Summer May Finlay and Marie McInerney reported on the Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference for the Croakey Conference News Service. The Conference was held in Darwin 18–20 June, 2019.

Croakey is a social journalism project for public health based in Australia. http://croakey.org
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Previewing #LowitjaConf2019 – sharing a vision and ambitions for future generations

The Lowitja Institute – Australia’s national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research institute – held its second International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference on the lands of the Larrakia Nation in Darwin, which hold a special significance in the Institute’s history.

The event, attended by more than 700 mostly Indigenous participants from across Australia and the globe, marked an important transition for the Lowitja Institute, while its theme – Thinking. Speaking. Being – recognised the UN declaration of 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

Summer May Finlay, a Yorta Yorta woman, public health practitioner and Croakey contributor, covered the conference, with non-Indigenous journalist Marie McInerney, for the Croakey Conference News Service.

They live tweeted the three-day event at #LowitjaConf2019.

Indigenous X was also at the conference. See this preview by Associate Professor Chelsea Bond, Dr Lisa Whop and Ali Drummond: The Blackfulla Test: 11 reasons that Indigenous health research grant/publication should be rejected.
Summer May Finlay writes:
The Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference 2019 creates an Indigenous space to discuss research and programs from an Indigenous viewpoint, bringing a collective understanding and a sense of safety for Indigenous people.

Lowitja Chairperson Pat Anderson, an Alyawarre woman, told Croakey she wants the conference to be an “Indigenous safe space”.

That requires “as much as possible making it Indigenous only”, including speakers, presenters, and delegates from around the world, she said during an interview ahead of the international event which has as its theme: Thinking. Speaking. Being. First Nations Solutions for Global Change.

While the majority of conference of speakers and delegates are Indigenous, there will also be non-Indigenous allies. “We welcome our non-Indigenous colleagues,” said Anderson.

As well as the conference focus on solutions, not problems, its theme is recognition of the important role that Indigenous languages play in maintaining and expressing Culture.

Vision and ambitions for future generations

Anderson is known nationally and globally for her leadership in Indigenous health and wellbeing over many decades, including recently as co-chair of the Prime Minister’s Referendum Council where she played an instrumental role in the development of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

In the conference program, Anderson said she wants this global gathering of Indigenous health researchers to create a place where “respectful, provocative conversations” can take place about “what concerns us today and what our vision and ambitions are for future generations”.

“We would like these conversations to explore new ways of thinking, speaking and being in the world, serve who we are, promote new ideas and take a planetary approach,” she said.

As well as wanting the conference to promote “Indigenous solutions”, she hopes speakers, presenters and delegates will “provide direction for priorities or issues that we might want to work on nationally and globally”.

Revealing global patterns

That’s a hope and expectation too for keynote speaker and leading Maori academic Professor Tahu Kukutai, who says conferences like this – with their focus on Indigenous programs and research and significant Indigenous attendance – allow us to see global patterns, such as the links between colonisation and wellbeing.

“Unless we [Indigenous people globally] are drinking the same Kool-Aid, the patterns are undeniable,” she told Croakey.
Focusing on solutions “is a strength”, said Kukutai, who is an international leader in Indigenous data sovereignty, and Professor of Demography at the National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis at the University of Waikato in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

She says that when Indigenous people are at a conference like this, there is a “shared understanding” because of a “shared broad world view”. The understanding is based on Indigenous peoples’ “distinctive place-based identities and cultures”. It is also created by the shared understanding “as dislocated peoples”.

“We (Indigenous people) know ourselves better than anyone else”.

Being within a predominantly Indigenous space “feeds your academic soul in a different way”, Kukutai said.

Not only is it good for you, she always learns “a tremendous amount”.

Other keynote and plenary speakers at the three-day event include:

• Peter Yu, Broome-based CEO of the Yawuru Corporate Group
• Dr Julia Kim, Program Director of the Gross National Happiness Centre Bhutan
• Bruce Pascoe, author of the award winning Dark Emu and Board member of the Aboriginal Corporation for Languages
• Bruce Blankenfeld, vice chair of the Polynesian Voyaging Society
• Dr Abhay Bang, founding director of SEARCH (Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health) in Gadchiroli in India, who led the recent first comprehensive investigation into Tribal Health in India.
Important connections

This conference is particularly significant for the Lowitja Institute, which began its life in Darwin in 1997 as the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal and Tropical Health.

At that time, Anderson says “research was a dirty word” for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, with research conducted on us rather than with us.

“We were the researched,” she said.

More than 20 years on, the Lowitja Institute is Australia’s national institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research and set from 1 July to become a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and structured as a public benevolent institution.

It will no longer be a CRC under the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, but will instead move to Department of Health funding.

This shift will mean the Lowitja Institute can work with researchers beyond the 22 institutions it has been partnered with under the CRC.

Research leadership

The Lowitja Institute has made an extraordinary contribution.

No longer are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people just the researched. We are researchers. All Lowitja Institute funded research projects have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers, with 68 per cent led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This is in contrast to the National Health and Medical Research Council Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research programs, where only 14 percent of the research is led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people themselves.

The Lowitja Institute got a much-needed funding boost earlier this year in the 2019-20 Federal Budget, with $10 million allocated for its research and scholarships program, but that has still only effectively restored its funding to pre-2018 levels.

While going from strength to strength, Anderson said the Lowitja Institute does not yet have “the full allocation of funding required to do the research that really needs to be done”.

Still, with its Indigenous-led program, this conference displays the strong capacity of Indigenous peoples. It also demonstrates that Indigenous people are not just the researched. We are researchers. And better for it.
Twitter previews

Ali Drummond @daunob_le - 6h
Reading for my flight to Darwin. Lowitja conference! Chris Anderson's chap that critiques Schools/Faculties claiming Indigenous Knowledges has been critical to my work & PhD. Book is a must read for HDR students! #LowitjaConf2019 #thinking @LowitjaInstitut

Pep @ItsJustPep - 4h
Plane full of awesome people heading north to #LowitjaConf2018. Looking forward to the incredible event & spending time learning. Great to catch up with former work colleagues already! Now TOO nervous about my presentation. 😳

Ali Drummond @IndigenousX - 5h
If you couldn’t make the Lowitja Conference in person this year, you can e-doris via @IndigenousX or @croakeyblog mob. Tweepers please use the conference hashtag #LowitjaConf2019

James Ward @researchjames - 2h
Entourage @KootsyCanuto and Kurt towers to #LowitjaConf2019 looking forward to a week of warmth and discussions n catch ups and ugh all the deadly people
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Previewing #LowitjaConf2019 – sharing a vision and ambitions for future generations

#LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

ArabenaKerry @KerryArabena · 3h
Morning catch ups with good friends @ausdeafmob & Hellen Pietsch from #MurrGen3 #IndigBusiness 3 grandmothers making a difference in Oz @First1000DaysOz for @lowitjaConf2019 @Lowitjainstitut

Kim O'Donnell @big_budgie_ · 2h
Looking forward to the #LowitjaConf2019 and catching up with colleagues @lopey @MickGooda @KerryArabena #Darwin #sunshine.
Tweeting training wheels...look out! 😜

Pearson In The Wind @Luke.Pearson · 16h
Heading to Darwin tomorrow to rep @IndigencouX at #LowitjaConf2019! Gonna be running a stall there with me & @JamesAGSaunders helping out with social media, and a charge station for forgetful mob like me who are always in need of a charger... Come say hi if you're gonna be there!
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

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Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 4h
Awesome to see @LukeLPearson founder of @IndigenousX & @JamesAGSaunders at the #LowitjaConf2019!

I’ll be saying hi, and I always need a charger!

Hope Luke & James can get more of our mob on twitter & for those who are already in twitter, using it more!

Pearson In The Wind @LukeLPearson
Heading to Darwin tomorrow to rep @IndigenousX at #LowitjaConf2019! Gonna be running a stall there with me & @JamesAGSaunders helping out with social media, and a charge station for forgetful mob like me who are...

Romi Mokak @RMokak · Jun 14
Look forward to #LowitjaConf2019; deadly people coming together on Larrakia country next week @AMSANTAus @ozprodcom

Nathan Appo @Elusive_Sausage · 2h
Off to Darwin tomorrow, excited to present with @donisha_duff & @seanyorston #itsbeenawhile #LowitjaConf2019

Tanja Hirvonon @Tanja23 · 2h
The weather is beautiful in #Darwin, looking forward to the #LowitjaConf2019!!! Will be a deadly week full of deadly people having important conversations that will drive and influence wellbeing @CroakeyNews @SummerMayFinlay @AMSANTAus @AipaAust @DrCChamberlain

Dr Kootay (Justin) Canuto and 1 other liked
UniMelbPoche @UniMelbPoche · 4h
Poche Leadership Fellows will be presenting at #LowitjaConf2019 this week. 2018 Fellows @tamarabutler @DrKootay @ItsJustPep & 2019 Fellows @RileyTamarar & Jacob Prehn presenting a range of topics. We wish them all well. #UniMelbPoche @CommMedia @unimelb @LowitjaInstitu

Mel Robinson @MelRuss72 · 4h
Looks like a beautiful day. Here’s the view of the Darwin Convention centre at sunrise #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut · Jun 14
Working a little bit hard (while the sun shines outside) in #Darwin to create a great experience for #LowitjaConf2019 delegates. See you all next week! Videos will be available soon after event.

Ali Drummond @IndigenousX · 18h
@LowitjaInstitut mob briefing. Program is looking real deadly! Looking forward to seeing everyone. One more sleep! 😴 #LowitjaConf2019 #myfrothough

Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut · 38m
Bumping in for #lowitjaconf2019... the great @LowitjaInstitut staff and helpers hard at work, thank you all!
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

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Previewing #LowitjaConf2019 – sharing a vision and ambitions for future generations

#LowitjaConf2019

chelsea bond @drccondon · 19h
Really looking forward to presenting at #lowitjaconf2019 on Larrakia country this week - bringing stories of OIB with @nalawangarra mob and an innovative research methodology with @UQNews VisionBima ZakPage Productions and

ORIGINAL INALA BOYS
This is "ORIGINAL INALA BOYS" by BIMA Vision on Vimeo, the home for high quality videos and the people who love them.

Lisa Whop @Lisa_J_Whop · 2h
Looking forward to an exciting week on Larrakia country at the #LowitjaConf2019 - presenting important work on elimination of cervical cancer - and how we can get there as advised by Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women.

Frank Beard @DrFrankBeard
On track to eliminate Indigenous cervical cancer disparity - study in @theMJA shows high first dose HPV vaccine coverage in Indigenous adolescents, though strategies to improve course completion needed @Lisa_J_Whop
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

DrMadsenLongbottom @DHLongbottom · 2h
To all the mob heading to @LowitjaInstitut conference have a blast! Check out our project on trauma informed care & responding to Aboriginal women who exp VIOLENCE.
Co-Lead Dr Tamara McKean is presenting Thurs June 20, on our behalf. I'll be in NZ for NASA Doctoral wrktop.

AHCSA @AHCSA_ · Jun 13
The report for the Aboriginal Gender Project has arrived!
The project’s team will be presenting the findings at #LowitjaConf2019 in Darwin next week.
AHCSA is proud to have worked with @uniadelaide, @sahmriAU and @LowitjaInstitut on the project.

MaiKuwayuStudy @MaiKuwayu · 1h
Look out for the Mai Kuwayu team at #LowitjaConf2019 - Ray Lovett, Jan Chapman, Katie Thurber, Bobby Maher, Alyson Wright and Tamara Riley. Great opportunity to find out more about our work on beautiful Larrakia country! 

#Ourculturescount

#LowitjaConf2019

Previewing #LowitjaConf2019 – sharing a vision and ambitions for future generations
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Going to The Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference from 18 to 20 June in Darwin? Three of our staff will be presenting: neildrewAIH, Uncle Mick Adams and Michelle Elwell. Program at: bit.ly/2Wbxaha LowitjaConf2019

If you couldn’t make the Lowitja Conference in person this year, you can e-doris via @indigenousx or @croakeyblog mob. Tweeters please use the conference hashtag LowitjaConf2019

Melissa Sweet @croakeyblog
Make sure to follow LowitjaConf2019 for news this coming week from the Lowitja Institute conference.
@SummerMayFinlay & @mariemcinerney will be covering for @CroakeyNews - and also make sure to follow.

Kylie Dowse @colourfrominst - 29h
e-doris is new fave 😏

Marni Tuala @MarniTuala - 5h
e-Doris 😄

Lorraine Muller PhDx2 @LorraineMuller
Replying to @MarniTuala @croakeyblog and 2 others
e-doris is a great new word. 😊
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Kalinda Griffiths @Klick22 · 58m
LOWITJAI! So. Excited! See all you mob soon... #LowitjaConf2019

#lovedata
#SuperstarsofSTEM

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 2h
And the trip to the #LowitjaConf2019 begins! First leg train to Sydney...

I’ll be up there concerning for @LowitjaInstitut with @CroakeyNews

I’ll also be presenting on my PHD.

So excited!!!!!
“May our ancestors guide and protect you always” – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019

A cultural ceremony opened #LowitjaConf2019 yesterday evening on Larrakia Nation in Darwin.

Image via @LowitjaInstitut tweet

Australia’s national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research institute was welcomed back to its “spiritual home” on Larrakia Land in Darwin yesterday evening during a cultural ceremony marking the beginning of the Lowitja Institute’s second International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference.

On a perfect Dry season night, with the sun setting on the harbour behind, the Larrakia Nation welcomed hundreds of mostly Indigenous delegates from across Australia and the globe with a smoking ceremony to cleanse people’s minds and spirits.

Richard Fejo, a Larrakia Elder and chair of the Larrakia Nation, said:

“I always feel a peace when I stand on my Country. I know I’m at home. Here at Larrakia, I want you to feel the peace that I feel when I’m on my Country.

We offer this to our visitors and people who live here.

You have come by the way of the Larrakia Nation. When you’re here, you hear the voices of our ancestors. When you leave, you’ll take the Larrakia message with you. May our ancestors guide and protect you always.”
Lowitja Institute chair Pat Anderson said the conference, which will feature guest speakers from around the world, was a testament to the strengths of an organisation that began 22 years ago.

“Darwin is the spiritual home of the Lowitja institute,” she said. “We started here over 22 years ago so it is with a great sense of pride and pleasure that I’m able to bring this huge conference home.

“Thank you to Larrakia for having us again, on Country.”

Below are some snaps and tweets as delegates arrived for the three-day event, which is being covered by Summer May Finlay and Marie McInerney for the Croakey Conference News Service.

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Welcome Ceremony

![Welcome Ceremony](image-url)

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019
“May our ancestors guide and protect you always” – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

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Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitute · 50s
A beautiful sunset for the smoking ceremony offered by Larrakia Nation to #LowitjaConf2019 delegates.

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Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut · 15m
A great performance by One Mob. Different Country at #LowitjaConf2019 Welcoming Ceremony.

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Ariana Kong (née Villarosa) @acvillarosa · 3h
Beautiful welcoming ceremony tonight with a performance from the One Mob Different Country dancers #larrakia #LowitjaConf2019 #Darwin #phdlife @LucieRamjan

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"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019

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Croakey Conference News Service
Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 5m
Pat Anderson: “Darwin is the spiritual home of the Lwitiŋa Institute, we started here 22 years ago. Thank you to the Larrakia people for having us here again, on Country.” #LowitjaConf2019 @LowitjaInstitut

Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut · 8m
Response to the welcome to Larrakia lands from #LowitjaConf2019 delegates who have travelled from Hawai‘i and Aotearoa to be with us for the next three days.

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 18m
Fabulous performance from Upai Purni #LowitjaConf2019 - Torres Strait Islander cultural group working at #DonDale with kids in detention

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Love this pic of Upai Purri performers Natalie Leysley, son Henrique Thomas, and grandmother Loyla Leysley from Badu Island after performing at #LowitjaConf2019 #WelcomeCeremony last night.

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019.

Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut · 1m

audience participation in the performance by Upai Purri at the #LowitjaConf2019 Welcoming Ceremony.
Watch Summer May Finlay interview the Torres Strait Islander cultural performers Upai Purri, speaking about their work with young people in detention and schools.

Click on this link to watch the snapshot video compiled by Summer May Finlay.
Pre-conference events

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

[Image of Croakey logo]
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

“May our ancestors guide and protect you always” – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019

Croakey
“Conference News Service”
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Snaps and selfies

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019

Snaps and selfies

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019

Snaps and selfies

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019

Snaps and selfies

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019

Snaps and selfies

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019

Snaps and selfies

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019

Snaps and selfies
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

“May our ancestors guide and protect you always” – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut · 2h
conversations already happening among some brilliant people and we haven’t even started! can’t wait for the next 3 days #LowitjaConf2019 @Lisa_J_Whop @drcebonds @LarnzLarnz @Klick22

Leah Barclay @LeahBarclay · 2h
Setting up the Soundscape Hub for ‘Listening to Country’ at #LowitjaConf2019 - come and listen to immersive environmental soundscapes from Queensland created with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in prison
#acoustic ecology

Bronwyn Fredericks @BronFredericks · 2h
Just ran into these gorgeous women from @IAHA_National down at the Darwin Waterfront. The Deadly Donna Murray, CEO of the @IAHA_National & some of her deadly team! We’re all looking forward to the @LowitjaInstitut Conference! #LowitjaConf19 #LowitjaConf2019

“May our ancestors guide and protect you always” – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference [here](https://www.croakey.com.au/)

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019

**Bronwyn Fredericks @BronFredericks · 44m**
I made sure I caught up with some of my northern colleagues while in Darwin for the #LowitjaConf19. Kim Robertson & Shane Moliap both work in Indigenous Policies & Programs, with The Office of the PVC Indigenous Leadership at @CDUni.

**Koorungkas Yarning @K_Yarning · 15m**
Christine Parry & Rose Walley, Whadjuk Noongar women at the opening ceremony for #LowitjaConf2019

**Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 40m**
Ran into Wardong (David Collard) who is on the Uluru Statement Working Group & in Darwin for the #LowitjaConf2019

I noticed his T-shirt & couldn’t help but ask for a photo!

The MUA sells similar ones. Get yours!


"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019

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"Conference News Service"
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Nathan Appo @Elusive_Sausage · 6m

#LowitjaConf2019 registered 🏁

Excited to meet all the mob at the Welcoming Ceremony this afternoon, definitely a buzz around town.

@seanyorston 🙏 – at Darwin Convention Centre

May our ancestors guide and protect you always” – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019

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Nathan Appo @Elusive_Sausage · 3h

It's a really inspiring feeling as I arrive into Darwin for the #LowitjaConf2019 knowing mob from all over are all here with the same purpose, to share knowledge, support each other & make our people healthier😊

Nathan Appo @Elusive_Sausage · 27m

Donisha, Nathan & Sean from @DeadlyChoices! Check them out Wednesday!

Deadly Choices: Changing Health Attitudes and Behaviours. @donisha_duff #LowitjaConf2019

"May our ancestors guide and protect you always" – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019

Croakey

"Conference News Service"
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

“May our ancestors guide and protect you always” – welcoming #LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019
The hashtag was trending nationally on Twitter before the Cultural Ceremony even began.

Summer May Finlay and Marie McInerney covered the #LowitjaConf2019 for the Croakey Conference News Service.
Peter Yu delivers powerful calls to action

“A fantastic first session”: Pat Anderson, June Oscar, Peter Yu and Janine Mohamed at #LowitjaConf2019. Image via @LowitjaInstitut tweet

Introduction by Croakey: A senior Yawuru man, Peter Yu, has issued a warning about the impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s health from racism that is again on the rise, “like the influenza of social ills, constantly mutating and finding new hosts”.

CEO of the Broome-based Nyamba Buru Yawuru Aboriginal Corporation, Yu called on health services, research centres and others working in Indigenous health and wellbeing to step up into the political impasse on the Uluru Statement of the Heart and uphold its principles in their work.

He said any program or policy that seeks to improve Indigenous health but “denies the centrality” of four key values – identity as a people, territorial lands and waters, language and culture – “will be doomed to failure”.

Yu won a standing ovation and his name trended nationally for hours on Twitter on Tuesday after he delivered the opening keynote speech to the Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference in Darwin, on Larrakia Nation land.
The three-day event was attended by more than 750 mostly Indigenous health researchers from across Australia, and the globe, including Bhutan, Canada, Hawaii, Indonesia, Nepal, Aotearoa/New Zealand, the Philippines and the United States.

Delegates also heard welcome speeches from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner June Oscar AO and Lowitja Institute chair Pat Anderson AO, and were also given a message and call to further action on Indigenous health from Lowitja Institute patron and namesake Lowitja O’Donoghue.

With the conference marking the UN Year of Indigenous Languages, Yu also talked about efforts to revive Yawuru language in the Kimberley after it was devastated during “mission era assimilation”, leaving only 10 people in his community able to speak it fluently by the 1980s.

“Losing these languages equates to the destruction of the world’s libraries,” he said. “It is to human thought and creativity what destroying the Amazon is to biodiversity.”

Yu is also chair of the Indigenous Reference Group to the Northern Ministerial Forum and signalled his intention to look beyond Canberra to Indonesia to build critical financial independence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Below is an edited extract of his speech, republished here with permission.

Yu also spoke to Summer May Finlay after his address. Watch the interview below and also listen to an interview with ABC Radio National.
Peter Yu writes:
Ngayu nilawarl Peter Yu, Yawuru ngany wamba ngangan Rubibigab.
Gala mabu jalinyji gurranyan ngayu burungan junggarrayirr nyambagun.
Ngayuni ngabindan nyambagun.

My name is Peter Yu, I am a Yawuru man from Broome
Thank you for welcoming me to your country here.
It is an honour to be here.

I want to start by addressing an issue that we see raising its ugly head on a more frequent basis than we would all like.

The issue is of course racism and its detrimental and insidious effect on us, our health and our country.

In considering the dismal state of Aboriginal health in this country, and in our failure to address it convincingly, we must be mindful always of the shadowy presence of racism. At the same time we must not succumb or be lured to a false sense of security and comfortability in the incremental nature of relative change.

**Structural violence**

I would define racism up front in today’s context as all pervasive in its systematic exclusion and structural discrimination.

It is an agile phenomenon, characterised by how it turns, shifts shape and emerges out of unexpected shadows.

It has a capacity to coalesce and to find solidarity in poisonous people, to manifest where fear and disenfranchisement co-exist.

And we see it again on the rise in Australia, in new ways, and in response to different perceptions of threat.

It cannot be quelled by a singular policy statement, or an institutional response or even by an election result.

It has no universal prophylactic, no vaccination or immunisation or moment of extinction. It is like the influenza of social ills, constantly mutating and finding new hosts.

The racism I’m talking about is not the booing that Adam Goodes copped, although that is emblematic of the story. But it is deeply embedded in the Australian nation state which violently imposed a western world on 60,000 years of Indigenous societies. The beneficiaries of that violence have never come close to compensating Indigenous people for that history.

Neither in the nation’s response to Mabo, nor in other national milestones, can we yet discern the dismantling of the systems of structural violence, nor the legacy of dispossession and genocide.

That structural violence is demonstrated by our continuing and appalling health profile; mass imprisonment, youth suicides, and economic and social deprivation.
“We need empowerment”

Medical professionals and researchers do a great job at the front line with Aboriginal people – But as Pat Anderson once observed, in referring to why western medicine can only go so far....

“As Aboriginal people we need to have a sense of agency in our lives, that we are not stray leaves blowing about in the wind. In a word, we need empowerment”.

Discrimination is a potent enemy of empowerment.

The power of agency, of peoples’ capacity to act and to make change, cannot be ignored in any genuine conversation about Indigenous wellbeing.

In a western conceptualisation of health, once an illness has been diagnosed, a whole schema of medical interventions can be enacted to encourage a cure, be they hospitals, medicines, surgery and so on.

Aboriginal people do receive uneven access to these services, for a whole range of reasons, but to my mind, that observation zooms in on the tip, and ignores the iceberg.

The iceberg, the big submerged issue here, is that a western conceptualisation of health denies, or ignores, or even denigrates, the Indigenous one and in so doing, is incapable, despite the very best of intentions, of making much headway in terms of the wellbeing of First Nations people.

Self-determination for health

For Indigenous people, a healthy life is fundamentally connected to our universal demands for self-determination, for freedom from discrimination and for autonomous economic foundations.

We know that our culture, that our languages and systems and practices are protective of our physical and mental health. Not as an add-on, or after thought.

Not as a policy of ‘cultural safety’ pop-riveted onto existing programs.

Developing culturally relevant tools for the measurement of wellbeing is crucial because it enables us to tell a story of our progress in a way, and in a language, that we own. And according to our own values.

These tools are important because they can articulate differences between Aboriginal people and everyone else, but they can also capture differences amongst Aboriginal groups as to what matters most.

This important work has to be conceived by us, driven by us and developed by us. The journey undertaken by my people in Broome, the Yawuru people, to develop just such a tool, and then apply it, is ongoing.

Importance of languages

I want to turn now to the importance of language diversity and why language is so important to Indigenous identity and to our wellbeing.

2019 is the international year of Indigenous languages.

Like many of my generation, I grew up in the mission era of assimilation. Language, in fact any form of cultural expression or identity, was severely discouraged, if not directly punished.
Like most kids of my generation, I was discouraged from learning my own language.

Assimilation was the policy imperative of the day, underpinned by arrogant notions of racial superiority, and the misplaced belief that the dominant culture could re-structure the entire mindset of Indigenous Australians. The means by which this was to be achieved was via shame, physical and mental intimidation and punishment.

I remember the distinct impression I had on leaving Broome and arriving in Perth to attend the mission and boarding school.

It was a bit of a rude awakening, because you’re coming from a very secure cultural and social environment as a kid growing up in Broome, but with a kind of peripheral awareness of political matters that our parents might have been involved in.

But then, coming to the big smoke to attend boarding school, you realise that you’re part of this official program that this policy is driving, that they are trying to re-structure your entire mindset: “We can’t do anything about your skin but we’ll try to do something about your head”.

For all people, language is the expression of a worldview, and of a value system; it contains the signifiers of cultural difference. It plays a crucial role for our people in expressing our social identity, in capturing family relationships, in speaking to connections to places and to country.

It is the vehicle by which cultural difference is communicated from parent to child – it is through language that children acquire the ways and world views of their culture.

This is why the speaking of mother tongues was not permitted in missions, and schools, during assimilation era in Australia. Why children who were taken from families were punished severely for speaking in language – it represented the most powerful expression of cultural identity, and a challenge to the colonial world view.

It can be difficult for English speakers, or single language speakers, to comprehend why other languages are so important – particularly where you are describing a system of knowledge that is orally based.

Losing these languages equates to the destruction of the world’s libraries.

It is to human thought and creativity what destroying the Amazon is to biodiversity.

Language is not only a way of describing the world; it is in fact a way of knowing and comprehending the world, and of understanding oneself, relating to others and reading the natural world.

“The best decision of my life”

When I was involved in setting up the Kimberley language resource centre in the 1980s, my language, the Yawuru language, was considered severely endangered – and there were less than 10 fluent speakers.

When I became CEO of the Yawuru corporate group in 2009 – and in response to calls from the community – I invested in the Yawuru language and we formed the Mabu Yawuru Nan-ga centre.

In 2017, we began the Walalnga Yawuru Ngang-ga language program: this is a 2 year study program for Yawuru adults, and we aim to have 20 Yawuru language speakers by 2021. It increases the use of Yawuru language amongst family and friends, and has kick-started the process of intergenerational language learning.
We focus on day-to-day terms – language you would use in your home to speak to your children, or on country – phrases relating to places and to cultural activities – tides, seasons, fish movements. The kinds of things that Yawuru people talk about.

We are aiming to create a community of adult Yawuru speakers, and we have a group of people men and women who can speak to each other in Yawuru for an hour. This has not happened in my lifetime...

I want to read to you a testimony from my wuberjanu, my niece, Natalie Dean, a Yawuru woman who was one of the first graduates of our Walalngga Yawuru Ngang-ga language program in 2018. She said:

“I have made the best decision of my life in joining this language course. It has changed my life completely, culturally, emotionally and spiritually.

I now know my connection to country through language, I have found my identity and I have re-connected to my great grandfather through language.

My children learnt Yawuru language before me at their school and it didn’t seem right.

So now I am teaching my children and grandchildren to speak Yawuru language. I am so proud to be able to keep my language alive.”

In 2019 the Yawuru language is taught throughout the primary schools in Broome, and it is reappearing around the town – on buildings, organisations, helicopters, street names, conservation and housing estates. The revitalisation of Yawuru language is an ongoing process, and one that I remain personally very committed to.

**Truth, Treaty, Voice**

For First Nations people the globe over, the struggle has been to hang on four things – our identity as a people; the territorial lands and waters of our people; our language; and our culture.

Any program or policy – or research project – that seeks to improve our lot, that seeks to address our impoverishment, but that denies the centrality of these values, will be doomed to failure.

My final word then is an encouragement towards partnership which enables Indigenous people to be the architects of our own futures, and to enact our collective responsibilities to people and to places, and to future generations.

The extent to which these partnerships are genuine will determine the trajectory of First Nations people over the 21st century. I make this call of course to health services, and to research centres, and to all who work in the name of bettering the health and wellbeing of Australia’s Indigenous peoples.

The calls made in the Uluru statement – Truth, Treaty, Voice – are translatable at scales below that of the nation.

While we wait for the national agenda to progress, as I am sure it will, it is worth reflecting on your institution, your research project, your professional practice, and the extent to which the principles embodied in the Uluru statement are upheld in the work going on around you.

I will leave you with that Gordian knot to untie, and commend this conference to you.
From Twitter

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 9m
Peter Yu, a Yawuru Man from Broome & Yawuru Corporate Group is the 1st #LowitjaConf2019 Keynote here with CEO of the @LowitjaInstitut @JanineMilera.

Listen to him speak to ABC abcmedia.akamaized.net/m/podcast/201...

Peter Yu with Lowitja Institute CEO Mrs Janine Mohamed

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 1h
Welcome to Country at #LowitjaConf2019 from Larrakia Nation Elder and chairman Richard Fejo

Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut · 1h
Starting early this morning with #LowitjaConf2019 keynote speaker Peter Yu talking to @abcsdarwin radio breakfast. Peter will be talking to Fran Kelly on ABC RN Breakfast at 7.50am AEST.
Peter Yu delivers powerful calls to action #LowitjaConf2019

IndigenousX Pty Ltd @IndigenousXLLtd · 39m
Peter Yu talking about impacts of racism on health and Australia’s inability to adequately address racism. #LowitjaConf2019

“You only have to look at all of the significant historical milestones... there has been very little in terms of manifest benefit for First Nations ppl”

Tina Brodie @tina_brodie09 · 39m
“We must be mindful of the shadowy presence of racism ... it turns and shifts shapes and emerges out of the shadows” - Peter Yu, Keynote #LowitjaConf2019

LIME Network @LIME__Network

Powerful reflections on insideous nature of racism and affects on health & wellbeing “this systemic exclusion of our people is like an illness, a disease.” “We continue to disavow agency, in a word we need empowerment.” Peter Yu #lowitjaconf2019

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Peter Yu delivers powerful calls to action

All Drummond @IndigenousX · 47m
This is why we turn up to #LowitjaConf2019 #BlackfullaBingo

chelsea bond @drcbond
Peter Yu delivers opening keynote and cautions against being lured by false sense of security with incremental change. Speaks so powerfully about racism as fundamental to Australian society. Preach 🙌 Also we are on a roll with 🎯 #BlackfullaBingo

chelsea bond @drcbond · 47m
Peter Yu preaching at #LowitjaConf2019 - Western conceptualisation of health undermines Indigenous conceptualisation which includes aspirations for self determination. #BlackfullaBingo

CRE_ICHEAR aka amanda leach @cre_ichear · 40m
Peter Yu - Shadow of racism - no vaccine for this disease #LowitjaConf2019 @MenziesResearch

Geoffrey Spurling @GkSpurling · 40m
Peter Yu, keynote speaker on racism: “Racism has no universal prophylactic or vaccination – the influenza of social ills – constantly mutating and finding new hosts” #LowitjaConf2019

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 41m
Peter Yu: Racial discrimination cannot be quelled by singular policy statements or election results, it has no vaccination or moment of extinction. It is deeply embedded in the Australian nation state. #LowitjaConf2019

JAGS @JamesAGSaunders · 41m
Peter Yu in his Keynote Address discussing the R word (racism) and how it's embedded across Australian society #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference [here](https://www.croakey.com.au/)

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**Lowitja Institute** @LowitjaInstitut · 31m

#LowitjaConf2019 Peter Yu delivering the 1st keynote address: we’re hard-wired to be connected. Social isolation is a great modern ill. Indigenous ppls value connectivity above all else: Connectivity is part of identity.

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**Ali Drummond** @IndigenousX · 31m

Peter Yu sharing his niece’s yarn about the importance of indigenous languages. Language is our connection to country, reconnects us to our ancestors; so we must learn and teach the next generation. #LowitjaConf2019

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**Jaqui Hughes** @JaqHughes · 38m

Australia history is continuing racial arrogance - blackbirding, eugenics, assimilation, removal of country and languages. A misplaced belief the dominant culture would replace and reconstruct the First Australians mindset. #LowitjaConf2019

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**Karen Dwyer** @KarenDwyer12 · 38m

#LowitjaConf2019 Peter Yu: improving lives of First Nation people: ownership of risk; partnership with government; build strength in governance and management; pride in language

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**CRE_IChEAR aka amanda leach** @cre_ihear · 38m

Peter Yu also speaking of Broome’s nearest neighbour - Indonesia - as future trade partner and creating opportunity not delivered by Perth, Sydney or Melbourne #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Peter Yu delivers powerful calls to action

#LowitjaConf2019

Jaqui Hughes @JaqHughes · 35m
Assimilation policy deliberately undermines Indigenous knowledges which are oral traditions; a cultural genocide. Dr Peter Yu. #LowitjaConf2019

CRE_ICHEAR aka amanda leach @cre_ichear · 35m
Peter Yu - destroying our language is like destroying all the libraries of the world #LowitjaConf2019 @MenziesResearch

Marie McInerney @marleemcinerney · 36m
Peter Yu talks about growing up in the assimilation era, of Indigenous kids doing ballroom dancing, private elocution and deportment lessons: “They couldn’t do anything about the colour of our skins but they were trying to do things with our heads” #LowitjaConf2019

Robyn Williams and 1 other liked

chelsea bond • @drobond · 37m
Peter Yu on the violence of assimilation - they couldn’t do anything about the colour of our skins so they interfered with our minds. #LowitjaConf2019 #BlackfullaBingo

NicAN @NicAN_Australia · 32m
Language: not just a way of describing the world, it’s a way of knowing the world. Peter Yu talks to the power of language for identity. He talks about the experience of banned language “they couldn’t change the colour of our skin; they tried to change what’s in our heads” #LowitjaConf2019

Geoffrey Spurling @GkSpurling · 32m
Peter Yu, Yarrawa man, on his personal intimidating experience of assimilation, “When you go to Perth (from Broome) and realise they are trying to reconstruct your entire mindset… I could do very good ball room dancing – we had private elocution lessons…” #LowitjaConf2019

Karen Dwyer @KarenDwyer1 · 32m
#LowitjaConf2019 Peter Yu: the power of language. Connection between people; passing of information between generations. Languages connect culturally, emotionally and spiritually. Social connection most highly valued.

Marie McInerney @marleemcinerney · 33m
Peter Yu: The Mabu Yawuru Ngan-ga Language Centre has set a target of having 20 conversational Yawuru speakers by 2021. yawuru.org.au #LowitjaConf2019

Nathan Appo • @Elusive_Sausage · 26m
Uncle Peter Yu inspires everyone in the room, now that was powerful #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut · 25m
#LowitjaConf2019 Peter Yu: Identity, lands & water, language, and culture are the pillars of success. Any project that denies these principles will fail.

All Drummond @IndigenousX · 26m
Keynote: Peter Yu talking on the limitations of social media. The risks that echo-chambers create. We must embrace difference and diversity. #LowitjaConf2019

Karen Dwyer @KarenDwyer12 · 27m
#LowitjaConf2019 Peter Yu: Difference is not a threat or risk; it is a portal to learning. Learn from Indigenous people.

Geoffrey Spurling @GkSpurling · 27m
Man, what a keynote - thank you Peter Yu (standing ovation) #LowitjaConf2019

Lisa Whop @Lisa_J_Whop · 37m
Peter Yu, a Yawuru man, delivering an incredibly powerful speech, to captivated #LowitjaConf2019 delegates.

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 2h
Great interview with Uncle Peter Yu. His lived history & experience gives him an amazing wealth of knowledge which I was privileged enough to listen to at #LowitjaConf2019 & during the interview.

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 49m
Hearing a message from @LowitjaInstitut patron Dr Lowitja O’Donoghue at #LowitjaConf2019. From the start she wanted it to be courageous, to match words to action, achieve tangible outcomes. “I entrust you to put your thinking, speaking and being to work”.

#Other opening session tweets

Croakey
"Conference News Service"
Peter Yu delivers powerful calls to action #LowitjaConf2019

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 1h

‘We gather here to speak, share, listen with good feeling on the lands of the Larrakia people, this is their land and their waters.’ June Oscar, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, opens #LowitjaConf2019 in Langauge as a Bunuba woman.
Dr Alyce Wilson @AlyceNWilson · 1h
Amazing welcome to country. Fantastic to be here on Larrakia country and looking forward to a week of #thinking #speaking #being @LowitjaInstitut #LowitjaConf2019

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 1h
Lowitja Institute chair Pat Anderson welcomes more than 750 delegates from across Australia and the globe, including Bhutan, Canada, Denmark, Hawaii, India, Nepal, US, Aotearoa at #LowitjaConf2019

Bronwyn Fredericks @BronFredericks · 5h
Aunty Pat Anderson speaking to the #UluruStatement from the Heart & #Voice #Treaty #Truth at the Lowitja Institute Conference #LowitjaConf19 #LowitjaConf2019 this morning. Important words at an important time for all Australians, Indigenous & non-Indigenous Australians.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Peter Yu delivers powerful calls to action

#LowitjaConf2019

@KerryArabena

#LowitjaConf2019 #ulurustatement

@SummerMayFinlay

Aunty Pat Anderson draws attention to the #Ulurustatement at the #LowitjaConf2019

Get familiar with it & promote it!

We need a People’s movement to take it beyond a statement to be a tangible reality.

@LIME__Network

“Lowitja brings together communities of interest that transcend any one discipline”

“We will build a strong & rigorous Indigenous research sector; which will build cultural authority for non-Indigenous researchers too” Pat Anderson AO taking about the strength of @LowitjaInstitut
Peter Yu delivers powerful calls to action. #LowitjaConf2019
Standing ovation for celebrated author Bruce Pascoe

Aboriginal author Bruce Pascoe received a rapturous response from delegates at the Lowitja Institute’s **International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference** in conference in Darwin on Wednesday.

Pascoe, who also presented to the **Progress 2019 conference in Melbourne** on Thursday, urged Australia to learn from the sophisticated knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in land management and maintaining peaceful, complex societies.
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference [here](#).

**Standing ovation for celebrated author Bruce Pascoe #LowitjaConf2019**

Marie McInerney and Summer May Finlay write:

Award-winning Aboriginal author Bruce Pascoe continued to shine a light on the hidden and hijacked stories of a sophisticated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture before colonisation that he said modern Australia still cannot bring itself to acknowledge.

Pascoe told more than 750 Indigenous health researchers from across Australia and the globe that Australia would do well at least, in the face of an uncertain climate and environment, to recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had long held the answers to better land management.

“Our people did and do hunt and gather, but we also organised massive fields of agriculture,” he told the Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Welfare conference in Darwin, on Larrakia land.

Importantly, the plants Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people grew and harvested were not “imported, exotic agriculture”, but native species that were domesticated by Indigenous people “because they identified them as the plants that were good for people, good for our health, good for the earth.”

“That’s not just a cosy feeling about what our people did,” he said. “It’s why our people did it, which is the most important point.”

**Flipping colonial narratives**

Pascoe, who is of Bunurong, Yuin and Tasmanian heritage, received a standing ovation at the conference where the enthusiastic tweeters had his name trending nationally for hours on Twitter.

His deconstruction of colonial narratives resounded for health researchers, who heard and delivered many presentations during the three-day event on the ongoing impacts of colonisation on the health and welfare of Indigenous people across the globe.

In his landmark book *Dark Emu*, which has won multiple literature awards since it was published in 2014, Pascoe challenged the long-held Western narrative that pre-colonial Aboriginal society was merely a hunter-gatherer society and was uncivilised.

It and his ongoing work draw on diaries and letters from explorers and early British colonists, and emerging artefacts that have laid undisplayed and unexamined in museums across the country, to build the evidence that “we were incredibly sophisticated agriculturalists”.

Another keynote presenter, leading Maori academic Dr Tahu Kukutai saluted Pascoe’s work when she took to the stage after him.

“I love the way you use colonial sources to flip the narrative,” she said.

Yet, Pascoe told the conference, for all the awards and success of his book, it tells a history that much of Australia continues to deny or ignore.
That can be seen in the remarkable story of the Brewarrina fish traps in New South Wales, an elaborate network of rock weirs and pools along a riverbed that are estimated to be over 40,000 years old and one of the oldest man-made structures on earth.

“No Australian goes there,” he said.

“Australians haven’t yet accommodated the fact that Aboriginal culture is a leader in the world in many ways.”

But he said he was alerting the local community that people from other nations will start to come in droves, “wanting to find the fount of civilisation” once they learn about the site and are able to understand that it represents “an incredible moment in the human family”.

**Embrace change**

Pascoe told delegates he was pleased with the enthusiastic reception his book has received.

But he worries that it won’t prompt the action needed to transform the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in ways that could address many of the issues under discussion at the conference and lead to change “for our children”.

“People want to embrace the book but do they want to embrace the change?”

Like many Australians, for years he accepted many colonial myths, including being taught every Anzac Day that Australia was blessed to have never had a war on its shores, when in fact Indigenous people had been subject to brutal frontier wars.

When he began to dig deeper, he “kept finding information that didn’t relate to the other part of the history of Australia that I’d been taught in every school I’ve been to, that Aboriginal people were mere wanderers on the earth, mere ‘hunters and gatherers’…”

His slides featured examples of the evidence that is challenging those myths.

One showed a photo of a large soil turning tool that he said had been found buried in the bowels of the Australian Museum, never displayed or catalogued in a history book.

It should be on both the school curriculum and the Australian flag because of what it told of an advanced early agriculture, he said.

Another slide showed a grinding dish, which he said was found to have starch embedded in the fissures – “35,000 years old, double the age of the Egyptians who are said by Google and Wikipedia to be the inventor of bread”.

An early map showed where Aboriginal people had been observed to be sowing and irrigating grain, he said.

**Complex, peaceful societies**

Dark Emu also disputes colonial history that Aboriginal people did not create settlements. It says there is significant evidence that they built communities, “with houses and cemeteries”, and established complex societies, over 60,000 years, which “relied on peace”.

It delights in telling the story that, in 1845, explorer Charles Sturt and his party were rescued when they encountered a village of around 400 Aboriginal people in South Australia and fed on “some roasted ducks, and some cake”.

Standing ovation for celebrated author
Bruce Pascoe
#LowitjaConf2019

Croakey
“Conference News Service”
“We did not just invent bread, we invented society,” Pascoe told the conference. “This is an incredible moment in the human family.”

It’s for those reasons, Pascoe said he doesn’t talk about damper, or use the term ‘bush tucker’. He said:

- “I talk about food.
- You can cut the legs off an Aboriginal achievement through diminishing the language.
- Our foods were our medicine. They were good for us, we chose them deliberately because they were good for our health.”

In an interview later with Summer May Finlay for the Croakey Conference News Service, Pascoe agreed it was surprising and frustrating that it was taking so long for the rest of Australia to listen to a story that Indigenous people had been telling for so long.

That was particularly the case in a world that was under threat on many levels, including from the climate.

“What the old people did was really remarkable, not just in Australian terms but in world terms,” he said.

“It was such a sophisticated society and it was produced so early.

“It’s so frustrating to think it was entirely dismissed by Europeans as being too simple to worry about it, when the whole basis of it was so profound and the world is aching for a solution like this now.”

Watch this interview
From Twitter

**Bronwyn Fredericks @BronFredericks - 13h**
I learned so much from Bruce Pascoe at the #LowitjaConf19 #LowitjaConf19 this am. From now on, I will be referring to Indigenous foods as #food #foods & not as bush tucker or something to have only as a condiment (eg bush tomatoes on the side or as a chutney). Thank you Bruce!

**Dr Michelle Bovill @michelle_bovill - 13h**
“Nothing has happened until we see change for our children” Uncle Bruce Pascoe shares with us his re-writing of our history. #LowitjaConf2019

**Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay - 13h**
Bruce Pascoe highlights that many Australian Museums have many Aboriginal artefacts which have never been displayed & non-Indigenous curators don’t even know what they are.

They need to be returned to our mob. Mob know what they are for.

#LowitjaConf2019
Standing ovation for celebrated author
Bruce Pascoe

#LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Standing ovation for celebrated author
Bruce Pascoe

#LowitjaConf2019

Incredible presentation delivered by Bruce Pascoe. A privilege to be here to hear it - and stand with the delegates for a standing ovation. #LowitjaConf2019

“We invented society”, “A culture based on peace” standing ovation for the amazing Bruce Pascoe @LowitjaInstitute #LowitjaConf2019
Standing ovation for celebrated author Bruce Pascoe #LowitjaConf2019

Keziah @Keziah_bb · 6m
Bruce Pascoe talking about his book Dark Emu says “People want to embrace the book but do they want to embrace the change?” #LowitjaConf19 @LowitjaInstitute

Dr Michelle Bovill @michelle_bovill · 13h
Our knowledge systems can change our health and our lands health. “Our foods were our medicine” #LowitjaConf2019 Bruce Pascoe

Indigenous doctors @AIDAustralia · 11h
Uncle Bruce Pascoe addressing Lowitja delegates on Australia’s diverse Aboriginal culture. Outlining the sophisticated agricultural techniques and practices used pre-colonisation proving Aboriginal Peoples were not just hunter-gatherers but were hunters, gatherers AND growers.

Kristy Crooks @KristyCrooks · 12h
Was great listening to Bruce Pascoe this morning. Our people were not only hunters and gatherers but sophisticated and wise agiculturists. We are the oldest living culture on earth. Our scientific knowledges must be acknowledged and respected. #LowitjaConf2019

james ward @researchjames · Jun 18
By far the greatest speech I’ve ever had the privilege by Bruce Pascoe dispelling myths of terra nullies and hunter and gathers #LowitjaConf2019

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Standing ovation for celebrated author Bruce Pascoe #LowitjaConf2019

Jennifer Browne @PowerfulOwl · 6m
Bruce Pascoe on Dark Emu: the enthusiasm has been great but the change has been invisible #LowitjaConf19

Dr Michelle Bovill @michelle_bovill · 12h
Replying to @tobyadams_ @MagabalaBooks
I pre-ordered my copy as well. It has gone straight to my children's school to influence their teaching of our history.
Standing ovation for celebrated author Bruce Pascoe

Croakey

Conference News Service

#LowitjaConf2019

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.
Listen to this interview with ABC Radio National (“I want people to concentrate on the story and be determined to change Australia for the better”), and watch the full conference presentation here.
Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019

The Merindas, in action at #LowitjaConf2019 gala dinner. Photograph by Marie McInerney

The post below includes some of the snaps and selfies shared via Twitter at the Lowitja Institute’s International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference on the Larrakia Nation in Darwin last week.

Warm thanks to all who contributed to sharing the conference news.

@HealthInfoNet - 11h
Senior Research Fellow, Uncle Mick Adams and Minister for Indigenous Australians, @KenWyattMP enjoying Day 2 of the #LowitjaConf2019 in Darwin. @LowitjaInstitut @WePublicHealth

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference [here](https://www.croakey.com.au/60/60).

Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf19
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Keziah @Keziah_bb · 2h
I love working with these deadly chicks! @anne2_11 @julieanncoombes Liz Hillman @georgeinstitute #Lowitjaconf2019

Tabassum.Rahman@uon.edu.au @TabassumRahma20 · 2h
#LowitjaConf2019 Day 1 with @GillianSGould @drratikasharma

Cristilee Houghton @CristileeH · 2h
#LowitjaConf2019 No better place then the Lowitja Conference for my first tweet! Great to attend with Charles O'Leary one of our 2018 AFSE Fellows...
@AFSocialEquity @CharlesOleary17
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019

**Bryan** @bryannukandi - 53m
Super looking forward to the @nalaCOE presentation that's coming up!!!! And no, those aren't "we haven't done our homework" looks on their faces
@SonyaEgert @DebAskey1 @GkSpurling #LowitjaConf2019 #4077

**Productivity Comm** @ozprodcom - 3m
Our staff attended #LowitjaConf2019 today, met with @LowitjaInstitut Chair Pat Anderson AO, and watched a panel chaired by our Commissioner @RMokak, with @June_Oscar, @KerryArabena and @researchjames exploring the process of thinking and knowledge.

**Lowitja Institute** @LowitjaInstitut - 3h
Look who dropped in at the #LowitjaConf2019 @LowitjaInstitut exhibition booth: @RMokak. Make sure you too drop in over the next three days!
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Dr. Anita Heiss - @AnitaHeiss - 28m
New levels of multitasking this morning. Running, taking a selfie and talking to Prof @BronFredericks on the phone about the @LowitjaInstitut conference she's at in Darwin this week - all simultaneously! #LowitjaConf19
Now for some 🍌 and writing! #livingthebestlife#can #uglife

Bronwyn Fredericks - @BronFredericks - 6m
Terrific to see Commissioner @RMokak from @OzProdCom & his colleagues Andrew McDonald & Bonnie Nguyen offering a workshop at the #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf19! As a Commissioner with the @QPCqld, I know there's much to do & I also look forward to opportunities to work together.

James Ward - @researchjames - 7h
This full he is working hard - good on you James #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

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Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Lisa Urquhart
@lisaurquhart

This is something special! #LowitjaConf19
thanks for having us! What a deadly yarn
we’re having!

Dr Michelle Bovill @michelle_bovill · 2h
Could we have a better host for our Gala dinner?!?! #lowitjaconf2019 too fun,
too deadly
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 1h
#LowitjaConf2019 @LowitjaInstitute Lifetime Achievement Award won by Professor Yvonne Cadet-James

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 1h
Indigenous maternal health researcher, La Trobe University Associate Professor Catherine Chamberlain, has won the #LowitjaConf2019 Research Leadership Award

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 1h
Fantastic to see self confessed data nerd @Klick2 named #LowitjaConf2019 emerging researcher of the year who declares - as you'd expect! - “We need to talk about data”
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference [here](#).

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Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

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Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019
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#LowitjaConf2019

Croakey

"Conference News Service"
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

END RHD @END_RHD · 9h
Lovely to meet Michaela Coloborne, the new Director of Policy at @NACCHOAustralia, today at #LowitjaConf2019.

NACCHO are a founding member of our alliance, leading work to #endRHD across Australia.

Kalinda Griffiths @indigencux · 2h
Fanboy moment. Selfie with Zaachariaha Fielding, lead singer of Electric Fields who sings in Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara and English. Solid! #LowitjaConf2019 #speaking #BlackfullaBingo

Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019
Photographs below by Marie McInerney
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference [here](#).

Check out the snaps and selfies from #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019
Five key takeaways from #LowitjaConf2019

Summer May Finlay writes:

Indigenous people from around the globe met on the lands of the Larrakia people (Darwin) for the International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference, held from the 17-20 June.

The theme, Thinking. Speaking. Being, was inspired by the UN’s declaration of 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

More than 740 delegates, most of whom were Indigenous, experienced what many described as “the best conference they have ever been to”.

What made this conference so significant?

The total immersion in Indigeneity.

It was the predominantly Indigenous speakers and keynotes amongst a largely Indigenous delegation, hosted by one of Australia’s leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, the Lowitja Institute.
Even the understanding of health was uniquely demonstrated at the conference from an Indigenous worldview. Health is more than the absence of disease. It is healthy culture, mind, language, being, community, family and self. ‘Health’, therefore, requires equilibrium in all aspects of each and every individual for us all to be healthy.

Peter Yu, a Yawuru man and the CEO of Broome-based Nyamba Buru Yawuru Aboriginal Corporation, summarised Aboriginal understanding of health perfectly:

“For Indigenous people, a healthy life is fundamentally connected to our universal demands for self-determination, for freedom from discrimination and for autonomous economic foundations.”

Another unique aspect of the conference was the focus on solutions. Solutions defined by Indigenous people and solutions that were rooted in culture. Cultures which are as old as time. Cultures which are diverse and yet share a common thread, linking us together. A thread which, when we meet, is obvious to us.

For me there were key five take always from the conference:

1. **Think cross-disciplinarily**
   
   Health is rooted in our sense of wellbeing: physical, emotionally, spiritually and culturally.
   
   If health is multi-dimensional, our solutions need to be cross-disciplinary. This was a key point made by Associate Professor Chelsea Bond during her keynote speech.
   
   Associate Professor Bond said she would not be entering into any more conversations about “which health discipline was ‘the best’.”
   
   “If Indigenous people are going to experience health and wellbeing, we need the philosophers, journalists, the poets, activists,” she said.
   
   We need the clinical professionals, but we also need the communicators to share our messages, academics to assist to develop the evidence base and activists to agitate for change.
   
   If we engage across disciplines, we will be able to create solutions which work with a whole person, not just body parts.

2. **Speak in language**
   
   In the International Year of Indigenous languages, Indigenous languages were the inspiration for the conference.
   
   Keynoter speaker, an Indigenous Hawaiian man, Bruce Blankenfeld, shared an all too familiar colonial story of a denial of First Nations language.
   
   For many years, it was illegal for Hawaiian languages to be spoken. This included in schools and the court system. In Australia, we are all too familiar with this dispossession and were also denied our languages. However, Blankenfeld says that language isn’t just a way of talking, it is also an expression of culture.
   
   Culture is the core who we are. Our languages are a part of that.
In no way does the role language plays in culture diminish those of us who are unable to speak in our mother tongue. What it does do, is encourage us to learn our languages and reclaim that part of our culture. In doing so, we are putting ourselves back together as an individual and as a people.

### 3. Speak our true history

**Bruce Pascoe**, a Bunurong, Yuin and Tasmanian man and author of the award-winning book, *Dark Emu*, continued to challenge the myth that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were savages and without civilisation.

Aboriginal people were making bread at least 35,000 years ago, as evidenced by starch found in a grinding stone. We were farming. Building houses. Practising engineering, as demonstrated by the **Brewarrina fish traps**, which are known to be the oldest man-made structure.

Many of us do not know our true history as Bruce Pascoe tells it. We have been fed the story that civilisation only landed in Australia with the arrival of Captain Cook. This denial of our history only promotes the white saviour and leaves us as the saved.

The false narrative of us as savages by diminishing our culture, diminishes us. If we are striving to be healthy as a people and nation, we need to ensure that our history is told in full. Told in schools. By our politicians. In our academic institutions.

### 4. Be courageous

Associate Professor Chelsea Bond called for Indigenous people to “be courageous”.

Bruce Blankenfeld, an expert navigator, asked whether it was a greater risk to leave the canoe tied up on the dock and lose the strong history of Polynesian navigation and the culture that goes with it, or to untie it from the docks.

**Dr Abhay Bang** is a physician and an internationally well-known public health expert. For the past 30 years, he and his wife, Dr Rani Bang, have lived and worked in a tribal district, Gadchiroli, in Maharashtra.

Tribal peoples weren’t accessing the health services outside their communities. Why? Because it didn’t reflect their culture. They didn’t see themselves in the white and clinical corridors and doctors’ rooms.

The solution? Take services to where the people are. Simple in principle, complex for policymakers. The outcome? A significant drop in child deaths.

Dr Abhay Bang called on policymakers to ask themselves what the risk was of not changing the system to meet the needs of the neediest. The risk is that the high burden of disease and death will continue.

For me, the loss of culture is far riskier than taking the canoe out on the open seas. Indigenous peoples, if we are distant from our culture, we aren’t whole.

Call out governments, allies, non-Indigenous institutions for excluding us. For taking Indigenous funding when they know our organisations can better meet the needs of our people. Challenge the academy and their whiteness. Be Indigenous academics and do it in an Indigenous way.
5. Be Indigenous

The Lowitja Institute’s conference was a celebration of Indigeneity, it was ever present and both tangible and intangible. Each and every speaker reinforced the role culture plays in our health and wellbeing. The conference demonstrated that the colonisers’ attempt to destroy our culture through the process of assimilation compromised our health and wellbeing.

First and foremost, Indigenous peoples are Indigenous in every space we occupy. Our Indigeneity cannot be quantified or qualified.

Reclaiming, maintaining and practising culture gives us confidence of self. This confidence gives us permission to be courageous.

Professor Kerry Arabena called on us to stop being compared to non-Indigenous people. Our cultures are unique.

As Indigenous peoples, we are standing on the shoulders of giants: our ancestors. They are our strength. We must honour them with our actions. We must create a path for ancestors that are yet to be. This is health. This is culture. This is the solution.

• This article was first published by NITV.

Summer May Finlay is a Yorta Yorta woman, academic, writer and a public health consultant. Summer has worked in a number of different areas relating to Aboriginal health and social justice. A contributing editor at Croakey, she covered #LowitjaConf2019 for the Croakey Conference News Service together with Marie McInerney.
From the Polynesian Voyaging Society to Bhutan’s Gross National Happiness Centre, some incredible journeys

The existential threat of climate change and the critical importance of connection to Country were centre-stage issues at the recent Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference conference in Darwin, held on Larrakia land.

Two international keynote speakers, from Hawaii and Bhutan, called for global action on climate change to address risks for countries and communities that have done little to contribute to the climate emergency but are on the frontlines of rising sea levels and melting glaciers.

Marie McInerney and Summer May Finlay write:

Over the past 40 years or so Bruce Blankenfeld has voyaged nearly 250,000 kilometres across the oceans of the world in a wa'a kaulua, a double-hulled voyaging canoe, using just the stars, wind, sun, moon and waves to navigate – night and day – for weeks at a time.

A stevedore by trade, Blankenfeld is a senior member of the Polynesian Voyaging Society, which was launched in the 1970s in Hawaii to rediscover the art and science of traditional Polynesian voyaging.

Bruce Blankenfeld presenting at #LowitjaConf2019. Photograph by Marie McInerney
The maiden voyage of the now legendary Hōkūleʻa was born of a determination by the Society’s founders to honour their Polynesian ancestors’ epic voyages and migration across the Pacific centuries ago and herald a renewal of Indigenous Hawaiian culture.

Multiple journeys since have seen the Society add another mission to its bow, to alert the Pacific region and the wider world to catastrophic climate change, massive over-fishing, and other existential environmental threats.

“We understand that Indigenous wisdom is the key to moving forward and healing this planet,” Blankenfeld told the Lowitja Institute conference.

Importantly, he said the Society also laid to rest paternalistic Western narratives that his ancestors had found their way across the seas just by “accident and drift”, that they sailed, as one authority put it, “at the mercy of the winds and the currents”.

This Western denigration of complex and sophisticated Indigenous knowledges was a strong theme at the conference, including from best-selling Aboriginal author Bruce Pascoe whose landmark book Dark Emu has challenged the entrenched colonial narrative that pre-colonial Aboriginal society was “merely a hunter-gatherer society and was uncivilised”.

Floating classrooms

Blankenfeld told the conference the Pacific Voyaging Society emerged at a time when Hawaiian culture was “really at a low ebb”, with traditional language still banned in schools and many parents taught by colonisers to be too ashamed of their culture to give their children Hawaiian names.

Many doubted the possibility and point of the Society’s determination to build the first traditional voyaging canoe of its type in 400 years and to undertake a maiden voyage over 3,700 kilometres from Hawaii to Tahiti.

Some warned: ‘Don’t waste your time’, or ‘It’s not going to feed your family’.

“There was a sense of shame there and also an expectation that what we were going to do was going to end in failure,” he said.

But rediscovering how to build the majestic wa’a kaulua – around 18 metres long and six metres wide and able to hold 12 or so crew and passengers and the food and water needed for the weeks of their journeys – and to learn and practise the ancient tools of navigation – “wayfinding” without compass, chart or GPS – has been a huge success.

The biggest voyage to date, the Malala Honua Worldwide Voyage, which launched in 2013, travelled to more than 150 ports, 23 countries and territories, and eight of UNESCO’S Marine World Heritage sites, engaging local communities and living sustainably. Another bigger one is planned for next year.
These boats have become “floating classrooms” that have sounded the alarm globally on the environment and helped reconnect many Hawaiians to their traditional knowledges, culture and language that were devastated in just over a century of colonisation, opening up “more and more doors to the possibility of who we could be”, he said.

Bearing witness
Blankenfeld told Croakey that wayfinding has changed the way he sees the world.

That’s both in the extraordinary and humbling experience of being just a speck out on the oceans, deeply among the elements, and then with the shocking realisation of what we are doing to them.

“You’re always connected to the environment, you can feel every wind change, you can feel every swell change, the temperature of the air…you are in tune [with nature].

“And then you see all this trash,” he said, describing the growing flotsam and jetsam of discarded fishing nets and other rubbish that float by in each voyage.

As well as the plethora of nets, he’s struck by how many toothbrushes and cigarette lighters float past as a toxic smorgasbord that causes untold harm to birds and fish, including the graphically documented deaths of tens of thousands of albatross chicks on the island of Midway, stomachs filled with plastic.

Alarmed at the impact also of overfishing and acidification of the oceans, the Society has been working with oceanographers and scientists, and keeping an eye close to home where Hawaii’s reefs and islands suffer a “constant assault of overfishing, urbanisation and runoff”.

Blankenfeld said Indigenous Hawaiians see their islands via ahupua’a, wedge-shaped land divisions that go “all the way from the mountains past the shallows of the shore out past the reef” – designated to contain nearly all of the resources its people need for survival.

It’s an understanding that also applies to the Pacific Rim and to the “island Earth”.

“All of that domain is inter-connected, so what happens on the land that’s not good is going to affect the ocean and what happens on the ocean that’s not good is going to affect the land, it’s a symbiotic relationship, the health of one determines the health of the other.”

Watch this interview
Wellbeing matters

That symbiosis was a message that resonated across the conference, including for and from the three-person delegation from Bhutan, whose famous Gross National Happiness index measures prosperity by the wellbeing of its citizens, not by economic growth.

Yet their future is in the hands of the rest of the world, Dr Julia Kim, Program Director of the Gross National Happiness Centre Bhutan, said in a keynote address.

Despite having become the first “carbon negative” nation, she said Bhutan faces the threat of massive flooding from melting glaciers unless the rest of the world heeds the warning that only a decade remains to stop irreversible damage from climate change.

Kim’s team was invited to Darwin after she met former Lowitja Institute CEO Romlie Mokak last year at a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation conference on the theme of “advancing wellbeing in an inequitable world”, which produced this report.

Mokak, who was this year appointed as the first full-time Indigenous Policy Evaluation Commissioner of the Productivity Commission, told Croakey he was struck by Bhutan’s leadership “on their desire to construct a future in contrast to dominant Western systems”.

“The parallels to Indigenous peoples’ knowledges, connections and aspirations were obvious to me,” he said.

Kim talked about her own journey to Bhutan from her early work as a Canadian doctor, when she got a “huge wake up” call on her own doorstep about health disparities.

In later postings including with the United Nations Development Program, she was struck by contradictions – in South Africa, where she was invited into homes for tea and bread by families who did not have enough food for themselves, and then in London where big salaries led to “time poverty”, with people too busy to catch up with family or friends.

GDP critiques

It made her question the accepted wisdom on development – “we only talk about under-development, it is possible to over-develop?” – and led her to critique the value of measuring the prosperity of countries by gross domestic product (GDP).

Those critiques go far back, including in the 1960s from US Senator Robert Kennedy, who warned against a measure that counts “air pollution and cigarette advertising, and ambulances to clear our highways of carnage” and fails to count “the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy of their play…the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials.”

Echoing many of the presentations on the need to embrace the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and communities, Kim talked about three key disconnects that are part of the financial, environmental and social crises of the 21st century.

They are:

• Disconnect from self: graphically illustrated in news published last year in the BMJ that life expectancy at birth in the US fell again in 2017 for the third year running, the longest sustained decline since 1915-18, when World War One and the 1918 Spanish influenza pandemic were among the causes of death.
• Disconnect from others: an irony at a time when digital technology and social media mean we have never been so ‘connected’, yet so lonely and, from a macroeconomic point of view, are seeing rising inequalities, xenophobia and fear.

• Disconnect from nature and the environment: most graphically seen in our failure to respond to the dire warnings on climate change.

It all points to a need to tap into the wisdom of cultures like Indigenous communities and the Bhutanese who have “preserved a connection to nature is so much needed at this time”, Kim said, also quoting opening day keynote speaker, senior Yawuru man Peter Yu:

“Staying connected to each other, staying connected to value systems that are under enormous pressure to change, and to Country. That is our holy trinity if you like.”

Gross National Happiness

Kim told the conference that the work of the Gross National Happiness Centre Bhutan is focused on bridging those disconnections and finding ways to “balance the inner conditions for happiness and create systems and structures that allow happiness to flourish”.

In Bhutan, those systems and structures include the nine domains against which all policies and projects are screened: psychological well-being, living standard, health, education, culture, community vitality, good governance, balanced time use and ecological integration.

It begs the question of whether the Adani mine would have got the go-ahead if it had been put to that test.

But as the threat of climate change illustrates so harshly, Bhutan cannot just go it alone, so is working to develop more partnerships internationally, including in Australia. It welcomed the handing down last month of a Wellbeing Budget in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the first Western nation to prioritise wellbeing over economic growth, after Bhutan and Costa Rica.

Kim’s colleague Gopi Kharel told Croakey we are all vulnerable to climate change and tied to climate change action from every nation and at a global level.

“Whether global leaders want to admit it or not, we are all in the same boat”.
Watch this interview

A final message
In a final message to the conference, Lowitja Institute chair Pat Anderson AO said she believed Indigenous people and knowledges held the answers to such threats, through deep connections to culture, community and Country.

She said:

“I sincerely believe the solutions for the planet live and reside globally with its Indigenous people.”

Watch this video featuring Anderson and other keynote speakers
From Twitter

Bruce Blankenfeld's presentation

Dr Ngaree JB @DrNgaree · 12h
Special moment learning that my Quandamooka family were one of the many First Nations to greet the @nokuluiacrewo on their Māliana Honua worldwide voyage #FirstNations #connectionsacrosstheglobe #LowitjaConf2019

Jaki Adams-Barton @AdamsJaki

“WE ARE” we are not trying to live culturally, we are cultural - Mr Bruce Mealoah Blakenfeld @LowitjaInstitut #LowitaConf2019

10:02 PM · 19 Jun 2019 from Darwin, Northern Territory

LIME Network @LIME__Network · 7h
Bruce Blankenfeld’s statement at #LowitjaConf2019 🙌
“This idea of standing on the shoulders of our ancestors (giants)...they know the stories that connect us...they know their names, dreams, descendents & they carry them. This is a collective responsibility.”

Dr Julia Kim's presentation

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 5h
Dr. Julie Kim started her presentation at the #LowitjaConf2019 with a moment to relax and meditate which she played the violin.

I encourage you to close your eyes and take the moment to relax.
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

From the Polynesian Voyaging Society to Bhutan’s Gross National Happiness Centre, some incredible journeys #LowitjaConf2019

NIaN @NicaN_Australia · 5h
Julia Kim: 3 problems of current economic modern: disconnect from self (stress, depression, suicide, drug use), disconnect from others (Technology has led to higher connection in one regard, but high levels of lonliness), disconnect from nature (climate change).
#LowitjaConf2019

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 5h
Dr Julie Kim: Bhutan has become the world’s first carbon negative country (requirement that 60% of total land shall be maintained under forest cover for all time) but is at major risk of impacts of climate change. #LowitjaConf2019 @croakeyblog

Measuring what Matters:
“We cannot be a GNI bubble in a GDP world”

• More countries now starting to focus on wellbeing
  • Cody Rigs & Ben You (”good living“): Developing country scoring high in quality of life, ecohapy
  • New Zealand: first western country to design entire budget based on wellbeing priorities
  • New alliances and growing social movement for wellbeing
  • WE ALL (Wealth Economies Alliance)

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 5h
Dr Julie Kim: “If you were to cut down all the trees in Aust, GDP would go up. Also important is what GDP fails to count: societies that still care for elders at home, that does not increase GDP, but if move into putting them in nursing homes, GDP will go up.” #LowitjaConf2019

You Retweeted

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 5h
Bobby Kennedy was an early critic of gross national product, a “flawed measurement” that counts napalm and pollution, rifles and TV programs that glorify violence. “It measures everything, except that which makes live worthwhile.” #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

From the Polynesian Voyaging Society to Bhutan’s Gross National Happiness Centre, some incredible journeys

#LowitjaConf2019

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 4h
Happiness is about Reconnecting to:
- Self
- Other
- Nature

How do you measure happiness on a national scale & use the results to influence policy?

Dr Julia Kim from the GNH Centre Bhutan outlines how at #LowitjaConf2019

Happiness: What is meant by “happiness”?

Not just a momentary “feel-good” feeling...

“True abiding happiness, while others suffer, comes from serving others, with nature, realizing wisdom and the true nature of our own mind.”

H.E. Jigmi Y. Thinley
(Former P.M. of Bhutan)

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 5h

While NZ announced a Wellbeing budget in 2019, 4th king of Bhutan (1972-2006) said happiness was more important than gross national product.

Really highlights that the Western World is well behind the game.

Dr Julia Kim gives us something to think about.

#LowitjaConf2019

The story of GNH begins with a vision of institutionalizing genuine wellbeing in 1999.

“Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product.”

H.M. Jigme Singye Wangchuck (4th King Bhutan)
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

From the Polynesian Voyaging Society to Bhutan’s Gross National Happiness Centre, some incredible journeys

#LowitjaConf2019

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**Marie McInerney @marie_mcinerney · 5h**

Media freedom and independence is a key domain in the Gross National Happiness survey in Bhutan #LowitjaConf2019 #PJ @croakeyblog

The GNH Survey in Bhutan

Psychological Wellbeing
- Quality of life, life satisfaction, sense of meaning in life, Experience of stress
- How often meditate? Visit temples and other spiritual places?

Time use and balance
- Hours sleeping, other activities

Good governance
- Government effectiveness (job creation, reducing income inequality, fighting corruption)
- Own participation in local governance
- Media (freedom, independence)

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**Marie McInerney @marie_mcinerney · 5h**

Here’s the screening tool for the Gross National Happiness Policy in Bhutan, applied to all sorts of projects and policies, including mines. Imagine #Adani #LowitjaConf2019

The GNH Policy Screening tool: 9 Domains, 22 Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain: Living Standard</th>
<th>Will negatively impact the equity of income distribution</th>
<th>Do not know the differential effects on equity of income distribution</th>
<th>Will not have any negative effects on the equity of income distribution</th>
<th>Will positively impact equity of income distribution</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Equity</td>
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<td>Score</td>
<td>Score awarded</td>
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<td>National for screening</td>
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<td>Suggested alternative or mitigation measure if none (2 or below)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
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- A GNH favorable score: ≥ 3 points x 22 variables (≥ 66 points)
- Policies screened: Economic development policy, national youth policy, national Telecommunications & broadband policy
- 9 GNH Domains integrated into 12th Five Year Development Plan

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**Fiona Petersen @FMMPetersen · 4h**

Ok. This is blowing my mind and is my favourite keynote so far. Going home to teach my daughters all about #grossnationalhappiness #GNP and Bhutan’s journey. Big esso Dr Julia Kim 🧡 #LowitjaConf2019 Do yourself a favour and get familiar with her Centre’s work.
“Language is the crux of everything” – more powerful stories from #LowitjaConf2019

The critical importance of Indigenous languages for health and wellbeing was a central focus of the Lowitja Institute’s recent International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference on the Larrakia Nation in Darwin.

Marie McInerney and Summer May Finlay report:

Rene Kulitja walked to the front of the stage area and laid a blanket on the floor.

Speaking in Pitjantjatjara, through an interpreter, the Ngangkari Traditional Healer talked just briefly about life and language, in what is now known as the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Lands, before white people arrived.

She then sat cross-legged on the floor of the stage and pulled the large beige blanket over her body and head until we could barely see even her eyes.
“This is English,” she said from underneath the blanket, adding:

“This is representing English, which is coming and pressing down on me and I can only see out through a tiny hole.

Why is it like this? I’m not an English person. I’m a Pitjantjatjara person.”

Her performance lasted just a minute or two, but captivated hundreds of delegates at a special panel discussion on the role of language at the Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference in Darwin, on Larrakia land.

It also graphically captured the importance of culture and language and the impact of colonisation on Indigenous peoples, particularly in Australia where 250 Indigenous languages were spoken at the time of European settlement in 1788.

At the turn of the century, one significant international study singled out Australia as a place where languages were disappearing at a faster rate than anywhere else in the world, devastated by official policies and practices that banned and discouraged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from speaking their languages up until recent times.

Now 145 languages are still actively spoken but 110 are considered either critically or severely endangered, according to researchers conducting the five year Barngarla Language & Wellbeing Study, which is looking at the mental health and social and emotional wellbeing impacts of language reclamation in South Australia, who presented at the conference.

But, as the most recent report of the Second National Indigenous Languages Survey said in 2014, there is much revival underway, with “an overwhelming desire” from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people “across the country and of all ages” to strengthen traditional languages and a growing recognition of its role in health and wellbeing.
That role was a key theme at the Lowitja Institute conference, which officially marked 2019 as the UN's International Year of Indigenous Languages in its theme and many presentations, declaring:

“

How we speak, the languages we use, and what we’re saying all have an impact on the health and wellbeing of our peoples.

Indigenous languages and the ways we share knowledges are at the forefront of international conversations right now.”

At the conference, Croakey spoke to a number of delegates and speakers about the role of language in culture and health, and in their own lives.

Watch these video interviews

Watch a compilation clip below (which closes with a dance from Renee Kulitja at the conference), or see them all individually below, or via this playlist.

You can also watch the full panel discussion involving Renee Kulitja, Nyunmiti Burton and Beth Sometimes (and interpreter Angela Lynch) from the NPY Women’s Council, as well as Noongar/Ballardong man David Wardong Collard and Indigenous Hawaiian educator and academic Dr Kū Kahakalau, led by Torres Strait Islander researcher Ali Drummond.

Kulitja is a well-known artist, whose most famous design is ‘Yananyi Dreaming’, which covers a Qantas Boeing 737. She is also a strong community advocate, and has campaigned to address issues of petrol sniffing in Aboriginal communities in central Australia and to seek an increase in renal dialysis machines for NPY communities.

Croakey readers may also be interested in this article: Our languages are a tool to understanding our ways of knowing and being, by Ali Drummond, who chaired the panel session. Drummond is a Meriam and Wuthathi man who grew up on Torres Strait, a PhD candidate, a nursing lecturer, director of Indigenous health at QUT and board director for the Lowitja Institute.
**Professor Dawn Bessarab: “When he spoke Bard, it was like listening to music”**

A Bard/Yjindjabandi woman from Broome in the Kimberley and Director of the Centre for Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health at the University of Western Australia, Professor Dawn Bessarab talks about the role of language, plus her takeaways from the conference.

“I think language is the crux of everything, because language helps to construct the way you think and see the world. If you start to use Aboriginal words and think in Aboriginal concepts, it’s a completely different world view to the way English constructs the world.”

She welcomed evidence being presented on the importance of culture and particularly of going back to Country for health. “We’ve always known that but nothing is validated until it’s ‘discovered’, that’s the Western way of doing things!”

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**Peter Yu: Breathing new life to language**

Senior Yawuru man and conference keynoter Peter Yu spoke with Summer May Finlay about efforts in his community to kickstart intergenerational language learning, with the Yawaru community currently only having about 10 people still fluent in language, as a result of colonisation.

He talked about how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should not feel shame or embarrassment for the loss of their languages, which was not their fault, but should celebrate their resilience and renaissance.
Dr Kū Kahakalau: revitalising Hawaiian language

Dr Kū Kahakalau has been at the forefront of efforts to revitalise the Hawaiian language, which Indigenous Hawaiians were taught to feel shame about, and is seeking now to take it out of the classroom and back into community.

“It means really being a native person, being connected to my land, to my ancestors and to the future. To have hope for the future we have to know the past. Our language explains who we are, why we do the things we do, what is important to us, what our values are.”

Dr Vicki Saunders: Listening to children laughing

Dr Vicki Saunders, a Gunggari woman from south west Queensland, talks about ways that she uses language in her work, including to shift from a deficit lens in researching child wellbeing and in the Listening to Country project which is bringing cultural comfort to women in prison.

“I come from a strong tradition where we focus on keeping our language alive as much as we can we can and I’ve been told by my aunties to use language wherever and whenever I can,” she said.
Jenifer Darr: on pain, possibility and where responsibility resides

A First Nation Yuwibara woman, Jenifer Darr is hopeful that the Native Title process can open windows for language recognition and revival for communities who had cultural ways taken from them through colonisation.

She took great heart from Peter Yu's speech, showcasing efforts to restore Yawuru language in the Kimberley.

Darr says:

“(My family) were rounded up and placed on the biggest Aboriginal reserve in Queensland, in Mackay in the 1890s.

My great grandmother knew her language, my grandmother knew her language and my dad never knew his language and couldn't pass that on to us as his children.

I know for me, language is core and central, it is the stuff that grounds us, the stuff that allows us to be who we are, it anchors us back to our being…it’s the stuff that gives us who we are.”

Dorothy Yunggirrnga Bukulatjpi: “We have to keep the language strong”

Dorothy Yunggirrnga Bukulatjpi is from the Galiwin’ku community on Elcho Island, off the coast of Arnhem Land. She says:

“There is a lot of language in my community.

We have to teach our children to be able to stand in that and make themselves strong... We have to keep the language strong.”
Mara West and Isabelle Adams: Language is part of culture

Mara West and Isabelle Adams are joint coordinators of the Kulunga Aboriginal Research Development Unit (KARDU) at Telethon Kids WA. They talk about the role of language in their lives and in health, including the need for health researchers to make their language comprehensible. West says:

“*It’s one thing to speak language … but I think we also have to be cognisant that we speak a language that community people can understand.*

*We work with researchers and we’re always telling them they need to have a plain English translation of their research because sometimes researchers and clinicians and scientists get carried away with the jargon they use in their different areas.*”

Alison Wunungmurra: Standing in two worlds, “valuing what you bring”

*Alison Wunungmurra* is a Dhalwangu Yolngu woman, who is a Family Educator and teacher in Gapuwiyak in north-eastern Arnhem Land.

She is looking for solutions for young people that bring together Indigenous and non-Indigenous families and colleagues in ways that say “I’m valuing your ideas and I respect who you are and what you bring to this space…to say we’re here together in this journey, what is the next step we need to take?”

She says:

“*Language is our identity. It highlights who we are as Yolngu…*”

*We want our kids to be able to be and become strong Yolngu children…*

*My vision is to see a Yolngu kid be the PM of this country, for our kids to be flying the jetplanes…*”
The Inala Manifesto: a call to arms for Indigenous health researchers

A transformative vision for Indigenous health research – The Inala Manifesto – has been presented by leading Indigenous scholar Associate Professor Chelsea Bond, at the Lowitja Institute’s recent International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference.

Marie McInerney writes:

Leading Indigenous scholar Associate Professor Chelsea Bond has issued a call to arms to Indigenous health researchers, to declare war on settler ideologies that continue to dehumanise Indigenous people, and to carve out a new intellectual space on Indigenous health.

In an address titled ‘Putting the Indigenist back into Indigenous health research’, Bond laid out the principles of what she called The Inala Manifesto on the closing day of the Lowitja Institute’s International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference on the Larrakia Nation in Darwin.

She said the manifesto looked to build a cross-disciplinary “army of thinkers” to eliminate the ideology that poorer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing is a result of “Black lack” rather than from ongoing oppression and dispossession.
She said:

“\textit{The question for us as Indigenous health researchers is whose validation are we seeking? On whose terms are we defining our being? And just as critically, on whose terms are we operating in being of service to the survival of our people as Indigenous health researchers}?”

\textbf{The premature deaths of Blackfullas today are on our watch, and we have to be honest with ourselves, take stock, and consider whether we really are doing enough or how we define success. Better surveillance of Black bodies is not a measure of success.}

\textbf{We need to set the bar higher for ourselves.”}

\section*{A game-changing hashtag}

Bond is an Aboriginal (Munanjahli) and South Sea Islander Australian and a Senior Research Fellow in the School of Social Science at the University of Queensland. She is described by IndigenousX as “one of Australia’s leading voices on matters of race and racism in the colony”.

Bond is also a resident of the outer western Brisbane suburb of Inala, where she has been involved in innovative work by the Inala Wangarra community development organisation. She has written of her concerns about the way the suburb was featured in SBS’s Struggle Street series, and the risk of feeding “the national appetite for Indigenous despair”.

In the leadup to the Lowitja Institute conference, Bond and colleagues Dr Lisa Whop and Ali Drummond published \textit{The Blackfulla Test: 11 reasons that Indigenous health research grant/publication should be rejected}.

They inspired the hashtag \#BlackfullaBINGO at the event, which followed up on the article and aimed to identify Indigenous health research presentations “that ARE here for Indigenous peoples” (see tweet below).
Transformative vision

In her keynote for the final plenary panel session, Bond told hundreds of Indigenous delegates from across Australia and the globe that she had been instructed by Lowitja Institute chair Pat Anderson to be “provocative and challenging, to make us think”.

Bond declared she was not there to “bear false witness to the virtue signalling of Close the Gap and Closing the Gap agendas” but on behalf of those people “whose premature deaths we are meant to be preventing” and to provoke thinking “about what it is to be Indigenous in Indigenous health, and what it is our community needs us to be”.

This meant transforming the researcher’s toolkit beyond technical research skills that are informed by Western methodologies and power bases, to reconfigure the researcher’s role as public intellectual and change maker – “as a truth-teller rather than objective observer”.

Bond called on her Indigenous colleagues to end self-defeating contests between disciplines and instead imagine and demand a new health research collective that values “the sociologist, the anthropologist, the political scientist, the legal scholar, and the philosopher” as much as the clinically trained health researcher and epidemiologist.

She said:

“Our task is twofold: one is the preservation of black bodies – it is the work of healers who are finding the means for surviving and flourishing in our lands; the other is the war against the ideologies that refuse to see our humanness and our health as possibilities.”

A courageous paradigm

Bond said she was presenting the Inala Manifesto, inspired by the work of Lester-Irabinna Rigney, as a strategy for winning this war.

The manifesto calls for a new Indigenous health research paradigm that:

• Recognises persistent health inequalities are the product of an ongoing process of colonisation that continues to insist that ill-health experienced by Indigenous peoples “is a product of Black lack, biologically or culturally”.

• Foregrounds Indigenous intellectual sovereignty, not as a radical or alternative position but which renders visible the strength, capability, and humanity of Indigenous peoples in all processes and products.

• Recognises health and wellbeing as a fundamental human right, which means that health research is a question of politics and political struggle, rather than simply the production of an evidence base for action.

• Attends to the nature and function of race, “not just in how Indigenous people experience racism in health system, but more broadly how race operates to produce the conditions for racialised health inequalities to persist”.

• Demands of health researchers courage rather than compliance, to turn their gaze on how institutions, structures, systems and processes operate to undermine Indigenous health and wellbeing.

• Considers disciplinary disloyalty as “a form of academic excellence” and gathers “the thinkers, wherever they are located”.

The Inala Manifesto: a call to arms for Indigenous health researchers

#LowitjaConf2019

Croakey
“Conference News Service”
No time to waste

Bond warned that moving into this space can come with professional and personal costs, but she said it was vital.

“Our people do not have the time to wait or waste on watching incremental statistical reductions in gaps between us and them, the parameters of which we never got to determine in the first place.”

Bond said there is a place too for non-Indigenous peoples in this intellectual army, but they should take note that the “role of the all-knowing white knower has been made redundant” and should beware of denying Indigenous people their rightful role.

“You will be welcome to serve as a foot soldier, being as courageous as the Blackfullas beside you, but we are no longer recruiting for white overseers,” she said.

“But also know, if you remain perfectly comfortable with the status quo, leading Indigenous health research centres while denying Indigenous peoples opportunities on those panels that you sit on…the army is growing and they will come for you and call you out, intellectually, because Black intellectual excellence is both real and powerful.”

• Watch Associate Professor Chelsea Bond's full presentation on The Inala Manifesto, and the following panel discussion here.
From Twitter

NiCaN @NiCaN_Australia - 8h
A/Prof @drcbond asks what does it mean to be Indigenous in Indigenous health research? It is being what community needs you to be, beyond peer review papers, grant applications, conference talks #LowitjaConf2019

Bryan @bryannukandi

“I’m here to take up the call of the Black matriarchy ... I’m here for the people whose premature deaths we are meant to be preventing.” @drcbond opening and framing the panel session ‘Being Indigenous’ #LowitjaConf19 @HASSUQ @UQPoche

Dr Alyce Wilson @AlyceNWilson - 8h
Assoc Prof Chelsea Bond: the #InalaManifesto grew from a need to create an intellectual home for Indigenous intellectual sovereignty and excellence where everyone is committed to and driven by the need for change - to improve health outcomes @drcbond #LowitjaConf2019
Dr @drcbond at #LowitaConf2019
"I'm not here today for research, I'm here today for our people who are dying."
"I want an intellectual place that focus on change & that creates tools for us to be as blackfellas to share intellectually for action."

Lisa Whoo @Lisa_J_Whoo · 8h
@drcbond sets out the Inala Manifesto - An Indigenist Health Humanities. A place where we share our values so the irrelevant conversations about what disciplines are better do not need to occur. #LowitjaConf2019

David Parsons @DavePars0ne · 8h
@ #LowitjaConf2019 the work that “we” do is for “our” people and “our” communities not the academies and @drcbond telling it how it is 💪

#StrongBlack #BecauseRacism #BlackExcellence

Dr Ngaree JB @DrNgaree
If we only ever refer to CTG in regards to our health then “Our being is only ever defined as being statistically deviant” @drcbond It’s time to stop comparing us always to the “non-Indigenous” and change the gaze #blackfulllatest #LowitjaConf2019
The Inala Manifesto: a call to arms for Indigenous health researchers #LowitjaConf2019

@NCoN_Australia · 8h
Statistics can be used to perpetuate racial violence. In choosing the research questions, measures and framing, we are deciding whether we will focus on the deficit discourse or, instead, on understanding & changing the inequity caused by colonial systems. #LowitjaConf2019

@GkSpurling
@drcbond: #closethegap supports a race ideology: what if they measured Indigenous wait times (reflecting violence of white institutions) instead of discharge against medical advice which is turned around as, “Look they don’t really care about their health.”? #LowitjaConf2019

@tina_brodie09 · 8h
@drcbond fiercely delivers a call for an Indigenous Health Humanities. Grounded in Indigenous research (@LesterRigley), we must develop our own methodologies that center Indigenous liberation & in doing this “disciplinary disloyalty is academic excellence” #LowitjaConf2019

@GkSpurling · 7h
@drcbond Health sciences don’t get why you would have a kindy at a health service. They see health in a certain way which struggles with holistic view of health (NAHS, 1989). Carving out our own space saves a lot of irrelevant arguments. #lowitjaconf2019 #inalaManifesto

@SummerMayFinlay · 7h
Every day we have experiences that make us feel powerless. That doesn’t mean we aren’t powerful.
@drcbond at #LowitjaConf2019

Words to say to yourself every day. Every time you feel powerless.

@SummerMayFinlay
@drcbond at the #LowitjaConf2019 said there is a space for non-Indigenous allies.

However the all knowing white saviour is made redundant.

There is a space alongside the Aboriginal people as a foot soldier.

Thank you Chelsea. I’m inspired and in awe.

❤️❤️❤️
The Inala Manifesto: a call to arms for Indigenous health researchers #LowitjaConf2019
"Survive and thrive" and other key elements of global Indigenous concepts of wellbeing

Indigenous concepts of wellbeing share common themes globally, and should inform initiatives such as the Wellbeing Budget of Aotearoa/New Zealand, delegates at the recent International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference were told.

Marie McInerney writes:

A leading Māori health and wellbeing researcher has welcomed the landmark Wellbeing Budget handed down by Jacinda Ardern’s government in Aotearoa/New Zealand – but warned it will fail to deliver unless systemic and institutionalised forms of racism are addressed.

Tahu Kukutai (Ngāti Tiipa, Ngāti Kinohaku, Te Aupōuri), Professor of Demography from the National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis at the University of Waikato, said she applauded Ardern’s “courageous vision” and saw “huge potential” for these wellbeing initiatives to deliver for Māori people.

“But the opportunities to transform the status quo will be missed unless the Government commits to identifying and addressing the systemic and institutionalised forms of racism that are part and parcel of ongoing colonialism that produce and reproduce ill-being,” Kukutai told the Lowitja Institute’s International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference.
And they will be missed if Maori are not front and centre of defining what wellbeing looks like for us and deciding the pathways and actions for getting there or staying there,” she said, echoing many of the keynote presentations from other Indigenous people who attended from around the world.

Kukutai, who described herself a “data geek and wannabe historian”, is a founding member of the Māori Data Sovereignty Network Te Mana Raraunga and co-author with Australian Professor John Taylor of a seminal book on Indigenous Data Sovereignty.

She told the conference she has spent much time working with tribal and Maori organisations and communities who want to advance the wellbeing of their people and who want the data to both inform and reflect their aspirations.

Wellbeing matters

Kukutai has found that most of these organisations and communities understand what wellbeing means to them and the values that underpin it. She said:

“But they are unable to access the right data – either because it doesn’t exist, or the barriers to access and use are too high.

I have seen and felt a very real sense of frustration over the ways in which their wellbeing is statistically represented and misrepresented, and more importantly, how those misrepresentations are acted upon in a very top-down way with respect to policy interventions.

There is also a failure to connect the local intelligence of tribes and communities – and their desire for grounded and devolved action – to the larger national policy-making agenda.”

Kukutai said work on these data sovereignty issues is very timely now that wellbeing “looms large on the policy and political agenda in Aotearoa, an agenda that relies very heavily on the operationalisation of wellbeing, on the collection of data, on measurement and monitoring”.

The Ardern Government is still attracting headlines across the world (including at Croakey) for having delivered its Wellbeing Budget, following the pioneering work of Bhutan and later Costa Rica, to become the first western country to design its entire budget based on wellbeing priorities.

It is also soon to unveil a much-awaited Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, underpinned by the vision of New Zealand being the best country in the world to be a child.

That’s an ambitious vision in a country where Maori children are over-represented on “all the usual indicators of illbeing” – with the blame being put on parents and whanau or families – and where child removal from Maori families remains a “massive issue”, Kukutai told the conference.

“For too many Maori children, Aotearoa is far from being the best place to be a child,” she said.

Address institutional racism

She referred to the attempted removal of a six-day-old baby boy from his 19-year-old mother in New Zealand last month that sparked a national outcry and highlighted growing numbers of newborn Maori babies – rising from 110 in 2015 to 172 in 2018 – taken under what are known as “uplift” child protection policies.
The figures prompted an open letter being signed by more than 10,000 Māori lawyers, midwives, social workers and academics calling on the government to “stop stealing Māori children” and to address institutional racism in the child protection system.

Also shining a light on institutional racism in Aotearoa/New Zealand has been this month’s landmark ruling by the Waitangi Tribunal, a permanent commission of inquiry set up to hear claims by Māori people relating to Crown actions which breach the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi.

It found, following a three-year inquiry, the Crown has breached the Treaty by failing to design and administer the current primary health care system to actively address persistent Māori health inequities and by failing to give effect to the Treaty’s guarantee of tino rangatiratanga (autonomy, self-determination, sovereignty, self-government).

In what is being hailed as a “watershed” report, the Tribunal says:

“Māori experience a wide range of socioeconomic inequities that the Tribunal in previous reports has linked back to colonisation and breaches of the Treaty compact.

In these ways, and more, the colonisation of New Zealand and its ongoing impacts are as much a determinant of Māori health outcomes as any other, and continues to manifest as institutional racism.”

In findings that also echo in Australia, it said the Crown’s failure to adequately identify or address problems with primary care funding is “another manifestation of institutional racism”.

**Core elements**

Along with efforts to refresh Australia’s Closing the Gap strategy here, the Tribunal’s report is an important backdrop to the work that Kukutai outlined at the conference, including joint research to identify shared international elements of Indigenous wellbeing.

The work has identified four main themes or elements (as illustrated in the feature image above):

- freedom which related to autonomy; justice, rights as first peoples; sovereignty and self-determination
- balance – the balance or harmony between people and nature; of sustainable ecosystems; balance between the spiritual and physical worlds; and the balance between individuals and collectives, of personhood and peoplehood
- surviving and thriving – about moving literally from demographic survival, to thriving families and communities and having good health and quality of life
- distinctive identity – language, culture, knowledge, lifeways and institutions.

Kukutai was also part of a Swedish funded research project that examined the literature on Indigenous health to see to what extent colonisation is treated as a driver or underlying cause of poor Indigenous health.

It found that in the vast majority of papers on Indigenous health, colonisation was not even mentioned – “it was irrelevant and thus rendered invisible”.

For those that did, most often it was just mentioned briefly or in passing “as a context setting variable, a past event”.

“The figures prompted an open letter being signed by more than 10,000 Māori lawyers, midwives, social workers and academics calling on the government to “stop stealing Māori children” and to address institutional racism in the child protection system.”
Only in a minority of literature, chiefly from Indigenous researchers and research groups, was colonisation “treated as an underlying driver of Indigenous health”.

That suggested two take-home messages:

“One – that while colonisation is intimately intertwined with wellbeing or the absence thereof, it is still largely invisible as an underlying determinant that has intermediate and proximate manifestations. And that articulating those linkages is hard but necessary.

Two, Indigenous researchers are the ones best positioned and equipped to do that work.”

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From Twitter

Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut · 10h
#LowitjaConf2019 @thkukutai @waikato presenting the research team

Lucie Ranjan @LucieRanjan · 12h
Great presentation from Prof Tahu Kukutai @LowitjaInstitut #LowitjaConf2019
Indigenous Well-being principles - Freedom, Balance, Survive + Thrive, Distinct Identity. @acvillarosaa
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

“Survive and thrive” and other key elements of global Indigenous concepts of wellbeing

#LowitjaConf2019

Hilary Miller @hilary_miller · 12h

Prof Tahu Kukatai talking about demography and looking beneath the numbers to our stories. Indigenous control over data is key to telling the right stories. Publication available for download now #LowitjaConf2019

Jaqui Hughes @JaqHughes · 12h

Examples of Decolonising our data knowledges by free open access publications - tremendously important keynote by Prof Tahu Kukatai - are URL for free reading #LowitjaConf19

Sally Nathan @SallyNathanUNSW · 12h

Professor Tahu Kukatai showing how colonisation and resilience are the story underlying population data and trends. So important that stories beneath are told #LowitjaConf19 Qualitatively informed epidemiology @sphunsw @MegBastard @AndrewHayen @sallyf Gibson @CroakeyNews
"Survive and thrive" and other key elements of global Indigenous concepts of wellbeing

Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut · Jun 18
Beneath the numbers... are our stories. Prof Tahu Kukutai @thkukutai at #LowitjaConf2019

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · Jun 18
@thkukutai presents at the #LowitjaConf2019 the Indigenous Data Science Program.

There are three themes:
- Maori Data Sovereignty
- Maori Data Science
- Maori Data Capability

It's a long term plan which aims to have Maori as active data participants not passive recipients.
“Survive and thrive” and other key elements of global Indigenous concepts of wellbeing

#LowitjaConf2019

You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.
Twelve priorities for Indigenous health: read the #LowitjaConf2019 statement

International Indigenous health researchers have called for “comprehensive truth telling processes” to dismantle colonial narratives and systemic racism in health research, policy and service delivery.

The call is one of 12 priorities outlined in the official statement from the Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference 2019, which met in Darwin, on the Larrakia Nation, from 18-20 June 2019.

Based on deliberations under the theme Thinking. Speaking. Being: First Nations Solutions for Global Change, the 760 national and international conference delegates made the following statement:

Thinking

1. Nation state governments must reform the way health resources are shared. Community health initiatives and programs that are built on place-based knowledge must be supported and recognised for the leadership and expertise they contain.

2. Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing are norms and should not be marginalised. They are not alternatives; they are not perspectives: they are our lived truth.

3. Our health is connected to our land and our seas. As Indigenous peoples of the world we are the protectors of these sacred lands and waters. It is our responsibility to connect our knowledges for positive change.
4. We have the right to our own institutions where we mentor our emerging thinkers, where we speak our truths, where we celebrate our ways of being.

**Speaking**

5. Colonialism and racism are determinants of ill health. We call for comprehensive truth telling processes, and the acceptance of these truths, to dismantle colonial narratives and systemic racism in health research, policy and service delivery.

6. First Nations knowledges and languages are our assets. We must protect, repatriate and rejuvenate cultural practices relating to health and wellbeing — including medicinal; therapeutic; and nutritional and healing-related knowledges and practices.

7. Data is part of our narrative. First Nations must be empowered with the knowledge and infrastructure to collect, monitor and interpret our own health and wellbeing data.

8. First Nations people living with a disability want their voices heard, and require a space to sit, hear, share, and reflect on issues that affect our wellbeing. We require resources and goodwill to develop structures and networks that will connect the First Nations living with disability community with researchers, services and policy-makers within values and cultures that promote their inclusion.

9. First Nations and dominant languages and literacy are fundamental rights and a foundation of empowerment. Lifting levels of literacy in our first and dominant languages is key to our self-determination and the development of our children.

**Being**

10. Our future generations are central to our being. The mass removal of our children through incarceration and institutionalisation is a source of ongoing trauma and must stop.

11. Our collective rights, as described in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, provide a framework for our health and wellbeing. These include the right to freedom from discrimination, the right to good health, and the right to self-determination.

12. First Nations health research funding should go to First Nations organisations and researchers.
“I ask everyone working in public health and other health fields to put down tools” – and read this

Public health professionals and the wider health sector have been urged to engage deeply with strong calls to action embedded in the official statement from the recent Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference.

Summer May Finlay writes:

As an Aboriginal person, working in a predominantly non-Aboriginal environment is challenging – and this includes public health.

The Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing conference held in Darwin last month was anything but challenging. It was invigorating.

I work in public health. I write, I teach, I research, I volunteer. I now work in mostly non-Aboriginal settings. I am a strong, motivated, passionate, educated and experienced 38-year-old Aboriginal woman, and yet some days are just bloody hard.

Why are they hard?
Because the systems and structures in mainstream settings are set up to meet the needs of non-Aboriginal, predominantly white people, and at times don’t understand or even value other ways of doing business – our methods of doing business.

When I’m in the Aboriginal space, it’s like coming home.

**Brave and bold**

Associate Professor Chelsea Bond, during [her presentation](#LowitjaConf2019) at the Lowitja Conference, urged us to be brave and to be bold.

She asked Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics to call out systems that minimise the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. These are systems which either intentionally or unintentionally maintain the inequalities. She inspired me to write this article. She inspired me to be bold (or at least bolder than I often am).

Bond gave us permission to push back against the systems. To challenge the current structures in public health that do little to benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues.

In public health, we always talk about equity and diversity, but too often I see a focus on equality and same, same. We see old white, mostly men, with a minimum of “Doctor” in front of their names, spruiking the good deeds of public health.

In the current systems and structures, we have to give equal weight to all non-Aboriginal voices alongside Aboriginal voices on our issues.

This is despite many non-Aboriginal people just not realising they are way off the mark, so much so that they are essentially maintaining the inequities.

Privileging of non-Aboriginal voices emboldens other non-Aboriginal people, also with limited knowledge and expertise to speak on our issues. The result is that the 97 percent end up drowning out the views of the very people they are seeking to assist.

The Lowitja Conference demonstrated that Aboriginal people are skilled, motivated and educated. When we come together, there is an unrivalled passion. A passion that can make a significant change.

Yet too often there is a token Aboriginal person on a committee or group – a lone ranger expected to be the fountain of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge.

And when we are unable to make the changes required, it is us who are perceived by the world to have failed. No acknowledgement is made of the systems and structures that put up invisible barriers limiting our capacity to make changes.

**Blueprint for change**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and ways of doing business are a core part of the [Lowitja Conference Statement 2019](#LowitjaConf2019), which was endorsed by the delegates.

The Statement is grouped under the Conference themes, Thinking, Speaking and Being. It is a blueprint for global change.

It says: “Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing are norms and should not be marginalised.”
We need people working in the public health space to stop and reflect on how they, through their practice, even subconsciously marginalise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of doing business. Budgetary considerations or competing demands are usual excuses for not prioritising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, effectively maintaining the norm, which in practice continues to marginalise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Statement also says: “First Nations health research funding should go to First Nations organisations and researchers.”

This is something that should be front of mind for both funding bodies and researchers. Researchers have often made their names and progressed their careers off research on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It’s time to give back and stand back. Allow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to do the work that needs to be done for our communities.

Bond, during her speech, did say that there is a place for non-Aboriginal people. Bond stated that non-Aboriginal people have space as “foot soldiers” supporting their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues. I agree.

We cannot and should not do it alone. But it has to be done our way, focusing on our agenda and meeting our needs.

I ask everyone working in public health and other health fields to put down tools, and read the Statement.

Take the time to reflect on how you can action the principles in the Statement daily.

• Summer May Finlay is a Yorta Yorta woman, a public health practitioner and researcher, and a contributing editor at Croakey. Follow on Twitter at @SummerMayFinlay.
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019

Panel discussions with Professor James Ward and Professor Kerry Arabena, together with June Oscar and Romlie Mokak. Photograph by Marie McInerney

In recent weeks, Croakey has published a series of articles from the Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference, which was held on the Larrakia Nation in Darwin with the theme: ‘Thinking, Speaking, Being: First Nations Solutions for Global Change’.

We are wrapping up the Croakey Conference News Service coverage of #LowitjaConf2019 with articles compiling tweets from some of the presentations that we have not previously covered. Below are some tweets from Day 1, when the program theme was “Thinking”.

http://bit.ly/33d7TrT
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019

Ali Drummond, Queensland University of Technology

Knowledge sharing, co-creation and translation through research yarning

Lisa Whop @Lisa_J_Whop - 2h
@daaureb_le talking about the dance of social yarning and research yarning and the fluidity in which yarns flowed and how they could negotiate space and cultural protocol in his research project. #LowitjaConf2019

Bryan @bryanmukandli - 1h
@daaureb_le talk has just been called a masterclass in Indigenous methodologies. His call to avoid “scripting” Indigenous peoples as objects of knowledge and instead cultivate openness through relationality was brilliant! #BlackfullaBingo #LowitjaConf2019

Research Question

What complexity of knowing, seeing and resolving is Indigenous peoples. Policy, health research, translation, and social practice are complex and involve a range of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The complexity and fluidity of these relationships are not always understood or addressed in research. How can we better understand and support these relationships to improve outcomes for Indigenous peoples?

NICTA @NICTA_Australia - 2h
@daaureb_le used Indigenous methodologies, incl reciprocity, relationality & privileging Indigenous voices, to find out what enables Indigenous & non-Indigenous nurses to reach accreditation standards & support aspirations of Indigenous people. #LowitjaConf2019

Ali Drummond talks about using Dadirri - deep listening, contemplation - in his research. This was important during yarning and data collection as well as for analysis. #LowitjaConf2019
Katrina Rutherford, Centre for Indigenous Health Equity Research, Central Queensland University

The Resilience Building Toolkit: Utilising technology to enable Indigenous voice and promote the resilience and wellbeing of students at boarding schools.
Juli Coffin from Telethon Kids, Mel Robinson from Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives and Denese Griffin from Birthing on Noongar Boodjar Project

Listening to the women: What birthing on country means to Aboriginal women living in an urban environment.
Catherine Chamberlain, Naomi Ralph from La Trobe University, and Graham Gee, Stephanie Brown from Murdoch Childrens Research Institute

Building strong foundations for the Health the Past by Nurturing the Future project: Sharing learnings from establishing a large NHMRC-funded community based participatory action research project in three jurisdictions.
First Nations solutions for global change –
a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019

Warm feedback for a related workshop

CRE REACH @CREreach · 8m
Powerful interactive workshop for the Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future study @DrCChamberlain #LowitjaConf2019

Christina Heris @HerisChristina · 42m
Fantastic workshop facilitated by the amazing @DrCChamberlain and her Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future project team #LowitjaConf2019
Associate Professor Catherine Chamberlain received the 2019 Lowitja Institute award for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research leadership and excellence, including for her work on the Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future project to co-design perinatal awareness, recognition, assessment and support strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents who have experienced complex childhood trauma.

Its framework and protocol were outlined last month in the BMJ.
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019

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“Conference News Service”

Professor Gail Garvey, Menzies School of Health Research

What Matters: Development of a Model of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing

NICaN @NICaN_Australia · 16m
@garvey_gail starts talk by acknowledging the hundreds of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have participated in #WhatMatters project - centering & strengthening voice of Indigenous pol in research #LowitjaConf2019

Hilary Miller @hilary_miller · 7m
Brilliant presentation by Gail Garvey on developing a model of wellbeing as part of the What Matters project. Wellbeing is a holistic concept, the fabric of which is woven by community, culture and family. Can’t look at issues in isolation #LowitjaConf2019

NICaN @NICaN_Australia · 9m
#WhatMatters project underpinned by values of collaboration & sharing - not working in silos. Yarning circles & interviews to talk about “a good life”, that differs b/wn people & b/wn cultures. #LowitjaConf2019 @garvey_gail

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.
Dominic Guerrera, Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia

The Aboriginal Gender Study: contemporary understandings of gender, gender roles and gender equity
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019

Stephen Harfield, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute

Dr Kalinda Griffiths, Centre for Big Data Research in Health, University of New South Wales

The identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in official statistics: critical issues of international significance.

Watch this Croakey interview with epidemiologist Dr Kalinda Griffiths, who won the Lowitja Institute’s 2019 Emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researcher Award at the conference.

A Yawuru woman born and living in Darwin, Griffiths talks to Summer May Finlay about why population health data matters, why it matters just as much who is in charge of it, and why it’s “absolutely critical to create an army of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data nerds”.

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 2h
@Klick22 says we need national data collection to include Indigenous data for comparison across populations.

She also says we need to collect just Indigenous data to get a more robust understanding.

#LowitjaConf2019

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 2h
@Klick22 says that there is inaccuracies in Indigenous data e.g. an under count which creates bias.

We need to consider how we manage these biases? And how do they impact our mob?

James ward @researchjames · 3h
#LowitjaConf2019 I don’t think there is a person at this con! that lives and loves their data as much as @Klick22 great work!
Cindy Ahearn and Tarneen Calliope, LIME Network

Scoping the development of a network of educators to support Indigenous health initiatives across the health sciences

LIME network research on university interprofessional education in Indigenous health #LowitjaConf2019

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019
**Dr Lisa Whop, Menzies School of Health Research**

**Screening Matters: the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who participate or never/rarely participate in cervical screening**

Award winning Indigenous cancer researcher Dr Lisa Whop, Senior Research Fellow at the Menzies School of Health Research, is challenging Australia to make sure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are central in the push towards cervical cancer elimination.

Australia is on track to become the first country in the world to officially eliminate cervical cancer as a public health issue by 2035 following the success of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination program and the changes to the National Cervical Screening Program.

But there are concerns that, with elimination measured as being incidence of around 4-6 in 100,000, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women will still experience high incidence and mortality, as a result of significantly lower screening rates.

“I want the Government to commit to elimination for all women, not just the majority,” said Whop, who presented at the conference on her Screening Matters study which conducted interviews with 80 Indigenous women in Queensland to ask why they participated in cervical screening or did not.

Watch this interview with Dr Lisa Whop (including about why she is wearing a ‘because racism’ T-shirt). You can read more about the Screening Matters study and its methodology via this Indigenous X story.
Some *preliminary* findings: having control over preventive health actions was empowering & knowledge mothers old pass onto daughters. Enablers: trusting GP relations, good 1st screen experience. Barriers: Not asked, shame, trauma, talked down to.

#ScreeningMatters #LowitjaConf2019

@NicaN_Australia · 2h
@Lisa_J_Whop reflects on Aust’s cervical cancer elimination goals and the need to center Indigenous women’s voice if Indigenous women are going to be part of this national push #LowitjaConf2019 #ScreeningMatters

@NicaN_Australia · 2h
Having Indigenous women as the interviewers helped get honest accounts of women’s experiences because they were able to establish relationality and safety. #LowitjaConf2019 #ScreeningMatters

@GkSpurling · 2h
How the GP frames that first cervical screening so important. Can lead to lifelong screening/ avoidance. @Lisa_J_Whop #LowitjaConf2019

Preliminary findings - screened women

Enablers:
- timing of appointments around work, family, life commitments and transport
- Need for culturally appropriate and respectful services
- female GPs (many but not all)
- Trusting and long-lasting relationships with GPs key

Early and first experiences of screening shape future perceptions of screening - e.g., GP framing as part of role as new mum led to one woman reporting “never missing” a screen.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

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IndigenousX: How to harness the power of digital communication for your sector
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

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Kootsy Canuto from the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute and Kurt Towers from Watto Purrunna Aboriginal Primary Health Services

Rarely are we mentioned despite our roles and responsibilities; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males’ discourse on parenting

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men are too often invisible in parenting conversations, according to Dr Kootsy Canuto, a research fellow with the Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity Unit at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute in Adelaide.

Canuto told the Lowitja Institute conference that health and social services, particularly maternal support programs and early years services, need to “radically rethink the way they value and involve male parents” and to address stigma and stereotypes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men are disengaged from their parental roles and responsibilities.

Canuto presented new research gathered from across South Australia, giving as one example a man in a remote community who only learnt his wife was being evacuated to a metropolitan hospital for a high risk pregnancy when he heard the plane leaving.

“There was a perception from the nurse that he wasn’t involved in the birthing process,” he said.
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“Put food on the table and pay the bills”.
“Increased responsibilities when you have a child”.
“Become a role model to your child”.
“Stepping up to the plate”.
“Set good examples”.
“It’s quite easy to be a father, but you’ve got to be a dad as well”.
“Give them what you never had – a better life”.
“Put yourself in a position of financial security”.
“Being present and involved”.
“Give your children direction”.
“Support your children”.
“Being there under any and all circumstances”.
“Being a guide, a teacher and a friend for your children”.
“Parents always worry for kids regardless of child’s age”.
“Give them a good chance in life”.

CONSTANTLY dealing with the LIES, BLAME and MISCONCEPTIONS.

They’re ALL lazy

They’re All

They’re DISINTERESTED in their health

If it’s their OWN fault

They’re all ALCOHOLICS

They’re child MOLESTERS

Marie McInerney @marlemcinerney · 49m

“Not just employment, but local employment”. What the men are asking for

#StrongFathersStrongFutures #LowitjaConf2019

What the men are asking for....

“Support from community, and visitors, to work as one cohesive unit. Not an individual job – a whole community is required”.

“Employment – appropriate local opportunities”.

“Education regarding when/where male parents can access the necessary ‘tools’ to support them in their roles”.

“After the footy season ends there needs to be opportunities to do positive stuff with the kids”.

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.
Watch these interviews on other health and wellbeing issues for Indigenous men and boys:

- **Dr Mick Adams**, Senior Research Fellow with the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet and highly regarded Elder within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

- **Professor James Smith**, Father Frank Flynn Fellow (Substance Misuse), at the Menzies School of Health Research.
Ariana Kong from Western Sydney University and Joanne Goulding from South Western Sydney Local Health District

Empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to improve oral health during pregnancy: Can we adapt a model?

Robert Dann from Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia

Yarning with Indigenous workforce: Understanding stress and staying strong
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

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Seth Westhead from South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute

Measuring the health and wellbeing impacts of reclaiming Indigenous languages

Marie McInerney @marlemcinerney - 3h
Hearing at #LowitjaConf2019 re @sahmriAU study of the revival of the Barngarla language on SA’s Eyre Peninsula, to examine whether improvements in mental health and SEWB can occur during and following the language reclamation process.

Dr Jo Arciuli @JArciuli - 3h
Seth Westhead telling us about health and wellbeing impacts of reclaiming Indigenous languages. Australian languages at great risk of loss #LowitjaConf19 #LowitjaConf2019 @UN4Indigenous #linguistics

Measuring the health and wellbeing impacts of reclaiming Indigenous languages

Marie McInerney @marlemcinerney - 2h
Here’s the @sahmriAU study we’re hearing about at #LowitjaConf2019 on Language reclamation portal.sahmriresearch.org/en/publication… - first formal test of a causal r’ship between language revival and mental health (vs impact of loss): Seth Westhead

Qualitatively Exploring the Impacts of Pilot Language Activities

Semi-structured interviews
Both and Leda talked with 10 people in total
- Port Lincoln (26-28 October 2017)
- Port Augusta (24 November 2017)
Offered participants the opportunity to talk with young/older, female/male, Aboriginal/ non-Indigenous – most interviews together

Demographic details
- 10 people from Port Augusta
- 6 people from Port Lincoln
- 10 females
- 6 males
- 6 people aged 15-30 years of age
- 7 people aged 30-50 years of age
- 3 senior Elders
Member checking – verbatim transcripts
Consensus meetings in communities
Dr Tess Ryan and colleagues, University of Melbourne

Further strengthening research capabilities: A review and analysis of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research Workforce

Marie McInerney @marie_mcinerney · 2h
Now hearing from @TessRyan1 re review/analysis of Indigenous health researcher workforce: it’s reported a standout finding that investment (albeit, minimal & short-term) was followed by “heightened success” in research activity & outcomes …an-resources-health.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.11... #LowitjaConf2019

Capacity building of the Australian Aboriginal and T...
This paper provides a narrative review that scopes and integrates the literature on the development and strengthening of the Australian Aboriginal and Torres ... human-resources-health.biomedcentral.com

Summer May Finlay Retweeted
Marie McInerney @marie_mcinerney · 2h
Final report of this review and analysis of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Researcher Workforce will be available in July: Chris Pitsania-Phung #LowitjaConf2019 lowitja.org.au/page/services/... @TessRyan1
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

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ArabenaKerry @KerryArabena · 2h
24 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Professors in health research. Peer support, research training, communitarian approaches to @learning and completing needed in health research workforce. @CentrePoche
#LowitjaConf2019

ArabenaKerry @KerryArabena · 2h
@LowitjaInstitute @unimelb @CentrePoche review of Ind health researcher workforce led by Prof Even found degrees, mentoring, training, projects, community research, networks & partnerships and international partnerships are strategies used to build our workforce. #LowitjaConf2019
CRE REACH @CREreach - 52m
Huge growth in the Indigenous health research workforce with a big jump in
doctorate completions and now 10 A/Professors and 24 Professors in health
@TessRyan1 #LowitjaConf2019

Candice Raymond @Candice56456117 - 2h
*That’s what we do in research, We’re change Agents * -Tessa Ryan
Further strengthening research capabilities .
#twitteriddas
#Lowitjaconf19
#Deadly
@LowitjaInstitut @Mibbinbah @First1000DaysOz @KerryArabena

'I would never have finished my PhD had it not been for the (research training program) I did... I think that
sometimes you just need to have a
critical friend and that sometimes it is
really difficult to find and anybody
who’s able to help an Indigenous student. You know you’ve always got
somebody in your corner and that’s
what you need’ (Int.4, 2018).
Panel discussion on the theme, ‘Thinking’

Panellists explored the process of thinking, investigation and knowledge development by First Nations peoples. Panellists: Dr Kerry Arabena, Ms June Oscar AO, Associate Professor James Ward with Mr Romlie Mokak as chair.
150

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 3h
“The ability to make a difference, to mobilise, to address inequity maintains positive thinking for me. The ability to embrace new aspects of science is really exciting but not without its problems for talking through with community.”
@researchjames #LowitjaConf2019

CRE REACH @CREreach · 2h
Great first panel session of the conference. James Ward on the big increase in Aboriginal people in academia: “We need to nurture the next generation of Aboriginal academics. And the generation after that” @researchjames #LowitjaConf2019
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019

You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay - 2m
@researchjames has seen a growth in Aboriginal academics challenging the system.

He says being in the academy has allowed him to challenge it.

He wants more #blokademics. Then he wants to retire in the Greek Islands cuz u can swim without sharka or croc.

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney - 8m
Indigenous people need to take control of climate action, says @researchjames, pointing to Australia’s terrible record on the extinction of species.
#LowitjaConf2019

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney - 6m
Indigenous knowledge offers “the survival imperative” in a world of climate change, says @KenyArabana. “I believe our knowledges will save the world. It’s not only thinking how we were able to maintain country, but how to we revitalise country.” #LowitjaConf2019 #climatehealth

Nathan Appo @Elusivo_Sausage - 2m
Panel Discussion on “Thinking” this session is questioning my own thinking and thought processes, and I love that. Great discussion 🤚
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference [here](#).

**First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019**

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**Summer May Finlay** @SummerMayFinlay - 27m

Amazing @KerryArabena says she can’t think when she is stressed.

She says that many Indigenous ppl live in a chronic state of stress & only have the opportunity to respond reactively.

What she does is remove her self to allow her self to think. And she reads.

#LowitjaConf2019

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**ArabenaKerry** @KerryArabena - Jun 21

#LowitjaConf2019 during the ‘thinking’ stream, I was asked why I left the University environment. I answered: I value how I think and what I think more than I value modern institutions that pay me to think. Now I am creating an ecosystem of businesses & I am HAPPY. #writingmyway

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**Other presentations**

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**Summer May Finlay** @SummerMayFinlay - 14h

@NACCHOChair reminds the #LowitjaConf2019 that the Closing the Gap Framework was not designed by Indigenous ppl. It was not for our ppl, it was for government.

The same mistake can not be made with the Closing the Gap Refresh.
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

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Summer May Finlay @SummarVayFinlay - 11h
Indigenous evaluation is something ppl obviously care abt cuz the room is packed at the @ozprodcom run by @RMckak.

Key themes
- Data Sovereignty
- Priorities set by communities
- Community capacity building & recognition of strengths

Indigenous methodologies

#LowitjaCon2019

Alana Gall @LarnzLarnz - 44m
@tamarabutler totally nailed her presentation about the needs of people caring for #FirstNations people with cancer - download from poster kiosk #2 for deets
#LowitjaConf19 @LowitjaInstitut @MerziesResearch
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.
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Karen Dwyer @KarenDwyer12 · 1h
#LowitjaConf2019 great resource tackling the issues of drug & alcohol in Indigenous communities. @DeakinMedicine @Candy_Mac_89

Ali Drummond @IndigenousX · 11h
Deadly Choices ice-breaker. Scissor-paper-rocks. Whole room activity - I won btw 🍀 #LowitjaConf19
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at LowitjaConf2019

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You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Karen Dwyer @KarenDwyer12 · 2m
#LowitjaConf2019 @nhmrc funded RCT Standing Strong program across 3 states. 60
Communities to be recruited. Community capacity building within program.

Joanne Bryant @JoanneBryant14 · 7m
Deficit approaches create stigma and shame for young people in relation to sexual health #LowitjaConf2019 Kim Beadman @CSRHI UNSW

Leah Barclay @LeahBarclay · 28m
Immersive listening between sessions at the @Lowitjainstitutf Soundscape Hub #acousticecology #LowitjaConf2019 #listeningtocountry
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

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@LowitjaInstitute Soundscape Hub #acousticecology #LowitjaConf2019

@seanyorston – at Darwin Convention Centre

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First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.
Virtual reality tours of missions in WA being trialled to help Stolen Generations healing. #LowitjaConf2019

All Drummond @IndigenousX · 1h
This project is community led. Solid to hear from community mob about their aspirations for this project. Goosebumps. #LowitjaConf2019

All Drummond @IndigenousX · 1h
Working with communities and using Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality to support members of and family of Stolen Generation. Truth-telling. #LowitjaConf2019 #thinking
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019

You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference [here](https://www.croakey.com.au).

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**Chris Bourke** @chrisbourke · 10h

Vicki Wade presents on Champions4change empowering communities to end rheumatic heart disease @RHAustralia #LowitjaConf2019 @AusHealthcare

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**Karen Dwyer** @KarenDwyer12 · 9h

#LowitjaCon2019 2 worlds working together traditional and western medicine. Mindfulness in an Aboriginal language 🌿 learn in workshop & take back to family. Men invited into the process.

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**IndigenousX Pty Ltd** @IndigenousXLLtd · 1h

Two way learning research project looking at lived experiences of rheumatic heart disease in Yolŋu community in Yirrkala #LowitjaCon2019
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019

IndigenousX Pty Ltd @IndigenousXLtd · 2h
Really interesting points about different ways of displaying data around relationships. Researchers couldn’t find any data tools that let them put family trees and relationships in a spiral, only linear western parent, children, siblings etc formats. #LowitjaConf2019

IndigenousX Pty Ltd @IndigenousXLtd · 2h
Thinking and feeling are intimately linked, so media, researchers and PSAs focusing on negative health stats and stories has a negative impact on how people think and feel and leads to more negative outcomes in health. #LowitjaConf2019

IndigenousX Pty Ltd @IndigenousXLtd
Information and education are important but health messages need to be delivered in ways that make people feel good, feel empowered. #LowitjaConf2019
10:34 PM  17 Jun 2019

Conclusions

Miritja’s thoughts:
- “Love has to be shown, it is an action”
- “Good support and encouragement are about loving – doing things to show love”
- “Have to remind people to believe in a loving way, not just talk about it”
- “We are all ‘idjwi (people), we should work together; come together, listen together”

Emma’s thoughts:
- Work with community-based researchers in all aspects of the research
- Both-way learning is essential
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019

Dr Lucas de Toca, AIATSIS, AIIL – Australian Indigenous Languages Institute and International Year of Indigenous Languages

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay - 2h
Research project Recognising Yolnu strengths and knowledge abt growing up children through collaborative research using video-reflexive ethnography at #LowitjaConf2019 has young researchers who are taking the initiative.

Research is no longer a dirty word, when it’s done right
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Dr Leonie Cox @Leoniecox444Cox · 1h
Terence Donovan political determinants of health. Young Warriors Program-School wanted to control the process & tried to insist white teachers had to come. Finally got to work with kids on country. @LowitjaInstitute
#LowitjaConf2019

james ward @researchjames · 13h
Patto being as gracious and humble as ever thanking Aunty Pat Anderson
#LowitjaConf2019 #AMSANTaus Patto you should know we are eternally grateful for everything you do for our people. @KenWyattMP @AIATSIS
@NACCHOAustralia
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “thinking” at #LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “speaking” at #LowitjaConf2019

In recent weeks, Croakey has published a series of articles from the Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference, which was held on the Larrakia Nation in Darwin with the theme: ‘Thinking, Speaking, Being: First Nations Solutions for Global Change’.

We are wrapping up the Croakey Conference News Service coverage of #LowitjaConf2019 with articles compiling tweets from some of the presentations that we have not previously covered. Below are some tweets from Day 2, when the program theme was “Speaking”, and you can also watch a video summary below.

The Indigenous Evaluation Strategy Workshop. Photo via @ozprodcom
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “speaking” at #LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019

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First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “speaking” at #LowitjaConf2019

Petah @patk766 · 23m
Not the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs but the Minister for Indigenous Peoples - Ken Wyatt @LowitjaInstitute #LowitjaConf19

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 14h
@KenWyattMP is the 1st Aboriginal person in commonwealth cabinet as Minister for Indigenous Australians.

He says it’s important it’s not! Minister for Indigenous Affairs. It’s about the people.

Minister Wyatt be the 1st but not the last.

#LowitjaConf2019

Jennifer Browne @PowerfulOwl · 22m
Minister for #Indigenous Australians @KenWyattMP addresses #LowitjaConf19 commits to “shared understandings and shared directions regardless of our political stance”
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “speaking” at LowitjaConf2019

becca @becmann2012 · 26m
Feeling blessed to be listening to @KenWyattMP at the #LowitjaConf19, our new Minister for Indigenous Australians. “We have the capacity to do the things important to us.” Yes we can 🙌

Jennifer Browne @Powerful0wl · 14h
Minister for Indigenous Australians @KenWyattMP addresses #LowitjaConf19 commits to “shared understandings and shared directions regardless of our political stance”

Marie McInerney @mariemcinerney · 13h
@KenWyattMP says has sought to be bipartisan in his role, meeting regularly with Indigenous Labor MPs, is now on a journey to speak to all State and Territory Ministers. “It is a privilege to be in this position. I need our community to walk with me.” #LowitjaConf2019
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “speaking” at #LowitjaConf2019

John Paterson from AMSANT and others

Carmen Parter @CarmenParter - 7m

What we need is a radical shift in the way that governments work says Pato from AMSANT - key point is staying strong and presenting a unified voice despite the diversity amongst us #LowitjaConf19 @LowitjaInstitut @AMSANTaus @CentrePoche

Lowitja Institute @LowitjaInstitut - 13h

@LowitjaInstitut CEO Ms Janine Mohamed introducing the #LowitjaConf2019 Statement draft for Day 1. The statement from the conference floor will be released at the end of the event.

Carmen Parter @CarmenParter - 16m

Our new and deadly Lowitja Institute CEO @LowitjaInstitut #LowitjaConf19 @CentrePoche talking about the draft first day about thinking statement @KenWyattMP
Romlie Mokak, Mark Bryant, Andrew McDonald and Bonnie Nguyen from the Productivity Commission

Workshop: An evaluation strategy for programs and policies affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
Georgina Trevorrow, Diana Murphy & Sandra Wilson from Moorundi Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service Inc

Language for Life from the “Deadly Nannas”
Panel Discussion

2019 is the International Year of Indigenous Languages. How we speak, the language/s we use, and what we’re saying all have an impact on the health and wellbeing of our peoples. Indigenous languages and the ways we share knowledges are at the forefront of international conversations right now.

Panellists: Mr David Collard from Wardong, Dr Kū Kahakalau, Representatives of the Ngangkari – Traditional Healers. Chair: Ms June Oscar AO
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on "speaking" at #LowitjaConf2019

Helen Edwards Writes @helenedwards_ - 8h
David Coillard, Wardong - which means Crow #lowitjaconf2019 on reinvigorating Noongar language

Helen Edwards Writes @helenedwards_ - 8h
Dr. Ku Kahakalau chanting to environment and people #lowitjaconf2019 as Hawaiians we are all related and go back to one common ancestor

Helen Edwards Writes @helenedwards_ - 8h
Dr. Ku Kahakalau #lowitjaconf2019 I am the land and the land is me - I am the land. Place names are of vital importance

Nathan Appo @Elusive_Sausage - 8h
Representatives of the Ngangkar- Traditional Healers share a dance and song with #LowitjaConf2019

Absolutely beautiful

@NACCHOAustralia @CroakeyNews @WePublicHealth – at Darwin Conference Centre

Day 2 – Speaking, Lowitja Institute Conference 2019
Michelle Bovill from University of Newcastle

Ngu-ng-gi-la-nha (to exchange) knowledge through a systematic review of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander smoking cessation interventions during pregnancy: How is individual and community empowerment reported?

Yvette Roe, Sophie Hickey and Sue Kildea, from Mater Research, University of Queensland

Rise Safely: A framework for implementing Birthing on Country to improve maternal and infant health outcomes
Josie Povey, Janama Mills, Anne Marie Puruntatameri & Cathy Stassi from Menzies School of Health Research

Aboriginal and Islander Mental Health Initiative for Youth (AlMhi-Y): Results and Process Evaluation

James Ward from the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute

Opportunities and challenges in achieving elimination of STIs in remote Australia
Erin lew Fatt from AMSANT, Jamie Newman from Bila Muuji, on behalf of the Career Pathways Project team

Sovereignty of our wellbeing: Career pathways for the well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health staff, families and communities
Other presentations

**George Kirby @Kerbeau · 8h**
Chris Bourke from the Australian Healthcare & Hospitals Association presents an evaluation of the various state and territory governments’ policies for promoting an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce. #LowitjaConf2019 – at Darwin Conference Centre

**Carmen Parter @CarmenParter · 7h**
At the cultural determinants workshop and just brainstormed this with my colleagues #LowitjaConf2019 with @KerryArabena @CentrePuche @patik786 @bluly31
Lauren Poulos presents her work on online dementia education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at #LowitjaConf2019 @CaringForSpirit @neuraustralia.

Kim Morey & Astrid Melchers talk abt the SA Aboriginal Chronic Disease consortium. They have Aboriginal people included as co-chair for different streams & Indigenous ppl involved in design & implementation. #LowitjaConf2019

Aboriginal Health and Ageing Program reps Maddy & Alison outline Standing Tall balance training app development for older Aboriginal people in Sydney #LowitjaConf2019
Twitter enabled people to follow the discussions long-distance

Megan Williams @MegBastard · 1h
Hi from Western NSW Heath Research Network conf today: Growing health research from the ground up #WHRN19 @WesternNSW-IRN Alas not at #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf19 but shout out from #Wiradjuri country. Follow us too all you mob @SummerMayFinlay @mariemcinerney @croakeyblog
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “being” at #LowitjaConf2019

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This is the final instalment of our coverage, which includes stories and 19 video interviews that you can watch at this playlist.

Also watch this video above produced for the Lowitja Institute summarising the discussions from Day 3.
Dr Abhay Bang

Founder director of SEARCH (Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health), Gadchiroli.

He was Chairman of the Expert Committee on Tribal Health, Government of India (2013-2018), which recently produced the first comprehensive report – Tribal Health in India: Bridging Gap and Roadmap for the Future.
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “being” at #LowitjaConf2019

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Chelsea Bond, Condy Canuto, Bryan Mukandi, and Jon Willis from University of Queensland; Karla Brady, Jake Foster and Uncle Shane Coghill from Inala Wangarra

Turning into a new man: Urban Indigenous masculinity and The Inala Wangarra Rites of Passage Case Study
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “being” at #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019

Dr Leonie Cox @Leoniecox444Cox 10h
There's a few damp eyes in this session @LowitjaInstitut @InalaWangarra @drcbond #LowitjaConf2019

Dr Leonie Cox @Leoniecox444Cox 10h
Karle Brady ‘men are not just handbags’ strong men. Bryan Mukandi the project is ‘saturated in love’ the men are gentle - opposite to popular stereotypes of Indigenous men @LowitjaInstitut #LowitjaConf2019 @InalaWangarra

Dr Leonie Cox @Leoniecox444Cox 10h
Not about good stories or bad stories it is about full stories. Research outputs uplift & are intelligible to the community. A journal article can’t do that! SAYS @drcbond @InalaWangarra @LowitjaInstitut #LowitjaConf2019 @QUT_Nursing

Dr Leonie Cox @Leoniecox444Cox 10h
@drcbond @InalaWangarra ‘turning into a new man’ project: humanising people, political imperative, resistance to dominant discourse, local governance structure, community IP. Theorise the project outputs not riveting theory onto the project. @LowitjaInstitut #LowitjaConf19
Elizabeth Ervine and Caine Carroll from Aboriginal Housing Office

Services OUR Way – respectful support and service collaboration to ensure positive health and wellbeing outcomes

- Listens and empowers
- Puts the family at the centre of support planning
- Addresses the underlying causes and factors that result in instability and challenging situations for families.
- Works collaboratively with its clients and service providers
- Case coordination, not case management
- Aboriginal control of the planning, design and implementation
- Aboriginal staff using tools developed and modified on the ground
- A holistic approach to working with vulnerable Aboriginal families to address mental, physical and emotional needs of clients, their families, and the communities in which they live.

- School attendance increased for children of 43 families
- Referrals received from almost 250 unique service providers
- 44 families supported to prevent eviction
- Child protection de-escalated for 84 families
Tamara Butler from Menzies School of Health Research

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's wellbeing: A comprehensive literature review

Background and aim

- Indigenous Australians' understandings of health and wellbeing differ from those of other Australians.

- Wellbeing is: “...not just the physical well-being of an individual but refers to the social, emotional, and cultural well-being of the whole community...”
  NACCHO, 2010

- Existing QoL/wellbeing measures may not capture wellbeing domains relevant to Indigenous Australians

- This comprehensive review aimed to identify and describe wellbeing domains relevant to Indigenous Australians

Family and community

- Family commonly noted as most important aspect of wellbeing
- Community revolves around social and ancestral relationships to Country and place
- Community participation and interaction builds up social capital.
- Role of music and sporting clubs
- These are all sources of: social support, connectedness, social capital, identity

Ongoing impacts of colonisation and government policies disrupts connection/ control and undermines wellbeing

Image credit: Menzies School of Health Research
Culture, spirituality, and identity

- Strength of Indigenous identity emerges through culture and spirituality
- Spirituality connects with ancestry
- Elders have important role to play in preserving culture
- Practicing culture strongly associated with positive wellbeing – e.g., language, songs, ceremony, caring for Country

Ongoing impacts of colonisation and government policies disrupts connection/control and undermines wellbeing

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Country

- Holistic, multi-dimensional concept relating to more than physical land
- Sense of belonging to the land
- Returning to Country is restorative and builds resilience

- Maintaining connection to Country associated with a range of mental, physical, cultural, economic, social benefits.

Ongoing impacts of colonisation and government policies disrupts connection/control and undermines wellbeing
Panel discussion on “Being”

Being Indigenous – what does this mean? Our ways of being can be contested, and they can be empowering.

Panellists will explore mindfulness and action, the role of the collective, and ways of acting on research findings. How can we be leaders of global change? Panellists: Ms Jody Currie, Associate Professor Chelsea Bond, Mr Bruce Blankenfeld. Chair: Dr Kerry Arabena
Sarah Fraser and Associate Professor Tamara Mackean from Flinders University

Considering difference: Clinician reports of providing equal and equitable burns care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families
Amunda Gorey and Danielle Woods from Central Australian Aboriginal Council

Aremella Arrayenyre-ileme – Doing It Right: The Aboriginal community's voice and choice in a multimedia approach to sharing health research knowledge in Central Australia

Aboriginal Researchers Glen Sharpe + Amunda Gorey w manager Bronwyn Silver at #LowitjaConf2019 talking #DoingItRight project which assists # Aboriginal communities to improve their understanding of research inc benefits + outcomes to help become equitable partners in #research
Jo Wapling and Taylah Church from Menzies School of Health Research

Enabling a traditional Australian medicinal plants agribusiness

Martina Kamaka from the Department of Native Hawaiian Health John A Burns School Of Medicine University of Hawai‘i & Meleanna Aluli Meyer, an Independent Filmmaker, Educator and Visual Artist

Using the arts and humanities to address cultural trauma and health disparities in a medical curriculum
Other presentations

CRE_ICHEAR aka amanda loach @cre_ichoar - 10h
Adult literacy - the gift that keeps on giving. Wonderful stories of benefits - writing to loved ones, to prisoners and reading to children. “The best thing for an Aboriginal child is a literate mother” #LowitjaConf2019 @MenziesResearch importance of! #hearingforlearning

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay - 10h
@ScottADAC & @KConigrave are working on a survey app which is asking Indigenous ppl abt their alcohol consumption.

It’s in language, asks questions in a way which is relevant to Indigenous ppl & is visual.

#LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.
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a focus on “being” at #LowitjaConf2019

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Terry Donovan & Sharon Wall @neuraustralia Yarning About #Ageing Well with urban and regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities #LowitjaConf2019

Louise Lavrenovic from the Aboriginal Health and Ageing team at @neuraustralia on medical and psychosocial factors impacting cognitive functioning in later life in urban Aboriginal communities #LowitjaConf2019

Ratika Kumar & @michele_bowil presenting on a quit smoking app project being developed with @GillianSGoud

The idea came directly from community. The draft app includes an smoking, alcohol, physical activity/nutrition & mental health sections #LowitjaConf2019
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “being” at #LowitjaConf2019 #LowitjaConf2019

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 10h
@michelle_hovill stresses that health information given to Aboriginal women must be relevant to their lifestyle.

Many Aboriginal families don’t have a leafy greens in the diet which is high in folate. Bake beans on toast does however which is more relevant!

Aboriginal mum engaged

- Aboriginal mother of 3 Renae Lamb was employed to support content creation. Renae worked with Aboriginal researcher to convert scientific knowledge into a usable community context.
- For example dietary recommendations and leafy green vegetables.

Holistic approach to wellness

- Rather than addressing a single health behaviour, our project is aimed at supporting Social and Emotional Wellbeing with an acknowledgement of Aboriginal definition of health and wellbeing.
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

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Awards and prizes
Details of the awards and recipients can be found here.
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Selfies and snaps

Prof. Jacinta Elston @JacintaElston · Jun 19
A mini BIRC reunion at #LowitjaConf2019. 12 years since we started the Journey @jcu; 13 became 1 post doc, 10 PhDs (+ 2 more to come), 3 masters, 1 degree & so much more. Thank you to those on the journey with us. ❤️ Prof Skeare & Hayes. Please share & tag the others I missed. – at Darwin Convention Centre

First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “being” at #LowitjaConf2019

#LowitjaConf2019
Feedback and reflections

Gomeroi Murri @DeadlyGomeroi · Jun 20
Wouldn’t it be deadly if attendance at blackfullas conferences was dependant on every organisation or government dept that attends paying for an Elder and a young person to attend from every location that they work in #LowitjaConf2019

IndigenousX Pty Ltd 🌐 @IndigenousXLtd · 4h
“Tired but inspired” beautifully sums up the mood as we start to wrap up the last day at #LowitjaConf2019 - such an amazing few days here in Larrakia country sharing with amazing brothers and sisters from across the country and around the world.
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “being” at #LowitjaConf2019

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Analytics

The 19 video interviews conducted by Croakey during the conference had a total of 4,970 views via Periscope and YouTube, as of 5 August 2019.

Symplyr analytics show that 1,707 Twitter accounts sent 12,625 tweets using the conference hashtag, creating 95.6 million Twitter impressions, between 17 June and 10 July. The conference hashtag trended nationally throughout the event.
First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “being” at #LowitjaConf2019

Australia trends - Change

#SixWordHorrors
Can you write a horror story in six words?

#LowitjaConf2019
National Rural Health Alliance and Melissa Sweet are Tweeting about this

#NBL20
LaMelo Ball is headed to Australia to play in the NBL.

Peter Yu
#creatingfuturesummit
LaMelo Ball
LaMelo Ball is headed to Australia to play in the NBL.

Trendsmap Perth @Trendspert - 28m

#Lowitjaconf2019 is now trending in #Perth

trendmap.com/au/per_hkhpz

Trendsmap Sydney @Trendsydney - 47m

#Lowitjaconf2019 is now trending in #Sydney

trendmap.com/au/syd_zhtqww

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First Nations solutions for global change – a focus on “being” at #LowitjaConf2019

Croakey Conference News Service
• Reporting by Summer May Finlay and Marie McInerney
• Editing by Melissa Sweet
• Layout and design by Mitchell Ward

Special acknowledgment to all the deadly mob tweeting from #LowitjaConf2019 here in Darwin. The sheer numbers of Indigenous health researchers driving work for change needs to be recognised.