

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287390586>

# Containing, Contesting, Creating Spaces: Leadership and cultural identity work among Australian Indigenous arts leaders

Article in *Leadership* · December 2015

DOI: 10.1177/1742715015620463

CITATIONS

6

READS

265

2 authors, including:



Amanda Sinclair

University of Melbourne

55 PUBLICATIONS 2,753 CITATIONS

[SEE PROFILE](#)

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:



Be:Longing: Navigating Indigenous Arts Leadership [View project](#)

# Navigating the territories of Indigenous leadership: Exploring the experiences and practices of Australian Indigenous arts leaders

Leadership

0(0) 1–21

© The Author(s) 2015

Reprints and permissions:

[sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav](http://sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav)

DOI: 10.1177/1742715015574318

[lea.sagepub.com](http://lea.sagepub.com)



**Michelle M. Evans**

School of Management and Marketing, Charles Sturt University, Australia

**Amanda Sinclair**

Melbourne Business School, University of Melbourne, Australia

## Abstract

This article explores the leadership of Australian Indigenous artists and arts leaders. We advance the idea of ‘territories’ to convey the overlapping contexts in which Indigenous artistic leaders work, and through this framework seek to highlight the embodied ways individuals enact leadership across country and community. Thematic, narrative and discursive analysis of 29 in-depth interviews with diverse Indigenous artists identify four territories and multiple practices of leadership in which our participants engage. The four territories are: authorisation in a bi-cultural world (cultural authorisation and self-authorising); identity and belonging (both fearless and connected); artistic practice (innovative and custodian of cultural values); and history, colonisation and trauma (expressing and containing trauma, empowering and generating hope). The article builds on emerging research on Indigenous leadership to argue that the experiences of Indigenous artists and a framework designed to reflect their embodied and spatially anchored practices, has broader applicability – revealing new insights about leadership.

## Keywords

Leadership practices, Indigenous leadership, territories, embodied leadership, Indigenous methodologies

## Warning

Readers should be aware that this article includes names of deceased people that may cause sadness or distress to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

---

## Corresponding author:

Michelle M Evans, Charles Sturt University, Panorama Ave, Bathurst, New South Wales 2795, Australia.

Email: [mievans@csu.edu.au](mailto:mievans@csu.edu.au)

## Introduction

In this article, we explore the experiences of Australian Indigenous artists and leaders to reveal the distinctive territories or contexts across which they work and the practices they use to provide leadership. Our research builds on the small but growing body of international scholarship on Indigenous leadership (Bolden and Kirk, 2009; Holmes, 2007; Katene, 2010; Kenny and Fraser, 2012; Nkomo, 2011; Spiller et al., 2011; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006; Sveiby, 2011; Warner and Grint, 2006; Wuttunee, 2004) and an even smaller but important body of work by Australian Indigenous researchers on different forms of leadership (see for example Dudgeon, 2007; Fitzgerald, 2010; Foley, 2007; Huggins, 2004; Ivory, 2008; Sanders, 2007; White, 2010). Much of this emerging research is interested in coming to know Indigenous patterns of leadership – both traditional and contemporary – more fully and deeply, not from the perspective of White<sup>1</sup> definitions, models and conceptualisations, but from Indigenous leaders themselves (Begay Jr, 1991; Calliou and Voyageur, 2007; Kenny and Fraser, 2012; Ottmann, 2005).

The data for this exploration come from in-depth interviews and follow up conversations with 29 Australian Indigenous artists and arts managers (here on referred to as Indigenous artists). For some of these interviewees, leadership is a foreign word, laden with notions of White individualism and imperialism. For well-founded historical and institutional reasons, some Indigenous<sup>2</sup> people are reluctant to identify with leadership or identify themselves as leaders as this may be akin to singling oneself out as separate from community or further, to aligning with oppressors. Our research has thus required a respectful, consultative approach where we have explored ideas of leadership together: a collaborative journey rather than investigating a group of ‘subjects’.

Our overarching research question was: “What is the embodied, emotional and psychological work Indigenous artists do that can be understood as leadership?” We position our study paradigmatically in social constructionism, positing that individuals and communities assemble their social reality based on a range of limitations including historical inheritances and cultural norms (Holmes et al., 2011). In this article, we suggest that what Indigenous artists do can indeed be understood as powerful yet different forms of leadership in a dynamic and challenging context. By bringing a leadership lens to the contributions made by Indigenous artists we wish to uphold the powerful meaning making and meaning management (Fairhurst, 2011) Indigenous artists do on behalf of themselves, their communities and broader society.

This paper represents a four-year research collaboration between the researchers. Evans is an Aboriginal woman who has established and led two Indigenous cultural organisations and mentored many Indigenous artists. Sinclair has longstanding interests in leadership and collaborated with several outstanding Indigenous leaders. The research partnership has provided much learning for both authors: for Sinclair the importance of understanding and owning her own Whiteness and privilege (Crawley and Sinclair, 2003; Sinclair, 2007); for Evans how to develop a scholarly platform to uphold the diverse voices of Indigenous artists.

The paper starts with a discussion of the literature pertaining to Indigenous leadership, and an exploration of the multiple uses of the term ‘leadership’ both by Indigenous leaders and applied to Indigenous peoples. It then describes the methodological foundations and assumptions of the research, documenting the methods and analysis used during our study. The findings are organised around our exploration of the four territories of Indigenous

leadership that demonstrate how leadership is enacted because of, and sometimes in spite of, the tensions inherent in these dynamic fields. The Findings section describes the four territories and leadership practices that emerged from interviews. The Discussion then reiterates the importance of understanding Indigenous leadership in its context. Further, we suggest that the notion of territories as a way of conceptualising the context or space from which leaders act, is widely applicable and captures the embodied and physically anchored dimensions of leadership that are often neglected in leadership research.

## Leadership and Indigenous leadership

In the vast annals of leadership research, it is rare to find an under-researched area. Yet Indigenous leadership is one such area. There are significant issues to be considered in undertaking research into Indigenous leadership and we begin by summarizing these, before providing an overview of Indigenous leadership research.

Despite the undisputed importance of leadership to the cultural, social and economic well-being of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, researchers have only recently begun to develop culturally-appropriate ways of studying the phenomena of Indigenous leadership (Bolden and Kirk, 2009). As we explore in the method section below, it is vitally important that research approaches do not reproduce the colonising patterns whereby Indigenous people, or leaders in this case, become the 'object' of study, with the result that their leadership is found wanting against an unproblematised Western template (Connell, 2007; Nkomo, 2011).

A second issue in Indigenous leadership research is the evidence that the very idea of leadership itself is alien to some cultures that have been governed traditionally in more collective and distributed ways (Scott, 2009). As Aboriginal leader, Lillian Holt, put it 'leadership is a White male idea' (reported in Sinclair, 2007). There are also the related risks of essentialising Indigenous values, or reducing dynamic, complex Indigenous patterns of leadership to one understanding, perhaps so they are more comprehensible within Western conceptual models (see Warner and Grint, 2006 for discussion of this risk).

Further, and this is particularly the case in the Australian context, the population size of Indigenous people is small. In Australia only 3%<sup>3</sup> of the population is Indigenous with growth in young people but limited numbers in the age ranges where leaders would be expected. The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that in 2011 that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population was considerably younger than the general population, with the medium age being 21.8 years old, significantly younger than the 37.6 year old average of the general Australian population.<sup>4</sup> Quantitative surveys or comparative studies, which might deliver generalisable findings, are difficult to undertake because of this small and diverse population, and further add to the 'scientific scrutiny' of Indigenous peoples (Irabinna-Rigney, 1999: 632). The numbers of Indigenous leaders working across government, business, community and other sectors is also small. Yet many Indigenous people have highly visible roles with formal and informal responsibilities within organisations and in the community. These roles require leadership and advocacy that often comes at a price. Individuals are asked, and often inappropriately expected, to have levels of cultural expertise and authority that may or may not be the case, as well as be the embodied representation of all things Indigenous.

Turning to research on Indigenous leadership, there is a small but growing international literature (see for example Begay Jr, 1991; Cornell et al., 2005; Julien et al.,

2013; Katene, 2010; Kenny, 2012; Ottmann, 2005; Spiller et al., 2011; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006; Sveiby, 2011; Warner and Grint, 2006; White, 2010). The work we draw on for this overview of Indigenous leadership includes case studies, historical accounts, anthropological analyses, evaluations of programs and description of individual leaders.

Research finds that Indigenous leadership often emphasises and enacts values not represented in conventional accounts. Indigenous leaders describe having to negotiate complex tensions in their leadership, such as being both inside and outside of Aboriginal culture, and practicing leadership through story telling which honours the natural world while also meeting performance accountabilities (Julien et al., 2010, 2013; Sanders, 2007). Indigenous leadership often puts a primary value on fostering self-determination and taking responsibility for the broader community as well as for future generations (O'Donoghue, 2007; Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, 2005). In Australia, Indigenous leadership must also negotiate conflicting inter-generational leadership expectations. Leaders are expected to uphold traditional cultural values and models of leading (such as being a custodian) alongside contemporary leadership demands (such as economic management of community and family assets both tangible and intangible).

Historical accounts of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership are primarily constructed by anthropologists and social scientists and describe a communal based society, where the idea of a single leader did not exist. Aboriginal scholar Dennis Foley reports, "The Eora pre-1788 was a society devoid of individuals seeking status, revenge or capital gains, as these were negative personal attributes not tolerated in the Elders circle. It was a pluralist society that did not experience dominance and leadership in the Western sense." (2007: 179). One of the few early colonial accounts of Australian Indigenous leadership is described in the relationship between Governor Arthur Phillip and Bennelong. Bennelong was referred to as the King of his tribe from the Parramatta River near Clay Cliff Creek (Holt, in Smith, 2009: 23). Captured in 1789 on orders from Governor Phillip, who hoped to open communication with Aboriginal people (Smith, 2009), Bennelong then sought to establish: "...an enduring reciprocal relationship with the British" (Clendinnen quoted in Smith, 2009: 24). Bennelong's leadership is one of the first demonstrations of Aboriginal leadership that is captured between the two worlds (English/Aboriginal). Bennelong found himself in a role charged to make sense of each and garner rights and voice for Aboriginal peoples.

Internationally, the debate about whether or not Indigenous peoples have Chiefs spans the imperial footprint across the globe. Sachs, in speaking about Native American leaders notes:

Leaders (who have mistakenly been called "chiefs") functioned primarily as facilitators, consensus builders, and announcers of decisions. They were chosen for positions of leadership on the basis of their high moral character and ability to represent people and lead in the long term interests of the community as a whole. (2010: 1).

Colonisation forced changes in the governance and leadership structures of most Indigenous peoples (Champagne et al., 2005). Diverse studies reveal the impact of Western imperatives upon traditional leadership structures. For example, for the Indigenous peoples in Papua New Guinea, the results of enforced colonial leadership systems have created 'tensions, conflicts and tribal warfare when people elect their leaders based on tribal social structures in Western leadership systems'. (Ambang, 2005: iv).

These effects are echoed in Ottmann's 2005 doctoral study on Indigenous leadership in the Saskatchewan context in Canada. Ottmann, daughter of a long serving Chief, found that the imposition of western governance models created dissonance with the traditional leadership structures of the tribe. One of the leaders Ottmann interviewed states:

We have a leadership style and it's out there somewhere, but I think just because we've been bombarded with non-First Nations values for so long, it's been pushed down or it's been put away somewhere... but it's there. The kind of leadership we have today is [not our] version of leadership, not really our own... We have to go back in history and look at our leaders and how our leadership was... (2005: 161).

Māori leadership scholars have brought a Māori worldview and set of ethics to the study of leadership, arguing for renewed emphasis on wisdom and wellbeing (Spiller et al., 2011). The concept of *rangatira*, the Māori word for leader, translates as 'to weave people together' (Pfeifer, 2006: 36). Further, Te Momo identifies that within *rangatiratanga*, the Māori word for leadership, are six key aspects of leadership in the Māori context: compassion; debate; sovereignty; female leadership; adapting protocol to situations; and truth (2011: 1 of 4).

Returning to the Australian context, colonisation irrevocably changed the nature of Indigenous leadership and we may never know in detail precisely how. The destruction of language, families, removal from land and denial of human rights displaced the First Australians in their own country. Forced to communicate in English, to assimilate to immigrant English behaviours, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have adapted. However, for some Aboriginal communities being born for leadership is still important. Different to the Eora of South Eastern Australia<sup>5</sup> described by Foley (2007), Ivory (2008) describes the Aboriginal people of the Port Keats region in the Northern Territory, who live their life today in a system known as Thamarrurr, that governs ceremony, disputes, marriages and other cultural responsibilities (2008: 242). In Port Keats "... leaders not only have to be born to lead, they also have to build up and maintain their respect." (Ivory, 2008: 25).

Indigenous leadership has been further compromised by the historical-legal legacy of terra nullius, the decree of the Crown stating that Australia was free to those who found it because it was 'no man's land'. Indigenous people continue to resist this doctrine but this process dictates a difficult path for leaders. As expressed by Cape York leader Noel Pearson "... unless the dominating State accepts us on our own terms, any complicity, any dealing constitutes an unacceptable relinquishment of our power." (in Yunipingu, 1994: 101). Scholar Pat Dudgeon argues that colonisation has profoundly impacted Australian Indigenous women's leadership through the roles and identities attributed by the colonisers. In her 2007 doctoral thesis, 'Mothers of Sin: Indigenous Women's perceptions of Identity and Sexuality/Gender', Dudgeon graphically conveys that despite typically degrading and de-humanising pressures, Indigenous women rebelled, asserted their value and provided leadership to their people.

Indigenous peoples may well have lost the rich tapestry that was leadership pre-colonisation (Begay Jr et al., 2007: 277); the consequences of this history create extra burdens for contemporary Indigenous leadership. As Australian Mick Dodson describes:

You have to know about the dispossession, you have to know about the Stolen Generation, you have to know about the mission and government settlement experience, you have to know about the war and the murder, you have to know about the floggings kids got for talking their

language. You've got to take into account all these things when you seek to be a leader in the Australian Indigenous arena." (Reconciliation Australia, 2007: 9)

Warner and Grint are among many scholars who argue for accurate historical context to be put back into accounts of Indigenous leadership: "...research still suffers from an ahistorical bias that explores the leadership issues affecting Indian communities as if they are Indian problems rather than the consequences of historical displacement and cultural destruction. Indigenous leadership definitions found in this scholarship of Indians and non-Indians, then, require an understanding of the impact of assimilation policies and practices in a historical context." (2006: 231).

Yet adaptive structures are also created as evidenced in Murillo's study of seventeenth century Mexican Indigenous leadership (2009) where municipal councils replaced traditional hereditary leadership structure. Thus, part of Indigenous leadership is to look back, respecting and reviving traditional values, but another part is adaptive, becoming expert in systems and negotiations that maximise opportunities for Indigenous peoples in the present and for the future.

Leaders typically carry multiple responsibilities that include voicing past and present damage, being spokespeople for change and managing contemporary pressures within organisations and communities (Hill et al., 2001). The individual may be ascribed leadership, however their success is often seen as collectively-owned rather than individual (Maddison, 2009). And community endorsed leadership remains the most salient form of Australian Indigenous leadership, "To my mind, you cannot speak about the need for leadership in our communities without being prepared to take on responsibility yourself." (Huggins, 2004: 5).

## **Method and research approach: Taking an Indigenous standpoint**

As described above, the tensions in exploring Indigenous leadership encompass both taking up and simultaneously problematising and contesting accepted notions of 'leadership' and 'Aboriginality'. We are seeking to locate this work within existing discourses of leadership and make a contribution to them, while also being aware that our ideas about Indigenous leadership are constructed within, and limited by, our own assumptions and experience.

This study, including methods of data gathering and analysis through long semi-structured interviews and thematic, narrative and discourse analyses, were chosen for their consistency with principles and values in Indigenous epistemology (Irabinna-Rigney, 1999; Meyer, 2003; Nakata, 2007; Smith, 1999). Indigenous epistemology seeks to bring to the production of knowledge and ways of knowing, an understanding of Indigenous cultural values. Indigenous people embody cultural knowledge that they receive from members of their family and relational networks, such as generationally passed-down cultural knowledge. This entrusted, sometimes sacred, knowledge is coupled with personal and socialised experiences that enact and embody ways of knowing and leading. Indigenous knowledge is thus often created through understandings of self in relation to country (Kwaymullina, 2005). It is holistic; generated "... between the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical realms to form a whole..." (Archibald, 2008: 11). Indigenous ontologies also place emphasis on the embodied experience of cultural knowledge and connection often expressed through the feeling of belonging (Moreton-Robinson and Walter, 2009).

Our approach has been informed by Indigenous research methodologies and Indigenous standpoint theory that seeks to decolonise western methodological frameworks (Connell, 2007). This approach makes power and oppression more visible, emphasising inquiry that is “ethical, performative, healing, transformative, decolonizing, and participatory.” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008: 2). In conducting research there is an overriding intent to empower participants through the research process rather than render them objects. For example, the interviewing process was designed to support participants to explore their experiences, aspirations and contribution through the lens of leadership. In both the interview and the follow up checking back with interviewees, we have sought to honour and respect the stories and experiences conveyed.<sup>6</sup> Indigenous standpoint theory requires Indigenous self-determination in research processes and governance, and control over the written record (Irabinna-Rigney, 1999). Indigenous research protocol standards were also prioritised in the methodological design. Evans had prior relationships with some of the interviewees. In the Indigenous epistemology tradition this is understood as a benefit – there was pre-existing trust that enabled participants to speak freely and know their experience and words would be respected (Smith, 1999).

The interview method aimed to create a space for leadership to emerge, acknowledging the micropolitics of the interview situation (Conti and O’Neil, 2007). Paying attention to framing devices in interviews and encouraging participants to share personally critical narratives, these interviews have become records of Indigenous Australian social history and will become a part of a national archive after a period of five years.

In selecting a sample of Indigenous artists, we chose those representing a mix of artistic forms and of artists from different parts of Australia (urban and remote). In the sample are visual artists, theatre artists, musicians, community cultural development practitioners, arts managers, writers, and choreographers. Artists were defined as those who were active practitioners of some form of artistic work and who were known by their art. Arts managers included those who had responsibility for running Indigenous arts centres, or festivals or programs within other organisations. Many of the participants, however, covered a mix of activities, both pursuing their own artistic practice, organising and advocating for the arts, working with and inspiring young people and representing communities in various forums in Australia and overseas. It was this shifting mix of leadership activities, often merging in and through art, that we were keen to document and understand better.

We also deliberately chose artists that are not established in, or represented by, arts bureaucracies. The Indigenous arts sector is not a static or neutral set of relationships; there are contests for power and scarce resources. We sought a mix of established and emerging artists with a preference for those working independently or in small organisations.

The analysis of interview transcripts and video records adopted a layered, iterative approach. First, a thematic analysis was conducted to surface what leadership means for Indigenous artists. Second, a narrative analysis explored critical themes that linked childhood memories and the development of artistic practice to a broader cultural narrative of Indigenous Australia. These narratives were organised in a way that explored how they limit or support individuals’ artistic work as leaders. Third, a discourse analysis was conducted to show how constructs of identity and Aboriginality from public domains structure the leadership that can be taken up, but also elicit new leadership practices. The findings that we now move on to report thus grew out of these layers of iterative analysis. Through this process, themes such as issues of belonging and responsibilities to community emerged as recurring across interviews.



## Findings: The territories

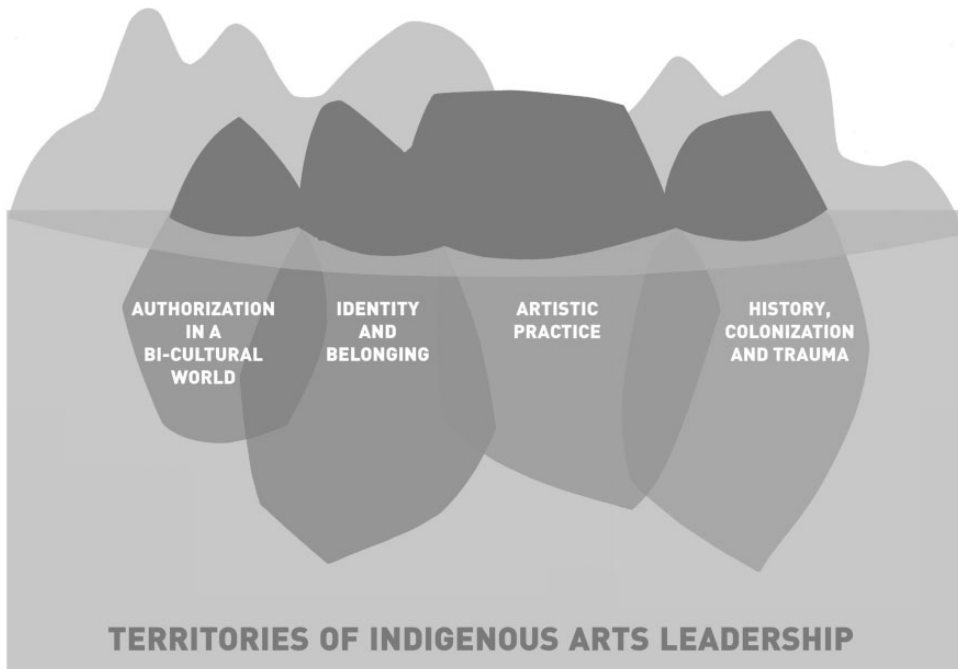
Our framework of territories has been developed to capture the complexities and tensions experienced, both internally and externally, by Indigenous artists in their leadership practice. We define territories as the overlapping contexts and structures in which Indigenous artists work. They comprise structural, societal and cultural constraints and opportunities in which relations of knowledge, power and language are already determined (Foucault, 1980). These spaces have historic and discursive grooves that continue to render Indigenous people as objects or troublemakers. Yet leaders also demonstrate agency and their leadership is often ingenious, persistent and courageous. Following Foucauldian perspectives we suggest that positions within knowledge and discursive structures are not completely fixed (Foucault, 1972, 1980). Acts of subversion and resistance can be expressions of power, and sometimes, we would argue, practices of leadership.

We have also used the concept of territories also to capture the way Indigenous leadership is physical, embodied, and connected to land. Employing notions like Bourdieu's 'field' (1993, 1996), the territories can be imagined as a series of overlapping physical and temporal spaces marked out by discursive, symbolic, embodied, cultural and economic positions.

We are mindful that the word 'territory' itself carries with it overlays of colonisation. Territory is not land; it is generally regarded as 'owned' or subject to conquest. The word territory, originated from the Latin word 'terra' meaning land and 'territorium a place from which people are warned' (Delaney, 2005: 14). However, territories can be taken up, occupied and re-possessed in new ways. The idea of territories grew out of the interviewing process, listening to participants describing their complex and embodied connections to multiple communities, different lands and time periods of past/present/future that are synchronously available in the present moment. For example, Bangarra Dance Theatre Artistic Director, Stephen Page, moves across continuums of time and space in the interview space, providing images of leadership through the frame of Indigenous knowledge. He speaks about embodied caretaking and most powerfully, about the spiritual and cultural power that connects the land with the people of the land. Stephen declares 'leadership is land' and 'leadership is a spirit'. The idea that an Indigenous way of leading is literally grounded in the earth and within the body is both culturally appropriate and empowering.

From the interview data, we thus identified four recurring contexts or territories in a landscape of undoubtedly more: authorisation in a bi-cultural world; identity and belonging; artistic practice; and history, colonisation and trauma (see Figure 1). In the following section we elaborate the four territories and provide examples of the leadership practices we identified Indigenous artists performing and employing within territories.

A central plank of our research was the wish to avoid a list which designates 'Indigenous leadership', hence imprisoning Indigenous leaders to in some way reproduce or be limited by these capabilities (Nkomo, 2011, see also Connell, 2007). The territories are interwoven and dynamic. They contain multiple positions and the same leader sometimes takes up contradictory positions, for example adhering to elders' cultural authorisation in one situation, speaking out against dysfunctional community norms in another. Through this process 'leadership' is always being constructed and negotiated. It is rarely finally and unequivocally established.



**Figure 1.** Territories of Indigenous arts leadership.

### *Territory 1: Authorisation in a bi-cultural world*

While formal authority is often useful in leadership, it is seldom enough (Heifetz et al., 2009). Authorisation captures the complex processes by which individual leaders gather sufficient support to speak and act for others. This authorisation is contingent and needs to be negotiated in ongoing ways from groups and communities. Gaining authorisation for many Indigenous artists is a central part of their work, especially where communities, rather than the individual, 'own' particular cultural symbols and the rights to reproduce them. Most Indigenous leaders are simultaneously operating in a bi-cultural context (Kenny and Fraser, 2012). Sometimes the recognition and authorisation to lead they acquire from White stakeholders, such as government funders, compromises their authorisation from cultural communities.

Cultural authorisation occurs where individuals are granted permission, by community members, to do culturally appropriate work. Jason Eades, a Gunai man, who at the time of interviewing was the CEO of the Victorian Aboriginal organization, the Koorie Heritage Trust, conveyed a particularly resonant example of cultural authorisation. Much of his role involved working with risk-averse politicians and government:

At one point one of the ministers said to me, 'so can you tell me whereabouts in Australia that they're doing this' [community driven Indigenous economic development policy], and I just looked at him and I said, 'they're not, so be a leader'... You can be fearless about some of the approaches. You know, it's not being disrespectful but you can be challenging to them and say, you know, it's time to step up a gear and to really get things going.

Cultural authorisation can occur through individuals formal representational roles, as in Jason's case, or through more informal advocacy. The representational role has status and legitimacy, which may extend beyond an organisation to representing a broader community agenda for, in this example, economic development. Jason's scope of influence is expansive in geographical and economic terms, his leadership having wide impact in the allocation of resources to Aboriginal business development.

Some issues have less defined stakeholders, which creates space for a different style of leadership – namely advocacy. Equipped with knowledge as well as the support to be a voice for the community, an advocate can push hard and speak back to powerful institutions like government. The advocate and the representative are familiar positions of leadership for Indigenous artists.

Another kind of leadership practice occurs where an individual who has earned cultural authorisation, uses that respect to resist and challenge dysfunctional community norms. Leilani Bin Juda, a curator and diplomat, speaks about how she challenged the status quo upon her return to her home of Thursday Island to build the new Cultural Centre:

When I first went back to Torres Strait my predecessor said to me, 'oh if you want to go and talk to the board members, then you should go down the pub because that's the place you'll find them'. Hell no. I said, 'what, that's not happening on my watch. You might do it but I'm not going to do that. Because (a), I don't drink, and (b) it's inappropriate'. So eventually they got the message and the board members if they needed something they come to see me in the office.

Leilani had earned the respect of key Elders in the years preceding her appointment as the manager of the newly instituted cultural museum on Thursday Island. She did this by coordinating a trip for 5 Torres Strait Islander Elders to view Torres Strait Islander material culture housed in the Haddon Collection in the United Kingdom, working with them to research and access cultural material not seen since colonisation. Granted cultural authorisation and responsibility to establish a cultural museum in the Torres Strait Islands, she was inducted into the role by Elders. Though culturally authorised, Leilani is also a kind of outsider, having worked on the mainland for an extended time, and therefore able to name dysfunctional norms, challenge them and lead differently herself.

Participants felt the need for cultural authorisation most keenly when they were creating work regarded as a 'legacy' and when Elders were mentoring them. Participants also spoke of how cultural innovation was sometimes culturally validated and sometimes not, leaving them unsure of their position. However, interview participants understood that they could not always wait for a tap on the shoulder by an Elder, an Aunty or agent. They often have to authorise themselves by having faith in their talent or believing they have an important contribution to make.

This territory of authorisation is a space within which Indigenous artists negotiate a platform from which they speak; be it a culturally or community authorised position or a personally backed place of empowerment. As leadership is increasingly seen as being distributed relationally and fluidly across networks, leaders must find ways to navigate the collective/individual dualism (Collinson, 2005). They must understand that leadership is created collectively, while also being prepared to shape and mobilise group appetites. Our suggestion is that these leaders provide nuanced exemplars of the pressures of navigation and innovative responses.

## *Territory 2 – Identity and belonging*

The second territory of identity and belonging is composed of those pressures on Indigenous artists to perform their cultural identity; to demonstrate their Aboriginality and their connection to community. In Australia, Aboriginality is a publicly contested identity. Indigenous people are challenged about their origins and subject to pressure to prove their blood lineage and genealogy. It is worth pausing to note that few White Australians are subject to this scrutiny. Scrutiny disrupts the sense of belonging Aboriginal people feel, creating added inner psychological work for individuals, even those not particularly vulnerable to public interrogation. For example, city-based Indigenous artists are frequently challenged about their identity if their art does not conform to public stereotypes of Aboriginal art, such as dot paintings.

Most artists just want to be able to just do their art. Many want their art to stand on its own without being qualified as Indigenous or having to explain why they don't fit the stereotypes. On the other hand, identity and belonging is also often central to their work. The leadership practices in this territory capture these tensions. For example, theatre director and arts manager Liza Mare Syron describes finding a level of individual and cultural confidence to see herself, her body, as a site from which to enact a version of Indigenous leadership:

I was being heard. That, to me, was when I felt that I was part of a leadership – or I'd moved into a leadership sphere. These were my leaders, you know. These were people who inspired me or these were people you watched. And then suddenly, I was invited to have a conversation with them.

In their discussion of embodying authentic leadership Ladkin and Taylor (2010) argue that, "Perhaps the greatest challenge . . . is faced as leaders resolve the tensions that will occur between their individual, truly felt commitments and the identity needs of the groups which they lead." (72). The excerpt above demonstrates this tension between individual confidence and gaining of cultural confidence to see one's body as a site for enacting a version of Indigenous leadership. Liza Mare makes an internal shift as she validates herself and is, in turn, culturally validated by her peers.

Emerging from the interview data was the very clear ways in which Indigenous artists' bodies and bodily performances enact leadership (Sinclair, 2005, 2011). These performances are often confronting and difficult as they enact and reproduce traumatic experiences (see also Territory 4). However, one of the pressures that makes this kind of bodily performed leadership difficult is public debate about what is the 'authentic' embodiment of Aboriginality. In this context, we suggest that diverse embodiments and performances of Aboriginality are often acts of leadership as they challenge stereotypes and help create fluid, hybrid identities for others to observe and take up.

Yet navigating the territory of identity and belonging can be a profoundly dispiriting experience. Individual identities can be denied, disputed and shunned. In the following quote, one participant describes the internal work required when belonging and identity is questioned:

So and that was during a very difficult period where people were really questioning me about who are you. 'You're not a black fellow - you're a fucking cunt, ra ra', and all this stuff. Really heavy on me. I just had to take it on board. It wasn't so much about my identity. It was about what I believed in and the things that I was doing that I believed in. What I was doing was

creating something for other people, which was much bigger than myself . . . Then working in the community where there's lots of other people. There's got a lot of buy in into what I do, well I made it so it had buy in.

This identity insult was felt as deep pain and heaviness wracking this participant's body. He was one of a number of leaders with experiences of being rejected. Yet he decides that the work of creating opportunities for other Indigenous people was more important. Colour and cultural divisions exist within the Indigenous community. As outlined above, Indigenous arts leaders process in their art publically mobilised ideas of 'authentic Aboriginality', as well as the slap of negative racist values. Sometimes these ideas are easily resisted, other times the ideas are internalised, causing individuals to question their worth, talent and identity.

Indigenous artists embody cultural identity in their art and leverage their leadership for culturally valuable purposes like empowering future generations. They uphold and navigate cultural protocols, but some are also banished from belonging. Many inhabit the lonely position of being the 'first' person to achieve in their discipline. A central part of their leadership is creating a pathway for future generations of Indigenous artists to follow them, as opera singer Deborah Cheetham explains:

I suppose I could have just stayed the only one and that could have been my shtick . . . Well that would be so lame . . . And what would that prove you know? I've been waiting for Indigenous opera to emerge in Australia and why wait . . . I'm the only person who is going to do something about that right now.

Her 'leadership turn' occurs when she moves from the solo spotlight to wash light over a growing ensemble of performers, "And I stood on stage with five other Indigenous singers and we performed together and then as soloists and that was a world first. I remember feeling on that day that I had never felt so proud to be on stage." Most of the participants spoke about the importance, to them, of connecting with younger generations through their art. Participants shared how they have been nurtured and now, in turn, seek to nurture younger Indigenous artists and arts managers by for example: creating spaces for belonging for otherwise disconnected young people; passing on cultural knowledge; building pathways for younger generations; facilitating connection to cultural identity; providing access to otherwise unattainable opportunities.

### *Territory 3: Artistic practice*

The third territory is concerned with respecting cultural protocols alongside artistic innovation and experimenting creatively with boundaries as leadership practices. It encompasses the pressures of commercialism and managerial imperatives.

One of the strengths of Indigenous artistic practice is relational storytelling. For example, playwright and actor Tammy Anderson's speaks about leadership as opening up her heart.

I go in with eyes and heart open . . . As an artist I think we're sponges. We go out there and absorb into us, into our soul. It's not about me visiting a community whether it be an Indigenous Australian community or a native American, these are human beings we're talking about you know. And um, and you go in and you feel, you know, it sucks into you and you come home and your heart's heavy and you see your visuals and you remember stories and things stick in your head.

Tammy soaks up the emotion, the stories, the sadness of the communities she works in. She shares her own story, crafted into a one-woman play, as an act of exchange from her heart to those in the audience. Indigenous arts leadership work holds and contains stories whilst conveying a sense of hope for the future. Participants spoke how their bodies become a space of safety for themselves and communities. The Indigenous body takes in these stories through the ears, eyes and heart and transforms it into something different such as inspiration and purpose.

Participants also spoke of constructing non-judgmental secure physical spaces for the creation of new work, using words like 'spiritual', 'creative' and 'special' to describe these spaces. Rachael Maza-Long describes a similar attention to creating a creative container for artistic work to be built:

The other example of leadership to me . . . when I'm working on the floor with actors . . . I'm just loving this. So it sort of is leadership in that it's facilitating but it's facilitating the opportunity for this collaborative process. Like I mean obviously I'm a bit of a bullshit artist. I actually do have to go 'bang! this is how it's going to go, this is how it's going to sit, this is what it's going to be and this is what you're going to do', like I actually do make the final call, but it's allowed to get to that point though. I love, I just love that everybody in the room has a really valid voice and is able to contribute to this amoebic.

Rachael articulates her effort to suspend her role as Artistic Director of the company to achieve some sort of equality in the rehearsal room. She contains the conflicts within, and sets them aside by focusing on her intentions for the space.

While Indigenous artists are centrally concerned with unleashing creativity, Indigenous arts leadership does not reside outside the market economy. The late Billy Missi's leadership included speaking out about culture as something that requires protection from the market forces and governmental pressures:

. . . culture is priceless. It's not a mineral for government to come in. You are in control of the culture, if you can manage it properly. That's what I want to work towards . . . it is a methodology.

Walking a line between protector and confident projector of Indigenous artistic culture, participants spoke about the difficulty of not having one trusted process to ensure cultural agreement for their work and use of cultural knowledge. In the absence of a single process, protocols have been established to guide artists and arts managers. One of the key leadership activities of one of the participants, Terri Janke, has been in the development and promulgation of such protocols, for example her co-authorship, with Robynne Quiggin, of the Australia Council for the Arts protocol guides for artforms (2007). Janke has led advocacy for intellectual and cultural property rights for Australian Indigenous people, as exemplified in her report *Our Culture, Our Future* (1998), and her proposal to establish a National Indigenous Cultural Authority (2009) to maintain cultural protocols, administer prior informed consent and represent Indigenous people and manage rights:

I never thought that I was a leader, but when you see people are using your material, I think when *Our Culture, Our Future* came out . . . I realised that I had produced something that was leading in a way that people looked up to it, and took it as a way to inform their practice.

Leadership is provided in this third territory through artistic innovation, nurturing creativity, and experimenting with boundaries. We suggest that many of these activities be considered not just art, but leadership, because of the role and impact this innovation has on

Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Leadership through artistic activities acts to affirm and build otherwise marginalised cultural identities. Leadership ensures cultural protocols and community ownership are respected, resisting pressures to commodify Aboriginal art. Leadership is exercised for communities by nurturing talent, challenging stereotypes and creating new ideas of what it means to be Indigenous.

#### *Territory 4: History, colonisation and trauma*

For many Indigenous people in Australia, direct experiences of colonisation and violence against their families are vivid and real. Many continue to experience the consequences of having land and children forcibly removed. Trauma and deep cross-generational sadness continue to be felt, as was evident when the Australian Government finally provided a formal apology to the Stolen Generation in 2008. High levels of incarceration, alcoholism and domestic violence are continuing symptoms. As Aboriginal author Judy Atkinson describes:

... experiences of violence are traumatic, and that trauma, if unhealed, may compound, becoming cumulative in its impacts on individuals, families and indeed whole communities and societies. The layered trauma that results from colonization is likely to be expressed in dysfunctional, and sometimes violent, behaviour at both individual and large-scale levels of human interaction, and these are re-traumatising. (Atkinson, 2002: 24)

While the violence of the colonial act is a profound legacy that impacts Indigenous leadership, power itself is not something out of the reach of Indigenous artists. The leadership practices we see across this territory often involve leaders working with their art and in communities to express and contain trauma, while also educating White communities about trauma's ongoing effects. For example, opera singer Deborah Cheetham created Australia's first Indigenous opera, *Pecan Summer*, about the experiences of her forbears resisting racism and having their children removed (she herself is a member of the Stolen Generation). Another vital element in her leadership has been training and developing young Indigenous singers to perform these traumatic but highly significant events, speaking out about contemporary effects of colonization and the challenge of mobilizing Indigenous people in the face of historical violence.

Indigenous artists spoke about creating creative spaces that 'suspended' external realities, cynicism and disbelief in order to collaborate. Trauma itself can be contained or held in 'non-persecutory' environments (Frosh, 2002). The theory of containment developed out of psychoanalytic literature and practice, describes a "... process whereby projections or projective identifications emitted by one person are 'held' by the other." (Frosh, 2002: 105). Offering meaningful containment in an organizational, artistic or community environment has many challenges, for example making a safe enough space where individuals don't experience rejection or criticism, but allows embodied expressions of emotion (Campling et al., 1999).

In this example, director and choreographer Ben Graetz describes how he works to create a safe space for artistic work to be created:

I'm very sensitive about creating an environment or a space where people can freely express themselves, where there's no judgment or there's no taking the piss or, you know, because it's a very spiritual place and creating spiritual, you know, special work.

The steps Ben recounts in establishing a creative container include first, quelling his own anxiety and then focusing his intentions for the space, which he describes as getting in touch with his passion. Third, Ben conveys the most important rule for the space; it is a space of non-judgment, and finally, he emphasises the spirituality of the work, the group and the space. In our argument, each of these is an example of a refined yet powerful and embodied leadership practice. Artistic leaders create physical spaces like open and non-hierarchical rehearsal rooms, but they also create safe spaces through their bodies by practicing calm, consistent, open and healthy attachments.

An important leadership practice in this territory was speaking out about professional jealousy and 'lateral violence'. Indigenous communities are often characterised by close networks of kinship and connection that support individuals (Kenny and Fraser, 2012). However, when combined with a common view that individuals should not stand out, or assume leadership without authorisation, these same conditions can create envy, jealousy and bullying. Robertson, quoted in Langton, explains lateral violence as "... 'gossip, shaming of others, blaming, backstabbing, family feuds and attempts at socially isolating others.'" (Langton, 2008: 13). Lateral violence is a difficult phenomenon for a community to acknowledge; yet we encountered several examples where participants took a leadership role in speaking out about such behaviour. Artistic leaders thus created spaces where the competitive pressures could be named and distressing experiences of being a victim of jealousy or violence could be acknowledged and worked through.

## Discussion

This article has suggested that in order to understand, and learn from, the leadership practices of Indigenous artists, we need to grasp the significance of structural, historic and cultural context. To show how context plays out in the leadership of our participants we have developed the concept of multiple territories across which leaders engage in dynamic leadership practices.

These arguments follow other research of Indigenous leadership. For example, in their exploration of Indigenous leadership in China Zhang et al. contend that studying the phenomena of Indigenous leadership requires understanding of the historical, societal and cultural factors that impact upon leadership and leadership outcomes (2012). Similarly, Kenny suggests 'the practice of leadership in Native communities has taken on different forms based on changing historical tides – autonomy, imperialism, colonisation, resistance and renaissance (2012: 1). From their work Ospina and Foldy conclude 'without addressing context, our theories of leadership remain incomplete' (2009: 876). Our research adds to these findings arguing that different contexts, or what we have called territories, are of central significance in understanding not just how Indigenous artists and arts managers lead, but what their leadership work is.

Leadership, we have also suggested, is a deeply embodied set of practices (Ladkin, 2008; Sinclair, 2005, 2011). The metaphor or construct of territories seeks to reflect physical experiences of leadership that are often central for artists but so often neglected in accounts of leadership. Recent work argues the need to reframe our understandings of leadership as having aesthetic and embodied dimensions (for example Hansen et al., 2007; Harding, 2002; Ladkin and Taylor, 2014; Ladkin, 2008, 2010). Leadership practices enacted by individuals who have community or group responsibilities have also been highlighted in studies on identity in leadership (Ospina and Foldy, 2010).



Both our research approach and our findings have emphasised that leadership is co-constructed through individual narratives and the responses and experiences of followers. We sought an interview process which created space for leadership narratives – including a rejection of the term leadership in a few cases – to be explored and woven together by interviewees. Attention was paid to the temporality, the sociality and the place of the interview and how it was a part of archiving personal narratives for future generations (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006). We further suggest the interviews helped to bring the phenomena of Indigenous arts leadership alive and into being (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004). As participants described their experiences and shared those of other colleagues, they initiated an ongoing inquiry into their own practice and the broader phenomena of Indigenous leadership in the sector (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003; Raelin, 2011).

The territories highlight key dilemmas of authorisation; identity and belonging; artistic practice; and history, colonisation and trauma, which are pervasive in the experiences and minds of Indigenous arts leaders. In response, the leaders we studied exercise a multitude of practices – some of which look like more conventional leadership work, such as formal representation and advocacy. Others arise from the constraints of history, power (or lack of it) and context, such as creating spaces for young Indigenous people, sharing stories and suspending disbelief and cynicism to engage in imaginative possibilities. They gain support from elders and carry on traditions but also act fearlessly. Some leaders practice leadership by simply embodying cultural identities. In the context of colonisation and intergenerational trauma, Indigenous arts leadership also occurred when individuals spoke out against professional jealousy and lateral violence.

Many of the practices we heard about demonstrate the individual and their ability to lead in the face of structural power, both internally and externally experienced. There is a diversity, dynamism and ingenuity to Indigenous arts leadership that is not captured in behavioural templates or static lists of leadership capabilities. Rather we see leadership practices that empower and liberate diverse Indigenous voices for leadership, enabling the contribution of Indigenous peoples to be heard in the broader community (Bolden and Kirk, 2009; Sinclair, 2007).

## Conclusion

Although the phenomena of Indigenous leadership is not widely understood, we have suggested on the basis of our research into forms of Indigenous leadership and the example of artists in Australia, that there is much that can be learned from Indigenous leaders about the wider phenomena of leadership. In particular we suggest that listening to the experiences of Indigenous leaders highlights the importance of context and structure, which we have termed ‘territories’ in framing the leadership practices that can be, and are taken up by Indigenous artists. We identified four of these territories in this paper: authorisation in a bi-cultural world (cultural authorisation and self-authorising); identity and belonging (both fearless and connected); artistic practice (innovation and custodianship); and history, colonisation and trauma (expressing and containing trauma, empowering and generating hope). As they move across these territories defined by intersecting social and economic structures, cultural norms and stereotypes, community pressures and expectations, leaders weave unique and dynamic leadership paths. Enriched by connections to place, space and histories, Indigenous leaders enact a uniquely connected kind of leadership. They combine multiple, overlapping and

sometimes contradictory leadership practices for different circumstances in a process that others have recognised as a form of ongoing identity work (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002), but that we suggest constitutes the very essence of leadership: contextualised, dynamic and reflecting both structural conditions and individual agency (Ospina and Foldy, 2009).

The concept of territories, we have suggested, also highlights aspects of leading that have been neglected in much contemporary research. These include the importance of bodies and physicality; spiritual connections to place, land, community and ancestors; and the power of aesthetic and creative forms to inspire and create containers for leading change (Hansen et al., 2007). For Indigenous leaders, embodied, situated practice is central. While territories is a concept that emerged from studying Indigenous leaders, we believe that this framework potentially applies to leadership in other contexts, where individuals are seeking to provide embodied and sustainable leadership that nourishes others within constrained social and cultural structures (Ladkin and Taylor, 2014).

Indigenous arts leadership is not a template of ideal individual cognitive qualities (Nkomo, 2011). Rather it is constructed physically and conceptually across territories that are connected to the past and the future in rich, complex and inspiring ways. Connections with the past echo the conflict and trauma of historical power relations as well as being a dwelling place for cultural knowledge upon which Indigenous artists draw (Kenny and Fraser, 2012). Sometimes feeling stretched across the paradoxical demands, leaders become elastic, or at other times absent. Being in one location within the territories or relying on one set of practices does not provide security and certainty. Instead it is the fluidity of moving around the territories, inhabiting the whole and encountering tensions and contradictions where leaders seem to experience new ways of doing their leadership work and being artists. Indigenous arts leadership also emerges when leaders create safe spaces for belonging and experimentation for themselves and others. Stories and narratives build leadership learning and confidence in these spaces. Our hope as leadership researchers is that in the future, the structuring realities of history may be made more visible and thereby transformed and re-imagined through Indigenous leadership.

## Acknowledgements

Our thanks and gratitude to the generosity of the participants in the study; we came to the idea of linking leadership with the work you all do by working with you. We would specifically like to personally thank the following participants whose words appear in this article: Stephen Page, Jason Eades, Leilani Bin-Juda, Liza Mare Syron, Tammy Anderson, Deborah Cheetham, Billy Missi (sadly passed away in 2012), Ben Gratez and Rachael Maza-Long. To Billy Missi's family and friends, we convey our deepest condolences. Billy was a true leader and a great artist. We dedicate this article to his memory.

## Notes

1. The term 'White' has been used throughout this paper for two major reasons. First, to make visible the powerful and hegemonic experiences of non-Indigenous Caucasian Australians, and second to

highlight the way Indigenous leadership has been historically constructed as other reinforcing essentialised descriptors that objectify and dehumanise Indigenous people.

2. The terms Indigenous, Aboriginal and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are used interchangeably in this article and refer to all Indigenous Australians and Indigenous leaders in this study. The choice to use the term 'Aboriginality' as a noun was made because it is more widely used in public discourse than indigeneity. We acknowledge some Indigenous people, including some participants, prefer to be referred to by their specific nation instead of a general term like Indigenous.
3. Accessed 23 June 2014 at 10.53 am from the Australian Bureau of Statistics website <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3238.0.55.001>
4. Accessed 23 June 2014 at 11.17 am from the Australian Bureau of Statistics website <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3238.0.55.001>
5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia is very diverse. Over 500 separate language groups have been reported see the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies language map for further information <http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/asp/map.html>
6. This commitment to the ongoing process of free, prior and informed consent continues to be enacted, including in the development of this article. Family of Billy Missi were consulted in the development of this article, and have given consent to the use of his name and words within the body of this article.

## References

- Ainsworth S and Hardy C (2004) Discourse and identities. In: Grant D, Hardy C, Osrick C and Putnam LL (eds) *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Discourse*. London: Sage, pp. 153–173.
- Alvesson M and Sveningsson S (2003) The great disappearing act: Difficulties in doing "leadership". *The Leadership Quarterly* 14: 359–381.
- Alvesson M and Willmott H (2002) Identity regulation as organizational control: Producing the appropriate individual. *Journal of Management Studies* 39: 619–644.
- Ambang T (2005) *The relations between indigenous and western leadership systems at the local level in the contemporary governance systems of Papua New Guinea*. Master of Commerce, The University of Otago, New Zealand.
- Archibald JA (2008) *Indigenous storywork: Educating the heart, mind, body and spirit*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Atkinson J (2002) *Trauma trails, recreating the song lines: The Transgenerational Effects of Trauma in Indigenous Australia*. North Melbourne: Spinifex Press.
- Begay MA Jr (1991) *Designing Native American Management and Leadership Training: Past Efforts, Present Endeavors and Future Options*. Cambridge: Harvard University.
- Begay MA Jr, Cornell S, Jorgensen M, et al. (2007) Rebuilding Native Nations: What do leaders do? In: Jorgensen M (ed.) *Rebuilding Native Nations: Strategies and Governance and Development* Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, pp. 34–54.
- Bolden R and Kirk P (2009) African leadership: Surfacing new understanding through leadership development. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 9(1): 69–85.
- Bourdieu P (1993) *The Field of Cultural Production*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu P (1996) *The Rules of Art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Calliou B and Voyageur C (2007) Aboriginal leadership development: Building capacity for success. *The Journal of Aboriginal Management* 4(1): 1–8.
- Campling P, Haigh R and Cox J (1999) *Therapeutic Communities: Past, Present and Future*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Champagne D, Torjenson KJ and Steiner S (2005) *Indigenous Peoples and the Modern State*. California: AltaMira.
- Collinson D (2005) Dialectics of leadership. *Human Relations* 58: 1419–1442.

- Connell R (2007) *Southern Theory: The Global Dynamics of Knowledge in Social Science*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Connelly M and Clandinin DJ (2006) Narrative inquiry. In: Green JL, Camilli G and Elmore P (eds) *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Education Research*, 3rd ed. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 477–487.
- Conti JA and O’Neil M (2007) Studying power: Qualitative methods and the global elite. *Qualitative Research* 7(1): 63–82.
- Cornell S, Jorgensen M, Kalt JP, et al. (2005) *Seizing the Future: Why Some Native Nations do and Others Don’t*. Joint Occasional paper on Native Affairs No. 2005-01. Tucson and Cambridge: Native Nations Institute and The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development.
- Crawley A and Sinclair A (2003) Indigenous human resource management practices in Australian mining companies: Towards an ethical model. *Journal of Business Ethics* 45(4): 361–373.
- Delaney D (2005) *Territory: A Short Introduction*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.
- Denzin NK and Lincoln YS (2008) Introduction: Critical methodologies and Indigenous inquiry. In: Denzin NK, Lincoln YS and Smith LT (eds) *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 1–20.
- Dudgeon P (2007) *Mothers of sin: Indigenous women’s perceptions of their identity and sexuality/gender*. PhD Thesis, Murdoch University, Australia.
- Fairhurst GT (2011) Leadership and the power of framing. *Leader to Leader Journal* 61: 43–47.
- Fitzgerald T (2010) Space in-between: Indigenous women leaders speak back to dominant discourses and practices in educational leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education* 13: 93–105.
- Foley D (2007) Leadership: The quandary of Aboriginal societies in crises, 1788 to 1830, and 1966. In: Hanna M and Macfarlane I (eds) *Transgressions: Critical Australian Indigenous Histories*. Canberra: Australian National University, pp. 177–192.
- Foucault M (1972) *Archaeology of Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon.
- Foucault M (1980) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Frosh S (2002) *Key Concepts in Psychoanalysis*. London: The British Library Board.
- Hansen H, Ropo A and Sauer E (2007) Aesthetic leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly* 18: 544–560.
- Harding N (2002) On the manager’s body as an aesthetics of control. *Journal of Critical Postmodern Organizational Science* 2: 63–76.
- Heifetz RA, Grashow A and Linsky M (2009) *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge Leadership Associates.
- Hill PS, Wakerman J, Matthews S, et al. (2001) Tactics at the interface: Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health managers. *Social Science and Medicine* 52(3): 467–480.
- Holmes J (2007) Humour and the construction of Māori leadership at work. *Leadership* 3: 5–27.
- Holmes J, Marra M and Vine B (2011) *Leadership, Discourse and Ethnicity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Huggins J (2004) Indigenous women and leadership. *Indigenous Law Bulletin* 6(1): 5–7.
- Irabinna-Rigney L (1999) Internationalization of an Indigenous anti-colonial cultural critique of research methodologies: A guide to Indigenist research methodology and its principles. *Wicazo Sa Review* 14(12): 109–121.
- Ivory B (2008) Indigenous leaders and leadership: Agents of networked governance. In: Hunt J, Smith D, Garling S and Sanders W (eds) *Contested Governance: Culture, Power and Institutions in Indigenous Australia*. Canberra: Australian National University Press, pp. 233–262.
- Janke T (1998) *Our Culture: Our future – Report on Australian Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights*. Sydney: Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission.
- Janke T and Quiggin R (2007) *Visual Arts: Protocols for Producing Indigenous Australian Visual Arts*. Sydney: Australia Council for the Arts.

- Janke T (2009) *Beyond Guarding Ground: A Vision for a National Indigenous Cultural Authority*. Sydney: Terri Janke and Company Pty Ltd.
- Julien M, Wright B and Zinni DM (2010) Songs from the circle: Leadership lessons learned from Aboriginal leaders. *Leadership Quarterly* 21: 114–126.
- Julien M, Wright B and McPhee D (2013) Cameo: Authentic Canadian Aboriginal leadership: Living by the circle. In: Ladkin D and Spiller C (eds) *Authentic Leadership: Clashes, Convergences and Coalescences*. Cheltenham UK: Edward Elgar, pp. 259–263.
- Katene S (2010) Modelling Māori leadership: What makes for good leadership? *MAI Review: A New Zealand Journal of Indigenous Scholarship* 2010(2): 1–16.
- Kenny C (2012) Liberating leadership theory. In: Kenny C and Fraser TN (eds) *Living Indigenous leadership: Native Narratives on Building Strong Communities*. Vancouver: UBC Press, pp. 1–14.
- Kenny C and Fraser TN (eds) (2012) *Living Indigenous Leadership: Native Narratives on Building Strong Communities*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Kwaymullina A (2005) Seeing the light: Aboriginal law, learning and sustainable living on country. *Insights – Indigenous Law Bulletin* 6(11): 12–15.
- Ladkin D (2008) Leading beautifully: How mastery, congruence and purpose create the aesthetic of embodied leadership practice. *The Leadership Quarterly* 19: 31–41.
- Ladkin D (2010) *Rethinking Leadership: A New Look at Old Leadership Questions*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Inc.
- Ladkin D and Taylor SS (2010) Enacting the ‘true self’: Towards a theory of embodied authentic leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly* 21: 64–74.
- Ladkin D and Taylor SS (2014) *The Physicality of Leadership*. Bingley: Emerald.
- Langton M (2008) The end of ‘big men’ politics. In: Review G (ed.) *Money Sex Power*. Brisbane: Griffith University.
- Maddison S (2009) *Black Politics: Inside the Complexity of Aboriginal Political Culture*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Meyer MA (2003) Hawaiian hermeneutics and the triangulation of meaning: Gross, subtle, causal. *Social Justice* 30(4): 54–63.
- Moreton-Robinson A and Walter M (2009) Indigenous methodologies in social research. In: Walter M (ed.) *Social Research Methods*. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, pp. 1–18.
- Murillo DV (2009) The Creation of Indigenous leadership in a Spanish town: Zacatecas, Mexico 1609–1752. *Ethnohistory* 56(4): 669–698.
- Nakata M (2007) *Disciplining the Savages – Savaging the Disciplines*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Nkomo SM (2011) A postcolonial and anti-colonial reading of ‘African’ leadership and management in organization studies: Tensions, contradictions and possibilities. *Organization* 18(3): 365–386.
- O’Donoghue L (2007) Black and white together, we shall overcome, someday. *Lowitija O’Donoghue Oration*. Don Dunstan Foundation, 29 May 2007, Adelaide, Australia.
- Ospina S and Foldy E (2009) A critical review of race and ethnicity in the leadership literature: Surfacing context, power and the collective dimensions of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly* 20: 876–896.
- Ospina S and Foldy E (2010) Building bridges from the margins: The work of leadership in social change organizations. *The Leadership Quarterly* 21: 292–307.
- Ottmann J (2005) *First Nations leadership development within a Saskatchewan context*. PhD Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Canada.
- Pfeifer D (2006) Māori Leadership. *New Zealand Management* 53(6): 36–37.
- Raelin J (2011) From leadership-as-practice to leaderful practice. *Leadership* 7(2): 195–211.
- Reconciliation Australia (2007) *Sharing success workshop: Building good governance and strong leadership*. Report for Reconciliation Australia of Mt Isa workshop, Canberra, Australia, September 2007.
- Sanders W (2007) The ins and outs of Australian Indigenous leadership. In: ‘t Hart P and Uhr J (eds) *Understanding Public leadership in Australia workshop*. Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, 29–30 November 2007, unpublished, pp.1–7.

- Sanders W (2007) The ins and outs of Australian Indigenous leadership. *Understanding Public leadership in Australia Workshop*. Canberra: Australian National University.
- Scott JC (2009) *The Art of not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University.
- Sinclair A (2005) Body possibilities in leadership. *Leadership* 1: 387–406.
- Sinclair A (2007) *Leadership for the Disillusioned*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Sinclair A (2011) Being leaders: Identities and identity work in leadership. In: Bryman A, Collinson D, Grint K, et al. (eds) *The Sage Handbook of Leadership*. London: Sage Publications, pp. 508–517.
- Smith KV (2009) Bennelong among his people. *Aboriginal History* 33(11): 7–30.
- Smith LT (1999) *Decolonizing Methodologies*. London and Dunedin: Zed Books and University of Otago.
- Spiller C, Erakovic L, Henare M, et al. (2011) Relational well-being and wealth: Māori businesses and an ethic of care. *Journal of Business Ethics* 98(1): 153–169.
- Sveiby KE (2011) Collective leadership with power symmetry: Lessons from Aboriginal prehistory. *Leadership* 7(4): 385–414.
- Sveiby KE and Skuthorpe T (2006) *Treading Lightly: The Hidden Wisdom of the World's Oldest People*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Te Momo F (2011) Whakanekeneke Rangatira: Evolving leadership. *MAI Journal: A New Zealand Journal of Indigenous Scholarship* 2: 1–4.
- Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (2005) Building Indigenous leadership: Promoting the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of Koori communities through the Koori communities leadership program. Report, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Australia, March.
- Warner LS and Grint K (2006) American Indian ways of leading and knowing. *Leadership* 2(2): 225–244.
- White N (2010) Indigenous Australian women's leadership: Stayin' strong against the post-colonial tide. *International Journal of Leadership in Education* 13: 7–25.
- Wuttunee W (2004) *Living Rhythms: Lessons in Aboriginal Economic Resilience and Vision*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Yunipingu M (1994) *Voice of the Land*. Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Corporation Publishing.
- Zhang X, Fu P, Xi Y, et al. (2012) Understanding Indigenous leadership research: Explication and Chinese examples. *The Leadership Quarterly* 23: 1063–1079.

## Author biographies

**Michelle M Evans**, originally from the Hunter Valley NSW, is a Bathurst based academic, writer, facilitator and cultural producer. Michelle holds a Senior Lectureship in Leadership at Charles Sturt University and is a Research Fellow at Melbourne Business School. Michelle leads Australia's first Indigenous Business Master Class series - MURRA - established to skill up Indigenous entrepreneurs. Michelle is a Fulbright Scholar (2013) and Trustee of the Yvonne Cohen Award for Indigenous Creative Young People.

**Amanda Sinclair** is an author, teacher and consultant in areas of leadership, change, gender and diversity. A Professorial Fellow at Melbourne Business School, The University of Melbourne, her books include: *Leadership for the Disillusioned* (2007) and *Doing Leadership Differently* (1998, 2005). Much of Amanda's recent work has involved helping organisations and leaders introduce mindfulness to their leadership work and she is writing a new book on leading mindfully. Also a yoga teacher, she is interested in the embodied physicality of leadership, supporting people to find pleasurable and sustainable ways of being in leadership.