Chapter 1 from ABORIGINAL WORKERS AND MANAGERS, HISTORY, EMOTIONAL AND COMMUNITY LABOUR AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA (2003) Claire Williams, Bill Thorpe with Carolyn Chapman, Seaview Press: Adelaide, further details at end of chapter.

Australian and Aboriginal historical contexts[1]

> One might have thought that some tribute would have been paid to the hardiness, pertinacity and grit of a race which had managed to survive for thousands of years on a continent which had failed to provide them with a single plant that could be cultivated or a single animal that could have been domesticated; but apparently few of the critics had the intelligence to make any allowance for this … fact. Even when we used their physical strength, their manpower and their bushcraft in developing our inland areas, we failed too often to pay them wages, claiming that money was no good to them anyway and that they did not know what to buy with it. (Strehlow, 1958: 5)

> As I say to people, we deal with the hardest of hard people, the Aboriginal people, because right from the time we are born we are under stress until the day we die. (Woman Aboriginal Manager, 2002)

Introduction

This and the next chapter present some of the contexts that lie behind Aboriginal

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The terms 'Indigenous' and 'Aboriginal' are used alternately and/or interchangeably here because of the shifting meanings associated with these terms and the different usage Aboriginal people themselves attach to them. The Aboriginal health workers who took part in this study and, more particularly, members of the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (Adelaide) who vetted drafts of an Occupational Health and Safety brochure for Aboriginal Health Workers (AHWs), preferred to regard themselves as 'Aboriginal' rather than 'Indigenous' people. However other Aboriginal people in South Australia and elsewhere use 'Indigenous' and this term seems to be gaining in popularity. For some time there has been a growing aversion by Aboriginal people generally to 'Aborigines', although 'Aboriginals' (as a noun) is not regarded so pejoratively. 'Aboriginal people' is still appropriate and to be preferred to 'Aborigines'. Other culturally appropriate terms are 'Nungas' (the collective noun for Aboriginal South Australians), 'Kooris' (for Victoria and New South Wales), 'Palawa' (for Tasmania but not all Tasmania), 'Murris' (for Queensland but not all Queensland) and 'Nyoongar' (for southern Western Australia). For their part, Nungas refer to non-Aboriginal South Australians as 'Goonyas'. Most terms used in this study for 'South Australians' and 'Australians' generally are less than satisfactory: non-Aboriginal implies 'not anything'; 'whites' (if it is used in a sociological, rather than a biological sense) is a little better; 'white ethnic' is probably better still because it acknowledges that all human beings have ethnicity and culture. Hopefully more appropriate alternatives will be invented or, better still, a world might arise where these categories are irrelevant or unimportant.

people's encounters with other Australians today, including the area of 'work'. To anticipate the analysis here and in other chapters, readers need to know that Aboriginal men, women and children have been a vital part of mainstream labour markets from the very beginnings of Australian colonisation (Cole, 1993; Reynolds, 1990; Pope, 1989; Mattingley and Hampton, 1988; Brock, 1993; Williams with Thorpe, 1992). They continue to work in mainstream and community occupations in a variety of fields, often for lengthy periods, for their communities, and to ensure their identity as a distinct people. Indeed, this multiple character of their working lives demonstrates situations of 'overemployment', not the popular stereotypes of 'walkabout' and 'laziness'.

Following a discussion of what the Aboriginal population may have been at the moment of colonisation, this and the next chapter offer an interpretation of some of the key features in the still vexed and racialised relations between Aboriginal people and other Australians. These include colonising processes, dispossession, massive Indigenous population losses and their eventual recovery, racial ideologies, ethnic survival and renewal, and the various ways that governing authorities have dealt with Aboriginal people. While this is a broad ranging overview, a good deal of the analysis and evidence draws on South Australian examples where the study team carried out the research.

Most of what follows applies to Aboriginal experiences in so-called 'settled' Australia, i.e. in much of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, southern South Australia, and south-western Western Australia where the majority of Aboriginal people live, although more remote regions have not been ignored. As Schwab states:

> While pockets of traditionally-oriented Aboriginal communities have managed to survive, though certainly not unscathed, in the less accessible centre and north of the continent, the majority of Aboriginal people today reside in 'settled' Australia, descendants of the people who experienced the most severe cultural disruption. (Schwab, 1991:77)

Here the colonial impact was far more devastating, overwhelming and lasted much longer. As described below, the effects brought many Aboriginal groups almost to the brink of extinction. Overseas immigrants came to these regions in greater numbers especially after 1850 and took up most of the coastal, riverine and productive land for grazing, agriculture and urban development sooner and more intensively than in less fertile, more distant country. Introduced diseases

swept through Indigenous populations more completely. Conflicts and frontier violence were more widespread between occupying settlers and Aboriginal landholders (Ryan, 1996; Hollinsworth, 1998:74-84; Evans, Saunders and Cronin, 1988:22-117; Reynolds, 1987; Summers, 1986a; Cannon, 1993; Critchett, 1990; Markus, 1994:18-54; Foster, Hosking and Nettelbeck, 2001:1-9; Hetherington, 2002:101-107,130; Evans, 2003:63-69).

Of these factors, there is general agreement that diseases and viruses were the main culprits in decimating Aboriginal communities -- chiefly smallpox, influenza, tuberculosis, typhoid, measles, syphilis and gonorrhoea (Attwood and Foster, 2003:5; Pope, 1989:36-41). To this should be added alcohol, which was unknown to Aboriginal society but which the early colonisers used to gain control over key Aboriginal men (Langton, 1997:86-87). The cumulative result was that Aboriginal Australians have become a permanent, greatly outnumbered, and subordinate minority in the wider Australian population.

For their part, most colonial authorities and evangelical Christian missionaries were determined to eliminate traditional Aboriginal languages and remake Aboriginal people 'in their own image' (Attwood, 1989:1). Included in this cultural makeover was a reconstruction of emotions including Western concepts of shame. Among Aboriginal groups, shame/honour were important emotions, albeit lived in a different way to Western shame but crucial in defining social bonds. Not only does the Genesis creation story in Western cultures emphasise shame but Catholicism, and particularly fundamentalist Protestant religions which 'Christianised' Aboriginal people, are much more shame-oriented compared to other religions (Lewis, 1995: 84). In Western culture shame lost its religious origin and became secularised and is highly social rather than personal. The person cares about others' evaluations of them. As will be emphasised a number of times in this book, shame is a troublesome emotion because it is so invisible to the person experiencing it, but one of the most painful emotions of all; it is registered as a sharp jolt because the whole self, not a particular action, is condemned (Scheff, 1990:15). One informant reflected cross-culturally on his grandmother, who 'grew up in a mission, even now when people come now, she's concerned about how she looks; I can see the mission; you can see it, you know'.

Again, in the context of 'settled' Australia, Aboriginal resistance to such cultural makeovers was harder to sustain than elsewhere. While there were exceptions to this pattern, genuine respect for Aboriginal cultures and beliefs did not occur until well into the 20th century, for example at Ernabella mission in the Pitjatjantjara lands and the Colebrook Home at Quorn in South Australia, where at least some Nunga memories of life there are positive, and there is evidence of genuine care (Mattingley and Hampton, 1988:213-215; *Bringing them home ...*1997:124; Haebich, 2000:202). Nevertheless Aboriginal survival in 'settled' Australia always involved, and still involves, the necessary paradox of 'living with the white people', while being 'amongst other Blacks' ('Corroboree song, Lower Murray', in Reynolds, 1990).

Enduring as a distinct people thus looms large in Aboriginal being today. Indeed,

despite undergoing such disasters, a combination of circumstances and events enabled Aboriginal people to hang on, adapt to the new order, and even flourish. In South Australia for example there were 14,921 Aboriginal people counted in the 1986 census -- roughly the same as it was at South Australia's non-Aboriginal foundations in 1836 (*Census 86 -- Aboriginals in South Australia:*1). From 1986 to 1996 (the most recent Census published at the time of writing) the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in South Australia is over 22,000 (*Census 1996 -- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People South Australia*: 2).

These significant intercensal increases -- a 340 per cent rise nationally between 1966 and 1996 -- are now typical of people who identify as Indigenous in other countries like New Zealand, the United States and Canada. They reflect situations of long-term relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, are a clear sign of cultural renewal, and demonstrate the point that 'race and ethnicity are social constructions rather than biological categories' (*Population issues, Indigenous Australians, 1996:*1).

Ways of interpreting history

Three aspects of the 'historical' are considered here. Firstly, there is the traditional Western practice of history as the attempt to find origins, to understand 'what actually happened' in a more or less distant past (Woolf, 1998:xii; Rose, 2003: 123).

Secondly, it refers to what Foucault has called 'effective history' -- the technique of inverting 'the relationship that traditional history ... establishes between proximity and distance' (Foucault, 1986:89). Whereas traditional history fixes events to a past which is over, effective history 'shortens its vision to those things nearest to it', thus overcoming the binary or break between 'past' and 'present'. Effective history is also a project that 'unearths the periods of decadence' and 'unearths the forgotten' in order to cast a critical eye over the 'periods of celebration' (Foucault, 1986:89; Said, 1994:17).

In this respect, effective history is akin to a third, Aboriginal sense of history -- the past *in* the present, where, for example, South Australian Aboriginal people living in major urban centres maintain the continuing and complex relationship they have with their country. Here, 'Indigenous counter-histories, often ... in the form of life stories ... bear witness to the survival of a traumatised Aboriginality' (Brewster, 2002:158; Watson, 2002:17-20; Brodie, 2002:5-8; Hemming, 1996:31; Atkinson, 2002).

These approaches to history suggested here, taken together, help to make sense of the intertwined Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal histories and cultures that constitute a core element of Australian life. Traditional western history enables us to see the origins of how Aboriginal lifeworlds were changed dramatically by a British imperial government's decision to occupy the Australian continent over 200 years ago. Effective history enables us to critically explore the results of this momentous decision at close quarters in the bodies and minds of the living. And the concept of the past in the present enables us to acknowledge ongoing Aboriginal identity in the face of dominating mainstream lifeworlds that are simultaneously familiar yet foreign to Aboriginal people.

Our interpretation here leans rather more towards 'effective history', as defined above, than to either traditional Western history or Aboriginal Aboriginal history. As non-Aboriginal or Goonya (white ethnic) authors, we can 'never be in the right skin to experience life' as Aboriginal people, although 'Aboriginal history' has developed over many years through the work of Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors, and we see ourselves as contributing to this field. (Evans, 1999:229; McGrath, 1995:361-362).

We are well aware that almost any retelling of Australian/Aboriginal history, including the version offered here, if it is an honest appraisal of 'what actually happened', is likely to unsettle at least some readers. Australians are the inheritors of 'enormous Aboriginal effort, most of which was adapted and discarded and their society destroyed' (Butlin, 1993: viii). Thus all of us living and working in 'Australia' today are heirs to this and for this reason 'Australian history' is inevitably 'Aboriginal history' (McQueen, 1997:210-211).

At the same time, many non-Aboriginal Australians, 'facing significant economic problems of their own, are in no mood to consider themselves as "invaders" or the beneficiaries of colonisation' (Curthoys, 2003: 187). We acknowledge therefore the realities of power and class in non-Aboriginal Australia which close the economic gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. We recognise too that great diversity exists in non-Indigenous Australian culture and not just among so-called 'ethnics' (Hollinsworth, 1998:168). 'All people have ethnicity', even the still-dominant Australian-born majority of British background whose whiteness is 'accepted as the norm' (Collins, 1999:393; Moreton-Robinson, 2000:37). But we reject a politics of resentment that sometimes portrays whites as victims (Curthoys, 2003:198).

We are white ethnic Australian academics who have entered the 'cultural borderlands' between Aboriginal and White Australia at various times (Langton, 1997:95). Our race privilege as whites -- Thorpe and Williams' that is -- carries great hierarchical social capital so we are not pretending that our meetings and relationships with various Aboriginal people are as 'equals'. Nevertheless these encounters have helped us to understand some of the circumstances that have made Aboriginal people what they are today; and our experiences and analysis here may persuade readers to think more carefully about current issues that concern us all. Throughout, the voices of the 'narrators' are those of the two non-Aboriginal authors (Hunter, 1990; Lal, 1996), but we have made an effort to highlight the Aboriginal voices as much as possible.

Pre- and post-invasion Aboriginal populations and some comparisons with non-Indigenous populations

This section serves as a point of departure to understand some of the

consequences for Aboriginal people, from other peoples taking over much of their lands and subsequent livelihoods. The main point we wish to get across here is that Australia's Aboriginal people have absorbed a devastating demographic experience. If this were translated to a futuristic scenario for the population as a whole, it would result in the Australian total dropping from their present levels of around 20,000,000 to well under 3,000,000 within a human lifetime.

As pointed out in more detail later, a stark contrast developed between the relative proportions and absolute numbers of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. This showed a steady rise in the ratio of non-Aboriginal people arriving in Australia and reproducing themselves, and a corresponding, sharper fall in the Aboriginal ratio. In 1799, the Indigenous population represented between 98.9 and 99.3 per cent of the total mainland population (Kociumbas, 1992:23). By the middle of the 19th century, it had plummeted to just over 15 per cent of the total. At the beginning of the 20th century it was just over 2 per cent (Kingston, 1988:108). This is much the same proportion as it is today, i.e. 2 per cent, according to the 1996 Census (*Population distribution*, *Indigenous Australians 1996*, 1997:12).

Various attempts have been made to estimate the Aboriginal populations of the Australian mainland and Tasmania before and since British colonisation but it is probably impossible to arrive at a definitive figure, even for colonies like South Australia or more localised areas still, let alone for the continent as a whole. The reasons for this will be explored in due course. For the moment we shall present a number of estimates that have been made.

The highest figure published so far for the pre-1788 Aboriginal population for Australia as a whole is archaeologist Colin Pardoe's calculation of 3,000,000. Pardoe based this on findings from a 'vast Aboriginal graveyard' at Lake Victoria in far western New South Wales north of the River Murray (Maiden, 1994: 101). The lowest estimate is 150,000 (Smith, 1980:68). Until fairly recently, the most widely accepted figure among non-Indigenous researchers and observers was anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown's, at 300,000, calculated in 1930 (Butlin, 1983:5). Demographer L.R. Smith has suggested 314,500, Governor Phillip 1,000,000, and historians Mulvaney and White 700,000 (Smith, 1980:69; Mulvaney and White, 1987:111). Today, historians suggest that Australia's Indigenous Australian population in 1788 was 750,000 and this figure appears to have wide support (Attwood and Foster, 2003:5).

Likewise there are various estimates for South Australia which, of all the Australian colonies, has the longest history of inclusion of Aboriginal people in census counts (since 1851). But the coverage has been inadequate (people living in remote areas were left out) and the data erratic. Other official reports were equally problematic (Smith, 1980:143; Grimshaw, Lake, McGrath and Quartly, 1994:138). Bearing this in mind, these official sources indicated that, at colonisation in 1836, South Australia's Aboriginal population was 12,000. Radcliffe-Brown suggested 10,000 (the lowest estimate). Another anthropologist, Norman Tindale, in 1940 proffered the highest figure (25,800);

demographer L.R. Smith's 'best estimate' is 15,000 (Smith, 1980:154); while John Summers stated that 'there may have been two, three or four times' the number specified by Tindale, i.e. between 20,000 and 40,000 (Summers, 1986a:283).

A major difficulty which makes it almost impossible to gain the true picture of pre-invasion populations is the fact that, in South Australia at least, and for parts of New South Wales and Queensland, three smallpox epidemics spread among Aboriginal communities in eastern Australia -- the first at Sydney in 1789, the second in 1829-31 from New South Wales through the Murray River and then westward to Kaurna country on the Adelaide plains (Pope, 1989:37). Elsewhere, another smallpox epidemic occurred in 1830 in the Northern Territory, then still part of 'New South Wales' (Rose, 1991: 75). Thus colonists 'did not encounter original (Aboriginal) Australians in an undisturbed state' (Summers, 1986a:283). In other words, estimates of pre-1788 and early post-1788 Aboriginal populations need to be adjusted upwards, at least in a number of cases. Furthermore, evidence of the effects of venereal diseases lends weight to this proposition.

This decline of population commonly happened within decades of colonial settlement and sometimes within much shorter timeframes. In Tasmania, an original population of at least 4000 prior to the 1790s had shrunk to a 'couple of hundred by the 1830s' (McGrath, 1995:21). Victoria, with an original population of at least 15,000 and perhaps 50,000 in the 1830s had dropped to 1700 by the 1860s, while in parts of the Northern Territory between 1880 and the late 1930s the rate of decline was 'perhaps 97 per cent in the Alligator River region' (Markus, 1994:xi). In one case in the Northern Territory, at Victoria River, the Kurangpurru people numbered some 500 in the early 1880s but by the early 1890s there were only two men left -- a drop of 99 per cent (Rose, 1991:78). In Queensland an original Murri population of perhaps 200,000 had dropped to some 25,000 by the 1890s, or by about 90 per cent (Evans, 2003:70). In South Australia an original population of at least 15,000 and possibly 20,000 was officially estimated at 4,397 by 1866 (Smith, 1980:155) -- a loss of between 70 and 78 per cent. This appalling destruction of human life of genocidal proportions only stabilised and gradually reversed during the 20th century. In 1996 the Census estimated the Indigenous Australian population at 372,100 -- roughly half what it probably was in 1788 (*Population distribution, Indigenous Australians 1996*:12).

These dramatic falls contrast sharply with the situation for immigrant non-Aboriginal Australians and the Australian-born. At the end of 1860 the Australian population as a whole (but excluding traditionally-oriented Aborigines) was officially 1,145,484 and the Aboriginal population 179,402. By the beginning of the 20th century, the non-Aboriginal population was 3,765,339 and the Aboriginal 93,536 (Kingston, 1988:108). In other words between 1860 and 1901, the non-Aboriginal population had increased by over 32 per cent whereas the Aboriginal population had dropped by more than 47 per cent.

To make the point even clearer we need to transpose the above rates of Indigenous population decline to non-Indigenous census estimates and project them forward. The idea is to show what would happen to the total Australian

population of 18,311,500 (in 1996) if another country's citizens took over Australia and had a commensurate impact to the 1788, and subsequent, occupations of Aboriginal Australia. Taking 1996 as equivalent to 1788, by 2068 Australia's population would have dropped to 2,746,725 and by 2108 to 1,290,960. From this basis, it would take until 2203 for it to reach some 9,000,000 people, that is, about half what it was in 1996.

Colonisation of Aboriginal Australia and invasive ideas 1: Racial and cultural classifications at invasion, and *terra nullius*

Colonisation of Aboriginal Australia became a reality when, in 1770, English navigator Captain Cook 'took possession of the east coast of "New South Wales" in the name of King George III' (Frost, 1998:52). At a stroke, and without any negotiations with Aboriginal people, two-thirds of Australia became 'Crown land'. Colonisation itself began seriously when the British government sent Captain Arthur Phillip to plant a convict and military settlement in 1788 at Kamay in Eora people's land that the British renamed 'Sydney', after Lord Sydney, the British Home Secretary (Martin, 1978:8). There was still no attempt at negotiations although Phillip was issued with official instructions to encourage peaceful relations between the Aboriginal people and the British settlement (Clark, 1962:80).

As they had only limited 'European supposition and knowledge' to draw on, the British had no idea that they had entered a continent in 1788 which may have been home to at least 500,000 people (see previous discussion above). These people -- who had been occupying 'Nova Hollandia' or 'New Holland' (as it was known in Europe) for at least 40,000 years -- spoke hundreds of different languages and comprised numerous nations founded on smaller communal groups and kinship structures (Hollinsworth, 1998: 94; Rickard, 1996:4-5; Atkinson, 2002:25). As Nunga woman Irene Watson states, in relation to her own country in south-east South Australia, 'We had distinct clan lands, carefully marked, and required permission from owners to cross into other people's country' (Watson, 2002:21).

Fundamental to Aboriginal people was a belief system, usually referred to as 'Dreamings', but also 'earthborn' or 'Dreaming law', where Ancestral Beings made both humans and land, and where 'all rights and obligations were derived from people's existence as extensions of places' (Bell, 1998; Rose, 1992:42-57; Swain, 1993:38). As suggested above moreover, Dreamings were not confined to the 'past', as in Western conceptions of history and historical origins, but underpin Aboriginal being in the present. South Australian Aboriginal people today like the Ngarrindjeri, who have been influenced by other cosmologies like Christianity, government policies, and the brutal effects of colonialism, still believe in their 'ngatjis', or personal totems (Hemming, 1996: 30-31; Bell, 1998:114-115; Forte, 1995:2; Brodie, 2002).

The mainly British newcomers and those who followed them, adding

possessions to the Empire as they went in Victoria (1802), Tasmania (1803), Western Australia (1829), South Australia (1836) and Queensland (1859), also brought with them a range of assumptions and ideologies which were to have profound consequences for Aboriginal people as Australia's colonies expanded. The most pervasive rested on denigrating depictions ('barbarians', 'savages' etc.), and hierarchical and racist notions about 'civilisation' and 'progress'. Such ideas or their derivations are still alive and well in workplaces where Aboriginal people are now working. The inescapable conclusion is that aspects of the colonialism described below still circulate in key institutions and organizations in Australia today.

Aboriginal Australia's annexation to the British Empire in the late 18th century occurred when scientists and classifiers (often the same people) were defining some major ideas within a European imperial world. Foucault has described these ideas as deriving from 'a culture entirely devoted to the ordering of space' (Foucault, 1970: xix). 'One influential scheme' in this 'order of things' was 'to categorise human groups into racial types' ranging from the most 'primitive' to the most 'advanced' (Hollinsworth, 1998: 36).

Scientists and philosophers ranked Europeans at the top and, in descending order, various non-Europeans: 'Asians', 'Africans', 'American Indians', and 'New Hollanders' (Australian Aborigines). Captain Cook's reports in 1770 indicated that the Aborigines had attained only a 'rudimentary state of existence' (Frost, 1998: 65). Bound up with these observations were opinions about 'savages' that had been 'building up in the European imagination' -- views which the British had at least 100 years 'before the settlement of Australia' (Reynolds, 1987a:108).

At the same time a different set of ideas, derived from the so-called 'Enlightenment,' had gained some influence among the very same people who were about to take over Aboriginal Australia. One such idea was that Aboriginal people were happier than Europeans because they were 'content with little nay almost nothing', as Sir Joseph Banks observed in 1770, and did not need 'luxuries ... and riches' (Brunton, 1998:104-105). These observers were still convinced nevertheless that their cultures were superior to Indigenous cultures in every respect. In this regard, arguably, these first colonists were ethnocentric rather than racist; and it is possible that non-Aboriginal colonisers were less bothered by racial difference and skin colour at this time than they were later in the 19th century and early 20th century (Broome, 1994: 88; Markus, 1994:55).

But concepts of the 'savage', and the racial typologies, had not gone away. Crucially, the emergence of more theories, or rather speculations, about so-called 'races' started to take more systematic shape in the late 18th century, i.e. when the British were becoming more active as an imperial nation (Anderson,1980:91). While Sir Joseph Banks and Captain Cook may have flirted with Enlightenment ideas, they also described these 'Indians' as 'but one degree removd from Brutes' (Brunton, 1998:91). As we shall see below, foreign descriptions of Aboriginal people continued in similar vein, but were conjoined with a number of others that influenced policy makers and governments making 'Aboriginal legislation'.

Over sixty years later, in the 1830s, the missionary, the Reverend John Williams, told an inquiry in London that the 'New Hollanders' ... were 'the most degraded of any (A)borigines that (he) had met with in any part of (his) travels' and that they had 'no permanent residence' (*Report from the Select Committee on Aborigines ...* 1968:675). Here Williams justified the 'dispossession of the Indigenous owners of this country' through the 'judicial myth' of '*terra nullius*' or uninhabited territory (Hunter, 1996:6). *Terra nullius* literally means 'land belonging to no one' (Frost, 1998:66). It also means a country that does not have a sovereign (Reynolds, 1987b:12). The crucial point, coming from English philosopher, John Locke, is that, in order to belong to land and thus have property in land, human beings must carry out God's command to 'improve' it. Otherwise it was 'waste land', even if people were living on it (Reynolds, 1987b:25).

Nevertheless it became clear to colonists once they occupied Australia that indeed it was home to Aboriginal people who had native title and knew it. In 1791 Benelong, or Banelon, a Bidjigal man, told Deputy-Judge Advocate Collins that 'Goat Island' in Sydney Harbour belonged to him, and had been his father's before him. As will be analysed shortly, by the 1830s there was much more talk about Aboriginal people as being the '"original possessors of the soil"', with '"an incontrovertible right"' to it (Reynolds, 1996:25-26).

Yet *terra nullius* remained the dominant legal doctrine in judgements involving Indigenous land rights and British and Australian common law until the 1992 Mabo and the 1996 Wik decisions recognised 'the limited set of property rights for traditional Indigenous Australians' (Hunter, 1998:18, note 5). So why did Crown land, and indeed other forms of land title, exclude or marginalise Aboriginal law for so long?

The decisive historical moment when native title was lost and not regained until 1992, was the early 1830s to about 1850. Significantly, it covers the very time when the founders of 'South Australia' were planning that colony, and when immigrants there were taking over Nunga lands -- a matter we will consider in chapter two.

Native title existed in international law in 1788 but it was not until the 1830s and 1840s that it became a focal point in relations 'between black and white Australians' (Reynolds, 1987a:133). First, the spread of colonial settlement by that time brought more and more Aboriginal groups face-to-face with the non-Indigenous intruders -- proving beyond doubt that Australia contained sizeable numbers of Aboriginal people. These encounters disproved at least one aspect of *terra nullius* -- that Australia was 'uninhabited'.

Secondly, and more importantly, a significant group of colonial and imperial figures had emerged who supported and argued for Indigenous land rights. They were also increasingly disturbed by the conflicts, massacres and frontier violence that were happening in Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. They included colonial Australian governors Gipps, Bourke and Gawler; imperial British officials Grey, Glenelg, Stephen, Russell and Buxton; colonial missionaries Backhouse and Threlkeld; and a number of other

'philanthropists' and 'humanitarians' in Britain and Australia (Reynolds, 1987b:135-145; Martin, 1993:58-59).

Opposing these 'humanitarians' were most of the major stockowners and pastoralists, who pushed the 'squatting movement' into Aboriginal lands. They included the 'overlanders' who brought sheep and cattle along the River Murray to South Australia (Hemming, Wood and Hunter, 2000:338). By this time, the pastoral industry and wool-growing in particular had become expansionist and export-oriented (McMichael, 1984:146). To be competitive in this increasingly global market, the costs of producing raw wool at its Australian source had to be as low as possible. Two main ways of lowering such costs were gaining access to large areas of Crown land and keeping the price of pastoral labour down. Stockholders and woolgrowers preferred bonded or convict workers who were less expensive to maintain than free wage labourers (McMichael, 1984:131). These employers were also prepared to use Aboriginal workers for this reason, a point we shall return to in the next chapter, while the need for more and more grazing land intensified the already parlous state of race relations.

In their support for Aboriginal land title (or at least the concept of Aboriginal land title), and their criticism of certain settler actions in killing Aboriginal people, the 'humanitarians' roused the squatters to join together into a powerful lobby group which ultimately succeeded in gaining security of tenure over Crown leaseholds and options to turn leases into freehold -- thus making it much more difficult to acknowledge or claim native title. Equally effective was to simply ignore the 'humanitarian critique' (Lester, 2002:32). In any case, the London government was simply too far away to control the situation on the ground, or for Colonial Office reports to have any impact (Moses, 2002:30).

Another settler tactic was to mount a 'trans-imperial discourse' through conservative and influential media like the London *Times* and the colonial *Sydney Morning Herald*, to argue that assigned convicts and Aborigines '"could only be ruled by terror"', and that the 'settler project' of taking over 'waste' land was justified in the name of 'progress' (Lester, 2002:33,37; Thorpe, 1996:53). Most telling of all however was the fundamental contradiction in what Cannon has described as 'genocide, with the best of intentions' (Cannon, 1993: 263). Irrespective of the ideological and political differences between them, neither the 'squatters' nor the 'humanitarians' wanted to stop 'the colonization project despite the manifest consequences of tribal extermination through violence and extinction by disease' (Moses, 2002:29-30; Reynolds, 1972:1).

The main reasons and justifications for these events were political, ideological, pragmatic and economic, as much as they were arguments over law. They are still being played out in legislative and political changes and in costly, protracted legal battles. Native title claims since the Mabo High Court judgement (1992) and the Native Title Act (1993) (e.g. the Yorta Yorta's in 2002 in the High Court) have been largely unsuccessful. Since the Yorta Yorta decision it is likely that almost all native title claims will fail, thus returning Australia to *terra nullius* (Rintoul, 2002).

In South Australia, the 'Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair' during the 1990s was a

'long drawn-out process' that brought out 'a lot of hurts' as Kaurna/Ngarrindjeri woman, Veronica Brodie described it (Brodie, 2002:143). A Royal Commission in South Australia in 1995 concluded that certain Ngarrindjeri people had 'invented' their spiritual beliefs -- a finding based on an out-of-date anthropology that dismissed Aboriginal 'living culture' (Lucas, 1996:43). Even though a federal court judge in 2001 rejected the 1995 Royal Commission's claim that the restricted women's business was 'fabricated', the 'hurts' remain, notably among those most directly affected -- the Nunga men and women who found themselves embroiled in the affair and who are now trying to restore relationships (Brodie, 2002:143-144).

Invasive ideas 2: Some racial and cultural classifications post-invasion to present

Earlier we pointed out that colonisation involved an assumed superiority in British and European cultures which the colonists brought with them to Aboriginal Australia (Reynolds, 1974:46-47). This was followed up in the 19th and 20th centuries with a 'mania for calibrating human physical diversity' which fixed Aborigines 'in direct contrast with the norm of "white civilised man"' and promoted 'perceptions of Aboriginal cultures as biologically determined and incapable of adapting to change' (Haebich, 2000:132). This mind-set is one constant that became established at the outset of invasion and which remains, in subtle and not-so subtle forms, today.

In what follows, we pay attention to further examples of racial and cultural classifications which were and continue to be influential -- albeit different in outline or expression -- in mainstream society, culture, politics and institutions. All of them overlap and collectively represent arguably the most powerful ideological weapons that non-Aboriginal people have brought to bear against Aboriginal people. Relevant for our purposes here are practices like physical and anatomical measurements of human beings, classifications of 'intelligence' in medical practice, racialised typologies based mainly on skin colour, the so-called 'survival of the fittest' doctrine, eugenic fears about 'race mixing', and simplistic categorisations between 'real' and 'unreal' Aborigines (Hemming, 1999:90).

Over this 200-plus year period, mainstream non-Aboriginal religious and scientific thought interacted but an emerging struggle developed between them. One major prevailing religious concept was the 'Great Chain of Being'. According to this any creature fitted into a hierarchy, with God at the top of it, followed by angels and, in descending order, various human beings, animals and plants, with simple sea creatures at the bottom (Hollinsworth, 1998:36).

Scientists at this time, notably botanists like Linnaeus and Buffon believed in the 'Great Chain' and used their grids of perception to classify human beings in relation to it, differentiating all living things by 'a series of gradations' (Banton, 1967:19). In the process of the shift to this secular, 'rational' or 'scientific' world view, various British and European classifiers built on an unquestioned cultural superiority.

For example, William Lawrence, an English comparative anatomist, in his *Lectures on comparative anatomy* (1819) had included an account of Australian Aborigines, dismissing them as 'naked, shivering and starved New Hollanders' who could not compare to 'the highly civilized nations of Europe' (Reynolds, 1974:46-47). Lawrence and others like the Dutchman, Camper and Charles White, Lawrence's teacher, justified this stereotype by devising 'facial angles' and 'ideal-type' classical Greek male features to demonstrate that non-European peoples, particularly dark-skinned ones, were closer to apes and monkeys than to human beings.

In Australia, comparative anatomy and phrenology took a firm grip among the educated and scientific classes. Phrenology, invented in Europe in the early 19th century, lasted well into the 20th century (Kearney, 1973:19). Phrenologists claimed that human temperament and intelligence could be worked out by examining the shape and size of human skulls, and in 1844 some of them concluded that 'the great preponderancy of brain in the New Hollander, as in all savage nations' lay at the back of the head, 'the seat of the passions' (Reynolds, 1972:114). In 1859, phrenologists were invited to give assessments of Aboriginal character to 'a select committee on Aborigines' in Victoria. One of these phrenologists concluded that Aboriginal adults were incapable of improvement, while another collector, a 'Mr. Sohier', stated that 'the Aborigines' small brains and inferior temperament were great barriers to their ever being permanently improved' (Kearney, 1973: 17; Reynolds, 1974:50). Among these remains were those of Mullawirraburka, or 'King John', a Kaurna elder (Brock 1993:40). (Such practices were and are deeply disturbing for Aboriginal people, who believe that the remains of their old people must be returned to their country.) This obsession with brain size lasted a long time, even among pro-Aboriginal experts like the influential anthropologist, A.P. Elkin, who was a leading figure in developing assimilation policy in the 1930s and who declared that 'the (A)borigine is ... endowed with a comparatively small size of brain' (McGregor, 1993:99).

Measuring cranial capacity, a major element in phrenology, and psychometric testing, one of phrenology's offshoots, were used to assess Aboriginal people. These studies were mostly done by psychologists with an interest in anthropology at a time when there was relatively little difference between 'the work of anthropologists, medical psychologists and biological scientists' (Austin, 1990:106). In 1915, S.D. Porteus conducted cognitive experiments (the Maze Test) on Ngarrindjeri people at Raukkan (Point McLeay). Porteus' main interests were in assessing so-called 'retarded' children, making connections between cranial measures and intelligence, and comparing Aboriginal people with the 'feeble-minded' of White society (Austin, 1990:106). Porteus claimed that Aboriginal children had a shorter period of mental development than white children, and in 1931 had declared that Aboriginal adults had a '"brain capacity of a 13-year old white schoolboy"' (Porteus quoted in Kearney, 1973:19). These kinds of studies continued on much the same lines well into the 1960s (Kearney, 1973:18-19).

It is no surprise that these scientists came up with such negative findings. While some social scientists, anthropologists and observers valued Aboriginal cultures, the majority of non-Aboriginal opinion in these educated circles until very recent times believed that Aboriginal Australians' cognitive ability was 'lower than that of the European'; and that Aboriginal people could be ranked accordingly on a 'hierarchy of races' (Kearney, 1973:22). The main problem was that majority opinion (whether 'educated' or not) in Australia accepted a type of race-thinking where so-called 'whites' -- either Australian-born or British -- were always superior to 'non-whites' or 'non-Europeans'.

Closely connected to this basic premise were two others: that there was such a thing as a 'pure' race (or at least easily recognised physical differences between peoples), and that it was a bad idea for different races to cohabit and have children (Evans, Moore, Jamison and Saunders, 1997:40). However it rarely occurred to settler Australians (and settler Australian men in particular) that the increase in the numbers of Aboriginal children with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal background had anything to do with them, which included their own 'sexual violations of Aboriginal women', or that such actions could lead to transgenerational trauma in Aboriginal people today (Atkinson, 2002:61-64; Hollinsworth, 1998:39). (See next chapter.)

If the non-Aboriginal 'grids of perception' and hierarchies of race described above sorted the various peoples of the world into physical and cultural types, evolutionary theory and 'Social Darwinism' in particular provided a seemingly plausible means to colonials of justifying Aboriginal population decline while, at the same time, masking the colonial land-taking, introduced diseases, introduced drugs like alcohol, kidnapping Aboriginal women, and frontier violence that were mainly responsible for such decline (Griffiths, 1987:19).

Social Darwinism predominated in Australia from the 1880s to the 1940s but its basic idea, 'survival of the fittest', permeates business culture and governments today in the ideology of the 'competitive economic environment' (Stilwell, 2003:86). Social Darwinism, or what may more accurately be called 'Spencerism' -- after Herbert Spencer, the 'father of sociology' -- was the application of Darwin's theories of biological evolution to human societies (Hollinsworth, 1998:39). Darwin had argued that species improved by a process called 'natural selection' where the 'bad' were eliminated while the 'good' were preserved. Spencer drew from this in 1850 that the 'stronger races' would eliminate the 'weaker races', leading to society's advance. Thus the disappearance of Aboriginal people was part of 'Nature's plan' (Markus, 1994:14-15; Evans, Saunders and Cronin, 1988:12).

Social Darwinism was central to the thinking of major non-Aboriginal figures and policy makers involved in Aboriginal lives in the 20th century, such as the anthropologist, Baldwin Spencer; the 'Chief Protector of Aborigines' in the Northern Territory, Cecil Cook; and 'Chief Protector of Aboriginals' in Queensland, John W. Bleakley (Markus, 1994:111; Austin, 1990). In 1930 Bleakley, quoting Baldwin Spencer, stated that Australia was 'a very ancient land' where 'crude and quaint' creatures which had 'passed away in the struggle

for existence' in other parts of the world had survived in Australia. 'Aborigines' were similar to the 'platypus' and the 'kangaroo' in this regard; an example of a 'stone age' culture who, 'if the white man' had not disturbed them by 'invading' their country, would have probably 'continued in the peaceful stone age condition indefinitely' (Bleakley, 1930:61-62).

Social Darwinism had a gloomy counterpart, the 'doomed race' idea, which was circulating at much the same time (McGregor, 1997:ix,13). As Aboriginal people could not seem to cope with white invasion, in the struggle for existence, they were destined to die out. Usually this was explained away as an inevitable, mysterious process, although a few more honest colonials sheeted home the cause to their own genocidal acts (Evans, Saunders and Cronin, 1988: 81).

These European-inspired male-centred classifications of 'man' inspired the 19th century 'founding fathers of anthropology' -- mostly natural scientists influenced by Darwinism -- and a number of those who either speculated about human evolution or carried out studies of Aboriginal people in central Australia. These 'early ethnographers' were mainly interested in gathering information about so-called 'pure', pre-European Aboriginal cultures, overlooking the effects of invasions, and the 'adaption of European goods to traditional uses' (Mulvaney, 1990:28; Mulvaney, 1989:113,119). What was emerging was a contemporary Aboriginality which incorporates elements of the colonial culture. This development challenged appeals to a pristine pre-colonial past 'where authenticity was determined by the authority of European discourses' (Russell, 2001: 85).

Such outmoded versions of anthropology set the 'intellectual context' for the view that so-called 'desert nomads' were and are synonymous with Aboriginal Australians, and which was privileged at the 1995 *Hindmarsh Island Bridge Royal Commission* above both Ngarrindjeri beliefs or alternative ethnographic accounts (Mulvaney, 1989:118-119; Hemming, 1996; Lucas, 1996:43). Such views dominate common-sense understandings in Australian society, immobilising Aboriginal identity, and typifying 'the failure of administrations to grasp the enormous cultural diversity and environmental complexity of Australian (Aboriginal) societies' (Mulvaney, 1989:118-119).

The motives, policies and practices that came out these ideas will be discussed in the next chapter for the South Australian situation. Here we need to note that these attempts to deal with the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal people through much of Australia were shaped largely around the question of 'race'. This issue had been brewing in Australia from the beginnings of British occupation but became sharper from the 1850s, with the influx of non-Europeans, like the Chinese in the 1840s and 1850s, the so-called Afghans from Pakistan who worked in outback South Australia, and the importation of Melanesian or Pacific Islanders to work in the Queensland sugar industry from the 1860s to the 1890s (Saunders, 1982).

This 'politics of whiteness' aimed to prevent non-British and non-Europeans from coming to Australia; and succeeded in gaining legislation curbing Chinese entry, the passing of the federal 1901 Immigration Restriction Act (the 'White Australia' policy), and the exclusion and deportation of Pacific Islanders from

Queensland (Markus, 1994:67,117; Evans, Moore, Saunders and Jamison, 1997:185). 'White Australia' was not dismantled officially until the 1970s but it did not end such racism even then (Hollinsworth, 1998:237). 'Politics of whiteness' refers to historically-created actions which position or assume 'white' racial interests above all others, e.g. gender (Ignatiev and Garvey, 1996:10). Being born 'white' is clearly a marker of race or biology, but more important is being born into a system or structure of rule which privileges those classified as 'white' (Moreton-Robinson, 2000:49). Moreover, by turning our gaze on racism in this way focusses more of our attention to whiteness and the state, and challenges the equation of race and ethnicity with Aboriginal people and non-English speaking migrants to Australia (Crowley, 1997: 57).

Immigration policy must be seen as one element in defining and confining those deemed 'not-white'. The other related element was a series of laws and ordinances which colonial and state governments passed to control Aboriginal people in various ways. Essentially these controls were variations on a theme which began when Governor Phillip planted a British Colony in 1788 and when Governor Hindmarsh assumed command of the South Australian colony in 1836: trying to bring or force Aboriginal people into 'mainstream' society (to use the Nunga term), or to keep them out of it (Stanner, 1977:25; Reynolds, 2001:166; Brock, 1993:6).

In this critical period when the politics of whiteness was defining what kinds of citizens should constitute the Australian nation, Aboriginal people were showing signs of arresting the apparently unstoppable fall in their numbers. As pointed out elsewhere, this was partly due to the growing numbers of Aboriginal people who had close kinship ties to Aboriginal communities (and thus were culturally and sociologically Aboriginal) but who were usually the sons and daughters of non-Aboriginal fathers and Aboriginal mothers. Racialised mainstream thought and actions however categorised them as 'half castes', 'quadroons', 'mixed race,' and 'remnants'. Authorities of all kinds, particularly some of the white 'protectors', administrators, and policy makers saw them as 'problem populations', who needed to be taken away from their communities while submitting them to the 'Christianising' and 'civilising' process (Haebich, 2000:142-143). In other words, this is the point where the Stolen Generations increasingly come from.

At the same time, those like the Queenslander Archibald Meston, who were largely responsible for developing the so-called 'protectionist' or 'segregationist' schemes that became a model for South Australia's Aborigines Act of 1911, urged that those people in remote Australia who had relatively sporadic contacts with whites should be isolated and 'preserved', away from the influences of white society and even be 'rejuvenated' (Bleakley, 1930; Evans, Saunders and Cronin, 1988:119; Thorpe, 1984:59-63). These actions came out of a muddle of mixed motives, contradictory policies, racial ideologies and a belated humanitarianism which are the root of a prevalent racism that undermines and delegitimates the complexity of Aboriginal identity. But they also came out of white agitation in colonial towns to remove out of sight and out of mind the very Aboriginal people in those towns whom settlers had turned into refugees (Evans, 1999:126;

Atkinson, 2002:66). The question of 'Aboriginal policy' will be reviewed in chapter two. For the moment, we need to consider another determining feature of Aboriginal lives in the present, namely the armed struggle that went on through most of the Australian continent and which has left a legacy of trauma and stress for the Aboriginal survivors and their descendants (Evans, 1984: 191; Atkinson, 2002:58-64).

Frontier conflicts and massacres on Australian soil

These included military campaigns, battles, guerilla raids, Native Police and white police actions, government-led punitive expeditions, 'vigilante violence' or 'hunting parties', and assorted skirmishes between Australia's Indigenous inhabitants, settler-Australians, and immigrants, and their allies on both sides (Reynolds, 1987:32-57; Evans, Saunders and Cronin, 1988: 33-66; Evans, 1999:22-25, 36-41; Thorpe, 1998; Foster, Hosking and Nettelbeck, 2001:6; Critchett, 2003:58; Cannon, 1993). Australia-wide, these conflicts began in 1788 and lasted until about 1930 (Thorpe, 1998; McKernan and Browne, 1988:92). They are still not over. (See chapter 'Aboriginal workers in the criminal justice system'.)

At times, clashes were so serious that colonial observers and participants regularly referred to a state of war (Reynolds, 1972:1-2; Evans, Saunders and Cronin, 1988:44-45; McKernan and Browne, 1988: 92-120; Reynolds, 1987:4-8). War is defined as '"a conflict carried on by force of arms as between nations or states, or between parties within a state"' (McKernan and Browne, 1988:93). This definition applies to much of what happened in Australia, including South Australia, particularly when colonials seized Aboriginal land and showed that they intended to stay on it permanently. At the same time, the conflict 'lacked the more structured pattern of the clash of more conventional armies'. It was also 'very much an ethnic war, waged between distinct communities, both ... occupying the same territory' (Evans, 1999:23). The struggle was often bitter and unforgiving, and all parties to the conflicts committed atrocities (Cannon, 1993:29-39; Reid, 1982).

Compared to other peoples in world history, Indigenous Australian nations, tribes, clans or mobs were not as warlike or expansionary. However fighting was an integral part of the culture and 'armed combat between adult males was an age-old tradition' (Cannon, 1993:3). In parts of northern Australia, for example, 'blackfellow wars' -- *waringari* -- 'were central to Aboriginal life' both before and after European invasion (Rose, 1991:101). Most disputes were about marriage arrangements, territory, illegal acts, and competition for scarce resources. Although fights were sometimes fatal and violent, wounding rather than killing opponents was the main object. In addition Aboriginal people resorted to 'payback' (killing to avenge a wrong) and sorcery, to deal with perceived enemies (Rose, 2003:126; Reynolds, 1982:86-88). Aboriginal men used these methods in the attempt to resist the colonial takeover (Reynolds, 1982:86-95). At the same time, Aboriginal ethics placed limits on such conflicts, at least within Aboriginal societies themselves (Rose, 1991:103).

By contrast, an aim of warfare for the British and colonial forces was 'the remorseless extermination of their opponents' (Gale, 1972:40).

A large book could be written on these 'Colonial-Aboriginal Wars' (Thorpe, 1996:184-185). It is only possible here to provide an outline. Nevertheless, the following points can be made:

It was an undeclared war, even though at certain times, e.g. in 1824 in New South Wales, Governor Brisbane declared martial law against Aboriginal men in the Bathurst region. British military forces such as the 17th Regiment took part in killing Aboriginal men, for example on Stradbroke Island in the 1830s in Queensland (Evans, 1992:20). One reason for not declaring a war officially was that the British government did not recognise Aboriginal people as comprising a sovereign nation and hence able to conduct war and sign treaties. (See discussion on *terra nullius* and native title above.)

The overall conflict 'can be considered the only full-scale war on Australian soil'. Thus Australia was not occupied peacefully, but like other comparable countries (e.g. the United States, Africa) had to be won for the occupying peoples through armed struggle (McKernan and Browne, 1988:94).

The Colonial-Aboriginal War was a 'classic' colonial war for two reasons. Firstly, 'it was limited for the invader but total for the invaded who had nowhere else to go' (McKernan and Browne, 1988:94). Secondly, colonial Australian governments, especially in Queensland, trained and deployed Indigenous men in Native Police detachments to 'suppress Indigenous resistance' (Evans, Saunders and Cronin, 1988:55-66; Evans, 2003:71; Kiernan, 1995:77).

Conflict was widespread insofar as every colony experienced instances of combat and violence (Reynolds, 1982:123). Some examples were the Hawkesbury and Nepean wars (1790-1805), the Wiradjuri wars (1820s), the Kamilaroi wars (1830s), clashes on the northern rivers (1840s) (New South Wales); the frontier wars of Victoria's western districts (1840s); fatal fights between overlanders, settlers and Aborigines on the Murray River, the South-East, the Flinders Ranges and Eyre Peninsula (late 1830s to early 1850s) (South Australia); the 'Black War' (1827-1830) (Tasmania); Aboriginal resistance around the Swan and Murray Rivers (1829-1834) (Western Australia); the MacIntyre River war (1840-1849), the 'Mandandanji land war' (1842-1852), the Kalkadoon war (late 1870s-1883) (Queensland); and the unofficial war in the Northern Territory to establish cattle empires (1883-1894) (Thorpe, 1998; McKernan and Browne, 1988; Summers, 1986a:294-295; Medcalf, 1995:38-43; Foster, Hosking and Nettelbeck, 2001:2-8; Pope, 1989: 74-85; Mulvaney, 1989:168-174; Collins, 2002; Evans, Saunders and Cronin, 1988:42-46; Rose, 1992:8-11).

Aboriginal warriors and those seeking revenge used several strategies against the colonials depending on the circumstances: (1) large groups, in a phalanx or crescent battle formation, who launched a succession of spears; (2) smaller bands who carried out 'hit-and-run' raids; (3) attacks on settler property and livestock; and (4) killing selected victims (and sometimes settler families) -- as distinct from combatants.

(1) was usually adopted in certain frontier situations (e.g. Eyre Peninsula in South Australia and central Queensland) when Aboriginal warriors felt confident of beating a poorly-armed and/or a smaller opposing force. (2) was a more common tactic than (1), suited Aboriginal modes of organization and fighting, and allowed better chances of escape. (3) was probably the most damaging tactic, a form of economic warfare, including arson, that sometimes caused settlers to abandon country. The main drawback was that it often aroused ferocious settler responses because livestock was often a more valuable commodity than people. (4) was somewhat exceptional. These were occasions when Aboriginal men murdered whites who were 'innocent', or who were not directly implicated in killing Aboriginal people. Again, there were terrible consequences for such acts, as after the Hornet Bank station massacre in Queensland (1857) when white vigilantes killed between at least 150 Jiman people in retaliation. (Reid, 1982:96; Cannon, 1993:51; Evans, 1999:37; McKernan and Browne, 1988:104; Broome, 1994:95; Critchett, 2003:55-56; Medcalf, 1995:40; Reid, 1982:96; Atkinson, 2002:90).

While Aboriginal modes of warfare were generally collective efforts, a number of leaders emerged to confront their colonial adversaries. Probably the first was Pemulwuy (western Sydney region 1790-1805), his son Tedbury (1805-1810); Windradyne of the Wiradjuri (New South Wales 1820s); Tarerenorerer or Walyer, a woman who co-ordinated attacks by the Emu Bay people in Tasmania (1828); Yagan, who fought against settlers in Western Australia in the early 1830s; Jupiter, Cocknose, Winnaberrie and Koort Kirrup in Victoria (1840s); Dundalli, Eumundi and Bussamarai in Queensland in the 1840s and 1850s; and Jandewarra or Pidgeon in the Kimberleys, north west Australia, in 1891-1897 (Willmot, 1987; Critchett, 2003:56; Ryan, 1996:141; Connors, 1992:53; Collins, 2002:25; Toussaint, 1995:248-249).

Colonials used a variety of means to defend themselves, attack Aboriginal people and groups, and to subjugate Aboriginal resistance: from military regiments and other government-organised means of violence, down to settler vigilante squads and individuals like William Fraser of Queensland who carried out their own private wars. As noted above, the formation of the Native Police, a well-armed mounted infantry comprising young Aboriginal men under the command of white officers, comprised possibly the most deadly weapon the colonials possessed, especially in Queensland (Evans and Thorpe, 2001:26-28). At the same time, this corps did not kill as many Aboriginal people as colonial settlers did (Evans, 2003:73).

Colonial forces possessed several advantages over Aboriginal combatants: weapons and other technologies, horses, numbers, and a relentless intent to destroy their enemy. Even before 1860, the guns colonials used, like muskets, could inflict serious damage. Well-aimed spears, and Aboriginal bravery in the face of gunfire, counteracted this to an extent (McKernan and Browne, 1988: 99). After 1860 more efficient, reliable, powerful and quicker-firing weapons like Colt revolvers, Snider carbines, Martini-Henry and Winchester rifles swung the military balance decisively in favour of the colonials (Evans, 2003:71). Aboriginal

men did for a time get hold of guns, e.g. in Victoria in the early 1840s, which they used against each other as well as against the colonials. But the colonials were able to disarm and outlaw their use, except for 'trusted' Aborigines, and the Native Police forces (Cannon, 1993:29-32). Unlike Native Americans, Aboriginal warriors did not use the horse in warfare, although they became excellent horsemen when employed as stockmen and trackers (McKernan and Browne, 1988:113). And, as discussed above, the rapid decline of the Aboriginal population, together with ever-growing immigrant numbers, proved too much for Aboriginal resistance in the long run.

The death toll for Australia as a whole, as a result of warfare and fatal conflict, like the question of Aboriginal population numbers, is as much a methodological question as a matter of establishing historical fact (Critchett, 2003:56). For one thing, the authorities usually enumerated settler deaths more carefully than they did Aboriginal deaths (Evans and Thorpe, 2001:22-23). Nevertheless Reynolds suggested that it was 'reasonable to suppose' that 'at least 20,000 Aborigines were killed, with about half of these deaths (10,000) in Queensland' (Reynolds, 1982:122). Settler deaths Australia-wide have been estimated at between 1,000 and 3,000 (Broome, 2003:96). The Victorian toll has attracted probably the most research into the subject, with Broome suggesting that Aboriginal deaths there were in the region of 700-1000 and non-Aboriginal deaths were only 59 (Broome, 2003:96). So far, no detailed study of South Australia has been done, but one recent account conservatively estimated an Aboriginal death toll of 400-800, compared to 80 European deaths (Foster, Hosking and Nettelbeck, 2001:8-9). Taken together, these calculations 'suggest a ratio of 10 to 1 black to white deaths is not ... unreasonable ... to apply nation-wide' (Broome, 2003:95).

Finally, much of what we know about frontier conflicts is that they were more like massacres than wars (Thorpe, 1995:39). Indeed, a dictionary definition of massacre as 'general slaughter, carnage of persons', could apply to *most* fatal clashes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the period under review (Fowler and Fowler, 1964:749). Similarly, a thesaurus definition of massacre as 'bloodshed, mayhem' and 'pillage' is found under the sub-heading, 'act of war', which in turn is under the heading 'War/Peace' (Bernard, 1986:783). Implied in the definition, although not central to it, is that those killed are 'victims' (innocent or otherwise) rather than combatants. As in the case of the frontier wars, colonials carried out more massacres and killings of Aboriginal people than Aboriginal people did of colonials, or of other Aboriginal people.

Conclusion

In this chapter we put forward a number of themes, contexts and arguments in order to understand how and why relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians have become what they are: the often fatal incursions into their lands and consequent genocidal population losses; the impossible mission in trying to reconcile colonialism with humanitarianism; and the denigration of Aboriginal being through the importation of overseas ideas and practices.

History, particularly the practice of ‘effective history’, is a fundamental analytical strategy that helps to explain these events and their connections to the present. Indeed, in certain respects, as other parts of this study show, Australia remains a deeply colonial, racialised space for Aboriginal people. In the next chapter, our analysis turns more to South Australia and focuses on a number of themes and issues such as the connections between Australian and Aboriginal family forms, the development of ‘Aboriginal policy’ (including the Stolen Generations), and the genesis and character of Aboriginal employment.