Australian Aboriginal Marginalisation in Policy Making and Education: a function of colonialism and its aftermath.

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I certify that I am the sole author and that the substance of this portfolio has not already been submitted for any degree and is not being currently submitted for any other degrees.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge that any help received in preparing this portfolio, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this portfolio.

Signature:

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ABSTRACT

This project is an exploration of factors which have historically contributed to Aboriginal marginalisation in Australian society. These factors perpetuate the contemporary position of an underclass occupied today by Aboriginal people. During my years of teaching I observed at first hand the disproportionate lack of engagement with the education system by Aboriginal students. As a result, I started exploring both the theoretical frameworks which attempted to explain the situation and the various policies related to methods of education delivery. This led to looking at the underlying social structures which contribute to the situation

Colonialism and associated dispossession are identified as the main contributors to historical and contemporary marginalisation of Aboriginal people in Australia. Inherent in colonialism were scientific racism, institutional racism, structural violence and cultural violence. These remain embedded in the fabric of Australian society and continue to influence not only the daily lives, but also the long term life chances of Aboriginal people.

The impact of these factors on Aboriginal participation in policy formulation and education is examined within a critical theory framework. Discussion of education includes both policy related to Aboriginal education in general and issues related to higher education participation by Aboriginal people. Literature and information from interviews and ongoing email correspondence with participants informs the discussion. Methodology suited to critical theory proposed by Smith (1999:149-150) involves reading, writing and representing from an Aboriginal perspective, and was used in this research.

Cultural Safety, a concept developed in New Zealand in relation to health service delivery, offers a different approach to improving service delivery to Aboriginal Australians. The practice of Cultural Safety can reduce the power imbalances created by colonialism and its application to Aboriginal education is a major focus of this portfolio.

Reference

Smith, L. 1999, *Decolonising Methodologies,* Zed Books, London.

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ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACER	Australian Council of Educational Research
ACU	Australian Catholic University
AEU	Australian Education Union
AIDA	Australian Indigenous Doctors Association
AITAP	Aboriginal and Islander Tertiary Aspirations Programme
A&TSIEU	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Unit
APR	Apparent retention rates
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
AVCC	Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee
CAA	Council for Aboriginal Affairs
CAD	Council for Aboriginal Development
CAPA	Combined Australian Postgraduate Association
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DEET	Department of Employment Education and Training
DEST	Department of Education Science and Training
ESL	English Second Language
FCAATSI	Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
IAOK	Independent Aboriginal Organisations of the Kimberley
ICHRP	International Council of Human Rights Policy
IECB	Indigenous Education Consultative Body
IEDEA	Indigenous Education Direct Assistance Programs
IEETY	Indigenous Education, Employment and Youth
IESIP	Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs

NAC	National Aboriginal Conference
NACC	National Aboriginal Consultative Committee
NAEC	National Aboriginal Education Committee
NAEP	National Aboriginal Education Policy
NATSIEP	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
NIPAAC	National Indigenous Postgraduate Association Aboriginal Corporation
NBEET	National Board of Employment, Education and Training
NIC	National Indigenous Council
NIELNS	National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy
NIT	National Indigenous Times
NTEU	National Tertiary Education Union
PMC	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
QIECB	Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Body
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
RCIADIC	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody
SAE	Standard Australian English
SPR	Student progress rates
SPS	Special Program Schools
SRA	Shared Responsibility Agreements
TIP	Tertiary Interest Program
UTAS	University of Tasmania
UTS	University of Technology Sydney
WGIP	Working Group on Indigenous Populations (United Nations)
WUPA	Wollongong University Postgraduate Association