THE SPIRIT OF THE FLAME

Spiritual leadership of four Indigenous Australian school leaders:

Dreaming Australia

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DECLARATION

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that the work presented in this thesis is original and my own work, except as acknowledged in the text, and that the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates whether four Indigenous State primary principals rely on spiritual leadership to inform their leadership role in schools. I investigate the four principals’ leadership through an analysis of a series of interviews, documents and observations conducted at the four case-study sites. I was particularly interested in the under representation of Indigenous peoples in leadership and their voices being marginalised or misrepresented on a number of important debates due to Australia’s colonial history and the potency of postcolonialism. There were two political debates prominent during this period. These were the Liberal government’s intervention in the Northern Territory in response to the “National Emergency” of the abuse of Indigenous children in 2007 and the Prime Minister, Mr. Kevin Rudd’s apology in February 2008 to the stolen generations on behalf of the Australian government.

I engage Foucault’s notions of discourse and truth (1971) and analytic of power/knowledge (1980), biopower (1984) and postcolonial theories (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2000) to provide the theoretical frame for conceptualising this study into spiritual leadership. I take a critical discourse approach (Fairclough, 2001) to the analysis of the principals’ interview talk in order to ascertain whether the principals are operating at the deeper levels of society where representations and positions are formed and reformed often engaging symbol, metaphor and at times, myth. I was interested to
explore the principals’ perceptions of their leadership through a
deconstruction of their use of symbol and metaphor.

The research project questions whether spiritual leadership is enacted by
the principals. The thesis acknowledges that, due to the underrepresentation
of Indigenous principals, even emancipatory, visionary and spiritual
leadership may not be sufficient to transform postcolonial power
differentials in Australia which represent Indigenous peoples and cultures as
inferior to white people and cultures. The analysis firstly investigates
whether the leaders resist these negative representations of Indigenous
peoples and their cultures then moves to the inner world of the leaders
whereat more complex notions of the leaders’ vision, purpose and
leadership enactment are explored. The thesis acknowledges that it is at
these levels where the presence of Spirit or a sense of spirituality may
inform the principal’s leadership role.
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PRELUDE: THE SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA

Despite Australia’s driving metaphors of the lucky country and a fair go for all, Indigenous peoples and other minority groups do not experience life from the position coined in these slogans (Peel, 2003). As one example of this, the disproportionately low numbers of Indigenous peoples in leadership positions (White, 2007) within Australia would suggest that, in our times, many Indigenous peoples do not belong to a lucky country or experience a fair go in Australian mainstream society. The underrepresentation of Indigenous Australian peoples in leadership is one example of the outcomes gap between the lives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. This study aimed to address the gap by exploring Indigenous school leadership, in particular whether there was evidence of spiritual leadership among the participants interviewed for this multiple case study. The thesis of this study contends that, in order to redress the outcomes gap or make the vision of a fair go real, spiritual leadership may be a viable approach to school leadership.

I begin this thesis by introducing Jeff Mc Mullen’s (2007, June 25) plea to all Australians to make the gaps in Aboriginal (and Torres Strait Islander) outcomes “personal” and to work together to “close the gap” through

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1 Spiritual leadership is when the leader is authentically operating from her/his spiritual core, giving her/himself away (Byrum, 2006) to make a difference in the lives of others; operating at the stage of transcendence when the leader is guided by the Spirit or higher intelligence (Wilber, 2000a). The Dreaming is the belief and practice of spirituality in Indigenous peoples’ lives. It refers to a “complex network of knowledge, faith and practices that derive from stories of creation, and which dominates all spiritual and physical aspects of Aboriginal life” (Penrith, 1996, p.4).
processes of education. With the spirit of this plea in mind, this research project has focused on the question of whether Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander school leaders call on a spiritual paradigm when called upon to discuss their leadership within schools.

The Children of the First Sunrise

Is this what we see now as we contemplate the Federal Government's plan to "save the children" by taking over 60 Northern Territory remote communities?

These are the Children of the First Sunrise, the descendants of the Ancestors who walked the coastlines of the world on the greatest human journey the world has known. These children, neglected and abused as our Nation has turned away, are the living expression of the world's oldest continuous culture.

I do not romanticise their past or ignore the enormous sadness of their present. But it is essential to value Aboriginal people first as human beings. You may choose your own way of doing this, by looking at the longer timelines of history and how their adaptive brilliance and resilience has allowed them to endure climate change, species extinction, and the comings and goings of many other people. You may marvel at the abstraction, beauty and symbolism of the highest forms of their art, their grace in dance or original voice in words and music. You may admire their spiritual realms and the intensity of their belief. Or love them in the sporting arena where we all seem to claim their exuberance as our own. But value them, first and finally, as human beings, especially at this time, as we hear it said, once again, that we are "saving their children"...

“...Closing the gap in life expectancy for these children calls for a far greater commitment than we have yet made in the Howard Emergency Plan.” Closing the Gap is this nation's greatest challenge and the way to close the gap in life expectancy is to close the gap in education.

A considerable body of international research, especially the work of Fraser Mustard, among Indigenous people in Canada, has established that for every extra year of education we provide to a whole community of young women we add up to four years to the life expectancy of their first child. Dr Ken Wyatt, the Director of Aboriginal Health in NSW,
adds that every extra year of education for those young mothers will also reduce the chance of them losing their first baby by seven to ten per cent.

What more incentive can we want to now put in place a Literacy Brigade of suitably educated teachers and retired professionals to join the overwhelmed ranks of the teachers in the remote area schools? Our Governments, Territory, State and Federal, must build adequate housing to allow for the arrival and support of all of the services that make up a normal, healthy town.

Let's stop pretending it can't be done. Let's stop arguing about what has been spent and who is to blame.

It is essential that Federal, Territory and State Education departments aim higher, stop bickering and cooperate to improve the education of all of our children... There just aren't as many hands as we need on the front lines of this crisis. That is the great challenge to ease the emergency. We need to make this personal. This is our responsibility and every day is a precious opportunity. So raise your voice and use every breath for the Children of the Sunrise (McMullen, 2007).2

Remaining Mainly Unheard

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander3 voices for the most part remain tangential in Australian mainstream society. The voices of Indigenous peoples are often represented as other than legitimate (Cowlishaw, 1999; Foley, 2005) or they “remain mainly unheard.” Ashcroft and Ahluwalia (2001) contend that this is due to the cultural hegemony set up by the colonial power, which convinces the colonised they should align with the

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2 I collected the data used for this study between October 2003 and November 2004. The McMullen quote was written later, in 2007, whilst I was writing up my analysis of the data collected. I believed this quote was relevant to the context of the study given the immediacy of the Northern Territory intervention described by Scrymgour (2007) as: “… a leap back to the days of the first Intervention, to the days of assimilation, control and coercion; to the days when Aboriginal people were regarded as too naïve, and too simple, to control their own affairs”.

3 Hereafter I use Indigenous as a collective noun in awareness of its inadequacy to reflect the numerous and diverse groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in Australia (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). At points, I deliberately refer to Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islander peoples.
dominant culture in everyone’s best interest. Calling on the theorisations put forward by Bhabha, Huddart (2005) contends “Colonialism has been a hidden presence shaping Euro-American power and the grand narratives of modern progress” (p. 6) and so these “grand narratives” or colonial discourses support each other in silencing Indigenous voices, which “remain mainly unheard” in postcolonial Australia. Throughout this study I use Foucault’s notion of discourse (1971). Discourses are forms of representation, bodies of knowledge that construct and define individuals as objects and as subjects (Foucault, 1971). They are not a way of describing the world; rather their formation is a way in which the world comes into being. Discourses, therefore, become more than forms of representation. A full interpretation of Foucault’s notion of discourse is explored in chapter 3.

I do not suggest that these colonial discourses silence in any total or absolute sense. Since the period between 2007 and 2008, for example, the voice of Noel Pearson was heard as a “qualified endorsement” of Prime Minister Howard’s approach to Indigenous issues. Pearson claimed a central position in the policy debates around the Howard Government’s Northern Territory Intervention. This sole voice portrayed the Indigenous perspective and was heard as a collective and homogenised response to other Indigenous perspectives. The Northern Territory Intervention marked

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4 Prime Minister John Howard served in office from 1996-2007. He was defeated after eleven years in office by Kevin Rudd and his Labour team in October 2007.

5 In mid 2007 the government of the day executed a “state of emergency” in the Northern Territory in order to “save” Aboriginal children from the “perpetrators” of their neglect and abuse by taking over 60 Northern Territory remote communities (Coyne, 2007, 2008; Middleton, 2007).
the last effort of the Howard Government to solve the Indigenous “problem” - a response from the government of that time, which demonstrated its continued operation from the colonial position of a “patriarch” (Scrymgour, 2007); taking over the responsibility for protecting Indigenous children, assuming Indigenous peoples could not or would not accept this responsibility for themselves. I use this example of the response by the Howard government as indicative of the endemic essentialist understandings that still resonate in the commonsense understandings based on colonial attitudes in some sections of Australian society. There are many other examples that demonstrate the impact of Australian colonisation against the international struggle by Indigenous peoples in “settler” societies to overcome their colonised condition. This postcolonial context is vital to this study and explored in more depth in chapter 3.

The government response of legislation to remove autonomy from Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory (Richardson & Wise, 2008) once again belies Indigenous “self-determination” whilst insinuating that Aboriginal culture is somehow shameful and accepting of abuse and neglect. In such a context we are left to question how Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander leaders might assert a different representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures. How might it be possible for

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6 “Self-determination” is the term used in Australia to describe the current political policy towards Indigenous Australians from the 1970’s (Cowlishaw, 1999, p. 271). Tuhuiwai Smith, an Indigenous academic (1999, pp. 115-117) and others, argue the term is rhetoric in many postcolonial countries and remains a political goal still to be realised.
the “mainly unheard” to become audible in all their complexity and diversity?

In the prelude to the thesis I have first introduced a context for the “problem” this project addresses by using the Northern Territory Intervention as an illustration of how postcolonial Australia marginalises Indigenous viewpoints. I provide a context for hearing Indigenous school leaders’ voices. I complete the prelude by introducing the title, and then I move to offer my “voice” within the research project, which details the research journey undertaken and the aims in undertaking this research project. In chapter 1 I provide an introduction and rationale for the research project, my thesis, and provide a chapter outline.

Hearing the spirit of Indigenous talk

Indigenous leaders’ voices remain either “mainly unheard” (p.3) or perhaps even misinterpreted by mainstream Australian society (Coyne, 2008; Shinn, 2006). The research reported here is based on a long-standing uneasiness with the inaudibility of Indigenous leaders’ voices – particularly those of Indigenous school leaders – within the debates around education, outcomes, participation, and access. Despite the considerable investments of

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7 Postcolonialism deals with the effects of colonisation on cultures and societies. Since the 1970’s the term has been used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonisation. As Gandhi (1998) cautioned, “Postcolonialism can be seen as a theoretical resistance to the mystifying amnesia of the colonial aftermath. It is a disciplinary project devoted to the academic task of revisiting, remembering and crucially interrogating the colonial past” (p. 4).

8 The term, “mainly unheard” refers to Indigenous voices being ignored or overlooked.
governments, systems, communities, teachers, and administrators, Australian schools continue to fail many Indigenous students (Dawkins, 2007), and responses continue for the most part to ignore the responsive voices of Indigenous education leaders (AIATSIS., 2005).

In this thesis I sought to “hear the spirit” of four Indigenous school leaders’ voices and to investigate the place of spiritual leadership within articulations of school leadership in their school community and more broadly. I have worked to unpack the discourses upon which these leaders called in the enactment of their leadership. The research project explores whether the leaders’ voices are sourced from the leaders’ visionary and/or spiritual core. Thus, throughout I have questioned whether the four Indigenous leaders relied on what I have come to term, spiritual leadership. Fairholm (2003) attests “spiritual” leaders as “respond(ing) to their spiritual core” (p. 18). I have made the assumption that school leaders can make a difference to the educational outcomes of students both as role models and through instructional and visionary leadership (Belmonte, 2007; Caldwell, 2007). Although it is widely accepted that school principals can make a difference to student educational outcomes (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999), the field of spiritual leadership is relatively new. There are leadership writers arguing the link from spiritual leadership to student outcomes (Beare, 2006; Coman, 2006; Fry, 2003; Lin, 2006). In the work presented

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9 Visionary leaders have vision and give direction (Doyle & Smith, 2008) which forms part of spiritual leadership however this is not the entirety of the concept, spiritual leadership. These leadership terms are explored more fully in Chapter 2, under the sub-heading: Visionary & Spiritual Leadership.
here I have set out to investigate four leaders’ uptake of such leadership representations to puzzle the enactment of spiritual leadership.

Understandings of leadership as a spiritual practice are peripheral to Australian mainstream leadership practice at present. However, they present a distinct possibility of becoming “natural” over a period of time (Duignan, 2002; Sykes & Frydenberg, 2006). A number of contemporary writers signal a collective consciousness, which they describe as a “yearning” for a spiritual meaning to life, in the Australian (and Western) world (Lin, 2006; Tacey, 2000, 2004; Thompson, 2005). Such a collective yearning for a spiritual dimension or meaning to life, matched with a strategy for forming strong and ongoing partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous school principals10, may be one answer towards supporting the Rudd government’s promise to “close the gap” in educational and other outcomes for Indigenous peoples. However, it is important to acknowledge that the challenge of closing the educational gap is complex and will require sustained partnerships among educational leaders and others (Mellor & Corrigan, 2004), among many other approaches. Whilst this research project recognises the contribution of partnerships to help close the gaps (COAG, 2007), its focus is on the discourses called upon by the school leaders for aspects of spiritual leadership as a way of engaging with such a context productively.

10 An example of this is the national “Dare to Lead” program run by the National Principals Association (APAPDC., 2005; Australia Principals, 2009).
My non-Indigenous Voice

I am a non-Indigenous researcher working on issues that involve Indigenous peoples and Indigenous leaders in the area of Indigenous educational research. There are many issues and responsibilities to be addressed as a non-Indigenous researcher working with Indigenous leaders and school communities.

I explore these briefly before dealing with the concepts in more detail in chapter 4, where I recount the rationale, processes, and reciprocity that were built into the covenant\textsuperscript{11} of this research.

I engaged the AIATSIS (2000)\textsuperscript{12} guidelines for ethical research in Indigenous studies in the set up, conduct, and analyses of this research. In addition I have been, and continue to be, counselled by a number of Indigenous colleagues, including Elders, as to protocols and responsibilities in engaging in this research. Their counsel has been cognisant of the various positions taken by Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics and others on non-Indigenous researchers conducting research with Indigenous peoples.

Telling qualitative stories is by its very nature “fraught with complexities and questions” (Ropers-Huilman, 1999, p. 21), but there are additional

\textsuperscript{11} The covenant is the contract into which I entered with the four school leaders. The contract covered a number of legal and ethical areas as required by the university ethics committee and Education Queensland. I also made some personal promises to the principals as to how I would conduct myself whilst working with the school community when I was in the field and afterwards when I returned home.

\textsuperscript{12} AIATSIS: The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, which sets ethical guidelines for research with Indigenous peoples.
potential difficulties for a non-Indigenous researcher who wishes to discuss Indigenous issues. The non-Indigenous researcher must recognise and appropriately negotiate the research context with a sense of reciprocity; this is a critical responsibility due to a history of mis-representation and exploitation of Indigenous peoples by non-Indigenous researchers (Foley, 2000; Minniecon, Franks, & Heffernan, 2007; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999).

Nakata (2007) recently theorised the place where the two sets of knowledges and peoples - Western and Indigenous - meet by framing this space as the “cultural interface” (ch.10). It is at this interface that a researcher such as me – a migrant of British “stock,” white, employed in a position of responsibility, non-Australian accent, Catholic Celtic, female – must work to recognise and account for the history of my knowledges being known as legitimate. This profile has served to make my white voice as privileged in postcolonial Australia. I have personally experienced the fair go in a lucky country. I tried to remain conscious of my privileged position at this cultural interface and remember that my privilege was randomly historical. However, all four school leaders were well informed of research ethics and protocols and, in fact; two have been awarded research higher degrees themselves. The school leaders were aware that all data and my interpretation of the data would be collected, analysed, and written about from my perspective and worldview. They were cognisant that I, as researcher, would be analysing the data; thus, “In a very important sense this (the) written representation is largely, though not completely, but a
mirror image of the researcher and her/his baggage.” (Scheurich, 1997, p. 74). My “non-Indigenous voice” would remain the lens in this research project.

For the purpose of this project I drew on Moje’s (2004) conception of the “third space” to open new alternatives of places for dialogue, for, “In the third space then, what seem to be oppositional categories can actually work together to generate new knowledges, new discourses, and new forms of literacy” (Moje, et al., 2004). I aspired to use the third space to work with the principals to use this research project to document their knowledge of leadership through their use of recognisable leadership discourses upon which they called in the interviews.

In the next section of this prelude I reintroduce the title of this thesis by describing the painting created for my study by an Aboriginal leader with whom I work. The painting is used as a way of expressing one interpretation of my understanding, and indeed representation, of the leaders, whose talk I investigated for aspects of spiritual leadership.
The Spirit of the Flame

This painting tells the story of my journey to this PhD thesis, and is named *The Spirit of the Flame*. The blue waters at the bottom of the canvas are the Atlantic Ocean and tell of my journey across the braw waters from Scotland where my Catholic Celtic spiritual heritage, which sustains me, was born. I am the tan “u” shape at the bottom left of the canvas set in the blue waters and drawn moving towards Australia. I am represented as a female with digging sticks at my side as, in Aboriginal art, people are perceived from the spirit above. The dotted set of lines attached from my
“u” representation lead back to a set of circles. The outer circles are the people and lands from where I sourced my identity and energy, which came from my Celtic heritage in Scotland. The centre circle is the spirit, which is my energy source. From the blue waters, I travelled to the red earth of Australia. The next stage of my journey drawn on the canvas is when I travelled to central Queensland, where the first case-study leader was principal. The central Queensland Aboriginal totem of the snake is drawn beside Jay; Jay was the principal of a small, remote primary school in Western Queensland. The Aboriginal totem of the goanna is drawn to the left of the canvas in the red central section beside the second Aboriginal principal, who was the leader of a semiremote primary school with a high percentage of Aboriginal students. I have named this school leader Dave. The life source or “Spirit” of both these principals is represented by the dotted lines tracing back to their spiritual energy and life source drawn in circles on the canvas. The circles surrounding their energy source represent their family and the land from which they shape their identity.

At the top of the canvas, the other two Torres Strait Islander school principals are situated in the greeny blue waters of the Torres Strait. The totems of the turtles are seen swimming in the Torres Strait. These leaders also live from their spiritual source, which comes from connectedness to Spirit, family, land, and sea and which is represented by the dotted life lines coming from their representations to the circle, which gives them their

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13 The terms remote and semiremote are here used cognisant that these are Western concepts. Indigenous peoples would not necessarily classify these regions in this way.
spirit. At the top right hand side of the canvas is the second male leader, who is the principal of a remote Islander school. On the left hand side Samantha, the second female leader, is drawn among the turtles of the greeny blue, warm straits. She is principal of a semiremote island school in the Torres Strait.

In the centre of the canvas we come together. The circle in the centre shows our common spiritual bond, which is our connectedness as humans and as school leaders. The connection is the shared desire to support the voices of Indigenous leaders being heard so that their leadership may be drawn upon in closing the gap through education.

*The Spirit of the Flame* is the energy source held deep within all peoples which some people name as Spirit, God, intuition or a higher intelligence. The flame is a symbol or metaphor used by many cultures to represent power or Spirit and knowledge or wisdom. And so *The Spirit of the Flame* represents the spiritual source from which, according to this research project, leaders source their energy to make a difference to the educational outcomes of their Indigenous students and Indigenous peoples in general.

My Journey to this Research Project

I immigrated to Australia in 1988 on the wave of the publicity of the bicentenary celebrations in Australia. I came to Victoria with my husband
and four children and subsequently moved to Queensland in 1990. I taught in various primary and secondary schools until I became a school principal in 1998. This position caused me to question whether my role as school leader could positively affect the educational outcomes of the students attending the school at which I was employed. Around this time I was actively involved in a partnership with Griffith University in two federally funded projects engaging action-research methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) of qualitative research. This involvement caused me to question the “grand narratives” and discourses being called upon to explain the educational context at that time. I was left uneasy at the supposed understandings of many that advocated there were “equal opportunities” in education for all Australians at that time. Such understandings I could see allowed for blame about issues of failure and access to be squarely set with individuals and communities. The spotlight was thus moved from issues related to disadvantage, inequity, and discrimination and toward individual inability or individuals’ lack of will to take up the opportunities offered to them. These ways of understanding are still active in some educational arenas in Australia and were certainly a part of an entrepreneurial orientation under the Howard government from 1996-2007, which was underpinned by a philosophy of individualism (Johnson, 2006).

Like many educators, I witnessed equal opportunity as a non reality for many of the students for whom I held accountability, also for their parents and communities. I believed that school leaders were partly accountable for
this set of realities and shared a responsibility for challenging the status quo. I complete this prelude by connecting my vision to those of like mind.

The Spirit of Australia

"What has been brewing inside the Australian soul is a new spirituality that will surprise both the secular establishment and the official religious tradition" (Tacey, 2000, p. 252). In alignment with David Tacey’s insight and Sohail Inayatullah’s (2002) vision, I dream an Australia where Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices are in partnership dialoguing just, sustainable, and peaceful futures. I dream an Australia where all cultures are valued. I dream an Australia that has accepted its past, thereby entering a period of healing through the processes of reconciliation. Symbolic and practical reconciliation (Altman & Hunter, 2003) give voice to the possibilities of futures that recognise the past and current processes of colonialism. I believe in possibilities in this ancient, but new, landscape.

This was the dream I held when I applied to immigrate to Australia, and this dream brought me to Australia with my family 20 years ago. I had believed the story that was marketed in the United Kingdom in the bicentenary year, 1988, that Australia was a land of new possibilities. In many ways I had to “walk this land” for a long time before I understood that I neither had, nor have, a real conception of the deep wounding of Indigenous Australians being caused by colonial and postcolonial processes (as defined by Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2006). Only through working in
education systems was I able to grasp some sense of how colonialism affected and continues to deeply affect the various peoples, particularly Indigenous Australians, living in Australia. I had come from a country where my Scottish and Celtic heritage resonated somewhat with the impact of colonisation. The Scottish people continue to forge an identity that is no longer affiliated with kilts and bagpipes in the traditional and narrow representations of Scottish culture. Like Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, Scottish culture was never static. The Scots forge an identity of a contemporary people who were eventually conquered three centuries ago and still struggle to break free from the inferior representations of Scottish people made available in public and media discourses. The Celtic culture, which is my heritage, was outlawed and represented as inferior by the English colonists from the 17th century until the 19th century when the second Highland clearances were conducted, contributing to the collapse of the clan system and the demise of Gaelic culture and language (Failte, 2008). I recognise that my story is not the raw or traumatic history present in Australia, as despite the connection I have made, I have been recognised as white and afforded privileges that come with whiteness (Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006), both in the U.K. and in Australia.

One of the understandings that I have gained through the research for this PhD study is the multiple realities that represent a people. I understand that this project forms only one set of realities, which I have coconstructed with
the school leaders, Indigenous elders, academics, researchers, writers, and others. However, I am also cognisant that in many instances I have constructed “realities” for the school leaders as part of this process. This is a part of the process of reporting an analysis of others’ words and stories (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Engaging in discourse analysis has allowed me to realise that the layers of theory, various epistemologies, and ontologies that I have encountered embedded in the data were not layers to be peeled back by me to reveal “the truth” but, instead, a complex construction with which to glimpse the many realities that are the enacted leadership of the principals with whom I worked. I came to align with Foucault’s (1980) analytic of power/knowledge and postcolonial theories (AAP., 2006; Ashcroft, et al., 2006; Bennett & Cowan, 2003; Bhabha, 1994; Dirlik, 2000; Fhlathâuin, 1998; Gandhi, 1998; Goldberg & Quayson, 2002; Hickling-Hudson, Matthews, & Woods, 2004; Nakata, 2007; Spivak & Harasym, 1990) during this period, and incorporate the understandings of the symbiotic relationships among these theories into my conceptualisation of the research project.

I have become conscious that there are possibilities for transformational change in Australian society. The possibilities to talk up alternative, transformational discourses become evident in the third space (Moje, et al., 2004) from where I aimed to collect the spirit of the talk from the leaders. Although I understand this at an intellectual level, I struggled to believe transformation was feasible at a practical level due to the suppression of
Indigenous voices individually and collectively (e.g., the abolition of ATSIC) in the era of the Liberal government under Prime Minister John Howard (AAP., 2006; Behrendt, 2005; Guardian, 2000; Howard, 2007; Sarra, 2007; Shubert, 2004). A change in my belief system has taken place during the course of this research project and came about as I integrated my belief system with the beliefs of thinkers and writers who, whilst critiquing the status quo, advocate hope for change (Cousins & Hussain, 1984; Cowlishaw, 1999; Duignan, 2006; Foucault, 1980, 1997; Foucault, Rabinow, & Rose, 2003; Gandhi, 1998; Inayatullah, 2002; McMullen, 2007, June 25; Sarra, 2007; Tacey, 2000).

This journey has been paralleled by my leadership involvement in a productive partnership with Indigenous colleagues to bring about symbolic and practical reconciliation amongst 10 intersystemic schools in my school region (Altman & Hunter, 2003). I align with Fairclough (2001) that “the difficult but essential need is to try through research and discussion to work together towards an agreement about where the priorities are, what the great issues of the time are” (p. 215). As McMullen (2007) identifies in the opening quote to this prelude, the greatest issue of our time is “Closing the Gap (which) is this nation's greatest challenge and the way to close the gap in life expectancy is to close the gap in education.” The status quo in Australia can be talked up in a different direction. As Fairclough (2001, p. viii) advocates, “…language functions in maintaining and changing power relations in contemporary society,” therefore supporting the possibility of
talking up different discourses to present alternative possibilities for the future of Australia. Part of the process for transformational change involves Indigenous leaders talking up a new way of conceptualising Indigenous peoples and cultures.

These powerful, alternative futures are envisioned in the shape of new representations that present alternative possibilities (Slaughter, 1996). The new government has set a different vision for the future of Australia, both in its symbolic and practical acts of reconciliation since assuming power (Rudd, 2008). It remains to be seen how effective these acts will be, however there is a definite mood of hope since the 2020 Summit held by the Rudd government, which addressed Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders’ visions for the future of Australia (Hagan, 2008).

I sought to make a difference through my involvement in some practical work for symbolic and practical reconciliation through my role as a school principal and leader in the Jambe\textsuperscript{14} project (Consortium of Schools Nerang, 2006-2008). I became involved in the research for this PhD study into Indigenous leadership and particularly Indigenous visionary and spiritual leadership following educational programs in which I had been involved with Indigenous colleagues. I had witnessed aspects of Indigenous leadership through my work with Indigenous colleagues in the Jambe and

\footnote{The Jambe project is funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Jambe is a local Kombumerri (Aboriginal) word for learning and leadership. The project aims to promote Indigenous leadership through the promotion of Indigenous cultures and a program of symbolic and practical reconciliation.}
other projects (APAPDC., 2005), and aimed to explore these phenomena in a more systematic way. Although I have experienced the difficulties in working towards partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders where we attempted to move to a shared power base, I have also experienced the synergy possible when people work towards a common goal. I started to investigate the possibility of spiritual leadership in the leaders’ talk as a way to conceptualise leadership more generally, drawing on these powerful and productive frames that I had witnessed through my involvement in these educational projects.

My broad goal was to find out more about Indigenous school leadership that was bringing change and renewal in schools. Thus, in this research project I set out to analyse questions of leadership through a discourse analysis of the school leaders’ talk about their leadership. The central research question in this study was: In what ways do Indigenous principals rely on spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools?

In order to address this and other questions related to it, I move to chapter 1, where I will introduce the research project by describing the research problem and research questions, the educational context, and the purpose and significance of the study. Chapter 1 finishes by providing a chapter outline.
THE SPIRIT OF THE FLAME

An Introduction to the Study

This research investigated the possibility of visionary and/or spiritual leadership\(^\text{15}\) in the discourses called upon when four Indigenous school leaders were asked to discuss their leadership in a series of interviews. Current leadership literature suggests that successful leadership incorporates elements of visionary and/or spiritual leadership (Beare, 2006; Duignan, 2006; Fry, 2003; Lin, 2006). This study sought to ascertain whether there was evidence of visionary or spiritual leadership in the talk of four Indigenous school principals, and to make comment on the relevance of this to the field of leadership more generally. In this study I conducted a critical discourse analysis of the interview talk the four leaders employed as primary State school principals within Queensland, as they described their personal stories and the enactment of their leadership.

I explored concepts of leadership by engaging critical discourse analysis\(^\text{16}\) (Fairclough, 2001) to investigate the leaders’ possible engagement with educational, colonial, visionary, and spiritual discourses in the discussion of

\(^{15}\) Spiritual leadership is when the leader is authentically operating from her/his spiritual core, giving her/himself away (Byrum, 2006) to make a difference in the lives of others; operating at the stage of transcendence when the leader is guided by the Spirit or higher intelligence (Wilber, 2000a).

\(^{16}\) Critical discourse analysis (hereafter CDA) is the discipline of “denaturalising” discourses which are presented as “common sense” but founded on particular ideologies. “It involves showing how social structures determine properties of discourse, and how discourse in turn determines social structures” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 27).
their leadership. The data were collected during visits to four school sites where the leaders were employed as State primary school principals. Data collected included interviews, observations, and documents. All of the leaders who are participants in the study are Indigenous Australians. Two of the principals are from the Torres Strait and two are Aboriginal people from Queensland. The research project particularly sought to explore illustrations of visionary and/or spiritual leadership, which may be enacted through the leader’s role. This chapter begins by developing the research problem that was introduced in the prelude. It then outlines the research questions that were formed to collect data to investigate this problem.

This introduction continues by describing aspects of the Australian educational context and then moves to outline the purpose, significance, and limitations of the study, and concludes with a chapter outline.

**Statement of the problem**

In this study I aimed to analyse the talk of four Indigenous Australian educational leaders. There are three main reasons to hear these unheard voices. The first reason is the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous student outcomes across a range of standardised tests in literacy and numeracy, school retention, and career pathways, which are regarded as success measures for schools and children, and which currently remain
unacceptable (Dawkins, 2007) in a “developed”¹⁷ nation. The second reason is the underrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in educational leadership positions in Australian society (White, 2007). The third reason is the negative representation of Indigenous peoples and their cultures, which is currently accepted as truth in several parts of Australian mainstream society (Evans, 2006). The underlying problem which has marginalised the voices of Indigenous peoples, represented their cultures as inferior, and continues to contribute to the significant outcomes gap in leadership representation and in other areas between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, is colonisation. I have chosen, in this research project, to explore these three major manifestations of the mammoth and complex problems present in Australia caused by colonialism and postcolonialism, which “…are the problem of the present time, and of what we are in this very moment.” (Foucault cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 216).

Colonisation is the specific form of cultural exploitation that developed with the expansion of Europe over the last 400 years (Ashcroft et al., 2000). Australia was colonised by the British in 1788 (Elder, 1998), and, as a result of British or European imperialism, “racism is still deeply implicated in issues of marginalization” (Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004, p. 4) which profoundly affect Indigenous peoples’ access to education and other services.

¹⁷ Australia is described as a first world country or developed nation, which means it is considered developed economically with its citizens being catered for in both human rights and in opportunities for advancement.
Postcolonialism continues to powerfully ‘shape’ the way Australian society is set up and conducts itself in all aspects of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples’ lives. In order to introduce the key set of concepts underpinning this study coined in the term *postcolonialism*, I adopt the following definition of postcolonialism by Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2000):

> Postcolonialism includes the study and analyses of European territorial conquests, the various institutions of European colonialism, the discursive operations of empire, the subtleties of subject construction in colonial discourse and the resistance of those subjects and, most importantly perhaps, the differing responses to such incursions and their contemporary colonial legacies in both pre and post-independence nations and communities. (p. 187)

In order to address the deep-seated and complex phenomenon of postcolonialism in the contemporary Australian context, this study noted the correlation between high-quality leadership and student outcomes (Sergiovanni, 1991). Recent reports continue to emphasise that the educational outcomes gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students remain unacceptable and unchanged since at least 1975 (Dawkins, 2007). These gaps have become expected and some acceptance of this phenomenon is evident according to the research base of the Australian principals’ associations (APAPDC., 2000, 2005). Despite government policies and programs over 40 years to redress this problem, the educational gaps remain unacceptable (Australia Principals, 2009; Dawkins, 2007)).

The Dawkins (2007) report, commissioned by the federal government to review the Adelaide Declaration and how Australian students were
performed against international norms, found Australia less equitable than some other high-performing countries, emphasising that, “School principals have the critical role of establishing and driving the school culture and are the primary focus for high-quality performance and continuous improvement in all schools” (p. 17). High-quality leadership cannot be truly authentic representation if it is not proportionally represent Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Presently Indigenous perspectives are not proportionately represented in mainstream leadership (White, 2007; Williams, 2001). There are no national or state figures on Indigenous principal representation; however “Principals Australia”, the peak body representative of all Australian principals, estimates “The precise number of Aboriginal school principals is uncertain, but currently thought to be in excess of 70” (Australia Principals, 2009). Principals Australia reports that there are 10,000 principals in Australia across all educational sectors: primary, secondary; State, Catholic, and Independent (Australia Principals, 2009). Aboriginal and Torres Strait principals represent 0.007% of principals, although Indigenous proportionate numbers in the population are 2.4% (MCEETYA, 2006). Australia’s colonial history continues to affect Indigenous peoples’ participation in leadership, among many other aspects of life. Despite government policies promoting Indigenous leadership (Australian Federal Government, 2007) the unacceptable deficit in Indigenous leadership representation remains. The outcomes gap between Indigenous and non-
Indigenous peoples represented in leadership is reflected in all areas of Indigenous life. It is present in life expectancy, health, housing, incarceration rates, employment, and education (COAG, 2007). Indigenous peoples are underrepresented in all areas of education systems (Mellor & Corrigan, 2004).

This study assumes that the promotion of Indigenous leadership is an important part of the solution to this problem; many studies have highlighted the positive effect that strong educational leadership can have on student educational outcomes (Barth, 2002; Beare, 2001; Bezzina, 2008; Caldwell, 2007). Indigenous leaders are “mainly unheard” due to their mis- and underrepresentation in schools and in wider society. The mis- and underrepresentation is intricately related to Australia’s colonial history and postcolonialism. In order to address this complex problem, I move to “hear” the leaders through the research questions in the search for evidence of visionary and/or spiritual leadership among the four Indigenous school leader participants in this study.

**The Research Questions**

The central research question is:

1. In what ways do Indigenous principals rely on a spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools?

The subsequent research questions are:
2. In what ways can the Western discourse of educational leadership be identified in the articulation of the principals’ notions of leadership?

3. In what ways are postcolonial representations identified by the principals in their personal stories as leaders?

4. How is leadership symbolised by the leaders in interview talk when asked to describe their leadership approach?

5. How do the leaders use the symbols and metaphors around spirituality as they work to re-envision Australian society?

In the next section I briefly present the contemporary Australian context, which is inextricably linked to Australia’s colonial history (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). I outline some historical information that has had an impact on the contemporary educational setting. These contexts have a major impact on understanding the position of all four principals in their school setting as Indigenous leaders of a Westernised educational system. I then present the purpose of this study and argue its significance and limitations. I conclude with an outline of the research project and finish with the chapter outline.

The Impact of Colonisation on how Indigenous Australians are represented in 21st century Australia

Early Colonial Representations

When Australia was colonised in 1788, the colonisers represented Indigenous peoples according to the worldviews available to them
The limited worldviews were launched by Cook’s early descriptions of the Aboriginal people he met at Botany Bay and earlier in Tasmania (Flood, 2006). Multiple representations of Indigenous peoples have continued into the 21st century having been based originally on the beliefs, understandings, and ideologies of the early colonists (Evans, Saunders, & Cronin, 1993). The last 200 years have added many and complex layers to these representations. Images are predominantly constructed by Western peoples about Indigenous peoples. The representations made visible within society do not include those of the traditionally marginalised voices of Indigenous peoples themselves (Foley, 2005). It is these representations by Western peoples that “have voice” while other representations “remain mainly unheard” (McMullen, 2007, p. 2).

Colonial worldviews were formed from the ideology of imperialism. Imperialist philosophy and attitudes of the late second millennium meant the conquering nation state had to implant its (supposedly superior) culture through settlements by colonising other distant countries (Ashcroft et al., 2006). European countries were competing in this imperial war to represent their “superior cultures” in as many colonies as was possible and they retained this control by representation rather than merely “might”:

Ultimately, however it was the control of the means of representation rather than the means of production that confirmed the hegemony of the European powers in their respective empires. Economic, political and military dominance enabled the dissemination of European ideas through the powerful agencies of education and publishing. But it was the power
of imperial discourse rather than military or economic might that confirmed the hegemony of imperialism in the late nineteenth century (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2000b, p. 127).

The reasons behind exploration and settlement in the colonial times are contested – in relation to both general activity and specific colonising projects such as the colonialisation of what came to be known as Australia (Crow, 2004). It is likely that these activities were the result of a variety of purposes and layers (Gandhi, 1998). There is no doubt that the 18th and 19th century economic capitalist theories of Europe’s Great Britain\(^\text{18}\) meant a need for the expansion of more markets from which to mine raw materials in order to expand their empires. Imperialistic discourses amalgamated race theories representing Indigenous cultures as inferior, primitive or “Other” into its ideology as it justified its appropriation of the Australian colonies (Said, 1985).

This has meant Indigenous Australian peoples have historically been represented by the imperialist culture as inferior to and outside of Western values and culture (Beckett, 1988). These deficit representations engage around Darwinian\(^\text{19}\) binaries of white peoples evolving as a superior “race” and Indigenous peoples, therefore, as inferior, on the lowest rung of human development (Bennett & Cowan, 2003; Sabbioni, Schaffer, & Smith, 1998;)

\(^{18}\) The name of Great Britain was a commonly used term for the Isles of the United Kingdom from the 15th century as part of the act of union but revived in the 18th century in recognition of the British Empire (Encarta, 2009).

\(^{19}\) Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution “On the Origin of Species” (1859) espoused that humans developed from animals, Social Darwinism, which drew from Darwin’s ideas, argued whites were further developed than blacks who were nearer to the Neanderthal human.
West, 2000). These negative images of Indigenous peoples and cultures are deeply rooted within the Australian psyche (Shaw, 2007). They include representations of Aboriginal peoples as: violent, drunken, untrustworthy, lazy, irresponsible, and acting as abusive parents et cetera. This study recognises the legacy of Social Darwinism; whilst aware there is debate as to the interpretation of Darwin’s theories that have been adapted by educational theorists (Patel Stevens & lisahunter, 2009).

In this study, Said’s (1978) canonical text, which is recognised as the founding text of “postcolonialism,” is used to discuss the ongoing effects of colonisation. Said used Foucault’s version of discourse to set up “colonial discourse” because of the way Foucault describes discourse as an instrument of power (1972). For example, representations of Indigeneity that were formed through the colonial discourses of Australia’s history may be traced in the media coverage of the “crisis” of child abuse in the Northern Territory of Australia whereby Indigenous children are “saved” by the patriarchic government (Richardson & Wise, 2008). These colonial representations are present throughout Australia and are evidenced in State institutions such as the education systems. For example, the representation of Indigenous students as “failures” remains a current and potent representation operating at the educational systemic level where low expectations of Indigenous students are tolerated and even documented in policy and reporting documents (APAPDC., 2000) whilst intervention programs are offered to “close the gap” between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.
Colonialism is recognisable in the Western orientation of the educational systems in 2009 despite 30 years of cross-cultural literature advising a multicultural approach to education in Australia (Fordham & Schwab, 2007). Colonial legacies are most potent deep within the Australian culture. Although there are many people, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, working to change colonial representations of Indigenous peoples at every level of society (Grossman, 2003), these representations remain potent and especially difficult to shift in institutions of State, such as education (McConaghy, 2000).

**The Australian educational system**

The contemporary Australian educational system is inextricably connected to its colonial heritage which commenced in the 19\(^{th}\) century and instigated from power relations established since the period of “contact” by the British (McConaghy, 2000, p.227). Western and Eurocentric epistemologies are inherent in the Australian education systems. These ways of viewing the world have impacted upon school leaders’ perceptions and enactment of leadership in schools and communities. In order to be deemed a “high-quality” leader in a Westernised educational system, the leader normally operates from Western educational values, norms, beliefs, and understandings. Examples of “high-quality leadership” (Pearson, 2004) are normed against a Western discourse of leadership.

\(^{20}\) The term “Australian culture” refers to the mainstream Westernised culture based on British culture (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1995) which has been adopted and adapted by the mainstream since Australia was colonised in 1788.
The Australian educational system is one of several institutions, including government bodies and the legal and justice systems that work to conserve the colonial power relationships legitimating the rights of the dominant, Westernised worldview. More recently there has been the advent of Indigenous Australian people donning positions of power and authority in Australian educational institutions albeit in disproportionate representation (Australia Principals, 2009). For the last hundred years educational leaders have adopted Western models of leadership more aligned to Australia’s historical past two centuries than the “futures” possible for the next period in Australian society (Inayatullah, 2002). Colonial legacies, which are alive in the 21st century, represent Indigenous peoples as “other”, at the bottom end of the pyramid, which represents the hierarchical structure of schooling. As a result, educational leaders may find it difficult to imagine alternative futures without the huge “gaps” in health, housing, education, socioeconomic class et cetera between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia:

There are lingering perceptions in some quarters of the Australian community that the gap in educational outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian students is “normal” and that educational equality for Indigenous Australians is either not achievable, or if possible, only achievable over a long period of time (i.e. decades or generations). (APAPDC., 2000, p. 9)

Leadership in schools is based on the notion of a pyramid structure, which places a few, often white males (White, 2007), at the pinnacle of the structure in schools. The majority of “others” in this model are towards the
base of the pyramid in terms of how power is represented. Whilst colonialism is potent in the structures of schooling, it is most potent deep within the fabric of Australian society, at the belief or philosophical level of educational establishments. Whilst the discourses of social justice, equal opportunity, and positive discrimination remain “quiet” but present in the educational systems, they have made little impact at the levels at which discourses need to operate to challenge the dominant ideology of “white” or Western superiority (Hayes, 2006). The “natural” ideology (Rogers, 2004, p. 40) mainstreamed in contemporary society is that of an Australian society being underpinned by the primary belief of a “fair go” for everyone. And yet for many groups, the idea of equal opportunity in education is inaccurate in Australian society, especially for Indigenous peoples (Loughlin, 2008).

In this section I have outlined the perennial effects of colonialism, which remain potent in the education systems of Australia. In the literature chapter (2) and in the theoretical framework (chapter 3), postcolonial literature and theories are explored in recognition of their intimate relevance to this study. In this next section, I move from the impact of colonisation on the educational context to stating the purpose of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to ascertain whether there is evidence of visionary or spiritual leadership in the leadership talk of Indigenous school
leaders and to make comment on the relevance of this to the field of leadership more generally.

This study aimed to investigate and highlight Indigenous Australian leadership because of the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of Indigenous leaders and people in Australia. I wished to highlight Indigenous Australian school leadership because of the strong connection between high-quality school leadership and student outcomes (Caldwell, 2007). The educational outcomes gap is one manifestation of the problem this study aimed to address. I aimed to document and promote positive Indigenous school leadership models to contribute to the field of leadership literature generally and more specifically to add to the paucity of Indigenous leadership literature in Australia. The promotion of positive role models of Indigenous leadership could encourage Indigenous people aspiring to school leadership in order to narrow this gap in representation.

Another manifestation of the problem of “mainly unheard voices” is the underrepresentation of Indigenous leaders in Australian mainstream society partly due to the lack of numbers of Indigenous peoples in senior leadership positions. Their voices “remain mainly unheard” if their position is in dissent to the mainstream (McMullen, 2007, p. 2). This ‘underrepresentation’ is also due to misrepresentation when their voices are in dissent.
I believed that the investigation of strong and visionary Indigenous school leaders could prove to be a part of the solution to the problem of colonial and postcolonial processes silencing the position and voices of Indigenous peoples and leaders or marginalising them. I believed that this study could provide some insight as to how Indigenous school leaders were leading their school communities and, in particular, addressing the educational gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. The “outcomes gap” is recognised by all Australian educators as a significant problem that needs to be addressed in alternative ways as the current strategies are not making the progress that educators were intent on achieving in narrowing the gap (COAG, 2007; MCEETYA, 2007).

The major purpose of this study was to ascertain the possibility of visionary and/or spiritual leadership among the four Indigenous school leaders. The reasons for spiritual leadership being the focus of this study are: my personal interest and belief in spirituality as the core of leadership that can make a difference at the levels necessary in contemporary Australian society also the integration of spirituality in Indigenous peoples’ cultures which formed the basis of my hypothesis that spiritual leadership may be an enacted practice in Indigenous school leadership which coincides with the emergence of and contemporary interest in spiritual leadership literature in the late 20\textsuperscript{th} and early 21\textsuperscript{st} century.
Significance of the Study

It is significant that a search of Australian Indigenous leadership literature pinpoints one master’s study of Australian Indigenous leadership (Lester, 1993), one chapter of a doctoral study which explores the leadership of an Indigenous religious leader (Selway, 1995), one doctoral study of Indigenous Australian women’s career pathways which challenges educational leadership models (White, 2007), and a doctoral study of two white female principals of Indigenous schools in Queensland exploring their work practices through a number of Foucauldian conceptual lenses (Niesche, 2008). In addition, the search located one study focusing on “walking in two worlds” conducted with Indigenous women educational leaders from Canada, New Zealand, and Australia (Fitzgerald, 2006). There is a paucity of research on Australian Indigenous leadership; therefore studies in this area are significant.

This project is significant on at least three counts beyond the paucity of research available. First, the project aims to highlight the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of Indigenous leaders in the belief that this awareness will help bring about strategies to redress the imbalance evident in the education system. Second, the four Indigenous leaders who participated in this study are all school principals who deal with the issues around the educational gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. This remains a significant issue for all educators who may gain some insight from this study’s analysis of Indigenous school
leaders’ approaches to closing the gaps. Third, this study is primarily concerned with the possibility of spiritual leadership being enacted by the four school leaders. Evidence of spiritual leadership among the data gathered would be significant for all school leaders and for the general field of leadership.

On the count of making visible the underrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in leadership, there are initiatives being pursued by the government and other agencies to redress this imbalance. For example, Education Queensland claims that proportionate representation of Indigenous peoples at all levels of its education system is an outcome to be achieved by 2010:

Education Queensland believes that, by increasing the number and range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and leaders in Education Queensland, more sources of advice about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues will be available and there will be a significant increase in the number and visibility of positive role models for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. (Education Queensland., 2002)

The Australian government recently launched initiatives at State and Federal levels to address the lack of Indigenous leadership representation in several institutions (Dawkins, 2007; Evans, 2006); achievement of some of these recommendations has been a government aim for several years (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander. Social Justice Commissioner, 2004; Royal Commission, 1992). Indigenous leadership institutions, funded by government and sponsored by businesses across Australia, have been established; this is a testament to the commitment by the government and industry to the promotion of Indigenous leadership (Queensland
Government, 2003; Sarra, 2006). The findings of this study could be significant in the research and training of potential leaders by providing new insights into Indigenous leaders’ perspectives on their own leadership.

Even though the decade of Liberal Government (1996-2007) has seen a breaking down of the relationship between the Commonwealth and Indigenous peoples in a way not evident for many years prior to Howard’s leadership (Guardian, 2000; Shubert, 2004), the Australian government did continue during this time to provide a considerable amount of federal funding toward attempting to redress the deficit in outcomes for Indigenous peoples across a number of key areas: health, housing, education, child welfare, life expectancy, et cetera. For example, from 2005-2006, the Minister for Education announced “significant funding to Indigenous students who remain the most educationally disadvantaged group in Australia” (Nelson, 2005, p. 5). This significant funding took the form of $505.4 million in 2005-06 to enhance the outcomes of Indigenous students. This was an increase of $12.3 million compared to the previous year’s allocation (Nelson, 2005). Nevertheless, despite these vast budget allocations, the gaps between the outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in education and in other areas (MCEETYA, 2007; McMullen, 2007) remain significant. The National Report for Schooling in Australia in 2007 summarised that over a 7-year period “the achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students remains large” (MCEETYA, 2007, p. 37); the difference is around 20-30 percentage points
in year seven in literacy, which is counted as nil difference over the 7-year period. As is stated in the *Statement of the Problem* of this study, an underlying and complex problem that continues to contribute to the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples is postcolonialism. Economics, no matter how well intentioned, is unlikely to solve this complex problem. These endemic gaps demonstrate the significance of leadership studies that intricately link leadership to educational outcomes (Caldwell, 2007).

While there is hope from the new policy directions of the recently elected Rudd government, the redress of this education gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is likely to take many years. In such a policy context, it is important that there is qualitative research that investigates alternative visions of how to redress the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. This project promotes and values the voices of Indigenous school leaders as one way to address these issues.

The project reported here offers a leadership approach that advocates partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous school leaders. This partnership approach is one significant attempt at a solution to move forward as many leaders, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, advocate that partnerships moving to equal power relations are the only viable way to move forward (Australia Principals, 2009; Dodson, 2002; Evans, 2006). These partnerships aim to operate at the deeper levels of society in the knowledge that the government monies will remain largely redundant unless
sustainable leadership is practised in deep and challenging ways with an aim toward creating new and powerful metaphors for a united Australia wherein all voices are heard. The gap in educational and other outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples will remain significant until some transformation happens in Australia.

Another significant aspect of the project is that it adds to the literature on Indigenous school leadership and to the general field of leadership. Specifically, it aims to add to the field of visionary and spiritual leadership, which is an emergent and, thus, important field of leadership literature to be developed (Beare, 2006; Bhindi & Duignan, 1997; Caldwell, 2007; Dantley, 2009; Duignan, 2002; Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). It provides my reporting of four Indigenous Australian school leaders’ perspectives and strategies aimed at redressing the gap in Indigenous and non-Indigenous outcomes in Australia (Evans, 2006). In the next section I begin a discussion of limitations of this research project.

Limitations of the Study

This study is a but a tiny hologram into the major and deeply complex issues surrounding invasion (Elder, 1998; Mattingley & Hampton, 1988; Trudgen, 2000), colonialism, postcolonialsim, Australian Indigenous representation, Indigenous leadership, and the contemporary outcomes gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The issues, which are both complex and deeply embedded within Australia’s culture, are
recognised by most Australians regardless of their heritage. The problems Australia has to resolve because of its colonial past and decisions made because of the appropriation of Australia in 1788 cannot be underestimated both in their complexity and enormity. The approach to solving these problems is equally enormous and diverse. This study aims to contribute to this solution, as stated above in *Significance of the Study*, although leadership promotion is not a panacea for this complex area.

However, as Mc Mullen pleads in the opening prelude to this study, “We need to make this personal…” (2007, p. 2) and work with Indigenous Australia to close the gap for Indigenous Australians. Mc Mullen advocates that this can be attempted through education. I support Mc Mullen’s forward-thinking thesis, which advocates that closing the gap can be supported through the promotion of Indigenous leadership. However I also recognise that this approach has limitations. This study recognises that a research project written from the epistemology of the “third space” may have taken a more challenging approach which could have a different potential as, to my knowledge, a radical approach has never been tried (Bruyneel, 2007). This study looks at the leadership of four Indigenous school leaders from my (one) worldview and, although this could prove useful to the field of leadership literature, the data are limited.
Outline of the Research Project

This research project investigated approaches to leadership as reported by four Australian school leaders when asked to describe their personal stories and educational leadership in interview talk. In order to conceptualise the study I engaged Foucault’s concept of discourse as forms of representation, bodies of knowledge that construct and define individuals as objects and as subjects (1971). The study sought to find out if the leaders were calling upon a visionary or spiritual leadership discourse, therefore the concept of discourse was key to analysing the leaders’ talk. The study also engaged Foucault’s (1980) analytic of power and related concepts in order to build a theoretical framework with which to set up and conduct the data collection and analyse the data. These concepts were engaged in recognition that discourses are powerful in positioning and maintaining power relations in a postcolonial society. The fact that colonial and postcolonial processes are working in every aspect of Australian society meant that I used postcolonial theories to understand some of the influential discourses operating in the leaders’ (Westernised) educational context. Postcolonial theories were explored in the understanding that they complement Foucault’s analytic of power (1980). These theories may be used to deconstruct discourses as they work to represent “the” truth within a society. The use of discourse (Fairclough, 2001; Foucault, 1971; Said, 1985) was also engaged in the analyses to explore the potential of discourses around visionary and/or spiritual leadership being called upon by the leaders.
I chose to use Fairclough’s (2001) critical discourse analysis because of his conceptualisation of how discourses are shaped by power and language, which complemented Foucault’s conception of discourse. I conducted a series of interviews with each of the four school leaders, four deputy principals, and four Indigenous elders in three of the communities. The interview data were audio taped and transcribed. I collected and analysed school documents and used observations to complement the interview data. I conducted a critical discourse analysis of the data collected and used these analyses to write the data chapters (chapters 5 to 8). These chapters were designed to concentrate on particular questions from the five research questions posed to shape the study. I outline this structure together with the other chapter outlines below to complete this introductory chapter.

Chapter Outline

The thesis is made up of 10 chapters. The prelude and first four chapters introduce the research project by providing the theory, context, literature, and methodology for the major thesis that spiritual leadership may be evident in the discourses called upon by four Indigenous school leaders in the enactment of their role as school principals. The Prelude introduced my journey to this research project. This introductory chapter has provided a statement of the problem, and introduced the research questions, context, purpose, significance, and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 explores leadership and postcolonial literature. The chapter moves through 20th
century leadership literature to focus on the more recent literature on visionary and spiritual leadership, which, I argue, provides more refined representations of leadership. The literature chapter foregrounds the paucity of studies that discuss Indigenous leadership and spiritual leadership in Australia. The theoretical framework is detailed in chapter 3, as a way to focus the concepts underpinning the study. This chapter relies on understanding discourse and its relationship to power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980); and power relations and bio-power and their links to postcolonial theories (Akim, 2008; Beyer, 1999; Gandhi, 1998; Hickling-Hudson, et al., 2004; Huddart, 2005; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Chapter 4 outlines the approach, design, and methodology used to conduct the study. The chapter opens with my reasoning for choosing a qualitative design to conduct the research. I explain how a critical discourse analysis was set up to follow the research process, and then I move to discuss the methods used to access the field and gather the data. I detail how the data were analysed using methods of critical discourse analysis.

Chapter 5 is the first of four data analyses chapters. Chapter 5 provides a picture of what postcolonialism means for two of the school leaders in their contemporary contexts. The use of the term hologram recognises that there remains a plethora of complex and unexplored data outside the tiny holographic lens I have provided in this study. Chapter 6 explores symbols of leadership and Indigeneity, aspects of which were evident from the analysis of the discourses engaged in by all of the leaders in the study.
Chapter 7 presents an analysis of two of the principals’ use of a “spirituality” of leadership as a way to move their communities on towards their articulated dream for Indigenous realisation in contemporary society. In chapter 8, I move to a focused study of one leader’s use of spiritual, Christian, and colonial discourses. I conduct a critical analysis of the discourses evident in the leader’s talk of her quest to realise self-determination for the Torres Strait. Chapter 8, the final data chapter in this thesis, develops my contention that when leaders are operating from spiritual leadership to set direction for their people, then there may be potential for transformation at the heart of a community.

Chapter 9 summarises and synthesises the substantive findings from the research project. I explore the possibility of promoting Eisler’s (1987) partnership model for Indigenous and non-Indigenous school leaders. I conclude the chapter by suggesting some recommendations for future studies.

I now move to chapter 2, which explores leadership literature as a backdrop to the research questions. The research questions aimed to explore which potential discourses were available to and called upon by four Indigenous leaders as they discuss the enactment of their leadership in State primary schools. I explore contemporary and recent leadership literature that gives shape to the colonial, visionary, and spiritual discourses, which I surmised, through my principalship experience, might be engaged by the Indigenous leaders in their role as school principals.
THE SPIRIT & LEADERSHIP

Uncle Don: Christianity is the same as culture and spirituality for the Torres Strait, you see, the beginning of time you were created the same as Our Creator, Father God, you have the same potentials. We have the same attributes, likeness as God so God was there at that time of creation as you journey and now at this time. God is still here with us the same God was yesterday, today and forever, the same, so our culture was blessed, our spirituality was blessed, ‘cause the spirituality of indigenous is the environment, the sea, the land, you know the air we breathe and this was the time when God expresses his spiritual connection with human and so its human ways are the ways of appreciating, of giving him the glory… all them other things that need to come like, confident, inner determination, well the leadership qualities, really personal, of love and understanding …

(Interview with Uncle Don, Torres Strait Islands Elder, Samantha’s school, September 2004).

Introduction

This project investigated the ways in which four Indigenous principals drew upon a visionary and/or spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools when asked to discuss their leadership. The quote above is an excerpt from an interview for this study where Uncle Don, a community elder, connected Christianity to Indigenous spirituality lived through Indigenous culture and the environment. Uncle Don explained that leadership comes from this “spiritual connection” which, for him was “Father God.”
This chapter moves to explore leadership literature for spiritual leadership, which is exercised at a deep level engaging ideas or metaphors that emanate from the “inner leader.” As Thompson (2000) and others (Boje, 2003; Clarke, 2000; Fairholm, 2003; Sanders III, Hopkins, & Geroy, 2003) elaborate, leadership is a process of growth and maturation fed by the leader's inner spirit. The focus on “Spirit” is central to this chapter. I argue, in this review, that for the unheard voices to be heard in order to make a difference, leadership needs to be operating at the spiritual core or from inner leadership.

Chapter 1 provided a statement of the problem; introduced the research questions, context, purpose, and significance of the study; and outlined the research project. In this chapter I provide a brief overview of policy; and then a review of leadership literature from the 20th century that supports mainly Western leadership paradigms. I then review the relatively new field of spiritual leadership and associated concepts. In this study, I argue that leaders need to be operating from this type of leadership if they mean to make any real difference (Mumford, 2006). Postcolonial literature is intricately connected to this research project and its theories are engaged in chapter 3 to help build the theoretical framework for this study.

National Policy on Indigenous Affairs

The current official policy of the national government to Indigenous Australians is that of self-determination and self-management (Guardian,
2000). The first decade of the 21st century witnessed a radical shift in Australian federal policy regarding Indigenous issues with the government intervention of the “Emergency Taskforce,” which was instigated in the Northern Territory in 2007 in response to the “national emergency” of child abuse in Indigenous communities. The Commonwealth Parliament passed five bills described as the “national emergency response” to purported child sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. The bills were introduced and passed through the House of Representatives in one day (Brennan, 2008). This major policy by the federal government marked a return to a visibly patriarchic approach to Indigenous issues rather than self-determination. While some would argue that the notion of self-determination has always been rhetoric in Australian Indigenous policy, the move to an unabashed version of patriarchal colonialism was significant (ANTaR, 2008; Jull, 2008; Loughlin, 2008; McIntyre, 2007; Richardson & Wise, 2008).

**Reconciliation**

In 2007, Kevin Rudd was elected to the office of Prime Minister with a labor mandate. One of the first official responsibilities he undertook was to make a formal apology to members of the Stolen Generation on behalf of the Australian Government (Rudd, 2008). This momentous symbolic action by Prime Minister Rudd promised a definite change in government orientation to Indigenous peoples and policy in Australia. Reconciliation, symbolic and practical, remains a nominated, yet only partially realised
priority at every level of Australian society. The educational level is where reconciliation is believed to play a crucial role (Reconciliation Australia, 2001). No national government has been able to successfully address the difference in outcomes between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australia. Redressing the education gap, for example, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is likely to take many years (MCEETYA, 2007). Despite the policy differences between the Australian Liberal and Labor governments, there has been a stated intention by successive governments to redress the gap. Despite the stated intention, the gaps did not close during the Howard years although substantial funds were allocated to this reform (MCEETYA, 2007). It remains to be seen how far the Rudd policies and approach will realise the aims of closing the gap (Rudd, 2009) as already there are questions about the orientation of the current Labor government to the practical reality of Indigenous self-determination. For instance, the Northern Territory Intervention remains in place despite the plea by Aboriginal and numerous other advocates for Aboriginal Rights that Aboriginal voices be heard on the current review of the intervention being undertaken by the Rudd government (ANTaR, 2008; Brennan, 2008; Calma, 2008; Jull, 2008; Loughlin, 2008; Mcintyre, 2007; Richardson & Wise, 2008; Scrymgour, 2007).

This brief summary of recent Indigenous policy and direction by the federal government serves as an orientation to the policy situation in Australia. It was not my intention to provide an extensive review but rather
to contextualise the contemporary policy situation as this is not integral to
the study. In the next section, I undertake a review of the leadership
literature.

Leadership Literature

I organise the reviewed leadership literature into four main clusters. The
four clusters I have used to organise the literature align with Doyle’s (2008)
four “generations” of leadership theory over the last 80 years. Doyle’s
generations of theory are: trait theories; behavioural theories; contingency
theories; and transformational theories. Whilst my conceptualisation of
leadership theory is not uniform with Doyle’s (2008), I resonate with his
cautions “to recognize that none of the four ‘generations’ is mutually
exclusive or totally time-bound” (p.2). However, there is some development
in leadership theory that has built upon earlier ideas (McCauley & Moxley,
1998).

The nominally chronological development of the literature is more
complex with many established theories and perceptions of leadership from
the 20th century remaining current (Avolio, 2005). The four clusters help
sort and categorise general trends or generations (Doyle & Smith, 2008) in
the literature.

I move through the first three clusters of leadership literature to the
fourth cluster where leadership literature is more focused on the inner leader
and ideas and metaphors around the concept of the inner leader. I argue that
this fourth cluster describes leadership that has leverage to make a
difference because leaders are operating from a visionary or spiritual core.

Having reviewed the literature on the inner leader, which focuses on
visionary and spiritual leadership, I then move to define some concepts
around spirituality, spiritual intelligence, spiritual leadership, spiritual
consciousness, and Indigenous spirituality. In the following section, I
review the literature that is associated with the first cluster.

**Trait & Charismatic Leadership**

This first cluster of leadership literature provides some background to the
second research question on whether Western discourses of educational
leadership are identified in the articulation of the principals’ notions of
leadership.

I have categorised trait and leadership characteristics theories as the
first cluster. These leadership characteristics are visible or external and often
rely on popular or visible notions of leadership that can be readily discussed.
I categorise these trait and characteristics theories within the “leaders are
born” (Williams, Ricciardi, & Blackbourn, 2006, p. 8) paradigm. These
leadership models are often associated with charismatic leadership, which is
also within the “leaders are born” paradigm (Beyer, 1999).

Prior to the 1990s, one view represented in the leadership literature
seemed to prefer the autocratic, charismatic, or religious leadership models
that argued leaders were born to a pre-designed career of leadership (Eysenck, 1967). This model of the hero emanated from classical Greek mythology and legend (Avolio, 2008) and has become known as the “great man” or “great leader” myth (Gemmil & Oakley in Grint, 1997). The charismatic model has been criticised as idealistic, gender biased, and unaware of the empowerment of followers as leaders. The preference for the Western male model of leadership is still evident in educational leadership and contributes to the underrepresentation of women, black, ethnic, and minority groups in positions of educational leadership (Collins, 1991; Essed & Goldberg, 2002; White, 2007).

Charismatic authority is described as “…power legitimized on the basis of a leader's exceptional personal qualities or the demonstration of extraordinary insight and accomplishment, which inspire loyalty and obedience from followers” (Weber & Parsons, 1964, p. 12). Charismatic theories of leadership are associated with Weber, the sociologist, who identified three types of authority, one of which is charismatic authority (Weber & Parsons, 1964). One of these charismatic traits was the emergence of the great man in times of crisis, hence the popular appeal when a hero appears as circumstances require. Bass (1990), however, reported that empirical results indicate that charismatic leadership occurs in the absence of crisis, therefore a crisis situation necessitating the great man or charismatic leader is a myth of leadership.
There continues to be debate that the leadership traits of the charismatic leader identify the “superhero,” and, thus, are unattainable for most leaders. Also the majority of the other traits have been identified in studies of the general population, and therefore cannot be argued to be particular to charismatic leaders (Chemers & Ayman, 1993). Critics of trait theory recognised that the leadership skills that may work in one context may not be appropriate for another context or different group of followers, thus identifying an inherent flaw in trait and charismatic leadership theories (Chemers & Ayman, 1993).

This cluster of literature is helpful to this project as charismatic leadership is often a label attributed to what, I argue, is actually visionary or spiritual leadership operating from a much deeper, spiritual core and presenting as charisma, because inspiration and influence are present in both. While the charismatic and trait theories remain legitimate models in leadership, a significant number of writers have argued that leaders are not born to lead but learn the craft of leadership (Adair, 2003; Phillips, 2008).

Corporate or Systemic Leadership

The second field of leadership literature is clustered around private and government institutions or organisations, for example: business, industry, and education. I have classified management, corporate, and systems theories of leadership in this second cluster, as these theories tend to concentrate on training the leaders from the system or organisation’s
perspective. This form of leadership is within the “leaders are made” paradigm (Phillips, 2008), underpinned by the belief that leaders can learn or be trained into leadership. This cluster sits within a behavioural paradigm, as described by Doyle (2008).

Leaders are made theories mean that educational leadership training and development were being supported by business and management leadership literature together with educational leadership facilities designed to train and provide in-service leaders (Centre for Leadership and Management in Education: CLME, 2008; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1996).

Mitchell (1990) writes from a phenomenological approach that assumes leaders are shaped by their environment and may become the leader required by their community. Leaders are made theories assumed that there were intricate relationships between the system or organisation and the leader. Often the system or organisation took responsibility to develop the leader’s capacity by providing training and leadership programs in this western model (Australian Federal Government, 2007; Cranston & Ehrich, 2008; Locke, 1998; Nelson, 2005; Price, 2001; West-Burnham & O'Sullivan, 1998). The move to build leadership capacity included developing empowerment models that seek to teach parallel and contingency leadership in alignment with “leaders are made” theories (Chemers, 1981; Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley, & Beresford, 2000). Parallel leadership occurs when teacher-leaders are trained to move into designated leadership positions alongside the leader. Contingency models are in place
when training is offered to aspiring leaders, for example, and they move into positions as required (Andrews & Lewis, 2004).

**Transactional and Transformational Theories**

A parallel leadership discussion being debated from the 1970s led to a distinction, by MacGregor Burns (1978), between transactional and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership occurs when “one person takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchange...” (MacGregor Burns, 1978, p. 20). It refers to the management contract focusing on character traits or habits of the leader, which were the focus of studies prevalent around the 1970s, although similar studies continue (see for example, Goffee & Jones, 2008).

Transformational leadership occurs when “one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality” (MacGregor Burns, 1978, p. 20). MacGregor Burns’ explanation of transformational leadership has been adopted to describe excellence in leadership; however this model no longer holds the primary place in the 21st century as studies explore other models that incorporate multiple approaches including transformational styles (Caldwell, 2007). Transformational leadership occurs when the leader and her/his followers become capable of transforming the status quo and “authoring” the future (Mitchell, 1990). While I would classify transactional leadership within this second cluster, I shall explore transformational
leadership with visionary and spiritual leadership, which I have classified as the fourth cluster.

The Movement from External Leadership to Inner Leadership

In the late 20th and early 21st century, with the advent of powerful postmodern and poststructural critiques, discourses around leadership accounted for new understandings of how leadership is conceptualised and constructed by leaders in their roles. These discourses demanded more complex understandings of the leader’s coconstruction of her/his world. Doyle (2008) classified this third cluster of literature as the contingency generation. Leadership discourses focusing on the external manifestation of skills, competencies, traits or characteristics, began to change. As Thompson asserted, “…we have long dispensed with the idea that leadership is a set of competencies” (2000, p. 1). Thus the literature changed to abstract on the internal or inner world of the leader rather than external competencies. Because postmodernism accepts multiple perspectives, the postmodern leadership literature began to question the moral and emotional as well as the intellectual substance of the leader rather than accept external traits or behaviours as the only evidence or conceptualisation of leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992). This change was due to new and multiple understandings, brought about through postmodern and poststructuralist theorisations, of how individuals co-construct meaning around concepts including leadership (Denzin, 2001; Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1997). Due
to philosophers like Foucault (1980) recognising the relationship between discourse, language, and power, leadership researchers such as Senge (1990) and Sergiovanni (1996) explored alignment between leadership and the language in which leaders engage (Combs, 1996). It was recognised by leadership writers such as Duignan and Bhindi (1997) and Fairholm (2003) that unless leaders were operating from their inner belief systems or values, there could be misalignment between their epistemologies and the enactment of their leadership (Thompson, 2000; Wilber, 2000a). This recognition considered leadership as socially constructed – as a series of complex interactions between the leaders’ language and the enactment of their leadership.

Mitchell recognised “…there are no leaders without followers and no followers without leaders…” (1990, p. 62). Within such an approach, empowerment models that emphasised the sharing of power through servant or subsidiary leadership began to emerge (Greenleaf, 1991). The leader’s ability to interact with people was recognised as being critical in the co-construction of leadership contexts (Avolio & Bass, 2002). This movement in leadership literature was a definitive change from the essentialist literature that focused on the external traits of the leader. Models of leadership that focused on traits and systemic theories, which had dominated the literature up to the close of the 20th century, were superseded by literature that took account of changing contexts and the leader’s inner world (Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1997; Heck, 1991).
Sustainable & Substantive Leadership

Concurrently, around the late 20th century, leadership literature was foregrounded by those working from a perspective of substantive or sustainable leadership that looked more closely at change theory (Fairholm, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2005; Schmandt & Ward, 2000; Thompson, 2000). This literature examined what drives the leadership, long term, for substantive change (Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1992), tracing how this energy was transformed into a vision. These leadership models also recognised the importance of the shared vision (Fairholm, 2003; Sanders III, et al., 2003). The findings from this group of studies strongly suggest that real change does not happen unless the leader and the community have a shared vision and are moving in the same direction (Australian Federal Government, 2007; Cranston & Ehrich, 2008; Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1991; Skye, 2007; Williams, et al., 2006).

Thus, as I focused on the inner leader and visionary leadership literature, I began to focus on the central research question: “In what ways do Indigenous principals rely on a spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools?”

Systems & Chaos theories

Parallel to sustainable and substantive literature theories that looked at change theory, systems and chaos theories also recognised the human experience as intricately interwoven with the environment and the human
condition (McCarey, Mihal, Desiderio, & Wheatley, 1993; Osler, 1997). In the bigger picture, change may seem haphazard for a period but beyond that period, order will be restored to the system. These models recognised that the leader’s enactment of her/his leadership must take account of the relationship between leader and environment (Fitzgerald, 2002; Heck, 1996). The fourth research question was posed to find out if the school leaders talked about their leadership in symbols or metaphors that accounted for the constant coconstruction of leadership by the leader and the recognition of chaos and tension being a part of the natural leadership process when initiating change according to these models.

This literature recognises the more complex relationship between leaders and their world and focuses even more on the inner leader and their values and beliefs, and the purpose of their leadership (Byrum, 2006). This led to the development of a focus on cross-cultural leadership and studies associated with this conceptualisation of leadership as intricately related to cultural models as part of the leader’s world (McKenley & Gordon, 2002; Osler, 1997). This recognition precipitated a prolific body of leadership literature focusing on the cross-cultural aspects of leadership.

**Cross-Cultural Leadership - Moving Beyond Worldviews**

I have classified cross-cultural leadership and contingency theory literature in this third cluster on the basis that the leader is operating from a particular worldview or culture and is aware of leadership being contingent on particular contexts. The values and beliefs of the leader are paramount as
the leader may be operating her/his leadership from a set of values or beliefs, which are intricately, related to her/his culture or worldview. However, a review of this cross-cultural literature begins to show a differentiation as some of the leadership literature begins moving beyond the worldview into a transnational paradigm (Costa, 2006; Wilber, 1997).

While writers constructing discourses around visionary leadership were largely in consensus about successful models of school leadership (Hickman, 1998), a parallel and prolific discourse was forming around the debate of how culture affects school leadership (Gerstner & Day, 1994). In the last 30 years there has been a proliferation of studies on cross-cultural leadership, which have examined the ability of leaders to move between cultures both in their national environment and in the international arena (Den Hartog, House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, & Dorfman, 1999). While there are universalities identified for charismatic and transformational aspects to leadership, there are major cultural differences that affect how the leader approaches leadership, according to studies by Gerstner and Day (1994).

**Walking in Two Worlds**

Cross-cultural leadership literature assumes there are several discourses available to leaders from each of the (nominally) two worlds from which they enact their leadership (Fitzgerald, 2006). This walking in two worlds (Boldt, 1980; McKenley & Gordon, 2002; Osler, 1997) is a common practice reported by black, minority ethnic and Indigenous leaders in
Westernised educational settings. Bravette (1996) had to face the reality of her own silence as she had watched other black colleagues, who did not have the strategies to remain authentic to themselves whilst operating in another culture, fail in the system. She realised her silence on matters of racism “…for fear of being accused of having a chip” (p. 9) was condoning the status quo. Leadership literature charted the common experience of leaders having to overcome cultural and other barriers as they aspired to and moved into leadership positions (Fitzgerald, 2006; Nielsen, 2000; White, 2007). Huggins (2004), an Aboriginal academic and leader, speaks of her experiences as a leader walking in two worlds, and her viewpoint on the racism that Indigenous women, in particular, continue to experience as they aspire to leadership:

…Finally, I must come to the core challenges faced by Indigenous women leaders: racism and sexism. And, again, I can only really comment on these challenges by reflecting on how they have affected me… Indigenous women experience simultaneous oppressions including sexism and racism, and sometimes it’s hard to pinpoint which oppression is being experienced at a particular time. If you are dark-skinned and look Aboriginal, most often it's racism... (Huggins, 2004).

Because there have been minimal studies conducted of Australian Indigenous leaders in relation to their understandings of walking in two worlds as leaders from a cultural minority, I explore this phenomenon through the general field of cross-cultural leadership. White’s study (2007) on Australian Indigenous female educational leaders noted the links between her people and other Indigenous peoples: “…Indigenous Australian women have closer links with Native American women and Canadian
Aboriginal women, in terms of their history of dispossession, spiritual ties with land, incarceration on reserves and the current state of communities” (p. 63) due to their country’s history of colonialism. White focuses on female Aboriginal leaders and the common experiences they share with other Indigenous women as they aspire to and move into leadership. The study examines the difficulties the leaders experience as Indigenous leaders in postcolonial countries:

… there are enormous barriers, both personal and institutional, to their success. Vestiges of colonialism such as racism, sexism, socio-economic and educational disadvantage remain entrenched in contemporary Australian society. (White, 2007, p. iv)

This literature serves to background the third research question, which probes the data for the ways in which postcolonial representations are identified by the principals in their personal stories as leaders recounted for this study.

**Black and Minority Ethnic Leaders Experiences as Principals**

Black and minority ethnic leaders have described their experiences of racism and a particular cultural bias in the educational systems they attended both as a student and as an employee (Osler, 1997). The experience of racism in institutions such as the educational system is common to black leaders in the UK (McKenley & Gordon, 2002), Indigenous leaders in Canada (Boldt, 1980), and to both black and Indigenous leaders in the USA (Begay, 1997; Bravette, 1996), and is the recorded experience of Indigenous leaders in Australia (Beckett, 1988; Huggins, 2004; White, 2007). Many
studies focus on aspects of racial inequality in the educational system particularly prevalent in countries that were colonised (McConnochie, Hollingsworth, & Pettman, 1988).

Osler (1997) reported that black leaders became school principals to make a difference to the lives of their students, especially for black and other disadvantaged students; they knew “Schools are political institutions and managing them is a political activity” (Osler, 1997, p. 133). The leaders record the tension between retaining their black identity and being seen to be just to all students. In particular, leaders who themselves have experienced racism or discrimination whilst part of a Western institutional system report that they lead to make a difference to inequities in the system for future generations (Bravette, 1996; Kewey, 1997; Osler, 1997). Some principals report that their motivation for becoming a school leader is to work to make a difference in society to transform these prejudicial attitudes and beliefs entrenched in the system (Walker, 2000). A universal theme described in these studies by black, minority ethnic and Indigenous leaders is how they have learned to become two way literate or two way strong to operate successfully (Walker, 2000). Mc Kenley and Gordon (2002) looked at school principals from black and minority ethnic backgrounds who were leading school communities in the UK. Despite the recognition of the quality of their leadership according to official reports, there were numerous accounts of lack of recognition by professional colleagues. Black and minority ethnic leaders record that in order to be successful in the
mainstream educational system, they had to learn the current discourses of the system and adopt many of the worldviews and attributes of the mainstream culture (McKenley & Gordon, 2002). The leaders report the dilemma they experience in becoming proficient in mainstream educational discourses whilst not compromising their own identity as a black, minority ethnic, or Indigenous person leading in that community (Australia Principals, 2009; Bhabha, 1994; McKenley & Gordon, 2002; Sarra, 2008; Wright, 2001).

This phenomenon has also been described as code-switching (Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006; Fordham & Schwab, 2007). The more proficient the leader becomes at achieving the code- (culture-) switching balance, the more the leader is accepted in the mainstream culture. However, the leaders report difficulty in maintaining balance across cultures, as often there can be a clash when the leader must make an important decision, for example, and the leader’s cultural mores would dictate a different process and even outcome from those expected in the mainstream (Bravette, 1996). This seems to be a common experience for black, minority ethnic or Indigenous peoples as reported across the studies in the UK (McKenley & Gordon, 2002; Osler, 1997), the USA (Bravette, 1996; Dei & Johal, 2005) and Canada (Aronson, 1993; Brown & Sant, 1999; Nielsen, 2000) and in Australia (Beckett, 1988; Fitzgerald, 2002). The general cross-cultural literature reported Indigenous, black, and minority ethnic leaders leading school communities, albeit in underrepresented numbers, must operate from
both worldviews in order to be accepted in their leadership role (Cranney & Edwards, 1998). White (2007) reported leaders must skillfully operate from both cultural epistemologies and inevitably compromise in instances when they must make a decision according to a particular worldview.

This literature provides some background to research questions two and three, which probe the data for Western discourses of educational leadership and to identify postcolonial representations of Indigenous peoples as leaders as they recount their personal stories as school principals. This study was aimed at exploring the extent to which the four school leaders reported experiences of code-switching similar to those of other black, minority ethnic leaders, and whether their leadership discourses called upon either or both codes.

I now review the literature around visionary and spiritual leadership. I categorise this leadership as belonging to the fourth cluster because this leadership operates at the deeper levels of society where a nation forms its driving metaphors that symbolise the identities represented as “truth” for particular groups within its society (Foucault, 1971). I argue that school leaders must operate here, at these deeper levels, in order to make a difference, and it is here where inner leadership works in transformational, visionary, and spiritual models.
Visionary and Spiritual Leadership

Doyle (2008) named this fourth “generation” transformational leadership, whilst I name the cluster visionary and spiritual leadership. If they wish to make a difference, leaders must operate within the fabric of a culture where a nation’s identity is shaped and symbols and metaphors are formed. Leadership clustered around the first three clusters (above) may affect change. However, I surmised that the change needed to affect the symbols and metaphors called upon in order to form discourses of Australian Indigeneity that counter those described above, required more profound leadership. Leadership operating from the leader’s spiritual core may produce discourses that have the power to effect change. This is where transformational leadership (MacGregor Burns, 1978) works. The transformational leader instigates change by moving beyond some of the discourses represented as “the” truth and calling upon discourses that use alternative metaphors to move the community forward.

In this section I review the leadership studies and literature that represent leadership through discourses that use visionary or spiritual language to describe the heart of leadership. I explore the literature for reconceptualised models of leadership that represent leadership as a deep and powerful spiritual exercise.

Recognising that worldviews are strong frames through which leaders view their world, this cluster of literature moves beyond the worldview and
adopts a transnational standpoint. The fourth cluster addresses the background to the central research question, which is “In what ways do Indigenous principals rely on a visionary or spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools?”, and the third question, which asks “How do the leaders use the symbols and metaphors around spirituality as they work to re-envision Australian society?”

**Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence in Leadership**

The literature I identified in this cluster begins to talk of the use of emotional intelligence in leadership (Kempton, 2006, 2006). Emotional intelligence was defined in an article by Salovey and Mayer (1990, p. 188) as “the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions”. Leadership literature recognises the use of emotional intelligence (Clarke, 2000) as a vital characteristic of any leader’s ability to work with the community to sustain change and transformative practice (West-Burnham, 2006).

Although there remain multiple debates as to the existence of emotional intelligence as “intelligence” there is common acceptance of the concept in leadership studies, as an “…awareness of self (and others) is fundamental to educational leadership” (Cranston, Ehrich, & Morton, 2007, p. 13). Authors such as Childre and Cryer (1999), Duignan and Bhindi (1997), Salovey and Sluyter (1997), and Tjong (2000), among many others, accept the connection between emotional intelligence and managing people in
leadership. Goleman (1996) introduced the wider world to the concept of emotional intelligence. The term *emotional intelligence* became widely popularised in leadership and has now been related by Goleman and others to spiritual intelligence, as a highly developed emotional intelligence may signal a leader who engages spiritual intelligence (Lin, 2006; West-Burnham, 2006).

Kempton (2006) posed the question as to whether there is “…such a thing as spiritual IQ.” Her framing of spiritual intelligence (SQ) is akin to the idea put forward by Wilber (2006b), the philosopher, who believes that humans’ interpretations of their spiritual experiences depend on their cultural framework and on their stage of social and ethical development. In Australia there are educational writers exploring the field of spiritual leadership (Belmonte, 2007; Caldwell, 2007; Duignan, 2006; Sykes & Frydenberg, 2006). Caldwell’s (2006) work takes up the focus on emotional and spiritual intelligence prevalent in contemporary educational leadership literature.

Kennedy’s (2002) study of spirituality in the workplace with 390 adult graduates noted that “…spirituality is not something to be put on or taken off as it is part of who you are.” This conceptualisation of spirituality as being at the *core* or *heart* or as being *inner* to the human condition is noted in the study. Kennedy’s study differentiates spirituality from organised religions, which are taken on in one’s lifetime. Kennedy (2002) argued that spirituality is conceptually different from religion.
The Inner Leader

Part of the leadership literature in the 1990s focused on the inner leader naming servant leadership, moral leadership and values-led leadership (Greenleaf, 1991; Hesselbein, Goldsmith, & Beckhard, 1996). Other writers name this leadership literature as authentic, deontological, or ethical leadership (Wilber, 2000a). Essentially these writers focus on the inner leader. The leaders’ strength is due to their ability to lead from the heart, core, or spirit, as well as from a rational base, with their leadership enactment firmly aligned to their beliefs and values (Sarkar, 2003). Studies such as those by Day (2000) and Leithwood (1999) accentuated the fact that for transformation to happen, the leader needed to be operating from the inner or authentic leadership paradigm whereby her/his role and values system were in alignment. Writers such as Andrews and Lewis (2004) and Beare (2001) specify that authentic school leaders need to be cognisant of world trends by holding a futures perspective, and incorporate this knowledge into the strategic development plan for their school community. This literature concurs on the finding that successful school leadership requires leaders who are operating from their values and belief system – from their inner core (Sanders III, et al., 2003).

The inner leader reads community aspirations and sets vision and mission around the deeper purpose of the community. Literature regarding the inner leader captures the heart of a society as it probes the deepest beliefs and values identified by the leader and the community as being of paramount
importance. The inner leader works with authenticity, using models that are based on spiritual intelligences and that attempt to capture the heart of leadership. The emergent literature uses myth and metaphorical language to capture complex ideologies and representations of leadership.

In order to define the field of spiritual leadership I move to explain the key related terms of spirituality; spiritual intelligence; spiritual leadership; transcendental and transformational leadership; and spiritual consciousness and futures as they are used in this research project.

**Definitions of Spirituality, Spiritual Intelligence & Spiritual Leadership**

Although aspects of these terms are similar in meaning and the terms are sometimes used interchangeably, I describe the terms’ common understandings that were adopted for this study.

**Renewal of the Spiritual in Western Societies**

Historically, spirituality had been written out of mainstream Western literature, particularly since the advent of the positivist movement (Friedman, 1999) in the “modern” world (Foucault, 1971), although the study of spirituality has remained sacrosanct in Eastern philosophies (Wilber, 1985). Only rational and sequential forms of reasoning were considered legitimate from the 17th to the late 20th centuries in Westernised societies. Scientific and empirically valid models of intelligence were
considered the only legitimate intelligences (Friedman, 1999). Since the 17th century, spiritual or intuitive knowledge gained the reputation in the Western world of being childlike, feminine, and primitive (Lin, 2006). The scientific paradigm maintains credibility into the 21st century and has had a refocus and revalue (Friedman, 1999), but there are writers who accentuate the need for an integrated intelligence that incorporates “intellectual, emotional, moral, spiritual, and ecological intelligences” (Lin, 2006, p. 41).

In the following sections I discuss the rise and recognition of spirituality in the contemporary (Western) world and its challenge to the dominant scientific rationality per se, before I link the notion of spirituality to the leadership literature.

The 21st century Western renewal of interest in spirituality coincides with studies of spirituality as it relates to leadership (Coman, 2006). Sunderland (2007) critiqued Tacey (1995; 2000, 2004), the Australian author who identifies this yearning for spirituality as an important facet of everyday Australian life as an Australian value. Sunderland argues that Tacey’s discourse of spirituality is a reproduction “of a transcendent narrative of the dominance of Judaeo-Christianity and white Anglo-Celtic subjectivity in Australian culture” (2007, p. 9) in the guise of the embracement of the spiritual. Despite critiques such as Sunderland’s of the attempted monopoly of spirituality by the dominant Western group, spirituality and its associated concepts, for example spiritual leadership, are being “talked up” in current
Australian culture (Bouma, 2006). The Westernisation of spirituality discourses is a current phenomenon.

According to West-Burnham, “…spirituality is the journey to find a sustainable, authentic and profound understanding of the existential self which informs personal and social action” (2006, p. 3). Kempton elaborates that spirituality, or the use of spiritual intelligence is “an ability to sense and connect to the presence of spirit/love/God in yourself, in others, and in the physical world” and to have “access to feelings of compassion, to peace, and to insightful awareness and a tendency to ask questions like ‘Who am I?’ ‘Where am I going in my life?’ and ‘What is the ultimate value of what I’m doing?’ (Kempton, 2006, p. 1). These deeper or more complex questions about human purpose may give insight into whether the leader is acting from his/her spiritual core. Leaders who engage spiritual leadership operate from these foundational premises as they use this grounding to “inform(s) personal and social action” (West-Burnham, 2006, p. 3).

Francis (2002) asserts that spirituality is intricately intertwined with mysticism which “…has clearly defined academic and historical meaning referring specifically to an altered state of profound, tremendous enlightenment, illumination or awakening that changes a person's life forever…” (p. 5). Literature associated with spirituality or spiritual intelligence may align with the transcendental or mysticism. I include these definitions because they recognise that there are leadership writers (Francis, 2002; Sanders III, et al., 2003; Wilber, 2000b) who associate the exploration
of spirituality with some ancient traditions of mysticism and the
transcendental. These writers acknowledge that this stage of enlightenment
or illumination is not often recognisable in leaders; however, the state of
enlightenment, when it is (rarely) identified, is certainly relevant to spiritual
leadership. Leaders of this calibre, such as Mahatma Ghandi, Mother
Teresa, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela in the 20th century, have
the potential to change the world and are recognised as spiritual and
enlightened leaders (Beyer, 1999; Doyle & Smith, 2008).

Litchfield (1999) highlighted that Gardner (2003) was considering
spiritual intelligence as another category to add to his multiple intelligences
(MI) theory. Litchfield (1999) described spiritual intelligence as an
awareness of “otherness” with a sense of wonder and awe at the cosmology
of the world. He noted that spiritual intelligence is used by the wise person
who throughout the ages may have been known as a sage (McLyman,
2005). The spiritually intelligent person has developed her/his ability to
deply listen and know the inner Spirit. Litchfield (1999) continued to
observe that spiritual intelligence includes comfort with chaos, dichotomy,
and the paradoxes of life, whilst the qualities of commitment, dedication,
and faith are present in the spiritually intelligent person’s life and
presumably manifest in her/his leadership.

**Spiritual Leadership**

According to Beare (2006), spirituality is at the core of leadership.
Spiritual leadership happens when the leader is operating from her/his
centre and purpose in this life. Leadership literature is forming a discourse in spiritual leadership, according to West-Burnham, as “…The next door to be pushed ajar - if not fully opened, is that of spirituality and its place in the debate about the factors that inform leadership” (2006, p. 3).

When leaders enact their leadership from their spiritual intelligence, they develop the transcendence to hand over the problem or decision to their higher intelligence in order to gain alternative insight into the problem (Houston & Sokolow, 2006). Studies of leadership, including school leadership, quote leaders as stating they use intuitive knowledge or “inner guidance” (Fairholm, 2003, p. 176) for many and certainly the important decisions they make in their role. There are writers (see for example, Kempton, 2006) who describe the use of intuition as relying on one’s higher self or Spirit, a practice which is said to be “spiritual intelligence” (West-Burnham, 2006, p. 3) or operating in the transcendental. The corporate world is increasingly engaging intuitive methods in its leadership literature and training (Northouse, 2004). According to the literature, spiritual leadership is enacted when leaders hand over decisions to their higher selves and rely on intuition to guide them in the critical decision-making processes (West-Burnham, 2006). Leaders who operate from their spiritual core rely on their higher selves for wisdom (Litchfield, 1999). Beazley (2002) and Byrum (2006) would describe the wisdom as sourced from a higher self, a higher or universal intelligence, or the Spirit within, and as being recognisable when the leader has reached spiritual adulthood. While some
people name the use of spiritual intelligence as intuition, others describe it as engaging the sixth sense or inspirational leadership (Sarkar, 2003). According to Zohar and Marshall (2000, 2004), a leader who is spiritually intelligent has also a highly developed reason and other intelligences. Spiritual leadership does not replace the use of the other intelligences, but the spiritual leader engages a combination of intelligences depending on the problem or issue, and may hand over difficult leadership dilemmas or complex problems to the higher self or Spirit within.

In Western societies discourses around spirituality have often been related to religious, particularly Christian, discourses (Coman, 2006). While contemporary spiritual leadership literature recognises the overlap between religious traditions and spirituality, it separates spirituality from organised religion or traditions (Bouma, 2006).

The next section of this chapter traces the spiritual leadership discourse as it emerges from the late 20th century literature and joins leadership theory.

**Spiritual Adulthood, Transformational and Transcendental Leadership**

Spiritual adulthood is the stage when humans have reached self-actualisation (Mitroff & Denton, 1999) or are moving towards self-transcendence (Sanders III, et al., 2003). The development of the adult into spiritual adulthood is described in various terms by several authors (Byrum, 2006). Houston and Sokolow (2006) qualify that intuitive knowledge or
spiritual guidance comes from a higher or deeper source of knowledge. When this energy is transferred into leadership, it has the potential for transformation. Transformational leadership refers to the stage when leaders operate from their higher self, at the instigation of others’ needs and for the common good of both other people and the environment. Transformational and visionary leadership are seen as higher stages of leadership. However, as defined by Sanders (2003), transformational leadership is the stage before transcendental or spiritual leadership. Leaders who are operating as transformational leaders are enacting their leadership from their higher or moral self, but not necessarily handing over to the Spirit as they are when engaging transcendental leadership (Wilber, 2000b). Although writers (Fry, 2003; Irby, 2002), refer to transformational leadership as aligned with spiritual leadership, they differentiate between transformational and transcendental leadership, naming the transcendental as spiritual or involving pure consciousness. The leaders may actually hand over the problem or issue to a higher being, a higher self or Spirit in order to seek guidance. They engage meditation, prayer, and similar methodologies and practices to centre themselves in order to access their higher selves (Beazley, 2002). Leaders who are operating from their spiritual core seem to place important decisions with the higher or spiritual self, although they may act on other mechanical matters from their intellectual, emotional, or other intelligences.
The spiritual leadership literature, which emerged into the mainstream late in the first decade of the 21st century, focuses on the stage of enlightenment named as the transcendental. The literature is integrated across disciplines and incorporates theory and perceptions from philosophers, psychologists, scientists, and other intellectuals (Beare, 2006; Belmonte, 2007; Fairholm, 1997; Fry, 2003; Houston & Sokolow, 2006; Loren, 2006; West-Burnham, 2006; Wilber, 2000b). For example, Wilber integrates psychological and philosophical theories with spirituality and names this concept “integral spirituality” (2000a, 2000b, 2006a, 2006b) while West-Burnham (2006) uses philosophical perspectives in charting the movement towards the transcendental. Houston and Sokolow (2006) use spiritual guidance principles while Byrum (2006) adapts developmental theories from psychology and philosophical underpinnings in his PhD study of spiritual adulthood.

Spiritual leaders are balanced in their outlook and tend to put their energies into the bigger picture rather than dwell on issues and matters that they may not be able to positively affect (Kempton, 2006). Spiritual leadership connects with the universality of the human condition whilst recognising cultural and other differences that affect worldviews. Lin (2006) emphasised that spiritual leaders operate from their wisdom, which is the ability to make sensible decisions based on a base of accumulated knowledge.
A parallel theme in many of the spirituality studies is the identification of “collective consciousness” (Irby, 2002; Lin, 2006; Sarkar, 2003; Wilber, 2000a), which I move to explore in the next section. This collective consciousness is a call for educational leaders who:

…facilitate the formation of a compassionate and loving global community while teaching the younger generation to forge a harmonious, respectful relationship with nature. …a school that teaches interconnectedness based on love; changes the learning atmosphere; and focuses on school curriculum, teacher-student relationships, school leadership, and the role of education in society as a transformative power…

(Lin, 2006, p. 30).

Spiritual Consciousness and Futures

Some current writers who develop theory in spirituality engage Wilber’s developmental theory of the human ascent into super consciousness (Wilber, 2000a). I find this approach to the conceptualisation of spirituality helpful because it parallels the theory of collective consciousness that was prominent at the beginning of the 21st century and that has been recognised by other writers (Lin, 2006). This collective consciousness recognises that people’s searching for some meaning in their lives is no longer necessarily satisfied by organised religions:

Historically, great movements in any area emerge from a collective consciousness. It is not surprising that in any given field of activity, great ideas do not occur in isolation. Despite an idea germinating in an individual mind, it is interesting to note that the same idea strikes two or more thinkers, geographically far apart, around the same time. Collective consciousness results from consensus…The power of collective consciousness has not been fully explored or appreciated… (Sarkar, 2003, p. 1)
Spiritual consciousness is “the newly emerging integral consciousness (which) may become an important player in the world culture of the twenty-first century” (Combs, 1996, p. 120). This search for meaning has been recognised by studies across a range of disciplines in Australian society over the last 20 years (Randrup, 1997). The integration of consciousness or collective spirituality is part of a movement for connectedness to other human spirits and to the environment that humans share (Schmandt & Ward, 2000). The call for connectedness has grown from new understandings inspired by the sustainable environment movements interwoven with the peace, earth, and ecological movements (Berkes, Folke, & Colding, 1998; Schmandt & Ward, 2000; University of Technology, 2001) and “ancient” Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wisdom about humans’ interconnectedness to earth and all life (Dalmau & Kelly, 1992).

The futures movement recognises the “triple bottom line” that measures human, ecological, and economic benchmarks as important (Inayatullah, 2002). The collective consciousness has a desire to connect with all humans and with the environment rather than remain in nationhood politics. These philosophies are in alignment with futures literature (Gidley & Inayatullah, 2002; Milojevic, 2005; University of Technology, 2001; Wilson, 2000). Part of the futures literature base includes a belief system that humans have the potential to create their own preferred futures rather than accept the future that may eventuate if they do not act proactively. Spiritual consciousness and Futures literature serve as a background to the fourth research question,
which asks: “How is leadership symbolised by the leaders in interview talk when asked to describe their leadership approach?”

**Indigenous Australian Spirituality**

Indigenous Australian spirituality has remained current and fluid in Indigenous cultures although, for some peoples, it has become interwoven with the religious beliefs and values of religions, particularly Christian religions, introduced into Australia from other cultures post “contact” (Chesterman, 1999; Harris & Malin, 1997; Lee, 2006). For many Indigenous peoples, spiritual beliefs are derived from a sense of belonging to or being a part of the land, sea and air, connected to other people, and spiritually connected to one's culture (Chesterman, 1999; Craven, 1999; Doomadgee, 1996; Elder, 1998; Maddock, 1991; Penrith, 1996). While Western peoples have been interested in how Indigenous spiritualities played out in cultural activities, particularly painting and dance, they have never legally, politically, or economically accepted Indigenous spirituality in its connection to the land and sea (Russell, 2006).

Indigenous Australian peoples have recognised the need to remain connected to each other and to the land and sea for tens of thousands of years (Doomadgee, 1996). This spiritual connection is named “The Dreaming” (Penrith, 1996).
The Dreaming

Literature on Indigenous peoples in Australia describes The Dreaming as the belief and practice of spirituality in Indigenous people’s lives.

Indigenous peoples have a set of discourses around spirituality and The Dreaming. Although the term can have different meanings according to the Indigenous group, essentially The Dreaming refers to a “complex network of knowledge, faith and practices that derive from stories of creation, and which dominates all spiritual and physical aspects of Aboriginal life” (Penrith, 1996, p. 4). Until more recently these spiritual conceptualisations had little value in Australian Westernised culture:

…So the sad thing about it all was the missionaries didn't realise that we already had something that tied in with what they'd brought to us. They saw different as inferior, and they didn't ask us what it was that we had. And it's very sad because if they had asked... things may have been different today (Doomadgee, 1996, p. 1).

Doomadgee goes on to argue for the existence of a connection between the Aboriginal worldview and that of the missionaries:

Our people, before the white man came were very spiritual people. They were connected to land and creation through the Great Spirit...So there wasn't much difference in what the missionaries brought and what we already had…(Doomadgee, 1996, p. 1).

In a similar vein Neill, an Indigenous Australian, in a study of women religious leaders, describes her spiritual and cultural beliefs:

Our Dreaming teaches us to trust in God, the Creator of all things, and respect the things of heaven and earth and we will be blessed with life eternal. We have to listen and observe our Mother Earth for she provides the clues to our future and the heavens determine our wellbeing. This is the essence of our Dreaming (Neill in Selway, 1995, p. 87).
The interconnection between the Dreamtime, the Creator, and Mother Earth underpins notions of oral story telling of the Dreaming. Dalmau and Kelly (1992) describe the sacredness of the Dreaming:

A Dreaming is a myth from the Dreamtime and a way to bring to waking consciousness the nature of the universe through the use of story. The notion of aboriginal dreaming contains information not just about the past - it also contains the present and the future. This body of secret wisdom is orally transmitted and includes sacred sites, stories and ceremonies (p. 48).

According to Dalmau and Kelly (1992) the real knowing or wisdom is a profoundly secret and sacred phenomenon often inscribed in sacred drawings at sacred sites. The sacredness, often represented in symbol and myth, is part of Indigenous peoples’ connection to Dreaming and story telling.

Land (sea and air) is part of Indigenous identity, with Indigenous Australians forming their identity from a deep and spiritual connection to the land for more than 50,000 years (Turner, 2001). As Bayet-Charlton in Grossman (2003) explains, “Aboriginal people traditionally have a strong physical and spiritual bond with the Australian landscape through “The Dreaming” (p. 175). She continues (Bayet-Charlton in Grossman, 2003), “Land ownership, access and use is considered priority number one for Aboriginal people. Without land, there is no base for the structure of Aboriginal culture” (p. 175). These connections between land and spirituality for Indigenous peoples serve to provide some background for the
fourth research question, which asks the leaders to name the symbols they use to describe their leadership.

I now move to summarise the leadership literature that was explored in this chapter and that provides a background to this study on the possibility of Australian Indigenous school leaders’ spiritual leadership.

**Spiritual Leadership Literature in Summary**

In summary, leadership theory in education as it approached and moved into the first decade of the 21st century has focused on visionary leadership, ethics, authenticity, sustainability, emotional and spiritual intelligence in leadership, and team empowerment. A set of discourses around spirituality, spiritual intelligence, and spiritual leadership is emerging together with the wider discourse on spiritual consciousness and futures. These literatures have a synergy with Indigenous spirituality. Indigenous spirituality, or The Dreaming, remains a profound and vital part of Indigenous Australians’ identity, culture, and leadership.

**Conclusion**

This literature review explored the general literature on leadership and traced the more recent leadership literature that focused on the inner leader, and moved to spiritual aspects of leadership. Other strong elements of the research studies reviewed in this chapter are visionary and transformative leadership. The advent of research on the impact of emotional intelligence
on the sustainability of leadership has led to another concept in Western leadership literature, which is that of the presence of spiritual leadership, and leaders who operate from their spiritual core.

In chapter 3 I engage Foucault’s theory of discourse and analytic of power/knowledge, power relations, and bio-power (1971, 1980, 1989, 2000) together with postcolonialism to focus on the possibility of spiritual leadership being evident in the discourses called upon by four Indigenous principals in the enactment of their school leadership
FIRE IN THEIR BELLY

Extract 3.1

40. Dave: …So if it’s your own thing coming from right down here, from your gut, from your heart, from your (gestures to stomach and then heart) a, that kind of building, that kind of power is, makes you untouchable. You know? So, you’re going to go out in society and these kids are going to take their place in the world with fire in their belly and nobody will, nobody can touch them because they’ll have that power to stand up by themselves...

(Interview One with Dave, November 2003).

Introduction

This chapter is entitled Fire in Their Belly, which comes from a quote taken from the interview transcript of one of the principals, Dave. Dave called on this metaphor to describe his students’ Spirit or power, which he wanted to help unleash through his “emancipatory” leadership (Interview One with Dave, November 2003). In this research project I attempt to access the meaning of “fire in their belly,” the “Spirit”, or power often symbolised in spiritual literature as being deep within, in the belly or within the gut. It is in this realisation of power or Spirit within, according to Dave, that his students may have the potential to become “untouchable” (extract 3.1, turn 40, line 4), “…to stand up by themselves”… (extract 3.1, turn 40, line 8) as they have recognised their power, Spirit, or the fire in their belly. In order to unpack these and other meanings in the interview talk of Dave and the other
three leaders, I use concepts around discourse and truth, power, knowledge, and postcolonialism.

Chapter 2 explored Western literature on leadership in order to develop an understanding of early leadership theories, and concluded by tracing the more recent leadership literature, which has taken a focus on what I have framed as the inner leader or visionary and/or spiritual aspects of leadership. I argued that in order to make a difference, leadership needed to be operating at the deeper levels of society and needed to be in the form of inner leadership operating from the spiritual core of the leader. In this chapter I connect theories of discourse (Foucault, 1971), Foucault’s analytic of power (1980), and postcolonialism to help provide a theoretical framework for the possibility of spiritual leadership being espoused in the discourses called upon by four Indigenous leaders in their role as principals.

I conceptualise leadership that makes a difference as a spiritual social practice. Founding studies based on this theorisation come under the rubric of spiritual leadership (Coman, 2006). Such theorising represents a disruption to the notion of leadership as a series of traits or characteristics. The focus here is on the inner leader and the leaders’ description of their intention as school leaders. Thus, this study, in part, investigates the ways in which relationships based on power provide and deny certain representations of leadership and Indigeneity. These relationships of power work towards providing or denying certain displays of leadership in the talk of the leader participants. The theoretical framework provides a standpoint
from which to conceptualise spiritual leadership and to gain some understanding of how the study was approached. I define discourse by following Foucault’s line of thought whereby discourse is “considered to be an institutionalized way of thinking, a social boundary defining what can be said about a specific topic” (Foucault, 1971, p. 18) with his qualification that discourse is much more than language. I then move to discuss power. I explain Foucault’s analytic of power and how it is always in relationship to discourse, knowledge, and truth relating to his concepts of power relations, bio-power and power/knowledge (1971, 1980, 1997, 2000). Finally, I provide an account of postcolonial theories and describe how these have been used to frame the relationships among discourse, power, and postcolonialism, and then move to the central argument representing the possibility of spiritual leadership in the discourses called upon by the school leaders.

The interview questions aimed to explicate the core metaphors in the discourses upon which the leaders drew. These core metaphors may be culturally identified following Foucault’s research objective of deconstructing how subjects are realised in different cultures (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982). The current study assumed that an explication of the metaphors called upon in the principals’ discourses used to describe their personal stories and their leadership would provide valuable insights into postcolonial representations and spiritual leadership. I assumed that within the discourses there would be metaphors associated with culture and
leadership that could be deconstructed to provide insight as to how the leaders as subjects become realised in their coconstruction of reality through the discourses. It is within relations of power within the discourses that the leaders, as subjects, are realised. Foucault’s work on power and power relations has been used in educational studies over the past two decades (Babcock, 2000; Ball, 1990; Goodwin, 1996; Olssen, 1999; Peters, 2007; Saltmarsh, 2008) to “explore discursive practices that perform an educative role in the constitution of subjects and of human forms of existence” (Olssen, 1999, p. 6). I aimed to explore how the leaders’ discourses contributed to or negated their subjectification as leaders in a Western educational system.

The Problem of the Present Time

In order to build the theoretical frame for this study, I selected various postcolonial theorists and literature in the final section to make connection between Australia’s colonial history and its currency in contemporary Australia (Ashcroft, et al., 2006, 1995; Bennett, Turner, & Volkering, 1994; Bhabha, 1994; Dirlik, 2000; Gandhi, 1998; Hickling-Hudson, et al., 2004; Malpas, 2001; Said, 1978; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Whilst accounting for the myriad of influences colonisation has had, and continues to have, on the school leaders and their school communities in postcolonial Australia, I was interested in discourses that are represented as spiritual in nature (see page 17 of Prelude). This research project moves to focus on the “currency” of
colonialism at the deepest level, which affects the spirit of both the individual and society. I was interested to investigate what I perceived as the problem of the present time, which, for me, is the power relation that silences the voices of Indigenous leaders through the recognition or denial of particular discourses. I followed Foucault’s suggestion, “Maybe the most certain of all philosophical problems is the problem of the present time and of what we are in this very moment” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 216).

**Foucault’s tool-box**

In order for me to investigate “the problem of the present time” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 216), I was able to make use of Foucault's analytic tool-box to choose the tools that I considered would be useful to me in the set up and analysis of this study:

I would like my books to be a kind of tool-box which others can rummage through to find a tool which they can use however they wish in their own area... I would like [my work] to be useful to an educator, a warden, a magistrate, a conscientious objector. I don't write for an audience, I write for users, not readers. (Foucault, 1974, pp. 523-524)

I found Foucault’s (1971) concept of discourse an imperative tool for my study, and his analytic of power and related concepts vital to an understanding of discourse. Power reproduces itself whilst theorising the construction of discourse. I wished to deconstruct the discourses called upon by the school leaders in an attempt to uncover the relationships of power within postcolonial discourses and, possibly, spiritual leadership discourses.
In particular I was interested in the notions of bio-power, power relations, and power/knowledge as I proceeded with my analysis. I now move to explore Foucault’s notions of these concepts and how I have adopted them as useful tools with which to “open” the interview talk of the school leaders. I begin with Foucault’s notion of discourse.

Discourse

In order to illuminate how relations of power work, I call on the notion of discourse. Discourses are forms of representation, bodies of knowledge that construct and define individuals as objects and as subjects (Foucault, 1971). They are not a way of describing the world; rather their formation is a way in which the world comes into being. Discourses, therefore, become more than forms of representation:

…rather, it is through discourse itself that the world is brought into being. It is also in such a discourse that speakers and hearers, writers and readers come to an understanding about themselves, their relationship to each other and their place in the world (the construction of subjectivity). It is the complex of signs and practices which organises social existence and social reproduction (Ashcroft et al., 2006, p. 71).

Discourse remains a contested notion, however, “despite important differences of emphasis, discourse is an inescapably important concept for understanding society and human responses to it, as well as for understanding language itself” (Jaworski & Coupland, 1999, p. 3). This accepted, discourse is a way of describing, treating, and interacting with the subject through the lexical choice. It is this choice of language that
represents certain things and affords the subject power or status, or may take away the power or status of the subject undergoing classification through the discourse. Discourse helps us “understand society” (Jaworski & Coupland, 1999, p. 3) and interact with society, and, even as the discourse fluctuates, it becomes much more than language:

Instead of gradually reducing the rather fluctuating meaning of the word ‘discourse’, I believe I have in fact added to its meanings: treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements (Foucault, 1972, p. 80).

Discourse operates on subtle rules that exclude or include statements that can be used to represent people, things, and events. Importantly, discourse acts as a social boundary defining how the people, things, or events may be treated or known. Power relations (Foucault, 1980) work within the discourse to treat or represent certain subjects as power-full whilst others are denied status within the system of statements or representations that become part of the discourse.

As social practice, discourse supports statements that come to be perceived as essential truths. Discourses are alleged to represent reality or the truth and their treatment of people, things, and events is perceived by certain groups in society as “the” truth or reality. Whilst, on occasion, discourses may be challenged as to their representation of truth, in many circumstances, the dominant discourses are not challenged but accepted as representing reality or truth; therefore the power relations represented within constitute reality as social practice.
Institutions play a crucial role in shaping the discourses which build these realities: “…the institution gives discourse power” (Foucault, 1972, p. 216). People may become aware that there are rules around each discourse that include what can and cannot be said as part of the discourse, but not everyone is cognisant of the rules of exclusion. Foucault describes these qualifications on the order of discourse as the “three great systems of exclusion governing discourse - prohibited words, the division of madness and the will to truth…” (1972, p. 219).

“Prohibited words” relate to engaging in “political or sexual discourses” (Foucault, 1972, pp. 216-219). Foucault identifies that it is not politically correct to engage in these discourses in mainstream forums. He uses “political or sexual discourses” as examples of discourses that may challenge the status quo. This study was interested in the Western educational discourses that exclude or marginalise political discourses as controversial and inappropriate debate for State employees, especially those who have been accepted as mainstream leaders. Whilst primary school principals are expected to voice their opinion on matters of educational importance, it is not deemed acceptable for them to critique the State educational system that employs them or to don a politically active role. In addition, spiritual leadership or acknowledgement of calling upon the Spirit to guide one’s decisions as a school leader would be deemed politically inappropriate and thus part of the excluded discourse in State mainstream education.
Foucault uses as an example of the second exclusion the madman whose speech is dismissed. Foucault argues that the 19th century institutional system relegated the madman to be excluded from having a viewpoint in the psychiatric discourse that became part of a set of very powerful medical discourses. The exclusion of the madman’s voice remains within current institutions, which still operate on systems of exclusion. These systems may operate on binaries that either include or exclude subjects or subject matter depending on how they are classified by the system. For this study, the madman could possibly be the school leader who calls upon discourses of leadership that envision a very different Australia, or who engages spiritual leadership discourses that are not mainstream leadership discourse in the State educational system. This potential is present assuming the school leaders call on different discourses as they interact with their environment creating potentials for their students and community, potentials that are present in The Dreaming but not yet in the mainstream educational arena. Although these potential discourses may be present within the leaders’ talk, according to this study, they may be hidden due the first two of Foucault’s exclusions (Foucault, 1972, pp. 216-219). The exclusion may be because the discourses are shaped by those who have been excluded, both because they voice from the margins and/or their voice may be too political for current times.

Foucault then names the “will to truth” as the third exclusion, and traces its evolution from early Greek times when Western discourses were founded
as legitimate in their pursuit of the highest truth. The will to truth became the “will to power,” as knowledges presented as the truth were positioned as powerful. Thus the “will to knowledge” became positioned as powerful, as knowledges were categorised into academic disciplines. Certain knowledges became powerful whilst others were excluded. For example, in the discourse of medicine, Western treatments were counted as legitimate as they aligned with a positivist view of the world while Eastern knowledges, such as acupuncture, were excluded as illegitimate as they derived from a different worldview. Gradually the Western discourse of medicine with its positivist view of the world became powerful due to its knowledges being perceived as the truth in the treatment of patients. In this study, Foucault’s third exclusion relates to Indigenous knowledges that have been marginalised and presented as primitive, as their leaders’ voices have been silenced as illegitimate.

Thus, particular knowledge disciplines are classified as having status which, in turn, makes their associated discourses more powerful. In the 18th and 19th centuries, nature and science had status as the highest truths. In the educational systems, bodies of knowledge were presented in scientific discourse as the legitimate knowledge or the truth which is how they exclude or marginalise other knowledges (Foucault, 1972):

Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it. (Foucault, 1972, p. 227)
Discourse supports one set of interests in society and presents one set of knowledges founded on a particular ideology as reality or “the” truth. These discourses become powerful as they come to look as if they are “natural” and as such take up a dominant position in society; thus, in Australia, the power relations are presented as natural in the postcolonial binary of black and white, with the latter holding the truth. In this way discourses may actually constrain and/or enable our ability as language users to think and see and to express what we think and see. Discourses have power in language use itself; they do not only represent power. Language users may position themselves as actors within powerful and prolific discourses that operate to present one set of realities accepted as natural or the truth, and use these knowledges to maintain their position or, indeed, to challenge the truth held within the discourse.

To summarise, discourse in this thesis will be used to refer to a system of statements that represents ways of saying, writing, thinking, and knowing (Foucault, 1971). Discourses are realised as social practices around texts and language and so they are much more than just language. They produce representations of truths that enable and/or constrain our very ways of seeing, talking, and thinking about the world. In turn, discourses are represented by the world in a reciprocal relationship that results in particular discourses becoming powerful mediums in their own right. Discourses only ever represent one set of perspectives on truth. For this study a conceptualisation of the “more” of discourse is imperative as the more is
built on power relations, truth, and knowledge. The theoretical frame is conceptualised around these concepts because of the assumption that postcolonialism, and particularly its effects on power relations, affects many aspects of the lives of the actors in this study – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The founding notion of Foucault’s discourse and that of Said’s “colonial discourse” (Ashcroft et al., 2000) are investigated within the “more” of the school leaders’ talk for aspects of postcolonialism and a spiritual dimension to their leadership role.

In the next section I turn to Foucault’s analytic of power which I use, together with discourse, as part of the theoretical framework for this study. I then move to related concepts around power that I borrowed from Foucault’s tool-box to become part of my toolset to conduct this study.

Power

Foucault did not offer a theory of power because he considered any attempt to define power as futile. Foucault (1982) further clarifies the general underlying theme to his work on power, confirming that his ideas do not represent a theory or a methodology. Instead he offered an analytic of relations of power and how it is exercised. Foucault explains:

... My objective, instead, has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects. My work has dealt with three modes of objectification which transform human beings into subjects. (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 208)
Foucault’s analytic of power includes attention to two techniques of power: concerned with “the subjugation of bodies” and “the control of the population,” respectively (Foucault in Cousins & Hussain, 1984, p. 245). The first technique is used to control humans by attributing certain characteristics to them as a process of subjectification, making them dependent on a set of subjectivities available. I explore this technique of power below. The second technique occurs via the use of bio-power, which is explored below in the section, Bio-power. I borrowed these two main techniques from Foucault’s tool-box as I found them useful in this study to conceptualise how the power relations had been set up and maintained in colonised Australia (Cousins & Hussain, 1984, ch. 9).

Subjectivity

Foucault explained that human beings are made “subjects” through forms of power that subjugate. Subjugation is achieved by the use of control or dependence. Foucault was concerned by the 19th century practice whereby the State imposed subjectivity through its various institutions and thus replaced the power of the church. The State, according to Foucault, is the new form of “pastoral power” that looks after the subjects’ health and well being and “integrates the individual” providing “…they submit to a set of very different patterns” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 215). At the same time and always as part of his analytic of power, Foucault recognises the possibility of resistance that can “… promote new forms of
subjectivity through the refusal of this kind of individuality which has been imposed on us for several centuries” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 216).

When applied to the institution of state schooling, there are many relations of power at work that categorise versions of subjects of students and teachers in the highly governed circumstance of education. State educational establishments are expected to follow systemic policy, which in Australia is a Westernised model of education in alignment with the dominant Western worldview. There is no tolerance in the educational system of individuality (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 216). Providing students conform, they will pass school as the system looks after their health and wellbeing (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982). At the same time, the school leaders in this study and others like them are required to “close the gap” between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (Rudd, 2008). One aspect of the context for the problem of Indigenous leaders’ voices remaining mainly unheard is the gap in representation of Indigenous leaders, who may have a specific set of responses to closing the gap for their Indigenous students. The mandate runs parallel to recognising that the dominant discourse (will to truth and knowledge) is designed to control and create dependency, rather than be open to other voices. This study was intent on exploring how the leaders managed these tensions and dilemmas in their leadership role and whether they called upon non-Western and perhaps
spiritual discourses “to promote new forms of subjectivity” as resistance (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 216).

Foucault uses the sane and mad as an example of how the State achieves this highly governed circumstance by separating its subjects into categories. The institution of schooling controls and creates dependency by separating students into those who pass and those who fail as subjects of the system. There is argument that the power relations of the State system of education are set up in such a way that its subjects are predestined to pass or fail (DETYA Equity., 2000; Pearson, 2004). The system is not designed to encourage others, whether students or school leaders, who may voice a dissenting discourse to exercise their power or release the fire in their belly to challenge the power relations that have been set up. In fact, Foucault’s “panopticism” (1977, part 3, ch.3), which is the system of surveillance set up in institutions to enforce the dependency needed for regulatory control, provides the ongoing and comprehensive technologies of power required to maintain the power relations without the use of external force.

In addition to analysing how subjectivity is used by the State as a technique of power, Foucault explores how power works in other relationships. His analytic does not assume the traditional position of power being possessed and immovable.
Power relations

According to Foucault, power is always in relation, which is why he chose to provide an analytic of how power works rather than a definition that suggests power is static. Capillary power is the metaphor Foucault engages to describe how power is in continual motion and always in relationship, therefore presenting possibilities:

But in thinking of the mechanisms of power, I am thinking rather of its capillary form of existence, the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives (Foucault, 1980, p. 39)

His analytic circulates power within the relations of people and it is in this relationship, he explains, that power is exercised:

Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody’s hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application. (Foucault, 1980, p. 98)

For Foucault, “…relations of power are open-textured: they are exercised from innumerable points, not limited to one particular domain; they take a wide variety of forms and are only partially coordinated” (Cousins & Hussain, 1984, p. 228).
His analytic of power suggested power is “exercised rather than possessed” (Foucault, 1977, p. 24). More traditional understandings of power have conceptualised it as being possessed and exercised from a sovereign source, imposed from above and descending to the masses. Foucault (1980) does not discount power in this form. He does, however, suggest an alternative way of analysing how power is exercised in a society. His alternative is to suggest that power should be analysed as ascending and as working in a capillary nature - as in a network where the participants are in relationship. For Foucault, power is not a commodity located with one person or institution. Rather, it is a certain type of relation between individuals: “Power relations…are very complex” (Foucault, 2000, p. 327). Historically there has mainly been one set of (known) legal and institutional tools with which to analyse power. These models assumed a pyramid structure with power positioned and wielded from the person(s) at the top. These models further assumed that power was possessed by those at the top of the monarchy, aristocracy, or oligarchy, for example, and operated in a descending model whereby it was used to position those in power and those outwith. These models assumed power is in a state of domination whereas Foucault’s model is of power relations:

The analysis of power relations is an extremely complex area; one sometimes encounters what may be called situations or states of domination in which the power relations, instead of being mobile, allowing the various participants to adopt strategies modifying them, remain blocked, frozen. When an individual or social group succeeds in blocking a field of power relations, immobilizing them and preventing any reversibility of movement by economic, political or military means,
one is faced with what may be called a state of domination where freedom is constrained or limited. (Foucault, 1997, p. 283)

The above example of power mobilised is an extreme circumstance for Foucault. Foucault advises that power must be analysed at the edge of the capillary in order to unpack it as a network of relations; always in tension and never held with a particular group as a possession. For Foucault power is not negative, as it may be a positive force; but neither is its exercise neutral (1980). And so, for this study, power is omnipresent, as the fire in the belly (see above, extract 3.1. turn 40, line 6) which Dave claims is never lost, omnipresent and always accessible, presenting possibilities as a positive force for change. For Foucault, “there are no relations of power without resistances” (Foucault, 1980, p. 142), described by him as working at the edge of the capillary. Therefore, according to Foucault’s analytic of power, which I have adopted as part of my toolkit for this study, the possibility of change in the power relations remains present. This study questions whether the school leaders were adopting spiritual discourses that were working in resistance at the edge of the capillary amongst relationships within society and particularly institutions when “the other…decides to form resistance against permanent structures, then faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible inventions may open up” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 220). Foucault further asserts that in order to challenge the power relations in institutions, “…it is important to know the history of power relations to be able to transform or abolish them” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982,
This plethora of responses and possibilities within the power relations is an assumption underpinning this study.

This resistance which, Foucault (1977) names as always present, is likely not to be a large scale rebellion, rather multivocal and positioned at many points in the network. In fact, his analysis states that there may be “innumerable points of confrontation” (Foucault, 1977, p. 27); these points of confrontation are not always between State and citizen or between social classes as is often surmised when power struggles are discussed. These points of confrontation could arise through the use of discourses that treat the subjects in a manner different to that suggested by the institutional norm. Foucault’s concept of power relations encompasses the notion of analysing the institution “from the standpoint of power relations rather than vice versa” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 222). Assuming that where there is power, there is resistance, this analytic presents the possibility of transformation through a change in the power relations.

So, for this study, Foucault’s (1980) analytic of power and its relations allow the space to continue to problematise the practical constraints placed on and around the leaders’ lived experience of leadership as employees of a State institution. This study’s theoretical frame, based on Foucault’s analytic of power and resistance, suggests possibilities for changing these seemingly immovable practical constraints built into the State institution of schooling.
Foucault elaborates that schools, as State institutions, work by a “whole ensemble of regulated communications: lessons, questions, orders, etc. and a whole series of power processes (enclosure, surveillance, reward, punishment, the pyramidal hierarchy)...” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 216). Foucault (1977) details how schools and hospitals followed prisons and the army in exerting total control over subjects through rendering them “docile”. This was achieved through power processes such as those above, which developed a series of controlling mechanisms such as timetables. Timetables that engage “the three great methods - establish rhythms, impose particular occupations, regulate the cycles of repetition - were soon to be found in schools, workshops and hospitals” (Foucault, 1977, p. 149). In analysing power relations at work in these institutions, Foucault continues by naming bio-power as the technology used to manage subjects in these groups and institutions.

**Bio-power**

For Foucault, bio-power is a technology of power, used as a technique to control large populations. At the commencement of the enlightenment, there was a need to organise the population due to the emergence of the modern nation state or modern capitalism (Foucault, 1984). The distinctive quality of the political technology of bio-power is that it allows for the control of entire populations. The term *bio-power* is about having power to control other bodies. Bio-power, for Foucault, contrasts with traditional modes of
power based on the threat of death from a sovereign. In an era where power must be justified rationally, bio-power concentrates on the regulation of the body and is viewed as a positive force in society rather than as power’s former orientation as a negative force under threat of death. Bio-power is the technology of regulation of customs, habits, health, reproductive practices, family, blood, and well-being (Foucault, 1984). Foucault recognised that early in the 19th century the State required some form of mechanism to control or regulate the bodies for which it assumed responsibility. This is when the State institution found its role in regulating large groups to serve the capitalist state. Schools, hospitals, the army, the penal system, asylums, and factories were all institutions that served as places where bio-power could regulate the population. Foucault (1977) traced the histories of societies that had developed institutions based on willing control in the 19th century and used the institution of schooling as one of his examples. Schools and other institutions became accomplices in the role of maintaining the bio-power:

Hence there was an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of postulations marking the beginning of an era of bio-power. (Foucault, 1984, p. 262)

State institutions “…also acted as factors of segregation and social hierarchisation, exerting their influence on the respective forces of both these movements, guaranteeing relations of domination and effects of hegemony” (Foucault, 1984, p. 263).
Bio-power became the great technology of power in the 19th century, and was recognised by Foucault (1984) as a primary instrument in the development of capitalism. Australia, as a 21st century capitalist country, is founded on this Westernised regime and its ideologies, and so may be said to rely on bio-power to perpetuate these ideologies and their supporting discourses. The theoretical frame for this study assumes that the dominant discourses perpetuated in mainstream Australian institutions will complement Western ideologies and knowledges.

Foucault’s concept of bio-power (1984), as part of the theoretical frame for this study, recognises the need for capitalism to self-generate through its (State) institutions. For example, it is difficult for its governing authority to use its ideology to overtly coerce its subjects in order for capitalism to retain its primacy in a democratic state. This is particularly the case in a postmodern society that (ideally) promotes equality of opportunity and the right to freedom of speech, therefore assuming the presence and tolerance of dissenting discourses. Foucault’s conception of bio-power suggests these regulating and controlling mechanisms of the State manage subjects by sorting, segregating, and regulating them, and “looking after their well being” in such ways that subjects become homogenised and “docile bodies” (Foucault, 1977, pp. 135-169). Although these regulatory regimes work to silence or marginalise dissenting voices, there remains the contradiction that where there is power, there is resistance. Therefore, although bio-power aids the preservation of the capitalist state by controlling entire populations,
Foucault’s full analytic recognises the possibility of resistance from “innumerable points of confrontation” (Foucault, 1977, p. 27).

I incorporated Foucault’s notion of bio-power as an underpinning to this study as it explores the State’s regulatory control relevant to the schooling contexts in which the four leaders were school principals. I adopted Foucault’s notion of bio-power, which suggests that State institutions would be operating under these regulatory controls leaving little encouragement for dissent or challenge. Despite the presence of bio-power, this study aimed to explore the edge of the capillary (Cousins & Hussain, 1984) for dissenting or alternative perspectives voiced in the school leaders’ interview talk.

In this next section I discuss power/knowledge before moving to explore the concepts around postcolonialism used in this study.

**Power/knowledge**

Foucault continued to analyse concepts around power and moved to thinking that power and knowledge were symbiotic in nature; therefore he devised the neologism: power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980) to reflect there being two parts to the same concept. Foucault’s term power/knowledge is important to this study as the strong and complex implications of this term are also related to discourse and to truth. Foucault informs us that “power produces knowledge”; and “power and knowledge directly imply one another” (1977, p. 27). He surmises that power:
…traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression (Foucault, 1980, p. 119).

As power/knowledge is exercised, it functions to produce discourses that are representations of reality or truth. These representations are enabled and constrained by the sets of discourses – possibilities, knowledges that are working within particular institutions or disciplines. Schools, as modern institutions, work to have people, events, and things known in detail. Part of their function is to collect information, detail it, and compare it to norms in the population, as demonstrated, for example, when schools sort subjects (students) for post-school positions (Harber & Davies, 2002). These fields of knowledge remain powerful in producing discourses that portray how subjects are represented. In the institution of school, subjects may be known as a pass or fail. This process is described by Foucault (1972) as the formation of objects within a discourse whereby a complex group of relations of power are characterised in a discursive practice. In the educational setting, this practice may become a self-fulfilling prophecy as the subjects pass or fail (Foley, 2005) according to predictions based on the institutional power relations or bio-power already formed and presented as natural or the truth. Thus, who passes and who fails forms an educational discourse representing successful students, which is more than language or representation as it works to maintain its discursive practice.
The formation of a field of knowledge brings power; the reciprocal is also true. The power/knowledge that produced discourses of leadership may present possibilities to leaders or the knowledge/power to challenge particular systems of power/knowledge that are presented as “natural discourses” (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 14). According to Foucault:

…power is not an institution, a structure, or a certain force with which certain people are endowed; it is the name given to a complex strategic relation in a given society (Foucault, 1990, p. 123).

This “complex strategic relation” was a focus of this study as I attempted to ascertain if power/knowledge was exercised by the leaders into possibilities that form as resistance within the leaders’ discourses. This study, assuming Foucault’s notion of power/knowledge, explored whether Indigenous school leaders, whose cultures have historically been represented as power-less in traditional models of power, were enacting a leadership knowledgeable of how they might represent Indigenous peoples in a more power-full position. This study was interested in how the school leaders might achieve this repositioning through their use of discourse. In theory, schools, as educational institutions, are reputed to be sites where knowledge is produced, not only reproduced. Assuming that educational institutions can produce knowledges by which subjects become aware of how, for example, postcolonialism works within institutions, then Foucault’s analytic of power/knowledge would suggest that there are possibilities to “produce(s) discourse” (Foucault, 1980, p. 119).
Having connected Foucault’s notions of discourse, power/ knowledge, and truth to the theoretical frame for this study, I turn, in the next section, to theories of postcolonialism. I begin this section by defining postcolonialism as it is used in this study. I then move to connect Foucault’s analytic of power to postcolonial theories in an attempt to conceptualise how all these theories work to provide a complex context which is “the problem of the present time” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 216) in Australian society.

**Postcolonialism**

*Postcolonialism* was originally the term given to the historical period after the Second World War to encompass the impact of colonisation on cultures and societies (Ashcroft et al., 2000). Following Said’s, *Orientalism* (1978), postcolonialism came to be used by literary critics to discuss the effects of colonisation, however the actual term *postcolonialism* was not used until the 1990s by Spivak (Ashcroft et al., 1995). Inherent in the term is the understanding that societies that have been colonised are never postcolonisation, even when there is an active anticolonial program working to decolonise the society. Countries that were colonised have a deep and lasting legacy of colonial rule that is embedded in the nation, its institutions, and in all aspects of its society. Whilst the legacy is embedded, it is not dormant; in fact reports from postcolonial societies state how potent colonialism can remain, resulting in racial discrimination (Patten & Ryan,
2001), among many other injustices, against the colonised nation (Ashcroft et al., 2000).

Since the 1980s there has been a proliferation of authors writing fictional and nonfictional literature and multiple studies conducted on the theme of postcolonialism (see for example, Ashcroft, et al., 2006; Bhabha, 1994; Fhlathâuin, 1998; Gandhi, 1998; Goldberg & Quayson, 2002; Said, 1978; Spivak & Harasym, 1990). Debate about the concept of postcolonialism and to what it refers continues (Ashcroft et al., 2000). For the purpose of this research project, postcolonialism will be used to “…explain issues of opposition, privilege, domination, struggle, resistance and subversion as well as contradiction and ambiguity” (Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004, p. 2) as they relate to those countries and contexts that have been colonised by force, invasion, or settlement.

Postcolonialism can be considered as intricately related to Marxism because economic exploitation is a common practice to both the processes of colonisation and the processes of capitalism, according to Marx (1976). Critics have aligned postcolonialism to postmodernism/poststructuralism, feminism, gay/lesbian theory, and cultural studies due to their common aversion to humanism and modernism. These movements are aligned in their common critique of Western male dominance and Eurocentric views expressed as canonical across all knowledges and inculcated in societies (Gandhi, 1998). However, in this study, postcolonialism specifically deals with the power relations involved in the binary of black/white and its
complications of ambivalence and ambiguity; racism; colonial discourses; and the complex power relations that are “the problem of the present time” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 216).

In particular, postcolonialism is concerned with the ways in which colonisation has affected certain marginalised groups in an adverse fashion (Tweedie, 2001). Foucault (1977) traced the histories of societies that had developed institutions based on willing control in the 19th century, and used the institution of schooling as one of his examples. Schools have been accomplices in the role of maintaining the bio-power for 100 years in colonised Australia by:

…the way in which knowledge of the colonised people has been generated and used to serve the coloniser's interests; and the ways in which the coloniser's literature has justified colonialism via images of the colonised as a perpetually inferior people, society and culture. (Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004, p. 14)

In the majority of the settler communities, the marginalised groups are the Indigenous peoples. The colonising of distant territories was the outcome of imperialist ideology, which was at its height in the 18th century. Imperialism resulted in the practical outcome of colonisation as nations expanded their empires for economic, strategic, and political advantage. Tuhiwai Smith (1999), writing from a Maori perspective, recognises the deep-seated influence of imperialism and its legacy through the processes of colonisation: “Imperialism frames the indigenous experience. It is part of our story, our version of modernity” (p. 19). The end result of imperialism is
economic, strategic, and political disadvantage for Indigenous peoples who are marginalised in postcolonial societies.

Using a few simple ideas, Said’s founding text of postcolonialism, *Orientalism* (1978), critiqued the Occident’s gross misrepresentation of the sophistication of the Orient. The ideas centred around the colonial discourse that the Orient and its peoples were inherently inferior, thus the Occident superior, and so the coloniser convinces the colonised that they need the coloniser’s culture, education et cetera. Whilst Said’s context referred to Eastern peoples, his theory of the effects of colonisation may be transferred to any groups who are marginalised in the processes of colonisation. The coloniser sets up State institutions, such as schooling, which are built on this binary framework.

Said adapted Foucault’s notion of discourse (1971) as he conceived colonial discourse “…as a system by which dominant groups constitute the field of truth by imposing specific knowledges, disciplines and values upon dominated groups” (Said in Ashcroft et al., 2000, p. 42). Colonial discourse theory is premised on the fact that power differentials are inbuilt into the way in which subjects are treated within the discourse according to a binary of coloniser and colonised. Colonial discourse theory includes the premise that the “educated” coloniser knows everything about the colonised peoples. It is difficult to conceive of colonial discourse without the symbiotic of power relations. The interrelationship of Foucault’s discourse and analytic of power with postcolonial concepts forms the conceptual framework for
this study. Thus, colonial discourses (Essed & Goldberg, 2002) that are
recognised by postcolonialism theories, and Foucault’s notion of (the power
of) discourse, align in their philosophical orientation.

Postcolonialism theories recognise the concept of the “other” (Said,
1978). Said critiqued the use of the other by Eurocentric thinkers and writers
to set up the binaries on which postcolonialism is built and which
postcolonialism engages to maintain its potency: “colonizer: colonized;
white: black; civilized: primitive; advanced: retarded; good: evil; beautiful:
ugly; human: bestial; teacher: pupil; doctor: patient” (Ashcroft et al., 2000,
pp. 24-25). These postcolonial binaries are recognised in power relations:
for example, each set of binaries has one side as “power-full” and its binary
as “power-less”. Thus, each positive descriptor is associated with the
coloniser whilst its opposite describes the colonised. It is within these binary
relationships or discursive practices that subjectivities are formed as part of
the discourse (Foucault, 1972). Discourses are to be treated as practices, not
just representations, as they systematically form the objects of which they
speak. These representations are much more than language, as their practice
outlines how subjects and objects are treated and how power is distributed.

Bhabha (1994) introduced a complication to the colonial discourse binary
as he initiated the concept of “ambivalence” into colonial discourse theory.
This term is adapted to describe the complex mix of attraction and revulsion
in the relationship between coloniser and colonised. Bhabha pointed out
that, within this complex relationship, there could be ambivalence between
resistance and mimicry (and sometimes mockery) by members of the colonised group. He noted this complex situation represented in colonial discourses set up to control and create dependency of the colonised. The discursive practice treats the coloniser’s position as preferred and therefore to be coveted by the colonised peoples. Power relations set up in the binary of coloniser/colonised may become ambivalent as members of each group develop a set of discursive relations with the other as part of the complexity of living in the same society. Thus, this study on the spiritual leadership of school principals anticipated the complexity of the power relations between the colonised and coloniser, as it assumed that leaders who may be operating from this complex understanding, wisdom or higher level or Spirit would conceive of, but not be bound by, the narrow, binary relationship.

Relationships of power may be contingent on the network of relations set up by the classification of various Indigenous, minority, and ethnic groups established by the colonising nation as they “settled” Australian land. Within these power relations (Foucault, 1980), perhaps at the edge of the capillary (Cousins & Hussain, 1984), and according to the theoretical framework set up for this study, there is some room for movement in the form of resistance. This study recognised colonial discourses as powerful competitors to representations of Indigenous peoples as knowledgeable, proud, and strong in their culture and relationships. This recognition is necessary for the voices of Indigenous school leaders to be heard with their truth representing Indigenous peoples as knowledgeable, proud, and strong.
(Sarra, 2007) as part of the problem of the present time is the dominant discourses (narrowly and mis-)representing Indigenous peoples.

Summary Statement

This study aimed to explore these complex sets of relationships on the understanding that there may be multiple discourses operating within the school leaders’ interview talk describing the ambivalent relations set up over time. This study’s research questions probed the data for discourses positioning colonised and coloniser as being aware of the more recent context, as colonised begin to take up positions of authority, for example, as school leaders.

Foucault’s analytic of power/knowledge and bio-power recognises how power must “be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than a negative instance whose function is repression” (Foucault, 1984, p. 61). Whilst recognising that bio-power works to preserve the status quo, this research project was interested in the idea that power could be considered as a productive network in a capillary of power relations. This project was set up on the conceptual framework that suggests that perhaps productive networks that function to initiate change in the power relations were operating through the leadership of the four school leaders. The process to establish this possibility was the investigation of the discourses upon which the leaders called when asked to describe the
possibility of spiritual leadership being enacted by them in their role as principals.

The study was designed to explore the discourses at work in the principals’ interview talk to investigate the possibilities enabled and constrained by the discourses called upon, some of which may have been borrowed from colonial discourses set up through the bio-power of the State institution of schooling, or enabled through the leaders’ spiritual leadership. The study aimed to explore whether there were competing discourses in the interview talk that had been shaped at the edges of the capillary as counter to those powerful discourses recognised as the truth within the system. The study was interested to explore at which points there may be hybrid discourses recognisable or, indeed, new discourses of spiritual leadership espoused in the interview talk of the school leaders.

Conclusion

An understanding of the complexities of postcolonial Australia and the power relations constantly at work in contemporary society is critical in order to interpret the discourses alive in the principals’ talk of their leadership. In order to access the principals’ talk, I designed a qualitative study. I surmised that data collected via the interviews with the school leaders at their school sites might show evidence of spiritual leadership:

Discourse is important, therefore, because it joins power and knowledge together. Those who have power have control of what is
known and the way it is known, and those who have such knowledge have power over those who do not. This link between knowledge and power is particularly important in the relationships between colonizers and colonized and has been extensively elaborated by Edward Said in his discussion of Orientalism in which he points out that this discourse, this way of knowing the ‘Orient,’ is a way of maintaining power over it. (Foucault, 1984)

The power relations of coloniser and colonised are part of non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australia. In order to understand and interpret the discourses alive in the principals’ talk of their leadership, I used the following research questions to probe the data for evidence of spiritual leadership:

The central research question is:

1. In what ways do Indigenous principals rely on spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools?

The subsequent research questions are:

2. In what ways can the Western discourse of educational leadership be identified in the articulation of the principals’ notions of leadership?

3. In what ways are postcolonial representations identified by the principals in their personal stories as leaders?

4. How is leadership symbolised by the leaders in interview talk when asked to describe their leadership approach?

5. How do the leaders use the symbols and metaphors around spirituality as they work to re-envision Australian society?
In this chapter I have argued my reasons for engaging Foucault’s (1971) theory of discourse and analytic of power (1984) together with postcolonial theories to frame this research project. In chapter 4 I systematically recount the research design of the study and the particular methods used in the collection and analyses of the data. The study used a qualitative design to align with the theoretical frame described in this chapter.
RESEARCH DESIGN

The essential political problem for the intellectual is not to criticise the ideological contents supposedly linked to science, or to ensure that his own scientific practice is accompanied by a correct ideology, but that of ascertaining the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth. The problem is not changing people’s consciousness - or what’s in their heads - but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth. (Foucault, 1980, p.133)

Introduction

This research project investigated how four Australian school leaders construct and enact their leadership in the Queensland State Educational System. The project investigated whether they were working at the edge of the capillary, “ascertaining the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth” (Foucault, 1980, p.133). The research was designed to explore how the leaders construct and deploy discourses to represent themselves in a Western educational system. I was particularly interested in whether the leaders drew upon Western epistemologies, constructed from postcolonialism, that are inherent in the educational system. I asked how the “production of truth,” part of the status quo of power in the State “institutional regime” of education, is challenged or verified by the principals through the discourses upon which they call (Foucault, 1980). I investigated to what extent, if at all, the principals called upon spiritual leadership to inform their leadership role.
The research design was set up to investigate these questions through a series of five questions that orientate the research study. The central question that underpins the research study as a whole queried whether the leaders called upon a spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools. I progress in this study to an exploration of the possibility that the principals’ leadership is informed by spiritual and moral purpose in order to “…ascertain(ing) the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth” (Foucault, 1980, p. 133).

In chapter 3, I provided a theoretical framework for conceptualising the way Indigenous peoples are positioned, and the principals reposition themselves, in the educational system. I engaged Foucault’s theory of discourse and analytic of power/knowledge and bio-power and their symbiotic relationship (Hall, 1997). According to Foucault, the praxis of bio-power works through educational and other systems to maintain the dominant order of discourse representative of Western ideology or social order (Hoy, 1986). This praxis works through the willing consent of those involved in the educational system (Foucault, 1980). This study’s theoretical frame incorporates the use of postcolonial theories as they account for the legacy of colonial discourses remaining dominant in mainstream Australian society, which has been appointed with the struggle to maintain the “natural” social order. I surmised that discourses operating at the deeper levels became powerful vessels due to the perceived “truth” and “knowledge” they are believed to hold about Indigenous peoples by
mainstream society. I incorporate critical discourse analysis (hereafter CDA) (Fairclough, 2001) into the analysis from chapters 5 to 8.

Fairclough’s notion of discourse, language, and power (2001) aligns with that of Foucault, whose notion of discourse I have adopted for the theoretical framework for this study. In this chapter I explain the choice of a qualitative approach to the research project and provide detail of how the fieldwork was conducted. I explain how I gained access to the field; how the data were collected; and my approach to analysing the data subsequent to the fieldwork. The four case-study sites were State primary schools administered by Education Queensland (hereafter EQ) located in remote and semiremote areas of Queensland, Australia.

In 2000, the Council for Reconciliation recommended that all leaders promote the vision of “a united Australia which respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all” (Reconciliation Australia, 2001)). It was within this climate that I conducted my research because the school principals were working in this context. I believed in the premise that “discourse has effects on social structure, and so (can) contribute(s) to social continuity and (to) social change” (Fairclough, 1989, p.17). This study aligned with Fairclough’s premise of the connections between discourse and potential for social change. I wanted to engage a methodology that would align with my philosophy and belief system, which suggests that leaders may talk up alternative discourses that have the potential to contribute to social change.
Design of the Study

A Qualitative Approach

The central question that underpinned the research study was whether the leaders engaged a spiritual discourse to inform their school leadership in order to ascertain from which epistemologies and ideologies the leaders were operating. This meant I had to design a research methodology that employed qualitative methods of data collection in order to provide scope for an in-depth analysis of the discourses called upon by the principals. I used a multiple-case-study approach “…a case study is here defined as an in-depth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon” (Feagin, Orum, & Sjoberg, 1991, p. 2).

In my search of contemporary Australian leadership literature, it became apparent that there was very little literature in which Indigenous leaders represented their world (Beckett, 1988). The case-study method has its restrictions, concerning, for example, the extent to which a subgroup’s results may be “generalised to the dominant group” (Feagin et al., 1991, p. 64) and how far, and in which circumstances, a theory may be claimed as valid. Nevertheless, I believed this methodology would allow the Indigenous leaders to represent themselves in some respects through the method of in-depth interviews. I was mindful of the restriction that I am a “second person” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 162) interpreting and analysing the original data, therefore researcher bias is inevitable. The
analysis of narratives “…should be to reshape the networks through which knowledge is constructed so that the groups previously marginalized and represented by others can become representers of their own experience” (Nespor and Barber in Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995, p. 51). While I recognised that I continued to be the primary instrument of data collection, my bias was explicit and considered by myself as researcher, “[I]n qualitative research where the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection, subjectivity and interaction are assumed” (Merriam, 1998, p. 103).

I designed a case-study methodology (Silverman, 1997) to provide deep understandings of “a single social phenomenon” (Feagin, et al., 1991, p. 2). This phenomenon was the articulation, construction, and enactment of leadership by the leaders. The deep understandings were the insights, which I aimed to access through the data collection processes. This meant I had to travel to each remote area where the leader was school principal in order to conduct the research in an intensive mode. Merriam (1998) posits that the key philosophical assumption “…upon which all types of qualitative research are based is the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds” (p. 6). The intensity had to include the school principals’ talk around “…beliefs, values, moral judgments, feelings, motives, intentions, dreams, hopes, illusions, and imaginations (and the part they) play in what leaders actually do” (Mitchell, 1990, p.18). This
qualitative design allowed me the best opportunity to collect “rich thick description” (Merriam, 1998, p. 107).

Yin’s notion that “…theory development prior to the collection of any case study data is an essential step in doing case studies” (Yin, 1994, p. 28) became a part of my study. I had developed a theory around leadership from my experience as a school principal and my professional learning and interaction with colleague principals over 19 years in fulltime leadership positions. I theorised that transformative school leadership required deep engagement with a community and that this potential had to come from the inner leader. I already had a philosophical and practical propensity to qualitative methods due to my occupation as a principal and the experience over an extended period in interview techniques and practice. I had experience communicating with people at the inner level of their beliefs, values, and spirituality through interview and talk-based processes.

**Indigenous Principals Representation**

Indigenous principals tend to lead in small and one-teaching-principal schools across remote areas of Queensland. There are no national statistics on the number of Indigenous principals employed by the State, Catholic, or Independent schools in Australia, as noted earlier in this document (chapter 1). The association of Australian Principals, Principals Australia (2009), reports that Aboriginal and Torres Strait principals represent 0.007% of principals, when Indigenous proportionate numbers in the population are 2.4% (MCEETYA, 2006). I was able to gain limited data on Indigenous
representation at principal level in Queensland schools, where, in 2003, 22 Indigenous principals were employed mainly in remote areas and one-teaching-principal schools (Button, 2003). As far as I was able to ascertain, no Indigenous principals, either primary or secondary, were employed by Catholic Education or the Independent schooling systems in Queensland at this time. The underrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in leadership positions is universal across many systems despite policies of positive discrimination in recruitment (Brisbane Catholic Education, 2006; Education Queensland., 2002).

I designed the study cognisant of these statistics and initiatives regarding Indigenous leadership representation at school principal level. I believed that a qualitative approach could provide some insight relevant to the further recruitment of Indigenous leaders to the respective educational systems. I believed this could be a very practical and worthwhile outcome of a qualitative design that had the aim of generating rich thick description (Merriam, 1998) on Indigenous leadership.

The Four School Leaders

This project was a qualitative study of four school principals. In this section I introduce each of the four leaders. I introduce the leaders in order to make the connection between the rationale for a qualitative design and the nature of each of the case studies.
Jay: Case-Study A

Jay was a teaching-principal of a remote school in central Queensland. This was Jay’s first position as principal. She had been in leadership for 3 years. The families of the students were pastoralists, many of who had run family properties for generations. There were nine students at the school and Jay was the only full-time teacher. Jay had one-day release per week to administer the school. The parents and community were very involved in the primary school. A local family had donated the land for the school buildings and the male donor, who was named the patron, was invited as special guest to school events.

Jay found out as an adult that she had Aboriginal heritage when, at 23, her grandmother told her. This was after Jay had given birth to a daughter who was “dark.” Jay’s mother had died when Jay was very young and she had been brought up by her grandmother. Jay’s grandmother had not told Jay or her siblings they had Aboriginal heritage. She had hidden the family’s Aboriginal heritage to protect her daughter (Jay’s mother) from being taken by the government as part of the “stolen generation” (Sabbioni, et al., 1998). Jay relayed that she had always known at a spiritual level that she was Aboriginal and recounted particular instances from her upbringing to demonstrate this. Jay told her students of her Aboriginal heritage, although she knew that members of the local school community could be resistant to an Aboriginal principal. She recounted that she believed her role in the school community was to teach tolerance and respect for other creeds.
and cultures. Jay believed she could make a difference by helping to break down racial intolerance by making her Aboriginality known in the school community and explicitly teaching educational programs about other cultures. Jay aimed to reach the community through her students, as the community was strongly involved in the life of the school.

At the time of my visit to this remote community, there continued to be an undercurrent in the culture of a perceived “land grab,” which had added to the racial intolerance between the pastoralists and the Aboriginal groups in the region. *Land grab* is the term for the post-Mabo period when a section in Australian society perceived (and still perceives) that Aboriginal people were attempting to illegitimately take land from its rightful owners, the pastoralists (Russell, 2006). This had a huge impact on the school community as the debate was hidden but present in the local community that was comprised mainly of pastoralists and their families. This may have been part of the reason Jay’s Aboriginality was largely ignored in the community. The non recognition of Jay’s Aboriginality had been made easier because, as Jay reported, she looked white (Interview One with Jay, October 2003) and was not immediately identifiable as an Aboriginal woman (Mattingley & Hampton, 1988).

**Dave: Case-Study B**

Dave was principal of a semi remote community school in Queensland with 210 students. The town had been established as a designated
Aboriginal settlement in 1904 by the Queensland State Government. The town gained independence (Sabbioni et al., 1998) in the 1980s and has steadily grown to 3000 members. Many Aboriginal peoples from different tribal groups live in the community.

The vast majority of students at the school were Aboriginal students with a few Torres Strait Islander students. Dave had been principal of the school for 5 years at the time of the research. He had been instrumental in building up the strong Aboriginal identity of the school and community both because he was the first Aboriginal principal at the school and because he promoted the Aboriginal identity of the school. Dave had deliberately staffed the school with 31 Indigenous teachers and ancillary staff from a total of 41. Dave was assisted in his leadership position by a deputy principal. Dave’s leadership was endorsed by local elders in the community, who supported his drive to markedly raise the outcomes of the students at the school. Dave was an Aboriginal man who strongly identified with his Aboriginality in his leadership and community roles.

**Pete: Case-Study C**

Pete was principal of a remote island school in the Torres Strait. His school roll was 177 students, which meant he led a complex school when considered in this remote setting. Pete was a Torres Strait Islander who spoke the local Creole and endeavoured to maintain the traditional Torres Strait regional language in his school community. Pete’s main language was
English; the school was administered in English. Pete was assisted by a full-time deputy principal and supported by a number of community elders. Athe (Uncle) William was the school mentor and icon. Athe William assisted with behaviour management and attendance of the students by liaising with families in the community to ensure the regular attendance and pastoral care of the students. He also assisted in keeping traditional languages, spirituality and culture foregrounded in the school. Pete struggled with the turnover in staff because of the remoteness of the school. He had initiated a number of incentives to train local people to be teachers and teachers’ aides so that there was a presence and role model of Torres Strait Islander peoples in his school. Pete mentored a number of aspiring and beginning principals, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to help promote leadership in the region. There were 3 Indigenous teachers and 4 Indigenous teachers’ aides at the school. Pete was recognised as an experienced leader across the Torres Strait and held a high and respected profile for his initiative in progressing an interagency leadership group across the region. Traditionally, Torres Strait Islanders made a living from warfare, trading, pearling, and fishing. The Torres Strait Islands, particularly the smaller islands, have high unemployment. On Pete’s island, most of the work centred around the school, health centre, and the stone mine with “Work for the Dole” incentive programs in operation (Bills Digest., 1997).

The drive for an autonomous Torres Strait was an important debate for many Torres Strait Islanders when I was there, although it is not a
mainstream or national debate in Australia. This context was relevant to both Torres Strait Islander principals, Pete and Samantha, who were recognised leaders in the region.

Samantha: Case-Study D

Samantha was principal of a primary school in a remote but populated island in the Torres Strait. Her school roll was 394. The school had been split into two primary schools in 1913 to segregate the “white” students from the “black” students. Although the two schools were amalgamated in 1964, the history of segregation was within the current grandparents’ direct knowledge because many of them had been sent to the “coloured” school. Samantha was leading a school that had a legacy of racial segregation. This legacy was evident within the school’s culture. The site of the current primary school was the site of the former “W Coloured School” (pseudonym) school for “coloured” and “native” children. Samantha was supported by two deputy principals and a third, seconded staff member on her administration team. Samantha sought the support of a number of community elders who were regular visitors and mentors to Samantha and to her staff and student body. Samantha was the first Torres Strait Islander to be appointed principal of the school. Samantha verbalised the importance of her Torres Strait identity as a leader in a school community where the vast majority of the students were of Torres Strait Islander background. A focus of Samantha’s vision was to promote the school as a “Family
Learning Home” in alignment with Torres Strait culture rather than remain within its Western identity.

A Qualitative Design

In order to follow the argument for the qualitative design for the data collection, it is important to note these contexts in Australian culture at the time when the data were collected. The researcher in a case study approach cannot clearly separate phenomena from context. It was important for me to use methods that could in some way access the complexity of the interrelatedness of the leader and the school context. It was also important that I remained cognisant of my coconstruction of the reality written into the data analysis: “...qualitative data-like other depictions of social reality - are social constructs. They are influenced by researchers’ assumptions about social reality and methodological practices” (Silverman, 1997, p. 26).

I summarise the data sources for each case study below:

Table 4-1: Data Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Community interviews</th>
<th>Document collection</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jay case study A</td>
<td>3 semistructured in-depth interviews with principal over two week period</td>
<td>Vision documents</td>
<td>Interschool community science and sports day</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School action plan</td>
<td>P&amp;C meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community documents</td>
<td>Meeting with school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Community interviews</td>
<td>Document collection</td>
<td>Observations</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Historical documents</td>
<td>founder Pictures taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave case study B</td>
<td>3 semistructured in-depth interviews with principal over two week period</td>
<td>Community Elder Deputy Principal</td>
<td>Newspaper articles on school &amp; principal School vision and action plan documents Community historical documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meetings with community people at worksites and cultural centre Meetings with radio personnel Recording and transcript of School Awards Night &amp; Year Seven graduation Pictures taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pete case study C</td>
<td>3 semistructured in-depth interviews with principal over two week period</td>
<td>School Elder &amp; Principal Deputy Principal</td>
<td>School vision documents and school Action plans Historical documents on local industry &amp; historical lugging and pearling historical documents Religious documents and spiritual drawings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assembly School community activities Pictures taken Hero writing cultural day</td>
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In the next section I detail the methods adopted by me to access the field, and to collect and analyse the data. This multiple-case-study focuses on the principals’ leadership; therefore I drew boundaries at the data that I believed were relevant to the leader and her/his context.

The Method

There were three phases involved in the data collection process of the fieldwork. The first phase began late 2003 and involved gaining ethical approval from the University ethics committee and from Education Queensland. I also had to negotiate access with each principal whom I had identified as a member of the purposive sample for the case study. The second phase involved entering the field for a 2-week period and conducting semistructured, in-depth interviews; nonparticipatory observations; and the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Samantha case study D</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Community interviews</th>
<th>Document collection</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 semistructured in-depth interviews with principal over two week period</td>
<td>Deputy Principal Administration team member Father Don, community Pastor &amp; Elder Community Elder</td>
<td>Historical documents Archived documents on history of the island and school community School vision and action plan documents and reports</td>
<td>Two assemblies recorded Organised trip to religious service on other island &amp; “sister” school P&amp;C meetings Pictures taken</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
collection of documents at each case study site. The interviews were conducted between October 2003 and September 2004. The third phase involved the stages of organising and analysing the data set in order to choose excerpts for intensive analysis for this research project.

Phase One: Accessing the Field

**Ethical Approval**

The first phase involved gaining ethical permission from Griffith University and Education Queensland to access the four school sites. I gained ethical approval for the proposed study from the Griffith University Ethics Committee. I then received approval from Education Queensland Ethics Committee to access four schools within their administration. Education Queensland approved my proposed research project to work in four schools on the proviso that I received direct permission from each school principal and community elders as deemed appropriate (Appendix B).

Gaining Access to the Field

**Purposive Sampling**

I set out to establish a purposive sample (Cohen, et al., 2000) of school principals for the multiple case studies. Purposive sampling:
…seeks only to represent a particular group in the full knowledge that it does not represent the wider population: simply represents itself; researcher handpicks the group on the basis of their judgment of their typicality; purposive sampling is unashamedly selective and biased. (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 180)

Originally I asked the gatekeeper (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) in Education Queensland to identify Indigenous principals with diversity in school location, gender, the size of the Indigenous population in which they worked and size of school. I asked him to help me identify four principals of schools who would represent the following characteristics:

- Primary schools with mainly Indigenous students led by an Indigenous principal within a traditional Indigenous context in a remote setting
- Primary schools with a percentage of Indigenous students led by an Indigenous principal in an urbanised context
- Primary schools with a majority of Indigenous students led by an Indigenous principal in a semiremote or rural context
- Primary schools led by both male and female Indigenous principals
- Primary schools of variable student roll, therefore of variable school size and complexity.

This “criteria-based” sample of “maximum variation” was my ideal; however, the reality of the group’s rarity resulted in an element of “convenience sampling” as it was impossible to meet all the characteristics
of variation or a “purposeful sample” for which I had hoped (Merriam, 1998, p. 63).

I made contact with a colleague in Education Queensland’s Workforce Diversity and Equity Unit, who was in the position of gatekeeper to the field (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Whilst respectful of privacy regulations, the gatekeeper was able to identify the nature of the cohort of Indigenous principals in Queensland. I remained in contact with the gatekeeper in order to ascertain potential principals with whom I could work. There was no duress put on any potential principal through either of these bodies, rather permission sought for me to make contact with them.

I was able to secure representation of all criteria apart from a large school in an urbanised setting. Education Queensland made contact with my first case study principal. I contacted two potential case study principals through the Australian Principals Associations’ Professional Development Council (hereafter APAPDC), of which I am a member. This association is an amalgamation of all representative bodies of Australian primary and secondary school principals. Whilst the APAPDC had no official data identifying Australian Indigenous principals, my contact personally knew two Indigenous colleagues. The APAPDC contact helped me make contact with Dave, the principal who became my second case-study.

The first case study principal was identified by my contact, the gatekeeper in Education Queensland. I made contact with Jay (Case-Study
A) and sent her explanatory literature on the proposed study. I followed this with several emails and phone calls to both the school and the principal. This principal had privileged information of the Queensland cohort of Indigenous principals, which allowed me to make initial contact with an Aboriginal male principal of an Indigenous community in a semiremote community, Dave, who became Case-Study B. The fact that he already knew of me through the principals’ association contact helped my credibility. It was through my second case study principal, Dave, that I made contact with Pete, the third case-study principal (C), who was a Torres Strait Islander in a remote island setting. This principal contacted a female colleague, also a Torres Strait Islander, in a semiremote island community of mainly Indigenous students, and she became the fourth case-study principal (D), “Samantha”. I used these key informants (Yin, 1994), who were Indigenous colleagues, throughout this snowball process of securing as purposive a sample as was possible given the rarity of this group of Indigenous principals.

My purposive sample included the ideal of at least three schools where the principal had a range of leadership roles derived from the complexity of a larger community. The Indigenous colleagues with whom I worked endorsed my study to prospective Indigenous principals. Thus the early case-study principals themselves aided my recruitment of subsequent principals. This proved vital to the study as being a non-Indigenous researcher working with Indigenous peoples has negative connotations in
some circles of Australian institutions and communities due to the previous “exploitation of Indigenous communities” (Cowlishaw, 1999, p. 46) by non-Indigenous researchers.

I knew that a two-week field experience at the four case-study sites did not constitute the experience of “participant-observation” (Silverman, 2006, p. 26); however I arranged to live in the school communities and participate in community daily activities for the period of my field experience. This meant that to some extent I became a “participant-observer” (Merriam, 1998, p. 111) as I was welcomed by the principal as a colleague and given a home for the duration of my stay. I lived with my first principal for the two-week period, stayed in a motel close by at the second case-study site, and lived in teacher residences at the two Torres Strait Islander schools. I was invited to social and after-school activities in each of the four communities. For the short duration, I aimed to achieve the participant-observer role as well as was possible although there were time limitations as to how I could participate.

Phase Two: In the Field

Preparation for Interviews

I conducted a pilot study (Yin, 1994) prior to entering the field. I designed the pilot study to trial and evaluate the proposed design methodology, as well as the appropriateness and reliability of the technical aspects of the study. I required experience in the technical aspects of audio
taping and transcribing the tapes. I conducted the pilot study with a colleague principal in order to assess whether my interview questions were properly designed as open questions. The pilot study confirmed the importance of building rapport with the respondent (Merriam, 1998). The pilot study principal said the main reason he recounted phenomena that he considered had shaped his principalship was due to the trust we already shared as colleague principals. I surmised that rich and thick descriptions that would allow experience of situations and individuals “…that we would not normally have access to…” (Merriam, 1998, p.238) could be achieved only if preliminary relationship building was inbuilt to the study.

In order to build some rapport with my case-study respondents, I sought guidance from academic colleagues within the Indigenous community. I sought advice from two Indigenous elders whom I knew through my school principal’s role. They questioned how I intended to observe the interests of the Indigenous leaders who were to be the subjects of the research project. I spent a period of time prior to my field placements contacting each principal both by email and by telephone. The main purpose of this contact was to set up the field placement but also to build some rapport with each colleague and to discuss some of the aims of the study prior to my placement. The elders directed me in my sensitivity to Indigenous cultural protocols as I built some rapport with the four case-study principals prior to entering the field (Nielsen, 2000; Ryan, 2000).
I understood that I would “construct” what would be considered important in the interviews prompted by my particular bias and perception of reality: “…in a very important sense this written representation is largely, though not completely, but a mirror image of the researcher and her/his baggage” (Scheurich, 1997, p.81).

I recognised that being from the dominant culture, I was in a “privileged” position as the researcher (Silverman, 2006, p. 110). I was aware of the potential power imbalance that can arise between researcher and respondent, especially given the historical exploitation of Indigenous peoples in Australia by researchers (Cowlishaw, 1999; Ngurruwutthun & Stewart, 1996).

This awareness led me to be vigilant in ensuring the transparency of the research aims and processes, and the rights and responsibilities of researcher and respondent, which I negotiated with each principal. These rights and responsibilities are articulated in the informed consent form (Appendix B). At the same time I was aware that my research was being conducted with leaders who are both adult and highly educated in both Western and Indigenous cultures. Therefore, as key informants, (Yin, 1994) they were able to comprehend their stake in the data collected. Before I began each data collection exercise at the respective schools, I initiated a conversation around these issues with each of my colleague principals.
I informed each participant of the confidential nature of the study and the strict coding of any identifiers of the participants, their families, or their schools. The struggle to keep the anonymity of the four principals and their communities has proven to be problematic from the outset of the study. This is due to a number of factors, including the rarity of Indigenous principals; the high profile of one case-study principal; and the interest in the study I attracted when presenting papers focusing on the Indigenous leaders. The fact that I work with a number of Indigenous leaders in an intersystemic Indigenous and non-Indigenous partnership project across South East Queensland led to further interest in the identity of the leaders by colleagues. Confidentiality has remained an issue from the beginning of the project. My supervisors advised me throughout the project to refrain from using certain extracts with identifying features whilst presenting at conferences in particular areas. I was advised to delete particular identifiable slogans and references and did not use many of these in my data analyses chapters. I discussed with each leader that, whilst every means to protect the anonymity of the school and its principal would be adopted, there would always remain a risk that some members of school communities could make an educated guess as to the school and its leader’s identity. The principals were aware of this calculated risk and signed the consent form from this informed perspective.

I negotiated with the principals that I would send the full transcript of the interviews to each principal and the other interviewees for member
checking. Principals were able to request a renegotiation of the inclusion of any part of the interview transcript with which they were uncomfortable. None of the respondents requested exclusion of data following the member-checking phase of the study. I clarified with each respondent that, in the event of her/his disagreement with my interpretation of the data, s/he could present another interpretation, which would be included as an endnote in the final thesis. This would not mean that I would necessarily change my interpretation but I agreed to include the respondent’s response. Each case-study principal was given a copy of the informed consent form and its accompanying information sheet in advance of the field study in order that s/he was familiar with its contents prior to my placement. When I arrived in the field, the principal and I clarified the directives of the ethics approval from Griffith University and Education Queensland. We negotiated the conditions for my field-study stay and, when we had agreed upon all of these matters, the principal signed the consent form before the case-study was conducted.

**Semistructured, in-depth interviews**

I conducted three semistructured, in-depth interviews as the primary means of data collection. The interviews with each principal took approximately 2 to 2.5 hours each and were conducted at intervals over the 2 week period I was in the field. I aimed to gather a “[r]ich, thick description” (Merriam, 1998, p.211) of the respondent’s unique perception
of the world through this less formal method. All interviews were audio
taped with the consent of the respondent and transcribed by a professional
transcriber and me.

The interviews were set a few days apart in order to allow me time to
listen to prior interviews and in some cases transcribe parts of the audio
tapes in order to properly prepare for an “…in-depth, multifaceted
investigation, using qualitative research methods…” (Feagin et al., 1991,
p.2) at the second and subsequent interviews.

Appendix A: Interview One

In the first interview I concentrated on building rapport with the principal
and clarifying technical issues. I spent some time introducing myself, my
family, and my career background, as is Indigenous protocol. I then clarified
the research aims, and the rights and responsibilities of the respondent and
of myself as researcher.

Following these introductions and clarification of the interview process
and its transcription, I sought permission to audiotape the interviews with
each leader. In the first interview I mainly focused on asking the principal to
recount her/his biography, educational life history, and general leadership
style. The full schedule of interview prompts for the three interviews is
attached (Appendix A).
Interview Two

In the second interview I asked the principal to respond to points that had interested me in the first interview. I also focused on the principal’s Indigeneity and whether this had any impact on the leader’s formation or style. I then explored cultural and historical impacts on the principal’s leadership as perceived by the principal. I asked the principal to talk to the balance of systemic and cultural considerations.

Interview Three

In the final interview I mainly sought clarification and expansion on some of the previous interviews’ discussions that had particularly interested me. I planned to explore the principals’ vision and mission and how they would describe cultural and spiritual aspects to their leadership. I asked the principals to position themselves in the sociohistorical contexts of their leadership as an Indigenous principal in a Western educational context. I planned to record the images called upon by the principals to represent themselves, their choice of discourse (Fairclough, 1989), and their versions of “reality.”

The interviews did not remain focused on the prompts itemised in Appendix A, but, rather, even from the first interviews, moved into a more complex dialogue on Indigenous identities and representations together with cultural and spiritual explorations. This was the result I had hoped might eventuate from the use of semi-formal interviews, which allow more scope
for digression as an interactive dialogue between researcher and respondent ensues.

It was important for me to interview some of the other leaders in the community to gain others’ perceptions of the leaders’ operation of their role, but also as a means of triangulation of the data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). When designing the research project, I surmised it would be productive to request interviews with these school and community leaders. I interviewed the school patron at Jay’s school and community elders at the other three schools, all of who knew the school principal and her/his vision for the school, and had observed her/his leadership. I interviewed other key members of the school leadership team, including deputy principals at Dave, Pete, and Samantha’s schools.

Nonparticipatory Observations

I conducted nonparticipatory observations (Cohen et al., 2000) as an integral part of each case-study. Observations can be distinguished from interviews in two ways: “…first, observations take place in the natural field setting instead of a location designated for the purpose of interviewing; second, observational data represent a firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of interest rather than a secondhand account of the world obtained in an interview” (Cohen & Manion, 1989, p. 94).

Observations were included in the research design as a means of supplementing the data collected from the interviews, also as a means of
triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) for the validity of the study (Stake, 1995). I did not conduct observations extensively, as the series of interviews was my primary method of data collection. As a researcher, I endeavoured to be aware of my bias as the primary instrument of data gathering, as “…subjectivity and interaction are assumed” (Merriam, 1998, p.103). As Merriam (1998) suggests, once I had become familiar with the field study site, I was able to balance the insider and outsider and note observations without being too obtrusive. I did not want the school community to become wary or stilted in their interactions when I was around; therefore I did not take observational notes when I was interacting within the community. My observations were focused upon the interactions of staff, community, and students with the school principals in order to acquire further data on their leadership interaction.

**Document Collection**

Merriam (1998) describes documents as the “umbrella term to refer to a wide range of written, visual and physical material relevant to the study at hand” (p. 112). I chose to collect and copy any document that related to the principal in her/his role, and some documents that were descriptive of the history or context of the primary school or the community. For example, scrapbooks were kept at one of the school sites. The newspaper and journal articles contained therein focused on the phenomenon of the principal positively turning around the student educational outcomes at that particular
school. The Indigenous school liaison officer, who became a key informant (Yin, 1994), kept, in the school staffroom, scrapbooks that contained chronological records of the media stories following the achievements at the school attributed to the leadership and determination of the school principal. These records provided rich data (Feagin, et al., 1991) on the principal’s school leadership. Although these were not official school documents, the scrapbooks provided valuable insight on the wider community’s perception of the principal’s leadership and some valuable data on the school’s achievements under his leadership. I used these records to stimulate discussion of the principal’s perceived mission in education in subsequent interviews both with the principal and with other leaders in the school community.

Many official departmental documents recording each school’s mandatory reports to Education Queensland were available at each school. From each school, I collected a wide range of school vision and mission statements and annual records of school initiatives, which proved invaluable for discussion with the school leader. I collected the school development plan from each of the four case-study sites. School documents proved to be a rich source of data. The documents provided a further source for triangulating the case-study principals’ talk used to represent her/his world as recorded in the interviews. For example, in Samantha’s school (Case-Study D), I located original archived documents that recounted the school’s history back to 1913 when the Minister had segregated the students on two
campuses according to “race.” Samantha often focused on the history of her school and its colonial legacy as culturally “inferior” because it had formerly been a school for “coloured” children. The language she called upon to describe this legacy and its effect on her current context was immediately recognisable from the documents and letters, which I had retrieved from the school archives.

I deliberately sought any documents, literature, photographs, and artifacts available at the school, or in the community, that provided information about Indigenous cultures in the area. I used some of the information gained from the documents to open discussion with the principal in the interviews in order to triangulate the credibility of the interview data. I mainly collected documents which provided data on subjects discussed in the interviews.

Trustworthiness

A trustworthy study is both valid and reliable. This study employed naturalistic methods of establishing trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The nature of a qualitative study is such that data will produce findings from multiple realities rather than one definitive reality. This study’s aim was to analyse the language employed by the leaders and that was grounded in the data. The study particularly aimed to access any constructions of leadership that were grounded in a spirituality of
leadership, which was my theoretical construct prior to conducting the study.

I used many of Merriam’s (1998) strategies to enhance the internal validity of the study: “triangulation; member checks; awareness of researcher bias” (pp.204-205). Each case-study principal and other interviewees at the sites were given the opportunity of member checking the interview data and my analysis at various intervals during the data gathering and analysis processes of the study. Merriam (1998) purports “External validity is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations” (p.207). In order to enhance the external validity, I collected rich, thick description (Merriam, 1988) from each case-study site, each of which had been purposively chosen according to the criteria that demonstrated its typicality. Although the period of time I was on site was relatively short, the complexity of the data that were collected was such that the data could be described as reasonably rich and thick. The detail in the analysis was designed to allow the reader to determine the extent to which the findings could be applied to other situations.

Phase Three: Data Analysis

I transcribed the data verbatim from the audiotapes of all interviews with the principal and other leaders in each community. I did not insert any description of body language or my own notes in these transcripts. I did, however, take full notes during each of the interviews with the principals
and the other leaders. I took these notes to highlight any matters that seemed important during the interview, also as a means to direct my subsequent interviews with the respondents. This meant I had a detailed record of all interactions with the principals and other respondents to which I could return.

I inserted all data from the interviews, document analysis, and observations into (NVivo, 2003), designed to support qualitative research in the storing, categorisation, retrieving, and intensive analyses of data. NVivo is a well used software program that relies on axial coding to develop theories. It is premised on the principles of grounded theory. Coding the data through NVivo enabled me to identify the intricate relationship between my participants’ responses.
**Intensive Analysis**

I then moved into a period of “intensive analysis” (Merriam, 1998, p.127) of the collected data that were analysed in several layers, to move towards both believable and trustworthy findings, and an exploration of the guiding question of the research: “In what ways do Indigenous principals rely on spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools?”

I employed critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001) to analyse the data. Having identified the intimate relationships across the data, I was able to use CDA to further deconstruct the data in order to test my hypothesis of these intimate relationships or a commonality across the leaders’ transcripts. For example, I tested whether the findings verified that all four leaders called upon a common set of discourses to envision the future for their school communities. I chose a series of narratives, sectioned into extracts, to analyse for the four data analysis chapters.

**Reciprocity**

I remained aware that there could be an imbalance in my relationship with my Indigenous colleagues. In reality I knew that I was gaining more from the relationship with my Indigenous colleagues than they were likely to. I tried to redress this imbalance throughout the process of this study and thereafter by seizing any opportunity available to support the school communities in which I had worked. For example, a tragedy occurred in one
school community whereby two parents and a sibling in one family were killed. My school became a “sister” school to that community and raised funds to support the children who had lost their parents. I also was able to provide accommodation and lodging to the children and families who had been chosen in representative sporting teams from the sister school, thereby giving something back to the schools that had so generously opened their communities to aid me with this research project. I continue to keep in touch with and provide each principal with copies of papers and presentations that I have given and had published, regarding their leadership.

Whilst I endeavoured to continue to maintain contact with the four leaders throughout the process of writing my analysis of the data, I was aware that their commitments meant time constraints on the number of occasions they were realistically able to check data and comment on its validity. I therefore operated as streamlined a process as was possible in soliciting feedback. I found my colleagues’ chose to abide by my judgement (Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995) because principals work to a very demanding schedule; we discussed these matters during the process of the early data analysis.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have recounted the research design and the process of data collection and analysis in sufficient detail to allow the reader to understand the chain of events leading to the findings from the study. I now
proceed, in the next four chapters, to present the data analyses. The first of these four chapters, chapter 5, explores the colonial legacies inherent in the school principals’ talk around their leadership and expands on the postcolonial theories explored in chapter 3. I argue in the analysis that these data present a hologram through which to view postcolonialism and various models of leadership.
Introduction

*Colour-full Holograms* is the first of four data analysis chapters within this thesis. This chapter is named in recognition that the hologram, as a lens that illuminates a bigger picture, gives depth and colour to the principals’ narratives. In the original story, these narratives may have been told as “black/white” or may have called on simple binaries while they were produced through a postcolonial lens. Chapter 4 recounted the case-study methodology and critical discourse analysis (hereafter CDA) methods designed for this qualitative study on spiritual leadership. Each data analysis chapter engages the central question on whether the school leaders call on spiritual leadership when asked to discuss their leadership as an enacted practice. In addition, chapter 5 focuses on questions 2 and 3 as an exploration of Western representations of leadership and postcolonial theories; chapters 6 and 7 focus on questions 4 and 5, exploring how the principals use symbols and metaphors around spirituality as they work to re-envision Australian society. Chapter 8’s analysis builds on the possibility of spiritual leadership, concentrating on the symbolic and metaphorical discourses called upon by Samantha. I work with Foucault’s notion of discourse and analytic of power, which I have adapted to form my “toolbox” (Foucault, 1974, pp. 523-524) together with postcolonial theories to help me analyse the data. I investigate the use of pronouns, paradox,
myth, metaphor, symbols, and binaries used as persuasive argument by the leaders to position themselves and the other actors in the narratives. The analyses attempt to puzzle the power relations and question “truths” presented as universal in the postcolonial and Westernised discourses within the personal stories of the two Aboriginal principals, Jay and Dave. I chose the metaphor of the hologram for this chapter as, even through this holographic or tiny lens, I argue, the CDA illuminates the language to reveal complex relations of power (Foucault, 1980) and the social and other effects for the participants of national policies like assimilation (Cowlishaw, 1999; Hodge & Mishra, 1991). I further argue that the complex relations of power were formed from colonial ideologies and are called upon and critiqued in the principals’ talk as they work towards persuading their audience of the reality for Aboriginal peoples both in the present and as projected into the future. I explore the data for ways in which Western and postcolonial discourses are actually identified by the principals in their personal stories and whether there is evidence of visionary, spiritual, or other models of leadership in the principals’ talk. I begin by introducing the three narratives, their structure, and the focus of the analysis.

The narratives of leaders

The first narrative is told by Jay (Case-Study A). Jay is an Aboriginal principal who works as a teaching principal in a one-teacher school in a

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21 As stated in the prelude to this study, I chose to use the term Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or Indigenous as is most appropriate to the context.
remote rural area mainly populated by pastoralists. Jay had not known of her Aboriginal heritage until she gave birth to her daughter, at which time Jay’s grandmother revealed the Aboriginal heritage, which she had hidden for two generations due to the policy of assimilation which meant the children could be taken by the state government (Flood, 2006). The first narrative is named *Pure Bloodlines*, introducing the binary of black/white, which the analysis illuminates with the colour red symbolising bloodlines. I use these colours to analyse the language in a table that charts colonial and binary representations of Aboriginal peoples and other black people. This analysis is specifically of the representations quoted in a racist discourse that Jay has experienced in her leadership role. The analysis provides a critical look at the images engaged by her community. Further I explore how Jay works within these circumstances to resist and challenge these views through her students in a longer-term aim, engaging, what I name as, visionary and transformational leadership. She does this by taking on a leadership role to explicitly teach racial tolerance.

The second narrative is taken from an interview with Dave (Case-Study B), in which he describes and looks forward to possibilities for the future Australia and in which he names the current context as *Juvenile Australia*. The narrative is constructed in three parts. In the first part, Dave uses personification to position Australia as a juvenile. I analyse this extract as a binary, placing his metaphors against each other as they work to persuade his audience that Australia would prefer to be seen as a mature nation. In the second part of the narrative, Dave critiques the icon of Australian sport that
is used to symbolise the unity of Australia. My analysis focuses on the
dominant discourse (McHoul & Grace, 1993) of sport that is used to serve
the ideology of Australia as a mature, unified nation, which Dave counters
with powerful and expletive language that functions to challenge this truth.
The third part of the narrative works to surprise the reader by the use of
expletives and paradox so that Dave may pause to position Aboriginal
people in leadership. In fact, in this part of the narrative Dave presents a
sense of urgency, offering an alternative viewpoint which, I argue, is Dave’s
emancipatory and visionary leadership in a call to action. The analysis looks
at how the narrative works to shock the reader in readiness for the
introduction of this new direction or call to action, which may seem
paradoxical at first.

The third narrative is also a holographic lens that provides a profound
illumination from Dave. In this narrative Dave focuses on the “truth” of the
popular identity for Australia as a lucky country. *The Lucky Country*
narrative moves to engage Aboriginal rights at their deepest level in
connection to land, time, and spirituality as counter to what Dave names as
the myth of a “fair go.” In the first part I, as researcher, set up a series of
interactions to establish with Dave that there is a fair go for people from
certain countries of origin but not for Aboriginal peoples or for certain other
migrants. The second part of the narrative focuses on Dave’s persuasive
argument that Aboriginal people have something that the white man can
never claim, which is a deep and spiritual connection to land. My analysis of
this narrative focuses on the strength of Dave’s argument and how he
separates the white world from the Aboriginal world to divorce himself from his audience whilst proclaiming a spiritual and universal truth of Aboriginal peoples’ ancient and spiritual connection to the land (Doomadgee, 1996), for which, I contend, there is no real counter argument.

I use the analyses of these narratives to illuminate how the discourses alive in contemporary Australian culture have affected both freedom and reality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Representations of being an Aboriginal person continue to present deficit explanations that have come to seem truthful or real over many years. The narratives are illustrative of how Indigenous peoples are positioned within the postcolonial black/white binary, which is challenged by the colour-full visions designed by these two leaders to name and reposition Aboriginal peoples and power relations from the “edge of the capillary” (Cousins & Hussain, 1984, p. 239).

In the following narrative, Jay adopts the metaphor of bloodlines, which are associated with the colour red, and a symbol used to represent the universal human race, to tell a story and then take a leadership position in response to teach racial tolerance to her students and to their families.

Pure Bloodlines

I asked Jay how she dealt with her Aboriginal heritage in her current Westernised school context and whether her school community was aware of her Aboriginal heritage. Although the concept of pure bloodlines is
problematic when related to humans, it is very familiar to the rural community of Australia. Jay was aware that her students were familiar with this concept and believed that this knowledge could be powerful in teaching racial tolerance to her students and the wider community. Jay chose to position herself as an Aboriginal woman in the community even though she knew there was blatant racism against Aboriginal people within some parts of her school community. Jay used her leadership role in an attempt to transform the school community’s views. The colour red is introduced into the narrative, adding to the black/white binary. Part of the racial demarcation on bloodlines is the use of the metaphor of pure, red blood for heritage, although the paradox is that all humans have red blood, no matter the skin colour. Racist discourses employ skin colour and pure bloodlines to denote race and afford value to the race according to its relationship to black or white coloured skin or purity of the bloodline. Despite the fallacy of the paradoxical race debate, these postcolonial representations have been working at the “local, institutional and societal domain” (Rogers, 2004, p. 7) for 200 years in Australia. I begin the analysis below by describing and interpreting the instances of postcolonial binaries in Jay’s narrative (see Table 5.1 below).
### Table 5-1: Bloodlines: Acceptable & Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract 5.1 turn &amp; line</th>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Positive representation</th>
<th>Negative representation</th>
<th>Ambivalence</th>
<th>Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T18, l. 5</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>Pure bloodline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T18, l. 6</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>Pure bloodlines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T18, l. 16</td>
<td>red</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal blood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T18, l. 14</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>Ref: Aboriginal blood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T20, l. 2</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>Lazy bludger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T20, l. 3</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T20, l. 4</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>they</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T20, l. 7-8</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>American Negroes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T20, l. 8-9</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>American Negroes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T20, l. 12-13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mob of wogs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T22, l. 5-6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese influence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Great country of ours

Used to talking pure bloodlines

Never hidden it but I’ve never advertised it

Some of the children’s parents are racist

That lazy bludger black

You can’t employ them

They won’t do the work for you

Line them all up and shoot them

They’re a blight on society

They should go over and drop an atomic bomb on them

Negative comments because of the Second World War
The table serves to demonstrate the quantity and orientation of the connections that Jay reported, voiced by members of her school community by providing strong language forms, for example metaphors, pronouns and clichés to provide justification for their racist position against many of the world’s peoples: blacks, Indigenous and Aboriginal peoples, people from the Islamic faith, and Japanese people. There are several positions a new leader could adopt upon becoming a school principal in a community such as Jay’s – I explore two of them. First, the leader could remove her/himself from the race debate, exercise popular trait or systemic leadership, and be gradually accepted as a member of the community. Second, the leader could take a radical position, confront the racist statements head on, and risk ostracising the community. In such a close-knit community, these leadership positions are unlikely to transform racist views (Hargreaves & Fink, 2005). Jay chose to take on a position where she could influence the community rather than antagonise it. She chose to take on, what I argue is, a visionary and transformational leadership role, educating the community through their children. She describes this in extract 5.1 below:

**Extract 5.1**

18 Jay: They know I have Indigenous heritage I haven’t gone in depth with them but when we did a unit on em, racial differences...we looked at everybody’s heritage and the fact that none of us have a *pure* was the word that one of the children brought up, a pure blood line because they are used to talking pure blood lines in cattle, horses, and sheep and even the workers use it so they understood that, so we talked that, nobody has that kind of background any more um, everybody has some other nationality in there somewhere which
is what makes up this great country of ours and as an example for them I gave them a very potted history of my own background through to my great-grandfather so they all knew that I had Aboriginal blood going back several generations em, it’s never been, I’ve never hidden it and but I’ve never advertised it widely in this particular community because I do know that some of the children’s parents are racist just by hearing their comments made about things that happen in the news and things they see on TV. And the comments the children bring to the classroom that, I’ve tried to work on the children’s tolerance and to make them aware that they have to learn to, to live in the society as it is, they can’t dictate who’s going to be around them and that everyone has a mixed heritage of some sort.

19  Researcher: Em, can you describe for me or for the study, can you describe some of those comments which warned or alerted you to not having conversations with those particular people em, about your em, as you say mixed heritage as we all have…?
Jay: um, well I overheard one father saying to another, that lazy bludger black em, I don’t know what led up to it, but they both said yeh, you can’t employ them, they won’t do the work for you em, and then um, riots in America happened involving some of the American Negroes and the comments that a couple of the children came to school with were very, very racist, about you should line them all up and shoot them and em, they’re a blight on society and you could hear the parental influence and even the parental words coming through and then even down to twelve months ago after the twin towers the comments from some of the kids in saying, they should go over and drop an atomic bomb on them, they’re just a mob of wogs, em, those type of comments.

Researcher: They’re huge. Jay, how did you address that with the students?

Jay: They enjoyed that [unit of work on tolerance], they loved it and, one grandparent made negative comments because of the Second World War and the Japanese influence and the child came to school and said, I can’t understand why Grandpa doesn’t like the Japanese…

…so as part of the Anzac Day unit, I talked to them about some of the things that had happened with the Japanese and why some people didn’t like the Japanese but that was, that was two generations ago, the people now are not the same, that they don’t think the same as those people did back then. Em and basically just trying to teach tolerance…

Jay: When I did the unit with the children and I used my own example. I knew that the children would go back, go back, em, and tell their parents and I prepared myself to deal with that, but I’ve never had to. Nobody has fronted me over it...

Jay: Basically I know who will accept it openly and they’re the ones that I’ve told openly and em, the others, the ones that I’ve just said it’s a research project and left it at that, they’re the ones that I know that are going to have the comments to make, but never direct to me, no comments have ever been made direct to me, the comments are what the children
come back and say, and I just work on the children’s attitude then, and try to develop their tolerance, without putting their parents down… then the reverse happens of course, as the children start to influence their parents, their parents’ way of thinking… (Interview Two with Jay, October 2003)

This narrative tells the story of how Jay interpreted the world differently to how some people in this rural community interpreted the world. I analyse the narrative at all three CDA domains: local, institutional, and societal (Fairclough, 1995) to deconstruct the racist discourses. Jay recounts that although she had “never hidden” (extract 5.1, turn 18, line 15) her Aboriginality, neither had she “advertised it widely in this particular community because (she) (did) know that some of the children’s parents (were) racist” (extract 5.1, turn 18, line 17). I analyse the racist comments reported by Jay whist aware that these comments are relayed through second and third parties; however this circumstance is the immediate world of Jay in her role as principal and leader in the school community. The racist comments recounted above use the linguistic feature of gross generalisation to group otherness (Gandhi, 1998). Indigenous peoples (extract 5.1, turn 20, line 3), American Negroes (extract 5.1, turn 20, line 5) and peoples of the Islamic faith (extract 5.1, turn 20, line 13) are all grouped together as them who are not the same. Jay sets up the binary with the use of pronouns implicit to the common understanding that the same people are white.

Following the Second World War and the threat of communism, the Middle Eastern Bloc presented a threat to the Western way of life (Young, 1993). Since the dismantling of the Eastern Bloc (Sinfield, 1997), members of the
Islamic tradition and religion (Manne, 2002) have replaced the East in the binary position as a threat, opposed to the West and therefore the “rightful” Western way of life (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 50). Jay recounts the parents of her students referring to *them* rather than *us* to identify others who are from different creeds or colours. In the narrative, “they” is used to refer to all three groups opposed to the legitimate “us” (extract 5.1, turn 20, lines 3-4). When we name persons in discursive practice, there is an implicit obligation to recognise them as human and refer to them with respect; however the use of the pronoun provides distance, which allows for these racist generalisations. The terminology of “lazy bludger black” (extract 5.1, turn 20, line 2) coupled with “you can’t employ them” (extract 5.1, turn 20, line 3) is proposed as justification for the implicit thesis that all black people are lazy. The implication is that they are untrustworthy; therefore one (us) must observe the caution of refraining from employing them. Contention presented by Jay as to what local community members would use as excuses for not employing black people is recycled to justify the unemployable label serving to maintain the power relations within the black/white binary. This binary is essential to white preservation and dominance as, when black people access the power bases through Western (education and) employment, they gain “voice” in the society (Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995). This voice has the potential for Aboriginal peoples to alter the position their cultures have been allocated in the colonial discourses while work is done to keep black people unemployable and uneducable.
The second set of comments in the story (extract 5.1, turn 20, lines 5-8) about the American Negroes sets their worth at nothing; in fact the implication is that they are like to dogs: “You should line them all up and shoot them” (extract 5.1, turn 20, line 8) as they are a “blight” (read disease or curse) on society. These comments emanate from the much deeper foundations in colonisation and Social Darwinism (West, 2000). These comments position black peoples as a homogeneous group. The racist discourse that represents white as superior, positions blacks as potentially uncontrollable, therefore it is the civilised white man’s job to rid society of this blight.

As mentioned above, the perceived threat to Western global domination is that of the Islamic cultures, therefore they too should be annihilated in one movement by using an “atomic bomb” (extract 5.1, turn 20, line 13). They are referred to as “wogs”\(^{22}\) (extract 5.1, turn 20, line 14) in order to strip the Islamic peoples of identity so that the prior statement of annihilation is more acceptable. Terms such as “wog,” work as a generalisation serving to distance the speakers (whose comments Jay reports), allowing them to make these racist statements without direct responsibility. The juxtaposition of the metaphor of “mob of wogs” (extract 5.1, turn 20, lines 11-14) is used to explain and justify all previous racist comments. The language form achieves this by qualifying the “wogs” as a

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\(^{22}\) “Wog” is a derogatory term used in Australia to describe immigrants from European countries but not from the colonising nations of the United Kingdom (Goodall & Jakubowicz, 1994).
“mob of.” The term *mob* is often used in emotive speeches to denote people who are not observing the rule of law.

This colour-full hologram told by Jay of the various incidences of blatant racism she had experienced while in her role as principal is an illuminating hologram of power and race relations in some communities in Australia. I deconstruct this language to demonstrate how these statements work to support the overall racist discourse that exists in Australian society. In some sectors and areas, racism is not so blatant but is insidious in the culture and in some institutions of State. Jay and her principal colleagues who are the participants in this study lead in institutions of State. According to these racist narratives, it may be difficult for Aboriginal leaders to be accepted or to lead in some communities where their position is in question.

Jay’s recount of the blatantly racist comments functions to shock the “audience” and, at the same time, the explicitness of this language gains audience’s empathy regarding the position Jay takes in working to transform these blatantly racist views in her school community. The balancing of the racist language with Jay’s nonemotive or nonreactive response as a leader serves to portray Jay as a credible leader in her community. In fact, it encourages the audience to believe, from the evidence of Jay’s leadership, that transformation may be possible in communities such as Jay’s, because of her leadership approach. If Jay, as explored above, had taken on a confrontational approach in this particular community, change or transformation would have been very difficult as, I argue, this approach
would further ostracise her from the community. Jay’s narrative reveals elements of visionary and transformational leadership which is demonstrated when “leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality” (MacGregor Burns, 1978, p. 20). Jay demonstrates this form of leadership when she gradually erodes entrenched racist attitudes through teaching her students (and families) racial tolerance in her remote community (Wild, Nicholson, & Anderson, 2007). Jay manages this through her students:

I just work on the children’s attitude then, and try to develop their tolerance, without putting their parents down… then the reverse happens of course, as the children start to influence their parents, their parents’ way of thinking…(extract 5.1, turn 36, lines 7-12)

Jay was able to relay to me in a later interview that she was aware of some movement when I asked her if she witnessed any outcomes of her visionary and strategic leadership to create tolerance in the community:

**Extract 5.2**

179  Jay:  There are some trends there but I don’t think it will come about by 2010.

180  Researcher:  Right. Can you name some of the things you see or hear that – that give you hope in that respect?

181  Jay:  Well, just within this community was the fact that just today by the end of the P & C Meeting one of the people I overheard making very racist comments 2½ years ago, when one of the women asked what your role was and I explained that you were doing a research project for a PhD on Aboriginal – on Indigenous Leadership. She said, “Oh, that’s right. That’s right, you have this heritage.” And this man said, “Ah, we’ve got a Murri in our midst.”

182  Researcher:  And that was different way of looking at it.
Jay: Totally different to his comments 2½ years ago!

Researcher: It was almost an endearment there.

Jay: Yes. And there was no put down or – there were no negative – I didn’t feel any negative vibes from him which I had picked up very strongly the last time…

(Interview Three with Jay, October 2003)

Whilst it would be difficult to argue that such entrenched attitudes could be transformed by Jay’s work as a leader in the shorter term, her vision included a longer term plan, “There are some trends there but I don’t think it will come about by 2010” (extract 5.2, turn 179). Indeed Jay’s contingency strategy, which involves the leader adjusting her approach cognisant of the community to gain specific outcomes (Doyle & Smith, 2008), was beginning to help create a shift in the position of some members of her community, “Totally different to his comments 2½ years ago!” (extract 5.2, turn 183).

In the following narrative Dave (Case-study B) describes the nation of Australia as a juvenile waiting to grow up. Although Dave adopts a different leadership approach to that used by Jay, he too is intent on producing a shift in his community’s attitudes.

Juvenile Australia

I have named this story *Juvenile Australia*, which is a direct quote of a metaphor Dave used to describe the maturity of the Australian nation. The narrative is from part of the second interview with Dave (Case-Study B)
when we were discussing the maturity of the Australian nation. Dave describes Australia as a juvenile because he reported that he believed Australia had not accepted its colonial history, nor responded to the pleas by Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians for the government to say Sorry and thereby recognise the devastating loss to Indigenous peoples due to the forcible removal of children, and other government policies. The story addresses Dave’s hypothesis that the issues currently present in Australia regarding the gaps in life opportunities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are, in part, a direct result of colonialism and postcolonialism.

Extract 5.3
(Interview Two with Dave, November 2003)

125 Researcher: Do you feel Australia is a mature nation?
126 Dave: No, absolutely not.
127 Researcher: Where would she be, he be? I hate using she or he.

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23 This has changed since the national apology in February 2008 (Rudd, 2008).
Dave: Australian identity is a baby. Is a baby. And the reason … Or maybe a juvenile. And the reason it is that is because it hasn’t had the courage and the guts to own its black history. For the same reasons that I said. And it’s like…until we do that, then we’ll start to mature as an identity that we can be proud of. Because in 50 years time people are going to look back on us and think “What a joke, we didn’t even have the guts to own our black history.” Hopefully in 50 years time we would have owned it but at the moment we are not owning it and we are if we went forward 50 years and looked back on us now, we would just be embarrassed by the sort of leadership that we have on this situation that we find ourselves in. It’s like sometimes an analogy that I think of is that the Australian identity is like a …it’s like a closet drunk. It might be outwardly, it appears fine and it might be like an upwardly mobile sort of appearance but deep down there’s a dark dirty secret that they just haven’t got the courage to own. Or it’s like a cancer that we just won’t admit that we have. You know, this racism and things like that is like a cancer that we haven’t got the courage to own and face up to and until we have the courage to own and face up to it, unless we do that, then it’s going to erode our soul. It’s going to bring us down. It’s going to kill us. You know? It mightn’t kill us but it’s going to make us very, very sick and it will never allow us to mature into an identity that we can be proud of. And you just watch things like the National Anthem on TV when Australia plays rugby league and people standing side by side and you’d like to feel proud to sing the National Anthem together but the country’s so fucked on those kind of things. There’s no sense of unity. There’s no sense of really standing side by side because we’ve got this bullshit, bullshit discussions going on like Wayne Shuttle saying that Aborigines weren’t slaughtered and all that sort of stuff. And I’m not saying that people have to feel, look back on Australia’s black history and feel sorry or feel guilty or anything like that. That’s not useful. But they do need to look back and acknowledge it and acknowledge its connection to today because …

Yes, that’s yes. That pretty much caps it. It’s getting that sort of sense of being able to move into the future with dignity but I don’t think we’ve got that at the
moment. We’re not…we’re certainly not moving forward with dignity. There’s no way that exists. So, for me in this school here with all of these kids, I guess we acknowledge that, okay white Australia is having trouble with their journey. Let’s just leave them to sort their own shit out. Let’s just get our games together. Do you know what I mean?

139 Researcher: Yes.

140 Dave: Like, like it’s not going to do us any good waiting around for them to walk with us or things. They’ve got their own shit that they’ve got to sort out. Let’s just get our shit right and walk along so when we encounter racism and all that sort of shit it will always be their problem. Not ours. It might manifest or make things problematic for us but we need to stand our ground. And we’ll do that. And at some stage you would hope that they will make the journey but their journey’s longer than ours. So let’s start ours now. Let’s not be held up by them.

The story of Juvenile Australia is a powerful narrative that works in three parts. In the first part, Dave presents a vision for Australia through the use of a binary predicting how Australians would feel 50 years on if they had owned or not owned their black history. The second part of the narrative works to present the contradiction of Australia showing unity when, Dave argues, there is no real substance to this. In the third part of the narrative, Dave distances himself from white Australia and calls upon Aboriginal people to take a lead position and move forward into the future on their own. Dave engages a collection of metaphors and phrases to describe the Australian nation. See in extract 5.3 his use of juvenile, cancer, alcoholic, closet drunk, dark dirty secret, haven’t got the courage, upwardly mobile, very very sick, erode our soul, working to describe the deeper effects of colonialism, or unowned black history. Engaging powerful imagery, he
works to personify the nation of Australia as a juvenile who is “very, very sick” from the “cancer” (extract 5.3, turn 128, line 19) and hiding her alcoholism while living the life of a “closet drunk” (extract 5.3, turn 128, line 16). Dave positions himself with mainstream Australia in this first part of the text identifying with “we” in cautioning that “…unless we do that, then it’s going to erode our soul. It’s going to bring us down. It’s going to kill us. You know?” (extract 5.3, turn 128, lines 23-25). He uses pronouns to align with his audience in the first part, then switches pronouns to distance himself from the white audience in the second and third parts of the narrative. In the first instance, he aligns with his audience in order to harness their support for his argument that Australia needs to stop hiding from the truth of its colonial past and its “black history” (extract 5.3, turn 128, lines 37-38). In this narrative, Dave positions himself as a leader in the mainstream of power relations. For example, he positions himself as a knowledgeable leader and political thinker when he decries current leadership by saying “…we would just be embarrassed by the sort of leadership that we have on this situation that we find ourselves in” (extract 5.3, turn 128, lines 12-14). The passive modality of the verb emphasises “our” helplessness due to this “sort” of leadership (extract 5.3, turn 128, lines 12-14). Dave’s use of the pronouns in the collective, “we” and “our”, positions himself with his audience. He uses his deep understanding of the power of language to position himself as a visionary leader by first of all describing the Australia that presumably we would not wish to have, and, secondly, his vision of how Australia could be as a mature nation. The use
of metaphor as powerful imagery to persuade is employed to emphasise the belief he has that “It mightn’t kill us but it’s going to make us very, very sick and it will never allow us to mature into an identity that we can be proud of…” (extract 5.3, turn 128, lines 25-28).

The multiple sets of metaphor in this text create powerful imagery, making a strong and confronting challenge to Australia and its peoples to recognise postcolonialism or black history and move forward as a nation. Table 5.2 shows how the lexis works to set up a binary that persuades the audience that only one choice is possible:

**Table 5-2: Fifty Years On: Australia: Juvenile or Mature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract 5.6 turn &amp; line</th>
<th>Entity</th>
<th>Link</th>
<th>Entity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turn 128, lines 1-6</td>
<td>Is a baby… or maybe a juvenile</td>
<td>Until we do that (own its black history)</td>
<td>then we’ll start to mature as an identity we can be proud of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn 128, lines 8-11</td>
<td>Because in 50 years time people are going to look back on us and think, “What a joke, we didn’t even have the guts…”</td>
<td>Hopefully</td>
<td>We would have owned it (black history)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the first 30 lines, Dave uses the literary device of presenting a future 50 years on which would be the result of the present leadership, whereby Australia had not owned its black history. Implicit in the text is the understanding that Australian history has only ever been told from the coloniser or white perspective as “history is written by the victor” (Bourke, Bourke, & Edwards, 1998, p. 16). Until recently, Aboriginal voices regarding how Australia was settled or invaded has remained unheard (Elder, 1998; Mattingley & Hampton, 1988; Sabbioni, et al., 1998; Trudgen, 2000). Dave sets up the text as futures-orientated by looking back to the present. He refers to this present from a futures perspective as a joke because Australia did not have the courage to face the reality of colonisation and its effects on black history. This first scenario is created as a possible future that Australian people would not desire. Dave continues to enforce these negative images by personifying Australia as a “closet drunk” whose people “deep down” hold a “dark dirty secret that they just haven’t got the courage to own” (extract 5.3, turn 128, line 18).

This linguistic device of setting up two possible scenarios is very powerful. The first scenario is presented as a future possible (looking back)
in 50 years’ time, about which Australia would be ashamed. Dave then presents an alternative future scenario whereby Australia felt proud because it had chosen to address its black history. The text works because neither of these scenarios has yet happened, therefore the persuasive voice of Dave presents a future over which, presumably, his audience would feel it had some power.

This entire text moves to the power of myth and metaphor to engage and persuade the audience. For example, the choice of negative images of closet drunk, dirty dark secret, haven’t got the courage, cancer, and erode our soul work in the narrative as images with which no audience would want to align. However, we are given a choice of an alternative future in the way Dave sets up the 50 years on binary. The alternative is signalled by a visionary and transformational leader who uses the power of symbol within language to manipulate the power relations into alternative possibilities. Dave’s voice seems to demonstrate his understanding that his leadership discourse can work from the edge, challenging the powerful colonial discourse as juvenile and one about which a mature nation would feel ashamed. His leadership talk engages emotional and spiritual intelligence (Litchfield, 1999) to set up a discourse describing an alternative future as a mature nation, which presumably all Australians would prefer to the one he debunks as the colonial discourse of a juvenile, too immature to behave and act as an adult. Dave engages emotional intelligence and transformational leadership (Cranston, Ehrich, & Morton, 2007) when he embarks on the
binary of 50 years on. The discourse of this narrative signals inner leadership whereby Dave engages from the heart, core, and spirit, which are firmly aligned to his beliefs and values (Sarkar, 2003), hence his passion, as he persuades his audience in a deep and imaginative way through the use of symbol and metaphor.

In the second part of the text Dave uses strong and passionate language to enforce the point that Australia’s outward presentation is of a united nation symbolised in the national sporting events when the “nation” sings the national anthem (extract 5.3, turn 128, lines 28-31). Dave very strongly opposes this version as he constructs his view as an alternative truth that the nation is divided by the postcolonial black/white binary.

Extract 5.4

128 Dave: …And you just watch things like the National Anthem on TV when Australia plays rugby league and people standing side by side and you’d like to feel proud to sing the National Anthem together but the country’s so fucked on those kind of things. There’s no sense of unity. There’s no sense of really standing side by side because we’ve got this bullshit, bullshit discussions going on like Wayne Shuttle saying that Aborigines weren’t slaughtered and all that sort of stuff…

(Interview Two with Dave, November 2003)

Dave strongly opposes discourses that symbolise Australian culture as a unified nation and that are represented in sporting and national icons. In this extract, Dave strongly reminds his audience the racial divide is real and cannot be denied by the use of national symbols. He sets up the possibility
that “you’d” (extract 5.4, turn 128, line 3) like to “feel proud” (extract 5.4, turn 128, line 3) with the players, symbolising all Australians, “standing side by side” (extract 5.4, turn 128, line 3), and then blows this image up with some definitive and strong argument. He achieves this effect by the use of the expletive “fucked” (extract 5.4, turn 128, line 4), which serves to totally dismiss the romantic image of a unified Australia. The use of the expletive excludes the need for a series of secondary arguments as to why this image is a gross misrepresentation of contemporary Australia in Dave’s assessment. Once again, Dave uses impassioned language to debunk what he describes as the images or truths about the nation’s history and current situation, which deny its black history. Dave qualifies his challenge to Australia:

Extract 5.5

138 Dave: It’s getting that sort of sense of being able to move into the future with dignity but I don’t think we’ve got that at the moment. We’re not…we’re certainly not moving forward with dignity…

(Interview Two with Dave, November 2003)

The strong pace of the text and challenging tone continue into the third part of the narrative, when Dave switches metaphors to that of a journey and identifies white people as being behind black people on the journey to move forward. He takes an interesting turn on power relations to reposition black people as having the power to place themselves first on the journey to move
forward and opens the possibility that Aboriginal people do not have to wait for white people, “to sort their own shit out” (extract 5.6 turn 138, lines 3).

Extract 5.6
138 Dave: I guess we acknowledge that, okay white Australia is having trouble with their journey. Let’s just leave them to sort their own shit out. Let’s just get our games together. Do you know what I mean?

139 Researcher: Yes.

140 Dave: Like, like it’s not going to do us any good waiting around for them to walk with us or things. They’ve got their own shit that they’ve got to sort out. Let’s just get our shit right and walk along so when we encounter racism and all that sort of shit it will always be their problem. Not ours. It might manifest or make things problematic for us but we need to stand our ground. And we’ll do that. And at some stage you would hope that they will make the journey but their journey’s longer than ours. So let’s start ours now. Let’s not be held up by them.

(Interview Two with Dave, November 2003)

Dave’s proposal is emancipatory (Interview Two with Dave, October 2003) for Aboriginal people. He uses his emancipatory, visionary and transformational leadership position to present a possibility that is not normally visible to peoples who have been oppressed by postcolonialism, because the processes of colonial and postcolonialism would usually be seen to deny these possibilities (Bennett & Cowan, 2003). In this part of the text, Dave sets up the black/white binary whereby the blacks are “us” and “they” (extract 5.6, turn 140, lines 1-3) are the white people. This is an example of how pronouns are used to set up relationships within the story. Normally texts are written from the coloniser’s viewpoint and they are the
minority or the colonised peoples. Dave boldly positions black or Aboriginal peoples with a voice, indeed with a leadership role in moving forward and not waiting to be directed by white people. Again we witness Dave’s emancipatory and visionary leadership in recognising that Aboriginal people can choose to access power (extract: 5.6, turn 140, lines 3) by reconceptualising power relations within the discourse of white Australia. In alignment with Foucault’s analytic of power relations (1980), where there is power, there is resistance. This concept is here advocated by Dave through the particular strategy of taking the power of the “white Australia” (extract: 5.6, turn 140, line 3) discourse and reconceptualising it. His reconceptualisation includes using the term *black* (extract: 5.3, turn 128, line 3) to describe Aboriginal people. The term *black* has had a strong framing associated with it since the black power movements in USA and in South Africa (Fredrickson, 1996). The terms *Aboriginal* and *Indigenous* currently do not carry powerful connotations in Australia. Dave uses the terms *black* with the implicit assumption of power and leadership together to challenge and resist postcolonial Australia’s association of *black* with negative representations and weakness of Aboriginal or Indigenous peoples.

The entire narrative demonstrates Dave’s skill in working with notions of power not immediately aligned with representations of Aboriginal people. For example, he dismisses the idea that black people should wait for white leadership to help them recover their rights and power in Australia. He challenges Aboriginal people to “stand our ground” (extract 5.6, turn 140,
line 7) and start their journey now. This talk presupposes that power is constantly in relationship and accessible to Aboriginal people, as Foucault (1980) would advocate. Dave’s language signals a realisation of postcolonial representations of his people, also his sense of the need for emancipatory and visionary leadership to challenge this narrow representation and offer alternative power relations. Dave urges black Australia to start its journey now and “Let’s not be held up by them [white people]” (extract 5.6, turn 140, line 10) signaling, what I interpret, as a Foucauldian (1980) concept of power relations as Dave assumes, like Foucault, that power is in a network, omnipresent and always accessible.

The next narrative is taken from the same interview. Dave challenges another of the major myths operating at the core of Australian society – the myth that identifies Australia as “the lucky country.”

The Lucky Country

In this narrative I had engaged Dave in a dialogue discussing the driving Australian metaphor of “the lucky country” and its supporting metaphor of a fair go. In this extract Dave accesses the chain of power and juxtaposes the relationship of power, which produces a very different set of discourses (Foucault, 1984). This narrative is a primary example of the “more” of language. The analyses interpret the ideologies or the more, for example, the major Australian ideology of “the lucky country,” behind the discourses and its truths. According to Foucault these truths are often only one set of
perspectives (1971). Dave tells another truth of the fair go for Australia’s recent migrants, focusing on the fact that their position in Australian society depends on their country of origin and religion. The talk becomes amalgamated with mine as I tell the story of my immigration and how I have been privileged as a white woman entering Australia as a migrant. Indeed the text develops into an agreement that Australia has fulfilled the dream of the lucky country for people whom Australia privileges with immediate status, however, this is not a truth for certain migrants and others depending on their country of origin, creed and colour.

In this extract Dave juxtaposes the power potentials of postcolonial Australia by focusing on the theme of land and Aboriginal connection to the land. He positions black people as powerful through their connection to land. The connotation of this connection of Aboriginal people to land is powerful if derived from the Western concept of land ownership being associated with power and wealth. Dave juxtaposes the black/white binary allocating Australian white society as secondary to black society as a result of the black connection to the land, a claim supported by the powerful concept of ancient time:

Extract 5.7

98 Dave: Oh, Australia I see as a white world. It’s a…Mmm. Even though, even though we talk about multiculturalism and all of that stuff, it’s a romantic... I see it as a romantic thing that people talk about and we say that, we romanticise about this notion of fair go but it’s bullshit you know? It’s a fair go if you, if you’re with the ... with the crew, sort of thing. You know?
Researcher: Well, I’ve been given a fair go and I suspect that’s because I came here with white skin.

Dave: Yes.

Researcher: If I’d come... If I was Chinese or something.

Dave: Oh!

Researcher: I wouldn’t have been given a...

Dave: No. If you had a... If you were from the Middle East or something like that, there’s no such thing as a fair go. Yes.

Researcher: And certainly. So do you see Australia as I mean, it’s what we’re aiming for isn’t it? A real multicultural society. But we’re not there by any means. So, as an Indigenous leader, in Australia, which is your land, you still see Australia as white. Why is that? What’s your…?

Dave: Well.

Researcher: Well are you claiming, is that why you are being so when I use the word “aggressive” it’s not at all got any derogatory baggage...

Dave: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Researcher: I mean “aggressive” as in strong.

Dave: Yes, and maybe it’s just that sense of asserting our place. Because I know that we deserve. You know? I still think that society is a white society and we are still to assert our place in it. We have our world that exists as an Aboriginal world that white society can’t touch and part of that is connection to the land and to the place. And that really bugs people. I know. Lots of old bloody farmers and all that sort of stuff and they’re saying, “You know, how do you...” I spoke at a Rotary Club thing and this bloke gets up and says, “Well how do you define Indigenous Australian?” I said, “Well, you’re a descendant from the land.” He said, “Well, I’ve been here five generations and I feel like an Indigenous Australian.” But it really shit that guy because he knew that I had something that he just didn’t have. You know? But it’s his, him and his
people have set up society; it’s their society but we’re here and they can’t touch us on that. You know? We’ll always be descendant from the land. And they just can’t touch us and they hate it. So in a sense it; it’s our country. But it’s their society maybe. I don’t know…

(Interview Two with Dave, November 2003)

In this narrative, produced by Dave and I, we talked about the truth of Australia as “multicultural” (extract 5.7, turn 105, line 2) and the lucky country for some people; the talk then moves to how Indigenous peoples and others are positioned in relation to land. Dave demythologises the “romantic” (extract 5.7, turn 98, line 3) notion that Australia is a multicultural society by referring to this assertion as “bullshit” (extract 5.7, turn 98, line 5) unless you are “with the crew” (extract 5.7, turn 98, line 7) which I translate to mean as part of a certain white culture.

When Dave refers to “Lots of old bloody farmers and all that sort of stuff” (extract 5.7, turn 110, line 7), he is picking up the emotive land-rights debate, which focuses on the binary of Indigenous claims to land and pastoralists’ right to farm or miners’ rights to mine the land. When he asserts “It’s our country” (extract 5.7, turn 110, line 20), Dave is referring to the enormous stake in the land that Indigenous peoples have because they have been “descended from the land” (extract 5.7, turn 110, line 12) and have a deep spiritual and cultural connection to the land (and sea). In this section of the text Dave positions himself with Aboriginal people. Dave perceives that, at the deeper level, the “rotary club member” knew that
“white people” (extract 5.7, turn 110, line 15) may have formed societies in Australia since 1788, however, they can never lay claim to the affinity with the land that Indigenous peoples have: “And they just can’t touch us and they hate it” (extract 5.7, turn 110, line 17). When Dave refers to “they” (extract 5.7, turn 110, line 19), he is voicing the topical debate, evident in Australian society particularly since the land-rights debate in the 1980s, on who has the moral and legal right to Australian land.

Dave demonstrates multiple models of leadership in this text. He shows recognition of colonial history and turns the discourse of Western leadership upside down by focusing on land, Aboriginal connection to land, and how white Australia can never have a moral connection to Australian land due to the tens of thousands of years Aboriginal people have been spiritually “descendant from the land” (extract 5.7, turn 110, line 12). This is a central tenet of Aboriginal spirituality and whilst different groups may have different views on how Aboriginal people are connected to land, the truth of the centrality of land to Aboriginal spirituality, culture and identity is accepted (Penrith, 1996). Dave is well cognisant of the power of this knowledge:

…it’s their society but we’re here and they can’t touch us on that. You know? We’ll always be descendant from the land. And they just can’t touch us and they hate it… (extract 5.7, turn 110, lines 16-20)

He resists the dominant discourse of the settlers “Lots of old bloody farmers and all that sort of stuff” (extract 5.7, turn 110, line 7) who make, in
his view, pseudo claims to land. Dave definitively sets up a binary of “them” and “us” in this narrative and uses incontestable statements like “descendant from the land” (extract 5.7, turn 110, line 13) which makes Aboriginal peoples’ position as superior, unquestionable. Dave’s talk calls upon several models of leadership, including the use of moral and emotional intelligence and his own emancipatory leadership to present a powerful and very different version of the postcolonial truth. What is interesting in Dave’s approach is that he does not present systematic argument to debunk the colonial discourses that the farmers and others present as a case for their rights to land. In fact he uses powerful imagery, for example the spiritual connection of Aboriginal peoples to land, “We have our world that exists…” (extract 5.7, turn 110, line 4), as a dismissive argument supported by the binary of “them” (white people) and “us” (Aboriginal peoples); and ancient time, “But it really shit that guy because he knew that I had something that he just didn’t have” (extract 5.7, turn 110, lines 14-15) to refer to the ancient connection that Aboriginal peoples have had to the land for 50000 years. Dave uses the power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980) he has of the common understanding, that is now accepted, that Aboriginal peoples have been connected to Australian land for 50000 years.

In this narrative Dave seems born to lead, demonstrating charismatic leadership through the imagery he engages, which calls upon strong and powerful discourses of land, identity, and spirituality. The depth of these themes together with how they combine to provide sustained connection to
Australian land works to cancel white claims at a deeper, moral, and historical level. Although the text uses emotive language to persuade his audience, Dave’s voice adds to the power of his historical argument about an Aboriginal world, which existed long before the white man came to this place:

We have our world that exists as an Aboriginal world that white society can’t touch and part of that is connection to the land and to the place (extract 5.7, turn 110, lines 4-6).

Conclusion

The colour-full holograms in this chapter illuminate in full colour the black/white binaries that are the one-sided stories told in colonial discourses. The narratives are powerful insights into the inner world of two Aboriginal school principals. They tell of Australia’s colonial history and how colonial discourses position and represent Indigenous peoples in particular ways in today’s society. In each of the narratives, the Aboriginal principals present strong challenges to representations alive in their communities as the truth, and which are dispelled by the leader’s voice of an alternative truth told in full colour. Both Jay and Dave reposition Aboriginal people into new and emancipatory images. They do not accept the representation and positioning of black people as necessarily black skinned and/or somehow powerless. Both principals talk the hard talk, dealing with postcolonial realities of racial discrimination in Australia. Jay and Dave offer an alternative vision through their colour-full holograms of leadership.
offering tolerance and emancipation as powerful tools to move forward, and “…then we’ll start to mature as an identity that we can be proud of…”(Interview Two with Dave: extract 5.3, turn 128, line 5). As Kevin Gilbert, poet and activist and an icon of Aboriginal leadership advised over forty years ago, “Because a white man’ll never do it (Gilbert, 2002)” and Charles Perkins, another renowned Aboriginal leader echoed twenty years later, “...There’s only one person that is going to do it, and that is that black face you see in the mirror when you wake up in the morning…” (ABC, 1993)

I now move to chapter 6, *Big Boots Walking, Land and Leadership*, where I explore the interview talk that focuses on symbols engaged by all four principals to represent their leadership in the contexts of differing interpretations of the realities of walking in two worlds recounted by each school leader.
BIG BOOTS WALKING, LAND AND LEADERSHIP

Introduction

In chapter 5 I analysed four narratives that presented candid insights into the inner world of two Aboriginal school principals, Jay and Dave. These two leaders offered tolerance and emancipation as powerful tools to move forward through their “colour-full holograms” of leadership. In this chapter, *Big Boots Walking, Land and Leadership*, I explore the interview talk of all four school leaders to focus on the myths, metaphors, and symbols engaged by these leaders to represent themselves as Indigenous peoples and principals walking in two worlds. I address the fourth and fifth research questions, “How is leadership symbolised by the leaders in interview talk when asked to describe their leadership approach?” and “How do the leaders use the symbols and metaphors of spirituality as they work to re-envision Australian society?” I also address the central research question, “In what ways do Indigenous principals rely on spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools?” I have chosen four narratives to analyse from the principals’ interview talk where the leaders recount stories symbolising aspects of their leadership as praxis. I chose narratives that engaged myths,

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1 In this chapter, I deliberately referred to Aboriginal peoples as both Dave and Jay are Aboriginal people and they refer to Aboriginal people specifically. Elsewhere I use Indigenous as a collective noun in awareness of its inadequacy to reflect the numerous and diverse groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in Australia (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999).
metaphors, and symbols as the analyses I conducted highlight the complexity of the leadership models engaged by all four leaders used to negotiate complex community contexts. These complex communities, their leaders, and their cultures have been narrowed in some instances into colonial binaries of black and white. The analyses highlight the fallacy of the binary representations as the leaders provide alternative symbols from the narratives.

I have named the first narrative *The Big Boots*, which is taken from a phrase used by Dave (Case-Study B) to symbolise the much bigger and redefined position, which he advocates his students, community, and Aboriginal peoples more generally grow into (Interview Three with Dave, December 2003) rather than the smaller boots (by implication) afforded them by postcolonial Australia. This analysis looks closely at how the smaller boots given to Aboriginal peoples work to confine them into the narrow binaries or postcolonial representations to the extent that many people in Dave’s community confine themselves and their children to these representations. The analysis continues by focusing on how Dave calls on a range of inner leadership models sitting within an alternative analytic of power relations and version of the truth, in order to form a vision symbolised in big boots whereby, he believes, his people will dare to step out of these restrictive representations and emancipate themselves. In table 6.1, I present an analysis of *The Big Boots* narrative. I focus on identifying
and summarising models of leadership that are pronounced in the processes used to re-present Aboriginal peoples by Dave.

The second narrative is about a whistle presented to Pete (Case-Study C) when he left his first teaching position. The whistle was to denote the profession’s confidence in him as a future leader and, as such, was a symbol of his potential leadership. The analysis of this second narrative centres on Pete’s deconstruction of the representations given to Indigenous peoples as learners, teachers, and school leaders by white Australia. Pete re-presents himself as an Indigenous leader to his students, teachers, the students’ parents, and community; however the analyses highlight the whistle as symbolic of the profession’s acceptance of Pete as able to operate within a Westernised model of leadership. The analysis continues by exploring how Pete managed to use these early experiences to gain knowledge of the Westernised game as he learned to become highly proficient at walking in a Westernised world as a young man, teacher, and then leader across the Torres Strait. Using the expertise gained from these experiences, Pete developed his own cultural models of leadership identifiable in inner leadership and cross cultural models of leadership.

The third narrative focuses on the symbol of *Walking in Two Worlds*, which recognises that the four Indigenous leaders negotiate their principalship by moving in both black and white worlds. The literature on this phenomenon conceptualises two cultural worlds or epistemologies, however the boundaries are not necessarily discernable. All principals
responded differently as to how they managed walking in two worlds. The literature backgrounds the common dilemma black, minority ethnic or Indigenous leaders experience in becoming proficient in mainstream educational discourses whilst not compromising their own identity as a black, minority ethnic, or Indigenous person leading in that community (Bhabha, 1994; McKenley & Gordon, 2002). The analysis focuses on how the principals report dealing with possible dilemmas, decision making, and other processes as leaders operating from both worldviews. The analysis highlights the fluidity rather than rigidity of walking in two worlds, and the restriction the walking in two worlds symbol may impose on reality. I symbolised the principals’ worldviews in pictorial form by using visual frames painted by an Aboriginal colleague to symbolise and theorise the sophistication of these representations. I use the literature explored in the review on black, minority ethnic, and Indigenous leaders’ experiences to analyse these data.

The final metaphor focuses on the symbol of land and sea, Indigenous spiritual connection to the land and Terra Nullius. I analyse three leaders’ representations in these narratives, as they work to position Indigenous peoples and cultures in spiritual relationship to land. I analyse the leaders’ spiritual representations of land against Foucault’s analytic of power (1980).

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2 Indigenous cultures’ spiritual connection to land includes land, sea and air, hereafter assumed in the concept of land but sometimes made explicit as land, sea or air particularly when referring to Torres Strait Islander cultures (Sheehan & Walker, 2001).
and postcolonial theories, which I frame as having produced discourses that marginalise this spiritual connection. I begin by exploring the symbol of *The Big Boots* in the first narrative.

**The Big Boots**

In this narrative Dave demonstrates what I have named as inner models of leadership, all operating at deep levels or the fourth leadership cluster (Doyle & Smith, 2008). Dave engaged these models in order to turn two centuries of critique of Indigenous peoples into a challenge to harness the personal and collective power of Indigenous people as they work to move beyond the limitations imposed upon them by postcolonial Australia:

**Extract 6.1**

1 Researcher: Dave, last night the whole community of Cree came together for the awards night. May I ask you how you would perceive last night and its relevance to what you try to do here at Cree?

2 Dave: There were a couple of levels operating. It was to celebrate education. It was to let the parents see their children and to feel proud of who they are but probably at the deepest level it was about letting people know about this strong and smart that we talk about is real strength and real smartness. And last night I made some pretty in your face comments to the community about, “It’s our right to feel strong and we are strong and it’s our right to feel smart and we are smart.” And I think it’s a part of that… It’s definitely a part of that. I mean, it’s emancipatory leadership that we talk about where, where we’ve got to people, to realise that, “Yes, look we can be, we can be strong and smart because we’ve got every right to expect that of ourselves. And I think that the reason that that’s necessary is because we’ve lived in a society that tried to tell us otherwise and lots of us tend to buy that perception or bought into that notion
that “Yes, well maybe we are. Maybe we’ve got no right to feel strong or feel smart or anything like that.” So it’s been like, being strong and smart has been something that’s not an Aboriginal thing. So last night was, was designed to be very in your face and to say, “Look it’s our right to feel strong and it’s our right to feel smart.” And it’s about power really and it’s about that sense of power - not giving people power but drawing it out of people. Making people realise that even in the community of Cree, despite the atrocities and the sociological processes of the past, where people have been disempowered that there is a sense of power that’s still in us. That still exists. And I guess that’s what last night was about was, was triggering that or trying to awaken that or get people to realise, “Yes, shit. We are powerful you know?” And drawing that out of, drawing that out of people...(Interview Three with Dave, December 2004)

The above extract draws upon a leadership discourse that Dave names “emancipatory leadership” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 11). When I asked Dave for his perception of the awards evening, he immediately identified two levels where leadership in action was happening. The first level Dave identified was the every day intention of an awards night to celebrate student achievement: “It was to let the parents see their children and to feel proud of who they are” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 3). Dave then moved to identify the “deepest level” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 4) he had constructed through the medium of the awards night to “…let [ting] people know about this strong and smart that we talk about is real strength and real smartness” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 5). Dave’s lexical choice works at the deeper level, he reports, of communication where symbols and metaphors operate to represent people and nations: “Making people realise that even in the community of Cree, despite the atrocities and the sociological processes of
the past, that there remains a sense of power that’s still in us. That still exists….’’ (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 25). Dave uses his leadership to challenge, head on, the disbelief that he knows is embedded within the community, and with which he identifies “in us” (extract 6.1, turn 2 line 2), that Aboriginal peoples have the “right” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 22-23) to feel strong and smart, “even” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 26) in the community of Cree. The qualification “even” is an historical reference, because part of the “…atrocities and sociological processes of the past” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 27) were because “Cree” was set up as a settlement for Aboriginal peoples where:

…individuals from about 40 language groups across the state were forcibly shifted to the site and expected to form a homogenous group. A century later, it is still a place where there is plenty of pain and a level of social dysfunction. (Winkler, 2005, p. 14)

The repetition of “real” (extract 6.1, turn 2, lines 5-6) and “realise” (extract 6.1, turn 2, lines 12, 26, & 31) contributes to Dave’s assertion that some Aboriginal people do not yet believe that power is always in relationship and accessible and may be harnessed by them to construct their own identity. This is the first leadership dilemma I identify in the narrative because Dave attempts to deal at this deeper level of communication, where he must exercise his leadership, if he intends to make any difference to the processes and negative representations deeply embedded as a truth that have subjugated Aboriginal peoples and more particularly his school community. Dave adopts strong language and repeats several times his belief that power is present as Spirit and may be called on by Aboriginal people individually
and collectively in an attempt to persuade his audience (in his recollection of his awards speech) of the presence of power. According to Foucault’s analytic of power/knowledge, “…power is not an institution, a structure, or a certain force with which certain people are endowed; it is the name given to a complex strategic relation in a given society” (Foucault, 1980, p. 240). Therefore, in alignment with Foucault, Dave theorises that the Cree community may work with power available through this “complex strategic relation” (Foucault, 1980, p. 240), because the institutions of State do not possess power, nor is it static, but it may be recognised when people engage with it in their relationships. The leadership dilemma for Dave is to both challenge his community and support them to grow past the representations afforded them by “White Australia” (extract 6.2, turn 6, line 33) through accessing the power of this knowledge. Dave is explicit that, despite the “sociological processes” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 27) of the past, Aboriginal people can “trigger” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 30) their power and harness it. In Table 6.1 below I identify the models of inner leadership that, I contend, are operating within the broader discourse of emancipatory leadership as espoused by Dave, used to “trigger” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 30) the complex relations of power to work in resistance to the narrow binaries and postcolonial representations of Aboriginal peoples:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract 6.1</th>
<th>Communicating at the deepest level</th>
<th>Representation</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turn 2, lines 4-6</td>
<td>It was about letting people know</td>
<td>Strong and smart</td>
<td>Visionary, transformational &amp; instructional leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Real strength and real smartness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn 2, lines 6-9</td>
<td>Pretty in your face comments to the community</td>
<td>“It’s our right to feel strong and we are strong and it’s our right to feel smart and we are smart”</td>
<td>Emancipatory leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn 2, lines 9-14</td>
<td>About where we’ve got to people, to realise that</td>
<td>“Yes, look we can be, we can be strong and smart because we’ve got every right to expect that of ourselves.”</td>
<td>Emotional intelligence &amp; instructional leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn 2, lines 16-21</td>
<td>…lots of us tend to buy that perception or bought into that notion that ….</td>
<td>“Yes, well maybe we’ve got no right to feel strong or feel smart or anything like that” …being strong and smart has been something that’s not an Aboriginal thing.</td>
<td>Chaos theory &amp; empowerment models of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn 2, lines 21-23</td>
<td>designed to be very in your face and to say</td>
<td>“Look, it’s our right to feel strong and it’s our right to feel smart”</td>
<td>Authentic &amp; emancipatory models of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn 2, lines 23-25</td>
<td>And it’s about power really and it’s about that sense of power—not giving people power but drawing it out of people</td>
<td></td>
<td>Empowerment &amp; distributive leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn 2, lines 25-29</td>
<td>Making people realise</td>
<td>despite the atrocities and the sociological processes of the past, where people have been disempowered that</td>
<td>Emotional &amp; spiritual leadership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
there is a sense of power that’s still in us. That still exists.

And I guess that’s what last night was about was, was triggering that or trying to awaken that or get people to realise...And drawing that out of, drawing that out of people… “Yes, shit. We are powerful you know?”

Emancipation, empowerment, & spiritual leadership

In this next extract he continues by turning the metaphor of the big boots into a symbol of leadership, power, and expectation. Dave uses his leadership talk to articulate possibilities for his people; the emancipatory discourse continues as I asked Dave for his deconstruction of the awards night. I then move to analyse the metaphors and symbols Dave used to convey the messages, which he wanted to impart to his community.

Extract 6.2

3 Researcher: Can I reflect that back to you? So without dismissing the first level… And, as an observer, I felt that the cohesion in the events was the strong political message. It was the screen that said Martin Luther

5 King’s words about, particularly the ones that we don’t look at the colour of our skin; we will look at the content of our character. A very strong message. And there were other messages that were particular to the nature of Cree. The School Song - which is a political song too, political not being a bad word. … but being a good word.

4 Dave: Mmm. Mmm.

5 Researcher: So maybe, can I ask you to talk about the second part of your summation which was and I know we spoke to this before but I think it’s worth exploring further. It’s about power. Because, in the past, you have said and the colonial history has said, of Australia, that
Aboriginal people are not allowed to be strong and powerful or as smart.

Dave: Mmm. Mmm.

Researcher: And you’re taking a stand on that?

Dave: Yes. And I’m finding that we’re at a position now where when we’ve started - I mean our school was rock bottom. We grew to a position where, you know we’ve got kids performing alongside other children in the State and part of last night was steadying the ground like firming it up because essentially what we’re doing is we’ve got kids now that are in a zone that other Aboriginal kids throughout the country have never been in before and for them that would feel a bit strange. And so it was about steadying the ground and saying, “Now hang on a second. Don’t get uncomfortable about this strong and smart thing because we’ve got every right to own this. We’ve got every right to let it out of us.” Because yes, we’ve grown from that disempowered souls or that rock bottom performance, cheeky black kids, dumb black kids. We’ve grown out of that position where we’re standing up alongside white people and we mustn’t get uncomfortable about that and let’s firm this up and let’s move beyond that even more. And I felt that was necessary because I’ve received some comments in the past couple of weeks about and it’s disappointing that some people have said, “Oh, you’re conning these kids up too much.” And all that sort of thing. And I think, “That is fucking bullshit.” Because they’re freaking out because they can’t handle being strong and smart or that kids around them, the kids from their own community are strong and smart. And the best way to describe it I suppose is people think that. People are getting uncomfortable with it and suggesting that maybe we are getting too big for our boots. But my response to that is “Yes, we are getting too big for the boots that we’ve been put in but those boots have been made for us by ‘White Australia’ so it’s time that we got, it’s time that we outgrew those boots and grow into boots that we create for ourselves. And let’s make those boots really big boots.
and let’s grow into those. So if we get too big for our boots, that’s a good thing…”

(Interview Three with Dave, December 2003).

This second part of the narrative engages a number of metaphors, through which Dave sets up possibilities for Aboriginal people symbolised in *The Big Boots*. These possibilities are opposite to the narrow potential of the “…boots [have been] made for us by ‘White Australia’” (Extract 6.2, turn 8, line 34). Dave identifies himself in this text with Aboriginal people using the pronouns “we” and “us” (extract 6.2, turn 8, lines 32-34) disassociating himself from mainstream society by naming it “White Australia” (extract 6.2, turn 6, lines 34-35). Dave begins his explanation as to why his people need to “…steady[ing] the ground” (extract 6.2, turn 8, line 5) by presenting the academic history of the students describing how their performance changed from being “at rock bottom” (extract 6.2, turn 8, line 2) to being alongside other “children in the State” (extract 6.2, turn 8, line 4). He reports his sensitivity to the fact that this is a new phenomenon for his community, who were used to their children being described as “cheeky black kids, dumb black kids” (extract 6.2, turn 8, line 17). Dave recognises that, to the most profound level, Aboriginal people have historically become accustomed to being represented this way, and “lots of us tend to buy that perception” (extract 6.1, turn 2, line 16). This phenomenon is reported in postcolonial literature (Ashcroft, et al., 2000b; Sabbioni, et al., 1998) when the colonised take on the representations given to them by the coloniser, therefore “Instead of being proud of a unique and
rich culture you are forced to be ashamed that you are not white” (Mattingley & Hampton, 1988, p. 265). Dave recognises Aboriginal people have become “disempowered souls” (extract 6.2, turn 8, line 16). The use of this emotive statement emphasises the depth of the negative representations of Aboriginal peoples that affect identity right through to the human soul, which is at the deepest level of humanity. Dave role plays the parents’ concern and fear and then responds directly in the students’ voice, “…where we’re standing up alongside white people and we mustn’t get uncomfortable” (extract 6.2, turn 8, lines 18-19) at becoming successful using direct speech to convey the power of his message. Each rebuttal he proclaims strongly minimises the previous arguments he surmises on behalf of the community: “Because they’re freaking out because they can’t handle being strong and smart or that kids around them, the kids from their own community are strong and smart” (extract 6.2, turn 8, line 27). Dave recognises this fear and whilst his language shows recognition and sensitivity to the community’s predicament, his resolve to change the status quo is much stronger. He uses powerful imagery, together with colloquial language, the use of direct speech, and collective pronouns to identify with and assume a less formal relationship with his Aboriginal people: “we’ve got every right” (extract 6.2, turn 8, lines 12-15) to debunk the postcolonial-inspired positions and instead position Aboriginal people as powerful: “…Now hang on a second. Don’t get uncomfortable about this strong and smart thing because we’ve got every right to own this. We’ve got every right to let it out of us” (extract 6.2, turn 8, line 12). Implicit in Dave’s
choice of verb “to let it out” (extract 6.2, turn 8, line 12) is his assumption that Aboriginal people have both the power and the accompanying knowledge of the presence of power, as part of Foucault’s analytic (1980), “to let it out” of them.

Dave continues the narrative in the third extract with a further illustration of the mammoth shift in positioning of black students evidenced by the State results. He describes the parents’ response, “crying” (extract 6.3, turn 58, line 3), and opened by the scene in front of them to the possibility that, because these results had been validated over three years, the parents were beginning to believe that these results might be real. Implicit in this text is the possibility of a different position for black children rather than as “dumb” or “cheeky”(extract 6.2, turn 8, line 17), which had previously been used to stereotype black students and keep them in positions where they are framed as uneducable (Hall, 1997):

**Extract 6.3**

58 Dave: Yes. Yes. And I think like it was a couple of years ago when we run that sort of a night, it was like the parents cried. I watched parents crying and their eyes, you know, …thinking “Oh, man, this is unbelievable.” You know? That the kids were up there and put on such a show for us. Like they couldn’t believe what they were seeing. There was a sense of disbelief and then for them, like last night they saw it again. So they saw it last year. The year before that. They’ve seen it a couple of years in a row and they’re at the position where they’re thinking, “Holy shit, this is not a show. This is actually feeling real.” You know? …
Dave: And I get a sense that the parents are starting, at that position where they’re thinking “Shit! This is, this is, this is real, you sort of thing…”

(Interview Three with Dave, December 2003).

In this third excerpt, Dave reports a definite alternative position for black students to take in relation to education. Symbolically, Dave describes his attempts to lead Aboriginal people to “firm this [ground] up” (extract 6.2, turn 8, line 6) in order that they may grow into bigger boots than white Australia would ever give to them, by harnessing the power and “move[ing] beyond that even more” (extract 6.2, turn 8, line 20) to shape an alternative future for Aboriginal Australia.

This extract provides a number of responses to the central, fourth and fifth research questions signaling both leadership symbols and models of leadership as Dave works to report his ideas about a re-envisioned Australian society. *Table 6.1* above specifies various symbols of leadership sitting within the fourth cluster (Doyle & Smith, 2008), or inner leadership models, which, I suggest, are called upon by Dave in his emancipatory call to action. The symbols of leadership called upon by Dave in his interview talk are woven together in the metaphor of *The Big Boots*, which provides the vehicle for Aboriginal peoples to move forward. In order to move his community forward into the big boots, Dave engages inner leadership models of emancipatory, transformative, instructional, visionary, and spiritual leadership. Dave calls on all of these inner leadership models, collectively identifiable as spiritual leadership, while he works with symbols
and metaphors operating at what I have framed as the deepest levels of society. I argue here that he is leading from his core beliefs or spiritual self to trigger his community into engaging “the fire in their belly” (Interview One with Dave, November 2003: extract 3.1, turn 40, line 6), which is the knowledge to reconnect with Spirit, identity and culture.

The next set of symbols I analyse are around the symbol of a whistle, which although awarded to Pete as a symbol of his potential leadership, I argue, came from an anticipation of Pete’s potential as a Western leader. Once again, as explored in Dave’s narrative of The Big Boots above, white Australia attempts to define how Indigenous peoples should be represented as leaders.

The Whistle

Extract 6.4

23  Pete: And back in the 1970s at that stage, you had very few Torres Strait Islander students leave here to further their education and receive senior education…but it wasn’t encouraged from teachers at the high school and that I personally didn’t have any teachers say to me, “Have you considered going on to high school to further your studies in senior…” But throughout my schooling years, I never had an Indigenous teacher stand in front of me and teach or be recognised as a teacher. There were teacher aides, but no qualified teachers and that gave the impression to many of us at that time or most of us at that time that, you know, it may not have been possible for Indigenous people to become teachers and that university was too hard and obviously people, if it was something that people could get through, we should’ve had people through that before. …I always believed that within teaching, you have that opportunity to make a difference in
people’s lives if you felt you had those skills to do that and you felt comfortable. … But it could also put me in a position where I could be a role model for others to aspire to… Upon arriving in Cairns, at that time, there was to my knowledge no other Indigenous teacher in the region of Cairns or in Cairns itself…

(Interview Two with Pete, May 2004)

Pete became a leader in his field, becoming the first Indigenous teacher, principal, and interagency leader in Far North Queensland. Pete elaborates that because there were no Indigenous teachers of whom he knew during his schooling, there was an implicit belief among his fellow classmates when they were at school that “…it may not have been possible for Indigenous people to become teachers and that university was too hard…” (extract 6.4, turn 23, lines 12-14). However Pete “always believed” (extract 6.4, turn 23, line 16) that he could be a role model within education and “make a difference in people’s lives” (extract 6.4, turn 23, line 17). Pete positioned himself as different to white Australian representations and institutionalised racist practices; for example as recently as the 1970s senior education “wasn’t encouraged” (extract 6.4, turn 23, line 3), by educators with the consequences that Pete and his classmates believed they, as Torres Strait Islander peoples, were not intelligent enough to complete senior education. The fact that teachers did not promote senior certificate aspirations among their students demonstrates how widespread and protected by the assertion of truth, the colonial discourse of Indigenous peoples as being capable only of lower status positions, remained. Pete chose to position himself in a binary to be much more than this representation and become a “pioneer”
as one of the first Torres Strait teachers and leaders. This is transformational leadership (Dubrin & Dalglish, 2003). Pete demonstrated transformational and visionary leadership in enacting his aspiration. The literature reports black, minority ethnic and Indigenous peoples enactment of leadership aspirations despite negative messages from some sections of white society (McKenley & Gordon, 2002). Leaders who move beyond these boundaries draw from visionary, transformational, and spiritual models (Williams, Ricciardi, & Blackbourn, 2006). Their enacted practice moves communities forward, leaders having the courage to challenge the old representations as they break the postcolonial ceiling and become “a role model for others to aspire to…” (extract 6.4, turn 23, line 20). In moving communities forward, school leaders who are operating from spiritual leadership models do not put energy into apportioning blame; rather they use the power of leadership discourse, often engaging metaphor and symbol, to capture the imagination of their community as they offer an alternative scenario (Lin, 2006). Pete does not use negative talk when discussing the status quo in the 1970s:

….receive senior education…but it wasn’t encouraged from teachers at the high school and that I personally didn’t have any teachers say to me, “Have you considered going on to high school to further your studies in senior…” (extract 6.4, turn 23, lines 3-7)

Pete focused on changing the educational discourse of the 1970s, which presented as truth (Foucault, 1971) that Indigenous peoples could not become professionals as they were not intelligent or inclined to education; he did this by becoming the leader he envisioned. In the next extract, Pete
recounts two examples where he encountered racism as a new teacher to the education profession and moved through these experiences to master his teaching role in a Westernised school setting to the extent that the recognition of his leadership was symbolised in the gift of a whistle:

Extract 6.5

23 Pete: I remember back to my first day at school where, as a teacher, parents would arrive in the classroom and I would be all dressed up with the long socks in those days and they’d walk straight past me or come back to me and say “Excuse me can you tell me where I can find Mr Frank?” and the minute they sort of saw you were Indigenous, you know, the expectations were placed on you, oh Johnny’s good in science and you know, he’ll be wanting to go to university and things like that. I found as an Indigenous person and the only Indigenous person on staff at a big school, that I had to work twice as hard. I was aware that there was a lot of racial things going on at that time politically, and in the school itself and I know it went on because I would enter the staffroom and there’d be teachers talking and, you know, the noise was loud and the minute you walk in it just goes quiet and you know they’d been talking about Indigenous children and some making mockery of some of the things they’d seen or stereotyping them. But I saw my opportunity there as an opportunity to change some of the thinking and the way people saw Indigenous people and I worked very hard at that, whereby I took on extracurricular activities in the school, coaching teams in basketball and football and also spent a lot of time getting to know my students …and my going away gift from the staff was a whistle and it symbolised that, the Principal when he presented it to me that one day this bloke will be blowing this whistle and everyone will be jumping! …and I ended up with this little whistle …but I knew I had to work twice as hard and I knew there definitely was a need for more Indigenous people to be involved in school…So, whilst I say it was a hard time, it was a pioneering time getting Indigenous teachers into school. It was a time where you could influence and be a role model
so I was very conscious of that involvement in the school…

(Interview Two with Pete, May 2004)

This extract opens with a dramatic twist as Pete sets up the anticipation of being the bright new teacher all dressed up in “long socks” (extract 6.5, turn 23, line 3), a symbol or professionalism for male teachers in the tropical climate of North Queensland, only to be immediately deflated by parents walking by him and asking where the teacher was:

…I remember back to my first day at school where, as a teacher, parents would arrive in the classroom and I would be all dressed up with the long socks in those days and they’d walk straight past me or come back to me and say “Excuse me can you tell me where I can find Mr. Frank?” (extract 6.5, turn 23 lines 1-5)

The twist of anticipation, then the let-down, set up by Pete in the opening lines reminiscing upon his first day at school serves to emphasise the entrenched racism Pete encountered as a new teacher, literally ignored because he was black. The audience is expecting to hear a nostalgic story set up in the opening phrase, “I remember back to my first day at school…” (extract 6.5, turn 23, line 1). The adverbial phrase “straight past” (extract 6.5, turn 23, lines 4) accentuates the fact that black teachers were not part of the mainstream educational discourse known to parents. Pete describes “a lot of racial things going on at that time politically…” (extract 6.5, turn 23, line 12), however, although this certainly was the case around the Western world, the decade of the 1970s was also a time of political change in
Australia following the 1967 referendum. Pete echoed this societal context by engaging it as “…an opportunity to change some of the thinking and the way people saw Indigenous people” (extract 6.5, turn 23, line 20). Pete’s language is proactive because he viewed the 1970s as “a pioneering time” (extract 6.5, turn 23, line 32) to change the community’s perception of Indigenous peoples by working hard and proving himself in the school. He did this by taking on “extracurricular activities”: “coaching teams in basketball and football” and “getting to know his [my] students and their parents” (extract 6.5, turn 23, lines 22-24). This leadership strategy was successful, according to Pete’s story, as his leadership potential was recognised early in his career. This recognition was symbolised by the whistle presented to him by the staff and principal:

…my going away gift from the staff was a whistle and it symbolised that, the Principal when he presented it to me that one day this bloke will be blowing this whistle and everyone will be jumping! (extract 6.5, turn 23, lines 26-28)

The whistle was a Westernised symbol of leadership and, I suggest, recognition that Pete had proven himself in the school community by working “twice as hard” (extract 6.5, turn 23, line 11). This phenomenon is commonly reported in the literature of black, minority ethnic, and

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26 In 1967 a national referendum was held to ascertain whether Indigenous people were to be granted the right to be counted in the census and whether the Commonwealth was to have jurisdictional powers under the Constitution for Aboriginal Affairs (Tripcony, 2001).
Indigenous school leaders, because small numbers make them easily identifiable and, I suggest, their promotion is carefully scrutinised by their colleagues as possibly positive discrimination due to the postcolonial discourses still holding truth in educational institutions, that Indigenous or other black leaders are not really up to the mark: “Despite the recognition of the quality of their leadership according to official reports, there were numerous accounts of lack of recognition by professional colleagues…” (McKenley & Gordon, 2002, p. 6). Pete was so honoured to receive a simple whistle as a symbol of leadership as the bar was set especially high for him both by himself and by the profession. In fact, Pete went on to become the first Torres Strait Islander principal in the region and was instrumental in founding the interagency group, which was a group of professional people representing health, education, housing, employment, and other services committed to pooling resources and expertise to support and enhance the opportunities for Torres Strait Islander peoples. Although Pete was given clear messages by the society of the 1970s and his school teachers that Indigenous peoples perhaps were not able or capable of becoming professionals, Pete went on to do exactly that. I suggest that somehow Pete harnessed power, which according to theoretical frame for this study (Foucault, 1980), is always in relationship and omnipresent, and pursued this career path to make a difference. I do not imply that this would have been easy, nor does this study align with the dominant educational discourse that suggests there are equal opportunities or equal prospects of a fair go for anyone to become successful in Australia. Pete’s approach was to engage
inner leadership. Certainly, Pete enacted his visionary and transformational leadership by becoming the first Indigenous teacher and principal in his area actioning his vision to “make(ing) a difference” (extract 6.4, turn 23, line 17) for Indigenous students by becoming a leader and role model for them. Spiritual leadership focuses on the importance of moving people forward by focusing on the big picture. Although there are insufficient data in this narrative to argue Pete’s leadership as wholly spiritual, his focus on operating from his centre and purpose in life to affect the bigger picture is identifiable in the context of spiritual leadership literature (Beare, 2006; Sarkar, 2003).

In both The Big Boots and The Whistle narratives, the principals call upon discourses and action events that reposition Indigenous peoples according to the leader’s positive vision. The narratives that follow focus on another aspect of leadership, which is the leader’s ability to view the world from different perspectives and develop a rationale for managing the possible tension between the white and the black perspectives (Mattingley & Hampton, 1988). The symbol of leadership in these narratives is of straddling or walking in two worlds. This concept was introduced in the cross-cultural section of the literature review in chapter 2 and is reported by black, minority ethnic, and Indigenous school leaders (see for example, Boldt, 1980; McKenley & Gordon, 2002; Osler, 1997) as a phenomenon they negotiate each day in their role as principal operating in a Westernised school system.
Walking in Two Worlds

*Walking in Two Worlds* recognises that Indigenous and other black and minority ethnic leaders negotiate their principalship from both a black and white perspective in order to be able to operate as leaders in contemporary Australia (McKenley & Gordon, 2002; Osler, 1997). Each principal reported differently how she or he symbolised and managed walking in two worlds as a school leader. I present an analysis of all four leaders’ responses to this phenomenon reported in the cross-cultural leadership literature by focusing on language form and function and attempting to conceptualise the four leaders’ representations using visual symbols drawn by an Aboriginal artist. I present the analyses against the black and minority ethnic school-leader literature and against Foucault’s analytic of power/knowledge (1980) because power/knowledge works to produce educational and cultural discourses available to the leaders in their role as school principals. I begin by introducing Dave’s perceptions of black and white worlds as a game:

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27 I sought the endorsement from an Indigenous colleague as to the appropriateness of this section. The visual representations were discussed with the principals in the first instance and latterly with the Indigenous artist who painted the representations for my interpretation of the principals’ perception of walking in two worlds.
Extract 6.6

43  Dave: So we were talking about teaching, teaching our kids in our school things that mainstream Australia wants them to know so that they can play the game and be successful in life. But also teaching them things that mainstream Australia doesn’t want them to know, as well as teaching them how to recognise those things. Like those forces of racism or those forces of restricted beliefs and restricted perceptions or those forces of low expectations. Teaching, teaching kids how to recognise that and say, “No, this is not good enough.”

(Interview One with Dave, November, 2003)

In this extract, Dave sets up a binary in which he clearly identifies the “game,” (extract 6.6, turn 43, line 3) which consists of the things Aboriginal people need to know to be successful in “mainstream Australia” (extract 6.6, turn 23, line 2) and the “things that mainstream Australia doesn’t want them to know” (extract 6.6, turn 23, lines 2-5). Dave theorises that his students must be proficient at walking in two worlds, which is how I have framed this concept (Fitzgerald, 2006; Mattingley & Hampton, 1988). Dave, as school principal, has a clear educational agenda of the things that Aboriginal students must learn in order to be able to “play the game and be successful in life” (extract 6.6, turn 23, lines 3-4) or successful in the white world. The effect of Dave’s personification of “mainstream Australia” (extract 6.6, turn 23, line 5), as he complements the game metaphor with a human designer, is to emphasise the implied deliberate strategy of mainstream Australia in not allowing others access to the rules of the game. This sets up a binary between mainstream and other, or white and black (Gandhi, 1998). Dave is well aware as a school leader that his students need access to white
knowledge in order to compete with mainstream or white students as well as the sophistication of discernment so that his students learn the rules of the mainstream game. He continues by asserting that schools have a responsibility to do two things, which are: “…teach(ing) them things that mainstream Australia doesn’t want them to know, as well as teaching them how to recognise those things” (extract 6.6, turn 23, lines 5-6). The implication is that the rules are not usually overt; therefore one has to be astute to learn the game plan so that one may participate. According to Dave, Aboriginal people are not (yet) in control of the game. The game plan here is the dominant or foundational discourse of white Australia. Because the white Australia discourse and attending policies (Neill, 2002) are no longer lawful or politically acceptable, the discourse is less visible in the State institution of schooling, as are its rules. In fact, an equal opportunity discourse is presented as being dominant in the educational arena, known colloquially as a fair go. According to Dave, the dominant educational discourse of equal opportunity is not the reality for Aboriginal students who must learn the rules in order to get onto a level playing field. Dave’s agenda is to deconstruct this discourse for his students or break open the game plan or code as he has managed to do for himself in order to become a leader in the white world. He reports the ability to break open the game plan or code will allow his students to better comprehend white culture and, more importantly, how to access its power/knowledge (Foucault, 1972). Engaging Foucault’s analytic of power/knowledge, access to the knowledge of the white Australia discourse, set up through processes of colonialism and
perpetuated through postcolonial institutions, will give Dave’s students the
power to succeed in mainstream Australia if they wish to walk in two
worlds. Foucault’s analytic of power includes an understanding of its
omnipresence working in a network of relations (Foucault, 2000).
According to this framework, people may access power through the network
if they realise its presence, often through particular knowledge that
presumably can be accessed as Dave advocates:

…teaching our kids in our school things that mainstream Australia wants
them to know so that they can play the game and be successful in life. But
also teaching them things that mainstream Australia doesn’t want them to
know, as well as teaching them how to recognise those things…(extract
6.6, turn 23, lines 2-5).

Thus, while Dave is adamant that his students learn white education, so
that they have this power, he is equally adamant they must grow strong in
their own culture, as he has learned to do.

This next extract highlights the importance for Dave of being strong in
his Aboriginal culture as well as strong in the discourse of the mainstream
educational agenda. I had asked Dave to respond to the phenomenon of
walking in two worlds by showing him a Venn diagram with two circles
overlapping in the middle. I chose to draw the concept as a starting point for
the conversation when I was interviewing the principals. I understand that
both the linguistic description and the visual depiction of two circles are
simplistic representations of the complex phenomenon of walking in two
worlds. I engaged the black/white binary only to open the debate from the
literature (McKenley & Gordon, 2002). I realised later that my Venn
diagrams were unsophisticated, and thus not representative of the complexity inherent in the leaders’ representations of walking in two worlds. I therefore asked an Aboriginal artist\textsuperscript{28} to paint my understanding of the principals’ representations. I have included these representations as part of my analyses. In this next extract Dave elaborates on the connection of identity to culture:

\textbf{Extract 6.7}

93 \textbf{Researcher:} Because it seems so significant. Is it about identity, Dave?

94 \textbf{Dave:} Yes, it’s about the core of your being. You know? And you don’t shake off. The core of our being is the Aboriginal world. And to say that we are walking in two worlds suggests a separation from one thing and I don’t think that that happens. And there definitely is a time when you walk in an Aboriginal world and not in a white world. But I don’t think there’s ever a time when you walk in a white world without being Aboriginal. I think that’s quite impossible...

113 \textbf{Dave:} I can get around the community and be an aboriginal person in the same sort of way. There’s probably more yes, more times in life when I get around as both, I guess. There are times when I would operate as an Aboriginal person and leave the other stuff. Leave the other stuff. Probably, not probably, not that many times when I operate without the Aboriginal stuff. So it might be, it might be like, like this maybe. Not necessarily both worlds because all the time I’m walking Aboriginal. No, all the time I’m walking Aboriginal…

(Interview One and Two with Dave, November 2003)

\textsuperscript{28} I asked Jay Mc Queen, an Aboriginal artist, colleague and friend to paint my interpretation of the principals’ representations of walking in two worlds. She painted visual “stories” of all four principals’ representations of this phenomenon from my interpretation of the interview discussions.
The above extract is from a lively discussion between Dave and I around how to conceptualise, walking in two worlds. The importance to Dave of his being identified as an Aboriginal man is accentuated by the strength of his lexical choice of “core,” “being” (extract 6.7, turn 94, lines 1-3), and never “shake off,” as “The core of our being is the Aboriginal world” (extract 6.7, turn 94, lines 1-3). Dave deliberates that the diagram that I had shown him in the interview (with white and Aboriginal representative circles side by side) is inaccurate for him, because he is to the “core” Aboriginal.
Dave’s Aboriginal world is painted in the centre with colours from the red earth, desert, and Aboriginal flag. The nine red dots symbolise his Aboriginal communities. Dave is always Aboriginal and sometimes walking the Aboriginal world away from the white world. This process is symbolised by the brown background in the centre, distinguishable from the white world. The six orange outer circles symbolise the white world communities as Dave walks this world together with his Aboriginal communities but never without his Aboriginal identity, as “all the time I’m (Dave is) walking Aboriginal” (extract 6.7, turn 94, lines 1-3). The use of the dots in Indigenous art helps to represent the fluidity of the, nominally, two worlds.

Dave is also well able to operate in the white world; in fact he is a well respected leader who has a high profile in the national arena. His leadership in both worlds is illustrated pictorially above by an Aboriginal circle set within a white circle; these circles symbolise worlds or worldviews. Dave had intimated earlier that he could consciously leave being the big shot (Interview Two with Dave, November 2003) or successful mainstream leader when he is walking in “an Aboriginal world” (extract 6.7, turn 94, line 6), however he could never “shake-off” (extract 6.7, turn 94, line 2) his
Aboriginality, as he proclaims “I think that would be impossible” (extract 6.7, turn 94, lines 8-9).

I explored the concept of walking in two worlds with all four principals and found that they had various representations, which I have endeavoured to have depicted in paintings. These paintings, however, do not fully represent the complexity of the enacted practice of leadership for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals in Westernised school systems. All school leaders recognised these complexities with which they were dealing each day in their roles and drew on theories depicting how they managed these complexities, which were, oftentimes, tensions and dilemmas in their leadership. I resonated with the tensions and dilemmas a principal must reconcile daily as part of the role, however, I have never experienced the complexity that is added to the decision making process by the requirement to operate from two worldviews. The additional complication that this responsibility brings to the leadership role includes the fact that different cultures may manage a particular situation differently; all four principals described this leadership dilemma or potential culture clash that has been reported in the literature. Studies by McKenley and Gordon (2002) describe leadership dilemmas which the principals attribute as specific to operating from two worldviews as black and minority ethnic leaders. I now move to Jay’s perception of walking in two worlds which she attributes to being brought up as “white”:
Extract 6.8

1 Researcher: Many leaders, who have a different cultural background to the mainstream in schooling, describe themselves as having to walk in two worlds. Can you respond to this from your experiences? Please?

2 Jay: Um, I don’t have that issue here but in the past I have had it where I’ve had to, it’s almost been in reverse. I’ve had to prove myself as an Indigenous leader because, as you know, I don’t look Indigenous. So when I’m, when I was in a school where almost half the kids were Indigenous at one stage and it was common knowledge that I was an Indigenous person, I had to prove myself as an Indigenous person. Rather than the other way around. Rather than being an Indigenous person who had to prove themselves in a Westernised school, if you like. It’s, and it was only at the one school because apart from that school I’ve worked in basically mainstream Westernised schools. And it was a delicate balancing act walking that line between the two cultures. Between the white kids that were there and their families and the Indigenous kids, the Aboriginal kids that were at that school and their families. But overall I found I haven’t. I haven’t had any real issues with the, with the different background…

5 Jay: Um, when I was at that other school that had the Indigenous children, I found that when I was dealing with those parents I slipped into the Indigenous role and spoke to them as, as Aboriginal people from an Aboriginal perspective, but when I dealt with the white kids and the white parents well, not the white kids because they were all treated the same at school but the white parents, then I found yes I slipped into the Westernised accepted role.

10 (Interview Three with Jay, October 2003)

Jay attributes her different perception of walking in two worlds to the fact that she was brought up white, and therefore walks in mainstream culture as a white woman, “…but the white parents, then I found, yes, I slipped into the Westernised accepted role” (extract 6.8, turn 6, line 8). The
complication for Jay is, as she described, “I don’t look Indigenous” (extract 6.8, turn 2, line 4) and therefore when she is with Aboriginal people, she feels she has to prove herself, “and it was common knowledge that I was an Indigenous person, I had to prove myself as an Indigenous person” (extract 6.8, turn 2, line 7).

For Jay, “It was a delicate balancing act walking that line between the two cultures” (extract 6.8, turn 2, lines 13-14). Jay adopts the metaphor of the tightrope that requires a “delicate balancing act,” as she does not feel completely at ease in either white or black culture because of her personal story. The use of this metaphor represents a tension for Jay as she works with her, more recent, adult knowledge that her family heritage was Indigenous and she “found” that she “slipped into the Westernised accepted role” (extract 6.8, turn 3, line 8) with white parents. The use of the verb “slipped” suggests a degree of familiarity with which Jay walks in the Western world as distinct from the Aboriginal world, where she had to prove herself. The layers within each model of the Aboriginal world as distinct from the white world, represented in the paintings, are both complex and multiple. This ambivalence is the nature of postcolonial relations (Gandhi, 1998) in contemporary Australian society. Jay works with this ambivalence in her leadership role as school principal leading her community, through her students, by teaching them a more complex understanding of cultures which she names as tolerance (see chapter 5: extract 5.1, turn 18, line 21). In a later narrative, Jay theorised her
responsibility as an Indigenous leader to teach people that Indigenous peoples are not a homogenised group:

…I feel now that it – it is the responsibility of myself and people like me to show the world basically that not all Indigenous people have black skin and that just because we’re Indigenous doesn’t mean that we should be stereotyped; we’re all different just like everybody else. We’re all different. … (Interview Three with Jay, October 2003: turn 50, lines 5-10)

**Figure 6.2: Jay’s Model painted by Janelle Mc Queen**

Jay’s white and Aboriginal worlds are painted side by side but intricately connected. The white world is to the left with yellow circles representing the white communities with whom Jay interacts, and the Aboriginal world is to the right with brown circles representing Aboriginal communities. Jay is depicted as the red circle within each representation; always the same person even although she perceives a tension as she performs “a delicate balancing act walking that line” (extract 6.8, turn 2, lines 13-14) between the two cultures.

Pete’s response to walking in two worlds is different to both Jay and Dave’s representations as members of heterogenic Indigenous groups. Pete, who was brought up strong in his Torres Strait Islander culture, related that
he was always conscious of being “an Indigenous person and I come across as an Indigenous person” (extract 6.9, turn 84, lines5-6), however there are “levels” (extract 6.9, turn 84, line 13) at which he chose to operate from a Western style of leadership, as perceived by some colleagues, in order to achieve the outcomes he wished for his community:

**Extract 6.9**

84 Pete: The way I operate? Yeah. Like you said there’s two out there you can be the Indigenous and other times you walk the white man’s world. I look at the context of what I need to do in order to be successful. Now, I first and foremost, I operate as an Indigenous person and I come across as an Indigenous person. Whether I jump into a white man’s world or a non-Indigenous world and have to compete; I will compete probably differently or interact differently and that, but, I know they know I’m a black person. I can’t hide that. My skin, you know, my looks and everything will be black and I still use a lot of the ways I operate as a black person in that context too as well. But I know it’ll be a different levels and when to use this. So I don’t necessarily say I only operate in the Indigenous world as a black person the whole time. I change at different levels, but I don’t change the fact that I’m a black person and I make it quite obvious that you know, my views and things that I put forward at times depending on what we’re discussing, comes from a black perspective and as an educated Indigenous person, but I don’t feel that’s the only way I operate…

85 Researcher: But you know that a minority of leaders from groups where they’ve been in the minority and they are in another country who have been critiqued as, people saying they’ve sold themselves out or whatever. You know, obviously they’re a black man in white skin.

86 Pete: A lot of people refer to that as a “coconut” sometimes. They say, you know, you’re black on the outside, white on the inside sort of thing...
I think the opportunities and the political climate and things around now, accepts you more for who you are. I think so; a lot of the barriers have been broken down…But I feel that you know, things have changed now, where you know, you don’t have to become a coconut in order to be successful because, or to try and push yourself away from your people or your identity and become a person you don’t wanna become or be seen as in order to get from “a” to “b”…But at the same time, I’ve seen people become ostracised from you know, their community or being put down because they’ve gone too far over to the other side. (Interview Two with Pete, May 2004)

Pete uses the symbol of sport when describing his interaction as a leader “in a white man’s world” (extract 6.9, turn 84, line 7). Immediately he has to “jump” in and “compete” (extract 6.9, turn 84, lines 7-8) suggesting a movement into white culture, which involves a way of operating that is unusual in Indigenous cultures, which are more group-orientated than individualistic (Beckett, 1988). In this extract Pete may be alluding to the individualism and competitive nature of Westernised cultures and, in recognition of this cultural trait, he feels he must take on a different approach in the mainstream culture, which requires the forcefulness of a “jump” (extract 6.9, turn 84, lines 7-8) for a competitive edge. Pete identifies that, in order to operate in mainstream culture, one does not have to become a “coconut” (extract 6.9, turn 88, line 6) which is a colloquial term for people who seem to give up their black identity in order to fit in with white society or “be successful” (extract 6.9, turn 88, lines 7-8):
My skin, you know, my looks and everything will be black and I still use a lot of the ways I operate as a black person; you don’t have to become a coconut in order to be successful because, or to try and push yourself away from your people or your identity and become a person you don’t wanna become or be seen as in order to get from “a” to “b”… (extract 6.9, turn 88, lines 5-9)

Pete carries on with the complication that some people see him as “white” because he is able to make leadership decisions, which, in their estimation, are “more white than black” (extract 6.9, turn 88, lines 7-8). This assumption comes from postcolonial discourses still potent in educational institutions among some members of the profession, which advocate that efficient and effective leadership decisions are made by white persons in the role and often by white males (White, 2007). In reality, Pete is well aware of the multiple leadership discourses operating within the educational system and chooses to call on the “Westernised” leadership discourse strategically and in particular circumstances. I symbolise Pete’s Torres Strait Islander world as a larger circle but crossing the smaller circle of the mainstream world in which Pete is able to operate at different levels to achieve the outcomes he needs to move his community forward.
Figure 6.3: Pete’s Model painted by Janelle Mc Queen

Pete’s white and Torres Strait Islander circles are painted side by side. The Torres Strait is painted with blue colours representing the Torres Strait flag and the blue waters from where the Islanders source their spiritual identity. The white world is to the left with light blue circles representing the white communities, and the Torres Strait Islander world is to the right, with deep blue circles representing Torres Strait Islander communities. Pete is depicted as the turquoise blue circle in the centre as a leader well able to walk in both worlds.

I now move to the final extract of the Walking in Two Worlds narrative theorising Samantha’s representation of two-way strong or walking in two worlds:

Extract 6.10

23 Researcher: I’d like to explore with you if you would … walking in two worlds … there are people who become very proficient … I just want your theory on … I mean it might not be separate for you … from ideas that you have and how you, who are successful in both worlds so how have you managed that…

24 Samantha: I like that two-way strong thing
Samantha uses the metaphor of being “two-way strong” (extract 6.10, turn 24, line 1) in conceptualising how she manages walking in two worlds.

In this extract Samantha identifies that being “sure of yourself” (extract 6.10, turn 26, line 6) because you have “tackled”, “your own identity” (extract 6.10, turn 26, line 2) allows you to walk “together” or “side by side” (extract 6.10, turn 26, line 9) with non-Indigenous Australians. Samantha’s perception comes from her spiritual belief system. Her rationale for being able to “code switch” “easily” (extract 6.10, turn 26, line 16) emanates from knowing “why she (I) was created” (extract 6.10, turn 26, line 9).

Samantha’s language is quite definitive in this extract as she engages the symbol of two-way strong for her leadership approach. I witnessed the very real dilemmas Samantha faced in her role as principal when Samantha’s
leadership was tested by a culture clash (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002) between Torres Strait Islander values and Western values within the community (Observation notes 2 & 3, August 2004). Karen, Samantha’s deputy, witnessed several of these potentially difficult tensions, where Samantha was trying to keep “the identity and…she is trying to find ways where she can mesh the cultures” (Interview with Karen, Samantha’s deputy, August 2004). Samantha was acutely cognisant of the depth at which she needed to operate in a community that had a very difficult racial history of physical segregation of black and white students (see chapter 8 below). I illustrate Samantha’s position on the diagram as similar to Pete’s:
Figure 6.4: Samantha’s Model painted by Janelle Mc Queen

Samantha’s white and Torres Strait Islander worlds are painted side by side with blue, white, and green colours from the Torres Strait Islander flag representing the lands and ocean from where Samantha sourced her Torres Strait identity. The white world is to the right but smaller for Samantha, with light blue circles representing the white communities with which Samantha interacts. The Torres Strait Islander world is painted to the left with deep blue circles representing Torres Strait Islander communities. Samantha is depicted as the green circle in the centre as a leader well able to walk in two worlds but more often walking in the Torres Strait world. Samantha is a leader of a Torres Strait Islander school strong in its Torres Strait identity.

Summary Statement

The above extracts symbolise in language and visual representation the sophistication of leadership conceptualisation and enactment for the four leaders walking in two worlds each day in their role as school principals. The principals drew on multiple leadership discourses symbolised in the extracts, including cross cultural models. They explored the dilemmas, tensions, and reality of walking in two worlds, articulating how they conceptualised a modus operandi to operate in both cultures. It is recognised
in cross-cultural leadership literature (Fitzgerald, 2002; Heck, 1996; Williams, et al., 2006) that leadership dilemmas or potential culture clashes are an additional tension to “walking the line between two cultures” (extract 6.8: turn 2, lines 13-14) Jay describes as Indigenous leaders operating in a Westernised school setting.

I now move to the final metaphor, which I have named *Terra Nullius*, where concepts around Indigenous spiritual connection to land are explored in an attempt to puzzle how this intimate symbol of spirituality and culture may affect the leadership of the four school leaders.

**Terra Nullius**

The final metaphor explored in this chapter is that of the symbol of land (and sea and air) to the Indigenous leaders. *Terra Nullius* is the Latin term used to describe land that is not deemed to have a legal sovereign. *Terra Nullius* was the assumption made by the British colonists upon their arrival in Australian lands. Although there is debate over when Australian land was declared terra nullius (Connor, 2005), its colonisation and appropriation based on this concept is incontestable (Attwood, 1996). I attempt to recognise the connection of Indigenous peoples to land as an important concept. The analyses explore the inherent myth in the discourse of terra nullius. The myth on which Australian Western society was colonised was essentially about conquering Indigenous Australian land and sea, which was “no man’s land” and subjugating Indigenous peoples to a colonial binary of
inferiority. Implicit in the binary was the assumption that Indigenous peoples were incapable of looking after the land. Ironically, part of Indigenous culture and spirituality is that Indigenous leaders are deemed custodians of the land and, together with their peoples, they had managed to look after the land as “mother earth” for tens of thousands of years:

As Aboriginal people we know that the land is the spiritual center and source for all our lives, from it all life and knowledge arises, we in turn have a duty to protect and care for the land. (Purga Working Group 2000 in Sheehan & Walker, 2001)

The colonial binary founded on the myth of terra nullius is essentially a power struggle over land. In this final analysis of chapter 6, I extend Foucault’s theoretical framework to include, what I interpret as, an Indigenous symbiotic of spirituality, land, power, and knowledge. Foucault's analytic of power relations assumes power works in a network and is omnipresent and able to be engaged from “the edge of the capillary” (Cousins & Hussain, 1984, p. 239). Assuming that the colonial binary within the discourse of terra nullius has subjugated Indigenous peoples to the inferior position or to the edge, the theoretical frame for this study would suggest that they may access power/knowledge to bring about change in these relations of power. The analysis below explores whether there was evidence of this resistance in the data and whether this is related to Indigenous concepts of land, spirituality, and leadership. The two extracts collected under the title, Terra Nullius are engaged in order to explore land, sea and Spirit in relation to power and knowledge. Indigenous peoples believe they are descendant from or of the land: “The Dreaming comes
from the land” (Flood, 2006, p. 138). This understanding is difficult for Western peoples because, more recently, they have conceptualised land as an object to be tamed, conquered, or mastered (Crow, 2004), rather than as a cultural and spiritual symbol of the interconnection of humans to Spirit and to the land. The discourse of self-determination is arguably a misnomer to contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have faint or unheard leadership voices against some current assimilation policies and practices, which were highlighted in the opening prelude to this thesis (Brennan, 2007). The concept, pursuit, and reality of self-determination are explored in Pete’s vision (extract 6.11) and in a recount from an interview with Samantha.

Following the above section of *Walking in Two Worlds*, the analysis assumes that land is conceptualised differently in the two worlds – Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Land (and sea) was discussed as a vital part of the culture and spirituality of the Indigenous leaders interviewed for this research project as they talked about their personal stories and their leadership. At the time of the interviews, three of the principals – Samantha, Dave, and Pete – were moving into a bigger picture dynamic of how they spoke of land and leadership. They spoke of how they were influencing regional and wider communities towards a shared power base of autonomy or self-determination in their respective areas. In my third interview with Pete, I asked him to respond with his vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:
Extract 6.11

Yeah, I guess um, when we talk about a vision for people, it is my, this is my view on it. It is not necessarily one that’s been something that we all agree with, but my personal vision for Indigenous people is that they are given opportunities to achieve to their maximum potential and that they can sustain that I guess success rate or the level of success that they’re achieving, so that it’ll inspire others to get from “a” to “b.” That there is no reason for all Indigenous people not being able to fulfil their dreams…And if people really believe in having a unified Australian society where Indigenous people are recognised and acknowledged that they, I see some of the leaders in positions like in Parliament and in other businesses and so forth. …I think by 2020 I think we’ll be doing a lot more of that. I think people are only scratching the surface at this point in time to see the potential of their, what their community can do in regards to tourism and so forth. With native title and some of the outcomes with native title and sea rights and land rights and air rights, what is that, what will that look like in 2020 where you have people buying rights into accessing the waters of the Torres Strait and so forth. …And at the same time to see how much of it is being taken out of the Torres Strait and used for Australia in general. The benefits, and what does it mean for us. The types of leaders we’ll be creating in the future and I see you know, Indigenous people having opportunities to be entrepreneurs and we at schools or educators got to be ready for that. So that we can prepare people for that type of life coming up where they’re not left behind or don’t have opportunities for fulfilling their potential and be seen as leaders or successful people.

(Interview Three with Pete, May 2004)

Pete’s vision encompasses the whole Torres Strait region including land and sea. Essentially his vision is about taking back control or autonomy or power from the Western authorities. Thus Pete is exercising resistance as he talks up the Indigenous discourse of land: “With native title and some of the...
outcomes with native title and sea rights and land rights and air rights, what is that, what will that look like in 2020?” (extract 6.11, turn 2, lines 13 -14). He recognises that for his vision to become reality by 2020 Indigenous leaders must be operating “in positions like in Parliament and in other businesses and so forth” (extract 6.11, turn 2, lines 13 -14). Pete recognises that Indigenous peoples must have control of their land and sea; “to see how much of it is being taken out of the Torres Strait and used for Australia in general” (extract 6.11, turn 2, line 23). In order for Pete to enact this visionary leadership to help bring about a degree of self-determination and better outcomes for Torres Strait Islander peoples, Pete had led an interagency committee across the region, which was recognised as “making the [our] whole community a much stronger community” (Interview with Deputy Principal Kim, Case-study C). Pete’s vision included Torres Strait autonomy of a tourism industry that encompassed land and sea control so that, “in the next ten years what does that mean? Are we gearing up, getting ourselves ready for that?” (Interview Three with Pete, May 2004). Pete’s vision pursued a social transformation agenda, in alignment with the methodology of CDA engaged for this study’s analysis and its accompanying aim of social and political action (Rogers, 2004). This leadership in action is transformational, emancipatory, visionary, and essentially spiritual. Pete is working in his community to bring about social transformation, which necessitates that he work at the deeper or inner leadership levels with symbols and metaphors around the purpose and meaning of life (Dantley, 2009). This is part of the reason why Pete led the
interagency group to bring change to the political structures of the Torres Strait and reclaim the power of the Islanders to represent themselves and design their cultures’ purpose, meaning, and futures.

In this extract, Pete envisions a future wherein the Western worldview will be a big part of the Torres Strait Islands, as “entrepreneurs” (extract 6.11, turn 2, line 27), “positions in parliament” (extract 6.11, turn 2, line 27), “businesses” (extract 6.11, turn 2, line 27), and “tourism” (extract 6.11, turn 2, line 27):

So that we can prepare people for that type of life coming up where they’re not left behind or don’t have opportunities for fulfilling their potential and be seen as leaders or successful people (extract 6.11, turn 2, lines 28-30).

At the beginning of the extract Pete recognises that his vision “is not necessarily one that’s been something that we all agree with, but my personal vision for Indigenous people” (extract 6.11, turn 2, lines 2-4). Pete’s vision for the future demonstrates an understanding that Torres Strait Islanders walk in two worlds as the Westernisation of parts of the Torres Strait is already a reality. His vision encompasses this knowledge but includes Torres Strait power to control how this reality of Westernisation is managed into the future. The control of the future, as envisaged by Pete, would come from having rights to land (and sea and air), which is the Torres Strait world and to which Torres Strait Islander peoples are deeply spiritually connected. Pete recognises that this world must be reclaimed through Western processes in order that the Torres Strait may have control
of its Indigenous world, which includes cultural and spiritual connection to land and sea.

Samantha recognised the deep need by Torres Strait peoples to have some control back of their land and sea: “Well, so it’s the Ginar or the action political; it really is the time now. We’re talking about self determination” (Interview One with Samantha, August 2004: extract 8.5, turn 52, lines 1-3) when she spoke of her vision for the Torres Strait. Samantha spoke of the importance of Torres Strait self-determination, not only for pragmatic reasons as outlined in Pete’s vision for the Torres Strait, but also for the spiritual connection to the land and sea and air held by Indigenous peoples. Samantha recognised the need for both symbolic and practical autonomy. In the interview talk, the principals became passionate about this spiritual connection and its importance to Indigenous culture and identity. Land, sea, air and culture often merged as a symbol of Indigenous spirituality. In this next extract Dave explicates how non-Indigenous peoples will never, “have our world that exists as an Aboriginal world that white society can’t touch and part of that is connection to the land and to the place” (extract 6.12, turn 110, line 4):

**Extract 6.12**

110  Dave: Yes, and maybe it’s just that sense of asserting our place. Because I know that we deserve. You know? I still think that society is a white society and we are still to assert our place in it. We have our world that exists as an Aboriginal world that white society can’t touch and part of that is connection to the land and to the place. And that really bugs people. I know. Lots of old bloody farmers and all that sort of stuff and
they’re saying, “You know, how do you?” I spoke at a Rotary Club thing and this bloke gets up and says, “Well how do you define Indigenous Australian?” I said, “Well, you’re a descendant from the land.” He said, “Well, I’ve been here five generations and I feel like an Indigenous Australian.” But it really shit that guy because he knew that I had something that he just didn’t have. You know? But it’s his, him and his people have set up society; it’s their society but we’re here and they can’t touch us on that. You know?

We’ll always be descendant from the land. And they just can’t touch us and they hate it. So in a sense it, it’s our country. But it’s their society maybe. I don’t know. (Interview Two with Dave, November 2003)

This extract is analysed in chapter 5, Colour-full Holograms, in the narrative entitled The Lucky Country extract 5.11. I reintroduce it here to provide further evidence from the data of the myth of terra nullius in terms of the ancient and spiritual connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to Australian land and sea and air. Dave asserts this position in the conversation he sets up from lines 8-13 between the farmer and himself as an Aboriginal Australian who is “descendant from the land” (extract 6.12, turn 110, line 18). The effect of using this literary device of question and answer in direct speech provides immediacy and legitimacy to the answers, which are in authority and provided by an Aboriginal Australian who has the power of this knowledge. Dave empowers himself as an Aboriginal Australian by demonstrating his truth of ancient Aboriginal spiritual connection to land, which is portrayed by the symbol of land as mother. Aboriginal Australians are “descendant from…” (extract 6.12, turn 110, line 18) the land.
I reintroduce this extract to expand Foucault’s notion of power/knowledge for the purpose of this study to highlight an Indigenous spiritual discourse that incorporates power/knowledge, land, and spirituality as symbiotic and spiritually interconnected. Dave concludes that, at the most complex level, Indigenous people are connected to the land and, regardless of how many generations non-Indigenous people live on Australian land, they will only ever be connected to the “society” (extract 6.12, turn 110, line 16) no matter what title they name it. Whilst non-Indigenous Australians, like the farmer who works with the land, may genuinely have a deep connection to the environment, Dave’s argument of “five generations” (extract 6.12, turn 110, line 13) cannot stand against the ancient and spiritual connection of Indigenous Australians and, “they can’t touch us on that” (extract 6.12, turn 110, lines 17-18). When the Indigenous spirituality and land discourse meets the Western discourse of “Western right to own land,” Dave recognises the power of “truth” derived from the knowledge of ancient time, Indigenous ancestral right, and deep spiritual connection to land. Dave intuitively recognises this potential to empower Aboriginal Australians to emancipate themselves. Whilst emancipatory leadership would be a major leadership discourse evident in this extract, Dave is at the same time calling on the discourse of Indigenous spiritual leadership, which I argue is wholly interconnected to Spirit, power, knowledge, land, and leadership.
Conclusion

This chapter is entitled *Big Boots Walking, Land & Leadership*. The analyses highlighted the school leaders’ use of Western symbols, for example, *the big boots* and *whistle*, as they walk in the two worlds as Indigenous principals in a Westernised educational setting. The leadership symbols are significant in providing an understanding of the complexity for the principals of walking in two worlds, the complexity of which I have tried to interpret in the analyses above both by engaging CDA of the language and incorporating visual representations.

Although the leaders were highly proficient in walking in the Western world to ensure the best possible outcomes for their students and community, they were exceptional, I argue, walking in the big boots they had made for both worlds. They moved beyond the binary of two worlds and any other restrictive postcolonial representations, and called upon multiple discourses mainly from inner leadership models and centering on a spiritual leadership. The terra nullius metaphor demonstrated how Pete, Samantha, and Dave move specifically from an Indigenous spiritual leadership discourse. The leaders called upon a spiritual leadership discourse to pursue a transformational vision, including social and political action towards a “unified Australian society where Indigenous people are recognised and acknowledged” (extract 6.11, turn 2, lines 11-12).
In chapter 7 I further explore the discourses that the principals call upon when working from these deeper levels and engaging spiritual leadership.
SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Introduction

In chapter 6, I explored the interview talk of the four leaders interviewed as part of this study, focusing on the symbols engaged by the leaders to represent themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples and principals walking in two worlds. I addressed the fourth and fifth research questions, “How is leadership symbolised by the leaders in interview talk when asked to describe their leadership approach?” and “How do the leaders use the symbols and metaphors around spirituality as they work to re-envision Australian society?” I also focused on the central research question, “In what ways do Indigenous principals rely on spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools?” I claimed that the principals were highly proficient when calling upon Western discourses of outcomes and accountability, but exceptional when they moved into inner leadership discourses setting a vision for their communities and working towards social transformation. I used the term spiritual leadership to refer to the practices used by leaders operating from their core beliefs to move their communities forward towards futures they envisaged for Australia. Leaders who operate from a spiritual leadership discourse, whilst remaining centred in their own cultures, are not restricted by narrow colonial binaries or representations offered to them; they engage a leadership that moves beyond this agenda. I also claimed that the interview texts that I collected under the metaphor
Terra Nullius demonstrated Dave, Pete, and Samantha moving from a particular spiritual leadership discourse that is essentially an Indigenous discourse. In this chapter, entitled Spiritual Guidance, I look more closely at the same research questions exploring the ways in which Pete and Dave call upon spiritual discourses as they enact their leadership role to make a difference in their communities and in the work they do to re-envision Australia.

I begin by reconnecting Foucault’s notion of discourse and analytic of power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980) to the narratives. I revisit the intention of critical discourse methodology (hereafter CDA), (Fairclough, 1989). I contend that there are several leadership discourses identifiable in the two narratives I have chosen to analyse for this chapter on spiritual guidance. These leadership discourses symbolise the orientation and competence of the principals. I investigate the possibility that there are alternatives to the Westernised educational leadership discourses hearable within the leaders’ discussions about equal opportunity and student outcomes, because I surmised that there were hybrid discourses emerging in the principals’ leadership talk. These hybrid discourses may not be considered natural or common sense to Australian mainstream education or to leadership discourses, however, they are emergent in the 21st century education debate (Caldwell, 2007; Dantley, 2009; Lin, 2006) and in leadership literature (Beare, 2006; Cook, Macaulay, & Coldicott, 2004; Duignan, 2006; Fairholm, 2003). Fairclough (1995) advocates that the meeting place,
tension, or cruces of these discourses are the places at which there are opportunities to deconstruct the various aspects of social practice that are seen as natural. This deconstruction lays bare the new or alternative discourses. It is within these meeting places that the analyses of this chapter aim to deconstruct the dominant Western educational discourses in order to provide opportunity for change to the, “… ‘order of discourse’ consisting of discourses and genres in particular relationships with each other, but with an orientation to shifts in boundaries within and between orders of discourse as part of social and cultural change” (Fairclough cited in Jaworski & Coupland, 1999, p. 154). The analyses aim to capture the potential “shifts in boundaries” (Fairclough cited in Jaworski & Coupland, 1999, p. 154) to highlight how the leaders work to change the order of discourse (Foucault, 1971) that has previously worked in a particular set of postcolonial power relations in Australia. It was these possibilities for alternative voices of leadership that I set out to explore using CDA, as “discourse is the site of power struggles” where power may be “won, held and lost in social struggles” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 61). The potential shift in the boundaries of dominant leadership discourses provides an opportunity for the aims of CDA to be realised. CDA aims to examine the ideologies driving particular institutional discourses and set a social transformation agenda by explicitly addressing and seeking to solve social problems through the analysis and accompanying social and political action (Rogers, 2004).
I connect the analyses to spiritual leadership literature, which argues that, when leaders hand over to the Spirit or lead from their spiritual core, they access their personal power. When leaders connect with this core, according to Dave they find insight into problems and find “the fire in their belly” to envision a way forward, “…coming from right down here, from your gut, from your heart, from your (gestures to stomach and then heart) a, that kind of building, that kind of power is, makes you untouchable” (Interview One with Dave, November 2003: extract 3.1, turn 40, lines 1-4). The identification of these powerful potentials was an aim of the analyses presented here as I considered that this connection might have the potential to effect social transformation. Powerful potentials exist, according to Foucault’s notion of “capillary power” (Foucault in Cousins & Hussain, 1984, p. 239), as alternative discourses, representative of the leaders working within the structures of the current system but also strongly resisting the narrow postcolonial representations enabled by the Western educational system. The principals recognise the power of their leadership, I argue, as they not only work to resist the current power relations but also call on a spiritual leadership to empower them to lead their students, school, and wider communities towards a transformed power differential between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

The analyses of the two narratives signify the engagement of several models of leadership, including instructional, sustainable, emancipatory, transformational, visionary, and spiritual leadership. The first narrative is
taken from Pete’s case-study where he talks about his leadership work across the Torres Strait region and how he interprets An Aura of Leadership. The second narrative focuses on Dave’s understanding of Connection to the Universal Intelligence.

The analysis builds on chapter 5’s Colour-full Holograms that looked at the personal and professional stories of two of the school principals. These holograms provided insight, I argued, into the leadership drive of the principals to make a difference, which for Jay meant teaching tolerance and for Dave, emancipation. Chapter 6 explored how the school leaders managed walking in two worlds; the analyses focused on the symbols and metaphors the leaders used to represent leadership. This chapter builds on these analyses by considering how the leaders’ talk revealed their spiritual source to enact leadership that I have discussed earlier calling on Doyle’s (2008) fourth generation or inner leadership models. Although the leaders were able to provide evidence of the difference they were making to student educational outcomes at their respective schools, instructional models of leadership, I argue, are not sufficient to solve social problems. Social transformation requires the accompanying social and political action (Rogers, 2004). In order for Australia to become a 21st century, self-actualised nation-state, proud of its identity, it needs to represent and value all of its cultures. Australia must recognise and value Indigenous educational leadership, including the wisdom and guidance of Indigenous spiritual leadership.
The spiritual journey is said to be the personal journey towards self-
actualisation and even self-transcendence (Thompson, 2005). Self-
actualisation occurs when humans are at ease with themselves, have
integrated knowledge and wisdom, and are able to realise their human
potential (Maslow, 1999). Self-transcendence, on the other hand, occurs
when the human actually hands over her/himself to be guided by the higher
self or Spirit (Sarkar, 2003). I adopt the more general term of spiritual
guidance for this chapter as it would be inappropriate and almost impossible
to discern the journey to self-actualisation from self-transcendence from the
data collected for this research study.

*Spiritual guidance* is the term used in this chapter to describe inner
guidance that comes from intuitive knowledge, wisdom, moral authority,
vision, and emotional, and spiritual intelligence. I group these descriptors in
the phrase *inner leader*, which was introduced and unpacked as a concept in
the spiritual leadership section of chapter 2. The inner leader is guided to
social transformation (West-Burnham, 2006) as he or she is dedicated to
make a difference. I argue that Dave explicitly connects his leadership to
Spirit, whilst Pete makes spiritual connections in his personal journey and
leadership praxis. Spirituality is often signaled by metaphorical language
and symbol that are better able to capture the complexities of the concepts
being grappled with in the talk. In spirituality literature, intuition or intuitive
knowledge may be used to signal knowledge or wisdom from a spiritual
source (Sarkar, 2003), or a person’s aura is identified (Beyer, 1999) as connecting them to the Spirit.

A common discourse called upon by the principals centres on student outcomes and accountability as testing, which is a main Western educational discourse prevalent in contemporary schooling in the current context (see for example Dawkins, 2007; Henderson, 2005; MCEETYA, 2007; Nelson, 2005). Such neo-liberal discourses are important to all school leaders; indeed it has been suggested that they are driving schooling, and they are identified in the analyses of the narratives. The school leaders’ use of metaphors and images has symbolised the leaders’ recognition that their leadership must operate from a deep and powerful source in order to move Australia forward into an alternative vision of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples may work together in leadership.

I first analyse the narrative put forward by Pete as he explores the processes of leadership for him in his community as he works to ensure quality outcomes for his students, and then move to investigate how Pete calls on his aura as he leads an inter-agency group across the region working towards self-determination for Torres Strait Islander peoples. The analysis demonstrates two streams highlighted by Pete. First, Pete understands that improved outcomes on measures and matrixes are valued by Western schooling systems and increasingly by political and popularised agendas within society and are identified in his discourse. Second, Pete’s call upon
the spiritual guidance provided by his Torres Strait heritage and strong sense of identity as a Torres Strait leader and community member is identified in the analysis.

An Aura of Leadership

I asked Pete about his vision for his students and how he ensured his Indigenous students were afforded equality of opportunity in the educational system:

Extract 7.1

12 Pete: Thank you for proposing that question because it is something close to me, as I said to you before it’s the aim of why I went into starting a career in teaching and I want to make a difference and honestly believe and I promote this quite regularly to my staff and other people that I work with in education is that as educators or teachers we have the opportunity to touch lives in a positive way and I want be able to do that and to do that to my own people wherever possible and as a Principal you’re in a position to make bigger decisions and you can influence others to come on board with some of the initiative or things you want to try and implement to try and get better outcomes. I am totally focused on and committed with a passion to attaining the best possible outcomes for our students and I believe strongly that working closely, working with the community and empowering others around me both the community and staff in a way that they feel confident and competent in their roles in the school or be in the community so that we can get targets that we’ve set and also attain best possible outcomes for our students and you asked the questions: that’s what we do here to ensure that.

(Interview One with Pete, May 2004)
This excerpt explains the journey in which Pete is engaged and the parallel journey he operates with his people – including students, staff, and the Islander community – in trying to attain the best possible outcomes he can for his students and the community. Pete is engaged on a mission, which is “close to [him]” (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 2) to “make a difference” (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 4) for “[his] own people...” (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 9). This mission is both personal and professional; “I am totally focused on and committed with a passion to attaining the best possible outcomes for our students” (extract 7.1, turn 12, lines 13-15). Pete positions himself in his level of commitment to student outcomes through the use of adjectives and adverbs: totally, with a passion, and best possible (extract 7.1, turn 12, lines 13-15). This way of phrasing highlights Pete’s commitment to accepting no compromise or excuse in this mission regarding student outcomes. Pete calls upon current Western educational discourses related to accountability and student outcomes to which he holds himself and his staff entirely accountable. He calls on language from this Western educational discourse that highlights Pete’s deep engagement and responsibility as a school leader. For example, his lexical choice of better outcomes (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 13), best possible outcomes (extract 7.1, turn 12, lines 15 & 22), and targets (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 21) signals how seriously he takes this responsibility to raise the outcomes of his students and close the gap between his students and students more generally, particularly for “my own people” (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 9). The use of personal pronouns throughout, the possessive pronoun my, and the intensification of ownership
though the use of “own” in “my own people” (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 9) together with the extensive use of I as the theme of each clause emphasises the personal nature of Pete’s mission, making clear where he positions himself as a Torres Strait Islander but also as an instructional leader with a very clear agenda. In the opening to the narrative Pete expresses thanks to me as researcher for proposing he talk about the educational outcomes debate as “it is something close to me” (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 2) and the very reason, he recounts, that first lead him to teaching as a career. Pete is working within the Western educational discourse as he continues to call on dominant, outcomes-based, or accountability discourses to explain his mission. Although I assign the outcomes discourse to Western education, it is understood that Indigenous peoples share the aspiration and expectation that their children achieve the best educational outcomes possible and the gaps are closed in education and other outcomes in specified timelines, which is the design and intention of all four leaders, as evidenced in the data. Pete walks in both worlds, signaling his level of expertise in instructional leadership as he uses his position as principal to set and work towards targets and improved outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

However, Pete does not just rely on discourses of accountability to explain his position within the greater task of providing high-quality and high-equity opportunity and education to the students of his own community and more broadly. Pete also provides evidence that he calls upon a sense of visionary leadership as he describes the opportunity through education for
him to be engaged in “empowering others” (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 18),
“both community and staff” (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 18), to “feel confident
and competent” (extract 7.1, turn 12, lines 18-19). Pete’s uses the collective
noun, “community” to refer to his Islander community, identifying them as
well as his staff group. Pete interprets his leadership role as involving a
wider constituency and not just leading the school employees, as he
describes his wish to “empower” (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 18) his “own
people” (extract 7.1, turn 12, line 18) both the community and staff, to “feel
confident and competent in their roles in the school” (extract 7.1, turn 12,
lines 18-19). He knows that as a “Principal, he’s (you’re) in a position to
make bigger decisions and (you) can influence others…” (extract 7.1, turn
12, lines 10-11).

In this next extract, Pete tells the story of the background to his passion
to make a difference. Pete had been brought up hearing postcolonial
discourses justifying the fact that Torres Strait people could not be leaders
or hold positions of authority or power because they were incapable of
learning beyond the basic rudimentary elements of Western knowledges:

Extract 7.2
2 Pete: …But coming back to talk about trying to answer
your question in regards to things that have influenced
me, in the direction I went and my passion for
working with Indigenous people. In the early years
and it was probably even before I went to school, I
heard a lot of things being said about indigenous
people where it was very negative. I saw a lot of
things on TS Island and witnessed things where I
could see people weren’t treated equally and it was
mainly because of their colour, nothing else. I also
could see or experience a lot of racism in a negative way being directed towards Indigenous people and within the social structure I could see that you know, they went low on the order on social structure where they were disempowered by policy and all sorts of other strategies like employment and so forth where there were no Indigenous people that I knew of that were in senior positions or in positions of authority to make very big decisions that would influence the lives of Torres Strait Islander people…

(Interview Two with Pete, May 2004)

In this extract Pete names postcolonial discourses, which dictated many aspects of Torres Strait Islander life due to “colour, nothing else” (extract 7.2, turn 2, line 10), and which resulted in a lack of opportunity for Torres Strait Islander people to position themselves as leaders of their own destiny. Pete’s experience in his formative years gave him the “passion” to change the structures that ensured Indigenous peoples remained, “low on the order on social structure where they were disempowered by policy” (extract 7.2, turn 2, lines 13-14). Pete became living proof that it was possible to change the power relations in the Torres Strait by becoming a leader and challenging the postcolonial discourse that presented as the only truth the fact that Indigenous peoples were low on the “social structure” (extract 7.2, turn 2, line 13). Changes in power relations, such as Pete’s social and political action in becoming a leader, produced the space for Torres Strait Islander peoples to begin to see themselves as taking part in an alternative world with alternative ways of knowing Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (Nakata, 2007). The colonial discourse is one that has (mis)represented these people since the 1870s when the Torres Strait was
annexed to Queensland and claimed by London as part of the Australian colonies. Thus Pete’s leadership works at the “edge of the capillary” (Cousins & Hussain, 1984, p. 239), resisting colonial discourses and reconceptualising representations of Torres Strait Islanders, which may “influence the lives of Torres Strait Islander people” (extract 7.2, turn 2, line 19). Pete took on the mantle of conceptualising a Torres Strait leadership group as his “baby” (extract 7.3, turn 12, line 8) representing 20 organisations with a brief to effect social transformation across the region:

**Extract 7.3**

12 Pete: …We called it the “Interagency” project program and the inter-agency program at the school involves up to 20 different groups... The idea is to try and make the whole philosophy, is to get the leaders in the community sitting at the round table committing to better outcomes to our community in general. The school has been instrumental in facilitating this and I guess it was my “baby” to push this, I did that because I could see that some of the benefits that the school had experienced from involving some of the other agencies… There is no hierarchical order in these; when we come in we recognise each other as leaders and that we all have a role to play in bettering our community. Now we meet quite regularly maybe once a month; and whilst meetings aren’t planned formally it depends on the key players or the availability of people on the island that we arrange the meetings but hopefully down the track whilst still in its infancy with this movement we’ve already achieved many outcomes from it… By forming strong working partnership with agencies we’re realising that better outcomes are being attained...

17 Researcher: About mentoring…
Pete: I think it’s important that people in the Torres Strait were talking about autonomy, pushing for autonomy and self-government that we have a role as agencies in these communities to ensure that we’re playing a part in it. If we’re looking to empower people in this region that we must ensure opportunities for that and not just talk about it. As a leader in our school community I’m going to put my hand up and say “I’m not going to ‘Talk the Talk’ I’m going to ‘Walk the Talk’ …” (Interview One with Pete, May 2004).

Pete walks, talks, and breathes his vision to provide better outcomes for both his students and the wider community. Pete walked this by initiating the inter-agency group, which is an action group in the region committed to attaining “better outcomes to the community in general” (extract 7.3, turn 12, line 6). Pete has recognised and harnessed this power both for the community’s future “autonomy” and “self-government” (extract 7.3, turn 18, lines 2-3) although his “baby” (extract 7.3, turn 12, line 8) was still in its “infancy” (extract 7.3, turn 12, line 18) when I conducted these interviews. The use of metaphor and symbolical language once more signals that Pete is moving in his talk to discuss the heart of his leadership or mission, which is to make a real difference for Torres Strait Islander peoples. The personification of the inter-agency group as a baby serves to accentuate the potential power of the group to move the Islanders’ cause forward with the implicit assumption that they, in infancy, have much potential still to be realised as the baby grows. As Pete “walks the talk” (extract 7.3, turn 18, line 9) in this part of the narrative, the colonial discourses, although still present as potentials to frame his talk, have become sidelined to an
empowered discourse of Torres Strait self-determination and agency. In this excerpt, the alternative discourse no longer works from “the edge of the capillary” (Cousins & Hussain, 1984, p. 239), but has become mainstream, at least in the Torres Strait. The self-determination discourse represents the Torres Strait from a particular and strong position – although this discourse may not have voice on the Australian mainland. In the text, 7.3 above, Pete is operating from a number of inner leadership models, specifically demonstrating visionary, transformational, and empowerment leadership as the narrative moves on. He exercises visionary leadership by setting up the interagency group, which was his “baby” (extract 7.3, turn 12, line 12); empowerment leadership by establishing leadership roles for respective Islanders, “recognising each other as leaders and that we all have a role to play in bettering our community” (extract 7.3, turn 12, line 12-14); and transformational leadership as he walks the talk of his vision:

I think it’s important that people in the Torres Strait were talking about autonomy, pushing for autonomy and self-government that we have a role as agencies in these communities to ensure that we’re playing a part in it. If we’re looking to empower people in this region that we must ensure opportunities for that and not just talk about it. As a leader in our school community I’m going to put my hand up and say “I’m not going to ‘Talk the Talk’ I’m going to ‘Walk the Talk’…” (Extract 7.3, turn18, lines 1-10)

Pete is one of the leaders who do not name spirituality as the foundation of their leadership, however he does describe “aura” (extract 7.4, turn 76, line 9) as symbolic of the intangible power that he identifies and uses to provide leadership across his community and beyond. He articulates how he concurrently operates at a deeper level to achieve this shift in culture from
that of negativity towards the capabilities of his students and Torres Strait Islanders in general by calling upon a visionary and spiritual leadership discourse:

Extract 7.4

76  Pete: I find as an Indigenous leader I would operate differently to a non-Indigenous leader in a context like this… I think there are a lot of differences in the way we operate and I think it’s because of my understanding, my experiences, my respect for indigenous people and my passion for working with indigenous people in a way where it can empower them, that has allowed me to, or which has, it sort of is, the aura about me to operate in a different way. I think I also come from a different angle where I’m operating in a context where I wanna make a difference and I’ll be around for the long run, long haul. Whereas others come and go…

92  Pete: Sometimes I’ve seen my non-indigenous colleagues, you know their level of criticism and so forth or it’s their prejudice that they’ve been brought up with or something they’ve acquired over time. And they use some of these accusations to justify some of their prejudice and as you said, the level of sophistication, or my sophistication and how I deal with things, they’ll probably see it as more white than black as a way of justifying things. Well I don’t see it as such and I challenge them on that. It does not take away my Indigenous aura or my Indigenous personality or who I stand for. I see it as them having a problem within themselves to deal with it. It’s not my problem but sometimes those things that they say, it’s to, you can see there, there’s some racism sometimes in it. Or their belief is once again that black people can’t do things, or they can’t go here or they can’t be successful or achieve things and it’s that old colonialism “hey, we keep ‘em down there again”… I wanna get out there and find some big picture things that are having an impact and it may not necessarily be from this particular community or Torres Strait in general. It could be from a different country altogether or, but I like hearing about new ideas and strategies and I guess I look at our particular context.
and our situation here in a positive way where others may see it as very limited opportunities and see it negative that you can’t go much further than what’s here… Whilst that’s down the track, I think you have to have a vision as a leader…

(Interview Two with Pete, May 2004)

This extract opens with Pete defining his leadership as being different to that of a non-Indigenous leader, firstly because, in his estimation, Indigenous leaders operate differently (extract 7.4, turn 76, line 1) due to: understanding, experiences, respect, and passion to empower (extract 7.4, turn 76, lines 6-7) Indigenous peoples. Pete argues the differences he perceives by drawing a binary between the sustainable leadership (Davies, 2007) of an Indigenous leader and the contrasting reality of “others” who “come and go” (extract 7.4, turn 76, line 13) within many Indigenous education contexts. Pete operates from a sustainable leadership, “where I wanna make a difference and I’ll be around for the long run, long haul” (extract 7.4, turn 76, lines 11-12). Pete then goes on to name the residual legacy of colonialism, the “prejudice that they have been brought up with or something they’ve acquired over time” (extract 7.4, turn 92, lines 3-4) that results in some non-Indigenous colleagues who deem him “more white than black” (extract 7.4, turn 92, line 8). Pete explains that he challenges these colleagues on this assumption that “sophistication” (extract 7.4, turn 92, line 7) in his language or leadership allows them to surmise that he is operating as a white or Western leader. I argue that these colleagues have not questioned the position from which they narrowly make judgments, one aspect of which is that any sophistication in leadership signals a white
leader or, “(my) sophistication and how (I) deal with things, they’ll probably see it as more white than black as a way of justifying things” (extract 7.4, turn 92, lines 7-9). This narrow assumption is part of Pete’s experience as an Indigenous leader; some other examples of which were explicated in *The Whistle* narrative analysed in chapter 6, signaling the continued presence of postcolonial attitudes among some people within educational contexts. Pete and the other leaders work to expose these narrow representations at the meeting place of leadership discourses whilst using these opportunities, as Pete articulates, to envision alternative leadership discourses. As the previous extracts demonstrate, Pete is a highly effective leader in the respect that he is leading his community to better outcomes, which is part of a mainstream educational leadership discourse; there are multiple studies connecting strong instructional and visionary leadership to improved student outcomes (Cotton, 2003; Leithwood, et al., 1999). Pete reports in this extract that some of his non-Indigenous colleagues equate this with Western leadership, having assumed that if an Indigenous person makes it as a leader it is because s/he has learned to be white, because the dominant Westernised leadership discourse is represented as the truth of how leadership should be enacted. In reality all discourse is only ever one perception of truth (Foucault, 1971) representing one set of knowledges within which individuals, including some of Pete’s non-Indigenous colleagues, allow themselves to be constrained. Pete has mastered the neoliberal accountability discourse visible in Western education having positively affected student outcomes at his school to a significant degree (see above
extract 7.1, turn 12). He moves strategically, calling upon a number of discourses including traditional Western discourses and inner leadership models: most notably, visionary, transformational, and spiritual in order to achieve opportunity for his people but never leaving his Indigenous identity.

Although Pete walks in two worlds as an Indigenous principal leading in a Westernised school system, he does not lead from two sets of leadership discourse, rather he moves in a fluid and eclectic manner calling on leadership discourses from both worldviews depending on the context. Pete is working from a reconceptualisation of leadership discourses rather than a binary of either Western or Indigenous models. In the extract below, Pete explains the differences he perceives between his leadership and Western leadership:

Extract 7.5

76 Pete: ...I think there are a lot of differences in the way we operate and I think it’s because of my understanding, my experiences, my respect for Indigenous people and my passion for working with Indigenous people in a way where it can empower them, that has allowed me to, or which has, it sort of is, the aura about me to operate in a different way.

(Interview Two with Pete, May 2004)

Pete names aura as the presence about him that allows him “to operate in a different way” (extract 7.5, turn 76, lines 6-7) to non-Indigenous leaders. He has previously named particular cultural differences together with his long term commitment to leadership in a different way, however Pete then
moves on in the narrative to discuss a very important aspect of his leadership. He moves further into a visionary leadership discourse, not only for his own community but for Australia in general. Pete’s proficiency at walking in two worlds, together with his vision and commitment to make a difference for Indigenous peoples, means he draws skillfully and fluidly, I argue, from both cultural sets of discourses in representing his leadership. This call upon discourses from both worldviews does mean Pete operates differently, as he identified, but I would not define it as sometimes as an Indigenous leader and at other times as a Westernised leader. Rather, my analysis would identify a reconceptualised model that is of a leader calling upon several inner leadership discourses, neoliberal discourses of outcomes and accountability, and Indigenous discourses including spiritual discourses. The use of these different discourses together represents a form of spiritual leadership which is all of this and more. He works at the crucibles of all of these discourses to move the debate into the international arena where, he senses, the rights of Indigenous peoples internationally are being addressed through the UN and human rights campaigns (Nakata, 2001) into a way of representation which may not be so easily marginalised to Western interests:

Extract 7.6

47 Pete: …I said, you know I attended a World Indigenous Conference and I could quickly code-switch into another Indigenous person’s world, say the American Indians when they were talking about their struggles and so forth. I could identify that pretty quickly and understand not just what they’re saying, but understanding what they’re experiencing. I always say
and I believe, you know, to fully understand an Island man, a Torres Strait Island man or a Torres Strait person, or an Aboriginal person you have to be an Aboriginal person. You have to be a Torres Strait Island person. I can explain to you what racism is like and yet you may never get to experience it the way we do.

(Interview Two with Pete 2004)

Pete explains the gulf between the Indigenous world and the Western world in this extract. He focuses on his affinity with other Indigenous peoples’ experience. In the final sentence in this extract he makes the statement that although he may explain to me as researcher “what racism is like,” I “may never get to experience it the way” (extract 7.6, turn 47, lines 12-13) that Indigenous people do, which often is as part of daily experience.

Pete is operating from a more complex understanding, perceiving racism, for example, as a global phenomenon. Although he operates skillfully within and outwith various leadership discourses, he uses them to get to the core of what is important to his vision for Torres Strait Islander peoples. Part of this process is naming the racism discourse as he does above but not settling for this debate, rather moving it forward into the international arena to look for ways forward for Indigenous peoples. When leaders are operating from these big picture perspectives, they are moving from their spiritual core, working with spiritual guidance to pose the bigger questions of life’s purpose, “‘Who am I?’ ‘Where am I going in my life?’ and ‘What is the ultimate value of what I’m doing?’” (Kempton, 2006). In this following extract I asked Pete to explain what his aura represented to him:
Researcher: Pete, can you comment on your aura, what that means to you?

Pete: The aura, the way I see aura is you as a person... What’s around you? What do people feel when they’re in your space? I guess the vibes you give as a leader. The silent messages you give. The way people around you operate. The way the world ticks when you’re there. It’s, it’s a powerful thing that I guess you have no control over… it’s the little things that happen that you don’t expect to happen, happens and I think your aura has something to do with that in making things happen that you have no control over sometimes but just your presence there…

Pete: I think it does come with leadership. I don’t think it just happens overnight. I think the aura about you creates those things where you make those things happen. And I think that’s where you can be influenced about the aura of people. Not just in awe but the aura of what these people, the radars that are coming out, the vibes you know that you get and it’s because they may be significant people...

Pete: Yeah, just coming back, I just think there’s all styles of leadership that you can be in awe of but I think the outcomes, the person that I’m in awe of more is actions you know. Get out there and show that where people really wanna be around you for the right reasons so that the aura you give around is one that is not only a positive aura but it’s like a blessed aura around ya that’s gotta halo around it…

(Interview Two with Pete, May, 2003)

Pete explains “aura” as a presence, the “vibes you give as a leader” (extract 7.7, turn 98, lines 3-4) and “the silent messages you give” (extract 7.7, turn 98, line 4). He continues by describing aura as, “The way the world ticks when you’re there. It’s, it’s a powerful thing that I guess you have no control over…” (extract 7.7, turn 98, line 5). This response was different to Pete’s previous interview responses, as he spoke of uncertainty. He
responds that his interpretation of aura includes it being an external vibe which makes the world tick a certain way. The use of the verb “tick” is a powerful use of paradox as time “ticks” in only one way according to Western interpretation. “[T]icks” (extract 7.7, turn 98, line 5) is used here to show the “aura” (extract 7.7, turn 98, line 1) of the leader as having the power to make the world around the leader “tick” in a particular or different way. At the same time Pete believes he has “no control over” (extract 7.7, turn 98, line 7) the presence of his aura. I argue that, perhaps subconsciously, Pete has handed over some things to this powerful but uncertain presence or aura. He is aware of this presence when he is working with and leading people although “guesses” (extract 7.7, turn 98, line 9) he has no control over its power. The data do not suggest he consciously hands over to Spirit or to his higher self; however Pete does name the presence he feels is with him. As the narrative continues, Pete describes aura as he understands it in relation to other “significant” (extract 7.7, turn 43, line 9) leaders. Pete uses the metaphor “radar” (extract 7.7, turn 43, line 6) to describe the notion that sometimes we are “in awe” of leaders sensing their power with our “radars” (extract 7.7, turn 43, line 6) but not always able to fully describe why we feel this way about their presence.

Extract 7.7 symbolises the crux of the set of extracts collected for the Aura of Leadership narrative. Although there are several examples from Pete’s interview talk where I identify examples of visionary and spiritual leadership identifiable from the leadership literature, it is within this extract
that he uses particular spiritual language to describe a “significant” leader who has a “blessed aura” (extract 7.7, turn 45, line7), symbolising the leader’s connection to a higher source. Whilst Pete is adamant that “He’s (I’m) in awe of (more is) actions” (extract 7.7, turn 45, lines 3-4), the whole extract builds through the metaphors of “ticks” and “radar” (extract 7.7, turn 98, lines 5-6) to the crux where he names what makes a significant leader, which is what makes the world “tick” (extract 7.7, turn 98, line 5) in a certain way when people are around her/him. I argue that Pete here describes spiritual leaders who source their energy from a higher source, whom Pete has named as a “significant” (extract 7.7, turn 43, line 9) leader who possesses “not only a positive aura” (extract 7.7, turn 45, line 7) but a “blessed aura” around them that has a halo around it (extract 7.7, turn 45, lines 8-9). This language is used in the spiritual leadership literature to identify a person who is moving into the transcendental phase of self-actualisation (Sanders III, Hopkins, & Geroy, 2003; Tacey, 2000; Wilber, 2000). This leadership is recognisable in both the spiritual leadership literature from the Western world and from The Dreaming Indigenous spiritual leadership literature. It is interesting to note that Pete uses symbolic language recognisable from both sets of discourses; “vibes” and “aura” (extract 7.7, turn 98, lines 1-3) are recognisable from both worldviews, but “blessed” and “halo” (extract 7.7, turn 45, lines 7-9) may be more immediately recognised from Christian or Western spiritual discourses.
In the following narrative Dave articulates that he derives his spiritual guidance from a Connection to the Universal Intelligence. The analyses focus on Dave’s interpretation of his leadership as spiritually guided and how Dave conceives the connectedness amongst land, influence of Spirit, Universal Intelligence, intuitiveness, family, ancestral time, power, and emancipation.

Connection to the Universal Intelligence

Dave works closely with elders in the community around the school in which he is currently working. He verbalises, with caution, his drive and spiritual guidance and where these forces come through in his leadership. He links this caution to his perception of prejudice by the academic community against the recognition of nontangible forces. I present an extract of this interview from the point where Dave and I were talking about the concept of power:

**Extract 7.8**

17 Dave: Yes. So, it’s got to be like that because it, because when you build that sort of power, like I said it’s not the kind that white people give to you and because of that it’s not the kind that they can take away from you. It’s not the kind that anybody can take away from you. So. And that, that’s the, to that end that’s emancipatory I guess. Its giving people power to set themselves free ... you know?

18 Researcher: So, the individual has to… Can I go a bit deeper in that? I don’t know how I’m going to approach this, I’m trying...you speak about power and education and - I don’t know, maybe the things in life coming from inside out. And you’ve used the term “gut”
feeling and “fire” and “heart.” If your concept is that you bring them out of people, where are they coming from initially? Where is that power coming from initially? Is that a faith that you have?

19 Dave: That’s a good question. It comes, I think it comes from; it will come from an understanding of one’s Universe. A connection to the land. It will come from a knowledge of family history. It will come from a knowledge of family. It comes from that sort of collective sort of communal sense of existence and it, it comes from the Spirit as well. And I think that, that, I don’t know, the Spirit’s not the sort of thing that goes down well in academia but it comes from that, that connection to some sort of Universal intelligence or something like that. And for us being connected to the land here it’s like we’ve been here tens of thousands of years. And that’s a pretty powerful thing that only us as Aboriginal people can lay claim to.

5 We’re connected to this land. We identify with this land. These landscapes around here are a part of us. We interact with those in the same way that we’ve interacted with them for tens of thousands of years in the way that our, the people who we’re descended from have done the same thing. And there’s power in that. And it’s you know, that kind of power is unshakeable, you know? It’s just a matter of getting people to realise that it’s actually there. Because I think we’ve been - yes.

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Researcher: Have your people lost it? Some of your people lost it more recently, is that?

21 Dave: I don’t know that you ever lose it.

22 Researcher: All right. But you’re not connected?

23 Dave: ….um, but it certainly and I don’t know that you ever disconnect to it but you certainly suppress it, I guess. Western society suppressed it quite a lot. And for some of us…

26 Researcher: Where did that knowledge come from? You know how people say people, wise people to me, say that they got the answer from their gut they got it, not from some external thing. Where does that come, is that an ancestral?
Dave: I would say it’s more like a, that sense of intuitiveness or that

Researcher: Yes, intuitive, tacit knowledge.

Dave: Gee, you’re asking me some interesting questions today. For me, my belief is that it’s a, it’s a connection to that Universal sort of intelligence or that greater Spirit that’s around us that…

Researcher: Yes

Dave: No, more like that connectedness. You know? That connected to that something that sense of Spirit that I think has the potential to go backwards and forwards in our lives and advise us accordingly. You know, or present, present to our mind different choices and when we are on a track, it presents to us something that makes us question the sensibleness or question whether that choice is right or something. It’s like that - you know? You might be contemplating one decision or people are presenting you with an option but there’s just that something that’s making you not so sure about it and I guess I would explain that, by that sense of Spirit or something going forward and checking that out and coming back and saying, “Mmm…”

Researcher: Did you always have that knowledge about your Spirit or did, did someone teach you how to or did you just know?

Dave: No, I think it was a gradual evolving sort of understanding. I’m sure it was always there. That sense of intuitiveness or something was always there. I’m sure. But more in the last ten years I’ve started to just to contemplate it more deeply and try to generate some sort of sense of understanding and this, this is the point where I’ve come to in my mind and I feel like it’s the right thing, you know? And it’s quite different from religion. It’s more spirituality rather than religion. I think that religion is only a framework or mechanism within which people can practice spirituality. But I get a, I have a sense that you can practise spirituality without religion…”

(Interview Two with Dave, October 2003)
This extract begins with Dave and I discussing power and its source. Previously Dave had described his leadership as emancipatory. In the first turn Dave qualifies that power is within the individual and his role is “…giving people power to set themselves free. You know?”(extract 7.8, turn 17, line 7). Dave conceptualises power as within all individuals, not just a leader or authority. He symbolises power as the knowledge that power is within and, therefore, accessible; the power that this knowledge may give Aboriginal people is emancipatory, to free themselves from postcolonial and powerless representations of Aboriginal peoples:

…like I said it’s not the kind that white people give to you and because of that it’s not the kind that they can take away from you. It’s not the kind that anybody can take away from you. So. And that, that’s the, to that end that’s emancipatory I guess…(extract 7.8, turn 17, lines 2-7)

In alignment with Foucault’s analytic of power/knowledge (1980), Dave believes that power is always in relationship and accessible. He connects the concept of power to Spirit. Dave clearly articulates his connection to the Spirit, which guides and informs him and “…it’s a connection to that Universal sort of intelligence or that greater Spirit that’s around us…” (extract 7.8, turn 29, line 3).

Dave names the source of his “…understanding of one’s Universe. A connection to the land…” (extract 7.8, turn 19, lines 2-3) as the Spirit and this is from where he derives his wisdom. He recognises that acknowledging the source of his leadership to Spirit would not “go(es) down well in academia but it comes from that, that connection to some sort of Universal
intelligence or something like that…” (extract 7.8, turn 19, lines 8-11). Dave has a definite and clear conception of the attributes of Spirit. He states that the advent of Western civilisation has meant that some of his people have suppressed intuitive knowledge, which comes from the “Universal power” (extract 7.8, turn 19, line 14).

I contend that Dave is operating with Indigenous spiritual leadership, not (only) because he is an Aboriginal man, but because the attributes of spirituality he names are particular to Indigenous cultures and spirituality or The Dreaming (Penrith, 1996). He names “…that sense of Spirit” (extract 7.8, turn 31, line 2) that guides him in his life and in his role as principal:

…That connected to that something that sense of Spirit that I think has the potential to go backwards and forwards in our lives and advise us accordingly…You might be contemplating one decision or people are presenting you with an option but there’s just that something that’s making you not so sure about it and I guess I would explain that, by that sense of Spirit or something going forward and checking that out and coming back and saying, “Mmm…” (extract 7.8, turn 31, lines 1-15)

The attributes of Spirit that Dave names are particular to Indigenous spirituality, not all individually but collectively as he connects his personal power to knowledge of: “one’s Universe” (extract 7.8, turn 19, lines 2-3); “connection to the land” (extract 7.8, turn 19, lines 2-3); “family history” (extract 7.8, turn 19, line 4); “family”(extract 7.8, turn 19, lines 4-4); “collective sort of communal sense of existence” (extract 7.8, turn 19, line 6); “the Spirit” (extract 7.8, turn 19, line 8): “to some sort of Universal Intelligence” (extract 7.8, turn 19, line 10); “connected to the land here…for
tens of thousands of years” (extract 7.8, turn 19, lines 13); “identify with the land” (extract 7.8, turn 19, line 15); “landscapes around here are a part of us” (extract 7.8, turn 19, line 16); “interact with them for tens of thousands of years” (extract 7.8, turn 19, line 18); “the people who we’re descended from have done the same thing” (extract 7.8, turn 19, lines 19-20); “...has the potential to go backwards and forwards in our lives and advise us accordingly” (extract 7.8, turn 31, lines 3-4). The attributes of Spirit named by Dave, in particular the ancient connection to and identity in land, and a collective and communal sense of existence, are part of an Indigenous spiritual discourse. This narrative, through a discourse connecting Spirit to land and to power, illustrates Dave’s spiritual leadership. The implication of Dave’s “emancipatory” (extract 7.8, turn 17, line 7) leadership sounds potential for social transformation. Dave re-envisions Australian mainstream society in a powerful and new status quo where Aboriginal peoples emancipate themselves, (re)connecting to land, Spirit, and the power within. Although Indigenous spiritual discourses are not synonymous with Western spiritual discourse, some of the attributes of Spirit that Dave names, for example, power within and the Spirit advising people at different times in their lives, are akin to Western spiritual discourses (Boje, 2003).

Like Pete, Dave is well aware of the powerful potentials around him and within his people. He believes that social transformation will not come from a top down approach but from emancipatory or spiritual leadership, whereby Aboriginal peoples harness the Spirit or power within and set up a different
set of power relations that represent Aboriginal peoples as powerful and knowledgeable in their culture and ancient connection to land.

Conclusion

Pete and Dave’s narratives connect them to the Spirit, or demonstrate the use of spiritual guidance in their personal and professional stories as leaders. Pete’s narrative finishes with a spiritual reference to his “…positive aura but it’s like a blessed aura around ya that’s gotta halo around it…” (extract 7.7, turn 45, line 8), which gives a message for people to be around and follow Pete as leader. Dave’s connection to the universal intelligence or Spirit supports him to call upon Aboriginal people to emancipate themselves as he aims to challenge them to unleash the powerful potentials within. This chapter’s analyses highlight the symbols and metaphors around the Spirit or spiritual guidance which, although recognised by both school leaders using a different metaphor, were identifiable from the spiritual leadership literature and the Indigenous spirituality and cultural literature (Penrith, 1996; Sheehan & Walker, 2001).

Calling upon Western neo-liberal educational discourses of student outcomes, accountability, or Western leadership enabled both leaders to talk about student achievement. However, recent data show minimal gains in Indigenous outcomes across a range of life issues, including student performance (Dawkins, 2007; Mellor & Corrigan, 2004; Pearson, 2004). Both school leaders concurrently walk the spiritual leadership walk of long-
term vision for social and political transformation engaging emancipatory, transformational, and spiritual leadership. The two principals call upon spiritual guidance in their role as school leaders. I argue that there is sufficient evidence in Dave’s narrative to name his leadership as Indigenous spiritual leadership, because several of the attributes of Spirit Dave calls upon are particular to Indigenous spirituality and cultures.
POWER OF THE TORRES STRAIT DREAM

Introduction

In chapter 7 I focused on the metaphors and symbols used by Pete and Dave to describe what I have named as spiritual leadership to make a difference in their communities and in the work they do to re-envision Australia. The leaders’ discourses evidenced a variety of inner leadership models, aspects of which were spiritually guided, while an analysis of Dave’s leadership talk signaled a particular spiritual leadership that I have aligned with Indigenous spiritual leadership or The Dreaming (Penrith, 1996; Tacey, 2000).

Chapter 8 builds on the spiritual leadership explored in chapter 7 by concentrating on Samantha’s (Case-Study D) leadership and aspirations for the future of Torres Strait Islander peoples. Samantha reports her spiritual leadership is sourced from God or Spirit who has a pre-destined plan for Samantha as a leader. She reports her leadership role is to be led by the Spirit to help bring about the “‘Power of the Torres Strait Dream’ of Self Determination” (figure 8.1, line 10) or autonomy for the Torres Strait region. Samantha uses symbolic and metaphorical language as central images represented in the discourses she calls upon to achieve her main objective which, she reports, is “…going to be the answer to coming out of captivity…” (extract 8.2, turn 66, line5). Samantha leads within her school and across the broader community to transform some deep-seated deficit...
representations that surround and permeate aspects of Torres Strait Islander culture in the region. Samantha resists the “truth” of the dominant discourse of inclusivity, which she sees as a myth due to the colonial history of segregation on the island. She reports the legacy of this policy is present within the State institution of Torres Strait Primary School\textsuperscript{29} (hereafter TSPS), because TSPS is situated on the actual former site of the coloured, segregated school for Torres Strait Islanders and some people of other cultures. Through her rhetoric and action, she moves towards a powerful discourse of two-way strong for her students, and resists the inferior representations that were formed from colonial discourses. Foucault’s analytic of power relations (1984), when engaged as a frame for Samantha’s leadership discourse, would suggest that her interpretation would align with the concept of power as always accessible. An analysis of Samantha’s leadership approach assumes the omnipresence of power, because she calls on potentials that would mean the Torres Strait taking control or power over its own destiny. Samantha calls upon discourses of Christianity, postcolonialism, and Indigeneity and weaves them into a powerful representation of spiritual leadership, which moves towards a righteous change to self-determination in the Torres Strait. Samantha leads from her spiritual core, which is recognisable in her spiritual leadership discourse but also in her enacted practice, which draws on spiritual, visionary, and transformational leadership models in particular. The analyses focus on a

\textsuperscript{29} Torres Strait Primary School is a pseudonym for Samantha’s school (Case Study D) and hereafter referred to as TSPS.
series of cruces in the data where Samantha calls on hybrids of understandings to encourage what she discusses as two-way strong students able to “…collectively build the vision of the ‘Power of the Torres Strait Dream’” (TSPS school vision document, figure 8.1).

I explore Samantha’s leadership as school principal through the central, third, and fourth research questions: “In what ways do Indigenous principals rely on spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools?” “How is leadership symbolised by the leaders in interview talk when asked to describe their leadership approach?” and “How do the leaders use the symbols and metaphors around spirituality as they work to re-envision Australian society?”

I construct this chapter firstly by connecting to the theoretical framework and then conducting a critical discourse analysis (hereafter CDA) of the school vision document, Samantha’s interview talk, and an interview with a local elder and spiritual mentor in the community. I connect the analysis to Foucault’s notion of discourse (1971), analytic of power/knowledge (1980) and understandings of bio-power (Hoy, 1986) together with postcolonial theories. I contend that the discourses that Samantha calls upon in presenting her vision for the autonomy of the Torres Strait assume that people have the potential to harness their personal and collective power to make this dream a reality for the Torres Strait. This part of the analysis directly addresses the fourth research question on how the leader uses symbols and metaphors around spirituality to re-envision Australian society.
In fact, Samantha’s re-envision is a dramatic transformation to Australian society as her vision is of a self-determined Torres Strait.

The legacy of colonisation had meant that from 1911 until 1964 white students had been segregated from Torres Strait students and educated on separate campuses. The W Coloured School (pseudonym) was situated at the site of the current TSPS, Samantha’s school. Samantha’s story is one of vision for reconciliation and self-determination in the Torres Strait, the reality of which would mean some separation from mainland Australia. It is important to understand the history of segregation of the peoples in conceptualising Samantha’s vision for autonomy for Torres Strait Islander peoples against the background of settlement by the British as the Torres Strait was annexed to Queensland in 1872.

Torres Strait Primary School

Samantha is a Torres Strait Islander principal of a State primary school that educates 500 students, 95% of who are Indigenous peoples. At the time I conducted the research at TSPS the school had 8 Indigenous teachers out of 29 and 16 Indigenous teachers’ aides out of 20. During the previous five years, the school had been actively moving towards the vision of a “Family Learning Home” designed in alignment with Torres Strait Islander culture. In alignment with this vision, the staff composition had changed dramatically to increased Indigenous representation.
TSPS opened in 1885 with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in attendance. However, between 1911-1912, after several applications to the Premier and the Home Secretary by the Chair of the Torres Strait Council and other prominent citizens, it was decided to open a school named the W Coloured School for “coloured” and “native” children on the Island as:

The Chief Protector of Aboriginals reported that…the white residents naturally objected to such a number of coloured children mixing with the white children at the State School contending that natives were prone to all sorts of skin and other diseases, which are a menace to others. He was of the opinion that it was undesirable to allow such a large number of Aboriginals to mix indiscriminately with white children…

(Extract from historical documents archived at current TSPS & retrieved September 2004).

In 1964 the W Coloured School and the white State school were again amalgamated to one primary school at the site, which had housed the W Coloured School and henceforth became the school site of TSPS. Many of the Indigenous grandparents of current TSPS students had attended the segregated, coloured school.

In this chapter I focus on Samantha’s engagement in setting vision and mission for her school community through the use of inherited colonial discourses, which she integrates with traditional Indigenous discourses to articulate into action the dream of self-determination for the Torres Strait. In order to examine the specific use of discourses upon which she calls and how these discourses play out in her talk and other school documents, I firstly analyse one school document, which is the school vision statement. Samantha had been instrumental in the development of this document.
I use CDA (Fairclough, 2001) as a methodology to analyse the school vision document and extracts from the interviews conducted with Samantha. I analyse the lexis, particularly symbols and metaphors, in the discourses called upon in the vision document and interview talk by Samantha. These provide significant data for the overall analysis of the representation of spiritual leadership within the interview talk and documents called upon by Samantha.

Figure 8.1 Extract from TSPS Vision and Mission documents 2003.

School Vision Document

Spirituality is central to the lives of the people of the Torres Strait. At TSPS, we acknowledge God as the rudder of our lugger and believe that He has been and still is, in control of our destiny since the beginning of time. The Systemic Cycle through our present school vision demonstrates how we have learned from the past; learn in the present to prepare for the future. The present status highlights the course we are to take to build a future of hope for the generations to come, by picking up the pieces. God is guiding our school’s rebirth/renewal, in alignment with the rebirth/renewal of our region, to collectively build the vision of the “Power of the Torres Strait Dream” for Self-Determination.

Presently the ‘TSPS’ Island State School Vision is:

“Learn your past to live strong in the present to prepare for the future”

(Kit Loni, 2001)

Ngulaw Ngurpai – Learning from the past
Kayib Ngurpi – Learning in the present
Bathaingaka – Learning for the future
(Translated by Bi Dane)
The above is an extract from the TSPS school vision and mission statement. I begin an analysis by briefly describing the visual and textual features and then explaining my interpretation of text and context and the broader institutional and societal discourses in my interpretation of the document. The text is set out visually with a clear title, then a paragraph statement of purpose for the school community is summarised in bold and boxed to highlight the T.S. language with the English translation. This demonstrates the importance of T.S. language for primacy of TSPS cultural representation, whilst recognising the requirement for an English translation.

Traditionally, Torres Strait people made a living from the sea both through pearling and fishing and these metaphors are employed directly in the document connecting God to TSPS. The Islanders used luggers to chart the sea and trade with New Guinea and other islands. The vision statement calls upon traditional Torres Strait discourses representing the Islanders as a maritime people, their traditional Indigenous and Christian spirituality, and the more recent Western linear conceptualisation of time: past, present, and future. The school vision synopsis amalgamates these various representations to a collective vision to set the course that all Torres Strait people wish to follow for their autonomy with the statement “Power of the Torres Strait Dream”. This dream is written in quotation marks to signal the expressive value that it claims to represent all Torres Strait peoples. According to this document, the most important belief system, made visible
with the primacy of its position is the first sentence of the vision statement
“Spirituality is central to the lives of the people of the Torres Strait” (figure
8.1, line 1). Grammatically this statement is given primacy. This statement
is the opening sentence and uses a simple, declarative structure. The reader
is in no doubt as to the fundamental belief system underpinning the vision
described in the document. The belief comes from traditional Indigenous
The second sentence launches the maritime metaphor of God as the
“rudder” of the “lugger.” God is positioned as the “rudder,” steering the
Torres Strait towards its “destiny.” The metaphor of God as the “rudder” in
control of Torres Strait destiny has an alignment with the deterministic
stance of the Western discourse of “Born Again Christianity,” as
demonstrated through such language as “control of our destiny,” “rebirth,"
and “renewal” (figure 8.1, lines 3 & 8). This God is the Christian God
“brought” to the Torres Strait by the London missionary colonisers in 1871,
yet the Christian God has been “in control of our destiny since the beginning
of time” (figure 8.1, line 3). Discourses around Indigenous spiritual and
cultural maritime images have been amalgamated with the discourses of
Christianity brought by the colonisers. The text then adopts the Christian
God, thereby creating a crux in the data as the discourses merge to the
hybrid representation used for the vision statement.

The statement of vision ends by repeating that this journey both locally
and at the regional level is dependent on God being active to “collectively

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build the vision” (figure 8.1, line 9). The discourses merge to form the hybrid discourse of the Torres Strait God, who is both of traditional Indigenous spirituality and representative of the Christian God.

The vision statement is constructed as a positive, futures-orientated document both through its positive tone used in explicit statements like “a future of hope” (figure 8.1, line 8) and its assumption that God not only approves of their cause but will be active in its achievement. There are, however, some qualifications in order that the “Dream” (figure 8.1, line 10) may become reality, as Torres Strait Islanders must “pick up the pieces” (figure 8.1, line 7). This phrase colloquially signifies a past and present brokenness which I argue is the result of postcolonialism (Said, 1978). The vision statement outlines the method by which the dream will be realised by summarising the text that explains Torres Strait peoples must learn from their past such that they may “learn(ing) in the present” in order “to learn(ing) for the future (figure 8.1, line 5). This summary statement is emphasised in both bold and boxed and engages the use of Torres Strait language first with the English translation second to accentuate that keeping the Torres Strait language alive is instrumental in maintaining the Torres Strait cultures. The caution implicit in the text is for Torres Strait Islanders to learn from the past –colonisation- which has led to the present brokenness (need to “pick up the pieces”: figure 8.1, line 7) so that they may work towards a future of hope which is named as “Self-Determination” (figure 8.1, line 10).
Christian discourses have been interplayed with the spirituality of the Torres Strait Islander peoples to formulate a new language of the Torres Strait people, reflective of their spirituality and layered by various Christian traditions inherited through the preaching of the Christian missionaries who came to the islands as part of colonisation. This new language reflects new ways of viewing the world; so inherent in this interpretation of the Torres Strait dream of self-determination is a spirituality representing both Indigenous and Christian spiritualities.

It is policy and practice for State school communities to write documents outlining their vision for the school in much the same model as that posed above. Vision statements, however, would not normally include explicit or implicit spiritual or religious references in the text due to the historical and mandated separation of State and church in Australia (Sunderland, 2007). Samantha is leading her school community to chart their own course in this respect. This rhetoric and call to action is backgrounded in inner leadership models particularly transformational, visionary and spiritual leadership. MacGregor Burns (1978) notes the power of common purpose in his study of transformational leadership:

There is nothing so power-full, nothing so effective, nothing so causal as common purpose if that purpose informs all levels of a political system (p.439).

Whilst I argue in this analysis that Samantha, her colleagues and community members may have written a vision from a “common purpose” for Torres Strait self-determination, the discourse of self-determination is
not necessarily a mainstream discourse “at all levels of a political system” (MacGregor Burns, 1978, p. 439). The voices of Indigenous leaders may be faint or “remaining mainly unheard” (McMullen, 2007, p. 1) on this important matter in the Australian political arena in particular.

The space where the two cultures of Western and Torres Strait Islander meet to form an alternative representation of TSPS students as two-way strong and on “course” (figure 8.1, line 6) for the power of the Torres Strait dream is typically used by Samantha. Samantha is driven to build the Torres Strait dream which is why she worked to have her aim written into the school vision and mission statement. She builds autonomy in her students and in her community as she works to move from the legacy of W Coloured School which she reports is part of the current TSPS to the “Power of the Torres Strait Dream” for Self-Determination (figure 8.1, line 10). I argue in this analysis that a primary purpose of Samantha’s leadership is to help bring about self-determination to the Torres Strait.

Bringing autonomy to the Torres Strait allows Samantha to call upon several discourses with the purpose of representing the Torres Strait as powerful and on course for a future of hope. It is at the crux of the discourses merging that a powerful potential arises. According to Fairclough (1989), the crux is exactly the point at which the social struggle, in this case for Torres Strait autonomy has the possibility at all levels to be won, exercised, sustained, or lost. It is at this crux that the vision document has positioned TSPS in new and powerful representations in alignment with
“God” and on “course” for a destiny of “hope” “…for Self-Determination” (figure 8.1, line 6).

So while I argue that the hybrid discourse of Torres Strait self-determination is a new and powerful discourse in the Torres Strait context, it is not necessarily so on mainland Australia. Thus, as I analyse the data further, in response to research question four, in particular, exploring how the leader, Samantha engages symbols and metaphors to re-envision Australian society, I qualify the “power” of the representation in contexts outside of the Torres Strait region.

Foucault’s analytic of power relations frames bio-power (1984) as a technology of power that works to control entire populations by subjugating bodies within institutions. State institutions, like schools:

…also acted as factors of segregation and social hierarchisation, exerting their influence on the respective forces of both these movements, guaranteeing relations of domination and effects of hegemony. (Foucault, 1984, p. 263)

Thus, on TS Island, bio-power, as a technology of power, worked to subjugate and segregate the black and white students on the island “guaranteeing the relations of domination and effects of hegemony” (Foucault, 1984, p. 263). TPS was reinstated in 1964 after a period of segregation for more than half a century. Samantha believed that the contemporary TSPS, as an institution of State, was structured on this colonial discourse and the current school Westernised structure reflected these colonial attitudes. This aberration of Torres Strait identity and cultures
sourced her drive to have a “re-birth/renewal”(figure 8.1, line 5) of the schooling system and have it born again into a “Family Learning Home” (extract 8.4, line 15) based on a different set of power relations in which the parents and community would have power in the decision-making process. Samantha’s vision was far removed from the State model, as her symbols and metaphors are formed around an Indigenous family structure where staff, parents, and students would share in the power relationship that was forming the Family Learning Home. Thus this transformation to the Family Learning Home is a definite change in the power relations particularly as the technology of what Foucault names as bio-power (1984) had been working for more than fifty years to “guarantee(ing) the relations of domination and effects of hegemony” (Foucault, 1984, p. 263) used to subjugate and segregate the black and white students on the island.

In this following section I explore further the symbols and metaphors Samantha engages to lead her people to The Promised Land in response to the third research question “How is leadership symbolised by the leaders in interview talk when asked to describe their leadership approach?” and the central question on whether Samantha calls on spiritual leadership to inform her role as principal.

The Promised Land

I described above the historical context of TSPS having been two schools until 1964, separated on the basis of colour. This history influenced
Samantha as school leader to move on to a new vision for her school in direct opposition to the former model, which represented Torres Strait Islanders and their cultures as inferior and did not allow them any power in the decision-making processes of the school. Samantha positioned herself as leader to change the social order by adopting symbols and metaphors familiar to Torres Strait Islander peoples into the school culture and naming the school a “Family Learning Home” (extract 8.4, turn 6, line 10) which symbolises the school’s identity as Torres Strait rather than Western.

Samantha’s vision is in alignment with the Torres Strait dream rather than the Western worldview of how a State school should represent itself.

When Samantha was appointed as principal, some representation of Torres Strait cultures, including Torres Strait language, had been permitted in TSPS whilst Torres Strait cultural identity had been banned in the prior model of W Coloured School:

Extract 8.1
10 Samantha: …That “TSPS” Island State School and “W Coloured School,” their profiles were such that, well – “W Coloured School” certainly, if you think about the profile, the amount of participation by the community and input of the decision making processes and ownership by the community, was non-existent. “TSPS” State School was moving towards that and we’re encouraging that and that was the ideal scenario

(Interview Two with Samantha, September 2004)

My analysis of data from interviews with Samantha indicates her attempt to decolonise (Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004) the State school of which she is leader by moving towards the model of a “Family Learning Home”
(extract 8.4, turn 6, line 10). However, making a transformation of such magnitude in belief systems, culture, and structure requires a mammoth shift to the epistemological base upon which the “Family Learning Home” (extract 8.4, turn 6, line 10) is built. One such shift is the difference in “decision making” (extract 8.1, turn 10, line 5) from “non-existent” (extract 8.1, turn 10, line 6) by the Torres Strait community in the former models, to a power sharing model proposed by Samantha. Postcolonialism recognises that long after colonial rule, colonial legacies remain embedded in the representations of both coloniser and colonised and in the structures of institutions like schools. Samantha attempts to decolonise the school through the change in power relations proposed for the “Family Learning Home,” which is attuned to Torres Strait cultures rather than the Western model of State schooling. Researchers suggest: “…Although decolonisation challenged, countered and spawned contradictory impulses towards change, in most societies this process has only modified rather than erased embedded patterns of disadvantage…” (Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004, p.7).

This thesis contends that leaders need to be operating with the driving myths, metaphors, and symbols used to represent peoples and cultures in discourse which are ways of knowing these phenomena. Samantha’s use of symbol and metaphor familiar to Torres Strait culture and spirituality indicates an understanding of this because she calls on spiritual discourses that engage symbolic and metaphorical language to capture the core of what is important in her leadership role which for her is to help bring about self-determination in the Torres Strait region.
Despite the enormity of the task, Samantha continues to strive towards the vision of a “Family Learning Home” (extract 8.4, turn 6, line 10). In my first interview with Samantha I asked her to talk about her vision for the school community, thus I opened a debate at both levels of local and institutional education (Rogers, 2004). Samantha deepened the discussion to a societal context – that of the Torres Strait dream of “Self-Determination” (figure 8.1, line 10) and her desire to help bring the “Promised Land” (extract 8.2, turn 66, line 4) into reality:

Extract 8.2

66 Samantha: …Well, you would have read the systemic cycle the one that had the colonisation past, present and future and then the final journey being highlighted there and I call that the final journey into the Promised Land. So when we talk about, talk about coming out of captivity of being kept in captivity but it’s not really about what I’ve always thought was on the cards for the Torres Strait but more so about what came out for the Torres Strait. So in terms of socially, as a nation of people, what I want for the Torres Strait is very much about the big picture that I’m working on…

(Interview One with Samantha, September 2004)

In this extract Samantha calls upon “colonisation” (extract 8.2, turn 66, line 2) and stories from the Old Testament (“the Promised Land” extract 8.2, turn 66, line 4) in order to locate her Torres Strait Islander people in place and time. Samantha describes her mission as helping to lead her people from the captivity of colonisation and its postcolonial legacy into a period of time when finally the Torres Strait regains its autonomy, having
left behind the “captivity” (extract 8.2, turn 66, line 5) of postcolonial processes. Samantha believes she has been chosen by God to help bring this new status quo into place and time in the Torres Strait (Interview Three with Samantha).

An analysis of the above extract depicts the use of current Torres Strait autonomy and colonial representations (extract 8.2, turn 66, line 2) called upon by Samantha to position herself as a leader “working on” the “big picture” (extract 8.2, turn 66, lines 10-11). In this extract Samantha calls upon a religious discourse taken from the Old Testament and then seeks to use this discourse as a way out and forward into the “Promised Land” (extract 8.2, turn 66, line 4) for both the institution of school and for Torres Strait society more generally. Samantha adopts a religious discourse to foretell the story of the “final journey” to the “Promised Land” (extract 8.2, turn 66, lines 3-4). The use of the adjective final and its repetition in the following line emphasises Samantha’s certainty that this time the journey to self-determination (the Promised Land) will be successful, just as it was for the Jews as they fled Egyptian captivity. Samantha positions herself in a place that differs from that expected under the typical model of State school principals. Australian mainstream society is secular in mandate and in culture and does not normally engage in religious or spiritual discourses within its State institutional agenda. It is, however, at this unexpected place that such representations are made visible in Samantha’s talk. This reconceptualised knowledge is instrumental in forming a notion of spiritual
leadership called upon by Samantha. This concept of spiritual leadership for Samantha, is a hybrid of traditional Torres Strait spirituality, Christian religious discourses, and self-determination or “Ginar” (extract 8.5, turn 52, line 1). The “final journey” (extract 8.2, turn 66, line 4) has a sense of urgency around it: “…Well, so it’s the Ginar or the action political; it really is the time now. We’re talking about self-determination” (extract 8.5, turn 52, lines 1-2).

Australian colonial discourses normally associate time with Western linear notions, however, Samantha appends a “present” and “futures” perspective (extract 8.2, turn 66, line 2) to time past, highlighting the new future, which is “the final journey” into the “promised land” (extract 8.2, turn 66, line 4). Thus Samantha calls on the discourse of colonisation to provide a representation that associates Torres Strait people with the righteousness of God’s chosen people from the Old Testament. Metaphorically, _The Promised Land_ is a new beginning for Torres Strait Islanders - although the same place, it is certainly not of the same time. _The Promised Land_ is deliverance from the wrong of captivity, just as it represented how the Jews were held captive, enslaved and escaped into _The Promised Land_ from the Old Testament reference. Vision is often a complex and powerful concept more easily captured through symbol and metaphor. My analysis of Samantha’s use of the metaphor of the “Promised Land” (extract 8.2, turn 66, line 4) or Torres Strait “Self-Determination” (figure 8.1, line 10) suggests its pursuit is the purpose of her leadership, as
what she “…want(s) for the Torres Strait is very much about the big picture that (she’s) I’m working on…” (extract 8.2, turn 66, lines 10-11). Implicit in the narrative is the righteousness of the new chosen people, who are now Torres Strait Islanders with the Christian God leading their cause.

Christianity was introduced into the Torres Strait in 1871 as an integral part of the “civilising” of the Indigenous peoples of Australia by the British Missionaries. Although Christianity was imposed on the Torres Strait peoples, it has been embedded and accepted into mainstream Torres Strait culture. Indigenous spirituality and Christian spirituality have been integrated into a spirituality of the Torres Strait and talked about interchangeably in spiritual, cultural, and Christian discourses evidenced in Samantha’s talk.

It is interesting for this analysis that the very discourses (Christian and Western) that were used to subjugate the Torres Strait and Aboriginal peoples by the colonisers are now employed by the “colonised” to navigate a new beginning for the Islander peoples. However, the Islanders’ use of these discourses is a reflection of current epistemologies of culture and spirituality, as described by Samantha. Samantha seems to use (traditional) Indigenous spirituality interchangeably with Christianity and the current representations she engages are a weaving or hybrid of both discourses:
Samantha: …If I think about Torres Strait as a nation of people who were given an identity by God when they were first created at the beginning of time. We’ll go back to Genesis. We had a purpose…

(Interview Two with Samantha, September 2004)

Samantha demonstrates the righteousness of the Torres Strait cause by citing the action taken by God in the book of Genesis in giving the Torres Strait a “purpose” (extract 8.3, turn 20, line 4) and “identity” (extract 8.3, turn 20, line 2). In doing so, Samantha amalgamates traditional Torres Strait identity and retrospectively gives it Christian authentification. Wenger (cited in Rogers, 2004, p.120) argued “that these boundary locations are exactly where new knowledge is produced and identities can be transformed.” Samantha cites various myths and legends to distance her school as an educational institution from its identity as a “Coloured School” (extract 8.4, turn 6, line 8), which was then a Western, systemic organisation. Inherent in her argument is a new identity for her school divorced from these historical and unproductive times when the school represented its colonial identity:

Extract 8.4

Samantha: …I guess if I start with the school vision which is learning from the past, learning in the present only for the future. And I would have preferred to have said the language translation first and then English after. Simply because I wanted to highlight that it’s about the language part and the English comes afterwards. If I used the vision past, present, future and I link it to the three pigs’ house, the past house being the “W” Coloured School, the present house being “TS” Island State School and the future vision being the Family
Learning Home that the first two houses not being strong enough and that for the house for the future, which is the brick house being the strong house, being the house that we are currently trying to build. And that does look or the profile of that brick house being Family Learning Home, but eventually what we’ll do is it will be called a name that is a language name…

(Interview Two with Samantha, September 2004)

In this extract, Samantha calls on the Western nursery story *The Three Pigs* (“three pigs’ house”: extract 8.4, turn 6, lines 7-8) as a metaphor for the three stages of the Family Learning Home. A traditional Indigenous belief system is of the primacy of connectedness of family and its environment to learning. The importance of this belief is demonstrated in the renaming of the school into a “Family Learning Home”. Samantha argues that the Torres Strait needs a new learning environment, made of bricks, that has benefited from the mistakes of both previous houses made of straw and sticks and assumes its new identity in the Torres Strait language, which represents its uniqueness. The use of the Western nursery story to produce the metaphor for the inadequacy of the former two Western houses, and the fact that the very house that will be strong (and two-way strong) is the house made of Western bricks, seem ironic. Samantha’s discourse weaves traditional Indigenous values of family associated with learning together with the new Western learnings necessary to move forward. Samantha refers twice to the importance of readopting traditional language names, which had been forbidden in the straw house and discouraged in the stick house. Samantha’s knowledge of the intricate connection of language to identity (Doomadgee, 1996) causes her to specify in extract 8.4, lines 3-4, that the Indigenous
language name, not the English language name, comes first in association with Torres Strait identity. In this extract she has reconstructed Indigenous discourses against the foundation of a nursery story from the dominant Western educational and societal discourse of early learning. She does this to form the learning metaphor of how contemporary Torres Strait Islanders need to be two-way strong (Interview Two with Samantha) – a need that she had articulated several times in earlier discussions. She explicitly refers to “Ginar or action political” (see below: extract 8.5, turn 52, line 1).

Samantha’s language aligns with the methodology of CDA, which “…explicitly addresses social problems and seeks to solve social problems through the analysis and accompanying social and political action” (Rogers, 2004, p.4):

Extract 8.5

52 Samantha: …Well, so it’s the Ginar or the action political; it really is the time now. We’re talking about self-determination. …That we really equip our children to be two way strong. For them to go global…

(Interview One with Samantha, September 2004)

The analysis reported here suggests that Samantha is meticulously reconstructing representations of Torres Strait Islander people toward two-way strong by calling on both Western and Indigenous discourses as she attempts to network a shift in power relations. These two-way strong Torres Strait students will be able to interact from a position of strength in the global community, rather than from a disenfranchised or marginalised position. This short extract clearly states what Samantha believes which is
that “it really is the time now” (extract 8.5, turn 52, lines 1-2) to directly move towards the Ginar; as she quotes the TS language name first then translates it as “action political” (extract 8.5, turn 52, line 1) or “self-determination” (extract 8.5, turn 52, line 2).

Conclusion

The analysis of chapter 8 suggests that Samantha, as school leader, articulates a reconceptualisation of the complex history of the Torres Strait and its contemporary situation. She chooses to articulate strong and positive representations of Torres Strait peoples. She advocates two-way strong learning at her “Family Learning Home” (extract 8.4, turn 6, line 15) for the next generation as they move towards the “‘Power of the Torres Strait Dream’ of Self-Determination” (figure 8.1, line 10) and into the “Promised Land” (extract 8.2, turn 66, line 4).

Samantha challenges the discourses that have served the hidden mainstream agenda of conserving the status quo in the Torres Strait Islands by presenting deficit representations of Torres Strait Islander peoples as natural or true. She resists these inherited power relations by selectively calling upon the current discourses of Christianity and colonialism and weaving them into a powerful Torres Strait discourse of spirituality, central to which is her definition of self-determination in the Torres Strait. Samantha relies on spiritual leadership in her role as principal in response to the central research question, to chart “the course we are to take to build a
future of hope for the generations to come” (figure 8.1, lines 6-7) schooled in the Family Learning Home in order to bring about “Ginar or the action political” (extract 8.5, turn 52, line 1) for Torres Strait self-determination.

Samantha’s spiritual leadership discourse calls on symbols and metaphorical language to develop and action the vision of the Family Learning Home in order to move out of the Western educational model made of sticks. Both this model and the straw, W Coloured School had never represented equal opportunity for Torres Strait Islander peoples. Samantha selectively calls upon mainstream discourses and “surprisingly” (extract 8.6, turn 32, line 3) places them “outside the box” (extract 8.6, turn 32, line 3) beside other discourses in an unexpected arrangement. This surprise, she believes, will achieve the answer to leading her people out of “captivity” (extract 8.6, turn 32, line 4) into nationhood, once again representative and proud of Torres Strait cultures in order to self-determine their future:

Extract 8.6

32 Samantha: …Yes. Re Jeremiah if you read Jeremiah… “Behold I will do a new thing.”…By trying something new, something that is outside the box surprisingly for us it’s going to be the answer to coming out of captivity…

(Interview Two with Samantha, September 2004).
SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP, PARTNERSHIPS AND DREAMING

Introduction

In this final chapter I summarise the research process and findings from the study, focusing on the importance of Indigenous leadership representation for Australia’s future. I name inner leadership, in particular emancipatory, visionary and spiritual leadership, as powerful and productive when evidenced in the four school leaders’ practice. I conclude by highlighting symbiotic partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders as a major recommendation together with some potential for future studies.

In the final part of Chapter Eight I included an extract from an interview with Samantha where she urges us to think “outside the box” (extract 8.8, turn 32, line 3) This box, Samantha argues, has held Torres Strait Islander peoples in “captivity” (extract 8.8, turn 32, line 4) since British colonisation. Samantha calls upon a new and hybrid discourse at the meeting place of Christian and other Western stories with traditional Indigenous spiritual stories to provide the language of vision and action to transform the power relationships to bring about self-determination to the Torres Strait. Samantha is a spiritual leader who understands the use of symbol and metaphor to capture people’s imagination to dream of an alternative future.
Spiritual leadership is called upon by the four school leaders in their role as school principals first to emancipate (Interview One with Dave) Indigenous peoples from the black/white binary representations afforded them from postcolonial discourses and second to envision alternative futures for Australia where Indigenous leaders work in partnerships with non-Indigenous leaders. This thesis marks a beginning investigation into the spiritual leadership of four Indigenous Australian school leaders.

I have argued throughout this thesis that leaders who are operating from inner leadership or their core or Spirit are able to make a difference at the myth or metaphorical levels of society where they need to be operating to affect transformation. I have identified this leadership as spiritual leadership. I further argue two more conditions which could positively contribute to a context for a transformation in Australian society. The second condition I believe is necessary in order to promote change is for Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders to work in partnerships to promote Indigenous outcomes including Indigenous leadership. Dave understood that his “jumping up and down and challenging” (Interview Two with Dave, October 2003: turn 2) was not enough to have the major effect he desired for his students and community. He articulated a central condition for transformation that was for “white people” to stand beside him “…when there are more and more white people standing up and saying, ‘No, this is not right. Let’s change it.”’

(Interview Two with Dave, October 2003: turn 2).
I argue the third condition is proportionate representation of Indigenous leaders in a number of prominent government, business and public service positions including the educational system, in particular, in urbanised schools. This is not happening at the rate necessary to see positive change in the next generation. In fact in many areas, the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians has widened (Australia Dept. of Education Science and Training, 2002; Dawkins, 2007; McMullen, 2007; Megalogenis, 2006).

In the introductory chapter I presented the five research questions that I used to guide this study exploring the four principals’ leadership through their interview talk. The questions aimed to explore the main themes I had derived from the literature and from my own interest in Indigenous leadership.

The central question for this thesis has been:

1. In what ways do Indigenous principals rely on spiritual leadership to inform their role in schools?

The subsequent research questions that have driven the work presented here were:

2. In what ways can the Western discourse of educational leadership be identified in the articulation of the principals’ notions of leadership?
3. In what ways are postcolonial representations identified by the principals in their personal stories as leaders?

4. How is leadership symbolised by the leaders in interview talk when asked to describe their leadership approach?

5. How do the leaders use the symbols and metaphors around spirituality as they work to re-envision Australian society?

These questions allowed me to engage with the major themes of postcolonialism and leadership by investigating the discourses called upon by the leaders in their interview talk.

There were four major themes approached in this investigation. These were postcolonialism; symbols of leadership central to the leaders’ talk; the leaders’ vision for Indigenous students and peoples and spiritual leadership.

When collecting data I aimed to move to some deeper dialogue in the interview talk around the possibility of the leader engaging a spirituality of leadership. The exploration of spiritual leadership was the central focus, which together with the other questions were used to guide the literature review in chapter 2 and theorised in chapter 3.

In this chapter I repeat the research process and state the important themes that have been explored. I outline the implications, limitations and significance of this research project and then highlight the areas for possible future studies to complement the findings of this research project. I add some practical implications, which, I believe, could be undertaken to
promote Indigenous leadership. I conclude this chapter with a painting named, Dreaming Partnerships, aimed to visually represent a vision for Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders in partnership.

The Research Process & Findings

This thesis engages with the State institutional educational system and the leadership of four Indigenous school principals. The analyses aimed to establish whether leadership was operating at the deeper levels of society where a nation’s driving myths and metaphors work as part of an order of discourse justifying certain ‘truths’ and maintaining particular power relations. I argued that leadership needed to be operating at these deeper or inner leadership levels in order to challenge the dominant discourses and present alternative representations. I found that inner leaders lead from the heart, core or spirit as well as from a rational base using myth and metaphorical language to “capture” complex ideologies and representations of leadership. The principals reported teaching tolerance; they empowered through emancipation and demonstrated spiritually guided leadership as they made a difference to student outcomes in their role as school leaders. I argued all four school leaders were strong, purposeful and high quality leaders. All principals called upon several discourses to frame up the position they take on leadership. These included neoliberal discourses of accountability together with Christian, spiritual and Indigenous spiritual discourses. I argued the emergence of a hybrid spiritual leadership discourse
which signaled Western notions of spirituality but moved more from Indigenous spirituality described in The Dreaming (Penrith, 1996). This Indigenous spiritual leadership discourse was called on, in particular by Dave and Samantha.

The Prelude introduced the myth of the ideology of equal opportunity or a fair go for Indigenous peoples and other minority groups, an example of which is the disproportionately low numbers of Indigenous peoples in leadership positions (White, 2007) within Australia. The underrepresentation is one example of the outcomes gap between the lives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The thesis of this study contends that, in order to redress the outcomes gap or make the vision of a fair go real, spiritual leadership is one successful approach to school leadership. The introductory chapter set out some historical information. I argue this has impacted on the contemporary educational setting mainly the imperial discourse which I used to introduce theories of postcolonialism which have provided representations of Indigenous peoples based on early colonial representations layered by postcolonial identities and practices. In Chapter 2 I presented a theory that in order to make a difference or to affect social transformation, leaders needed to be operating at the myth or metaphorical levels of society to drive futures orientated agendas (Inayatullah, 2002) which require leadership which I identified at the fourth cluster (Doyle & Smith, 2008) or inner leadership level where leaders move from their core or Spirit. I aligned this leadership with the emergent spiritual leadership
literature of the late 20th and early 21st century. I am aware as a researcher
that although spiritual leadership literature is now becoming accepted as
part of the field of leadership literature, there is discussion about whether
the concept need encompass transcendentnal leadership where the leader
hands over to Spirit. I have conceptualised this study on the understanding
that in particular instances leaders may hand over to Spirit in order to make
decisions or guide their community, however they do not necessarily need
to be operating this way to be spiritual leaders. For this study, I have
adopted Byrum’s (2006) definition that when the leader is authentically
operating from her/his spiritual core, giving her/himself away to make a
difference in the lives of others, then he/she is demonstrating spiritual
leadership. In the final section of Chapter 2, I introduced The Dreaming
(Doomadgee, 1996) which is the belief and practice of spirituality in
Indigenous peoples’ lives. Whilst there are differing interpretations of The
Dreaming by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, essentially The
Dreaming is a, “complex network of knowledge, faith and practices that
derive from stories of creation, and which dominates all spiritual and
physical aspects of Aboriginal life” (Penrith, 1996, p. 4). These themes are
essential to this study as spirituality is connected to both Western and
Indigenous notions of spiritual leadership.

Chapter 3 was designed to set up the theoretical construct for the study. I
used Foucault’s work to interpret my study as these ways of representing
and knowing about spirituality had shaped discourses over time. This meant
I adopted Foucault’s notion of discourse as forms of representation, bodies of knowledge that construct and define individuals as objects and as subjects (Foucault, 1971). I adopted this notion of discourse and other tools in order to investigate “the problem of the present time” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 216) which I considered was the mis and underrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in leadership.

I found Foucault’s analytic of power and related concepts vital to an understanding of discourse. I deconstructed the discourses called upon by the school leaders in an attempt to uncover the relationships of power within postcolonial discourses and possibly, spiritual leadership discourses. In particular I was interested in the notions of bio-power; power relations and power/knowledge as I proceeded with my analysis. I adopted them as useful tools with which to open the interview talk of the school leaders. Foucault’s analytic of power (1980) proved critical to understanding the power relations, including resistance, at play among the dominant and emergent discourses which I identified through the use of critical discourse analysis (hereafter CDA) (Fairclough, 2001) in the analyses chapters.

I recounted the field work undertaken and how it was conceptualised and designed in Chapter 4. This chapter was designed to allow the reader to understand the chain of events leading to the findings from the study. It aimed to find whether the four school leaders were at all within, “ascertaining the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth” (Foucault, 1980, p.133) where Indigenous peoples represent themselves in
discourses and whether these ways of knowing the world included spiritual ways of leading their communities.

Chapter 5, the first data analysis chapter addressed research questions 2 and 3 investigating the presence of postcolonialism and Western educational discourses of leadership in the communities of Jay and Dave, the two Aboriginal principals. The analysis highlighted the colour-full and substantive narratives as a hologram to present postcolonialism as evident in racial discrimination, institutional glass ceilings, inequity of opportunity and negative and mythological representations of Indigenous cultures. The findings from the data imply that, despite all the policies, programs and financial aid put in place by government to reverse these phenomena, they remain a part of Aboriginal people’s stories.

In Chapter 6 I explored the metaphors and symbols engaged by the leaders around emancipation, vision and spirituality directly addressing research questions 4 and 5 and the central research question. I chose narratives which engaged myths, metaphors and symbols as the analyses of these symbols highlight the complexity of the leadership models engaged by all four leaders used to walk in two worlds whilst negotiating complex community contexts. The analyses found the principals provided alternative symbols in their narratives for discourses true to futures envisioned by them for Indigenous students and their communities.
Dave named his leadership emancipatory because his visionary leadership encompassed the knowledge that many Aboriginal people had to let go of colonial representations of themselves in order to dream with the vision of a new Australia where black people are, once again, strong, smart and powerful (Interview Two with Dave, November 2003). All four principals theorised walking in two worlds differently as an Indigenous leader operating in a Westernised system of schooling. Whilst the principals’ conceptualisations varied as to how the leaders managed this phenomenon, their stories aligned with the literature on black and minority ethnic (McKenley & Gordon, 2002) school leaders’ experiences.

In Chapter 7 I explored symbols and metaphors used to describe what I called, spiritual guidance in leadership. These were Pete’s “…blessed aura around ya…” (extract 7.7, turn 45, line 7) and Dave’s connection to the universal intelligence or Spirit.

In Chapter 8 I concentrated on an analysis of the fourth principal, Samantha’s use of spiritual and other discourses, which indicated her spiritual leadership. Whilst not all of the principals explicitly named spirituality in their leadership, the findings from my analysis suggest aspects of spiritual leadership are engaged by all four principals in their role as school leaders.

One of the themes I have highlighted throughout relates to aspects of spiritual leadership, which I nominated from the findings of this research
project, were recognised by the principals who identified the deep and sacred connections between spirituality, culture and land for Indigenous peoples. The principals’ talk contained spiritual discourses which drew upon Christian and traditional Indigenous spirituality, The Dreaming. Clearly the use of spiritual discourses varied among the four leaders. I outlined the concepts of self-actualisation and self-transcendence and their relationship to spiritual leadership. The findings from the data uncovered spiritual guidance being talked and enacted in the leadership of the four principals.

This finding of aspects of spiritual leadership being enacted by the four principals in their leadership role may add to the literature on spiritual leadership and add to the literature on Indigenous Australian spiritual leadership.

**Implications of the research project**

I found Dave’s different emancipatory approach to leadership captivating because it posed another set of questions. I wondered whether Dave had indeed read the Australian culture to the extent that he knew Aboriginal peoples could no longer wait for the slow wheels of change or transformation to gradually evolve. Dave recognised that he needed the partnership of non-Indigenous colleagues to bring about transformation. Indeed urgency was inherent to his emancipatory leadership.

I resonated with Dave’s position of urgency based on the decade from 1997 – 2007 where Indigenous issues were placed to the background of the
political agenda with the result that some educational and other gains previously made actually stagnated or even being diminished (Australia Dept. of Education Science and Training, 2002; Dawkins, 2007; Megalogenis, 2006).

I synthesise the findings from this research project to make the following key statements:

1. Although postcolonialism continues to deeply affect Australian Indigenous peoples’ opportunities and status, there are Indigenous school leaders who have positioned themselves and their communities as strong and positive representatives of Indigenous peoples and their cultures.

2. This research project identified the visionary, emancipatory and spiritual leadership of four school principals intent and successful in making a difference through high quality leadership effecting Indigenous student educational outcomes and better outcomes for the broader Indigenous community.

3. The four Indigenous leaders’ discourses indicated they operated at the deeper levels of society or from inner leadership models at the myth and metaphorical levels where a people’s deeply held beliefs are formed and reformed in order to affect social transformation.
The fact that all four principals agreed to work with me on this research project indicates the leaders’ willingness to work in partnerships with non-Indigenous leaders and others who share the common goal of promoting Indigenous opportunity and status in the Australian community.

Symbiotic Partnerships

A major part of my energy for writing this research project was my belief in the potential of symbiotic partnerships. Symbiotic is the term used to describe “an interaction between two different organisms living in close physical association, to the advantage of both” (Moore, 2004, p. 1447):

…The starting point for any honest discussion about indigenous education must be the admission that it is, with few exceptions, a massive disaster, and it has been so for a long time… The few success stories seem to be directly traceable to inspirational leadership at the school level, usually from the Principal, rather than government programs (Pearson, 2004)

I add to Pearson’s “success stories” that partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders lead to what Pearson named as “inspirational leadership” and to more than a “few” successes. Parallel leadership of Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders working within their educational communities to raise the status of Indigenous peoples and cultures has produced practical and recognised outcomes. The “Dare to Lead” initiative of the Australian principals’ associations is intent and dedicated to exactly this and has made sound progress in projects across Australia. The most
recent phase of the Dare to Lead initiative is Partnerships for Success (APAPDC., 2000, 2005; Australia Principals, 2009).

Essentially, in 2009, I believe there is the climate to help build sustainable outcomes for Indigenous peoples through working in these symbiotic partnerships. School principals can make a difference to the educational outcomes of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students. I concede that working to change the status of Indigenous peoples, who are viewed as the least powerful group in contemporary Australian society, is problematic. However, the possibility for young Indigenous Australians to break out of the socio-historical constructs positioning them as inferior is present when students become educated in a strong and powerful Indigenous identity for themselves as successful students. The first mammoth step towards symbolic reconciliation has been taken with the Rudd apology in February 2008. Symbolic reconciliation, I argue, is a significant step to practical reconciliation. Practical reconciliation through closing the gap of educational outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students through strong and spiritual leadership is the next step.

**Importance of Indigenous leadership for Australia’s future**

There are many examples of strong leaders within Australian institutions who are using their leadership positions to promote Indigenous and other marginalised peoples’ human, legal, educational and other rights within Australia ("Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre," 2003). The
enactment of this leadership is directed towards a vision for a just, multicultural society in Australia. Inspirational, emancipatory, visionary or spiritual leadership share the commonality of operating at the deeper levels of society where, I argue, transformation has its base.

Initiatives to augment the representation of Indigenous peoples in leadership positions contribute to the possibility of transformation through partnerships (Fitzgerald, 2002; Sarra, 2006). Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups throughout Australia have recognised that it is imperative to work in partnership in order to change the status of Indigenous peoples within the immediate term.

**Potential for Future Studies**

This research project has highlighted the multiple opportunities that exist to conduct further studies on Indigenous leadership due to the dearth of literature in this field of Australian literature. They include Australian Indigenous principalship representation; Indigenous leadership representation; Indigenous spiritual leadership; Indigenous identity; Indigenous self-determination; Indigenous and non-Indigenous partnerships; Indigenous self-determination and an Indigenous-Australian treaty.

**Conclusion**

I dreamt about Australia where Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices are in dialogue realising equitable, sustainable and peaceful futures (Inayatullah, 2002; Lin, 2006). I dream this for Australia’s future and
believe this can be realised through strong, powerful and high-quality leadership evidenced in the spiritual leadership of the four Indigenous school leaders whose leadership is the subject of this study. I believe this dialogue will be enhanced when Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders work in partnership and so I finish with a symbolic representation of this partnership moving towards the same Australia.
DREAMING PARTNERSHIPS

Figure 9.1: Partnership Model painted by Janelle McQueen

This symbolic representation of a leadership partnership between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous world is painted with colours from the red earth, desert, Torres Strait seas and the Torres Strait, Australian and Aboriginal flags. The symbol of the dots in Indigenous art helps to convey the fluidity of the two worlds as they interconnect. The outer shape symbolises the heart common to all peoples and when leaders move from this core or Spirit, they help to create just and harmonious societies.
APPENDIX A:  SEMI-STRUCTURED IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Please note the interviews are semi-structured and these questions are designed to be read in conjunction with summary on page 8. In order to achieve some depth in the interviews, the researcher will move some way with the respondent who will have previously negotiated with researcher as to what and in which sequence, topics should be explored. The following questions are meant as suggestions on which to base initiators for meaningful interview sessions.

Interview One:

1. You became a school principal in -----, please could you recount the story of how you became a school principal ------primary school?

2. Can you describe your own educational history?

3. ------, would you describe those educational achievements about which you feel proud, perhaps, in curriculum or in the relationships you have built while school leader?

4. Please describe the particular projects / goals on which you are currently putting your energy? Are these projects yours personally or initiated by other groups?

5. The principal as school leader has a particular role in leading the school through its development and managing change. Can you describe how you manage change or reform?

6. Many leaders have a particular model or person whom they emulate or aspire to be like in their leadership role. How would you describe your leadership?

Second Interview:

1. I would like to spend some of our time today exploring------which you brought up-----

2. -----I assume you have been educated in the Australia? -------Can you identify which, if any, aspects of your education affected your educational philosophy? Do you think your own schooling had any
particular impact on how you view your leadership role? If so, in what ways? Can you describe what you value in education? Can you talk a bit about being a leader in Education Queensland? … How does this affect how you lead your school community?

3. You are an Indigenous school leader. Do you have any views on how your cultural history as an Indigenous man/woman has affected your leadership?

4. Do you think there are any differences in your leadership as an Indigenous principal to other colleagues in Education Queensland?

5. Many people have a metaphor or a picture of themselves to describe themselves. For example some leaders see themselves as servant leaders or innovative leaders. Do you have a picture or metaphor of yourself as a leader?

6. We would agree that the principal’s role is a very active one. Can you describe some of the dilemmas or stressors with which you deal in your role as principal?

7. Every school community has an element of conflict and the principal’s role is pivotal in resolving some of this. How do you manage conflict-resolution?

Third Interview:

1. I would like to spend some of our time today exploring-----which you brought up------

2. ------, the other day you described yourself as a ----------leader (eg). Can you expand on -----------You described -----------as being a major phenomenon in your development as a principal--------------- (deepth of any areas the respondent and/or researcher feel are at the heart of leadership fro the principal).

3. Many leaders who have a different cultural background to the mainstream in which they work, describe themselves as having to “walk in two worlds”….can you respond to this from your experiences, please?

4. You would be described by many as having achieved against the odds…having achieved the status of principal….Can you talk a bit about how you see the future of Indigenous leadership in schools. Do you have any particular dream or vision for the future? What about for Indigenous students/community? Does this have any implication for you as a leader?
5. Can you summarise the support you have had as an Indigenous principal? How do you think we could support current and/or aspiring Indigenous leaders in their role as principals?
APPENDIX B:  INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Indigenous Australian Principals’ Understandings of School Leadership in a State Education System: Multiple Case Studies

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chief Investigators</th>
<th>Research Student</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor Robyn Zevenbergen</td>
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<td>0738755893</td>
<td>07 55255932</td>
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The student is a research higher degree candidate & this is a study towards meeting the requirements of a PhD.

This study of Indigenous Principals’ understandings of school leadership involves a case study approach at each of the principal’s schools. The purpose of the research is to add to the literature on leadership and the theories, which underpin it, by including Indigenous perspectives. The research has also a pragmatic purpose which is to inform educational authorities and other interested parties of the experiences of Indigenous
leaders in order that Indigenous school principals and those aspiring to the position may be supported in their training and ongoing support for leadership. It would be expected that the researcher would seek permission to be in the school for a two-week period in which she would conduct three interviews with the principal, a series of observations and document analysis of those documents in whose development the principal was involved.

Although all names and identifying features of the school and principal will be coded and kept confidential, there is a limited element of risk that confidentiality may not be maintained due to the limited number of schools in Queensland with Indigenous principals.

There are benefits that may be expected from this research. The study will contribute to the very limited literature on Indigenous theories of leadership. The study will challenge the existing body of literature, which documents school leadership from a Western viewpoint. In multi-cultural Australia, different cultural perspectives must be recognised. Within this context, Indigenous perspectives on school leadership must be given legitimacy. The study will document Indigenous school principals’ perspectives on leadership. The data collected from each school principal and her/his school will be securely stored and remain confidential. The data analysis will include a coding of names and other identifying features and according to the university ethics procedures. All information related to the study will be kept confidential and in secure sites at Griffith University (Gold Coast Campus).

The participant may wish to contact the chief investigator prior to the research period or at any time thereafter to clarify or raise any matters of concern. Details are given above.

The participants should be aware that it is the intention and part of this contract between researcher and participant that she/he be given feedback at stages during the research process. These stages are as follows:

- The interview transcripts will be taken back to respondents in order that they may check if language is true to their intention and modify any part with which they are uncomfortable.

- At periods throughout the data analysis and interpretation the respondents will be contacted. They will be given opportunity to modify any interpretation provide it is agreed with researcher and/or provided opportunity to add their perspective on that issue

The principal as participant will at all times be aware that consent to participate is to be given or withheld entirely freely. Consent may be withdrawn at any time without loss of benefit or treatment or penalty incurred to the principal or other members of the school community as a
result. The principal will be aware that all effort will be undertaken to ensure strict confidentiality.

If participants have any complaints at any time regarding the manner in which this research is conducted or its content, there is a complaints mechanism to which the participant may wish to lodge a complaint:

In this event, the participant may take her/his concern to the University Research Officer, Office of Research, Bray Centre, Griffith University, Kessels Rd., Nathan, QLD 4111, telephone 07 3875 6618 or

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Administration), Bray Centre, Griffith University, Kessels Rd., Nathan, QLD 4111, telephone 07 3875 7343

Griffith University gratefully acknowledges your support in the conducting of this research as do the university research team responsible for this project. Thank you for your assistance.
CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Indigenous Australian Principals’ Understandings of School Leadership in a State Education System: Multiple Case Studies

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I have read the information sheet and agree to participate voluntarily in this project. I understand that I am not required to participate in this research if I do not wish to do so. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without needing to explain my reasons for withdrawing. No loss of benefit or treatment will occur as a result of my withdrawal or penalty incurred.

I recognise that the researcher will provide me opportunity to read the transcripts of any discussions in which I took part and I shall be given opportunity to edit these if there are any sections, which I do not believe, convey the meaning of my position. I understand I shall be able to add my perspective to the interpretation of the data if the researcher and I do not have the same understanding of particular data. I understand I shall be provided this opportunity at intervals during the study as the data are interpreted and written up by the researcher.

I recognise that the data will be kept in a secure site at Griffith University, and that all publications will involve names being changed so
that the best attempts to protect the confidentiality of myself, or my colleagues is undertaken by the researcher. I understand that the data will be written up as case studies and that whilst every attempt will be made by the researcher to preserve anonymity, it may be possible to identify participants. I understand that strict confidentiality will be observed at all times.

I have read the information sheet and consent form. I agree to participate in the research project: Indigenous Australian Principals’ Understandings of School Leadership in a State Education System: Multiple Case Studies. I understand that the study will be carried out as described in the information statement, a copy of which I have retained. I realise that whether or not I decide to participate is my decision and will not affect my employment as a principal or my status in the school. I also realise that I can withdraw from the study at any time and that I do not have to give any reasons for my withdrawal. I have had all questions answered to my satisfaction.

Signatures: ...........................................  ..............
Investigator(s) .......................................  Date.............
Participant ............................................. Date.............
Indigenous Leadership
Discourse and Representation
Annette Duffy, Brisbane Catholic Education, Australia

Abstract: Indigenous Australian peoples have been shaped and constructed through the lens of postcolonial understandings of deficit in relation to academic abilities, behaviours and personal status in the educational system by mainstream Australian society. These deficit explanations of Indigenous peoples run deep within Australian culture and popular understandings. Literature charts colonial and postcolonial legacies, which influence the discourses around Indigneity, their relationship with identity and how these may impact on contemporary Australian schooling. These deficit models have influenced the current fact that Indigenous peoples are grossly underrepresented in the leadership positions of Australian educational systems. In this paper I undertake a critical discourse analysis of one state primary school principal’s merging of dominant educational discourses in Australia with colonially derived representations of schooling and Indigneous cultural and spiritual discourses as her way to forge a new ‘course’ for Torres Strait Islander peoples. This paper suggests the imperative to examine some of the central myths surrounding deficit representations of Indigneity. The principal addresses these deficit representations through the discourses she employs in her leadership enactment to ensure her students are ‘two-way strong’ as a way to take their rightful place in the ‘global’ society of today.

Keywords: Discourse, Representation, Indigenous, Leadership, Postcolonial

Introduction

This paper investigates the reporting of one primary school principal around issues of Indigenous representation and aspirations for the future of Torres Strait Islander peoples. The paper argues that the principal redeploys existing mainstream discourses to construct representations which reflect positive images of Indigenous peoples and their futures. The principal, Samantha, deploys symbolic and metaphorical language as central images to ‘capture’ the essence of the discourses she calls upon to achieve her main objective which, she reports, is “...going to be the answer to coming out of captivity...” (Interview One with Samantha, September 2004). The leader on whom this paper focuses is a principal within the state education system in Queensland, Australia who operates at each level of the culture both within and outwith her community to change deep seated deficit representations which surround and permeate almost every aspect of Indigenous culture in Australia (Boston, 2000; Craven, 1999, p.37). The ‘failure’ of Indigenous students in a Western educational system would challenge the dominant discourse of inclusivity. Samantha challenges the dominant discourse of inclusivity through her rhetoric and action as she moves towards a powerful discourse of ‘two-way strong’ for her students. Samantha calls upon discourses of Christianity, Colonialism and Indigneity and weaves them into a powerful Torres Strait ‘discourse of spirituality’, which moves towards a ‘righteous’ change to Self-Determination in the Torres Strait. I focus on a series of cruces in the data where Samantha calls on hybrids of already existing discourses to encourage what she discusses as ‘two-way strong’ students able to “…collectively build the vision of the Power of the Torres Strait Dream” (TSPS school vision document extract 2004).

In order to explore how Samantha achieves a new use of the language of colonisation merged with Indigenous spiritual and cultural discourses, I briefly explain the historical background and current context in which she operates as school leader.

Australian Educational Context

Samantha is principal of a school which, together with most Australian schools, developed a Western orientation due to Australia’s history of British colonisation and State and Federal Government control of schooling over the past hundred and thirty years. A country’s stability often relies on the authorities preserving the status quo in order to ensure its hierarchy of relationships. Foucault (1977) contends that the status quo of power is not necessarily succeeded through coercion but by willing control through the consent of the persons within the institutions. Foucault’s premise extends that schools play a major role in promising the extension of the power relationships set up by the authority and the associated knowledges and ‘truths’ which are legitimated by that power or authority. Postcolonial Australia still perpetuates particular myths masking, for example,
the truth of colonisation, through its schooling system (Craven, 1999, p.46).

In order to focus on Samantha's school context I briefly outline some of the historical, institutional and societal trends, which currently show potential to position Indigenous peoples as 'outsiders' to mainstream society, including Samantha in her role as principal, should she challenge the (Western) social order through her leadership (Fairclough, 1989, p. 64).

During the period (2002-2005) when I undertook the larger study of which this case study is a part, Indigenous issues had subsided from the forefront of mainstream and media debate. There had been a period during the nineteen nineties with Native Title 1992, Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody 1991, and the institution by the government of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation 1990 to oversee a formal process of reconciliation, when Indigenous issues were 'hot topics' on the national and state agendas. Whilst Indigenous issues have lost some status on the national agenda as depicted by the media at least, Indigenous educational outcomes, reconciliation and other Indigenous issues remain a priority of policy and program in educational institutions. Reconciliation has the potential to play a crucial role in education and remains important among educational leaders (Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council, 2005). An outcome of the ten years of the Council for Reconciliation was the recommendation that all leaders promote the vision of:

A united Australia which respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all (Australia, 2001).

I conducted my research within this period when many Australian principals were working to this ideology of "a united Australia" in their role as community leaders.

Apart from the ongoing priorities of reconciliation, social justice and equity, 'outcomes based education' (Governments (COAG), 2006; Proudfoot, 1999) has become a dominant discourse in Education Queensland as it has in many Westernised educational systems. The outcomes discourse has allowed for 'deficit' definitions which have become synonymous with Indigenous representations in the outcomes debate. The dominance of the outcomes discourse is important in gaining an understanding of Samantha's drive in vision and mission to positively affect this 'deficit' definition as it is associated with Indigenous students. I summarise above some of the societal and institutional trends, which provide the context for Samantha's leadership. In the following section I describe the historical and contemporary local contexts intersecting with the discourses Samantha employs as school leader to reconstruct the representations available to her students and Torres Strait Islanders more generally.

Torres Strait Primary School (hereafter TSPS)

Samantha is a Torres Strait Island principal of a state primary school which serves 500 students, 95% of who are local people. The school has eight out of twenty-nine Indigenous teachers and sixteen out of twenty Indigenous teachers' aides. During the last five years while the school has been actively moving towards a "Learning Home" designed in alignment with Torres Strait Islander culture, the staff composition has changed dramatically to increased Indigenous representation.

TSPS opened in 1885 with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in attendance. However, between 1911-1912, after numerous applications to the Premier and the Home Secretary by the Chair of the Torres Strait Council and other prominent citizens, it was decided to open a school for 'coloured' (hereafter 'W Coloured School') and 'native' children on the Island as:

The Chief Protector of Aboriginals reported that...the white residents naturally objected to such a number of coloured children mixing with the white children at the State School contending that natives were prone to all sorts of skin and other diseases, which are a menace to others. He was of the opinion that it was undesirable to allow such a large number of Aboriginals to mix indiscriminately with white children...

(Extract from historical documents archived at current TSPS & retrieved September 2004).

In 1964 the 'W Coloured School' and the 'white' state school amalgamated to one primary school at the site, which had housed the 'W Coloured School'. Many of the grandparents of current TSPS students had attended the segregated coloured school.

I have briefly described the history and educational context in which Samantha is school leader. I use Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1989, hereafter CDA) later in this paper to analyse power and language inherent in the discourses provided by the data collected from Samantha, her community and documents engaged by her school.

Methodology

The data I use for this paper were from one case study which was part of a multiple-case study of four Indigenous principals employed as leaders in the
The state educational system of Queensland, Australia.
I used multiple methods of data collection: interviews, current and archived documents and observation at each case study site.

The subject of this paper, Samantha, is one of the four participants in the multiple case study of leadership. To collect data for this study, I spent two weeks at each field study site as a non-participant observer (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000) conducting at least three in-depth, semi-formal interviews with each principal. Interviews with personnel were audio taped and transcribed and data were inserted into NVivo computer program (NVivo Qualitative Computer Software Program, 2003). I had coded the data into the main themes of: power & knowledge; identity; and leadership/career trajectory.

Following this initial coding I then moved to a period of intensive analysis (Merriam, 1988, p. 127) whereby I identified the themes and data for the larger study to be analysed through the theory and methods of Critical Discourse Analysis (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). This theory and method is particularly useful in studying postcolonial power relations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples within the institutional arena in Australia.

For this paper I also focussed on current and archived documents together with extracts from the interviews with Samantha and one elder in the community.

This paper focuses on one Torres Strait principal’s engagement in setting vision and mission for her school community through the use of inherited colonial discourses, which she integrates, with traditional Indigenous discourses to articulate into action the dream of Self-Determination for the Torres Strait.

In order to examine the specific use of discourses upon which she calls and how they play out in her talk and other school documents, I firstly analyse one school document which is the school vision statement and in which development Samantha as a deputy school principal had been involved.

General Analysis
I use Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2001) as a method to analyse the school vision document, extracts from the interviews conducted with Samantha and with one of the elders in the community, Father Don. I analyse the discourses employed by the vision document and the interviewees as significant data in the overall analysis of the representation of the Torres Strait and the “dream of Self-Determination” at Samantha’s school.

School Vision Document (Extract - P.9)

Spirituality is central to the lives of the people of the Torres Strait. At TSPS, we acknowledge God as the rudder of our lugger and believe that He has been and still is, in control of our destiny since the beginning of time. The Systemic Cycle through our present school vision demonstrates how we have learned from the past; learn in the present to prepare for the future. The present status highlights the course we are to take to build a future of hope for the generations to come, by picking up the pieces. God is guiding our school’s rebirth/renewal, in alignment with the rebirth/renewal of our region, to collectively build the vision of the “Power of the Torres Strait Dream” for Self-Determination.

Presently the ‘TSPS’ Island State School Vision is:

“Learn your past to live strong in the present to prepare for the future” (Kit Loni, 2001)

The above extract is from the TSPS school vision statement 2001 (page 9). I begin an analysis by briefly describing the visual and textual features and then explaining my interpretation of text and context and the broader institutional and societal discourses alive in the document. The text is set out visually with a clear title, then a paragraph statement of purpose for the school community summarised in bold and boxed to highlight the T.S. language with the English translation. There is further explanation below the boxed vision statement in T.S. language and English translation. I take this to demonstrate the importance of T.S. language for primacy of TSPS cultural representation, whilst recognising the requirement for an English translation.
Traditionally Torres Strait people made a living from the sea both through pearling and fishing and these metaphors are employed directly in the document connecting God to TSPS. The Islanders used luggers to chart the sea and trade with New Guinea and other islands. The vision statement discourse calls upon traditional Torres Strait representations as a maritime people, Indigenous spirituality, Christianity and the Western linear conceptualisation of time: past, present and future. The school vision synopsis amalgamates these various representations to a collective vision to set the course that ‘all’ Torres Strait people wish to follow for their autonomy with the powerful statement: “Power of the Torres Strait Dream” written in quotation marks to signal the expressive value that it represents all Torres Strait peoples. The most important belief system according to this document is written in the first sentence of the vision statement: “Spirituality is central to the lives of the people of the Torres Strait” (line 1). Grammatically this statement is given primacy. It is the opening sentence using a simple, declarative structure. The reader is in no doubt as to the fundamental belief system underpinning this vision. The belief comes from traditional Indigenous spirituality (Beckett, 1988; Cranney & Edwards, 1998). The second sentence launches the maritime metaphor of God as the “rudder” of the “lugger”. God is positioned as the “rudder”, steering the T. S. towards its “destiny”. This metaphor is aligning the Torres Strait maritime discourse with the philosophical base of ‘Born Again Christianity’ in the sense that this Christian orientation takes a deterministic stance which is in alignment with the “rudder” (God) being in control of Torres Strait destiny and echoed through the use of language such as: “control of our destiny”, “rebirth” and “renewal” (lines 9-11). This God is the Christian God ‘brought’ to the Torres Strait by the London missionary colonisers in 1871 yet the Christian God has been “in control of our destiny since the beginning of time” (line 5). Discourses around Indigenous spiritual and cultural maritime images have been amalgamated with the discourses of Christianity brought by the colonisers. The text then adopts the Christian God to harness and motivate. According to Fairclough (1989, p.68), the crux is exactly the point at which the social struggle, in this case for Torres Strait power, has the possibility at all levels to be won, exercised, sustained or lost. It is at this crux that the vision statement discourses and merges them with the purpose of representing the Torres Strait as powerful and ‘on course’ for the power of the Torres Strait dream is typically used by Samantha in many other contexts but always towards a similar purpose.

I use interview extracts below to demonstrate how Samantha calls upon several discourses and merges them with the purpose of representing the Torres Strait as powerful and ‘on course’ for a future of hope. It is at the crux of the discourses merging, that a powerful potential arises in the power of language to harness and motivate. According to Fairclough (1989, p.68), the crux is exactly the point at which the social struggle, in this case for Torres Strait power, has the possibility at all levels to be won, exercised, sustained or lost. It is at this crux that the vision document has positioned TSPS in new and powerful representations in alignment with God and ‘on course’ for a destiny of hope and Self-Determination.
In the Australian educational context above, I described the historical context of TSPS having been two schools until 1964 separated on the basis of ‘colour’. This history influenced Samantha as school leader to move on to a new vision for her school in direct opposition to the former model which represented Torres Strait Islanders and their culture as inferior. Samantha positioned herself as leader to change the social order. She challenged the status quo of Western superiority and positioned herself through this act as an ‘outsider’.

Samantha’s vision is in alignment with the Torres Strait dream rather than the Western worldview of how the Islander school should represent itself. Previously no representation of Torres Strait culture including Torres Strait language had been permitted in the ‘W Coloured School’ or the prior model of state school:

...That ‘TSPS’ Island State School and ‘W Coloured School’, their profiles were such that, well – ‘W Coloured School’ certainly, if you think about the profile, the amount of participation by the community and input of the decision making processes and ownership by the community, was non-existent. ‘TSPS’ State School was moving towards that and we’re encouraging that and that was the ideal scenario (Interview two with Samantha, September 2004)

My analysis of data from interviews with Samantha indicates her attempt to ‘decolonise’ the state school of which she is leader by moving towards the model of a “Family Learning Home”. A change in the social order of a nation is unlikely to occur in a straightforward fashion. Researchers suggest:

Although decolonisation challenged, countered and spawned contradictory impulses towards change, in most societies this process has only modified rather than erased embedded patterns of disadvantage... (Hickling-Hudson, Matthews, & Woods, 2004, p.7)

Nevertheless Samantha continues to strive towards her vision of a “Family Learning Home” representative of Torres Strait culture. In my first interview with Samantha I asked her to talk about her vision for the school community thus I opened a debate at the level of local and institutional education (Rogers, 2004, p.7). Samantha proceeded the discussion to a much deeper, societal context – that of the Torres Strait dream of Self-Determination and her desire to help bring the “Promised Land” into reality:

...Well, you would have read the systemic cycle the one that had the colonisation past, present and future and then the final journey being highlighted there and I call that the final journey into the Promised Land. So when we talk about, talk about coming out of captivity of being kept in captivity but it’s not really about what I’ve always thought was on the cards for the Torres Strait but more so about what came out for the Torres Strait. So in terms of socially, as a nation of people, what I want for the Torres Strait is very much about the big picture that I’m working on... (Interview one with Samantha, September 2004).

In this extract Samantha calls upon “colonisation” (line 2) and the Old Testament (line 5) in order to locate her Torres Strait Islander people in place and time. Samantha describes her mission as helping to lead her people from the captivity of colonisation and its postcolonial legacy into a period of time when finally the Torres Strait regains its autonomy having left behind the entire legacy of colonisation. Samantha believes she has been given this mission by God to help bring this new ‘status quo’ into place and time in the Torres Strait.

An analysis of the above extract depicts the use of current (Torres Strait autonomy) and colonial (colonisation, line 2) representations called upon by Samantha to position herself as a leader “working on” the “big picture” (line 12). In this extract Samantha calls upon Christianity which, it could be suggested, had helped ‘hold’ her people in captivity and then seeks to use this discourse as a way out and forward into the “Promised Land” for both the institution of school and for Torres Strait society more generally. This text is significant as Samantha positions herself in a different place to the expected cultural model of state school principals and employs the language of ‘Other’. Australian mainstream society is secular in mandate and in culture and does not normally engage in religious discourses within its state institutional agenda. It is however, at this unexpected place that the hybrid discourses engage. Here Samantha calls upon different discourses using a similar technique of the hybrid discourse to create a space with potential. The question remains as to whether Samantha will be successful in harnessing the potential power to contribute to societal change through her engagement with and new use of the hybrid discourses to articulate her agenda.

The discourse of colonisation in Australia would normally be associated with a Western linear notion of time past, however Samantha appends a present and futures perspective (line 2) to ‘highlight’ the new future which is “the final journey” into the “Promised Land” (line 5). Thus Samantha calls on the discourse
of colonisation to provide a representation which
associates Torres Strait people with the ‘righteous-
ness’ of God’s chosen people from the Old Testa-
ment. Metaphorically, “The Promised Land” is a
new beginning for Torres Strait Islanders - although
the same place, it is certainly not of the same time.
“The Promised Land” is deliverance from the
‘wrong’ of captivity just as it represented how the
Jews were held captive in the Old Testament refer-
ence. Leaders often engage in metaphorical language
to articulate vision. Vision is often a complex and
powerful concept more easily ‘captured’ through
metaphor. My analysis of Samantha’s use of the
metaphor of “The Promised Land” (Torres Strait
Self-Determination) suggests its pursuit is the pur-
pose of her leadership as what she, “…want(s) for
the Torres Strait is very much about the big picture
that (she’s) I’m working on…” (lines 12-13). Impli-
cit in the passage is the righteousness of the new
‘chosen’ people who are now Torres Strait Islanders
with the Christian God leading their cause.
Christianity was introduced into the Torres Strait
in 1871 as an integral part of the ‘civilising’ of the
Indigenous peoples of Australia by the British colon-
isers. Although Christianity was imposed on the
Torres Strait peoples, it has been embedded into
mainstream culture. Indigenous spirituality and
Christian spirituality have been integrated into a
spirituality of the Torres Strait and talked about to-
gether in spiritual, cultural and Christian discourses
interchangeably:

…I like to talk more about the culture and
spirituality and Christianity. Christianity is the
same as culture and spirituality for the Torres
Strait, you see, the beginning of time you were
created the same as Our Creator, Father poten-
tials…
(Interview with Elder, Father Don, September
2004)

So while it may pose problematic in analysis that the
very discourses (Christian & Western), which were
used to subjugate the Torres Strait and Aboriginal
peoples by the colonisers, are now employed by the
‘colonised’ to navigate a new beginning for the Is-
lander peoples, essentially this is a reflection of cur-
rent epistemologies of culture and spirituality as de-
scribed by Father Don in the above extract. Samantha
seems to use (traditional) Indigenous spirituality in-
terchangeably with Christianity and its current rep-
resentation is a weaving of both discourses:

…If I think about Torres Strait as a nation of
people who were given an identity by God when
they were first created at the beginning of time.
We’ll go back to Genesis. We had a purpose…
(Interview two with Samantha, September 2004)

Samantha constructs this representation to show the
‘righteousness’ of the Torres Strait cause by citing
the action taken by God in the book of Genesis in
‘giving’ the Torres Strait a “purpose” and “identity”
by amalgamating traditional Torres Strait identity
and retrospectively giving it Christian authentifica-
tion. Wenger (cited in Rogers, 2004, p.120) argued,
“that these boundary locations are exactly where new
knowledge is produced and identities can be trans-
formed.” Samantha cites various myths and legends
to distance her school as an educational institution
from its identity as a ‘coloured’ then a Western sys-
temic organisation. Inherent in her argument is a new
identity for her school divorced from these historical
and ‘unproductive’ times when the school represen-
ted its colonial identity:

…I guess if I start with the school vision which
is learning from the past, learning in the present
only for the future. And I would have preferred
to have said the language translation first and
then English after. Simply because I wanted to
highlight that it’s about the language part and
the English comes afterwards. If I used the vis-
pion past, present, future and I link it to the three
pigs’ house, the past house being the ‘W’ Col-
oured School, the present house being ‘T.S’. Island
State School and the future vision being the
Family Learning Home that the first two
houses not being strong enough and that for the
house for the future, which is the brick house
being the strong house, being the house that we
are currently trying to build. And that does look
or the profile of that brick house being Family
Learning Home, but eventually what we’ll do is
it will be called a name that is a language
name…
(Interview Two with Samantha, September
2004)

In this text Samantha uses the Western nursery story,
“The Three Pigs” (lines 8-9) as a metaphor for the
three stages of the Family Learning Home. A tradi-
tional Indigenous belief system is of the primacy of
connectedness of family and its environment to
learning – “Family Learning Home”. Samantha ar-
gets that the Torres Strait needs a new learning en-
vironment, made of bricks, which has learned from
the mistakes of both previous houses made of ‘straw’,
and ‘sticks’ and assumes its new identity in Torres
Strait language representative of its uniqueness. The
use of the Western nursery story to produce the
metaphor for the inadequacy of the former two
(Western) houses and the fact that the very house
which will be strong (and two-way strong!) is the
house made of (Western) bricks seems ironic. Samantha’s discourse weaves traditional Indigenous values of family associated with learning together with the new (Western) learnings necessary to move forward. Samantha refers twice to the importance of readopting traditional language names, which had been forbidden in the ‘straw’ and discouraged in the ‘stick’ house. Samantha’s knowledge of the intricate connection of language to identity (Cowlishaw, 1999, p. 144) causes her to specify in lines 3 -4 that the Indigenous language name comes first in association with Torres Strait identity, not the English language. In this passage she has reconstructed Indigenous discourses against the foundation of a dominant educational and societal discourse of early learning from the Western paradigm of nursery story to make the learning metaphor of how contemporary Torres Strait Islanders need to be “two way strong” which she had articulated several times in earlier discussions. She explicitly refers to “Ginar or action political” (see below). Samantha’s language aligns with the theory and practice of Critical Discourse Analysis which “…explicitly addresses social problems and seeks to solve social problems through the analysis and accompanying social and political action” (Rogers, 2004, p.4):

...Well, so it’s the Ginar or the action political; it really is the time now. We’re talking about self-determination. ...That we really equip our children to be two way strong. For them to go global...

(Interview one with Samantha, September 2004)

The analysis reported here suggests Samantha is meticulously reconstructing representations of Indigenous people toward ‘two-way strong’ by calling on both Western and Indigenous discourses as she attempts to forge a shift in power. These ‘two way strong’ Torres Strait students will be able to interact from a position of strength in the global community rather than from a disenfranchised or outsider position. This short extract clearly states that Samantha believes, “it really is the time now” to directly move towards the Ginar (language name first) or “action political” of “self-determination”.

Concluding Remarks

Indigenous Australians have been shaped and constructed through the lens of postcolonial conceptions of deficit in relation to academic prowess, behaviours and personal status in the educational system by mainstream Australia. Many Indigenous students have internalised these deficit representations (Purdie, Tripcony, Boulton-Lewis, Fanshawe, & Gunstone, 2000). My analysis suggests that this school leader, Samantha has conceptualised this complex history and contemporary situation articulating strong and positive representations of Torres Strait peoples. She advocates “two-way strong” learning at her “Family Learning Home” for the next generation as they move towards Torres Strait autonomy and into “The Promised Land”.

Samantha challenges the discourses that have served the hidden mainstream agenda of conserving the status quo in Australia by endorsing deficit representations of Indigenous peoples. She challenged the status quo by selectively calling upon the current discourses of Christianity and Colonialism and weaving them into a powerful Torres Strait discourse of Spirituality which is central to her definition of Self-Determination in the Torres Strait.

Samantha sums up her school mission as being to develop and action the vision of the ‘Family Learning Home’ in order to move out of the Western educational model made of ‘sticks’. Both this model and the ‘straw’, ‘W coloured School’ had never represented ‘equal opportunity’ for Indigenous peoples. Samantha selectively calls upon mainstream discourses and surprisingly places them ‘out of the box’ beside other discourses in an unexpected arrangement. This ‘surprise’, she believes, will achieve the answer to leading her people out of ‘captivity’ into ‘nationhood’, once again representative and proud of Torres Strait cultures:

...Yes. Re Jeremiah if you read Jeremiah... ‘Behold I will do a new thing.’...By trying something new, something that is outside the box surprisingly for us it’s going to be the answer to coming out of captivity...

(Interview One with Samantha, September 2004)

References


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Annette Duffy is a primary principal of a Catholic school in Queensland, Australia. Her research interests are in the area of leadership, Indigenous education and the professional development of teachers. She is currently enrolled in a PhD study at the School of Education and Professional Studies, Griffith University. The multiple case study investigates the constructions and perceptions of leadership held by four Indigenous principals.
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Indigenous principals on school leadership

ANNETTE DUFFY reports on interviews with Indigenous principals.

THIS article focuses on Indigenous school leadership and some of its challenges and highlights, as expressed by four Indigenous primary school principals in Queensland. The data presented here is part of a larger multiple case study that investigates the discourses used by these Indigenous principals and how these might be called upon to explain everyday experiences of school leadership. Two of the four principals are from the Torres Strait Islands and I have called them Pete and Samantha. The other two principals are Aboriginal and they have been called Dave and Jay, to protect their anonymity.

Grasping the challenges

Noel Pearson cut to the very heart of leadership and the imperative to ‘grasp the challenges’ by proclaiming: ‘The starting point for any honest discussion about indigenous education must be the admission that it is, with few exceptions, a massive disaster, and it has been so for a long time . . . The few success stories seem to be directly traceable to inspirational leadership at the school level, usually from the principal, rather than government programs’.

(Pearson, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership, Australian, 13/9/04).

Each of the Indigenous principals in this study articulated the need to work consistently and consciously, to face the challenge of low educational outcomes for Indigenous students head on. This was, and continues to be, a most vital challenge and seems to echo Pearson’s cry for ‘inspirational leadership’. For example, one principal, Dave, challenged staff who contributed to the ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’ of low expectations for Indigenous students. Dave responded directly to the ‘reasons’ that were given to justify the teachers’ low expectations, for example, ‘Maybe we shouldn’t expect too much of ourselves and if our kids are dropping out of school, so maybe we shouldn’t . . .’

‘I said “You can take these statistics and reinforce your argument that Aborigines are not inclined to education but I can take the same statistics and argue that the education system that we provide doesn’t accommodate, or that the education system is failing Aboriginal children”. And when I would ask them and challenge them on things. So we have to turn that around. And, as I said yesterday, I believe our children can be smart and they can leave here with academic outcomes that are comparable to any other child in any other school and if you don’t believe it, then get out and go somewhere else!”

(Interview with Dave, November 2003)

A second principal echoed Dave’s experiences. Seeking to re-educate her community, this principal set the tone and example of high achievement by Indigenous students, never accepting complacency. The achievements of Indigenous students were frequently vocalised to help change community perceptions: ‘...what I had found in the early years was the general expectation of white teachers was that Aboriginal kids can’t learn, when I knew jolly well that they could learn and did learn but they learned differently ...’

(Interview with Jay, October 2003)

Low expectations

Low expectations of Indigenous students have been a factor both within and outside Indigenous communities. The challenge here is for the principal to change the metaphor, to a powerful one of success, associating Indigenous students with positive images. In fact, all four principals addressed these deficit notions ‘head on’. There was a strong sense in each principal’s talk that, at a deeper level, they could change the colonial legacy of Australian society, especially the myths and assumptions around the inferiority of Indigenous peoples. The principals discussed the need to shift these negative perceptions towards powerful and positive images and stories of Indigenous peoples. They believed this would directly affect the educational culture, expectations and outcomes in their own school communities.

Pete, the third principal, had similar experiences to Jay and Dave. Recounting his own history, he said that he
had never had Indigenous leaders as role models when he was at school. He recounted the myth - still alive among school communities - that Indigenous students could not become educational leaders. Dave set out to dispel this myth and to make a difference to the educational outcomes of Indigenous students in his Islander community: ‘... but throughout my schooling years, I never had an indigenous teacher stand in front of me and teach or be recognised as a teacher. There were teacher aides but no qualified teachers and that gave the impression to many of us at that time, or most of us at that time, that, you know, it may not have been possible for Indigenous people to become teachers and that university was too hard... and that if it was something that people could get through, we should’ve had people through that before...’. (Interview with Pete, May 2004)

**Dispelling the myths**

The principals faced the mammoth task of dispelling these myths in their schools and communities, as well as in wider society. The extent and depth of these belief systems cannot be overstated and I do not trivialise them here. All four principals discussed their first-hand experiences of racist and discriminating constraints. Nevertheless, as leaders of vision, courage and clear direction, they were also immersed in weaving a new tapestry for the future for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

The principals described how they understood the potential power of their school leadership to change the status quo of low educational outcomes for Indigenous students. The major driver for this change was the determination of each principal to change the metaphors, at school and community levels, in order to weave a new chapter for Australia’s future. Although each principal had his or her own educational style of leadership and attended to a different school culture, they definitively and consciously put energy into changing the driving metaphors. In this way, they changed the perceptions of Indigenous students and their performance, often facing resistance from within and outside their own communities. They knew the metaphors had to associate power with knowledge (Foucault & Gordon, 1980). Metaphors about strength, identity, knowledge and achievement were developed as symbols of power and of Indigenous identity. The principals seemed to recognise that their communities needed to rediscover and reinvent powerful images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity: ‘That kind of building that kind of power, is what makes you untouchable. You know? So, you’re going to go out in society and these kids are going to take their place in the world with fire in their belly and nobody will, nobody can touch them because they’ll have that power to stand up by themselves. People will challenge them but I’d like to think that they’re equipped enough and feeling powerful enough to deal with those kinds of challenges. Whereas, previously, we’d just been downtrodden the whole time’. (Interview with Dave, November 2003)

Whilst the four leaders recognised that they needed to change the local culture, they were also acutely aware that they had the power, as a principal, to affect the wider community. This is recognised by Samantha’s connection between the educational establishment and her vision for the autonomy of her community through a ‘two way strong’ group of young people: ‘...That we really equip our children to be ‘two way strong’. For them to go global. To go wherever they want to, knowing that they can compete with the best’. (Interview with Samantha, September 2004)

All four principals were aware of how important their leadership role was in contemporary Australia. They knew the impact that ‘inspirational leadership’ could have on the educational outcomes of their students. They also had a sense of how their leadership could have an effect on other potential Indigenous leaders. All four leaders continue to promote Indigenous leadership in many practical ways. They individually and collectively have a dream for the future of Australia, which they know must include a proportionate representation of Indigenous leaders. Indigenous perspectives must be included in decision-making processes in education and in other systems in Australia.

‘Currently, however, there are too few Indigenous leaders, many of whom have responsibilities at community, state and national levels. There is a critical need to provide support for Indigenous leaders at all levels to develop their knowledge, skills and networks to lead communities, organisations and the nation into the 21st century’. (Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre, 2003).

*A detailed list of references is available from the author.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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