

CENTRE FOR ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC
POLICY RESEARCH



CAEPR RESEARCH PLAN 2008–2010



ANU COLLEGE OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

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The CAEPR Research Plan 2008–2010 is built around four themes:

- Economic, cultural and social circumstances
- Economic development aspirations and sustainable futures
- Governance, policy and the state
- Education and learning for life

This Research Plan was developed by CAEPR staff at an annual planning retreat in November 2007, and was subsequently endorsed by the CAEPR Advisory Committee in December 2007. It is a rolling triennial plan that will be updated in November 2008. As the CAEPR Annual Report regularly documents, planned research activity will be supplemented with additional unanticipated projects and contracted research.

THEME 1. ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Lead researchers: Dr John Taylor and Dr Boyd Hunter

Since its inception in 1990, a core focus of CAEPR's research has been the tracking of change in Indigenous social and economic circumstances at national, regional and local levels. Initially, much of this work was census-based and concerned with demography and economic status but this has gradually broadened to include the analysis of survey and administrative data as well as measurement around specific social issues such as alcohol, criminal justice, poverty, community development and longitudinal pathways for children and families. The current research plan reflects this expansion as well as a growing list of social science research collaborators and sponsors including Commonwealth and State governments, the private sector, Indigenous organisations and the Australia Research Council. Notable in the current plan is a major three year project sponsored by the Ministerial Council on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. This will examine regional change in Indigenous social indicators, establish measures of residential segregation and migration in metropolitan areas, and develop a typology of short term mobility and its consequences on for service delivery.

COMPREHENSIVE 2006 CENSUS REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Nicholas Biddle, John Taylor, Mandy Yap

This project comprises part of the wide-ranging research for the Ministerial Council on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs on Indigenous demographic, social and economic trends over three years.

SHORT-TERM MOBILITY

Sarah Prout, John Taylor, Mandy Yap

This project comprises part of the wide-ranging research for the Ministerial Council on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs on Indigenous demographic, social and economic trends over three years.

DISAGGREGATION OF URBAN POPULATIONS

Nicholas Biddle, John Taylor, Mandy Yap

This project comprises part of the wide-ranging research for the Ministerial Council on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs on Indigenous demographic, social and economic trends over three years.

POPULATION MOBILITY

John Taylor

Research on migration and mobility in Halls Creek; the project is part of an ongoing commitment to research for FaHCSIA.

REGIONAL POPULATION PROFILING

John Taylor

Report for the Lingjari Foundation, Western Australian Government and Woodside Energy.

THE 2006 CENSUS AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN REMOTE AREAS

Frances Morphy, Will Sanders, John Taylor

Book manuscript tentatively entitled *The Tyranny of Numbers: Making Indigenous Australians Legible to the State*.

INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS AND ALCOHOL CONTROL

Maggie Brady (QEI Fellow), Boyd Hunter

This ARC Discovery Project, subtitled 'Ownership on Harm Reduction and Social and Economic Development' runs until 2011.

ANALYSIS OF THE DYNAMICS OF ABORIGINAL INTERACTIONS WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Boyd Hunter, Jerry Schwab

This ARC project runs over 2007–2010 and aims to further analyse data from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey and New South Wales local court data.

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF INDIGENOUS POVERTY

Julie Lahn, Maggie Brady, Janet Hunt, Boyd Hunter, Sarah Prout

(Larissa Behrendt, Nicole Watson)

This research in collaboration with Professor Larissa Behrendt builds on poverty measurement literature, with case studies being analysed.

THE SHEPPARTON PROJECT

Julie Lahn

Final negotiations for this project to be undertaken with the First Nations Foundation and University of Technology Sydney (Larissa Behrendt and Nicole Watson) are underway; it will focus on governance at the Rumbalara Football and Netball Club and issues of development and resource management in the Shepparton region.

DROUGHT AND REGIONAL AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES

Boyd Hunter

This research will explore the incidence of drought and economic outcomes for families in regional Australia with an Indigenous component; funding from the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Boyd Hunter

Constructing and analysing community profiles; undertaken in collaboration with FaCSIA.

THEME 2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

Lead researchers: Professor Jon Altman and Dr Julie Lahn

This theme looks to explore innovative ways to improve livelihood opportunities for Indigenous people through economic engagement with the market and the customary sectors appropriately enabled by the state. Much of the focus here will be on regional and remote Australia and on Indigenous communities located on the significant Indigenous estate. The theme will address two crucial issues that have emerged in policy debates in the past decade. The first is the provision of economic development opportunity for Indigenous people in geographically remote contexts, recognising the demographic reality that this population is growing and is relatively immobile in terms of labour migration. The second is the provision of economic development opportunity that acknowledges the diversity of Indigenous aspirations and their fundamental difference from mainstream aspirations in many situations. Much of the research in this theme will focus on opportunities in new emerging sectors, like carbon trading and the provision of environmental services, as well as recognising established competitive advantage in sectors such as the visual arts and cultural tourism. The theme will analyse institutional barriers to development and means to address these and will provide an evidence base for new policies to effectively facilitate regional and community economic development for Indigenous well-being and for national benefit.

AFTER THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY

Jon Altman, Janet Hunt, Will Sanders, Melissa Johns

This research will track the rebuilding of Indigenous Australia and the implications of the National Emergency in the Northern Territory; the involvement of a Visiting Indigenous Fellow is anticipated. This work will be undertaken in collaboration with the Central Land Council, Oxfam Australia and others.

WELFARE TO WORK

Jon Altman, Will Sanders, Melissa Johns

This research will continue research on reform of the CDEP scheme especially in the Northern Territory but also elsewhere in Australia. Particular focus will be placed on assessing program redesign needed to ensure actual and perceived passivity associated with the scheme is addressed.

INDIGENOUS POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Jon Altman, Sean Kerins, Geoff Buchanan, John Hughes, one more researcher (TBA)

This applied research project supported by the Sidney Myer Fund will focus on linking Indigenous poverty alleviation and natural resource management and new resource-based development opportunities at six Indigenous communities study sites in the Top End of the Northern Territory. This work will focus on Indigenous Protected Areas and Caring for Country projects.

HYBRID ECONOMIC FUTURES FOR REMOTE INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIA

Jon Altman (ARC Professorial Fellow), doctoral student (TBA)

This ARC Discovery Project 'Hybrid economic futures for remote Indigenous Australia: Linking poverty reduction and natural resource management' will explore theoretical aspects of this field, to commence in mid 2008.

INDIGENOUS RESOURCES AND INDUSTRIES

Jon Altman, Sean Kerins, Julie Lahn

Research for the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development on mining will continue. Other research will examine the customary economy and arts, tourism.

WATER IN INDIGENOUS NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

Jon Altman

(with Joe Morrison, NAILSMA, Sue Jackson, CSIRO)

Research will continue with NAILSMA and CSIRO as part of the Indigenous Water Policy Group initiative funded by the National Water Commission and on the issue of non-market valuations of water as part of the CSIRO-led Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge CERF.

MEASURING CHANGES IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELLBEING

Jon Altman, Nicholas Biddle, Boyd Hunter, Julie Lahn, Geoff Buchanan

This collaborative research, part of NAILSMA's Turtle and Dugong Management Project, involves fieldwork at One Arm Point, Nhulunbuy, and Mornington Island and will conclude in 2008.

PHILANTHROPY, NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS AND INDIGENOUS DEVELOPMENT

Jerry Schwab, Janet Hunt

This research explores the engagement of philanthropic donors and development-focused non-government organisations with Indigenous communities.

THE TORRES STRAIT REGION

Julie Lahn, Jon Altman, Will Sanders

This project will analyse the Torres Strait regional authority as a model for effectively facilitating Indigenous remote economic development.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ART SECTOR AND GOVERNMENT

Cate Slocum (supervised by Jon Altman)

Doctoral research to explore the links between the contemporary Aboriginal art sector and government following the Senate Inquiry into the Indigenous Visual Arts Sector in 2007.

INDIGENOUS LAND TITLING

Nicole Watson (supervised by Jon Altman)

A comparative analysis of Indigenous land titles in Australia, the United States of America and New Zealand in order to determine whether individual property rights are an appropriate accommodation of Australian Indigenous land aspirations.

THEME 3. GOVERNANCE, POLICY AND THE STATE

Lead researchers: Dr Will Sanders and Ms Janet Hunt

This theme examines governance and public policy relating to Indigenous Australians at a number of different empirical and conceptual levels. It includes an Indigenous community governance project examining the operation of Indigenous, or predominantly Indigenous, organisations at local and regional levels. It also pays attention to the larger policy environment in which these local and regional organisations operate, dominated by Commonwealth and State/Territory governments. The theme notes the complexity of state organisation in Indigenous affairs and the indeterminacy and frequently changing nature of policy. Conceptually, the theme asks whether organisational complexity has benefits for Indigenous affairs as well as costs, and whether policy indeterminacy and change are inevitable or can be lessened. The theme seeks in the first instance to analyse state policy towards Indigenous people and, in light of this, to formulate possibilities for improvement where this seems possible.

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE PROJECT

Janet Hunt, Kathryn Thorburn

The project is in its final phased of investigating the structures, processes, institutions, leadership, powers and capabilities of Indigenous community governance across rural, remote and urban settings with several case studies. Ms Diane Smith will continue involvement as a CAEPR Visiting Fellow.

THE POTENTIAL FOR REGIONAL GOVERNANCE IN SPARSELY SETTLED DESERT AREAS

Will Sanders

Continuing research examining governance arrangements focused on single remote communities and the potential for regional community governance arrangements with fieldwork at the Anmatjere Community Government Council, Central Australia.

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS IN AUSTRALIA

Katarina Ferro

Doctoral research on the topic 'The Language of Rights Among Aboriginal Intellectuals in the 21st Century', exploring approaches to Indigenous rights by Aboriginal intellectuals Larissa Behrendt and Noel Pearson.

AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC POLICY IN ANANGU PITJANTJATJARA LANDS

Deirdre Tedmanson

Doctoral research with field work based in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara lands.

THEME 4. EDUCATION AND LEARNING FOR LIFE

Lead researchers: Dr Jerry Schwab and Dr Inge Kral

This research theme focuses on the effective delivery of education, the development of evidence-based education policy and the social context of literacy and life long learning among Indigenous Australians. It includes research on all levels and sectors of formal education and training, but also extends to consideration of non-formal contexts and learning across the lifespan. Research under this theme involves both qualitative and quantitative methodologies and is anchored by an understanding that learning is fundamentally social and situated and can be found and enhanced both inside and outside the classroom. In addition, CAEPR research in this area is framed by an awareness that education and training are most effective when linked to the local social, cultural and economic contexts of everyday life. Several of the current projects in this theme involve collaborations with government departments, Indigenous organisations and communities and involve ground breaking research that addresses post-school skills acquisition and youth pathways to employment through land management, media and other community-based arenas of learning.

INDIGENOUS EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Jerry Schwab

Research exploring the patterns of early school leaving among Indigenous youth in the Northern Territory (part of an ARC Linkage project titled 'Custom-based land and resource management and the educational and social re-engagement of Indigenous youth' over the period 2006-2009).

MODELS OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT THROUGH LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

Jerry Schwab

This research involves and international exploration of models for re-engaging Indigenous youth through land and resource management programs (part of an ARC Linkage project titled 'Custom-based land and resource management and the educational and social re-engagement of Indigenous youth' over the period 2006-2009).

FROM PEDAGOGY TO PRODUCTION: LAND, EDUCATION AND REMOTE INDIGENOUS YOUTH

Bill Fogarty (supervised by Jerry Schwab)

An ethnographic study for a PhD thesis (part of an ARC Linkage project titled 'Custom-based land and resource management and the educational and social re-engagement of Indigenous youth' over the period 2006-2009).

LAND, RESOURCES AND YOUTH: A MODEL FOR POLICY AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Jerry Schwab, Bill Fogarty

Policy-focused research on developing program models for effectively engaging young Indigenous people through land and resource management programs and activities (part of an ARC Linkage project titled 'Custom-based land and resource management and the educational and social re-engagement of Indigenous youth' over the period 2006-2009).

LIFESPAN LEARNING AND LITERACY

Inge Kral, Jerry Schwab

This three year ARC Linkage project titled 'Lifespan learning and literacy for young adults in remote Indigenous communities' is focused on early school leavers and disaffected young adults in remote Indigenous communities and explores how literacy can be acquired, transmitted and maintained outside school settings and across the lifespan (2007-2010).

DESERT LEARNING - AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF NGAANYATJARRA LEADER ROBIN SMYTHE

Inge Kral

Research in collaboration with Robin Smythe and David Brooks, anthropologist with the Ngaanyatjarra Council (2008-2009).

WRITING WORDS - RIGHT WAY!

Inge Kral

A book will be prepared based on the doctoral thesis titled 'Writing Words - Right Way! Literacy and Social Practice in the Ngaanyatjarra World' which won the Australian Anthropological Society PhD Thesis prize for 2007 for best thesis by research!

Jon Altman
February 2008