's argument against the Queensland Wild Rivers scheme, which was applauded by environmentalists but which some Aboriginal people claimed would limit their economic opportunities (Karvelas 2009). Henry (1998) explores the more nuanced relationship between the local environmental and Aboriginal movements in Kuranda, Far North Queensland in response to the building of the Kuranda Sky Rail. She points out that the local environmental movement was itself not a homogeneous group, and new groups were formed to accommodate those who wished to take more direct approaches to protest. Likewise, Henry (1998) discusses the heterogeneity of opinions held by the Aboriginal community. She concludes that the tensions within and between the groups were challenged and confronted through performances of protest, allowing participants to 'not only challenge sameness by asserting their differences, but also, by engaging their differences, [to] refashion sameness, that is, their idea of "community"' (Henry 1998: 159).

Broader networking sometimes arises out of settings which are not strictly 'activist' in nature. Academics offer social movements the opportunity to tell their story to a wide audience. Presenting about social movement activities at conferences, publishing papers and books, and speaking to students and the media are all ways that social movements have been assisted

by academics. However, Indigenous people also have a tenuous relationship with academia, considering themselves the victims of what they call 'vampire researchers' who come in and suck the knowledge out of a community and leave with no further contact. There is a (sometimes truthful) perception amongst Indigenous communities that these researchers benefit from this relationship in terms of career advancement, money from publishing, and simply prestige and that the researchers, then, owe something to the communities with which they work. In order for activists to utilise academics as network links, the academics need to provide some benefits to the community. In the case of my research, it was taken for granted that as an American I would be telling the story on an international stage. Barbara Glowczewski, a French anthropologist who has worked extensively in Australia, writes about her role as an informant about the Palm Island death in custody and the resulting riots, inquests and trials in the French media. This smoothed her acceptance into the community at a very sensitive time (Glowczewski 2008).

As further evidence that international networking is important to Indigenous people, even outside of explicitly activist contexts, the United Nations is seen as an ally of Aboriginal people, a tool that can be harnessed to influence the Australian government. However, Corntassel (2007), a Cherokee academic from the United States, has written about the mainstreaming of Indigenous rights within the United Nations system. Corntassel argues that this mainstreaming amounts to co-optation and blunting, as the Indigenous political agenda is softened to fit into existing institutional structures. Moreover, the UN mainstreaming of Indigenous rights has led to 'channelling effects', where Indigenous political activities have been confined to these official structures at the expense of grassroots organisation. Corntassel comes to the conclusion that this co-optation leads to a challenge to global Indigenous unity and obstructs genuine Indigenous self-determination and justice. Aboriginal activists, then, are faced with the challenge of seeking support from other causes and in international arenas without being co-opted or patronised.

Still, there was a desire for broader networking, particularly on an international scale with other Indigenous peoples. I asked Dan if he was involved in international networks, and he said that although he has not yet had the time or resources to instigate those contacts,

...It will happen, it will. It's inevitable because Indigenous people across the globe are now reaching a point where we need to hold hands across the water and march onetime, on the bastions of capitalist, you know, global capitalism. It is essentially, the entire structure of global capitalism is built on stolen lands, stolen country. So we need to challenge that, we need to attack that. (Interview 2/04/2008)

This lack of transnational networks despite the desire for them may be explained by Tarrow's (2001: 2) assertion that mass-based transnational movements 'are hard to construct, are difficult to maintain, and have very different relations to states and international institutions than the less contentious family of international NGOs or activist networks'. Tarrow argues that transnational social movements are unable to form without pre-existing international institutions. Thus, while activists like Gracelyn have travelled around the world and made ongoing contacts with activists from other indigenous and minority groups, these friendships between activists often remain social. It is uncommon for activists, despite their overlapping political commitments and ideological perspectives, to work together for activist purposes. This changes, however, when transnational institutions provide a structure within which this can happen.

As a result, the links between local Aboriginal activists and other issues and locations are often tenuous and opportunistic. They are maintained by sharing information until there is a need to work together, and then this coalition is often short-lived, rather than an ongoing relationship to nurture. In this way, Aboriginal activists in Townsville are a part of something bigger, yet they tend to focus their energies on the local scale of organising. As Edelman (2005: 38) found in Central American peasant activist networks, the need to maintain a local-level focus is important because groups need to react to issues as they happen. Edelman's (2005: 38) interviewees expressed the need to 'do it

now' in order to organise effectively against the state. Further, local organising is valued by these peasant activists because they are acutely aware of the issues: 'We're not outside, nor on top' (Edelman 2005: 38), as might be the case with other members of coalitions. Likewise, there is a real sense of reactionism in the Townsville Aboriginal movement because this group is uniquely positioned to respond to local issues. Rather than a long-term plan for the group, for instance, the TIHRG focuses on issues as they arise. This was an adequate strategy when the Palm Island death in custody remained unsettled, but following the acquittal of Senior-Sergeant Hurley, the group changed focus from the NT Intervention to local deaths, racism in Townsville, Stolen Wages, and a number of other issues. However, it is highly likely that this lack of clear focus led to the rapid decline of the group and the inability to form effective and ongoing networks with other groups and movements.

Difference and Diversity

One issue that activist groups need to confront regularly is whether they will strive for a coherent or a diverse group. Maddison and Scalmer (2006) include the continuum between unity and difference in their list of tensions which characterise social movements (see Chapter Two). Unity, for social movements, requires boundaries to be drawn which clearly indicate a collective self as well as a collective other (Maddison & Scalmer 2006; Hunt & Benford 2004). The continuum put forward by Maddison and Scalmer (2006) is quite broad and allows them to cover a number of issues affecting movements, but the terminology is somewhat confusing. Their argument applies to both ideological unity/difference and demographic homophily/diversity. Distinguishing between these two variations of unity and difference allows for a more in-depth understanding of the dynamics affecting social movements. Both are vital to movements, and are interconnected, but will be addressed by movements in different ways. I will return to the issue of ideological difference within movements, and particularly amongst Aboriginal people themselves, in Chapter Seven. Here I argue that the tension between homophily and

diversity, in terms of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, is unlikely to be confronted at a movement-wide scale. Rather, it will mainly affect localised groups which make up the broader movement.

Face-to-face interaction is based heavily on similarity (Sandell 1999), because sharing characteristics makes interactions more comfortable, efficient, and rewarding (Carley 1991: 334). The strength of network ties is positively correlated with similarities between individuals (Granovetter 1973: 1362), particularly when dealing with racial or ethnic minorities (McPherson et al. 2001). Several studies have found that activist movements become more homophilic over time (Newman et al. 2008; Newman & Dale 2005; Sandell 1999), perhaps because collective behaviour is spread via diffusion through pre-existing interpersonal networks (McPherson et al. 2001). Homophilic activist groups are able to focus on specific issues which are already familiar to the group in question, so there is no need to water down or lighten the intensity of movement goals in order to appeal to a diverse audience. This leads to a strong collective identity and local cohesion (Diani 2004: 346-7).

Despite the benefits of similarity, the demographics of Australia mean that homophily is an impractical decision for Aboriginal people. However, this is not an easy relationship. For more than a century, Aboriginal people have turned to white people for advocacy with mixed results. For instance, an 1846 shipwreck led a white sailor, James Morrill, to live with the Bindal people of the Bowen region, where he stayed until 1861 when pastoral expansion brought white settlers into the area. Upon his return to Brisbane, he acted as a go-between, lobbying the government on behalf of the Bindal people who sought continued access to their lands despite pastoral expansion (Bolton 1967). In the 1920s, white activists pushed for an autonomous Aboriginal state. They argued that a place such as Arnhem Land should be given over to Aboriginal people who lived there, as a replacement for the reserve system. This would allow for land ownership, self-government, and freedom to practice culture. If this 'Model Aboriginal State' proved successful, others would be established around Australia (Blackburn 1999). Blackburn (1999) notes, however, that the

Aboriginal people living in Arnhem Land were never consulted about this proposal.

The Aboriginal activism which arose in the same time period was noteworthy because white people were not allowed to become full members of Aboriginal rights organisations. Their support was welcomed in organisations like the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association, but they were not allowed to make decisions (Maynard 2008, 2003). Paisley (1997a; 1997b) writes about the advocacy offered by white feminists in the inter-war years. She argues that white feminists were concerned about miscegenation between white men and Aboriginal women, so they pushed the Commonwealth government to take responsibility for Aboriginal people. These feminists, along with many white advocates of the time, advocated assimilationism for urban Aboriginal people and protectionism for those who were considered 'traditional' (Paisley 1997a, b).

The most obvious illustration of the tension surrounding white involvement is the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI). The group was made up of both black and white activists, and they worked together throughout the 1960s with only minor tensions. They campaigned heavily for a 'yes' vote in the 1967 Referendum, which was a resounding success (Taffe 2005). However, in the late 1960s and early 1970s there was a growing sense that Aboriginal people needed to lead the organisation, particularly since the focus of their activism was largely on self-determination. Read (1990) argues that there was a significant turning point from a focus on civil rights – which declared Indigenous people to be equal – to a demand for Indigenous rights. There was debate, however, about whether FCAATSI was an Aboriginal organisation, or a group dedicated to changing a racist society⁴⁴. At the 1970 conference, the question of white involvement became a very contentious issue. FCAATSI conferences always included a session which white people were not allowed to

⁴⁴ 'Lost Rights'. *The Courier-Mail*. 28 March 1970. QSA – SRS 505/2 File no. 1A/517 No. 2 1967-1978. Box 6

attend; this session narrowly passed a motion to exclude white people from the FCAATSI executive in 1970⁴⁵. When the vote was brought to the whole group, however, the proposal failed. It was originally proposed by a white member of FCAATSI, Barry Pittock. Other white members of the group, such as MP Gordon Bryant, felt that such a change would 'inhibit' the work of FCAATSI. Some Indigenous members of the group were worried that excluding white people from the executive would jeopardise the support they received from many white groups and individuals and they did not support it for that reason. When the motion failed, a group of Indigenous members left and started their own organisation, the National Tribal Council⁴⁶.

The stream of white supporters who mean well but cause trouble is not limited to history; Aboriginal activists are still forced to confront these issues on a regular basis (Petray 2007, 2009a). Given that they make up such a small portion of the Australian population, Aboriginal people need broader support in order to be noticed by the state. But this broader support often brings trouble as well as attention. It is possible, however, for non-Indigenous people to work with the Aboriginal movement in a way that is mutually beneficial. Many people are opposed to racism and they are committed to fighting for the rights of oppressed peoples, but if they do so without thinking critically about their own privilege then they will be ineffective advocates – which Aboriginal people are tired of dealing with (Petray 2007, 2010a). It is not helpful for white people to claim 'colourblindness'. Paul Kivel's (2002) book, *Uprooting Racism*, argues that we all operate from within pre-existing power structures whether we agree with them or not, and they will never be broken down unless we actively address our roles within these structures. Similarly, Cowlshaw (2004a: 61) points out that 'by not speaking of race, white people – who claimed no race – avoided analysis of the racial source of their privilege'.

⁴⁵ 'Natives exclude whites'. *The Australian*. 28 March 1970. QSA – SRS 505/2 File no. 1A/517 No. 2 1967-1978. Box 6

⁴⁶ Plociennik, Henry. 'Aboriginal body splits over move to bar whites'. *The Australian*. 30 March 1970. QSA – SRS 505/2 File no. 1A/517 No. 2 1967-1978. Box 6

In April 2009 I presented a conference paper about white involvement in a black movement (Petray 2009a), in which I discussed three examples of white supporters who were well-meaning but problematic for various reasons. Before presenting the paper, I discussed it with Florence and Gracelyn, with whom I had worked throughout my field work. I told them which examples I had included, which prompted their memories of white people they have had to 'deal with' throughout their experience in activism. They reminded me of other examples I had seen during my field work, and shared stories about people that had come before I started my research. There were numerous people who had wanted to help the movement but became frustrated with the organisational styles and the lifestyles of Aboriginal activists. There were others who acted in ways that were 'culturally inappropriate', in particular speaking on behalf of Aboriginal people and trying to tell them what to do. Gracelyn and Florence laughed as they recounted their experiences, because, as they explain, 'we have to see the funny side of it or we'll go crazy'.

It seems logical that activists would want to close ranks and keep their movement as homogenous as possible. However, the question of homophily and diversity is a double-edged sword. As some theorists have shown, movement schisms can actually develop as a result of *too much* homophily (Gargiulo & Benassi 2000). Cohesive networks have the effect of curtailing autonomy and inhibiting individuals' abilities to create bridging ties (Gargiulo & Benassi 2000), which is important for movement diffusion. Homophily also limits information that people receive, the attitudes they form, and the experiences they have because interactions are mainly with similar individuals (Newman & Dale 2005). Further, homogenous networks are less adaptable when confronted with new members or contexts (Gargiulo & Benassi 2000).

On the other hand, diverse networks are important for the broad spread of information (Granovetter 1973). This is because a greater number of people of varying demographics can be reached through weak ties via shared network links. Granovetter (1973) argues that the removal of a weak tie will likely hamper information transmission much more than will the removal of a strong

tie, because weak ties act as 'bridges' between two (or more) unaffiliated networks. When crossing racial and ethnic boundaries, weak ties are more effective at bridging social distance than strong ties because 'more people can be reached through weak ties' (Granovetter 1973: 1369). A potential drawback of highly heterogeneous movements is that their messages must be more vague and encompassing than those which are directed at homophilic groups (Diani 2004: 346-7). Heterogeneous networks seem to be more effective when they selectively target specific subgroups of the population (Diani 2004: 346). McAdam and Paulsen (1993) discuss recruitment to the Freedom Summer campaign of the American civil rights movement, which involved a large number of teachers who did not fit the typical profile of activists. Their participation was due to a specific recruitment drive through universities and major national teachers' associations.

In a similar fashion, Townsville Aboriginal activists continually attempt to involve white supporters. Despite the numerous examples of disastrous partnerships, there have been very fruitful relationships as well. Florence explained that when changes happen around the world, 'it's about black and white people coming together'. She identifies different 'generations' of activism and identifies hers—that is, activists who began mobilising in the 1980s—as one which has relied heavily on white support:

So with my generation, I guess it's, yeah, how we see things is not just in black and white. It's about people, you know human rights, it's about justice, it's about inequities, all those sorts of issues. So I try to focus on that, to try and gather the non-Indigenous support. And that's what we did for the Doomadgee, that's why we had so much support for the Doomadgee thing [the 2004 death in custody of Mulrunji Doomadgee], we said okay we'll have one spokesperson and we'll keep on saying to the media, this is not a black and white issue, this is an issue of justice. You know if this was your son, and he went out drinking for the night, and all of a sudden... you know, how would you react to that? And that really started people thinking, you know that's right. And I said forget about it being a black/white issue, it's an issue of justice. (Interview 11/04/08)

She also discussed several other campaigns which have relied heavily on non-Indigenous support, from the ongoing Stolen Wages campaign to the

Reconciliation Council to the 1967 Referendum, and concludes that 'if you're going to initiate change it's gotta be... you've gotta have the support of the wider community'. Edwards and McCarthy (2004: 128) point out that social movements often have specific needs and the inclusion of as many supporters as possible is a form of 'value-adding' due to the variety of skills, competencies and expertise which are then available to the movement.

Aboriginal activists in Townsville have relied on strategic framing in order to include as many people as possible in the 'us' side of the 'us vs. them' divide. Framing is a practice used by social movement participants (among many other actors) to direct the ways that people think about an issue. In an early meeting of the TIHRG, Gracelyn spoke about the decision not to name the group 'The Justice Group'. She explained that justice is something that comes from the government, and we are opposed to the government. Although the group worked closely with the local police in the lead up to the trial of Senior-Sergeant Hurley, Gracelyn was wary of getting too close with them: 'we're not a reconciliation group, we are a human rights group and we are in opposition to the police'. It was recognised that individual police officers were not necessarily 'enemies' but they certainly were not on the 'us' side of the divide; their loyalties, according to Gracelyn, were ultimately with the police. Human rights are widely accepted as universal, so aligning a movement with these principles is done to strategically broaden support for the movement. Likewise, during the Hurley trial protests and throughout my field work I have noticed an active avoidance of homophilic tendencies (Petray 2008b, 2010b). Aboriginal activists extend personal invitations to many white members of the local community, especially well-respected people like lawyers, academics and feminists. This is done partially to make a statement, via the media, that the Aboriginal movement has widespread support and that it is worthy of government and public attention. Olzak and Ryo (2007) argue that, on an organisational level, increasing participation and diversity indicates to insiders and outsiders alike that support for the movement is also increasing. The same

must be true on a more local level, which is why Townsville activists were so focused on diversifying the face of the rallies.

Changing contexts

Advances in technology make the opportunities for networking—locally, nationally, internationally, and between movements—much faster and simpler. But the rise of the internet in activism is far more complex than just making communications easier. As Landzelius (2006a) argues, the increasing moves made by Indigenous peoples into cyberspace complicate the relationship between identity and place, and affect the ways that identities are constructed and presented. Much of the literature on cyber-activism focuses on global campaigns, such as the U'Wa of the Colombian Amazon who became the 'poster child' of the global environmental movement (Landzelius 2006b), or the Zapatistas, who created a global spectacle in their ongoing struggle for autonomy within the Mexican state (Belausteguigoitia 2006). These movements utilise technology for outreach purposes. There were several notable cyber-outreach attempts that I followed during my field work; 'MurriBlog', a Queensland Aboriginal blog posting about local political issues was active for the first half of my field work but has since been deleted. The 'Aboriginal Rights Coalition' blog is still available but was not been updated between 27 May 2009 and 23 January 2010 (and has not been updated since then). Likewise, the 'Fight for Aboriginal Rights' blog was only updated four times in 2009, and even the blog of the *National Indigenous Times* was inactive between June and November 2009, and has not been updated since December 2009.

In addition to outreach, Landzelius (2006a: 9) has identified 'inreach' as 'the dissemination of in-group information ... as well as the import of expert knowledge to the local level'. This is the cyber-activism more often utilised by the Aboriginal movement in Townsville. When I joined the TIHRG, members kept in touch by email, using the 'reply all' function which often left off newer members and many found confusing. Someone suggested a list serve, and as I

had used them before, I offered to set one up. As of April 2010, the TIHRG listserv had 32 members, 25 of whom had started at least one discussion; 10 of these active participants in the discussions are Indigenous. The vast majority of emails to the list were sent by Florence, followed by me, Marilyn (an Indigenous woman) and Gracelyn (Figure 5.4). Between the establishment of the listserv in August 2007 and October 2009, there were 381 discussions started on this list; many were multi-post threads, with a total of 639 emails exchanged in this 27-month period. The volume of email discussions moved between peaks and troughs, correlating with the organisation of events or the discussion of timely issues (Figure 5.5). For instance, there is a small peak in October and November 2007, when the TIHRG was planning a demonstration to mark the third anniversary of the death in custody on Palm Island. Another, larger peak occurred between March and June 2008, corresponding to the most active period in the Stolen Wages campaign and a large number of emails

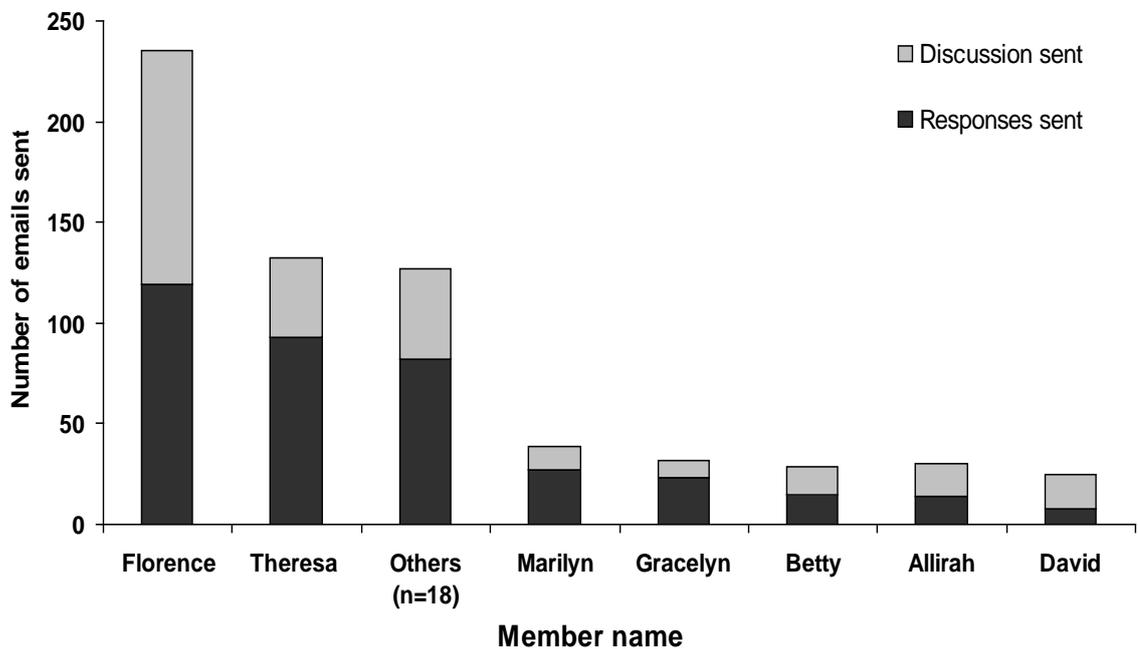


Figure 5.4 Number of emails sent through TIHRG listserv by member. Figure shows the number of discussions started by members as well as responses to other discussions.

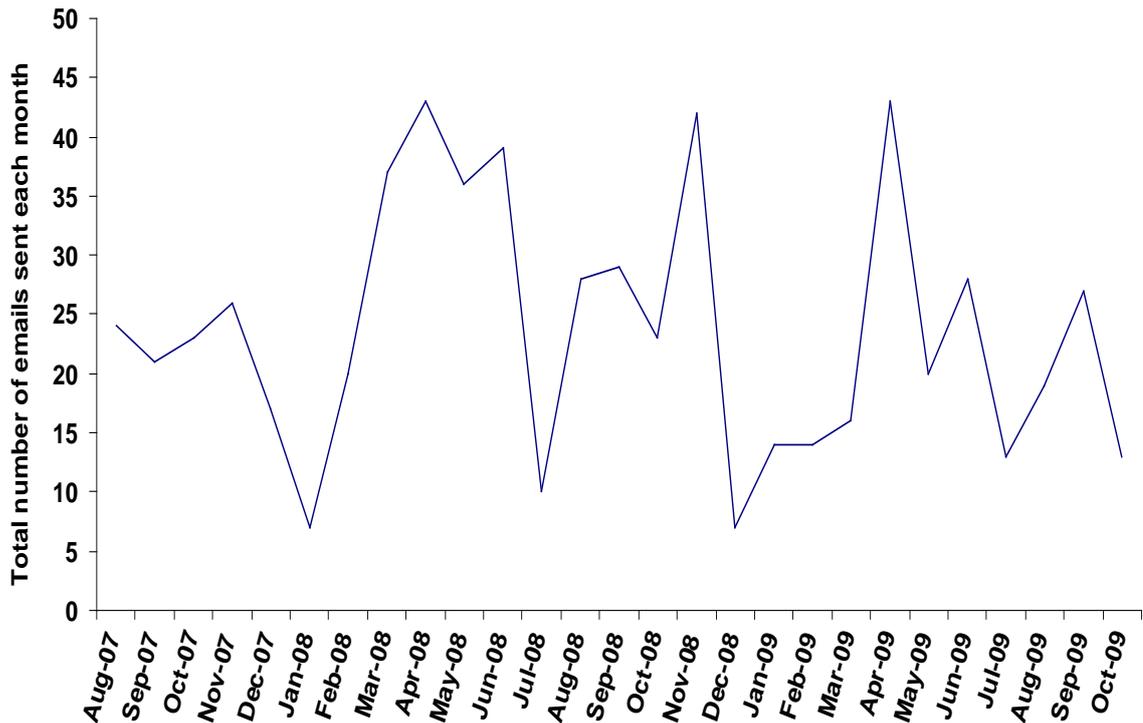


Figure 5.5 Total number of emails sent through TIHRG listserv each month.

circulating about meetings, travel to Community Cabinet functions, and marches. The emails that come through the TIHRG listserv range from plans for meetings and demonstrations, to newspaper articles about Indigenous issues or politics, to notices about other social movement activities, such as an environmental rally. The purpose of the list is to keep people in touch and up to date on local issues; it serves to strengthen ‘real life’ activism.

Another, more recent, phenomenon is the rise of Facebook and other social networking sites as a form of cyber-activism. Facebook allows users to seamlessly merge their various interests, political as well as social, as they post links to articles and events or publicly express their thoughts to their entire network of ‘friends’. Unlike the monolithic web pages of the earlier years of cyber-activism which had a tendency to essentialise Indigenous groups as a political tactic (Landzelius 2006b), ‘web 2.0’ is a space which encourages hybridity. This term applies to the interactive turn that the internet has taken, as users upload content via profile pages, photo albums, blogs and YouTube videos. In web 2.0, everyone is an author. Users can easily express their

identity as an Aboriginal person, a unionist, a greenie, and a feminist with the click of a button and the update of a profile. Facebook and similar social networking sites, then, may make it easier to balance multiplex identities. Web 2.0 also acts to expand the 'virtual we' of Indigenous solidarity, encompassing not just Indigenous people but their supporters, and many sympathetic individuals from around the world. People express their political beliefs on Facebook through various means, including membership in 'groups'. For instance, there is a Facebook group, the Working Group on Leonora Dialysis Machine, focused on kidney disease in the small town of Leonora in WA. This group pulls its membership from around Australia, as well as the United States, Indonesia, Europe and Canada.

Several of Townsville's Aboriginal activists have created Facebook profiles, though the amount and purpose of use varies considerably. For instance, while Florence has wholeheartedly embraced email as a form of information sharing and political networking, her presence on Facebook is so far limited to keeping in touch with family members. Younger users, like Janine, have embedded themselves socially as well as politically in Facebook as a medium for networking on a number of causes. These cyber-identities can be more easily devolved from state frameworks. When identity is expressed through the 'interests' tab on a profile and the groups one is a part of, these issues are public but largely independent of the state.

Social networking sites like Facebook allow activism to become accessible to a wider variety of people. Cyber-activism is quicker and simpler than traditional methods of networking; one can sign a petition online, join a Facebook group to stop black deaths in custody, and email a form letter to a politician in the space of several minutes. This opens up politics to people who would otherwise not become involved in activism, because 'push-button activism' (Landzelius 2006b) is much easier and less time consuming than spending hours at meetings and demonstrations. This makes it much more appealing to many people, because they do not need to invest as much time or effort to the cause. It increases the opportunities to engage with the state on a

regular basis. But, as Landzelius (2006b) argues, this virtual effortlessness may also decrease the effectiveness of action. As those in power come to realise the ease with which emails are sent and petitions are signed, they are less likely to respond in the same way as they might to a strike or a protest march. Moreover, push-button activism allows people to feel as if they are involved in a movement with minimal participation. Many of the groups on Facebook, like the Working Group on Leonora Dialysis Machine, or Stop Black Deaths in Custody, have a large number of members but very little activity happening within the groups. In other words, these social networking sites may increase the numbers of inactive members of social movements.

With the internet allowing international networks to form, there must be some implications for the way that social movements engage with states. Some argue that states are no longer the primary target of social movements, and instead, transnational financial institutions and corporations are the new focus of activism (cf. Keck & Sikkink 1998). While this may be the case for the global justice movement, the Aboriginal movement in Townsville and around Australia has not given up the Australian state as its target. Cyber-activism for Aboriginal rights, like petitions and letter-writing campaigns, and particularly list serves which organise 'real life' activism, are based on interactions with state agents. Emails are sent to individual Members of Parliament, petitions are presented to politicians and bureaucrats, meetings are organised with local leaders. But often these actions are undertaken not just by local people but by sympathetic supporters from around the world. For instance, the 'Drop the Charges Against Lex Wotton' petition, started by the TIHRG in October 2008 during Wotton's trial for inciting riot on Palm Island, had 404 signatories from around Australia, several states in the US, Greece, Belgium, Lebanon, Germany, Russia, Italy, New Zealand, Austria, Canada, South Africa, United Kingdom, France, Turkey, Algeria and India. The Australian state is not obliged to accommodate the views of those who are not citizens, and may disregard these signatures. But, given the state's involvement in the international arena, particularly as a recent signatory to the UN Declaration on

the Rights of Indigenous People, it appears that the state is concerned with its international image, as Chesterman (2001a, 2001b) claims was the case in the mid-1900s. It is likely that cyber-activism, because it exposes very local experiences to an international network, will similarly hold the Australian state accountable.

Summary and Conclusions

The different organising styles adopted by activist groups reflect the goals and values of the individuals involved but also the level of legitimacy sought by the group. Activist groups which want to be 'taken seriously' tend to adopt hierarchical structures which fit comfortably within state frameworks. Prefigurative groups, on the other hand, are more free to choose alternative and unrecognised 'dis-organisational' structures. Groups which aim to spread information rather than have formal memberships have the freedom to waver between the two styles as a hybrid organisation which exists primarily as an information-sharing network. Likewise, the networks between groups are reflective of the issue at hand and the resources of the individual groups; the majority of inter-movement, national and international links maintained by Townsville Aboriginal activists are informal and based on friendships rather than official coalitions. This is not because they do not want formalised network links, but because these links are costly to maintain. Moreover, the lack of homophily, the inclusion of outsiders in social movements, presents unique challenges. The tendency for homophily has been actively avoided by Aboriginal activists in Townsville in an attempt to strategically frame the issues as worthy of broad support. This becomes easier with the rise of internet activism, but this push-button activism presents its own challenges.

Examining the organisational styles of activist groups and networks offers insight into the relationships between the Australian state and the social movement. Perhaps the most profound level of homophily that can be seen in movement groups is in this regard: those who want to engage with the state are more likely to join together in formalised groups, like the Townsville

Indigenous Human Rights Group, while those who are interested in sharing information to empower others will form hybrid networks, and activists more interested in prefigurative work which is indifferent to the state have the freedom to adopt more loosely-structured organisational styles. It is also the relationship with the state which determines the broader networks which are formed between movements. The links between the Aboriginal movement and the union movement were strengthened when Aboriginal activists sought to change the policies of the Labor government. Connections to the environmental movement are more tenuous, but become useful when both groups seek to oppose state actions.

Tarrow (2001) reminds us that, despite the rise in international financial institutions, states are the dominant political actors. Thus, activist groups are unlikely to focus on building transnational networks when there are ample opportunities to voice their opinions about state-related issues within the sphere of the state. Unlike, for instance, Indigenous peasants in Chiapas, Mexico who struggled to be heard by their government and so utilised the internet and transnational networks to send their message to the world (cf. Nash 2005), Aboriginal activists in Australia have regular avenues through which to express discontent. This is increasingly the case as cyber-activism increases the opportunities for people to speak their mind to the government and other power brokers. The Australian state tends to incorporate the dissent, making concessions on issues that start to attract international attention (Chesterman 2001a, 2001b). For instance, the issue of stolen wages had been discussed by activists for several decades, but when it started to receive academic and then mainstream attention the government moved quickly to offer a reparations scheme. Following Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) suturing metaphor, these challenges are quickly sewn up in an attempt to solve the problem of opposition, but a scar remains to permanently mark the changed relationship between Aboriginal people and the Australian state. When the state is slower to respond, the dissenters are forced to open the wound further and seek broader assistance, as in Chiapas. The same happens more locally, as

Townsville activists turned the international spotlight on the injustices surrounding the Palm Island death in custody in 2004, harnessing French academics such as Barbara Glowczewski (2008) to liaise with international media on the issue. The following chapter will look more specifically at what these groups and networks do in order to achieve their desired goals.

Six

Getting Things Done: Activist Tactics and Action Repertoires

Introduction

Charles Tilly says that a social movement is as much what it does as why it does it, and movements are best understood by looking at clusters of protest events and contentious performances (Tilly 1999). Thus, he devoted his last book, *Contentious Performances*—declared by Sidney Tarrow (2008) to be Tilly’s ‘masterpiece’—to the study of what he calls ‘repertoires of contention’ or ‘claim-making repertoires’. The tactics chosen by a movement will be affected by the system in which they operate. Activist tactics are very different in a democratic state like Australia than they are under more oppressive regimes. Tactics are also determined by internal movement factors, such as leadership (Chapter Four), coalitions (Chapter Five), and cultural exigencies. At the same time, tactical repertoires affect the movement in profound ways—some actions strengthen collective identity while others assert cultural uniqueness⁴⁷. Tactical repertoires are ever-evolving components of a movement, and will change depending on a number of factors. Tactical repertoires have been likened to improvisational jazz music—the final product is based on shared prior knowledge of performers, group composition, and the target audience (McAdam et al. 2001). But aside from a general skeleton which is agreed upon beforehand, the details are worked out based on event-specific factors. Graeber’s (2009)

⁴⁷ Collective identity and cultural uniqueness should not be thought of as mutually exclusive, but my point here is that they are strengthened, and utilised, by movements in different ways and to achieve different ends.

detailed ethnographic account of global justice activism illustrates the unpredictable nature of protest events, and the manner in which activists much adapt quickly to changing contexts.

In this chapter, I examine some of the movement tactics chosen by Aboriginal activists in Townsville. These actions are almost exclusively persuasive and non-violent. They range from external, public demonstrations to meetings and events which are completely internal, open only to movement participants. On the external end of the spectrum, there is a largely performative aspect of activism, both overtly (plays, dances) and implicitly (dress, rehearsed speeches, conversations with the media). The actions all fall within a narrow range of options and they tend to share characteristics, supporting the assertion that activists choose actions that are 'familiar, available and likely to guarantee a (positive) response from their targets' (Munro 2005: 89). Moreover, movement memories and performance influence movements internally through strengthening important factors like collective identity. The tactical repertoire of a movement is worthy of study because of this dual purpose; it is both the site of interaction between a movement and the state, and the site of influence between a movement and its activists.

Tactical repertoires

Tactical repertoires are, quite simply, what activists do. The most familiar tactic of social movements is protest, which is 'the collective use of unconventional methods of political participation to try to persuade or coerce authorities to support a challenging group's aims' (Taylor & van Dyke 2004: 263). Activists turn to protest when their voices are ignored in standard political venues. Protests can take the form of political persuasion, confrontation, violence and coercion, and cultural expression (Taylor & van Dyke 2004). Tilly (2004, 2002) has argued that tactics are chosen to demonstrate a movement's worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment (WUNC), which indicate a movement's importance to society and thus the urgency of responding to its demands. Although the possibilities for movement action are virtually limitless,

individual movements tend to remain within the confines of familiar actions. Tactical repertoires encompass 'a limited set of forms of protest that are commonly used in a particular time and place' which are usually learned from earlier activism in the same place (della Porta 2008: 222). Tactical repertoires are also modular, that is, a standard set of tactics are often shared between movements or locations and can be combined and interchanged (Tarrow 1993). Movements with strong connections to outsiders, then, often have a broader repertoire of actions. Further, the choice of tactics is limited by a political actors' location in the social hierarchy (Piven & Cloward 1977).

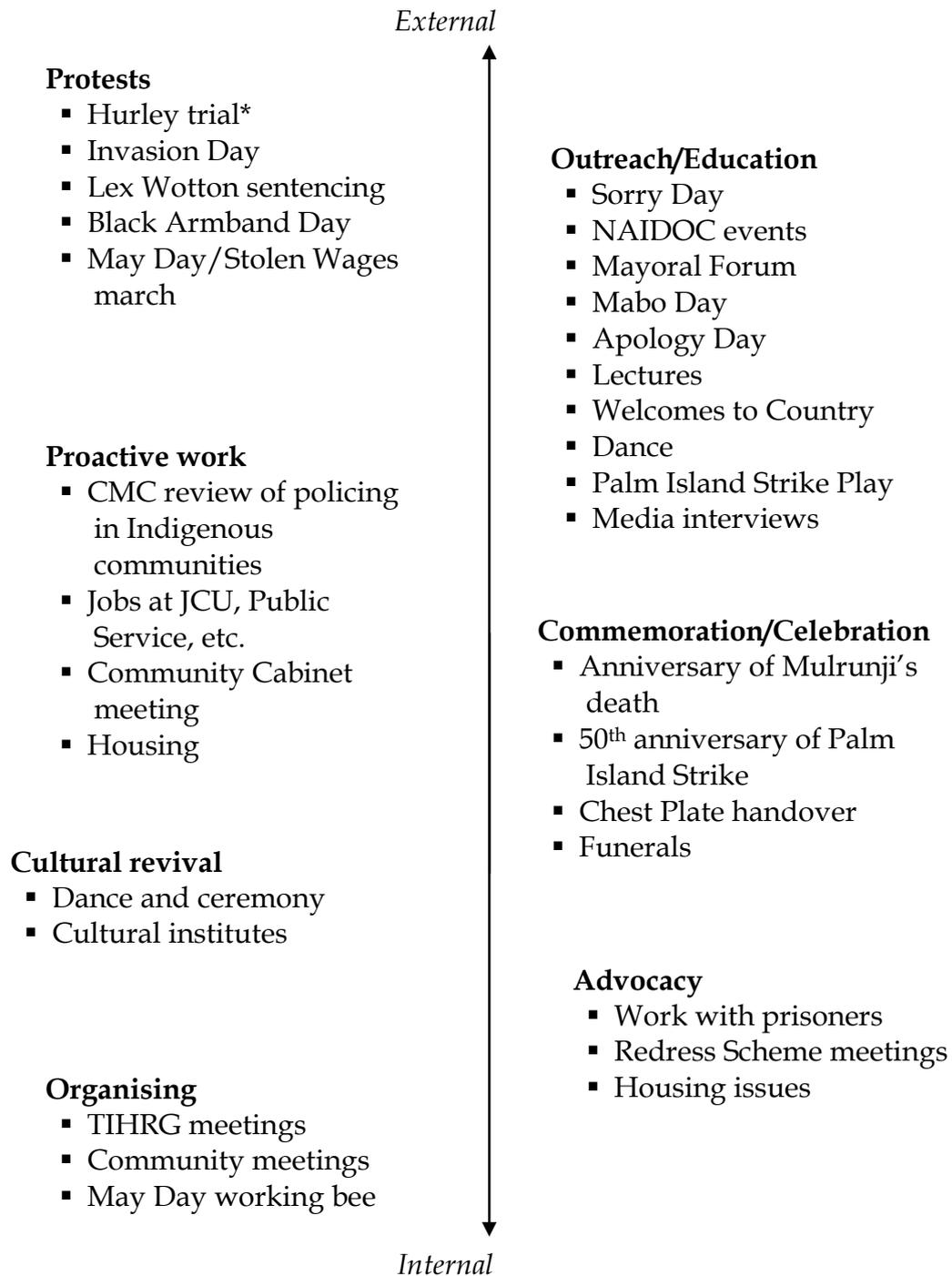
Tactical repertoires are not static collections of actions. Individual actions are affected by things like who attends the action, where and when it takes place, and the political climate in which it occurs. Repertoires are a relationship between activists and audiences, authorities, and movement targets. Although they are generally 'inherited', tactical repertoires are constantly evolving and adapting 'within limits set by the history of their previous interactions' (McAdam et al. 2001: 137). McAdam et al. (2001) argue that repertoires are generally found between pairs of actors—i.e. the movement and the state—and innovations happen on both sides, necessitating constant evolution of repertoires. If innovation does not occur, tactics become less effective: 'They reduce the strategic advantage of their performers, undermine participants' claims of conviction, and diminish the event's newsworthiness' (McAdam et al. 2001: 138).

Several categories of tactical repertoires have been identified by scholars. The earliest distinctions were between instrumental/practical and expressive/symbolic movements; the dichotomy then shifted towards strategy-oriented versus identity-oriented movements. Turner and Killian (1987, in Taylor & van Dyke 2004) have identified four basic tactics: persuasion, appealing to the target's self-interest; facilitation, giving the target the knowledge or resources to support the movement; bargaining, offering cooperation (often electoral) in exchange for support of the movement; and coercion, when the target is punished for failure to support the movement. Tarrow (1998)

differentiates between conventional tactics (petitions, lobbying, etc), disruptive tactics (boycotts, marches, etc) and violent tactics (property destruction, interpersonal violence, etc). However, many of these scholars accept that social movements will utilise all of these tactics in the course of their struggle, sometimes during the same protest event. Using more than one kind of tactic is beneficial to the movement because it allows them to place more pressure on the state, and state agents cannot as easily pre-empt the protest action. Soule and King (2006: 1567) have found that as legislators are exposed to more protest tactics, they 'are likely to become sensitive to the concerns of the movement'. Olzak and Ryo (2007) found that the state is more likely to respond positively to a movement when its tactics increase in diversity, possibly because this diversification leads to more moderate protests like lobbying. These classification schemes are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but are individually limited, and at the same time do not enhance one another when used together. Moreover, they do not adequately represent the sorts of action carried out by Townsville Aboriginal activists, which tend to fall within a very narrow range of options.

Aboriginal activist repertoires of action

As I discuss in Chapter Four, there is a tension amongst activists between doing activism that is confrontational and reactive, and doing activism which is geared towards making change in a positive and cooperative manner. Even those activists who are outspokenly opposed to the state and its agents are engaged in activism which works within state-imposed confines. Based on 18 months of field work, I have identified several categories of tactics used by Aboriginal activists in Townsville (Figure 6.1). These tactics fall along a continuum based on their focus, and do not correspond with the distinctions discussed above, but rather with the range of actions undertaken by Aboriginal activists in Townsville. At one end of the spectrum are external tactics, which are actions whose purpose is to attract the attention of outsiders. External tactics generally involve media releases and public demonstrations of support. At the



* For an in-depth discussion of the Hurley trial protests, see Petray (2010 in press).

Figure 6.1 Types of tactics used by Aboriginal activists in Townsville.
Types of tactics are followed by lists of examples I encountered during my field work, from May 2007 to January 2009.

other end, internal tactics are those which are generally open only to those within the movement. Along this spectrum, I have identified seven categories: protests, outreach/education, commemoration/celebration, proactive work, cultural revival, advocacy and organising.

Protests fall at the most external end of the spectrum, because their objective is always to be heard by movement outsiders: their targets, as well as 'the public'. Outreach/education has been identified as slightly less externally focused than protests. Although their primary aim is education of outsiders, and they seek media attention and a broad audience, they also intend to educate Aboriginal people themselves about their history, the background of a particular issue, and the activism which is currently taking place. In the middle of the spectrum, I have placed both proactive work and commemoration/celebration. Both of these tactics are carried out with an audience: in the case of proactive work, the audience is the group with whom activists are working to make positive change, and commemorations/celebrations are often events to which the media and outsiders are invited. However, these events are not entirely contingent on a broad audience. Cultural revival is another tactic which occupies a middle ground between internal and external; while it is undertaken for the sake of movement participants, it is occasionally made public as a political tactic. More internal is advocacy work that activists do with and for individuals, such as prisoners or the homeless. The occurrence of this work goes largely unnoticed by those not involved in the inner workings of the movement, but occasionally involves interactions with outsiders. Finally, organising takes place solely within the confines of the movement. Outsiders are not invited to take part in the planning process of activism, as these meetings are often used by movement participants to argue about the other tactics or strategy, to deal with personal issues within the movement, and to catch up and check in with one another.

In reality, these categories are not as neat as they appear on paper. For instance, rallies outside the trial of Chris Hurley took the form of a protest against black deaths in custody, but were simultaneously a commemoration of those who have

died at the hands of police. NAIDOC events are a tool for public education about Aboriginal issues, but they are also a celebration of Aboriginal cultural uniqueness. Advocacy work often starts on an individual, case-by-case basis, but if the same issue arises repeatedly it will join the realm of proactive work, with activists shifting their focus from helping one person to addressing the problem as a whole issue. Aspects of cultural revival tactics like dance are incorporated into most other activist tactics, and there are few events that can be classified as solely cultural revival actions. Further, individual actions have many different layers of meaning, and in addition to affecting a movement's goals, they influence the movement internally in ways that are not always obvious. In the sections that follow, I will look at a few examples of these tactics in more depth, after which I will discuss some of the broader implications of the tactical repertoire utilised by Aboriginal activists in Townsville.

Historical movement tactics

The tactical repertoires of present-day Aboriginal activists have developed out of the tactics of earlier activists. As discussed in Chapter One, the earliest activism was very locally focused and tactics were centred on petitions, pamphlets, and letters to the editor. Activists successfully created a spectacle in 1938 with the organisation of the Day of Mourning, in opposition to the official Australian Sesquicentennial Celebrations. The Palm Island Strike of 1957 is a ubiquitous event in the memory of present-day activists, but these confrontational tactics were the exception in activism, rather than the rule. Rather, the middle of the 1900s saw the tactics of the earlier part of the century expanded upon. Letters to the editor, petitions (e.g. Figure 6.2) and conferences were still the norm, and activists were increasingly effective at publicity and networking.

At the time, Queensland maintained very oppressive policies towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and these policies were often brought into focus through activist tactics. For instance, a conference was held in 1968 which invited the Queensland Minister for Aboriginal and Islander Affairs

(and later Premier), Joh Bjelke-Petersen⁴⁸. The organisers of this conference, 'a committee of Cairns citizens', planned to address 'Aborigines' and Islanders' problems', particularly the 'unsatisfactory' conditions in Indigenous education, housing, land rights, and economic and social equality⁴⁹. Minister Bjelke-Petersen was invited to 'enlighten [the] conference on the findings of the Ministers' discussions and the Queensland Government's views'⁵⁰. The extent to which conference organisers intended to work with Bjelke-Petersen for positive changes is difficult to infer from archival materials, but it seems unlikely that they would invite him if they had no hope of making some proactive changes. Similarly, the national group FCAATSI planned their 1971 conference to take place in Townsville 'to focus international attention on what a spokesman [sic] termed "restrictive legislation" in Queensland'⁵¹. The theme of this conference was racism in Australia and placed the *Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Protection Act* in its sights as the 'principle [sic] target'⁵². This conference made resolutions about the act and utilised international press to publicise the issue.

While conferences were a popular tactic at the middle of the 20th century, they were not seen to be effective by all activists. *The Australian* reported that 'young, well-educated and part-educated Aborigines' were disillusioned and impatient with conferences⁵³. Rather, they wanted the formation of effective pressure groups which would 'increase their hitting power within the law'⁵⁴. This focus on legislative pressure was taken up by several groups and individuals. Edward Mabo, later involved in a landmark Native Title case, wrote

⁴⁸ McGinness, J. 20 July 1968 Letter to The Hon. J. Bjelke Petersen on behalf of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. QSA SRS 505/2 File Number 1A/517 No. 2 1967-1978 Box Number 6.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ 'Queensland Discrimination Charged', *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 8 April 1971. QSA SRS 505/2 File Number 1A/517 No. 2 1967-1978 Box Number 6.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Forsyth, Christopher. (no date) 'Young Natives are Impatient', *The Australian*. QSA SRS 505/2 File Number 1A/517 No. 2 1967-1978 Box Number 6.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

letters to the Queensland government on behalf of his group, the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Advancement League. He questioned the conditions on Palm Island, particularly the segregation of schools, the usage of dormitories, and the treatment of unmarried couples. Mabo ended his letter with a request:

Therefore we request you, as Minister, to use your influence to abolish these laws discriminating against us so that we may enjoy life like other Australians⁵⁵.

Similarly, activists tried to get public opinion behind their cause by writing letters to the editor, such as L.G. McBride who wrote to *The Australian* about the need to invalidate, rather than amend, the *Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Act (1965)*⁵⁶.

Of course, tensions existed in the past between activists who wanted to use radical tactics to achieve radical demands, and those who would rather work with public opinion and governments to make positive changes. In the early 1970s, the Black Power movement came to Queensland (Lothian 2005). Leaders like Denis Walker were highly controversial individuals. Walker's tactics included conferences⁵⁷ but also protest marches which sometimes turned violent⁵⁸. He alienated groups like FCAATSI, who wrote articles opposing the separatism they felt the Black Panthers espoused⁵⁹. This difference of opinion was newsworthy, and led to debates where Aboriginal leaders discussed their differing viewpoints⁶⁰. Such public disagreement may be viewed as a negative –

⁵⁵ Mabo, Edward (Hon. Secretary). 5 May 1966 Letter to the Minister for Native Affairs on behalf of the Aboriginee [sic] & Torres Strait Islanders Advancement League. QSA SRS 505/1 File Number 1A/517 Box Number 98.

⁵⁶ McBride, L.G. 15 June 1970 Letter to the Editor, *The Australian*. QSA SRS 505/2 File Number 1A/433 Box number 5.

⁵⁷ Walker, Denis. 1 October 1969 Letter to 'Friend' on behalf of the Queensland Council for the Advancement of Aborigines & Torres Strait Islanders, inviting five delegates from this organisation to attend a conference. QSA SRS 505/2 File Number 1A/433 Box number 5.

⁵⁸ 'Black Power Saluted', *The Australian* 25 November 1971. QSA SRS 3501-1/1 File Number 01-069-008 Box Number 533.

⁵⁹ 'Solidarity with thugs and fascists?' (no date). FCAATSI Executive. QSA SRS 505/2 File Number 1A/517 Number 2 1967-1978 Box Number 6.

⁶⁰ 'Black Leaders to Clash at Uni' *Melbourne Herald* 29 February 1972. QSA SRS 3501-1/1 File Number 01-069-008 Box Number 533.

it implied that Aboriginal activists were not unified and were thus unworthy of white support—but Burgmann (2000: 14) points out the benefits of such a division within movements. Extremism, she argues, shifts the public debate 'to a point where less radical versions of the same position seem reasonable'; in other words, moderate reforms are made more likely by radical activism.

Protest

The 26th of January is celebrated annually as Australia Day, because it marks the day that English settlers first arrived on the continent in 1788. Since at least the 1930s, this day has been publicly mourned by Aboriginal people, used as a venue to protest. It has been variously labelled a Day of Mourning, Invasion Day, Survival Day, and Aboriginal Sovereignty Day. I had been doing field work for six months when I took part in my first Invasion Day march in Townsville. I had little contact with activists for several weeks prior due to the holidays, and no meetings had been held since November. I struggled to find information about the march, or if anything was happening at all. At 9:30 on the morning of the 26th, Gracelyn returned my phone calls to tell me there was a small rally at 10 that morning. When I arrived, I was informed we were running on 'Murri time' and we did not begin to march until after 11 am. In the meantime, participants were painting up, posing for photographs to be included in the *Koori Mail*, and catching up with one another. Many of the people present were members of local dance groups, so they wore traditional dress and carried clap sticks and didgeridoos.

Approximately 25 people marched that morning, and the vast majority were Indigenous—the only white people in the march were me, my partner, and another white woman from the Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group (TIHRG). Marchers debated whether we should chant, sing, or march silently, settling on some quiet singing and a steady drum beat. Most people spent the time chatting to other marchers. Gracelyn, towards the back of the crowd, spoke with several of her family members about the disappointing turn out. Gracelyn said people are getting complacent, because they all have jobs with organisations

now so they do not need to do anything for the community anymore. She said that things like Abstudy, CDEP, and other programs all came about because people marched for it. And now it will be taken away because people have become so complacent. During the march, one of the male dancers, Jai, spoke with me about how disorganised this event was; he explained that it came up so quickly and no planning was done, but he wanted to start planning something much bigger for the next year. When we reached our destination—the amphitheatre on Townsville’s Strand—marchers started yelling things like ‘We have survived’ and ‘Always was, always will be Aboriginal land’, directing the comments to the large number of non-Indigenous people nearby.

We filed into the amphitheatre and sat in the shade. For a moment no one seemed to know what to do; no one was in charge, there was no obvious organiser to direct us, but eventually Jai stood up and thanked us all for coming. He invited two traditional owners to offer a welcome to country, and while Gracelyn welcomed us on behalf of the Bindal clan, she said that, no matter if 20 people come, or 2, it’s important that we keep up the fight. She said people have been fighting for 220 years, and we need to keep it up. This was followed with several dances, and some speeches and poetry. During the dances, we attracted a small audience of other Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who were at the Strand for the public holiday, and the whole event was documented by the *Koori Mail*. Aside from this Aboriginal media outlet, there was no advertising of the event, nor media coverage after the fact.

Other protest events were planned more thoroughly than this Invasion Day march, but most that I attended throughout my field work had a similar haphazard feel to them – these events were run in a way that made it seem as if they had been quickly thrown together, with no one in particular in charge, and no one quite sure what we should be doing next. In meetings to organise these events there are clear leadership and decision making structures. However, there are so many uncertain variables when planning protests that even when firm decisions are made, plans change at the actual event. For instance, when planning for the trial of Senior-Sergeant Chris Hurley, activists expected

hundreds of protesters from around the country, but only a handful showed up and plans changed accordingly (Petray 2008b, 2010b). At the same time, events which had similar actions to protests, like the National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Celebration (NAIDOC) march, were smoothly orchestrated. Participants knew when to arrive; the events began (close to) on time; organisers had carefully coordinated with the police and the Townsville City Council; and programs of events were scripted. One difference between the two events is the frequency of occurrence; NAIDOC occurs every year, and organisers can learn from the previous event. Protests, on the other hand, tend to be one-off events, organised quickly to respond to specific current events. Thus, while organisers could base their plans on previous actions, there were always major differences, whereas NAIDOC was more predictable.

Organising a protest, then, entails some reliance on past events. Organisers recall what worked and what did not, they recall the response of the state, and they recall the effectiveness of different actions. By comparing the issues and general political climate, protest organisers can make informed decisions about the most effective actions, but this process is largely informal and often unconscious. Moreover, the timeframe for many issue-focused protests is much shorter than that for NAIDOC. Because it is an annual event, NAIDOC organisers begin months before the event and have plenty of time to plan even the smallest details. Protests are often arranged much more quickly in order to respond to an immediate issue, and thus the details are determined as they happen. Finally, NAIDOC has become an event which is recognised, and even supported by, the Australian state. The organisers of NAIDOC in Townsville receive funding and in-kind support from the Townsville City Council as well as Queensland and Federal departments. Protests, though, almost always make demands of the state, and are organised independently of state support. They are unfunded, or funded by non-governmental allies of activist groups. Because NAIDOC is seen as much less threatening to the state and to public order than protests, organisers have the privilege of adequate time and resources to plan and thus ensure a smoothly-run event.

Proactive work

A substantial amount of energy is expended by activists in an attempt to create positive change from within the state system. This work is generally not publicised, and many people do not know how important it actually is to activism. During my field work, I was able to sit in on several of these meetings, including one with the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC). Several months earlier, activists and academics took part in a workshop to draft a submission to the CMC review of policing in Indigenous communities. The recommendations that came out of this submission were mostly adopted, and the CMC held a follow-up meeting in November 2007. These meetings lasted for several hours each, and required a lot of preparation time in order to read the reports, brainstorm questions and suggestions, and after the meeting was finished to report back to those who could not attend and think about ways forward. Despite the work that went into this review, very few people know that it happened and activists do not seek credit for their involvement in the process. Rather, they are interested in improving the condition of their people without fanfare. Florence gets satisfaction when she sees positive change happen: 'So when you see outcomes like that, it's really worthwhile' (interview 28 March 2008). Likewise, Aboriginal people who work for the public service feel that they are trying to make changes from inside the system. Jim, an Aboriginal employee of the Department of Natural Resources and Water, feels that everyone does activism in his or her own field. In his work for the government, he is trying to make changes to the ways in which Aboriginal cultural and sacred sites are treated and maintained. For Janine, her job with the public service has 'been a way of contributing to the improvement of conditions for Aboriginal people'.

Florence spoke in depth about some work she did in the area of Indigenous Housing in the 1990s.

In about 1994... there wasn't a policy review from Joh Bjelke's era, on Indigenous housing. And Aboriginal and Islander people here in Queensland were in the worst, you know, sub-standard housing. (Interview 28 March 2008)

Before this time period she had lived in Victoria for several years, and she noticed a significant difference in the standard and the appropriateness of housing between the two states. She worked with others on a campaign to improve Indigenous housing that lasted for two years; they sent out letters to every Indigenous family housed through the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Affairs (DAIA) and letters to politicians.

We called for a policy review in housing, and that was done through—we did a petition and everything—through the housing listing. And other regions got wind of it, and so we had a whole state petition. And I sent our letters to the network down in central Queensland, and southern, and they sent it out. So that was a whole state wide action. And from that, after two years they established the Indigenous advisory for the policy review, I was part of that. And for five, six months, we had input into the policy. So we said we want culturally appropriate policy. (Interview 28 March 2008)

By pushing gently and showing that she was willing to work with the government on the issue of Indigenous housing, Florence was able to achieve many of her goals, but few people know of the countless hours that she and others have put into this issue.

Cultural Revival

The tactic of cultural revival occupies a grey area within activism. Some people, even those who are heavily involved in this tactic, do not consider it a form of activism. However, I agree with those who think that retaining and reviving cultural traditions is a political act. During my field work, I was invited on a tour of traditional sites with Gracelyn and two 'Cultural Officers', Jim and Joe. The day started in Bowen, where the two men performed a smoking ceremony before the opening of the Bowen Cultural Festival. Afterwards, we went to several locations where Aboriginal remains are buried. Many of these remains were formerly part of museum collections, and Joe and Jim have advocated, along with other activists, for their return to Aboriginal groups. When they have been returned, Jim and Joe have carried out traditional burial protocol and laid them to rest. These sites are now marked with stones and

plaques, and in one location a giant *Gubulla Munda*, or carpet snake statue (Figure 6.3a).

Jim's job, with the Department of Natural Resources and Water, is to maintain these sacred sites and he views this as an alternate form of activism. This is not something that he does for publicity or attention; in fact, few people even know that these sacred sites exist. While Jim and Joe occasionally bring outsiders like me to see these sites, they are not advertised as tourist attractions or used as political leverage. The two have made steps towards turning one site into a tourist attraction. Cape Upstart, traditionally known as Guthalungra, between Bowen and Ayr, is a traditional Birri Gubba camping ground. Today there is a cabin there where Traditional Owners have permission to camp, and Jim and Joe have found midden heaps along the beach that indicate it was a popular place to come for food. They have built a walking track, in the shape of a snake, that winds between a burial site (the snake's head), traditional fish trap replicas, and a sandstone sea turtle statue (Figure 6.3b). They have brought small groups of tourists to visit the site, but they seemed unconvinced that it was a good idea; they are operating in the grey area between *maintaining* culture and publicly *promoting* it.

Likewise, the Ngulumburu Boonyah group splits its time between outreach-style performance and internally-focused activities. In a grant application I helped them develop, the group states that its main objective is the healing of Aboriginal women through traditional cultural practices. While they are best known locally for their dance performances at events like the Townsville Cultural Festival and International Women's Day, they feel that their most important work is the revival of ceremony. This is not done for accolades but 'to work towards the revival of strong, proud Aboriginal women'. This group's tactics fall into several tactical categories—their dance is a form of outreach to the broader community, they act as advocates on a number of issues (see below) but, most importantly in their eyes, they are working towards cultural revival. The women of Ngulumburu Boonyah, and Jim and Joe, along with many other Aboriginal



Figure 6.3 Public art representing traditional Aboriginal culture.

(a) *Gubulla Munda* carpet snake statue overlooking repatriated remains in Ayr.



(b) Sea turtle statue at *Guthalungra*, or Cape Upstart.

activists working 'under the radar' - that is, working to change the system discreetly, without attracting the attention of the media, the general public, or power-holders - are involved in reclaiming their identity symbols to be used and defined on their own terms.

This form of activism comes closest to what Day (2005) describes as 'non-hegemonic': cultural revival tactics are not interested in seizing power from the state, and they are rarely even interested in changing state policy. Rather, they exist for their own sake, and are the tactics which are the furthest removed from state-movement interactions. The cultural revivalists I spoke with throughout my research indicated that they were not seeking recognition by the government; rather, they attempted to create a space in which they could return to ceremony as a key feature of Aboriginality. However, Henry (2008) points out that performance of culture, mainly through dance, is an inherently political act. She argues that live performances act as a form of 'symbolic capital' which gives Aboriginal people a sense of agency in their relationship with the state. Because state effects are pervasive, Aboriginal people cannot escape their relationship to the state, particularly given the history of state control over every aspect of Aboriginal life. This cultural renaissance, then, is a means of controlling the relationship between Aboriginal people and the state (Henry 2008: 56); it shifts the debate to Aboriginal terms.

Advocacy

In Queensland, Indigenous women in prison are vastly over-represented. 29.1% of the women's prison population throughout the state of Queensland identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, compared with a state wide non-prison population of 3.5%. This proportion is not evenly distributed throughout the state, however, with Indigenous women comprising 52.3% of female prisoners in the northern prisons (Hockings et al. 2002). This high rate of incarceration makes the prison a focal point for Aboriginal activists. I have visited on several occasions with activists. Two of these times were with Ngulumburu Boonyah, in association with The Women's Centre. These visits

loosely coincided with Reclaim the Night marches against sexual violence and International Women's Day, and we visited the Women's Secure section where Ngulumburu Boonyah performed, invited the women to join them, and spoke to women one-on-one about their cultural needs. On the other occasion I visited with Gracelyn for the prison's NAIDOC celebrations, where we visited the men in the visitor's area and also went into the Women's Secure section.

The women from Ngulumburu Boonyah consider prison advocacy to be one of their most important roles. In a grant application, they describe their relationship with the Townsville Correctional Centre:

We are recognised for our healing work by many people in the area. The most notable of these is the Townsville Corrections Centre. We have performed up there on International Women's Day for the female prisoners. The prison has realised our healing potential and we have been able to visit particularly troubled women to perform cleansing ceremonies. We have also advocated on behalf of prisoners who need culturally appropriate healing we cannot provide. The Townsville Corrections Centre has even asked us to do a traditional smoking ceremony on the new buildings being erected to house the female prisoners.

They explain in more detail that on several occasions, they are asked by the prison management to work towards healing with emotionally troubled prisoners. They perform smoking ceremonies to cleanse the area of bad spirits, and simply act as counsellors, allowing the women to share their stories with someone who understands. In one case, a young Aboriginal woman was troubled but would not accept healing from women; in her traditional country, men do the healing. Within the prison, there was a man from her country but the management was reluctant to let them speak with one another. The women from Ngulumburu Boonyah successfully pushed for this healing ceremony to take place. Gracelyn is also well-known to the management of the Townsville Correctional Centre and is called on for one-on-one counselling sessions with prisoners. When we visited for NAIDOC, we met with several women prisoners who asked Gracelyn for help. We wrote down names and contact information and promised to contact people on behalf of the women in prison. Gracelyn was also invited to speak to prison staff during this NAIDOC event about Aboriginal

culture and political issues, blurring the lines between her advocacy and proactive work.

Targets of activism

The common thread between these tactics as well as the others on the continuum is their target; the state is the actor most frequently targeted by Aboriginal activism. The target of a movement plays an important role in shaping the tactics used by the movement (McAdam et al. 2001). Walker et al. (2008) hypothesise that actions targeting the state will be less disruptive than other actions. They argue that this is because states have a stronger capacity to respond to activism, whether through repression, facilitation, or routinisation; states are also more open than other claim-making targets, and, as an institution, are less vulnerable to public opinion – though individual politicians and political parties may disagree, the system as a whole rarely undergoes any drastic changes. Thus, movements which target the state tend to rely on tactics like rallies and demonstrations. Further, Johnson (2007: 186) explains tactical choices as ‘largely determined by level of education and literacy, social, communicative, experiential and perceptual worldview, position on the social pecking order and (perceived) level of influence on the political system’. A well established democracy like Australia offers citizens many avenues for asserting agency within the political system, and protesters who resort to violence or even confrontation are viewed negatively by state actors, the general public and even other activists. All of the public actions carried out by Aboriginal activists happen within legalised and permitted frameworks⁶¹, and this requires activism to follow rules (Graeber 2009: 367). Thus, although there were activists who were considered by others, and who considered themselves, to be

⁶¹ One recent exception to this is the events which followed the death in custody on Palm Island in 2004, described by the state as riots. Although spontaneous, this is a contentious action which is linked to the Aboriginal movement (though the movement takes no ownership for this event) and which existed entirely outside of legalised frameworks. The result, however, was the declaration of a state of emergency which allowed anti-terrorism police to embark on the island and carry out arrests at gunpoint of alleged rioters (Glowczewski 2008). This perhaps weighs heavily on the minds of Aboriginal activists in Townsville and encourages them to remain within permitted frameworks of protest.

confrontational in their activism, this confrontation takes the form of angry speeches at (permitted) rallies, or occasionally arguments with state agents. The frameworks of protests within liberal democracy do not push confrontation further than this. However, even within these state-instituted frameworks there are spaces for subversion, for instance in the NAIDOC march described in Chapter One when the march paused in front of the court house and the police station for dancing, which was unexpected by police escorts.

Some scholars argue that recent activism is changing its focus, and has transcended the state system (cf. Keck & Sikkink 1998). They focus on movements which make claims on non-state actors (cf. Walker et al. 2008; Klotz 2002). On the other hand, Hall and Felon (2008) argue that indigenous movements are usually in opposition to the state. This has been happening, they say, for centuries in the Americas and for millennia in Afro-Eurasia. In the Americas in particular, indigenous groups were often accorded the status of 'nations' by Europeans, and thus they were offered some degree of autonomy and statehood. This changed as Europeans became the dominant population, so 'they made repeated efforts to submerge and subvert "nationhood" into minority status' (Hall & Felon 2008: 5). Australia's settlement process was very different, and Aboriginal people were never treated as a pre-existing nation, no treaties were signed and sovereignty was barely considered publicly until the 1971 decision by Justice Blackburn that Aboriginal sovereignty did not exist in Australia (Reynolds 1996).

Despite this unique history, Aboriginal activism mirrors other Indigenous movements because it is dominated by claims made to the state. The earliest activism was carried out by Aboriginal communities who struggled to retain reserve lands, or to be granted farm land, and to be treated fairly by the government. Their protests were directed to the government, in some cases the Queen of England, to provide them with land (Attwood & Markus 1999). Since these earliest actions, the Australian state has been the target of Aboriginal activism, from the 1967 Referendum campaign to the Tent Embassy to Native Title. In Figure 6.1, the target of each action is not always obvious. While the

protests are clearly directed at the state, and proactive work is often done in cooperation with the state, the other tactics are less clear. Outreach/education, for instance, is more overtly directed towards public opinion than governments. However, the ultimate goal of activists is to change public opinion enough that the government has to respond and change its attitude. Goot & Rowse (2007) point out the fluidity of public opinion, and problematise the concept in itself; 'public opinion' is determined by opinion polls and reported in news media, and is not a neutral process. However, governments have begun to rely on these polled opinions as an important influence on policy-making, and so activists consider public opinion to be one of their most important targets, so their activism reflects this.

Non-violent framing tactics

The consistent theme throughout the eighteen months of my research, and across various locations and with different activists, was the need for non-violence. Gracelyn often remembered her father's insistence that the only way to achieve change is to stay calm. In organising meetings, Gracelyn and others always highlighted the need for peaceful protests. In the lead-up to the Hurley trial, the Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group invited police officers to the meetings to plan logistical aspects of the daily protest demonstrations. Working with the police ensured the legality of our actions, and thus reduced the likelihood of violence. After the officers left one week, Gracelyn confided to us that, although we were meeting with them, the Police and the government as a whole are 'our enemies'. She explained that she has little trust in the police, because she has been at several demonstrations where violence breaks out as a result of police actions and protesters are blamed as the instigators.

As a further means of keeping the peace, Aboriginal activists planned to enlist several respected community elders to act as 'Marshalls'; they would wear visible uniforms and would be responsible for keeping the crowd in line. Further, activists intended to invite local preachers from various denominations to the protests, framing the daily actions as 'peaceful prayer vigils'. As Gracelyn

said in one meeting, 'we need some prayers to calm our mob'. The police at the TIHRG meetings were happy with both ideas because it relieved the pressure on them; they were as interested in a peaceful demonstration as activists were. Although the Marshalls and the preachers never eventuated, the crowds at the Hurley trial protests were small and non-violent, often starting off with prayers (Petray 2008b, 2010b). Relationships between police officers and Aboriginal people inside the courthouse were even described in the *Townsville Bulletin* as 'festive', 'light-hearted' and with 'no evidence at all of any animosity or confrontation' (Weatherup 2007: 4). While this reporter missed the palpably tense atmosphere that often existed in the courthouse, the threat of violence was successfully averted during this week of protests.

The tactical choices of activists can have a profound effect on the way an issue is perceived by the public. Activists attempt to strategically frame issues in such a way that they are compelling to a general audience and thus more likely to receive broad support. Gracelyn has chosen 'human rights' as her central frame. She includes this term in the name of the group which was started in response to a death in custody. She correlates Aboriginal inequalities with human rights violations—whether health, education, Stolen Wages, deaths in custody, or the Northern Territory Intervention. Attaching the term 'human rights' to Aboriginal rights is expected to universalise the issue and bring comparisons between the Australian state and other human rights violators—from Nazi Germany to Zimbabwe to the South African apartheid system. This framing technique is used by activists as a way to ensure their issue is heard and accepted by a wide portion of the public.

Activist memory

Tactical repertoires are inherited by activists, that is, they are based on the tactics used by activists in earlier generations. Of course, innovations and developments happen all the time, and the tactical repertoire used by activists today may look quite different to their earlier counterparts. Still, activist memories of those past events are crucial to the conceptualisation of activism.

These memories offer activists ways of making sense of their present situation, and they 'influence the ability of group members to engage in cooperative action' (Harris 2006: 19). Activist memories are also important because they play an integral role in the formation of collective identity. These complex interactions are crucial to the strength of a movement, and thus collective memories are important for movement outcomes as well. The collective memories which are utilised by activists are dynamic and are dependent on the needs of the movement at a particular time. The process of remembering always already includes the act of forgetting—both are shared cultural practices and 'without forgetting there is only an endless present overwhelmed by the flow of everything all at once' (Healy 2008: 9). However, it is not the particular memories that are important, but rather the meanings that are attached to them in the process of remembering which are likely to influence collective action (Harris 2006).

Aboriginal activists in Townsville regularly and consistently remember past events. They do this publicly, in demonstrations, and privately, while organising and in everyday conversation. They remember their past contributions to activism, the activities of their parents and family members (see Chapter Four), and they remember activism which was more remote in time and social space. In Townsville, memories which are commonly recalled range from the Palm Island Strike of 1957 to the 1967 Referendum to the 1982 Commonwealth Games Protests in Brisbane. The first two of these events were especially noteworthy while I was doing my field work because 2007 marked the 50th and 40th anniversaries of these events, respectively. They are both very different events and they are conjured to achieve different strategic ends.

The 1967 Referendum, which took place on the 27th of May, is remembered as a victory. The Australian public voted overwhelmingly (90.77%) in favour of a change to two clauses of the Australian Constitution. The two changes included Aboriginal people in the census, and permitted the Commonwealth Government to make laws on their behalf. McGregor (2009b) argues that these changes and the subsequent government action were almost

inconsequential; these constitutional changes had little effect on the treatment or status of Aboriginal people within Australia. But activists see the Referendum more positively. Public demonstrations and lectures often include some verbal reference to the 1967 Referendum which 'gave Aboriginal people the vote' or 'gave Aboriginal people citizenship' or 'considered Aboriginal people to be humans'. These details have become embedded in collective memory, with even ABC reporters including them in news stories. The reason for this is likely because simple stories are often more useful to social movements than complex ones (Armstrong & Cragge 2006; Polletta 1998). Discussing the impact of two constitutional changes is left to academics, while activists focus on fundamental narratives which validate their struggle. Further, charismatic and resonant stories are more likely to last (Spillman 1998), and saying that Aboriginal people 'were under the flora and fauna act' until 1967 makes this story much more compelling to potential movement supporters.

The importance of Referendum memories is closely linked with networking between Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists. As Florence recalls,

The 1967 Referendum, that was a people's movement. That was black and white people coming together to establish FCAATSI and all of those things, and ... if you're going to initiate change it's gotta be, you've gotta have the support of the wider community. (Interview 28 March 2008)

The Referendum is frequently recalled as a means of assuring white people that they are important to the movement, often in public demonstrations and especially in front of the media. The activism which led up to the Referendum was characterised by a strong partnership between Indigenous and white activists, and this is one aspect of the story which is not forgotten. This memory is further strengthened by its inclusion within the broader collective memory of the Australian state. State participation in memory-making and commemorations has the effect of legitimating a movement's claims about the past (Armstrong & Cragge 2006), and by extension, their claims in the present.

Whereas the 1967 Referendum is a victorious memory, the Palm Island Strike is more complex. In 1957, when the Island was under the administration

of Roy Bartlam, seven men organised a strike on the Island which lasted for five days, demanding improved conditions and more autonomy. Early in the morning of June 10th, police arrived from Townsville and arrested the seven 'ringleaders', who were moved with their families to other reserves in distant parts of Queensland (Watson 2010, 1991; Thaiday 1981). The strike is remembered by Indigenous people around Australia but performance of these memories is most concentrated in North Queensland, and is especially important to activism. While the Strike is remembered in a positive light, it is also a story of tragedy—seven families were removed from their home after standing up for themselves. As Armstrong and Cragge (2006) explain, victories are compelling, but less so than memories which combine victory with a shared memory of oppression. However, some level of triumph is necessary to ensure that memories are positive and do not 'signify the cost to being a member of a marginal group' (Harris 2006: 20).

While I cannot attest to the role of memories prior to 2007, when I began my field work, the Palm Island Strike seems to be a particularly salient memory in relation to the 2004 death in custody on Palm Island. Following this death, and an initial decision that it was accidental and no charges would be laid, the Police Station, Court House, and Police Barracks were all burnt down. This recent 'riot' shares similarities with the Palm Island Strike. Similar phrases are often used to describe the reasons behind both events—things like 'we couldn't tolerate any more' and 'we're not dogs'. Likewise, the police response to both events was strikingly similar—extra police were brought over to Palm Island by helicopter rather than boat, but the 'ringleaders' were arrested and removed to Townsville in the pre-dawn hours in both 1957 and 2004. Thus, the Palm Island Strike was often invoked at meetings and demonstrations focused on the 2004 death in custody, particularly the demonstrations in support of accused riot 'leader' Lex Wotton. While memories of both the 1967 Referendum and the Palm Island Strike are important to activist history, they play different roles. The Referendum is a memory of success due to a diverse support base and government flexibility. The Strike, on the other hand, clearly posits the

government as the enemy and places the success of the strike firmly in the hands of the Aboriginal protesters.

Activist performance

The actions of social movements can be thought of as performances. Like movements, performances are themselves relational phenomena; Belshaw (1969: 11) posits that 'variations in the interaction between elements of the social system' affect performances of social systems. Performance has long been used as a means of bringing about social change (Kistenberg 1995), and is useful as an analytic tool, making it possible to look at the ways in which activists communicate to an audience (cf. Cowlshaw 2004b: 83-106). Performance must be viewed within the frameworks of a culture's system of communication, as both a response to the culture but also capable of producing, resisting, or changing the culture in which it is performed (Turner 1987). Sometimes these performances are explicit, as in the case of the play 'Strike of 57 - The Day Palm Island Fought Back', but more often the performance of activism is implicit. The audience changes depending on which action is undertaken, but it generally includes the media, the government, and/or the general public. The plot is one of good versus bad; the underdog trying to make things right. Rather than closely following a script, activist performances are improvised, but general lines are rehearsed in internal meetings and private conversations before they are spoken on stage, in front of the audience. The costumes worn by movement actors feature lots of red, black and gold coloured clothing and political-slogan tee shirts. Performances usually include a role for traditionally-dressed characters that dance and perform ceremony.

The potential audience of a protest tactic is a large consideration in the planning of a demonstration. One simple guarantee of media-coverage is numbers; the larger the crowd of movement actors, the more likely the event will be covered at least by the local press. This is, of course, a simplification, as newsworthiness is based on a complex interaction involving conflict, currency, novelty and human interest, among other factors. Thus, despite the crowd of 300

people, the 2008 NAIDOC March found itself buried in the local newspaper (*Townsville Bulletin* 12 July 2008: 29), with a much larger story focused on the NAIDOC football game between a Palm Island team and an Army team (Graham 12 July 2008: 28). When a protest is expected to attract only a small crowd of supporters, organisers try to creatively adapt their tactics to attract media attention. In September 2008, Senior-Sergeant Chris Hurley filed an appeal to overturn the original coronial decision which held him responsible for the death of Mulrunji on Palm Island in 2004. The hearing was strictly legal argument; Hurley did not even attend this sitting. But activists could not let the event pass without protest. The TIHRG doubted that large numbers of people would turn up outside the courthouse, so to take the place of crowds they created a spectacle in the form of a nine metre-long yellow banner (Figure 6.4a). The desired effect was achieved—media crowded around, jostling one another for photos of the banner. In the end, the photo which was published in the *Townsville Bulletin* was of an Aboriginal elder tearfully explaining the impacts of this death and custody and the subsequent four years on herself, her family, and Palm Island and Townsville generally (Figure 6.4b). Despite their careful tactical planning, activists can never be sure of the outcomes of their performances—and even the most carefully orchestrated events are liable to be superseded by a dramatic improvised performance.

While activist demonstrations are generally not something that can be rehearsed ahead of time, activists do occasionally learn scripts and practice their lines ahead of time. At the criminal trial of Senior-Sergeant Chris Hurley in June 2007, activists gathered at a coffee shop near the court house every morning before the start of the daily rallies. Over coffee, we discussed our opinions of the case so far and our expectations for the coming day. I noticed on these mornings that Gracelyn repeated herself frequently; she reiterated catch phrases like ‘this is not a black issue, it’s a human rights issue’, ‘we’ll be out protesting every morning, whether there are two of us or two hundred’ and ‘we are non-violent, peaceful people just standing out here trying to get justice for our brother’. She was especially repetitive when discussing legal details, like her insistence on the



Figure 6.4 Demonstration outside Hurley appeal, September 2008.

(a) Media gathered around banner reading 'You can't erase the truth'. Photo by Rachael Cassells and printed with her permission.



(b) The image that was published in the *Townsville Bulletin*. Photo by Rachael Cassells and printed with her permission.

removal of 'section 23 of the criminal code'⁶² or the likely success of a civil case against Hurley. After saying these things to other activists several times, Gracelyn would then use these well-rehearsed scripts in her interviews with the media. Practicing in front of a sympathetic audience helped Gracelyn to ensure that she would not make mistakes in the live performance, and that her point was clear and succinct. Likewise, Janine explained that she wrote media notes, including catch phrases, in preparation for a forum she organised through GAP Strategies.

Janine: I really thought through what the message was that we wanted to get across. And had those dot points and I really encouraged [the other two organisers] to use those exact words in every interview. Because I'm really conscious also that they [the media] use only five seconds. So sometimes you only have that to get... and if you, yeah, I think you know what I'm saying.

Theresa: Sound bytes.

Janine: Yeah, yeah, and so often they can – whether they like you or not, that can... they can just use that to paint the negative part, if they just use that five seconds as opposed to the five seconds before which was probably more the message. (Interview 11 November 2008)

Preparing for audiences is a key component of Aboriginal activist performances.

Activist performances have a general structure to the 'costumes' worn by actors. The most important feature of these costumes is the colours – red, black and yellow, the colours of the Aboriginal flag. For instance, many members of the crowd that gathered outside the court for the sentencing of Lex Wotton wore outfits in these colours (Figure 6.5a). Other important costumes are shirts which are made to publicise different issues. Figure 6.5b shows several such costumes. From left to right, this photograph shows a tee-shirt featuring the face of TJ Hickey, a young Aboriginal boy who died during a police chase in Redfern in 2004; a polo shirt with the logo of an Aboriginal health service; a tee shirt protesting black deaths in custody; a red, black and yellow suit; and a tee shirt demanding 'Aboriginal control of Aboriginal Affairs – Stop the NT Intervention'.

⁶² By this, Gracelyn was referring to Section 23 of the Criminal Responsibility chapter of the Queensland Criminal Code. This section states that one cannot be held responsible for accidents or crimes without motives.



Figure 6.5 Activist costumes

(a) Red, black and yellow clothing at Lex Wotton's sentencing.



(b) Political slogans and images on tee shirts at Lex Wotton's trial.

These costumes are vital to the public expression of activist identity. They are commonly sold as fundraisers for activist groups, and both Indigenous and white people are willing to pay for the opportunity to advertise their politics across their chest.

Once activists have dressed for their role and the audience is assembled, the performance begins. The structure of the performance depends on the type of tactical action planned. Almost all tactical categories (with the exception of some organising meetings and some advocacy work) begin with a Welcome to Country by the Traditional Owners of the place in which the action takes place. In Townsville, two groups are acknowledged, the Wulgurukaba and the Bindal. Gracelyn and Florence are both members of the Bindal clan, and when no one else is available they perform traditional welcomes; if other Bindal elders are present, the traditional welcome is done by the eldest Bindal. Traditional welcomes are given before protests, before outreach events like NAIDOC Marches and lectures, at the start of funerals and commemorations, at proactive meetings with government officials, and at the start of community meetings. They are an integral part of the script of social movement activity in Townsville.

Following the Traditional Welcome, the externally-focused tactics then usually incorporate some other traditional spectacle, such as dancing (Figure 6.6a) or a smoking ceremony (Figure 6.6b). Activists explain that smoking ceremonies are a traditional means of cleansing the space of any negative spirits who may be around and simultaneously calling on the ancestors for support and guidance. This subject is a contentious one in Townsville; Gracelyn explained to me that the Birrigubba tradition (the larger regional group to which the Bindal belong) dictates that men should be the only ones to perform smoking ceremonies. However, the Ngulumburu Boonyah women are often invited by non-Indigenous organisations to perform smoking ceremonies, for instance at the Townsville Correctional Centre or for the opening ceremony of the Townsville Cultural Festival. Despite this controversy, the general opinion is that smoking ceremonies are an important aspect of public tactics for spiritual and publicity



Figure 6.6 Performing tradition in activist tactics.

(a) Smoking ceremony at Lex Wotton's sentencing, November 2008.



(b) Jai Cummins and Ngulumburu Boonyah dancing at Hurley trial protests, June 2007. Photo by Alf Wilson and reprinted with his permission.

reasons. Moreover, dance and ceremony are means of both attracting attention from outsiders and asserting a unique Indigenous identity.

Although performing dance and ceremony in activist settings is an inherently political act, occasionally activists utilise more overtly political spectacles. Before the start of the 2008 Invasion Day march along Townsville's Strand, Jai Cummins, dressed in traditional clothing and fully painted up, posed for photographs (Figure 6.7). Around his neck, he wore a cardboard half-moon decorated with

King _____

Of _____⁶³

This was a symbolic replica of the breastplates given to Aboriginal people in the early stages of colonisation. White settlers had these breastplates made for Aboriginal men they identified as leaders. Jai, along with other activists, feels that the breastplates were a way for European settlers to sabotage the egalitarian, non-hierarchical nature of Aboriginal society and to create schism that would weaken Aboriginal resistance. Academic analyses agree, arguing that the breastplates were 'inscriptions worn on the body [that] were meant to identify their bearers as *useful* individuals, people who in the eyes of white settlers were better *not* killed' (Van Toorn 2008: 232, original emphasis). Jai's performance was a way to bring this history, which he feels has been forgotten by Australian society, back into public memory. This performance was not just for external consumption, however; these breastplates are poignantly remembered by Aboriginal people, as I witnessed when I attended the presentation of two breastplates, family heirlooms owned by two white men, to the Aboriginal community in Ingham in August 2008. This event was attended by more than 100 members of the nearby Aboriginal community. These performances, then, are important not just for outsiders to see, but they are also highly valued by the individuals performing them for their role in preserving activist memory and

⁶³ Jai explained to me that he did not include a name or a place in these spaces because he did not want to offend anyone.



Figure 6.7 Historical costume worn by Jai Cummins at Townsville's Invasion Day March, 26 January 2007. Photo by Alf Wilson, published in *The Koori Mail*, February 2008 and reprinted with the permission of the photographer.

reminding the movement of where it has come from, and how far it still has to go.

Summary and Conclusions

The tactical repertoires of Townsville Aboriginal activists have evolved out of ongoing interactions between the social movement and the Australian state over the course of two centuries. As a movement which primarily targets

the state, Aboriginal activist tactics are much less confrontational than those which are, for instance, aimed at transnational financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank (cf. Graeber 2009; Juris 2008). Thus, the tactical repertoires which have been inherited and innovated largely fall into 'conventional' categories of protest. This opens activists up to the risk that their tactics will become stale, boring, and un-newsworthy – and thus, less publicly visible to broad audiences. But at the same time, conventional protests are considered to be more acceptable and when they are newsworthy, are often covered sympathetically (Juris 2008). Moreover, the state is far more likely to engage with those engaged with 'conventional' tactics than with more radical or unpredictable activists.

The comparison, in relational theory, of a movement's tactical repertoire to improvisational jazz is apt. When activists have experience – when they have participated in protest demonstrations previously – they know what to expect. They can base their participation on what has happened in the past, and although they are aware that circumstances will never be identical, they do have a good idea of how the protest will look. This is true of all the categories of social movement action, whether a street march, or a commemorative ceremony, or a meeting with politicians. Like an improvisational performance, social movement events appear more seamless if participants agree on a general structure in preparation for the event. When they do not, as in the case of the 2008 Invasion Day march discussed in this chapter, participants are unsure of what to do despite their expectations stemming from previous events.

Throughout this chapter, the discussion of phenomena like memory, performance, and tactical innovation implies a large degree of agency. While I do not wish to deny that agency, I am not suggesting that individual activists are necessarily making conscious decisions to alter memories, stage performances, or incorporate ritual elements into protests. Rather, these processes develop throughout a movement's life history and are affected by everything that movements do. Moreover, they are developed based on the broader strategic and ideological bases of a movement, which I explore in Chapter Seven.

Seven

Shifting Foundations: Strategies and Ideologies of the Townsville Aboriginal Movement

Introduction

The previous chapters have discussed who activists are, how they work together to form movements, and what they do. All of these aspects are informed by the movement's overarching strategic goals and ideologies, which are in turn affected by these aspects. This chapter discusses the strategies behind Aboriginal activism. In any social movement, ideology is an organic process, evolving with the successes and failures of the movement. However, in the Townsville Aboriginal movement there has been little consensus on the overarching movement ideology which informs goals and tactics. Local groups, and even individuals, operate from a number of positions ranging from working with the state to seeking complete autonomy from it, which impacts on the way they organise themselves (Chapter Five) and their actions (Chapter Six). This chapter argues that strategies and ideologies of the Aboriginal movement are not set in stone, but are nomadic, constantly moving to suit the political and social contexts of specific issues and locations. The effect may be a movement that is highly adaptable, and while it seems like this lack of firm foundation could act as a barrier to the creation of a concrete movement identity, it may in fact strengthen the movement.

Defining Ideology and Strategy

Ideology is a fraught term; according to Marxist theories, ideology is controlled by the ruling class (Marx 1846[1978]). However, others have broadened the definition. Gramsci (1971), for instance, argued that ruling ideologies create 'hegemony', which is the process through which 'the people' become willing partners in their own domination; rather than using power and violence to dominate, ruling classes use peaceful means such as the press, the church and the school system to spread their ideas. The way to change this, then, is for oppressed social groups to create counter-ideologies which can challenge hegemony. Following Gramsci, Rudé (1980) writes of an ideology of popular protest. These popular ideologies, Rudé argues, are based in 'collective sensibilities' rather than ruling ideas, and while often a diverse mixture of beliefs, they contain a clear counter-hegemonic focus. Geertz (1964: 47) traces ideology's roots from the non-Marxist definitions of the word, from the early 'collection of political proposals' to the negative usage of 'ideology' in a polemical sense through the middle of the 20th century. Trying to find a better way to use the term as an analytic concept, Geertz (1964: 55) suggests that ideology is an expression of social meanings which acts to tie social groups together and simultaneously expresses the ways in which these groups make sense of the world. Ideology, then, gives these groups a shared understanding and provides the basis for a shared course of action within that world.

In the social movement literature, ideology is used to describe

...a relatively stable and coherent set of values, beliefs, and goals associated with a movement or a broader, encompassing social entity, and is assumed to provide the rationale for defending or challenging various social arrangements and conditions. (Snow 2004: 396)

Snow (2004) suggests that ideology is a useful term for social movement analysis but that the character of ideology must be unpacked, and the effects it has on movement activity must be elaborated. In this chapter, I am following Geertz's (1964) usage of the term 'ideology' as a symbolic structure which bridges the divide between the way the world is and the way social groups would like it to

be, but include Snow's (2004) observation that ideology is rarely stable or coherent, but rather dynamic and shifting.

While 'ideology' refers to more abstract ways of thinking about the world, a social movement's 'strategy' is the more practical aspect. The theoretical usage of the term does not stray far from its everyday meanings: 'a plan designed to achieve a particular long-term aim' (OED Online). A social movement strategy, then, is the way in which groups go about making change. This is differentiated from tactics, which are the specific actions taken in an individual protest event, which are informed by the strategic aims of the social movement. Members of some movements, such as the global justice movement, have spent considerable time articulating their strategy and ensuring their tactics are concordant with these goals and plans (Graeber 2009, 2004; Day 2005). Ideology and strategy typically go hand in hand, although I will demonstrate throughout this chapter that they are sometimes inharmonious with one another.

Radical or liberal?

As I discussed in Chapter Two, one of the most common ways of differentiating movements is to classify them as reformist or revolutionary. However, these terms are somewhat inappropriate, given the imagery which they invoke—revolutionaries are seen as violent and dangerous while reformists are more moderate and easily manipulated by those in power. Thus, I will use the terms liberal or radical, to refer to those who seek to alter the existing system and those who seek a structural overhaul, respectively. Day (2005: 4-5; original emphasis) defines radical activism in relation to liberal reformism:

By radical activism I mean conscious attempts to alter, impede, destroy or construct alternatives to dominant structures, processes, practices and identities... those struggles that seek change to the root, that want to address not just the *content* of the current modes of domination and exploitation, but also the *forms* that give rise to them. Thus, for example, rather than seeking pay equity for men and women, a radical feminism works for the elimination of patriarchy in all of its forms; rather than seeking self-government within a settler state, a radical indigenous politics challenges the European notion of sovereignty upon which the system is states is constructed [sic]. Contemporary radical activism, then, pushes beyond the possibilities and limits of liberal reform, while not

entirely discrediting attempts to alter the status quo--one can never be sure of the value of a strategy or tactic without reference to particular social, historical and political contexts.

This is not a purely academic distinction, as I have heard many discussions of this topic in my personal experience with the animal rights and global justice movements. My involvement with Townsville's Aboriginal movement was unique in this regard because I never heard the terms 'radical' or 'liberal' arise during field work.

Perhaps the lack of articulation of these issues was due to the fuzziness separating the concepts liberal and radical. As Maddison and Scalmer (2006) point out, the ideological differences between the two were not always obvious, although in practical terms they are often worlds apart. Whereas reform-focused activists are willing to work with the existing system to make changes, particularly through voting, radicals are strategically opposed to any sort of engagement with the state with which they are in opposition. In this sense, the Aboriginal movement in which I took part is muddled and unclear about its ideological position. While activists state their unquestionable opposition to state institutions like the government and the police, they see the practical benefits of working with the state for change. This lack of clarity was not unusual, however, as many activists feel that waiting for a revolution to happen is a 'naive' indulgence. Rather, many want to get on with compromise and engagement as a means of changing the current situation, even if only marginally. Liberal activists see their work as pragmatic, because although radical change would be nice they do not see it happening without these smaller-scale reforms (Maddison & Scalmer 2006).

Maddison and Scalmer (2006: 149) suggest three ways in which the tension between radical and liberal components of a movement can be managed. On rare occasions, the tension is transcended. More often, it is temporarily disregarded and cooperation happens on a short-term scale. In other cases, the difference between the two becomes irrelevant. This last one is the most likely reason for the lack of discussion about ideology within the Townsville Aboriginal movement. The tensions between the two approaches dissipate

because 'if the revolution cannot be made, then the stark difference between it and "reform" drops away' (Maddison & Scalmer 2006: 149). The history of the Aboriginal movement's engagement with the state has led this distinction to largely dissolve.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the distinction between liberal and radical sects of the Aboriginal movement was still quite clear; the two were at odds with one another on a public level. Neville Bonner, Australia's first Aboriginal senator, was a common actor in this debate. He was an Aboriginal activist who aligned himself with liberal ideologies, becoming a politician in the Australian Senate with the Liberal Party. Bonner was publicly attacked at the 1971 FCAATSI conference, during his campaign for Senate, 'for his statement that much of the controversy over the Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders Acts was caused by "ratbags"'⁶⁴. Bonner was considered a 'sell out' and it was claimed that he 'would not be a true representatives [sic] of the Aboriginal people if he were elected' because he was alienated from them⁶⁵. However, Bonner was of the opinion that 'the aborigines [sic] already possess 'black power' in the sense that they have power to do better for themselves in education and employment'. Bonner felt that Black Power was disruptive and dangerous and that assimilation into white society was the answer to Aboriginal problems⁶⁶. Rowse (1997) suggests that Bonner saw himself as a spokesperson for those Indigenous Australians who disagreed with more radical activists, and saw his own form of political engagement – that is, formal participation in state institutions – as the highest form of activism, and something to which others should aspire.

The negative feelings were not unidirectional, however, and more radical activists were often publicly denounced for their strategic position. In a two-page essay written by the FCAATSI executive and circulated within the organisation, Denis Walker and his Black Power group was condemned for their

⁶⁴ 'Gurindjis Would Fight For Lands'. *The North Queensland Register*. Saturday, 17 April 1971. QSA – SRS 505/2 File no. 1A/517 No. 2 1967-1978. Box 6.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ 'Opal leader objects to "black power" statement'. Date unknown, newspaper source unknown. QSA – SRS 505/2 File No: 1A 433 Box No: 5.

revolutionary strategy. They refer to these radical activists as 'thugs', 'fascists', and 'separatists' and claim that 'Walker exhibited real strutting sadism'⁶⁷. While this indicates a clear personality clash, the essay bases its argument in the FCAATSI members' opposition to 'black separatism'. They explain that they

...oppose it, not for reactionary reasons, but because it was a furtherance of the splitting up of the working class (those people without power - black, red, white, yellow - male or female) because what was needed was solidarity, co-operation and love around the idea of people, as a whole, taking power (not black power) because separatism was a confirmation of arbitrary standards of colour, because a 'black identity' is a dehumanized and racist identity⁶⁸.

While both groups shared a common ground in their opposition to racism, they were ideological opposites. The Black Panthers sought a radical overhaul to the system of race relations. FCAATSI, however, was more interested in altering the existing system to be more inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The FCAATSI essay recognises that this is not likely to happen by adjusting government policy; rather, their goal was 'to break people out of the attitudes and organizations which atomize people'⁶⁹, but they felt that the strategic aims of the movement should be to work with white people to peacefully achieve this, rather than asserting Black Power.

Similarly, non-Indigenous Senator Keefe, president of the Australian Labour Party in 1970, warned Aboriginal activists that Australia's Black Power movement should stay away from the 'violence and racial isolation as advocated by a minority of people'⁷⁰. Rather, Black Power should focus on racial pride and cultural heritage. Likewise, Dr HC Coombs felt that the Aboriginal movement's greatest strength was its morality and its focus on justice and humanity. The movement strategy, then, should build on this foundation and Coombs used this ideology to argue against militant strategies. Rather than becoming involved in

⁶⁷ 'Solidarity with thugs and fascists??' Unpublished essay circulated within FCAATSI. Date unknown (between 1971 and 1974). QSA - SRS 505/2 File no. 1A/517 No. 2 1967-1978. Box 6.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ 'Aboriginals spying on own people, says Senator'. *The Courier Mail* 28 March 1970. QSA - SRS 505/2 File No: 1A/517 No. 2 (1967-1978) Box No. 6.

political action, he encouraged emerging leaders to 'take their place in occupation from which they could work quietly to build the foundations on which political action would rest'⁷¹.

Despite these calls for a gentle approach, the 1970s saw the continued presence of a Black Panthers group in Brisbane and other confrontational strategies (see Figure 7.1). This is evident in the language which was used in

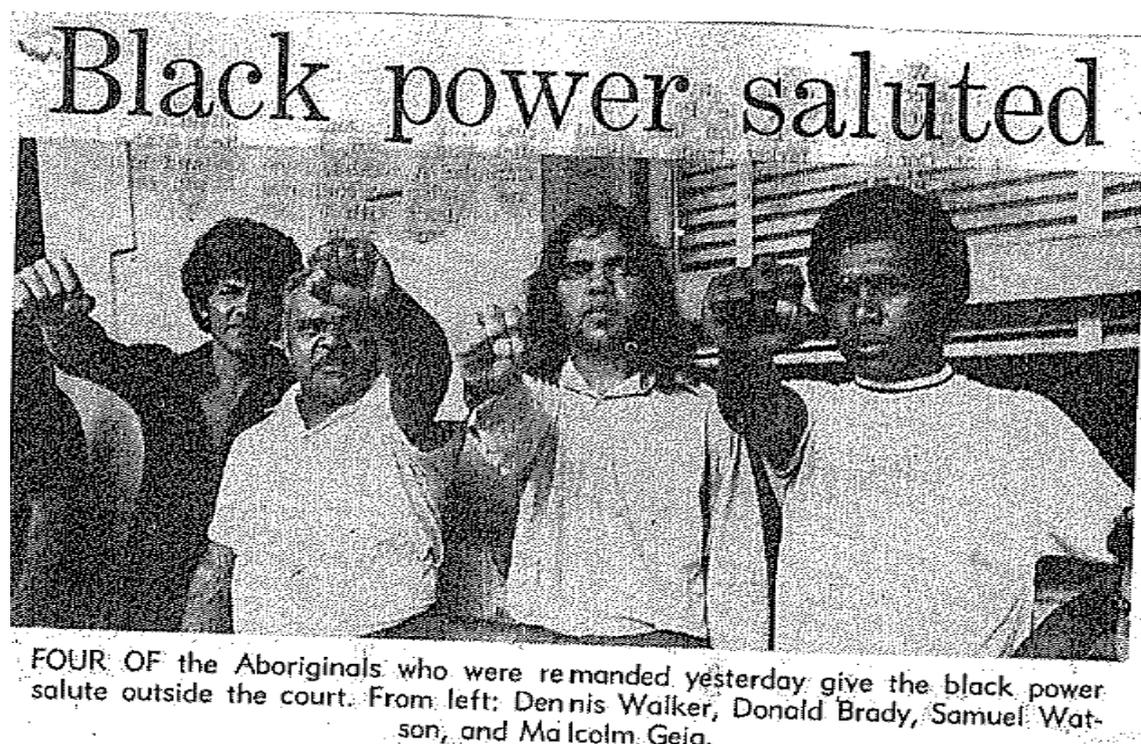


Figure 7.1 Image of Black Panther party from *The Australian* 25 November 1971. From QSA – SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-069-008 Box No: 533.

some leaflets created by activist groups. For instance, the Aboriginal Land Rights Committee circulated the 'Blacks '76 Demands', which included: 'smash racism and sexism'⁷². As they explain, though, this 'smashing' is not necessarily aggressive:

Racism and sexism are things which everyone can fight in their own lives, everyday. It is in the way people think about and treat other people that the biggest changes can come about. Calling Aboriginals 'boongs' and

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Aboriginal Land Rights Committee. 'Blacks '76 Demands'. QSA – SRS 505/1 File No: 3A/241 Box 483.

treating women like private property of men are just some things which you can begin to think about, and start to change in your own life⁷³.

The platform of the Black Panther Party Australia explains 'what we want; what we believe'. It includes freedom and self-determination, a separate black court system, land rights and economic reparations. The Black Panthers explain their forceful ideology: 'When the Government becomes a law breaker the people must become the law-enforcer'⁷⁴. The Black Panthers appealed for support from the community on the basis of class and race consciousness, suggesting that it was time to 'look deeper into the reasons why we Aboriginals and Islanders stay poor'⁷⁵. This flyer continued on to explain that capitalists get richer by 'using blacks everywhere'⁷⁶. They urged black people to unite under the cause because 'A revolution of some sort has to occur because we, blacks, are tired of being hungry aren't we?'⁷⁷

Although there was public disagreement, even then the strategic positions blended with one another on occasion. For instance, Kath Walker was an outspoken supporter of Black Power, and the mother of Australian Black Panther Denis Walker, but despite this radical ideological stance she attempted to enter politics and engage with changing the broader population⁷⁸. The *Townsville Bulletin* reported on a panel discussion held as part of the FCAATSI conference that demonstrated a similar strategic fuzziness. Aboriginal public servant, Reg Saunders, was a member of this panel discussion and is reported to have said that whether changes were achieved through 'shotguns or politics or whatever', they were inevitable⁷⁹. He implied throughout his discussion that politics was

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Black Panther Party Australia. 'Platform and Program: What we want; what we believe'. January 1972. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-069-008 Box No: 533.

⁷⁵ 'Hey Bungi!' Flyer. Date unknown. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-069-008 Box No: 533/

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Negus, George. 'Why I am going into politics by Kath Walker'. *The Australian* 27 March 1969. QSA - SRS 505/2 File No: 1A 433 Box No: 5.

⁷⁹ 'Shotguns or Politics?' *The Townsville Daily Bulletin* 15 April 1974. QSA - SRS 505/2 File No: 1A/517 No. 2 (1967-1978) Box No. 6.

the least likely way to achieve these changes, suggesting that ‘there were all sorts of red tape to be got over, and he could not see the “Aboriginalisation” of the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs in the foreseeable future’⁸⁰. The same article suggests that the panel was not unanimous in this viewpoint, as public servant and well-known activist Chicka Dixon discussed a group of ‘well educated kids’ in Canberra who had formed a group called the Young Aborigines Movement. Dixon was also hopeful that a proposed Human Rights Bill would override racist legislation in Australia. While many Aboriginal activists have been ideologically radical, they are strategically liberal. This implies a certain level of pragmatism, because activists recognise that their ideals are not necessarily realistic, at least in the short term.

This pragmatism is echoed in the present-day Townsville Aboriginal movement. A common theme that I heard throughout my research was that Aboriginal activists would like to see radical change to the system, but that it is the system we have and so they need to use it effectively. For instance, Janine described her ‘utopia’ as a socialist society, and one which recognises Aboriginal sovereignty. However, she recognises the importance of working with the mainstream political systems in order to achieve incremental changes.

Some things I’m in favour of participating in the mainstream. So, I would say politics, participating in the mainstream. Because I think you can’t be... sometimes you can marginalise yourself and that can have the opposite effect of what you’re trying to do. (Interview 11/11/08)

For Janine, this means participating in mainstream political parties, regardless of the platform.

I definitely would like to see more black people involved in any kind of political party, and we need to push one thing in particular but I think that’s how you influence things, is get as many Murris in there everywhere. And that includes some of them, sort of right wing, non-traditionally supportive political parties. But I would like to think that things are improving so much that we’ve got Indigenous people that, you know, support banking and finance and that sort of thing [laughing]. That’s how I, although I’m not particularly in support of capitalism, but I

⁸⁰ Ibid.

think that's the society we're living in so we have to engage. (Interview 11/11/08)

The need for this engagement is related to the demographic minority status occupied by Aboriginal people within Australia.

Whilst I would love it for Aboriginal people to have their own sovereignty, and their own government systems, and things like that... we're living in a society now where we're not the dominant culture. [...] We have to participate in what's going on around us and for the rest of the society. So that's participating in the economy, by working... perhaps owning a house... and that whole idea of wealth inherited, and passing it down so people can accumulate assets. You know, that's not necessarily an Aboriginal cultural thing. ... So I think we have to participate if we're going to have a share of what's going on around us. (Interview 11/11/08)

On a practical level, then, Aboriginal people simply do not have the numbers to instigate radical change and thus, their focus is on creating a space for themselves within the existing system.

It seems that the ideological distinctions between liberal and radical have lost their importance in the more recent Aboriginal social movement, to a large extent. While there is still considerable animosity between grassroots activists and those who are considered by many to have 'sold out', like Noel Pearson⁸¹ (see Chapter Four), at the local level the focus is not on ideological positions. In fact, one's ideological and strategic positions were rarely articulated; I found them hard to distinguish at demonstrations and meetings, and it was only when I probed individuals in conversation that I heard activists discuss the positions from which they operate. For instance, Gracelyn often referred to the government as 'the enemy', suggesting that even 'good cops' or 'good politicians' are ultimately loyal to the system she is working against. Yet Gracelyn maintained friendly relationships with state agents such as politicians and senior public servants, and during my fieldwork her children even began

⁸¹ Noel Pearson is a controversial character, but he does receive a significant amount of popular support. However, amongst the activists I spoke with over the course of my field work, I never heard anything supportive of Pearson. It is likely that there were people who agree with his stance, however they are probably unwilling to announce this publicly when the outspoken majority are opposed to him.

working for the Queensland Police Liaison Officer program⁸². In a similar way, anarchist activists are faced with an ideological contradiction. Anarchism suggests that all individuals should be engaged as nothing more than human beings without social roles attached, and with revolutionary potential. However, this is a source of ideological conflict when those individuals are state agents, particularly police officers, who are often responsible for excessive violence and repression of anarchist activists (Graeber 2009: 405). Although this seems like a contradiction, Gracelyn is able to distinguish between structures and individuals. She engages with state agents only outside of protest settings, and she has likely seen the strategic benefits of maintaining these friendships with people involved in institutions she opposes. For instance, she is thus informed about the general culture of these institutions, as well as influencing those who may be in decision-making roles.

Dan, a Brisbane activist, has articulated his ideological position in an interview:

Murri Anarchist is probably the best way, yeah, Murri Anarchist. Yeah, I think socialism is very close, but anarchism, the anarchist ideology and philosophy is probably closer to the Murri struggle for survival. Yup. So people ask and I say Murri Anarchist. (Interview 2/04/08)

Dan explained that there were few who would identify as 'Murri Anarchists', because,

We're still at a very early stage of the Aboriginal political struggle. We don't really have too many schools of different disciplines, so we're still working our way through that.

The Aboriginal political world is very large, very broad church. In the church there's room for a whole range of different points of view. That's healthy. (Interview 2/04/08)

⁸² Police Liaison Officers, or PLOs, are employed by the Queensland Police to improve relationships with the Indigenous community, increase cultural awareness within the police, and to divert Indigenous people from the criminal justice system. They do not have the same powers as police officers, but often work closely with police when Indigenous offenders are identified.

Still, Dan was one of the few activists I spoke with who had clearly articulated his ideological position. He was also the least willing to engage with the state to bring about change, arguing that

...nothing worth fighting for is going to be given to you by any government on a platter, regardless of the political character of the government. The only true place for political struggle is on the streets, and that's the only way you're ever going to achieve true change, true reform is through the politics on the street. Yep. (Interview 2/04/08)

If there was one clear strategic theme which emerged throughout my research, it was the need for non-violence. Despite the various ideological stances occupied by activists, from those who felt that engaging with the state was the best option to those who were radically opposed to it, there was an unbending sense that violence was not the way to achieve any goals. For some activists, the stress on non-violence arose from a previous history of violent clashes with the police. Gracelyn speaks freely about her experience with the police, in particular one episode when she was violently arrested, accused of stealing, and ended up in a wheelchair for months. Dan still has a scar received during clashes with the police at the Tent Embassy in 1972:

I got 16 stitches in the head from a police baton. And uh, yeah, so we got carted from there, to the watch house and the hospital. So I've got blood tie to that country as well. Yeah, so a lot of us spilled a bit of blood. Yeah. But quite a few coppers spilled a bit of blood too, so it wasn't all one way. (Interview 2/04/08)

Both of these activists, now leaders in their communities, are loud advocates for non-violence. When the Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group was organising daily demonstrations outside of the courthouse for Senior-Sergeant Hurley's manslaughter trial, non-violence was at the front of Gracelyn's mind. The TIHRG met with police for a month in order to ensure that both groups accepted protest plans, and to cover all possible outcomes. In the end, the demonstrations were framed as peaceful prayer vigils, rather than protests, to further remove any potential that 'troublemakers' may turn up (Petray 2010b). The concern was primarily with 'angry' young Indigenous protesters who might become violent; however there was a parallel fear of backlash, and violence from

non-Indigenous people acting in support of Hurley. The framing tactics were designed to subvert both of these possibilities.

Autonomy

Many movements face the challenge between remaining true to ideals which may be quite distant and seemingly unreachable, or compromising and working with the system for the sake of small improvements along the way. In Chapter Five I discussed the notion of prefigurative movements which aim to circumvent this challenge by locally creating the ideals they would like to spread more broadly, illustrated by Ngulumburu Boonyah. The problem with these movements, however, is that their autonomous focus can sometimes mean a withdrawal from the wider system. However, in some situations autonomous movements have successfully co-opted the system to their advantage. For instance, in a Rastafarian community in Ethiopia, social relationships have been arranged according to the movement goals; a school is run for all community children and a hospital serves the local area. These initiatives are funded through engagement with the capitalist system, 'Babylon', which the Rastafarian community ultimately opposes. One member of the community spends half of his time in New York City working as an investment banker, bringing his earnings back to the group (Petray 2009b). These autonomous activists are typically opposed to the state on an ideological level, but strategically they recognise that the state is a big structure that they cannot dismantle. Rather than trying to fight it, they simply stand to the side, creating their own spaces and engaging with the state when they need to for funding or other resources.

Day (2005) identifies several strategies typically adopted by autonomous social movements. These range from subverting the system they oppose through tactics like parody, impeding the normal operations of the system through property destruction tactics, and simply removing oneself from the system. Day (2005) also distinguishes between two types of prefigurative strategies: protests which suggest alternatives to the normal way of doing things, and the creation of alternative structures and spaces. This last one in particular is a powerful form

of activism because, as Day (2005: 19) explains, these alternatives 'render redundant, and thereby take power from' the system they oppose. However, these strategies are unique because they do not seek the 'totalising effects' of state power but rather exist in a limited context; 'in doing so, they challenge the notion that the only way to achieve meaningful social change is by way of totalizing effects across an entire "national" or "international" society' (Day 2005: 45). These movements have also been referred to as 'Grounded Utopian Movements' – grounded, because they are prefigurative and based in very real circumstances (Price et al. 2008).

For some Aboriginal activists, autonomy is an ultimate—but probably unrealisable—goal. Autonomous struggles in recent history have taken the form of walk-offs and strikes. For instance, the Wave Hill Walk-Off in 1966 began as a strike for better working conditions but the ideological stance of the group quickly became oriented towards autonomy. The Gurindji people wanted their land returned so that they could maintain cultural and economic independence. While they were waiting for the legal issues to be worked out, they simply went ahead and started their community, setting up homes and a school where the children could learn both western and traditional subjects (Hardy 1968; Attwood 2000). The Gurindji would probably not have articulated their movement as prefigurative or autonomous, but their model is a perfect example of these terms. Autonomous movements are not necessarily separate from reformist or radical movements, as this example also shows. The Gurindji sought legal reforms which would allow them to maintain their autonomous community, and when their request was refused by the government in 1971 they said that 'they are ready to take up arms to fight for this land'⁸³.

Similarly, the Palm Island Strike of 1957 was not just about working conditions but about the lack of independence in everyday life on Palm Island. In a report of the strike, written by the Director of Native Affairs, the 'trouble' which had 'occurred that day with certain natives' began as general discontent

⁸³ 'Gurindjis would fight for lands'. *The North Queensland Register* 17 April 1971. QSA – SRS 505/2 File No: 1A/517 No. 2 (1967-1978) Box No. 6.

amongst workers due to inadequate wages and unsatisfactory conditions⁸⁴. Rather than improving the conditions, however, the response taken by Palm Island Superintendent, Roy Bartlam, was to remove one of the 'instigators', Fred Doolan, for work on the mainland. On the 10th of June, several dozen people on the island went on strike, demanding a meeting with the Director of Native Affairs to explain their grievances. A letter was written to explain the position of the strikers, focusing on the lack of 'the forefreedom of which we are supposedly living under'⁸⁵. They also presented a list of 38 demands, including wage increases, election of Native Police officers rather than appointment by the Superintendent, and increased freedom of movement. The crux of their demands was for 'Coloured people to stay on the Island without white people except those required'⁸⁶. In short, the people living on Palm Island wanted increased control over their own affairs with assistance from white experts; but decision-making was to be left to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inhabitants of the island. Although they sought autonomy, the concession granted them by the government was the establishment of an Indigenous advisory council which met with the Superintendent 'as a means to obviate possible misunderstandings by the people generally of some matters which are easily cleared up by discussion'⁸⁷.

It is not just big and visible actions which are moves towards autonomy, however. Throughout my field work I saw the creation of distinctly 'black' spaces which were not attempting to change the status quo but rather allowing for desired social contexts within those spaces. These black spaces range from culturally-appropriate services such as the Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service (TAIHS) to community meetings to performances and parties.

⁸⁴ 'Palm Island Administration'. Report written by Director of Native Affairs, 13 June 1957. QSA - SRS 505/1 File No: 3A/241 Box 483.

⁸⁵ Letter from 'The people of Palm Island', 10 June 1957. QSA - SRS 505/1 File No: 3A/241 Box 483.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Letter from the Director of Native Affairs to The Superintendents, Woorabinda and Cherbourg Settlements. 9 September 1957. QSA - SRS 505/1 File No: 3A/241 Box 483.

These spaces provide the opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to address their own needs in their own manner. In the case of TAIHS, this means offering culturally sensitive health care which focuses on wellness and respects traditional roles. TAIHS describes its establishment in 1973, along the principles of self-determination:

Townsville Aboriginal and Islanders Health Services Limited (TAIHS) is one of an increasing number across Australia of self-governing, independent, community-controlled Indigenous organizations providing primary health care services to Indigenous people. TAIHS has grown up out of the desire of local Indigenous people to take control of their own health and of how primary health care services are delivered to and within Indigenous communities in north Queensland. (TGPN 2007)

The Black Community School

One noteworthy black space which was created in Townsville was the Black Community School established in 1973. This initiative was driven by Edward Koiki Mabo (who later became known for his role in the landmark Native Title case of 1992), Harry Penrith, and a small group of other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activists. The Black Community School was started because the educational system was failing Indigenous students, and these activists felt that they could do better if given the chance. In a letter to a bureaucrat in an Aboriginal education department, Harry Penrith acknowledged that 'we're not experts' and they may make mistakes, and that this was a 'rather revolutionary idea', but that something had to be done⁸⁸. In hindsight, it seems like attempting to improve educational outcomes is not all that revolutionary, but at the time it would have been a very radical concept. This was only six years after the 1967 Referendum which, according to popular memory, was the first time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were considered human beings by the broader population. In actuality, the referendum changed two parts of the constitution. The first included Indigenous people in population counts for the purpose of electoral divisions and state funding while the second made it possible for the Commonwealth government to make special laws on

⁸⁸ Letter from Harry Penrith, 31 July 1973. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01 - 25-039 Box No: 193.

their behalf (Goot & Rowse 2007). McGregor (2009b) discusses the small impact that these changes actually had, but the Referendum is referred to as a massive turning point in Aboriginal history and has meanings attached to it well beyond these historical truths. Land rights were yet to be granted and self-determination was still on the horizon. Thus, the thought that Indigenous people could do a better job of educating their children than the state was probably very hard for many people to comprehend.

Despite the odds which were stacked against them, Penrith and Mabo submitted a proposal to the Education department for the establishment of a Black Community School in August 1973. Their aims were to provide black children with an appropriate education, involving parents and the community to provide encouragement and hope. The teachers would have an understanding of 'Aborigines' difficulties and differences in outlook and aspiration' and would guide students towards the ultimate goal of tertiary education. The school was supported by the local Catholic Bishop, who provided the group with a space in South Townsville⁸⁹. The first group of students began learning in this space in September 1973, although the local press reported that it was not legally recognised by the Education department⁹⁰. These activists decided not to engage with the Education department to improve statistics; they saw an urgent need to remedy the situation and opted to fix it themselves. But rather than trying to normalise their ideas for everyone, they chose to keep their impact quite local. These are the hallmarks of an autonomous social movement which prefigures the alternatives it would like to see enacted.

The Black Community School was unpopular with some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activists in the community, who said that the school was 'apartheid, discrimination in reverse and the worst form of racism yet'⁹¹. Indigenous activists who were opposed to the school explained that they were

⁸⁹ Black Community School Proposal. Harry Penrith, 28 August 1973. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01 - 25-039 Box No: 193.

⁹⁰ 'Doubts surround legality of new Community School'. *The Townsville Daily Bulletin* 14 September 1973. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01 - 25-039 Box No: 193.

⁹¹ Ibid.

seeking integration, not segregation. Rather than disagreeing with the school on ideological grounds, the tensions may have been cultural. One Aboriginal student who attended the Black Community School for one day said he would not be going back because 'they were all mud kids over there'; the article then explains that "'Mud people" is the name by which Aborigines in this area refer to those from the Islands'⁹². The discontent was further stirred when the MP for Townsville South suggested that the school was initiated by 'the group known as the "red element" at the James Cook University'⁹³. However, these attempts to splinter the School based on racial or political lines failed. One pitfall which many autonomous movements face is the tendency to totalise—they begin in a localised context but as they gain momentum they seek to install their way of organising on increasingly broader sections of the population (Day 2005: 206). The Black Community School was not in danger of totalising, because of the controversy which surrounded it. The organisers accepted that many people did not see the need for the school, but they persisted with those who agreed with them and did not try to convince the others⁹⁴.

There are a number of letters between bureaucrats within the Department of Education and the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, and the school organisers. The Department of Education apparently encouraged the school organisers to submit the necessary paperwork for the school to be formally recognised, but that paperwork was not forthcoming⁹⁵. It seems as if the organisers were not actively opposed to the state, but rather indifferent to it. They were getting on with the business of running the school and had no time for paperwork, although they sought official support in the form of financial backing. Despite their disengagement from the state, the Black Community

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ 'Exclusive school for Aboriginals opens in Townsville'. *Cairns Post* 15 September 1973. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01 - 25-039 Box No: 193.

⁹⁴ 'Reply by Black Community School Council'. *The Townsville Daily Bulletin* 17 September 1973. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01 - 25-039 Box No: 193.

⁹⁵ Letter from Acting Director-General of Education to Mr. Killoran, the Director of the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs, 5 June 1974. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01 - 25-039 Box No: 193.

School received national attention; a national Senate committee in 1974 was given information on the school from Aboriginal researcher Lorna Lippman, who argued that the school was an 'Aboriginal initiative built on the soundest educational principles'⁹⁶.

The archives are a limited source of information, but it appears that the school ran for nearly a decade. By 1981 the Black Community School had been formally recognised by the Department of Education and was funded by Queensland State grants⁹⁷. The organisers sought permission to use Aboriginal land, such as the former Aitkenvale reserve land, rather than their rented space⁹⁸. They also sought to come under the umbrella of the State Education Department in order to receive better facilities, constant funding and stable staffing⁹⁹. This, they felt, would allow them to cater for a larger number of students. By 1982 the school had not received any further funding from the government and was forced to close, not due to poor educational standards but because of a lack of funding¹⁰⁰. This example indicates that autonomous social movements can be successful, but that they become vulnerable to collapse or co-optation when they become too reliant on the state. Hart et al. (2008) explain a similar phenomenon in regards to Indigenous self-determination struggles. Rather than actually allowing Indigenous communities to operate completely autonomously, government policy was that economic and in-kind support 'depended on individuals accepting mainstream norms first for (nuclear) family structure, settlement and life-style and then for housing occupation' (Hart et al. 2008: 53).

⁹⁶ 'Aborigines are being misled'. *The Courier-Mail* 26 October 1974. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-25-039 Box No: 193.

⁹⁷ Letter from W.A.M. Gunn, Minister for Education, to Mr Tomkins, Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs, 15 April 1981. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-25-039 Box No: 193.

⁹⁸ Letter from E.K. Mabo, R. Doolan, M. Sailor and Ms. Gibas to Queensland Minister for Aboriginal and Island Advancement, 10 March 1981. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-25-039 Box No: 193.

⁹⁹ Letter to the Director of the Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement, 14 May 1981. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-25-039 Box No: 193.

¹⁰⁰ 'Black school's future "seems pretty grim"'. *Townsville Daily Bulletin* 6 October 1982. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-25-039 Box No: 193.

Relational theory suggests that social movements are influenced by their history, which accumulates in a perpetual feedback loop (McAdam et al. 2001). Thus, it can be argued that the establishment of the Black Community School has influenced present-day activism, and more generally, the present-day Indigenous community in Townsville. The most obvious example of this is Shalom Christian College, a school which teaches more than 300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from years 1 to 12. Moreover, Shalom is led by a board of directors which is made up entirely of Indigenous people. Founded in 1992, Shalom is affiliated with the Uniting Church and accommodates residential as well as day students. It services many students from rural and remote Indigenous communities in an attempt to provide them with a more culturally appropriate experience than they might receive at other boarding schools (Shalom Christian College 2009). The fact that Shalom has been running for nearly two decades—twice as long as the Black Community School ran—is dependent on several factors. First, it has never operated outside of acceptable frameworks; it is a recognised educational institution which fits within the framework of religious education, which has long been accepted by Australian society. In contrast, the Black Community School was only loosely affiliated with the Catholic Church and did little to fit within state frameworks of education. This official status of Shalom has also meant that it has been well-resourced since its inception, and it does not struggle for funding and materials in the same way that the Black Community School did. However, I suggest that the Black Community School started the work of making Indigenous education an acceptable venture. It was highly controversial at the time, so when a more moderate alternative presented itself in 1992, the Black Community School had smoothed the way.

Black Spaces

The Black Community School is a very good example of the black spaces which many activists seek to create. Spaces, Tuan (1977) suggests, are abstractions which are often eventually made concrete through linkages with

places. Black spaces like schools have the longevity to become places. They are easier to examine than more fleeting black spaces, such as community meetings or days of celebration, because it existed in the public eye and for an extended period. But the issues faced by the Black Community School are paralleled by many autonomous spaces. They face a contradiction between operating independently from the state and relying on state engagement for resources. Despite this struggle, they do not seek legitimacy from the state, which allows them to get on with the task at hand, whether it is education or health or community building or simply having fun. This type of movement, which Day (2005) calls non-hegemonic because it does not seek societal dominance, is more likely to be successful in the long-run at creating lasting change to the system because its alternatives can run parallel to the state. Thus, it is less threatening than radical movements aiming to take power and revolutionise the system, and it is less likely to be co-opted than liberal reformist movements seeking gradual changes (Day 2005). Still, Day (2005: 205) argues that autonomous social movements struggle with these same tensions, and the Black Community School is a good example of this. Autonomous movements which are seen as unlawful or defiant are often repressed, whereas those which are legal and less confronting are under the threat of co-optation if they are too successful. Despite these tensions, autonomous movements have the potential to create meaningful and lasting social change.

Locally, the effects of these black spaces are multiplex. On one level, they create opportunities to build a strong community. They are spaces which are safe from outsiders where issues can be discussed and debated. They provide an opportunity for the community to exist on its own terms. This is even more pronounced given that these black spaces are often constituted in spaces which can be physically identified as Indigenous. For instance, all of the community meetings I attended throughout my field work were either at St Theresa's Church, which is run by the Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Council, or at the Townsville Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre. These spaces are run by Indigenous people and so the community is more comfortable

occupying them. In contrast, I attended a few events such as discussion panels or celebratory days which were held at the university or in local parks and they did not possess the same secure feeling, and they were rarely as well attended as meetings in black spaces. Especially when events are held at the university, there is a sense that Aboriginal people do not feel at home in this space, if simply for the fact that they do not know their way around the campus. However, the creation of black spaces in the more comfortable locations adds to a sense of community and builds up a collective identity, which is important for movement success (Friedman & McAdam 1992). Even when organisations are created within the system, to help Indigenous people negotiate state forms, these black spaces allow for Indigeneity to take precedence. Organisations like the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (ATSILS) or the Yumba Meta Housing Corporation have to shape themselves to fit within state frameworks. They are therefore constrained and cannot be 'autonomous' to the extent that other independent spaces can be. But the fact that they privilege Indigenous world views and ways of relating to one another makes them valuable black spaces.

At the same time, black spaces are a starting point for change. A strong community is more likely to appear worthy, unified, numerous and committed, which Tilly (2002) argues is vital to movement success. Moreover, these black spaces can act as seeds which grow into larger structures within broader society. As the Black Community School illustrates, these ventures are not always popular but they do bring attention to pernicious issues like poor educational standards for Indigenous students. They exist as experimental spaces in which alternatives can be attempted. The global justice movement creates similar spaces, called Temporary Autonomous Zones (TAZs), as an attempt to live without state control if only in a limited temporal and spatial context (Day 2005). Similarly, South America is a source of many examples of spontaneous and informal spaces which reconstitute social relations as an alternative to state domination. As Day (2005) discusses, Chilean women set up communal kitchens to feed their neighbourhoods when state economic policies made it difficult for

poor families to survive. Likewise, the 2001 collapse of the Argentine economy led to mass community organisations and worker-controlled factories (Day 2005; Petray 2009b).

These autonomous spaces attempt to remain as invisible as possible, because attention often means repression or co-optation. Still, Day (2005) follows Perez (1990) in arguing that these spaces help people to become non-Oedipalised and uncoded individuals. Deleuze and Guattari (1977) took the Freudian notion of the Oedipus complex and used it to understand the current social order, arguing that the state Oedipalises individuals and imposes its norms on us. The solution for revolutionaries is to become more like 'the schizophrenic', who has successfully resisted this process by remaining nomadic and constantly moving. Thus, these autonomous spaces, even if temporary and subterranean, have the effect of strengthening rhizomatic networks which allow for the perpetuation of resistance. The autonomous spaces, whether short-lived or more long-term, provide opportunities for the community to express their own differences internally, to a homophilic audience. At the same time, they increase perceptions of unity by acting as a space in which those differences are celebrated. An increase in these networks and in autonomous spaces may eventually create a hegemonic shift beginning from the local level (Petray 2009b). These autonomous movements are in fact more likely to create radical change to the system, because as Harvey (2005) argues, uprisings against the system can only come from within it, although they must have a desire not to take the place of that system but rather to transcend it. They must reshape power relations, as has been illustrated by the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico and around Latin America and the world. The mere existence of these autonomous spaces is a challenge to the system because they suggest a meaningful alternative.

What makes these autonomous movements so unique, according to Day (2005: 45; original emphasis), is that they refuse to 'work through the state, party, or corporate forms. Instead, they are driven by an orientation to meeting individual/group/community needs by *direct action*'. In this sense, these black spaces created by the Townsville Indigenous community are similar to the TAZs.

They are a practical solution to meeting community needs, from education to health care to a forum to air grievances. However, they are merely one component of organising done by Aboriginal activists, and these black spaces are not the focus of activism. The Aboriginal movement, as a whole, does work through state forms and could not be classified as a non-hegemonic movement. This strategic diversity means that activists are never wholly focused on creating autonomous spaces and building alternatives. But for most activists, this is not the ultimate goal and thus, the strategic diversity may have beneficial aspects.

Ideological unity and difference

As discussed in Chapter Five, collective identity is a vital component of movement longevity and is influenced by demographic homophily and diversity. One strategic and ideological strand which has existed throughout generations of activism is the notion of unity. This is seen as an important feature of Indigenous activism, but has not remained constant throughout the history of Aboriginal resistance. Instead, activism has moved back and forth between localised and pan-Aboriginal, from concerns affecting singular groups to concerns affecting Indigenous people more generally. The earliest forms of resistance to colonisation and racism were very localised. Several Aboriginal groups petitioned local authorities and the media, as well as British royalty, requesting permanent usage rights of reserve areas. One of these groups was based at the Coranderrk reserve in Victoria, and in the space of a decade had cleared land, established infrastructure and planted cash crops; in 1875 their success instigated a push by the local white population to move the reserve. After years of petitions, meetings and media coverage, and a march from Coranderrk to Melbourne, the government committed itself to improving the station, rather than relocating it, in 1882 (Attwood & Markus 1999; Newbury 1999).

In the next century, the focus of the movement generally was more pan-Aboriginal, and it is in this time period that an identifiable 'Aboriginal movement' began to coalesce. The 1938 Day of Mourning conference, in protest

to the sesquicentenary of Australian colonisation (Newbury 1999), and the national campaign for the 1967 Referendum (Taffe 2005) are good examples of the sort of national campaigns run for Aboriginal rights. But even when the focus of activism was highly pan-Aboriginal, there was still a significant tension between urban and rural Aboriginal people (Maddison 2009). In a pamphlet explaining their new group, the Queensland Black Rights Tribunal explained that they 'are of the firm belief that if we black people want a better deal, we must unite and fight together'¹⁰¹ (Figure 7.2). Likewise, a 1988 march protesting the Australian Bicentennial celebrations was recorded in a documentary titled *One People Sing Freedom*. The documentary, explains an ABC press release,

...filmed them as they came together, reflecting a diversity of views, environmental conditions, colour and behaviour. This unique gathering represented almost every aspect of Aboriginal circumstance in Australia today. Desert communities beside urban, fringe, rural. Songmen from the Tiwis alongside Christian Aborigines and city activists¹⁰².

Activists regularly mention the need to work together, arguing that a united front was the only way to effectively challenge state power. After the pan-Aboriginal protests of the 1980s pushing for a treaty, and the 1992 Mabo decision which made Native Title a possibility, the Aboriginal movement swung back to this localised focus, with Land Rights acting as a major galvanising issue for many Indigenous groups.

The creation of a distinct, unified group is not limited to cultural or racial sameness; collective boundaries are more firmly drawn when there is an ideological component as well. One of the easiest methods for doing so is to identify an 'enemy'. Novak (2006: 3) recognises the importance of drawing boundaries between a clearly defined 'us and them' or the creation of an oppositional force in order to solidify who 'we' are, as movement participants. This 'us and them' mentality 'focuses the fight, generating energy, enthusiasm and passion' within social movements (Maddison & Scalmer 2006: 116).

¹⁰¹ Queensland Black Rights Tribunal. Unpublished flyer, date unknown. QSA - SRS 505/2 File No: 1A/1380 Box No: 63.

¹⁰² 'One People Sing Freedom' Press Release. Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 20 April 1988. QSA - SRS 3501/1 File No: 01-015-010 Box 112.

QUEENSLAND BLACK RIGHTS TRIBUNAL

MANY MOONS AGO THE WHITE MAN CAME TO AUSTRALIA AND SLAUGHTERED OUR PEOPLE WITH BULLETS. TODAY THEY ARE DOING THE SAME. THIS TIME THEY ARE USING BULLDOZERS AND WHITE MAN'S ROGUERY. IF WE ARE TO RETAIN OUR RIGHTS WE MUST STOP FORMING SMALL GROUPS, STOP SQUABBLING AMONGST OURSELVES, BECOME UNITED, FORMING ONE BIG TRIBUNAL IN OUR STATE. WE WILL BECOME ONE HELL OF A BIG TRIBE, FORCING OUR VOICES TO BE HEARD BY THE BIG SMOKE DOWN SOUTH (CANBERRA) AND WITH THE HELP OF GOD OUR PEOPLE MAY NEVER GO HUNGRY AGAIN.

"WE WILL SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT WHICH SUPPORTS US"

Figure 7.2 Flyer from Queensland Black Rights Tribunal. QSA - SRS 505/2
File No: 1A/1380 Box No: 63

Townsville Aboriginal activists sometimes struggle with this, finding that they often need to work with or accommodate those outside of their movement boundaries. For instance, the Human Rights Group was outspoken that 'the police are our enemies' but yet worked closely with the local police department in the lead up to the Hurley trial in June 2007 to ensure that protests went as smoothly as possible. This has the effect of blurring the boundaries between 'us' and 'them', because activists engage with systems they explicitly oppose.

Similarly, Gracelyn was close friends with several state-level politicians in the Townsville area, and she often confided in them or sought advice from them. But in certain contexts, she maintained distance from these people because they represented the government. She attempted to keep the distinction between 'us and them' in protest situations, but because of her personal relationships this distinction was not always clear. Many activists are opposed to government actions but they do not explicitly formulate the government as the 'enemy'. For instance, the purpose of the group GAP Strategies was to get Indigenous people more involved in politics, clearly illustrated by the event they organised for local mayoral candidates to speak to the Indigenous community. Likewise, the Stolen Wages campaign was attempting to work with the government despite their fundamental difference of opinion over the issue. Activists demonstrated outside of government offices but they also met with officials for discussions aimed at reaching a consensus. There was never a clear sense that the government was an enemy, but when the final decision was handed down that an education fund would be established with the reparations money, activists felt let down and betrayed. The 'us and them' distinction is even fuzzier in terms of cultural revival activism. These activists are not operating from an anti-state framework; rather, like the Rastafarians (Petray 2009b), they are largely indifferent to the state.

Without clear distinctions between 'us' and 'them', there can be many ways of formulating social movement goals and activities. This has ramifications for the ways in which a social movement is perceived. A unified movement is more likely to be taken seriously by outsiders (Maddison & Scalmer 2006; Tilly

2002). Tilly (2004) argues that social movements rely on WUNC displays, by which he means displays of worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment. WUNC is performed as a means of backing up identity claims through such means as dressing neatly, the presence of dignitaries, children and clergy, matching visual representations such as badges or tee shirts, and visible participation by the old and handicapped (Tilly 2004: 4). Organisers of social movements make efforts to suppress 'all signs of division, weakness, corruption, or triviality in the public image presented by the movement' (Tilly 2002: 54) in an effort to make up for any of these areas which are insufficient. Thus, since the Aboriginal movement often suffers from small numbers, it must appear more unified, worthy and committed. These displays of WUNC are critical to the impact a movement will have and strong WUNC performances increase the likelihood of state recognition (Amenta & Caren 2004).

It is thus in activists' best interests to appear unified, at least publicly, regardless of underlying tensions which may exist within activist groups. This is something that has weighed heavily on the minds of Townsville Aboriginal activists several times throughout my field work. There is always pressure to present a united front, which is why activists regularly called community meetings in which everyone from the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population was invited to discuss certain issues, such as the Northern Territory Intervention, deaths in custody, and Stolen Wages. These community meetings were almost always held at St Theresa's Church, the local Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Church which freely offered its space and sound system to community groups. In these community meetings activists are able to garner the general consensus on the issues and communicate action plans to 'the community'¹⁰³.

¹⁰³ Of course, it is problematic to speak of 'the community' as if it is a coherent entity with one stance on every issue. And this was demonstrated by these meetings, which were often (but not always) poorly attended, and/or dominated by a few family groups, and did not always end in consensus. However, this is the terminology which is used by Aboriginal activists so I will follow their lead in this instance.

The question of unity was most noticeable, however, within the Stolen Wages campaign. As I discussed in Chapter Four, the local activists in the Stolen Wages Working Group were reluctant to let more outspoken activists like Gracelyn act as the spokespeople for the campaign. The Stolen Wages campaigners told me that they were appreciative of the media attention these activists brought to the issues, but the people who deserve public credit are those who have done the 'hard yards', or the background work which brought this issue to attention in the first place. In Townsville, Louise and Lilian cautiously agreed to work with Gracelyn but said the 'lack of trust' might make this difficult. Gracelyn was personally upset by this, but she actively tried not to bring attention to the issue publicly. She expressed her feelings on the issue in a private meeting of the Indigenous Human Rights Group and shared her concerns that the in-fighting was happening at a bad time, considering the media attention which was focused on the campaign.

These internal issues were addressed in a community meeting that lasted for several hours one Saturday morning. The tension in the church was palpable, and when things started to heat up the white people in the room were asked to step outside for several minutes in order to create a truly black space to work the differences out. There were only four of us, and we waited outside for over an hour as the personal issues were worked out. They explained that we should not take it personally because they had to 'sort out some blackfella business' which they would rather keep private. After we re-entered the meeting I was able to gather that the conflict started after a white woman told the Stolen Wages campaigners that Gracelyn 'hated them' – which Gracelyn vehemently denied. Interestingly, the source of the conflict was located by all parties as 'outside' of the Indigenous community. By blaming a white woman, the Indigenous community is able to maintain the possibility of collective identity and reduce the chances of schism in the community. Similar blaming patterns were seen in the 1970s; Read (1990: 80) discusses the division of the National Tribal Council into factions, but points out that 'whenever the whites, by refusing to give ground, remained the common enemy, the unanimity lost in the all-indigenous

organisations was at once reasserted'. Placing the discord externally diffuses the conflict and allows people to move past it together. The truce seemed unsteady and it felt as if there was animosity from every direction, but everyone agreed not to let outsiders come between them again; rather, they would address issues openly, which they considered the 'blackfella way'.

It is important to note that unity and difference are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and they can actually strengthen a movement, 'as long as an effort is made to develop respectful and inclusive organisational practices' (Maddison & Scalmer 2006: 131). Activists are reluctant to work with one another if they have very different approaches, but this could be successful if they adopt formalised mechanisms for ensuring all voices are heard and represented. In this stolen wages campaign, an alliance was eventually established after several community meetings, and both Gracelyn and Louise led separate delegations to meet with government officials on behalf of the Stolen Wages campaign. In these community meetings where the tension between strategic approaches was worked out, there was a lot of animosity. But at the end of every meeting, even if consensus had not been reached, the chair person of the meeting reminded everyone that 'we are all on the same side here'. This reminder of commonality is a way to increase feelings of unity despite tensions. For instance, in one far right-wing US group, studied by Snow and Clark-Miller (2003, in Snow 2004), there were noteworthy differences which brought the group close to schism on several occasions. When these ideological differences threatened group stability, the focus was shifted to the commonalities shared by group members.

It is impossible to expect that a movement as broad as the Aboriginal movement, even the localised branch in Townsville, could ever be truly unified. The movement represents a substantial diversity of constituents. The community includes people who grew up in Townsville, those who grew up in other rural areas, and people from Aboriginal communities like Palm Island. Various ideological positions are also held by community members, and while this issue is rarely discussed it does indicate some ongoing tension within the

movement. Thus, seeking unity seems to be a futile act but it is something which is incessantly sought by movement participants. This is likely due, at least in part, to their experience in activism and their knowledge that movements which display WUNC are taken more seriously by the state and the general public. However, there also seems to be reluctance on the part of non-Indigenous Australians to accept this diversity of opinions within the Aboriginal movement (Maddison 2009). By struggling to present a unified front, Aboriginal activists may perpetuate the broader notion that there is one singular community and ideological position occupied by Aboriginal people, which can be harmful for the movement in the long-term.

In actuality, diversity may be good for social movements. Diversity and difference may contribute to the construction and maintenance of movement identities (hooks 1997). Further, too much ideological unity could have a detrimental effect on movements; as Geertz (1964: 56) points out, 'Commonality of ideological perception may link men together, but it may also provide them, as the history of Marxian sectarianism demonstrates, with a vocabulary by means of which to explore more exquisitely the differences among them'. Burgmann (2000) argues that ideological differences make strategic sense for social movements. Although there is often significant tension between radical and moderate segments of social movements, they actually benefit one another. In practice, radical strategies gain the attention of the media, the public, and the state. The goals of these radical strategies are seen as unrealistic, but they make it possible for liberal activists to have more success. In comparison, the liberal strategies are seen as level-headed and more worthy of respect and cooperation. As Burgmann (2000: 14) explains, 'Moderate gains are best achieved not by moderate and respectable means, but by militant and disrespectful activity'. This is because such militant activity shifts the spectrum of public opinion 'to a point where less radical versions of the same position seem reasonable'. A movement's WUNC can also be strengthened by this ideological diversity. When a radical arm of a movement displays its commitment in a radical manner, the more moderate arm of that movement (which has worked hard to display its

worthiness by, for instance, dressing neatly) becomes more widely acceptable *in contrast* to that radical arm. For example, in the environmental movement, tree-sitters and monkey-wrenchers raise public awareness about environmental issues, but these actions are seen as radical and excessive. As a result, however, the Green Party seems more acceptable in comparison. As a whole, this movement can display many aspects of WUNC, which progresses the movement as a whole. Movement successes are one means of strengthening movement identity (Friedman & McAdam 1992), so this difference in ideology is, ironically, one way of actually increasing unity.

Summary and Conclusions

The history of the Aboriginal movement in Australia is characterised by striking differences between radical sectors of the movement and more moderate activists. In the past, these factions were at odds with one another, but in present-day activism the distinction has largely fallen into disuse, probably due to pragmatic reasons. Activists in Townsville recognise that they will not dismantle the state, nor will they overhaul social relations. Thus, even those activists who have very radical ideals work strategically with the state in order to make practical differences. In addition to these two major distinctions, however, some social movement theorists add another category, the autonomous social movement. The Aboriginal movement in Townsville does not identify as an autonomous movement and their focus is not on creating an ongoing alternative to the system; however, the activism adopted by the movement does lead to the creation of black spaces, often small in scale and short-lived, in which the community can act autonomously. Despite the fact that ideological distinctions are no longer articulated by movement participants, tensions still arise when activists operate in very different manners. However, the Aboriginal community in Townsville has ways of dealing with this, namely by locating the source of discord outside of the community itself to allow for future collective identity.

This chapter has demonstrated the nomadic nature of ideological foundations in the Aboriginal movement. This is a result of the cultural,

historical, social and political contexts in which the movement operates, and understanding these relationships is vital for understanding the movement. Rather than adopting one firm foundation and operating from the position, Aboriginal activists recognise that their historical disadvantage means they need to remain willing to fluctuate. As nomadic groups moved with the seasons, using cues in the local environment to determine how long they should stay in one location and when to move on, the Aboriginal movement relies on cues from the political environment to dictate its movement between ideological positions. When political goodwill towards their cause is low, they adopt more liberal strategies and attempt to make small-scale changes. But when public opinion shifts in their favour, they move their ideological base to a more radical approach and change their strategies accordingly.

Because ideological meanings are socially constructed, they change as social context—interaction, discourse, identification, and so on—shifts (Snow 2004). Thus, strategic foundations are contingent on a number of factors. Of course, external contexts like political goodwill and public opinion are important. But internal social movement factors play an equally important role, such as the constituents who make up the movement, the issues they want to address, the coalitions and networks they form, and the activism they are willing to undertake. All of the issues discussed in previous chapters have a part in determining the ideological structures of the Townsville Aboriginal movement.

However, this is not a simple cause-effect relationship, as relational theory is careful to remember. The strategic position of a movement, while influenced by internal and external factors, also acts as a structure which shapes those factors. Thus, a movement with a particular ideological foundation will attract certain individuals, and will affect political and social understandings of the issue at hand. In this regard, it is perhaps even more beneficial for the Aboriginal movement in Townsville to maintain strategic and ideological nomadism, so that it can respond most effectively to these factors. This allows the movement to engage with the state despite political and social changes, whereas a movement with a fixed political stance may find it difficult in certain

periods to engage with state actors. The Townsville Aboriginal movement has adopted this nomadism as the most effective strategy for movement success and longevity.

Eight

Discussion and Conclusions: Historical, Social, Cultural and Political Dimensions of the Relationship between State and Movement

The Aboriginal movement in Townsville has developed into its current form due to the historical, social, cultural and political factors guiding its relationship with Australian state regimes. Looking at these contexts provides a relational perspective of the movement and offers the most comprehensive understanding of social movements. Townsville Aboriginal activism has developed into a broad and diverse social movement. It is made up of a range of people who embrace many different styles of activism and some who prefer not to identify as activists at all. These activists organise themselves into groups with a variety of organising principles. Activist groups seek to—but also struggle with—inter-movement networking, regularly challenged by the need to engage with outsiders. The tactical repertoires (della Porta 2008; Tilly 2002, 2004; Taylor & van Dyke 2004; McAdam et al. 2001; Tarrow 1998) adopted by the Aboriginal movement reflect its position as both culturally unique and politically disadvantaged within the broader Australian context. The ideological foundations of the Aboriginal movement are fluid and shifting, even within groups and individuals, not because these positions are poorly thought through but to allow for flexibility. This final chapter contextualises the Townsville Aboriginal movement, examining the environment in which it operates and the impact this has on the social movement processes discussed in the preceding chapters.

Historical trajectories

The brief history presented in Chapter One has positioned Australia's Aboriginal people in a decidedly disadvantaged position. There is currently considerable debate about the influence of this history on the disadvantage and 'dysfunction' characteristic of Aboriginal communities. Anthropologist Peter Sutton (2009) and Aboriginal academic Noel Pearson (2000) claim that Indigenous politics has relied too heavily on a sense of victimisation, and that this is a key factor in the dysfunction of Aboriginal communities. Instead, they suggest a mainstreaming of Aboriginal communities, encouraging economic development and the application of broader social expectations and laws, such as compulsory school attendance, on Indigenous communities is required to improve quality of life. Many activists and academics argue, however, that the current levels of poverty, poor health statistics, low educational outcomes and high rates of violence are a direct result of the disempowerment of Indigenous communities since colonisation. For instance, King, Smith and Gracey (2009: 76) argue that

Indigenous social inequalities, which result from a combination of classic socioeconomic and connectivity deficits as well as Indigenous-specific factors related to colonisation, globalisation, migration, loss of language and culture, and disconnection from the land, lead to the health inequalities of Indigenous peoples.

Thus, Indigenous people are doubly disadvantaged by both culturally-specific (historical) and general socioeconomic determinants of health. Of course, the low socio-economic status of many Indigenous families can be traced, at least in part, to these same historical factors. One of the main arguments of the Stolen Wages campaign is that those workers were unable to build up enough wealth for their children to inherit; this has become an intergenerational cycle of poverty. The historical oppression of Indigenous people has also led to widespread racism towards them, on both an individual and an institutional level (Morris 1997). Glowczewski (2008) argues, contrary to the arguments put forth by those such as Pearson and Sutton, that culture should not be separated from politics, health, or justice. Incorporating culture into the solutions, she

argues, has 'a remedial effect' on Indigenous communities and eases the process of healing (Glowczewski 2008: 105).

Aboriginal Australians have been politically disadvantaged since Australian colonisation. Aboriginal people have had few opportunities to speak out against injustice and violence, relegated to silence as white 'Protectors' spoke on their behalf for nearly a century (cf. Reynolds 1989). And although they were technically Australian citizens since federation (cf. Reynolds 1996), Aboriginal people were unable to practice the rights that came with citizenship. Legally, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people gained the right to vote in Queensland in 1965 (other states gave the franchise earlier, in most cases by 1962; Cuneen & Libesman 1995). But, the popular opinion is that Indigenous Australians were not allowed to vote, were not considered citizens, and even that they were counted as fauna rather than people, until the 1967 Referendum.

The reasons for this are most likely due to the protracted campaign for a 'yes' vote, carried out by FCAATSI in the lead-up to the referendum. FCAATSI campaigned with posters and advertisements linking a 'yes' vote with Aboriginal rights. McGregor (2008) highlights the unique lack of a campaign for a 'no' vote in this referendum, arguing that this allowed the 'yes' campaigners to make extravagant statements without challenge or clarification, leading to the confusion around the issues. Still, McGregor (2008) points out that 'Commonwealth and state governments (with the significant exception of Queensland) had granted Aborigines most civil rights before the referendum'. Despite attaining these rights, Indigenous people in Australia still remain practically voiceless in Australian politics. As Maddison (2009, 2008) argues, Indigenous struggles *against* post-colonial dependency are necessarily played out in political contexts, resulting in ongoing dependency upon state structures. Following Bradfield (2006), Maddison (2008: 41-2) goes so far as to say that 'today Aboriginal people here [in Australia] probably experience less in the way of formal political autonomy than any comparable settler society anywhere in the world'. Despite the official government policy of self-determination for Indigenous communities, which ran between 1972 and 2005, Maddison (2008)

points out that little self-determination was actually achieved in practice, because real autonomy would have been too disruptive to the status quo. This present-day lack of political power is firmly rooted in the historical relationship between the state and Aboriginal people.

The history of Australian colonisation is regularly called upon by activists as a justification for their struggle. I realised from the earliest stages of my fieldwork how important history is to this social movement. Activists remind Australians of this history in order to validate protest. Of course, this is a history that many non-Indigenous people would rather forget, as evidenced by, for instance, John Howard's refusal to apologise to the Stolen Generations. The trajectory of public discourse tends to minimise the historical reasons for protests, particularly illustrated by the Palm Island protest riots of 2004 (Osbaldiston & Petray 2009, 2010a). Anthony (2009) discusses the media representations of that event, arguing that a 'moral panic' was created which positioned the Indigenous residents of Palm Island as outsiders, reinforcing the opposition between 'mainstream' Australia and Indigenous people. As Anthony (2009: 468) points out, however,

The protest was not construed as a reaction to the death of Mulrunji or the long history of Indigenous deaths in custody and police aggression towards Indigenous people. Rather, the Palm Islanders were presented as an uncontrollable and irrational group.

While many Aboriginal people attribute this event to the long-running oppression of Indigenous people, even comparing it to the strike of 1957, this depiction is not shared within broader public discourse.

As with the history of colonisation, the history of activism is regularly utilised by activists, acting as a source of pride for activists. Activists regularly remember their own roles in the history of Aboriginal resistance. In meetings of the TIHRG, Gracelyn often referred to past events, often reminiscing with others in the group who had been there with her. She bases her strategy for present-day activism on these past experiences, supporting the relational theory of continuous feedback loops in activism (Chapter Two). For instance, in the lead-up to the Hurley trial demonstrations, Gracelyn wanted to organise 'marshals' to

monitor interactions between police and protesters, and she wanted a lot of cameras to document everything. This, she told the group, was because she had been in many protests in the past where violence broke out at the instigation of the police, particularly the protests after the 2004 death of TJ Hickey following a police chase. The presence of cameras, and elders, and religious figures was intended to reduce the risk of the same thing happening in Townsville – it was an attempt at social construction of a protest, which was ultimately out of her hands and dependent on many other factors.

Activists do not rely solely on their own memories but also use family and community members' experiences as a starting point for their own activist identities. In the case of community memories, like the Palm Island strike of 1957, the public remembrance of this event—through the commemorative play but also through regular discussions at community meetings about present-day activism—gives activists a sense of continuity, as they are carrying on a struggle which has continued for decades. These memories serve as a unifying force, bringing people together despite personal differences. More specifically, they provide certain activists with a sense of legitimacy and authenticity—those activists who can trace involvement in protest through family lines are more often leaders in the movement. Their political consciousness has been shaped throughout generations. This is not to say that those who do not have activist 'ancestors' are unwelcome in the movement; rather, those who do have a pre-existing and clearly defined role within the collective memory.

This shared history—both positive and negative—acts to build collective identity. A shared identity is vital to the longevity of social movements because it gives activists a sense of purpose and belonging and improves retention. When people feel like they are part of something, they are more likely to remain committed even during quiet periods and after setbacks (Hunt & Benford 2004). Blumer (1969) argues that movements rely upon collective identity, which could be developed by, among other things, organising formal ceremonies and rituals. In the Aboriginal movement in Townsville, these formal rituals were performed at every protest demonstration in the form of smoking ceremonies and dancing;

formal rituals began every community meeting with a welcome to country, and ended the meeting with a prayer; regular formal rituals celebrated Aboriginal culture through NAIDOC Days and Sorry Days; and formal rituals commemorated past events like the Palm Island strike, the 2004 death in custody, and the 1967 Referendum.

But, there is a tendency in the Aboriginal movement to focus on history and to act in a reactive manner, rather than proactively making changes as some movements do. I do not mean that Aboriginal activists are interested in keeping the status quo, but the positive changes they seek are all reactions to something. In my fieldwork I participated in protests against deaths in custody and against the Northern Territory Intervention. Even the seemingly proactive protests I took part in were historically-rooted: the Aboriginal Sovereignty march in Canberra was focused more heavily on the problems of colonisation than on imagining a concrete alternative. Sorry Days were focused on the government response to the Stolen Generations. This reactive tendency in the Townsville Aboriginal movement is, of course, based on the history of extreme injustice experienced by Indigenous people since the colonisation of Australia. But this historical focus may also lead to stagnation. Instead of creating something positive, and working towards a future, the movement is fixated on the past. Many activists argue that they cannot build something new until these injustices have been addressed, but social movement theorists and participants in other movements see the value in pre-figurative movements, even in situations of ongoing oppression (cf. Day 2005; Graeber 2004). Burgmann (1993) refers to pre-figurative tactics as the self-conscious creation of a microcosm of the ideal future society within the current structures.

Some movements simultaneously challenge *and* pre-figure, known variously as autonomous or non-hegemonic movements. These movements are defined by both their future focus and the way 'their visions of strong utopias have formed to counteract conditions of racist imperial oppression' (Price et al. 2008: 128). These movements, however, do not seek recognition from states the way that more mainstream movements do. The examples used by Price et al.

(2008) include the Ghost Dance, a Native American, culturally-based resistance to white oppression based in the Great Plains area from 1889 until at least the 1920s; the Rastafari movement, focused on Jamaica (see also Petray 2009b for a discussion of Ethiopian Rastafari as an autonomous social movement); and 'long-durée' Maya activism, the term applied to the five centuries of resistance waged by Maya groups in Central America. Other examples are discussed using different terms but which are similarly focused on both the future and the present, such as the global justice movement and its associated non-hegemonic movements (Day 2005; Ribeiro 2009) and portions of the US Civil Rights movement (Lowe 2009). Examples of proactive and prefigurative movements are present in the Aboriginal movement, in Townsville and more generally. For instance, the 'cultural activists' in the Aboriginal movement, such as the women from Ngulumburu Boonyah, work to create a space in which tradition is valued (see Chapter Five). Likewise, the creation of 'black spaces' is simultaneously geared towards the present time, but also a form of future imagining (see Chapter Seven). These proactive forms of activism, however, are not the focus of the Townsville Aboriginal movement.

Collective identities

The social atmosphere of Townsville is not typically thought of as a tolerant and welcoming one that nourishes alternative identities. Gracelyn often referred to Townsville as the 'Ku Klux Klan capital of Australia', as did one protester outside of the courts immediately following the riots on Palm Island in 2004, who reportedly held up a placard reading 'The Capital City of KKK is Townsville' (AAP 6 December 2004). Townsville's reputation as a racist city became international news when an article was published in the United Kingdom's *The Guardian* (Fickling 21 June 2003) detailing the racial tensions felt in the area. The article refers to Townsville as 'the most racist town in Australia' and 'the capital of Australia's deep north', and it makes reference to events like the desecration of Eddie Koiki Mabo's gravestone, painted with swastikas the night it was erected. In 2003, the article reports, the tensions were erupting in

violent attacks such as beatings and hit-and-run accidents, particularly directed towards Indigenous people 'sleeping rough' in the parks. This assertion was based on recurring appearances of the KKK in the media and in the lives of Indigenous peoples. In 2003, residents in several Townsville suburbs reported receiving leaflets in their letterboxes, recruiting potential members who agree with the Klan platform that 'We don't have to live with the blacks, there is enough white power to make a stand so let's start doing so. Before our children have too [sic]' (AAP 2 August 2003). During my field work, an anonymous interview was conducted with a self-proclaimed Klan member based in Cairns, who claimed that there was a KKK cell operating out of Castle Hill, one of Townsville's inner-city suburbs (McKinnon 5 July 2007).

It is unclear why Cairns does not receive international media attention, given that a self-described KKK member from that city spoke to the media; rather, Townsville is notorious while its neighbouring cities escape notice. This is possibly because of the sheer number of newsworthy events which arise in Townsville. They are newsworthy because of the timeframe they are spread across - they are close enough together to illustrate consistency but far enough apart that they grab headlines. Moreover, Townsville is home to a large military base, and those events which involve the military often attract substantial media attention (Murphy 16 June 2005; AAP 9 February 2005; Jones 12 November 2004; AAP 11 November 2004). I do not want to suggest that the military is the sole cause, or even the main one, of racism in Townsville. The issue is far too complex to simplify in those terms. However, several noteworthy racist incidents in the recent past have been linked with the military. Because the military is an agent of the state, acts of racism are seen to reflect a broader government attitude towards Indigenous people, thus impacting on the outward sense of animosity between this social movement and the Australian state. Despite the fact that the Townsville City Council has little to do with the military, both are tentacles of the Australian state so the local city is identified by these (and other, non-military) incidents. It is conceivable that this social atmosphere would lead to a culture of fear, in which Aboriginal people are afraid to make

themselves visible through social movement activities. When Aboriginal activists were prominent news items, for instance during the Hurley trial, activists reported spikes in violence towards Indigenous people. Gracelyn said she received threatening phone calls, particularly after she appeared in the media. During the Hurley trial, protesters gathered one morning to news that a sign scrawled 'Die Blacks Die' was hanging in Oonoonba, one of Townsville's suburbs. In this sort of social setting, Aboriginal people become socially constructed as a problem, similar to Morris's (1997) findings in rural New South Wales.

However, as Janine demonstrated in Chapter Four, identity construction is not always reliant on a nurturing atmosphere. Sometimes, identities form in opposition to something and political consciousness arises as a response to conservatism. This phenomenon has been closely studied in terms of 'political opportunity structure' (Chapter Two), which posits that social movements develop in the context of environmental structures (McAdam 1982). This framework identifies two types of structures within which social movements operate: open, which allow easy access to the political system, and closed, which make access to political structures difficult (Kriesi 2004). Despite the criticisms of this theory (cf. della Porta & Diani 2006; Olzak 2004), political opportunity theorists have come to the interesting conclusion that the most open structures do not always result in the most resistance. Rather, social movement actions are based on a complex consideration of the risks posed by engaging in protest, as well as the risks of not doing so (cf. Goodwin and Jasper 2003). A similar conclusion may be drawn about the social structures in which the movements operate, which are closely linked to formal political structures. The risks to activists working in Townsville are that they may be targeted by racist violence if they engage in protest. However, based on the racist label provided to Townsville—indicating that this violence is not solely in response to activism but an ongoing phenomenon—it appears that they face the same risks even if the social movement is not active. Thus, it is probably the case that this 'closed', hostile social system actually creates the need for active protest movements. This

perception of hostility may also strengthen the collective identity of the movement, because it clarifies the 'us versus them' relationship, giving Aboriginal activists a clear opponent – racists – to unify against.

Another factor which strengthens notions of collective identity is Aboriginality. The factor which differentiates Indigenous movements from others, such as the environmental movement, is the unique cultural and racial (Cowlshaw 2004a) identity shared by movement participants. This is not to say that there is cultural sameness across Aboriginal Australia, nor that all members of the Townsville movement come from a singular background. As I have demonstrated throughout this thesis, there are a number of different identities occupied by activists in the Aboriginal movement (see also Maddison 2009; Merlan 2005; Rowse 2000). However, they are united by their sense of being Aboriginal. This is an identity which is largely inherent; although some individuals may choose not to identify with their Aboriginality, many do not have that option because their race is physically inscribed on their bodies. Many more would never dream of denying their Aboriginality, and these are the people who make up the movement. This category, which was imposed upon a continent of people with the arrival of European colonisers, has become a positive identity, indicating the Foucauldian concept that 'subordinated peoples are not passive entities over whom power is exercised' (Cowlshaw 2004a: 62). This understanding of power relations has become widely accepted in the social sciences, as evidenced by its incorporation into relational theory (Chapter Two). One's Aboriginal identity may not be chosen, and it may be socially constructed (Morris 1997), but it is integral to a sense of unity. As Cowlshaw (2004a: 60) points out, 'racial identities are powerful and positively significant'. Moreover, 'indigeneity' links activists into a global network, which they may not utilise but to which they feel a sense of belonging (Merlan 2009).

Politically, the concept of pan-Aboriginality has been used by activists as a tactic. Showing the links between 'urban' and 'rural' or 'tribal' Aboriginal peoples has been an important builder of collective identity on a nation-wide scale. Aboriginal academic Marcia Langton (1981) wrote scathingly of

anthropologists who ignored the similarities between these three groups, arguing that even 'urban' communities are characterised by some kind of 'Aboriginality'. She suggests funerals and internal conflict resolution as just two instances of the complex culture maintained in urban Aboriginal settings (Langton 1981: 17). In fact, Langton (1981: 19) argues that maintaining a sense of Aboriginality provides a sense of security amidst the hostile white society and offers a "'sane" way of negotiating the demands of an "insane" society'. Rowse (2000) identifies the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in 1972 as a key event in the attention paid to pan-Aboriginality by the state. The risk with invoking pan-Aboriginality is that Indigenous peoples can practice 'strategic essentialism' (Spivak 1988); as Speed (2006) encountered in her work with Indigenous groups in Chiapas, Mexico, many activists self-essentialise as a political tactic. Indeed, throughout my fieldwork I often heard activists speak about the deeply spiritual nature of Aboriginality, romanticising the links between Aboriginal people and 'the land'. While this may be true for some Aboriginal individuals, it is misleading to suggest that it is inherent to the 'Aboriginal experience'. However, this is a concerted framing tactic which posits even the most political activists who may be very distant from the 'cultural' activists (Chapter Four) as 'traditional' and worthy of 'preserving'. Indeed, 'urban' activists are more likely to posit this notion of pan-Aboriginality because, as Rowse (2000: 189) argues, 'to be "urban" is therefore to be cross-regional'.

Of course, as I have revealed in this thesis, the movement is characterised by a notable amount of dis-unity, despite activists' attempts at pan-Aboriginality and collective identity. There was schism and in-fighting throughout my field work. The Stolen Wages dispute was the most inflammatory example, but it was not isolated. Smaller skirmishes happened on a regular basis between individuals, particularly surrounding issues of activist approach. For instance, tensions between 'cultural' and 'political' activists were ongoing, though latent. Gracelyn often vocalised her frustrations with Florence's gentler approach, although she consistently acknowledged the value of their diversity and the two worked together. This tension, though a personal one between two sisters, was

reflected amongst activists with different styles, who thus adopt different tactics and strategies for bringing about change, throughout my fieldwork (see Chapter Four). The following example was one of the few times that this tension was made explicit, rather than remaining an undercurrent in the conversations of activists.

In November 2007 I attended a consultation held by the Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) regarding policing in Indigenous communities. For several months, Florence had worked on a submission for policy changes to which the CMC had tentatively agreed, and Townsville was to be used to trial of this new policy framework. This meeting was held with several stakeholders from the Indigenous community and the legal sector to discuss the details of the trial. The majority of people who attended the meeting seemed optimistic—they wanted to work with the CMC to ensure that appropriate policies were put in place, and while they were aware of the potential for problems they were hopeful for the best outcomes. After the meeting had finished, participants gathered for tea and coffee, and at this point we were joined by Gracelyn. She was far more cynical, and reminded the CMC representatives of all of their past failures, questioning them especially about the investigation of Senior-Sergeant Hurley on Palm Island, which had not followed normal protocols (Waters 2008). She became visibly worked up as she argued with the CMC representatives, and the tension in the room was palpable. Gracelyn referred to the CMC as a ‘toothless tiger’ and was sceptical that their changes would be effective. After the meeting, both Florence and Gracelyn separately expressed their frustration with one another. Florence had worked hard on her submission and wanted to be supportive of positive change. Gracelyn was disillusioned with Florence’s attempts to engage with these state agents and saw the meeting as a waste of time. But despite their frustrations, they still valued one another’s role in the activist arena and often worked together to achieve their goals.

Rather than indicating a fractured movement, this infighting actually signposts a cohesive community. As the discussions of homophily and diversity

have shown, very cohesive groups have been shown to lead to cliques and fragmentation (Gargiulo & Benassi 2000; Granovetter 1973). Infighting can only happen within cohesive groups. As I noticed throughout my fieldwork, there were several non-Indigenous individuals who fell out of favour with Aboriginal activists, and the movement response was to close off any engagement with those people. There is no compulsion to even argue with those they feel are not part of the movement. When activists make the effort to argue, it is with people they value and appreciate. In the case of the Aboriginal movement the overarching need for unity means that infighting is more common than schism. Schism—or the splintering off of factions who refuse to work together—would result in several closed groups who do not communicate with one another. The case in Townsville, however, is several groups with overlapping membership, who sometimes argue about the best way to approach the issues. Although they may not always work in harmony, throughout my fieldwork I witnessed a genuine sense of unity focused on the importance of sticking together. Klandermans (2004: 367) offers one possible explanation for this, because ‘for an activist ingroup-outgroup dynamics may turn the movement organization or group into a far more attractive group than any other group “out there” that is opposing the movement’ (Klandermans 2004: 367). In other words, it is easier to overcome internal disagreements than the relationships with those outside the movement. Arguments between cultural and political activists, for instance, are easier to navigate than the opposition between Aboriginal people and the state, so the groups form a united front with which to face the world. Behind this front may be infighting and arguments, but they are externally unified. This is why it was so upsetting to activists when politicians and the media became aware of the infighting surrounding the Stolen Wages campaign. The resolution to this conflict, interestingly, was placing the blame on an ‘outsider’ (Chapter Seven).

Klandermans (2004) identifies three key motives which account for social movement activity: instrumentality, ideology and identity. Instrumentality is best measured in movement successes, which is especially important to very focused campaigns, such as Stolen Wages or the activism surrounding the 2004

Palm Island death in custody. The activism on these issues was time-limited and had fairly discrete categories of success versus failure. The death in custody activism had a success when the decision not to charge Senior-Sergeant Hurley with manslaughter was overturned; the fact that he was going to trial was an historic event and was seen as a major win by activists (Waters 2008). The Stolen Wages Working Group had a small window of opportunity in which to wage their most recent campaign, as they tried to influence the government about the use of the remaining funds in the reparation scheme. However, when that window closed and the government made a decision which was seen as a loss to activists, they did not see that as a concrete failure or the end of their activism. Rather, they broadened their goals and began planning for legal action as well as international networking.

However, aside from specific campaigns, many movement goals are very long-term and hard to define, so the other two motives are likely more important to social movement participants. Klandermans (2004: 365) refers to ideology as the desire to express one's views, and to dignify one's life through struggle and moral expression. However, these political emotions which activists seek to express are socially constructed (Klandermans 2004); therefore this motive is closely linked to the third, identity. Klandermans (2004: 364) distinguishes between personal identity—'all these different roles and positions a person occupies'—and collective identity—'a place shared with other people'. While this thesis has focused largely on the latter, the importance of activism to personal identity should not be ignored. Regardless of education, occupation, income or social standing, it is possible to become an important member of the Aboriginal movement. This allows activists to 'be somebody', even without other status indicators. Their identity within the movement becomes important, and they have a sense that they are a part of something larger, fighting for a worthy cause. However, this can lead to people becoming possessive of their role in the movement and protecting against outsiders. Trigger (1997: 93; 1992) discusses the land rights process, illustrating 'a pattern of competitive status relations among senior Aboriginal people themselves, whereby knowledge is

withheld and revealed strategically'. In the same way that cultural knowledge becomes a form of capital in the land rights system, political knowledge and experience is used to elevate some while excluding others in activist realms.

It is clear that a strong sense of collective identity increases the likelihood of participation in a social movement. The Townsville Aboriginal movement has worked hard to be inclusive (Petray 2010b). This collective identity is likely because of the historical dispossession of Aboriginal people which has resulted in a variety of different backgrounds (ironically, the same phenomenon which leads to infighting). The strong sense of 'groupness' (Brubaker & Cooper 2000) is also due to the small proportional population of Indigenous people within Australia; at 2.5% of the total population, Indigenous Australians are a severe minority and thus need to work together, as 'one people', in order to bring about change. As Burgmann (1993: 18) points out, social movements are most effective when they concern people directly: 'As far as prospects for change are concerned, the more a social movement can appeal to self-interest the better'. Thus, the Aboriginal movement has worked hard to construct itself as a human rights cause, in terms of justice and decency.

However, the possibility of white people working in solidarity with Aboriginal groups is still a challenge, if we think of solidarity in Berger and Cornell's (2006) terms as an active concept 'where people with privilege don't sideline themselves but instead endeavor the difficult task of both providing and respecting other's leadership in the movement, based on our complicated positioning and responsibility'. White people who are involved in the Aboriginal movement in Townsville largely fell into two groups. One group of people tried to direct activism, making suggestions to groups, assuming leadership roles, and speaking on behalf of activist groups. Members of this group of white supporters were quickly ignored, as I witnessed on several occasions (Petray 2009a). The other group of white supporters, those whose involvement is longer-lasting, have a tendency to 'sideline themselves'.

For example, the TIHRG included several non-Indigenous women, and there was a very clear tendency for these women (including me) to defer to

Aboriginal leadership. When decisions had to be made, the white women in the group waited to gauge Indigenous opinions before offering an opinion. But when trying to create productive, meaningful partnerships between white and Aboriginal people, Cowlshaw (2004a: 68) argues, 'it is not enough to position oneself safely in the wake of Indigenous spokespersons, echoing and endorsing their sentiments'. At one of the early meetings I attended, I was seated next to a non-Indigenous woman in her 60s who spoke up a few times during the meeting. After the second comment she made, I heard her mutter to herself: 'Oh be quiet, it's not your group'. Several weeks later, after the Hurley trial had finished and the energy of the group was waning, another non-Indigenous group member remarked to the half-dozen women gathered for a weekly meeting—all non-Indigenous in that week—that 'I thought this was an *Indigenous* group?' This comment prompted the newest non-Indigenous member of the group to question her presence there, wondering if by joining she was taking away from the group's 'Indigeneity'.

However, Aboriginal members of the TIHRG went out of their way to invite these white women to join. There seemed to be a genuine interest in partnership, as Gracelyn in particular sought feedback from white members of the group. She did not want to share the decision-making, as evidenced by the exclusion of 'bossy' white people (Petray 2009a). But productive relationships were hard to achieve because the white women in the group were afraid of recreating colonial power relationships, which got in the way of real solidarity. Instead, the white women in the group became, as one member put it, 'the ladies who make tea'. Speaking about the dynamics between white and Indigenous academics, Cowlshaw (2004a) points out that many Indigenous academics are 'protected' from academic arguments because white people defer to their opinions. There is a similar dynamic with many white people involved with the Aboriginal movement. They are so afraid to offend Aboriginal people that they never really become engaged in the movement. Instead, they run errands and donate money and attend protests, but many white people lose interest in this limiting role and become increasingly disengaged with the movement. Graeber

(2009: 20) argues that for a real collective to emerge from hierarchical groups, there needs to be a sense of ownership felt by all members. This sense of ownership is something that is never likely to appear in the TIHRG given the white members' sense that the group was exclusively owned by Indigenous members.

Social movements in a democratic state

The rhetoric surrounding liberal democratic states like Australia is that everyone is an important political actor and that citizens have a number of opportunities to make their voices heard (Chapter Two). According to political opportunity structure theories, decentralised federal states like Australia offer multiple points of relevant access on the national, regional, and local level (Kriesi 2004: 70). Citizens can air their grievances to local councillors, to state politicians or to the local representative in federal parliament. Taking a more relational perspective of this theory, there are also opportunities to speak to a number of public servants representing various government agencies, to seek policy change on specific issues. In other words, the heavily *peopled* nature of the Australian state, and the localisation of state agents, leads to more opportunities to access the political system. This highly open political system can be detrimental to social movement successes, however. Piven and Cloward (1977) have pointed out that in democracies there is an expectation that change should originate through the electoral system. Public protest, then, is seen as an unnecessary nuisance, and often written off without regard for the actual issues raised. Even activists, despite their reliance on such protests, have placed a large emphasis on the role of the electoral system in order to achieve change in a liberal democracy like Australia.

For instance, the 2007 federal election was viewed as an important platform from which to push Aboriginal issues. This election was called just months after the start of the Northern Territory Emergency Response, and activists perceived it to be the most important issue of the campaign. Activists went out of their way to ensure that the Liberal Party, led by John Howard, was

not re-elected. The TIHRG hosted several community meetings, inviting political candidates to speak to the Indigenous community. George Colbran, local Labor Party candidate, spoke to a small crowd at St Theresa's Church about his hopes for improving conditions on Palm Island by creating small businesses. Andrew Bartlett, former Queensland Senator with the Democrats¹⁰⁴, spoke passionately about his opposition to the Northern Territory Intervention. When the Australian Labor Party, led by Kevin Rudd, was elected in November 2007 activists considered the election results to be indicative of public discontent with the Howard government's treatment of Indigenous issues, particularly relating to the Northern Territory Intervention and the need for an official apology to members of the Stolen Generations. Activists were optimistic following the 2007 election of Kevin Rudd's Labor government, but this positivity only lasted for several months; when the Intervention was not rolled back, and when the Apology did not manifest in any perceptible changes for Indigenous Australians, activists became disillusioned with the Labor government and expected to see large swings away from Labor in subsequent State and by-elections. On the other hand, the local council elections in early 2008 were seen as a real opportunity to elect an Indigenous person to local government. GAP Strategies hosted the forum for mayoral candidates to address the Indigenous community, but the most popular speaker on the night was Sam Reuben, the only Indigenous candidate running for election. Aboriginal activists put a lot of effort into supporting his campaign, although many of them had expressed cynicism about the potential of electoral politics previously. This highlights the dialectical nature of the relationship between activists and the state; they are not *truly* opposed to one another, despite appearances.

This example highlights the nomadic and sometimes contradictory nature of the Aboriginal movement, discussed in Chapter Seven. Similarly, Rowse

¹⁰⁴ The Democrats were a minor party in Australian politics formed in 1977. They operated as an influential minor party, securing the balance of power in 1980. Throughout the next three decades, they were the main third party in Parliament, committed to their slogan of 'keeping the bastards honest', often in terms of human rights and environmental protections, amongst other issues. Despite a strong history, they were unable to win any seats in the 2007 election and so the party disbanded (Australian Democrats 2009).

(2009b) discusses the paradox of Indigenous faith in the government. Based on the *Australian Reconciliation Barometer*, Rowse reports that Indigenous people surveyed strongly support the views that past policies have been unsuccessful, and even that race-based policies have played a role in Indigenous disadvantage. Yet they remain hopeful that this will not happen in future. As Rowse (2009b: n.pag.) eloquently sums up, 'History has taught Indigenous Australians that governments can do them great harm, but their expectation and hope remain high that governments can do them good'. Maddox (2008: 21) suggests that those who do not benefit from electoral politics are likely to lose faith in the electoral system:

Their loyalty to the state, which gives it its legitimacy, depends on their being able to trust that their voice is heard and that their opinions are respected. That can be lost if they find themselves continuously on a losing end that is never given any concessions.

In order to appeal to a broad range of potential supporters, Aboriginal activists interpret political events a certain way and take part in the social construction of events (though they are only one party in the social construction, as relational theory is careful to consider). As Foucauldian scholars have discussed, language is not just a means for communication, as it also 'bestows meaning and categorises experience within the world' (Morris 1997: 165). Language, then, is the primary way of 'framing' or 'socially constructing' an issue in a certain light, which is a key activity of social movements. This is illustrated in simple details, such as the choice to use the name Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group, rather than the Justice Committee. Gracelyn's repeated choruses that 'this isn't a black issue, this is a human rights issue' similarly attempted to universalise the Aboriginal movement (Petray 2010b). As Morris (1997) points out, racist discourse is an attempt to normalise racist ways of thinking as 'commonsense' knowledge. Likewise, social movement participants engage in a process of shaping 'commonsense' through social construction, as they frame their struggle in universal terms and attempt to socially construct a more inclusive public which cares about 'human rights' for Aboriginal people. This social construction can be seen in the way that activists

formed a coalition with labour unions to frame the issue of stolen wages as a labour issue (Chapter Five), and also in the performance of Aboriginal culture as a practice of strategic essentialism (Chapter Six).

Another key form of 'language' utilised by Aboriginal activists is statistical data. Rowse (2009a: 194) discusses the importance of official statistics to Indigenous intellectuals, despite the presumption that they 'are primarily a tool wielded oppressively by the colonial powers and their contemporary successors'. Rather, statistics are used by Indigenous activists to socially construct their struggle in terms that the broader population can understand. However, the fact is that these statistics are typically gathered by the state, often through census data or through other government programs. This is another way that states and movements are linked to one another. This system is not ideal, because it limits the arguments of the movement to those categories which are deemed important and measurable by the government – currently health and to a lesser extent education and home ownership. Thus, activism is constrained by the state, because statistics are a simple and effective way to ensure reportage in headlines and sound bytes. However, activists willingly accept these constraints because statistics do provide a common language with which to engage the broader public, and establish a certain 'truth value' to their claims (Henry 1999).

Yet, to maintain the democratic identity discussed in Chapter Two, the state must respond to at least some of the challenges presented by social movements. The relationship between the state and the movement is a dynamic one, and both parties interact with one another, make changes based on the others' actions, work together, oppose each other, and weigh up the costs and benefits of each of these responses. Although my focus throughout this thesis has been on the social movement side of this relationship, state actors engage in the same process to determine their response to social movements and political events (McAdam et al. 2001). If democratic governments are seen as representative of their citizens, then they need to respond to demands made by those citizens. When the demands come from a small minority of the population,

there is less pressure for response. But no matter how small the minority, if the media has been effectively utilised, and if the issue has been socially constructed as important to those outside of the social movement, the pressure increases. The suture metaphor, which Laclau and Mouffe (1985) take from Lacanian theory, involves a filling in of some lack—making up for something which is missing. Following this metaphor, social movements have a tendency to point out lacks in hegemonic practices, thus rupturing the social order, so the process of suturing is a way to fill in and stitch up the lack. This can look like co-optation, because it typically involves the incorporation of a previously marginalised group. If hegemony is conceptualised as a body, the influence of typical social movements is felt on the skin. Deep cuts may enter lower levels, but for the most part these challenges can be sutured with no damage to the underlying structure of hegemony—the state system. Of course, these sutures may leave permanent scars, such that hegemony is never quite the same as it was before. In this way, social movements can make changes in society, assured of the fact that their challenges will be incorporated into the social order. And if the state does not respond to quickly incorporate these challenges, the ruptures will deepen and the changes which are eventually made have the potential to be more profound.

Hamilton and Maddison (2007) argued that the Liberal government, run by John Howard and in power from 1996 until 2007, slowly eroded the democratic institutions of the Australian state. Although the government changed midway through my field work, there did not seem to be any noticeable differences; whether it is too early to judge or no immediate changes are coming is yet to be seen. Thus, even when there was a large public campaign, social movement issues were not always accommodated. For instance, the Stolen Wages campaign had a large support base from the labour unions, and waged a protracted and broad campaign for the government to pay full reparations instead of converting the remaining money into a scholarship fund. While the government responded by increasing original payments a small amount, they did not address the key concerns of the campaign, that the offer should be

reopened and made available to people who were previously ineligible for the reparations, or that payments were offensively small relative to the amount which was collected by the Queensland government over the decades of income management.

In Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) conception of politics, democracy is an 'open road' which provides the possibility for all laws and social norms to be challenged. However, it is very hard to predict the origins of these challenges. In this sense, it is likely that the Townsville Aboriginal movement is advantaged due to its shifting ideological foundations. Although the tactical repertoire of the movement may remain fairly steady, the ideology underlying those tactics changes regularly, thus avoiding predictability. The state and social movements both evolve in their tactical repertoires, in response to the others' actions and responses. But when the strategy impelling those tactics changes, it becomes harder for the state to respond quickly; the response will vary depending on the level of engagement sought by Aboriginal activists and their ultimate goals.

Despite the general desire to engage with the Australian state, and the broadly inclusive nature of the Aboriginal movement, one thing is fairly constant: Aboriginal activists do not seek to become part of the state apparatus. This is, of course, not universal: Aboriginal people have run for public office since the years immediately after the Referendum, when Kath Walker ran for Queensland parliament¹⁰⁵ and when Neville Bonner was a liberal senator from 1971 until 1983 (Rowse 1997). In the 2007 federal election, former Black Panther Sam Watson was one of at least six Indigenous candidates (AAP & Boase 2007). In the 2008 Townsville City Council election, Aboriginal candidate Sam Reuben received 13,012 votes, from a total of 974,508 votes cast on 88,920 ballots (Electoral Commission Queensland 2008). This is a small number of votes, but out of 49 candidates Reuben received more votes than 20, which was seen as a noteworthy result in Townsville. Despite these examples, party politics is the exception, not the rule, amongst Aboriginal activists. The sentiment was often

¹⁰⁵ Negus, George. 'Why I am going into politics by Kath Walker'. *The Australian* 27 March 1969. QSA - SRS 505/2 File No: 1A 433 Box No: 5.

expressed by Gracelyn, who regularly said that politicians may be well-meaning, but even those she considers friends have ultimate loyalties to the state – a system to which Gracelyn vehemently expresses her opposition. Therefore, their loyalties are split and activists must remain cautious of putting too much faith in the political system. This may explain why, of the six candidates reported by the *Koori Mail* in the 2007 federal election, none were affiliated with a major party. Four ran as independents, one with the Socialist Alliance and one with the Greens Party (AAP & Boase 2007). This indicates a lack of engagement between Aboriginal people and the two main parties. Janine took a similar scepticism towards the end of my research. Early in my fieldwork, she had the opinion that the electoral system was an effective way to bring about change; she even envisioned an eventual role in politics for herself. But after her May 2009 trip to the United Nations, Janine had changed her mind. She told me that she realised the structures confining politicians are too rigid to overcome. They are bound to their parties, and to maintaining public support, and this limits their abilities to make unpopular decisions, even though it might lead to real, positive change. Instead, she feels that real change must come from outside of the political system.

Of course, one often overlooked alternative to party politics is the autonomous social movement. These movements operate from within the system, but under the surface – though not as part of the structure, as politicians do. The Black Community School in Townsville was a good example of this. It operated legally within the confines of state education regulations, and after its initial establishment it existed largely unnoticed. Without the attention of the public and the state, the risks of co-optation are considerably reduced. After all, if the system does not notice a rupture in its surface, it has nothing to suture (Petray 2009b). The goals of these movements are different – rather than seeking to change the system, they just want to exist without government interference. Thus, the idea of success is almost foreign when compared with other forms of activism. However, other social movements regularly, if unknowingly, employ more transient forms of autonomous activism, such as community meetings and

celebrations in Townsville. These transient black spaces, more so than the Black Community School, begin the process of what Berger and Cornell (2006) identify as the way forward for social movements: developing internal power by creating pre-figurative spaces and simultaneously confronting the state and oppression.

The state and the movement

The relationship between states and social movements is made more complex because of the nature of both as simultaneously structure and agent. In both cases, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and the structures have their own logic and momentum. States and social movements both operate according to their own rules. But at the same time, these structures are peopled. So in addition to a relationship between two structures/agents, there are countless relationships which exist between the people who make up a social movement and the people who make up a state. As I have mentioned in previous chapters, this is illustrated by the friendships between activists and state agents like politicians and public servants (or in many cases, the shared identity of activists who *are* public servants). For instance, I spent time on several occasions with Gracelyn and Mike Reynolds, then Townsville member and Speaker of the House in the Queensland Parliament (now retired from that position). Mike came to parties at Gracelyn's home, and they also regularly met for meals and drinks out. From what I saw of these interactions, the general pattern was that Mike bought the drinks and Gracelyn sounded him out on political issues. She did not discuss specific plans of the Aboriginal movement, and rarely talked practicalities like social movement tactics. Rather, she spoke more generally about issues like deaths in custody, stolen wages, and the Intervention.

Both Gracelyn and Mike benefit from this relationship. Gracelyn gains insight into the inner workings of the Queensland Parliament, as Mike gives advice on the ways to approach issues in the most effective ways. She also uses Mike as a sounding board, knowing that he is already sympathetic to her cause and that they agree on a number of issues. If Mike does not agree with the

statements she makes, then Gracelyn knows to re-frame an issue in order to appeal to an often less sympathetic parliament and general public. From the other side of the relationship, Mike gained political benefits from his friendship with Gracelyn. Through their conversations, Mike was able to maintain a detailed knowledge of the issues concerning one sector of his constituency. He could then respond strategically, often by making public comments about the issue. The stage of Mike's political career gave him some freedoms that many politicians do not possess; on the verge of retirement, he could publicly disagree with his Labor Party colleagues without concern for his political future. On a more superficial level, the relationship makes Gracelyn seem more important as a leader of the movement, given that she maintains friendships with important politicians. Conversely, Mike comes across as in touch with his constituents. I am not suggesting that Gracelyn or Mike have maintained their friendship with any of these benefits in mind. Rather, from my external perspective these are the outcomes that I witnessed from their relationship.

Ironically, Gracelyn is one of the activists I worked with who is least willing to engage with the state to bring about change. This is likely a result of her history in activism; Gracelyn became active in the social movement in the late 1960s. Historian Russell McGregor (2009a) discerns a profound shift in the nature of Aboriginal activism in the years following the 1967 Referendum. He argues that the period saw a decline in the desire for Aboriginal people to be incorporated within the Australian state. Rather, the focus shifted to the construction of a pan-Aboriginal solidarity, and McGregor also identifies a rise in Aboriginal nationalism in that time period. McGregor argues that the 1967 Referendum led to a sense of disillusionment among many activists when the anticipated national inclusiveness never eventuated. But, among all but the 'extremist fringe', there was never a move to secede from the Australian state (McGregor 2009a: 351). Even the Black Panthers, arguably one of the most radical groups in the movement's history, had a hard time imagining a separation from the Australian state (McGregor 2009a). Similarly, the Zapatistas in Mexico, while almost idolised by global justice movement, do not envisage a

future outside of the state system. The Zapatistas offer an example of an Indigenous group which has worked proactively to gain autonomy, rather than waiting for it to be granted. However, this autonomy is conceptualised *within* the Mexican state. There has been no discernable push by the Zapatistas to become autonomous *from* Mexico (Belausteguigoitia 2006; Landzelius 2006).

The rising nationalism and pan-Aboriginality that McGregor identifies was short-lived, according to Martinez (1997). The 1980s and 1990s saw this pan-Aboriginal identity splinter into many mini-nationalisms, focused instead on localised definitions of identity. While the pan-Aboriginal identity may have been less prominent during that period, I argue that it was not discarded completely. Based on accounts of activists, and my more recent field work, it seems that activists maintain a keen interest in national issues, as well as local issues from around the continent. For instance, the 2004 death in custody on Palm Island and the subsequent riots were of interest to Aboriginal people far outside of North Queensland, evidenced by the bus of about 30 activists who travelled from Melbourne and Sydney to attend Lex Wotton's trial in Brisbane, as well as the solidarity protests held in places like Melbourne (*The Koori Mail* 23 April 2008). Similarly, the 2008 death in custody of a Western Australian Aboriginal leader captured national attention and featured in an episode of *Four Corners*, the investigative journalism show on the ABC (Jackson 15 June 2009); this death also attracted the attention of the Townsville Indigenous Human Rights Group and several community meetings in Townsville.

An even more salient national issue is the 2007 Northern Territory Emergency Response. In the more than two years since the Intervention began, protest demonstrations have been held in all major cities. National email networks like Working Group for Aboriginal Rights (WGAR) and Women for Wik have sent many petitions, demonstration notices and news items around the continent, illustrating the extent of opposition to the Intervention. Townsville had several community meetings focused on the Intervention in the weeks after it was announced. And in mid-2009 a panel discussion was organised by the James Cook University branch of Amnesty International to give a number of

Townsville activists and academics the opportunity to express their opposition to the Intervention. Gracelyn feels that this issue was important enough to be the deciding factor in national politics. First, she attributes the Labor victory in the 2007 federal elections to broad discontent over the Intervention. Several months later she claimed the Labor Party would suffer for continuing the Intervention. Her point was supported, she argues, by the 8.2% swing away from the Labor Party in the 2008 Northern Territory elections and by the 6% swing away from the Labor Party, and their subsequent loss of power in the 2008 Western Australia elections (ABC Elections 2009).

It is hard to tell at this stage if the national interest surrounding the Intervention is just an expression of the latent pan-Aboriginal solidarity that has remained since the shift McGregor (2009a) identifies, or if a renewed sense of nationalism is re-emerging across the continent. There seems to be a sense of urgency for a national representative body since the 2005 dissolution of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). ATSIC was a national umbrella organisation which was intended as both a means for Indigenous peoples to have a say in politics and a funding source for service-delivery to Indigenous communities. Following corruption investigations and mismanagement of funds, there was a profound sense presented by politicians and the media that ATSIC had not worked. In 2008 the Australian Human Rights Commission conducted consultations around Australia, and they made it clear that the ATSIC model would not be repeated. The problem, it seemed, was that ATSIC was a national body made up of many locally-focused councils and organisations. But at the consultation in Townsville, the mainstream view of ATSIC's failure was refuted; participants claimed that ATSIC had worked in this region, and that there had not been any problems with it. They valued the opportunity to engage with the state on a local level. The government-imposed solution to ATSIC was the National Indigenous Council, a body of appointed representatives to advise the government on Indigenous issues. The non-democratic nature of this Council left Aboriginal people feeling left out of the

political process, a feeling which became particularly salient when the Northern Territory Emergency Response was announced.

In response, a group of activists joined together in Alice Springs and formed the National Aboriginal Alliance (NAA). Members of this alliance were not elected, but were considered to be 'leaders' in their geographical areas. From the Townsville area, Gracelyn attended and became a member. The NAA was intended to lobby the government on behalf of Indigenous people, but the lack of real power and, perhaps more importantly, funding, led this organisation to be short-lived. The 'grassroots' activists who made up the NAA had to pay for travel to meetings themselves; thus, only one meeting was held, in September 2007. Following the election of the Labor government in November 2007, the Human Rights Commission was given the task of creating a new representative body. Consultations were held throughout 2008, and while the representative body is still in the earliest stages, it seems that the body will not be made up of local councils which send representatives to the national level. Rather, the consultation report claims that the representative body 'needs clear, robust and transparent relationships with regional and local groups but does not need to formalise this in order to be credible and effective' (Australian Human Rights Commission 2009: 16). Townsville activists are sceptical that this body will be effective, as the government has no obligations to consult or work with the body and it has sought funding from corporate sponsorships rather than government sources. Regardless of this scepticism, there is a clear sense that Indigenous people need a national voice in order to effectively make claims on the government.

'Politics' is a relational concept, in which multiple parties negotiate with one another for power. Contentious politics in particular involves two key parties – a group which considers itself to be subordinate, and a body to which they make their claims (McAdam et al. 2001). This thesis has provided an in-depth look at the contentious relationship between the Aboriginal movement in Townsville and the Australian state. This relationship pervades all levels of the movement, beginning with the individuals who become activists. This

relationship influences the organisational structures adopted by groups within the movement. This relationship dictates the tactical repertoires adopted by the movement. And this relationship produces, and is produced by, the strategic and ideological foundations of the movement.

Given the relational nature of social movement, the character of the Aboriginal movement is negotiated through their interactions with the political and social spheres in which they operate. These spheres were particularly rocky in 2009, and it was a slap in the face for Aboriginal activists when Senior-Sergeant Hurley received an insurance payout of \$102,000 for loss of property following the 2004 riots on Palm Island. Further emotional setbacks came when Hurley petitioned for a second inquest into the death in custody, in the hopes of removing his responsibility for the death from the records. Moreover, the NT Intervention was ongoing, the Stolen Wages campaign had not succeeded, and little had been done by the Australian government since the 2008 Apology to the Stolen Generations. Throughout 2009, activists in Townsville seemed exhausted. The activities of this social movement became more reactive and small in scale – rather than large street marches there was a shift towards individual advocacy. Activists expressed their fatigue on a personal scale, which affected – and was affected by – the fatigue of the social movement as a whole.

However as I was finalising this thesis, in June 2010, the Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) released its report on the investigation into the handling of the 2004 death in custody on Palm Island. The CMC found that the Queensland Police Service had mishandled their investigation of the death and that this was symptomatic of the corruption across the police force. The CMC also opened two further investigations of Senior-Sergeant Hurley himself, for changing his official statements and for insurance claims following loss of property due to the riots. This was, at last, a sense of victory for the activists who had spent nearly six years fighting for justice in this case. Perhaps these wins will invigorate social movement participants who will return to their tried and true tactics. Or maybe this will invigorate a new generation of social movement participants to take the reins from their

predecessors, transforming the nature of the movement in the process through the use of technology and innovative strategies and tactics. It remains to be seen just what is in store for the Aboriginal movement in Townsville, but what can be certain is that what arises will be the result of the complex relationship between the movement and the state.

References

- AAP (2005) 'Soldier Under Investigation for Racist Website'. 9 February.
- (2004) 'The Capital City of KKK is Townsville'. 6 December.
- (2004) 'Action Taken Against "Ku Klux Klan Photo" Troops'. *Sydney Morning Herald*. 11 November.
- (2003) 'Racist Leaflets Found in Townsville'. *The Age* (Melbourne). 2 August.
- AAP and Boase, K. (2007) 'Decision Time: Making a Stand'. *The Koori Mail*. 21 November, p. 10.
- ABC Elections (2009) Australian Broadcasting Corporation website. Accessed on 12 November 2009 from <<http://www.abc.net.au/elections/home/>>.
- ABC News (28 March 2007) 'Mayor says Townsville doesn't deserve "racist" label'. *ABC News Online*. Accessed 31 July 2009 from <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/03/28/1883274.htm?site=news>>.
- (26 August 2004) Townsville labelled racist city, *ABC News Online*. Accessed 16 June 2008 from <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2004/08/26/1185682.htm>>.
- Abers, R. (2002). 'Daring Democracy--Porto Alegre, Brazil'. Accessed 12 March, 2007, from <http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/South_America/Democracy_Porto_Alegre.html>.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (2009) 'Claiming stolen wages and savings (reparations scheme)' website. Queensland Government. Accessed on 7 May 2009 from <<http://www.atsip.qld.gov.au/people/claims-entitlements/wages-savings>>.

- Active Art (2008) 'What is an Activist?' on Active Art blog.
<http://bubbleidiots.blogspot.com/2008/09/what-is-activist.html> (accessed on 10 February 2009).
- Activism.ca (2008) 'Activist' from Terminology webpage.
<http://activism.ca/wiki/Activist> (accessed on 10 February 2009).
- Activist Rights (2006) 'What is an activist?' and 'Activists are not criminals'.
http://www.activistrights.org.au/cb_pages/what_activist.php (accessed on 10 February 2009).
- Activist Solutions (2007) Accessed 10 March 2010 from
<http://activistsolutions.org/>.
- Akers, H.F. (1981) 'Civil Liberties - Why Queensland had to compromise on street marches?' *Outlook* 3(6): 14-15.
- Alston, A. (2004) 'Beyond Nationalism But Not Without It'. *Anarchist People of Color*. Accessed 13 March 2007 from
http://www.illegalvoices.rog/index2.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=11&Itemid=29&pop=1&page=0.
- Althusser, L. (1971) 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)', in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 127-186.
- Amenta, E. and Caren, N. (2004) 'The Legislative, Organizational, and Beneficiary Consequences of State-Oriented Challengers', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton, Vic: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 461-488.
- Amin, S. (1980) *Class and Nation: Historically and in the Current Crisis*. London: Heinemann Educational Books.
- (1976) *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism*. Sussex, England: The Harvester Press.
- Anaya, J. (2009) 'Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of Indigenous people'. *United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*. Accessed on 27 October 2009 from

- <<http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/313713727C084992C125761F00443D60?opendocument>>.
- Anderson, I. (2007). 'The End of Aboriginal Self-Determination?' *Futures* 39: 137-154.
- Anderson, P. and Wild, R. (2007) *Ampe Akelyernemane Meke Mekarle: Little Children are Sacred*. Report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse. Northern Territory Government.
- Anthony, T. (2009) 'Manifestations of Moral Panics in the Sentencing of Palm Islander Lex Wotton'. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* 20(3): 466-475.
- Archer, J. (1991). 'Ambiguity in Political Ideology: Aboriginality as Nationalism'. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 2(2): 161-170.
- Armstrong, E.A. and S.M. Crage. (2006) 'Movements and Memory: The Making of the Stonewall Myth'. *American Sociological Review* 71(5): 724-751.
- Armstrong, R.E.M. (1980) *The Kalkadoons: a study of an Aboriginal tribe on the Queensland frontier*. Brisbane: William Brooks.
- Arrighi, G., Hopkins, T.K. and Wallerstein, I. (1989) *Antisystemic movements*. New York: Verso.
- Attwood, B. (2000) 'The Burden of the Past in the Present', in Grattan, M. (ed.), *Essays on Australian Reconciliation*. Melbourne: Bookman Press, 254-59.
- Attwood, B. and A. Markus (1999) *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights: A Documentary History*. Crow's Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006) Population and People Characteristics, Online. Accessed 15 April 2010 from <<http://www.abs.gov.au/>>.
- Australian Democrats (2009) 'History of the Australian Democrats'. Accessed 14 April 2010 from <<http://www.democrats.org.au/about/history.php>>.
- Australian Human Rights Commission (2009) 'National Human Rights Consultation: Background Paper'. Barton, ACT: Australian Government Attorney-General's Department.

- AustralianPolitics.com (2009) 'Liberal Democracy'. Accessed 8 March 2010 from <<http://www.australianpolitics.com/democracy/liberal-democracy.shtml>>.
- Balibar, E. and Wallerstein, I. (1991) *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*. New York: Verso.
- Barker, C. and L. Cox (n. d.). "'What have the Romans ever done for us?'" Academic and activist forms of movement theorizing'. *Tools for change*. Accessed 20 August 2008 from <<http://www.iol.ie/~mazzoldi/toolsforchange/afpp/afpp8.html>>.
- Barnes, C. (2003) What a Difference a Decade Makes: Reflections on Doing "Emancipatory" Disability Research'. *Disability & Society* 18(1): 3-17.
- Barrett, G. (2001) *The dynamics of participation in Parenting Payment (Single) and the Sole Parent Pension*. Policy Research Paper No. 14. Department of Family and Community Services.
- Barrett, M. (1991) *The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault*. Cornwall: Polity Press.
- Bartolome, M.A., Batalla, G.B., Bonilla, V.D., Cardenas, G.C., Sardi, M.C., Grunberg, G., de Jimenez, N.A., Mosonyi, E.E., Ribeiro, D., Robinson, S.S., and Varese, S. (1971[1973]) The Declaration of Barbados: For the Liberation of the Indians'. *Current Anthropology* 14(3): 267-270.
- Baumgardner, J. & Richards, A. (2000) *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism, and the Future*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Beam, L. (1992) 'Leaderless Resistance'. *The Seditonist* 12. Accessed 19 August 2008 from <<http://www.louisbeam.com/leaderless.htm>>.
- Becker, H.S. (1967) 'Whose Side Are We On?' *Social Problems* 14(3): 239-247.
- Beckett, J. (1988) 'Aboriginality, Citizenship and Nation State'. *Social Analysis* Special Issue Series no. 24: 3-18.
- Berger, D. and Cornell, A. (2006) 'Ten Questions for Movement Building'. *MR Zine, Monthly Review*, accessed 12 November 2009 from <<http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/bc240706p.html>>.

- Belausteguigoitia, M. (2006) 'On line, off line and in line: The Zapatista rebellion and the uses of technology by Indian women', in Landzelius, K. (ed.), *Native on the Net: Indigenous and Diasporic Peoples in the Virtual Age*. New York: Routledge, 97-111.
- Belshaw, C.S. (1969) *The Conditions of Social Performance: An Exploratory Theory*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Bevington, D., and Dixon, C. (2005) 'Movement-relevant Theory: Rethinking Social Movement Scholarship and Activism'. *Social Movement Studies* 4: 185-208.
- Bhaba, H.K. (1994) 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse'. *October* 28: 125-133.
- Blackburn, K. (1999) 'White Agitation for an Aboriginal State in Australia (1925-1929)'. *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 45(2): 157-180.
- Blumer, H. (1969) *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Methods*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bobel, C. (2007) "'I'm not an activist, though I've done a lot of it": Doing Activism, Being Activist and the 'Perfect Standard' in a Contemporary Movement'. *Social Movement Studies* 6(2): pp. 157-159.
- Boe Lawyers (2009) 'Palm Island' from Current Focus webpage. Accessed 8 April 2009 from <<http://www.boelawyers.com.au/current%20focus.html>>.
- Bolton, G.C. (1967) 'Morrill, James (1824 - 1865)'. *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Volume 2. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 262-263. Accessed 28 October 2009 from <<http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020227b.htm>>.
- Boudreau, V. (1996) 'Northern Theory, Southern Protest: Opportunity Structure analysis in Cross-National Perspective'. *Mobilization* 1(2): 175-189.
- Bradfield, S. (2006) 'Separatism or Status Quo? Indigenous Affairs from the Birth of Land Rights to the Death of ATSIC'. *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 52(1): 80-97.

- Bropho, R. (1980) *Fringedweller*. Chippendale, NSW: Alternative Publishing Co-operative with the assistance of the Aboriginal Arts Board, Australia Council.
- Brubaker, R. and Cooper, F. (2000) 'Beyond "Identity"'. *Theory and Society* 29(1): 1-47.
- Bullimore, K. (2001a) 'The Aboriginal Struggle for Justice and Land Rights'. *Green Left Weekly* vol. 433, 24 January.
- Bullimore, K. (2001b) 'Reconciliation and the Aboriginal Rights Movement'. *Green Left Weekly* vol. 434, 31 January.
- Burgmann, V. (2003) *Power, Profit and Protest: Australian Social Movements and Globalisation*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- (2000) 'The Point of Protest: Advocacy and Social Action in Twentieth Century Australia'. *Just Policy* September: 7-15.
- (1993) *Power and protest : movements for change in Australian society*. St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Buttel, F. H. and K. A. Gould (2004). 'Global Social Movement(s) at the Crossroads: Some Observations on the Trajectory of the Anti-Corporate Globalization Movement'. *Journal of World-Systems Research* no. 1: 37-65.
- Cahill, D.C. (2004) *The Radical Neo-liberal Movement as a Hegemonic Force in Australia, 1976-1996*. PhD Thesis, University of Wollongong, Australia.
- Camfield, D. (2008) 'Social Movement Unionism'. *New Socialist*. Accessed 19 August 2008 from <<http://www.newsocialist.org/index.php?id=1625>>.
- Canin, Eric. (1997) "'Work, a Roof, and Bread for the Poor": Managua's Christian Base Communities in the Nicaraguan "Revolution from Below" (Communal Strategies and Intellectual Transitions: Central America Prepares for the 21st Century)'. *Latin American Perspectives* 24: 80-103.
- Cape York Institute (2007) 'Director: Noel Pearson'. Accessed 22 March 2010 from <<http://www.cyi.org.au/default.aspx>>.
- Carley, K. (1991) 'A Theory of Group Stability'. *American Sociological Review* 56: 331-354.
- Castells, M. (1997) *The Power of Identity*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

- (1996) *The Rise of the Network Society, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture Vol. I*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Charlton, S.E.M. (1984) 'Debating the Impact of Development on Women', in *Women in Third World Development*. Reprinted in Brettel, C.B., and Sargent, C.F. (eds), *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (1993). Sydney: Prentice-Hall, 473-478.
- Chesterman, J. (2001a) 'Defending Australia's Reputation: How Indigenous Australians Won Civil Rights, Part One'. *Australian Historical Studies* 116: 20-39.
- Chesterman, J. (2001b) 'Defending Australia's Reputation: How Indigenous Australians Won Civil Rights, Part Two'. *Australian Historical Studies* 117: 201-221.
- Chesterman, J. and Galligan, B. (1997) *Citizens Without Rights: Aborigines and Australian Citizenship*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
- Cienfuegos, J. (2007) 'Discussion on what is an activist and what is a revolutionary organizer'. Published 4 August 2007 at Anarkismo.net. Accessed 10 February 2009 from <http://www.anarkismo.net/newswire.php?story_id=6113>.
- Clark, J. (2008) *Aborigines & Activism: Race, Aborigines & the Coming of the Sixties to Australia*. Crawley, WA: University of Western Australia Press.
- Coombs, H.C. & Robinson, C. (1996) 'Remembering the Roots: Lessons for ATSIC', in Sullivan, P. (ed.), *Shooting the Banker: Essays on ATSIC and Self-Determination*. Darwin: The Australian National University, pp.1-16.
- Corbett, K. (2007). 'Indigenous housing in sorry state'. *The Australian*, 17 April.
- Cornthassel, J. (2007) 'Partnership in Action? Indigenous Political Mobilization and Co-optation During the First UN Indigenous Decade (1995-2004)'. *Human Rights Quarterly* 29: 137-166.
- Cowlshaw, G. (2004a) 'Racial Positioning, Privilege and Public Debate', in Moreton-Robinson, A. (ed.), *Whitening Race: Essays in Social and Cultural Criticism*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

- (2004b) *Blackfellas, Whitefellas and the Hidden Injuries of Race*. Carlton: Blackwell Publishing.
- (1999) *Rednecks, Eggheads and Blackfellas: A study of racial power and intimacy in Australia*. St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- (1998) 'Erasing Culture and Race: Practising "Self-Determination"'. *Oceania* 68: 145-169.
- (1994) 'The Materials for Identity Construction', in Beckett, J.R. (ed.), *Past and Present: The Construction of Aboriginality*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- (1988) *Black, White or Brindle: Race in Rural Australia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crossley, N. (2002) *Making Sense of Social Movements*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Cuneen, C. and Libesman, T. (1995) *Indigenous People and the Law in Australia*. Sydney: Butterworths.
- Curthoys, A. (2002) *Freedom Ride*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- D'Amico-Samuels, D. (1991) 'Undoing Fieldwork: Personal, Political, Theoretical and Methodological Implications' in Harrison, F.V. (ed.), *Decolonizing Anthropology: Moving Further toward an Anthropology of Liberation*. Washington, DC: Association of Black Anthropologists, American Anthropological Association, 68-87.
- Davis, A. (1981) *Women, Race, and Class*. New York: Random House.
- Davis, D.A. (2003) 'What Did You Do Today?: Notes From A Politically Engaged Anthropologist'. *Urban Anthropology* 32(2): 147-173.
- Day, R.J.F. (2005) *Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements*. London: Pluto Press and Between the Lines.
- Dean, M. (1999) *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*. London: Sage Publications.
- della Porta, D. (2008) 'Research on Social Movements and Political Violence'. *Qualitative Sociology* 31: 221-230.

- della Porta, D. and Diani, M. (2006) *Social Movements: An Introduction*. Carlton, Vic: Blackwell Publishing.
- Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1977) *Anti-Oedipus : capitalism and schizophrenia*. Hurley, R., Seem, M. and Lane, H.R. (trans). New York: Viking Press.
- Deslandes, A. and King, D. (2006) 'Autonomous Activism and the Global Justice Movements: Aesthetic Reflexivity in Practice'. *Journal of Sociology* 42(3): 310-327.
- Diani, M. (2004) 'Networks and Participation', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton: Blackwell, 339-359.
- (2003) 'Introduction: Social Movements, Contentious Actions, and Social Networks: From Metaphor to Substance?', in Diani, M., and McAdam, D. (eds), *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1-19.
- Diani, M. and Eyerman, R. (eds) (1992) *Studying Collective Action*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Diani, M. and McAdam, D. (2003) *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dillon, M. (1996) 'The Institutional Structures in Indigenous Affairs: The Future of ATSIC', in Sullivan, P. (ed.), *Shooting the Banker: Essays on ATSIC and Self-Determination*. Darwin: The Australian National University, pp.89-104.
- Dyer-Witheford, N. (1999) *Cyber-Marx: Cycles and Circuits of Struggle in High-Technology Capitalism*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Edelman, M. (2005) 'When Networks Don't Work: The Rise and Fall and Rise of Civil Society Initiatives in Central America', in Nash, J. (ed.), *Social Movements: An Anthropological Reader*. Carlton, Vic: Blackwell, 29-45.
- (2001) 'Social Movements: Changing Paradigms and Forms of Politics'. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30: 285-317.
- (1999) *Peasants Against Globalization: Rural Social Movements in Costa Rica*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

- Edwards, B. and McCarthy, J.D. (2004) 'Resources and Social Movement Mobilization', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton, Vic: Blackwell, 116-152.
- Eipper, C. (2008). 'From the Man in the White Suit to the Woman with the White Mantle: Milestones in my Education as an Anthropologist'. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 9(3): 198-209.
- Electoral Commission Queensland (2008) '2008 Townsville City Council – Councillor Election – Election Summary'. Accessed 14 April 2010 from <<http://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/elections/local/lg2008/TownsvilleCityCouncil/results/Councillor/summary.html>>.
- Emihovich, C. (2005) 'Fire and Ice: Activist Ethnography in the Culture of Power'. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 36(4): 305-314.
- Epstein, B. (2002) 'Feminist Consciousness After the Women's Movement'. *The Monthly Review* 54(4).
- Escobar, A. (1992) 'Imagining a Post-Development Era? Critical Thought, Development and Social Movements'. *Social Text* 31/32: 20-56.
- Fegan, Brian. (1986) 'Tenants' Non-Violent Resistance to Landowner Claims in a Central Luzon', in Scott, J.C. and Tria Kerkvliet, B.J. (eds), *Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance in South-East Asia*. London: Frank Cass.
- Ferree, M. M. (1992) 'The Political Context of Rationality: Rational Choice Theory and Resource Mobilization', in Morris, A.D. and Mueller, C.M. (eds), *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 29-52.
- Fickling, D. (2003) 'Race Hatred Polarises Australian Town'. *The Guardian* (UK). 21 June.
- Finlayson, J. & Dale, A. (1996) 'Negotiating Indigenous Self-Determination at the Regional Level: Experiences with Regional Planning', in Sullivan, P. (ed.), *Shooting the Banker: Essays on ATSIC and Self-Determination*. Darwin: The Australian National University, pp.70-88.
- Fisher, W.F. and Ponniah, T., (eds) (2003) *Another World is Possible: Popular Alternatives to Globalization at the World Social Forum*. New York: Zed Books.

- Fitzgerald, R. (1984) *A History of Queensland: From 1915 to the Early 1980s*. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press.
- (1982) *A History of Queensland: From the Dreaming to 1915*. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press.
- Foley, G. (2001) 'Black Power in Redfern 1968-1972'. *The Koori History Website*. Accessed 15 April 2010 from <<http://www.kooriweb.org/foley/indexb.html>>.
- Foucault, M. (1988) 'Power, Moral Values and the Intellectual, an interview with Michel Foucault conducted by Michael Bess (3 November 1980)'. *History of the Present*, no. 4: 13.
- (1984) *The History of Sexuality: Volume II*. London: Allen Lane.
- (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Allen Lane.
- Frampton, C., Kinsman, G., Thompson, A.K., and Tilleczek, K. (2006) *Sociology for Changing the World: Social Movements/Social Research*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.
- Freeman, J. (1970) 'The Tyranny of Structurelessness'. Southern Female Rights Union Conference, Beulah, Mississippi. Accessed 30 March 2010 from <<http://www.jofreeman.com/joreen/tyranny.htm>>.
- Freire, P. (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Bergman Ramos, M. (trans.). New York: Seabury Press.
- Friedman, D. and McAdam, D. (1992) 'Collective identity and activism: Networks, choices, and the life of a social movement', in Morris, A.D., McClurg, C. (eds), *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 156-173.
- Garond, L. (2008) 'Postscript', in Glowczewski, B., *Guerriers Pour La Paix: la condition politique des aborigines vue de Palm Island*. Montpellier, France: Indigene Editions, 108-119.
- Gargiulo, M. & Benassi, M. (2000) 'Trapped in Your Own Net? Network Cohesion, Structural Holes, and the Adaptation of Social Capital'. *Organization Science* 11(2): 183-196.

- Garrigues, L. (2002). 'Politics Without Politicians: An Update on the Argentine Assemblies'. Retrieved 13 March, 2007, from <<http://www.argentina.indymedia.org/news/2002/06/29714.php>>.
- Geertz, C. (1964) Ideology as a Cultural System, in Apter, D.E. (ed.), *Ideology and Discontent*. London: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 47-76.
- Gledhill, J. (1994) *Power and Its Disguises: Anthropological Perspectives on Politics*. London: Pluto Press.
- Glowczewski, B. (2008) *Guerriers Pour La Paix: la condition politique des aborigenes vue de Palm Island*. Montpellier, France: Indigene Editions.
- Gluckman, M. (1955) *Custom and Conflict in Africa*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Goodwin, J. & Jasper, J.M. (eds) (2003) *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts*. Carlton, Victoria: Blackwell.
- Goot, M. and Rowse, T. (2007) *Divided Nation? Indigenous Affairs and the Imagined Public*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press.
- Gordon, E.T. (1991) 'Anthropology and Liberation', in Harrison, F.V. (ed.), *Decolonizing Anthropology: Moving Further toward an Anthropology for Liberation*. Washington, DC: Association of Black Anthropologists, American Anthropological Association, 149-167.
- Gordon, E.W. (1985) 'Social Science Knowledge Production and Minority Experiences'. *The Journal of Negro Education* 54(2): 117-133.
- Goulder, A.W. (1970) *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*. New York: Basic Books.
- Govor, E. (2000) *My Dark Brother: The Story of the Illins, a Russian-Aboriginal Family*. Sydney: UNSW Press.
- Graeber, D. (2009) *Direct Action: An Ethnography*. Oakland, CA: AK Press.
- (2005) 'Fetishism as Social Creativity'. *Anthropological Theory* 5(4): 407-438.
- (2004) *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.
- Graham, S. (2008) 'Bridging the gap on field', *Townsville Bulletin* 12 July 2008, p. 28.

- Gramsci, A. (1995) *Antonio Gramsci: Further Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, D. Boothman (ed. and trans.). London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- (1971) *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, Q. Hoare and G.N. Smith (eds and trans). London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Granovetter, M.S. (1973) 'The Strength of Weak Ties'. *The American Journal of Sociology* 78(6): 1360-1380.
- Guerilla News Network (2006) 'Organizing 101: How to Start a Non-Hierarchical Direct Action Group'. (*A*)*utonomous Resistance*. Accessed 19 August 2008 from
<http://shiftshapers.gnn.tv/blogs/12333/Organizing_101_How_to_Start_a_Non_Hierarchical_Direct_Action_Group>.
- Hage, G. (2009) 'Hating Israel in the field: On ethnography and political emotions'. *Anthropological Theory* 9(1): 59-79.
- Hale, C.R. (2006) 'Activist Research v. Cultural Critique: Indigenous Land Rights and the Contradictions of Politically Engaged Anthropology'. *Cultural Anthropology* 21(1): 96-120.
- Hall, A. (producer) (2004) 'Springbok Tour'. *Rewind*: ABC TV. Aired on 26 September 2004. Transcript accessed on 8 April 2009 from
<<http://www.abc.net.au/tv/rewind/txt/s1204845.htm>>
- Hall, S. (1996) 'Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity', in Morley, D. and Chen, K.H. (eds), *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge, 411-440.
- (1990) 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', in Rutherford, J. (ed.), *Identity*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 222-237.
- Hall, T.D. and Felon, J.V. (2008) 'Indigenous Movements and Globalization: What is Different? What is the Same?' *Globalizations* 5(1): 1-11.
- Hamilton, C. and Maddison, S. (2007) *Silencing Dissent: How the Australian Government is Controlling Public Opinion and Stifling Debate*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

- Harding, E. (2009) 'Anatomy of a Dis-Organisation'. *Alternative Futures and Popular Protest Conference*, Manchester Metropolitan University, 15-17 April 2009.
- Hardy, F. (1968) *The Unlucky Australians*. Melbourne: Nelson.
- Harris, F.C. (2006) 'It Takes a Tragedy to Arouse Them: Collective Memory and Collective Action During the Civil Rights Movement'. *Social Movement Studies* 5(1): 19-43.
- Harrison, F.V. (1991) 'Anthropology as an Agent of Transformation: Introductory Comments and Queries', in Harrison, F.V. (ed.), *Decolonizing Anthropology: Moving Further toward an Anthropology for Liberation*. Washington, DC: Association of Black Anthropologists, American Anthropological Association, 1-14.
- Hart, V., Thompson, L. and Stedman, T. (2008) 'The Indigenous Experience of Australian Civil Society: Making Sense of Historic and Contemporary Institutions'. *Social Alternatives* 27(1): 52-57.
- Harvey, N. (2005) 'Inclusion through Autonomy: Zapatistas and Dissent'. *NACLA Report on the Americas* 39(2): 12-17.
- Healy, C. (2008) *Forgetting Aborigines*. Sydney: UNSW Press.
- Hemment, J. (2007) 'Public Anthropology and the Paradoxes of Participation: Participatory Action Research and Critical Ethnography in Provincial Russia'. *Human Organization* 66(3): 301-314.
- Henry, J., Dunbar, T., Arnott, A., Scrimgeour, M., Matthews, S., Murakami-Gold, L., and Chamberlain, A. (2002) 'Indigenous Research Reform Agenda: Rethinking Research Methodologies'. *Links Monograph*, Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal and Tropical Health.
- Henry, R. (2008) 'Engaging with History by Performing Tradition: The Poetic Politics of Indigenous Australian Festivals', in Kapferer, J. (ed.), *The State and the Arts: Articulating Power and Subversion*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 52-69.

- (1999) *Practising Place, Performing Memory: Identity Politics in an Australian Town, the 'Village in the Rainforest'*. PhD Thesis, Anthropology, James Cook University.
- (1998) 'Performing Protest, Articulating Difference: Environmentalists, Aborigines and the Kuranda Skyrail Dispute'. *Aboriginal History* 22: 143-161.
- Hercus, Cheryl (2005) *Stepping Out of Line: Becoming and Being Feminist*. New York: Routledge.
- Highleyman, L.A. (1995) 'An Introduction to Anarchism'. On Black Rose Collective webpage. Accessed 28 August 2008 from < <http://www.black-rose.com/articles-liz/intro-@.html>>.
- Hockings, B.A., Young, M., Falconer, A. and O'Rourke, P.K. (2002) *Queensland Women Prisoners' Health Survey*. Department of Corrective Services: Brisbane.
- Hollinsworth, D. (1996) 'Community Development in Indigenous Australia: Self-Determination or Indirect Rule?' *Community Development Journal* 31(2): 114-125.
- hooks, b. (1997) 'Sisterhood: Political Solidarity Between Women', in Meyers, D.T. (ed.), *Feminist Social Thought: A Reader*. New York: Routledge, 484-500.
- Hooper, C. (2008) *The Tall Man*. Camberwell, VIC: Hamish Hamilton.
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission (1997) *Bringing Them Home: The Stolen Children Report*. Report of the National Inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families. Commonwealth of Australia.
- Hunt, S.A. and Benford, R.D. (2004) 'Collective Identity, Solidarity, and Commitment', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton: Blackwell, 433-458.
- Hyatt, S.B. and Lyon-Callo, V. (2003) 'Introduction: Anthropology and Political Engagement'. *Urban Anthropology* 32(2): 133-146.
- Isaacman, A. (2003) 'Legacies of Engagement: Scholarship Informed by Political Commitment'. *African Studies Review* 46(1): 1-41.

- Jackson, L. (2008) 'Who Killed Mr Ward?' *Four Corners*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation. 15 June 2008. Transcript accessed 14 April 2010 from <<http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/content/2009/s2595622.htm>>.
- Jacobs, J. M. (1994) 'The Construction of Identity', in Beckett, J.R. (ed.), *Past and Present: The Construction of Aboriginality*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Johnson, H.N. (2007) *When citizen politics becomes uncivil: Between popular protest, civil society and governance in Jamaica*. PhD Thesis, University of Waikato, New Zealand.
- Johnston, W.R. (1982) *The Call of the Land: A History of Queensland to the Present Day*. Milton, QLD: The Jacaranda Press.
- Jones, T. (2004) 'Racism Rife in Army, Mother Says'. *Lateline*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation. 12 November. Transcript accessed 14 April 2010 from <<http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2004/s1241701.htm>>.
- Jordan, T. (2002) *Activism!: Direct Action, Hacktivism and the Future of Society*. London: Reaktion Books Ltd.
- Juris, J. (2008) *Networking Futures: The Movements Against Corporate Globalization*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- (2005) 'Violence Performed and Imagined: Militant Action, the Black Bloc, and the Mass Media in Genoa'. *Critique of Anthropology* 25(4): 413-432.
- Karvelas, P. (2009) 'Aboriginal groups attack "green oppressors"'. *The Australian* 20 May 2009.
- Keck, M.E. and Sikkink, K. (1998) *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Kidd, R. (2006) *Trustees on Trial: Recovering the Stolen Wages*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- (2000) *Black Lives, Government Lies*. Sydney: UNSW Press.
- (1997) *The Way We Civilise: Aboriginal Affairs - The Untold Story*. St Lucia, QLD: University of Queensland Press.
- King, M., Smith, A., and Gracey, M. (2009) 'Indigenous health part 2: the underlying causes of the health gap'. *Lancet* 374: 76-85.

- Kistenberg, C.J. (1995) *AIDS, Social Change, and Theater: Performance as Protest*. New York: Garland.
- Kivel, P. (2002) *Uprooting Racism: How White People can work for Racial Justice*. Vancouver: New Society Publishers.
- Klandermans, B. (2004) 'The Demand and Supply of Participation: Social-Psychological Correlates of Participation in Social Movements', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton: Blackwell, 360-379.
- Klotz, A. (2002) 'Transnational Activism and Global Transformations: The Anti-Apartheid and Abolitionist Experiences'. *European Journal of International Relations* 8(1): 49-76.
- Koori Mail* (2008) 'Rallies offer support for riot accused. 23 April, p. 32.
- Kriesi, H. (2004) 'Political Context and Opportunity', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton: Blackwell, 67-90.
- Lacey, A. (2005) 'Networked Communities: Social Centers and Activist Spaces in Contemporary Britain'. *Space and Culture* 8(3): 286-301.
- Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. New York: Verso.
- Landzelius, K. (2006a) 'Introduction: Native on the net', in Landzelius, K. (ed.), *Native on the Net: Indigenous and Diasporic Peoples in the Virtual Age*. New York: Routledge, 1-42.
- (2006b) 'The meta-native and the militant activist: Virtually saving the rainforest', in Landzelius, K. (ed.), *Native on the Net: Indigenous and Diasporic Peoples in the Virtual Age*. New York: Routledge, 112-131.
- Langton, M. (1981) 'Urbanizing Aborigines: The Social Scientists' Great Deception'. *Social Alternatives* 2(2): 16-22.
- Lather, P. (1991) *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy With/in the Postmodern*. New York: Routledge.
- Lea, D. (2000) 'Individual Autonomy, Group Self Determination and the Assimilation of Indigenous Cultures'. North Australia Research Unit

- Discussion Paper. Casuarina, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University: 1-17.
- Lea, T. (2008) *Bureaucrats and Bleeding Hearts: Indigenous Health in Northern Australia*. Sydney: UNSW Press.
- Lederman, R. (2005) 'Challenging Audiences: Critical Ethnography in/for Oceania'. *Anthropological Forum* 15(3): 319-328.
- Lempert, R.O. (2001) 'Activist Scholarship'. *Law & Society Review* 35(1): 25-32.
- Lippmann, L. (1994) *Generations of Resistance: Mabo and Justice*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.
- (1991) *Generations of Resistance: Aborigines Demand Justice*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.
- (1981) *Generations of Resistance: The Aboriginal Struggle for Justice*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.
- Locke, J. (1690[1980]) *Second Treatise of Government*. C.B. Macpherson (ed.). Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company.
- Loos, N. (1982) *Invasion and Resistance: Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier 1861-1897*, Canberra: ANU Press.
- (1976) *Aboriginal-European relations in North Queensland, 1861-1897*, PhD Thesis. James Cook University Department of History, Townsville.
- Lothian, K. (2005) 'Seizing the Time: Australian Aborigines and the Influence of the Black Panther Party, 1969-1972'. *Journal of Black Studies* 35(4): 179-200.
- Lowe, M. (2009) "'Sowing the Seeds of Discontent": Tougaloo College's Social Science Forums as a Prefigurative Movement Free Space, 1952-1964'. *Journal of Black Studies* 39(6): 865-887.
- Luxembourg, R. (1913[1951]) *The Accumulation of Capital*. Schwarzchild, A. (trans.) London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Maddison, S. (2009) *Black Politics: Inside the Complexity of Aboriginal Political Culture*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- (2008) 'Indigenous autonomy matters: What's wrong with the Australian Government's "intervention" in Aboriginal communities'. *Australian Journal of Human Rights* 14(1): 41-61.

- Maddison, S. and Scalmer, S. (2006) *Activist Wisdom: Practical Knowledge and Creative Tensions in Social Movements*. Sydney: UNSW Press.
- Maddox, G. (2008) 'Truth Telling and the Fragility of Democracy'. *Social Alternatives* 27(1): 17-21.
- Mansell, M. (2003) 'The Decline of a Movement'. *Journal of Australian Indigenous Issues* 6(4): 27-29.
- Marcus, G.E. (1995) 'Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography'. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95-117.
- (1986) 'Contemporary Problems of Ethnography in the Modern World System' in Clifford, J. and Marcus, G.E. (eds), *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 165-193.
- Marshall, P. (1992) *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism*. London: Harper Collins.
- Martin, D.F. (2003) 'Rethinking the Design of Indigenous Organisations: The Need for Strategic Engagement'. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research Discussion Paper No. 248.
- Martin, D.F. and Finlayson, J.D. (1996) 'Linking Accountability and Self-Determination in Aboriginal Organisations'. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research Discussion Paper No. 116.
- Martinez, J. (1997) 'Problematizing Aboriginal Nationalism'. *Aboriginal History* 21: 133-147.
- Marx, K. (1873) 'Afterword to the Second German Edition', in *Capital Volume I*. Accessed 14 January 2011 from <<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/p3.htm>>.
- (1859[1977]) 'Preface', in Rojas, R. (ed.), *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- (1858[1978]) 'The Grundrisse', in Tucker, R.C. (ed.), *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: WW Norton & Co., 221-293.
- (1846[1978]) 'The German Ideology: Part I', in Tucker, R.C. (ed.), *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: WW Norton & Co., 146-200.

- (1845[1978]) 'Theses on Feuerbach', in Tucker, R.C. (ed.), *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 143-145.
- Marx, K. and Engels, F. (1848/1978) 'Manifesto of the Communist Party', in Tucker, R.C. (ed.), *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: WW Norton & Co., 469-500.
- Mauss, M. (1925[1969]) *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. Cunnison, I. (trans.). London: Cohen & West.
- Maynard, J. (2008) *Fight for Liberty and Freedom: The Origins of Australian Aboriginal Activism*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- (2005) "'In the Interests of our People": The Influence of Garveyism on the Rise of Australian Aboriginal Political Activism'. *Aboriginal History* 29: 1-22.
- (2004) 'For Liberty and Freedom: Fred Maynard and the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association'. History Council of NSW. NSW State Library.
- (2003) 'Vision, Voice and Influence: The Rise of the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association'. *Australian Historical Studies* 34(121): 91-105.
- McAdam, D. (1982) *Political process and the development of black insurgency, 1930-1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- McAdam, D. and Paulsen, R. (1993) 'Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism'. *The American Journal of Sociology* 99(3): 640-667.
- McAdam, D. and Snow, D.A. (eds) (1997) *Social Movements: Readings on their Emergence, Mobilization, and Dynamics*. Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Company.
- McAdam, D. and Tarrow, S. (2000) 'Non-violence as Contentious Interaction'. *PS, Political Science and Politics* 33: 149-54.
- McAdam, D., Tarrow, S., and Tilly, C. (2001) *Dynamics of Contention*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- McCarthy, J. D. and M. N. Zald (1977) 'Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory'. *The American Journal of Sociology* 82(6): 1212-1241.

- McCarthy, J.D., McPhail, C., Smith, J., Crishock, L.J. (1999) 'Electronic and print media representations of Washington D.C. demonstrations, 1982 and 1991: a demography of description bias', in Rucht, D., Koopmans, R., Neidhardt, F. (eds), *Acts of Dissent*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 113-30
- McGinness, J. (1991) *Son of Alyandabu: My fight for Aboriginal rights*. St Lucia, QLD: University of Queensland Press.
- McGregor, R. (2009a) 'Another Nation: Aboriginal Activism in the Late 1960s and Early 1970s'. *Australian Historical Studies* 40: 343-360.
- (2009b) 'The 1967 Referendum: An Uncertain Consensus', in Crotty, M. and Roberts, D.A. (eds), *Turning Points in Australian History*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.
- (2008) 'An Absent Negative: The 1967 Referendum'. *History Australia* 5(2): 44.1-44.9.
- (1997) *Imagined Destinies: Aboriginal Australians and the Doomed Race Theory, 1880-1939*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- (1993) 'Protest and Progress: Aboriginal Activism in the 1930s'. *Australian Historical Studies* 25(101): 555-568.
- Mcguirk, R. (2008) 'Aboriginal activists protest kangaroo cull'. *USA Today* 20 May 2008.
- McKinnon, L. (2007) 'Fear of KKK Cell'. *Townsville Bulletin*. 5 July.
- McMichael, P. (2004) *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective*, Third Edition. London: Pine Forge Press.
- (1996) 'Globalization: Myths and Realities'. *Rural Sociology* 61(1): 25-55.
- McNally, W. (1973) *Goodbye Dreamtime*. Brisbane: Nelson.
- McPherson, M., Smith-Lovin, L. and Cook, J.M. (2001) 'Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks'. *Annual Review of Sociology* 27: 415-44.
- Megalogenis, G. (2007) 'PM Pushes Business on Indigenous Aid'. *The Australian*, 16 April.
- Melucci, A. (1989) *Nomads of the Present*. London: Hutchinson Radius.
- Merlan, F. (2009) 'Indigeneity: Global and Local'. *Current Anthropology* 50(3): 303-333.

- (2005) 'Indigenous Movements in Australia'. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34: 473-494.
- Morris, B. (2005) 'A Crisis in Identity: Aborigines, Media, the Law and Politics – Civil Disturbance in an Australian Town'. *Critique of Anthropology* 25(1): 59-85.
- (1997) 'Racism, Egalitarianism and Aborigines', in Morris, B. and Cowlshaw, G. (eds), *Race Matters*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- (1989) *Domesticating Resistance: The Dhan-Gadi Aborigines and the Australian State*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.
- (1988) 'Dhan-gadi Resistance to Assimilation', in *Being Black*, I. Keen (ed.). Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 33-64.
- Morris, A.D. and Staggenborg, S. (2004) 'Leadership in Social Movements', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton: Blackwell, 171-196.
- Mowbray, M. (1986) 'State Control or Self-Regulation?: On the Political Economy of Local Government in Remote Aboriginal Townships'. *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 2: 31-39.
- Munro, L. (2005) 'Strategies, Action Repertoires and DIY Activism in the Animal Rights Movement'. *Social Movement Studies* 4(1): 75-94.
- Murphy, M. (2005) 'Overhaul Tipped for Military Justice'. *The Age* (Melbourne). 16 June.
- Mykhalovskiy, E. and Churck, K. (2006) 'Of T-Shirts and Ontologies: Celebrating George Smith's Pedagogical Legacies', in Frampton, C., Kinsman, G., Thompson, A.K., and Tilleczek, K. (eds), *Sociology for Changing the World: Social Movements/Social Research*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 71-86.
- Nash, J. (2005) 'Defying Deterritorialization: Autonomy Movements Against Globalization', in Nash, J. (ed.), *Social Movements: An Anthropological Reader*. Carlton, Vic: Blackwell, 177-186.
- (1997) 'The Fiesta of the Word: The Zapatista Uprising and Radical Democracy in Mexico'. *American Anthropologist* 99(2): 261-274.

- National Health and Medical Research Council (2005) *Keeping Research on Track: A Guide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples about Health Research Ethics*. Canberra.
- (2003) *Values and Ethics: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research*.
- Negus, G. (2002) 'Springbok Rugby Union'. *New Dimensions with George Negus*: ABC. Aired 15 July 2002. Transcript accessed on 8 April 2009 from <http://www.abc.net.au/dimensions/dimensions_in_time/Transcripts/s608221.htm>.
- Newbury, P.W. (1999) *Aboriginal Heroes of the Resistance: From Pemulwuy to Mabo*. Surry Hills: Action for World Development.
- Newhouse, G. (2008) 'NT intervention: Aboriginal Australians take their case to the UN'. *Crikey* 27 October 2008.
- Newman, L. and Dale, A. (2005) 'Homophily and Agency: Creating Effective Sustainable Development Networks'. *Environment, Development and Sustainability* 9: 79-90.
- Newman, L., Waldron, L., Dale, A. and Carriere, K. (2008) 'Sustainable Urban Community Development from the Grassroots: Challenges and Opportunities in a Pedestrian Street Initiative'. *Local Environment* 13(2): 129-139.
- Nilsen, A.G. and Cox, L. (n.d.) 'Why do Activists need Theory?' website. Accessed on 18 August 2008 from <<http://eprints.nuim.ie/archive/00000445/01/activist-needs-theory.htm>>.
- Novak, S. (2006) 'Remembering Mountain Meadows: Collective Violence and the Manipulation of Social Boundaries'. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 62(1): 1-25.
- Olzak, S. (2004) 'Ethnic and Nationalist Social Movements', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton: Blackwell, 666-693.
- Olzak, S. and E. Ryo. (2007) 'Organizational Diversity, Vitality and Outcomes in the Civil Rights Movement'. *Social Forces* 85(4).

- OneWorld (2002) 'Press Release: OneWorld at the World Social Forum 2002, Porto Alegre, Brazil: "Maximizing the Network Effect - the Power and Potential of the Internet for Civil Society Worldwide"'. Accessed 19 August 2008 from <<http://www.oneworld.net/article/view/40020/1/3741>>.
- Osaldiston, N. and Petray, T. (2010 *in review*) 'On Horror, Dread and Disgust: Revisiting the Elementary Forms of Place'. *Anthropological Theory*. Submitted 26 January 2010.
- (2009) 'Horror, Dread, Awe and Disgust: Revisiting Durkheim and Place'. *The annual conference of The Australian Sociological Association*. Canberra: TASA, December 2009.
- Ost, D. (2004) 'Politics as the mobilization of anger: Emotions in movements and in power'. *European Journal of Social Theory* 7(2): 229-244.
- Paisley, F. (1997a) 'No Back Streets in the Bush: 1920s and 1930s Pro-Aboriginal White Women's Activism and the Trans-Australia Railway'. *Australian Feminist Studies* 12(25): 119-137.
- (1997b) 'White Women in the Field: Feminism, Cultural Relativism and Aboriginal Rights, 1920-1937'. *Journal of Australian Studies* 52: 113-125.
- Pascoe, B. (2008) *The Little Red, Yellow, Black Book: An Introduction to Indigenous Australia*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press
- Pearson, N. (2000) 'The Light on the Hill'. Ben Chifley Memorial Lecture delivered on 12 August 2000. Accessed on 22 March 2010 from <<http://www.australianpolitics.com/news/2000/00-08-12a.shtml>>.
- Perez, R. (1990) *On An(archy) and Schizoanalysis*. New York: Semiotext(e).
- Perkins, C. (1975) *A Bastard Like Me*. Sydney: Ure Smith.
- Petray, T.L. (2011, *in review*) 'A Walk in the Park: Political Emotions and Going Native in Critically Engaged Activist Research'. *Qualitative Research*. Submitted on 26 March 2010.
- (2010a) 'Support vs. Solidarity: White Involvement in the Aboriginal Movement'. *Social Alternatives* 29(4): 69-72..
- (2010b) "'This is not a black issue": homophily and diversity in Aboriginal activism'. *Social Movement Studies*. Submitted on 6 February 2009.

- (2009a) 'Doing activist research: A critically engaged methodology for praxis'. Barker, C. and Tyldesley, M. (eds), *Alternative Futures and Popular Protest*. Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University, 17 April 2009.
- (2009b) *Stir It Up: The Rastafarian Movement as an Anti-Systemic Movement*. Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM.
- (2008a) 'Performing memory and transforming history in Townsville Aboriginal activism'. Presented at joint conference of the Australian Anthropological Society, the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand and the Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth, Auckland, New Zealand: 11 December 2008.
- (2008b) 'Homophily and Diversity: The use and effects of bonding versus bridging networks by Townsville Aboriginal activists'. Majoribanks, T. et al (eds), *The annual conference of The Australian Sociological Association*. Melbourne: TASA, 3 December 2008.
- (2007) 'Towards autonomy: Aboriginal activism and social movement theory'. Presented at annual conference of the Australian Anthropological Society, Canberra, ACT: 1 November.
- Pickard, V.W. (2006) 'United yet autonomous: Indymedia and the struggle to sustain a radical democratic network'. *Media Culture Society* 28(3): 315-336.
- Pioneers of Love* (2005) Julie Nimmo (Director), Richard Dennison (Producer), and Mark Chapman (Co-Producer). Orana Films.
- Piven, F.F. and Cloward, R.A. (1991) 'Collective Protest: A Critique of Resource Mobilization Theory'. *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 4(4): 435-458.
- (1977) *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fare*. New York: Pantheon.
- Poirier, S. (2010) 'Change, Resistance, Accommodation and Engagement in Indigenous Contexts: A Comparative (Canada-Australia) Perspective'. *Anthropological Forum* 20(1): 41-60.
- Polletta, F. (1998) 'Contending Stories: Narrative in Social Movements'. *Qualitative Sociology* 21(4): 419-446.

- Polletta, F. and J. M. Jasper (2001) 'Collective Identity and Social Movements'. *Annual Review of Sociology* 27: 283-305.
- Popper, M. (2004) 'Leadership as Relationship'. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 34(2): 107-125.
- Povinelli, E. (2002) *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism*. London: Duke University Press.
- (1993) *Labor's Lot: The Power, History, and Culture of Aboriginal Action*. London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Poynton, P. (1992) 'Into the Deep Black Yonder: EARC Does Cape York'. *Aboriginal Law Bulletin* 18. Accessed 8 April 2009 from <<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/AboriginalLB/1992/18.html>>.
- Price, C., Nonini, D. and Tree, E.F. (2008) 'Grounded Utopian Movements: Subjects of Neglect'. *Anthropological Quarterly* 81(1): 127-159.
- Ranci re, J. (2006) *The Politics of Aesthetics : The Distribution of the Sensible*. G. Rockhill (trans.). London: Continuum.
- Read, P. (1990) 'Cheeky, Insolent and Anti-White: The Split in the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders - Easter 1970'. *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 36(1): pp. 73-83.
- Reger, J. and Staggenborg, S. (2006) 'Patterns of Mobilization in Local Movement Organizations: Leadership and Strategy in Four National Organization for Women Chapters'. *Sociological Perspectives* 49(3): 297-323.
- Renn, K.A. (2007) 'LGBT Student Leaders and Queer Activists: Identities of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Identified College Student Leaders and Activists'. *Journal of College Student Development* 48(3): 311-330.
- Reynolds, H. (2005) *Nowhere People: How International Race Thinking Shaped Australia's Identity*. Camberwell, VIC: Penguin.
- (2003) *North of Capricorn: The Untold Story of Australia's North*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- (2001) *An Indelible Stain? The Question of Genocide in Australia's History*. Ringwood, Vic: Penguin.
- (2000) *Black Pioneers*. Ringwood, Vic: Penguin.

- (1996) *Aboriginal Sovereignty*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- (1989) *Dispossession : black Australians and white invaders*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- (1987) *Frontier: Aborigines, Settlers and Land*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- (1982) *The Other Side of the Frontier*. Ringwood, Vic: Penguin.
- (1972) *Aborigines and Settlers: The Australian Experience, 1788 – 1939*. North Melbourne: Cassell Australia.
- Ribeiro, G.L. (2009) 'Non-hegemonic globalizations: Alter-native transnational processes and agents'. *Anthropological Theory* 9(3): 297-329.
- Richards, J. (2008) *The Secret War*. St Lucia, QLD: University of Queensland Press.
- Robinson, F. and York, B. (1977) *The Black Resistance: An Introduction to the History of the Aborigines' Struggle Against British Colonialism*. Camberwell, Vic: Widescope.
- Rodan, G. (1996) 'Theorising Political Opposition in East and Southeast Asia', in Rodan, G. (ed.), *Political Oppositions in Industrialising Asia*. London: Routledge, 1-39.
- Rosser, B. (1985) *Dreamtime Nightmares: Biographies of Aborigines Under the Queensland Aborigines Act*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
- Rowse, T. (2009a) 'Official Statistics and the Contemporary Politics of Indigeneity'. *Australian Journal of Political Science* 44(2): 193-211.
- (2009b) 'The Reconciliation Barometer and the Indigenous Imaginary'. Discussion Paper, Centre for Citizenship and Public Policy. Accessed 14 April 2010 from <<http://www.apo.org.au/research/reconciliation-barometer-and-indigenous-imaginary>>.
- (2000) 'Transforming the Notion of the Urban Aborigine'. *Urban Policy and Research* 18(2): 171-190.
- (1997) "'Out of Hand" – The Battles of Neville Bonner'. *Journal of Australian Studies* 54-55: 96.

- (1996) 'The Political Identity of Regional Councillors', in Sullivan, P. (ed.), *Shooting the Banker: Essays on ATSIC and Self-Determination*. Darwin: The Australian National University, pp.42-69.
- (1978) *Australian Liberalism and National Character*. Malmsbury, VIC: Kibble Books.
- Rudd, K. (2008) The Apology. Tabled in Commonwealth Parliament on 12 February 2008. Accessed on 7 April 2009 from <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/events/apology/text.htm>>.
- Rudé, G. (1980) *Ideology and Popular Protest*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Ruggiero, V. (2000) 'New Social Movements and the "Centri Sociali" in Milan'. *The Sociological Review* 48(2): 167-185.
- Sandell, R. (1999) 'Organizational Life Aboard the Moving Bandwagons: A Network Analysis of Dropouts from a Swedish Temperance Organization, 1896-1937'. *Acta Sociologica* 42(3): 3-15.
- Sanders, W. (1993) *Reconciling Public Accountability and Aboriginal Self-Determination/Self-Management: Is ATSIC Succeeding?* CAEPR Discussion Paper 51. Canberra: Australian National University.
- sasha k (2006) "'Activism" and "Anarcho-Purism"'. *Anarchist Opinion*. Accessed 20 August 2008 from <http://www.infoshop.org/rants/kk_purism.html>.
- Scott, J.C. (1985) *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. London: Yale University Press.
- Shalom Christian College (2009) Website accessed 7 April 2010 from <http://www.ccdeu.org.au/shalom_christian_college/welcome_to_shalom_chriistian_c.php#>.
- Shorter, C. (2000) 'Understanding and Motivating Activists'. Accessed 18 August 2008 from <<http://cameron.shorter.net/writings/activist.html>>.
- Small, S.A. and Uttal, L. (2005) 'Action-Oriented Research: Strategies for Engaged Scholarship'. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67: 936-948.
- Smallwood, G. (1980) 'Profile'. Aboriginal and Islander Studies Committee Newsletter. October: 3-5.
- Smith, D. (2005) *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People*. Oxford: AltaMira.

- Smith, G. (1990) 'Political Activist as Ethnographer'. *Social Problems* 37(4): 629-648
- Smith, L.T. (1999) *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*.
Dunedin: University of Otago Press.
- Snow, D.A. (2004) 'Framing Processes, Ideology, and Discursive Fields', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton: Blackwell, 380-412.
- Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., Kriesi, H. (2004) 'Mapping the Terrain', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton: Blackwell, 3-16.
- Soule, S.A. (2004) 'Diffusion Processes within and across Movements', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton, Vic: Blackwell, 294-310.
- Soule, S.A. and B.G. King. (2006) 'The Stages of the Policy Process and the Equal Rights Amendment, 1972-1982'. *American Journal of Sociology* 111(6): 1871-1909.
- South Dakota Democracy in Action (2008) 'Democracy in Action Norms'. Accessed 19 August 2008 from <<http://www.sddia.org/about-norms.html>>.
- Speed, S. (2006) 'At the Crossroads of Human Rights and Anthropology: Toward a Critically Engaged Activist Research'. *American Anthropologist* 108(1): 66-76.
- Spillman, L. (1998) 'When do Collective Memories Last? Founding Moments in the United States and Australia'. *Social Science History* 22(4): 445-477.
- Spivak, G.C. (1988) 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in Nelson, C. and Grossberg, L. (eds), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. London: Macmillan.
- Stafford, A. (2007) 'Push for action over indigenous health crisis'. *The Age* (Melbourne), 5 April.
- Starr, A. (2004) 'How can Anti-Imperialism Not Be Anti-Racist? The North American Anti-Globalization Movement'. *Journal of World-Systems Research* X(1): 119-151.

- Sullivan, P. (1996) 'All Things to All People: ATSIC and Australia's International Obligation to Uphold Indigenous Self-Determination', in Sullivan, P. (ed.), *Shooting the Banker: Essays on ATSIC and Self-Determination*. Darwin: The Australian National University, pp.105-127.
- Sutton, P. (2009) *The Politics of Suffering: Indigenous Australia and the End of the Liberal Consensus*. Carlton, VIC: Melbourne University Press.
- Taffe, S. (2005) *Black and white together – FCAATSI: The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, 1958-1973*. St Lucia, QLD: University of Queensland Press.
- Tarrow, S. (2008) 'Charles Tilly and the Practice of Contentious Politics'. *Social Movement Studies* 7(3): 225-246.
- (2001) 'Transnational Politics: Contention and Institutions in International Politics'. *International Journal of Political Science* 4: 1-20.
- (1998) *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
- (1993) 'Modular Collective Action and the Rise of the Social Movement: Why the French Revolution was not enough'. *Politics Society* 21(1): 69-90.
- Taylor, S.J. and Bogdan, R. (1998) *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: A Guidebook and Resource*. Brisbane: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Taylor, V. and Van Dyke, N. (2004) "'Get Up, Stand Up": Tactical Repertoires of Social Movements', in Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A., and Kriesi, H. (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Carlton: Blackwell, 262-293.
- Thaiday, W. (1981) *Under the Act*. Townsville: North Queensland Black Publishing Company.
- Throssell, H. (2007) 'Indigenous Health: Sorry is not Enough'. *Online Opinion*, 23 March.
- Tilly, C. (2008) *Contentious Performances*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- (2006) *Regimes and Repertoires*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- (2004) 'Observations of Social Processes and Their Formal Representations'. *Sociological Theory* 22(4): 595-602.

- (2002) *Stories, Identities, and Political Change*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- (1999) 'Conclusion: From Interactions to Outcomes in Social Movements', in Giugni, M., McAdam, D. and Tilly, C. (eds), *How Social Movements Matter*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- (1984) *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- (1982) *Routine Conflicts and Peasant Rebellions in Seventeenth-Century France*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- TGPN (2007) 'Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service Practice Profile' website, accessed on 3 November 2009 from <<http://www.tgpn.com.au/taihs.shtml>>.
- Tonkinson, R. (2007) 'Aboriginal "Difference" and "Autonomy" Then and Now: Four Decades of Change in a Western Desert Society'. *Anthropological Forum* 17(1): 41-60.
- Touraine, A. (1988) 'Modernity and Cultural Specificness'. *International Social Science Journal* no. 118: 443-457.
- Townsville Bulletin* (2008) 'Communities call for fair go', 12 July 2008: 29.
- Trad, S. (2008) 'Furore over Canberra kangaroo cull'. *The Australian* 20 May 2008.
- Trigger, D. (1999) 'Nature, Work and "the Environment": Contesting Sentiments and Identities in the Southwest of Western Australia'. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 10(2): 163-176.
- (1997) 'Land Rights and the Reproduction of Aboriginal Culture in Australia's Gulf Country'. *Social Analysis* 41(3): 84-106.
- (1992) *Whitefella Comin': Aboriginal Responses to Colonialism in Northern Australia*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
- Tsing, A.L. (2005) *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Tuan, Y.F. (1977) *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. London: Arnold.
- Tucker, R.C. (1972) *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Turner, V. (1987) *The Anthropology of Performance*. New York: PAJ Publications.

United Nations (2006) *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Accessed 24 March 2009 from

<<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/512/07/PDF/N0651207.pdf?OpenElement>>.

Van Toorn, P. (2008) 'Slave Brands or Cicatrices? Writing on Aboriginal Skin in Tom Petrie's *Reminiscences of Early Queensland*'. *Biography* 31(2): 223-244.

VeggieBoards (2006) 'Activist Discussion'. 14 December 2006.

<http://www.veggieboards.com/boards/archive/index.php/t-64644.html>
(accessed on 10 February 2009).

Voloder, L. (2008). 'Autoethnographic Challenges: Confronting Self, Field and Home'. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 19(1): 27-40.

Walker, E.T., A.W. Martin, and J.D. McCarthy (2008) 'Confronting the State, the Corporation, and the Academy: The Influence of Institutional Targets on Social Movement Repertoires'. *American Journal of Sociology* 114(1): 35-76.

Wallerstein, I. (2004a) 'The Dilemmas of Open Space: The Future of the WSF'. *International Social Science Journal* 56(182): 629-638.

----- (2004b) *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*. London: Duke University Press.

Ward, N. (2008) 'Do Social Movements Challenge Top-down Governance?' blog post. Accessed 19 August 2008 from <<http://www.neilward.ie/?p=78>>.

Waters, J. (2008). *Gone for a song: A death in custody on Palm Island*. Sydney: ABC Books.

Watson, J. (2010) *Palm Island Through a Long Lens*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

----- (1995) "'We Couldn't Tolerate Any More": the Palm Island Strike of 1957'. *Labour History* 69: 149-170.

----- (1991) *Becoming Bwgcolman : exile and survival on Palm Island Reserve, 1918 to the present*. PhD Thesis, University of Queensland.

- Watson, Nicole. (2006). 'Indigenous Resistance to previous terror laws'. *Green Left Weekly* 25 Jan. Viewed 19 October 2008 from <<http://www.greenleft.org.au/2006/653/7600>>.
- Weatherup, M. (2007) 'Tense mood on judgment day'. *The Townsville Bulletin*, 21 June 2007.
- Weber, Max (1948) 'The Sociology of Charismatic Authority' in Gerth, H.H. and Wright Mills, C. (trans. and eds), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 245-252.
- Winch, J. and Hayward, K. (1999) "'Doing It Our Way": Can Cultural Traditions Survive in Universities?' *New Doctor*: 25-27.
- Wiktionary (2009) Accessed on 10 February 2009 from <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Wiktionary:Main_Page>.
- Wolfe, P. (1997) 'Review: History and Imperialism: A Century of Theory, from Marx to Postcolonialism'. *The American Historical Review* 102(2): 388-420
- WordNet (2006) Published by Princeton University. Accessed on 10 February 2009 from <<http://wordnet.princeton.edu/>>.
- Zaman, S. (2008) 'Native Among the Natives: Physician Anthropologist Doing Hospital Ethnography at Home. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 37(2): 135-154.