

## **Key Thinkers and Concepts in Indigenous Studies (AIND20007)**

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Consultation by appointment anytime on Mondays and Tuesdays only.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This subject will introduce students to key thinkers and concepts in Australian Indigenous Studies. AIND20007 Key Thinkers and Concepts will allow students who have completed the first year MULT10001 Aboriginalities subject, to form a deeper and more profound understanding of Indigenous knowledge, socio-political context, and experience. For the 2018 delivery of this unit, we will specifically explore two dimensions. In Part A, we examine thinkers and concepts that address questions of land and place. In Part B, we turn to texts that explore the dimensions of space and time. Weekly topics include permission, standpoint, markings, lore, othering, representation, experience, justice, dialogue, repatriation, water, extinction, and healing.

## WEEKLY TOPIC LIST

For the 2018 delivery of this unit, we will specifically examine the following:

- Who qualifies as a “thinker” in Australian Indigenous Studies?
- Can the notion of “concepts” (or, abstract ideas) be expanded to include alternative forms of knowledge production?
- The evaluation of these “key” thinkers and concepts are done by and for whom—and for what purpose/s?
- What thematic patterns emerge from this exercise—what marks Australian Indigenous Studies out from other approaches? and
- What thinkers and concepts might have been included, and which may have been omitted? (Note: Due to the discovery-based design of the course and the assessments, students are free—and indeed strongly encouraged!—to explore concepts and thinkers not listed this year, such as Mudrooroo, Sally Morgan, Larissa Behrendt, and Noel Pearson).

In response to these questions, this semester the weekly topics—and thereby reading list—is designed along two dimensions. In Part A, we examine thinkers and concepts that address questions of land and place. In Part B, we turn to texts that explore the dimensions of space and time.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Concept/s</b>	<b>Thinker/s</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>0</b>	February 19	<b>Permission</b>	Joy Murphy (2018)  Joy Murphy (2010)	Boundaries exist between and within Aboriginal communities across Australia. Traditionally, to cross these boundaries and enter country you needed permission. When this permission was granted the ceremony now called Welcome to Country took place.
<b>1</b>	February 26	<b>Standpoints</b>	Martin Nakata (2007, 1-12 and 218-26)  Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2016)	Nakata reminds us that standpoints are socially-constructed—they are produced. Relatedly, Moreton-Robinson argues that “the Indigenous” is produced by “racialized knowledge” within Western-trained scholars, and thus what is needed is a Critical Indigenous Studies.

<b>Part A: Land/People</b>				
<b>2</b>	March 5	<b>Markings</b>	David Mowaljarlai (1993, 200–211)  <i>Images of Man</i> (Roberts 1980)	The <i>Gwion Gwion</i> (or, <i>Guyan Guyan</i> ) paintings in the Kimberley are dated between 15,000 and 70,000 years old. “Discovered” by the pastoralist Joseph Bradshaw in 1891, these “Bradshaw” galleries have been the site of divisive debates. The debates have been about their origin/s, meaning/s, and function/s.
<b>3</b>	March 12	<b>Lore</b>	Mary Graham (2008)  <i>Putaparri and the Rainmakers</i> (Ma 2015)	Mary Graham synthesized the diversity of beliefs and assumptions in Aboriginal thought down to two precepts: (1) the land is the law and (2) you are not alone in the world. These precepts constitute aboriginal “lore”, and we can see many examples in art, literature and film that evidence them.
<b>4</b>	March 19	<b>Othering**</b>  <b>** Guest lecturer: Todd Fernando</b>	H.C. “Nugget” Coombs (1994)  W.E.H. Stanner (2009, 19–56)	The discipline of anthropology, and the method of ethnography, have been the main passages for what many understand of “the Indigenous”. H.C. Coombs and W.E.H. Stanner were pivotal thinkers whose readings of aboriginal life impacted many generations.
<b>5</b>	March 26	<b>Representation</b>	Eric Michaels (1988)  Marcia Langton (1993)	Following from the emphasis on appropriation and self-representation that was introduced in MULT10001 Aboriginalities, this week we delve deeper into the pioneering work of the American Michaels on critique of Aboriginal art and culture, and Langton on the nuanced politics of representation.
<b>Mid-semester break**</b>				
<b>6</b>	April 9	<b>Experience**</b>	<i>Colony: Australia 1770–1861</i>	Students are asked to analyze the companion exhibitions,

		** Involves a fieldtrip to the State Gallery of Victoria	(2018a) <i>Colony: Frontier Wars</i> (2018b)	<i>Colony: Australia 1770-1861</i> and <i>Colony: Frontier Wars</i> , that present “two parallel experiences of the settlement of Australia”. Before the exhibitions open at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) on March 15, students are strongly encouraged to review the NGV’s exhibition pages and to begin investigating the providence of at least two or three key works.
<b>Part B: Space/Time</b>				
7	April 16	<b>Justice</b>	Marcia Langton (2002)  Stephen Muecke (2004, 6–28)	The notion of “justice” remains at the center of contemporary discourse on Aboriginal affairs, with prominent thinkers including Noel Pearson, Mick and Patrick Dodson, and Larissa Behrendt. But justice also operates across space and time. Whereas Western philosophy is anthropocentric and near-centered, many currents in Australian Indigenous Studies may be said to be inter-generational, and display kinship with the beings and things that comprise the non-human world.
8	April 23	<b>Dialogue</b>	Miriam Rose Ungunmerr (1988)  Max Dulumunmun Harrison (2009, 17-30 and 59-66)	Dialogue between the self and other is present within many aboriginal teachings. Ungunmerr’s notion of “dadirri” is one expression of this dialogical stance that seeks to connect with Christianity, Harrison of the Yuin people is among those who evidence this “two way” dialogical relationship.
9	April 30	<b>Repatriation**</b>  <b>** Guest lecturer: Lyndon Ormond-Parker</b>	Stephen Muecke on David Unaipon (2006, xi–xliii)  Gordon Briscoe on Kevin Gilbert (1994)	As a response to the violation of removal, Aboriginal Australians—and their ideas—have been repatriated, or returned, to their rightful place or state. History is replete with tragic examples of repatriation,

				although the instances we will focus on this week are of David Unaipon, the first aboriginal author of a printed book, and Kevin Gilbert, whose life as a writer, artist and activist was forged whilst in prison.
<b>10</b>	May 7	<b>Water**</b>  <b>** Guest lecturer: Marcia Langton</b>	Marcia Langton (2006)  ( <i>Yarra River Protection (Wilip-Gin Birrarung Murrn) Act 2017</i> , n.d.)	Water is not merely a life-giving force for aborigines—it is sacred. Through select engagements with water cosmologies in indigenous thought, we examine the landmark Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrn) Act 2017 which acknowledged the Wurundjeri in new ways.
<b>11</b>	May 14	<b>Extinction</b>	Tony Birch (2016)  Alexis Wright (2013, 6–74)	The discourse surrounding planetary vulnerability has largely marginalized, dismissed, or in some way overlooked Indigenous peoples and knowledge. Several Aboriginal thinkers are at the forefront of remedying our understanding of and response to climate change and other ecological crises.
<b>12</b>	May 21	<b>Healing**</b>  <b>** Involves a fieldtrip to the University of Melbourne’s Medical History Museum</b>	<i>Coniston</i> (Batty and Kelly 2013)  Eric Michaels and Francis Jupurrula Kelly (1984)	We end the semester with a cross-campus fieldtrip to the exhibition <i>The Art of Healing: Australian Indigenous Traditional Healing Practice</i> , at the Medical History Museum at the University of Melbourne.

### **TEXT LIST**

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## ASSESSMENT TASKS

### **Assessment Task 1: Tutorial Dialogue**

Due: Assigned Week (from Week 2)

Task	Criteria	Grade
<p><b>You choose the topic. You get the class thinking about it.</b></p> <p><b>Step 1:</b> In tutorials in Week 1, you are to select a weekly topic that <b>you are passionate and/or interested in.</b></p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> In preparing for your assigned week, you are to <b>introduce an additional thinker or concept that illuminates the chosen topic</b> (e.g. the ethnographic film, <i>The People of the Great Western Desert</i>, for the topic on Othering. <b>Each student is allocated no more than ten (10) minutes for this purpose at the beginning of the tutorial.</b></p> <p><b>Step 3: “Just do it!”</b> Each student is allocated five (5) minutes (and no more than ten (10) minutes each) for this purpose at the beginning of the tutorial.</p> <p>Please note, you are not required to give a formal presentation or “speech”, although you may. You are encouraged to instead use role play, simulations, staged dialogues/interviews, personal narratives, and other interactive activities to illuminate your argument. You are thereby encouraged to approach this task as one of <b>experimentation and play</b>—take risks, and so long as preparation and team work are evident, you will be rewarded.</p>	<p>(1) <b>critically engaging</b> with the required text/s and ideas covered in lectures, as well as evidence of additional research;</p> <p>(2) the ability to <b>clearly and succinctly evaluate</b> the key themes and ideas being discussed; and</p> <p>(3) the ability to <b>respect and listen to others</b>, and to continually <b>interrogate oneself.</b></p>	<p>10%</p>



## **Assessment Task 2: 1,500-word “Exploratory” Essay**

Due: Week 3 (in tutorial) and Week 6 (online, by 11:59pm, Monday, April 9)

<b>Task</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<p><b>You pose the question. You deliver the answer.</b></p> <p><b>Step 1: Before consulting your lecturer, you are to choose and develop a topic</b> relevant to Australian Indigenous Studies. Bring a one-page, printed copy of an annotated bibliography for your area of interest to the tutorial in Week 3.</p> <p><b>Step 2: Together in tutorials, in Week 3, we will refine your interests and/passions into a manageable topic.</b></p> <p><b>Step 3: Submission.</b> Week 6.</p>	<p>(1) the ability to <b>identify</b> one or more key concepts and thinkers in Australian Indigenous Studies;</p> <p>(2) demonstrated knowledge of the <b>cultural, social, political, and moral complexity</b> of the topic chosen; and</p> <p>(3) the <b>presentation and structure</b> of your argument in a clear and convincing manner.</p>	30%

**Assessment Task 3: 2,500-word “Research” Essay**

Due: Week 9 (in tutorial) and Week 12 (online, by 11:59pm, Monday, May 21)

Task	Criteria	Grade
<p><b>You pose the question. You deliver the answer.</b></p> <p><b>Step 1: Having received peer and assessor feedback on Assessment 2, the “exploratory essay”, you are to further develop a topic relevant to Australian Indigenous Studies. Bring a one-page, printed copy of an essay plan for your chosen topic to the tutorial in Week 9.</b></p> <p><b>Step 2: Together in tutorials, in Week 9, we will refine your topics into precise questions.</b></p> <p><b>Step 3: Submission. Week 12.</b></p>	<p>(1) the ability to <b>identify and interpret</b> one or more key concepts and thinkers in Australian Indigenous Studies;</p> <p>(2) demonstrated knowledge of the <b>cultural, social, political, and moral complexity</b> of the topic chosen; and</p> <p>(3) the <b>presentation and structure</b> of your argument in a clear and convincing manner.</p>	60%