Confronting Racism in Communities

Guidelines and Resources for Anti-Racism Training Workshops

Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care

CMCD Centre for Multicultural and Community Development

University of the Sunshine Coast
Queensland, Australia

Written by David Hollinsworth

Confronting Racism in Communities

Guidelines and Resources for Anti-Racism Training Workshops

Written by David Hollinsworth

This project was funded by the Queensland Government

Contact Details

Copyright Information

Cover Design

Diane Belling, Marketing and Communications, University of the Sunshine Coast

Contents

1.   Introduction and objectives

These guidelines and resources were developed by David Hollinsworth with assistance from Hurriyet Babacan and Mitra Khakbaz of the Centre for Multicultural and Community Development (CMCD) at the University of the Sunshine Coast, and Katherine Moriarty, Project Officer for the *Confronting Racism in Communities Project* of the Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care and the CMCD.

They are designed to provide background information and analysis of the various forms of racism and racial discrimination that continue to occur in Australia, and to suggest strategies to support those affected and to combat racism more generally.   These resources are particularly aimed at those community workers and other community members who wish to become more effective in understanding how racism works, its impacts, and how we can support and advise those who experience racism, often on a daily basis.

Most racism in Australia goes unreported and largely ignored, except by those who feel its effects.   In part this is because of people being unwilling for various reasons we will explore to make a complaint.   Partly this failure to recognise racial discrimination results from much racism being hidden or indirect rather than visible and public. One key objective of these resources is to equip people with the knowledge and skills to identify systemic racism and social exclusion that results from the ways our institutions and organisations function.

People who experience racism and those who observe or are told of its effects, often feel frustrated or powerless in knowing how to respond. Often managers, police and other authorities seem disinterested or even hostile. The nature of many events means that our ability to respond is limited. For example, we may have no idea of who wrote the disgusting graffiti on our house or who made the threatening phone call. In other situations we may be

uncertain how to show that we have been treated badly even though we have a strong sense that something is not fair or right.

These materials provide information and discussion of the main ways to complain about racial discrimination or vilification. They also include suggestions about more community based anti-racism campaigns and strategies that we can use in our schools, workplaces, neighbourhoods and associations to encourage respect for cultural differences and human rights.

Some readers may find parts of the material unfamiliar or difficult to understand. For example, the analysis of different forms of racism uses some language and theories that many people will not have encountered before. Other people may find the details of anti-discrimination laws and the various complaints mechanisms off-putting. Don't worry! The materials are designed as a set of resources that you can use as needed and over time. The contents page will help guide you to those sections you want to access. As you become more familiar with these resources you will be able to apply them in your work or community settings and to adapt them for specific purposes. For example you may want to conduct an equity and access audit of your organisation to identify hidden factors that act as barriers fro some community groups. Or you might want to run a workshop for people interested in learning how to support victims of racist abuse.

This guide was initially developed as a resource for a series of anti-racism training workshops conducted across Queensland as part of the *Confronting Racism in Communities Project* of the Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care and the Centre of Multicultural and Community Development, University of the Sunshine Coast. We hope these materials are very useful in assisting you to confront and respond effectively to racism in your community. Please provide any feedback you wish to the author by email:
dhollinsworth@ozemail.com.au

2.   What is racism?

Australia is becoming a "breeding ground for bigotry" where people "refuse to see difference of culture, language or creed as deserving of respect or understanding" according to the Anglican Archbishop of Perth, Roger Herft (*AAP*, October 8, 2006). He warned the Synod that "without strong leadership and determined resistance, the virus of bigotry will spread and many of us will find ourselves mouthing the vicious slogans normally reserved for extremists".

The archbishop's warnings provide yet another timely reminder that Australia is in danger of losing the generalised capacity for respectful and harmonious relations where diversity is celebrated and confidence exceeds anxiety and suspicion. Racism appears to be intensifying significantly in the last ten years, despite a recent poll that placed freedom of speech first and tolerance of different religions and cultures second among Australian values. Mateship came fifth and last in the list (Grattan, *The Age*, October 10, 2006).

An understanding of the nature of racism is essential in order to recognise and combat it effectively. Racism is a global phenomenon that is shaped by various historical, social, political and economic factors. It changes its forms and expression in different contexts and can be defined in many different ways.

The Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (1998) defines it as:

> Racism is an ideology that gives expression to myths about other racial and ethnic groups, that devalues and renders inferior those groups, that reflects and is perpetuated by deeply rooted historical, social, cultural and power inequalities in society.

Racism is the result of a complex interplay of individual beliefs, shared values and ideologies, and institutional practices. It is expressed in the actions of individuals and institutions and is promoted in the ideology of popular culture. Central to racism are beliefs that humans can be grouped into several major categories or races, and that these categories mark the superiority or inferiority of those who belong to them. The concept of race is a social construct, not a scientific one (see below for discussion of the meaning of the concept 'race').

Racist beliefs and prejudices are misconceptions about these assumed racial categories. They are frequently based on, or expressed as, a fear of difference, including differences in customs, values, languages, religion, physical appearance, cultures, and world-views.

Individual racist beliefs are often reinforced by widely held social attitudes (and vice versa). Prevailing racial attitudes are often supported by other dominant values that explain and justify group differentiation and social inequality (for example, class and gender).

Different forms of racism

These beliefs and attitudes underpin individual racist behaviours, including ridicule, racist abuse, property damage, discrimination, racial harassment, racial vilification and physical assault. Alongside such individual behaviours, major social institutions can also exclude, marginalise and oppress racial minorities. This form is called **institutional racism** (the different forms and manifestations of racism in Australia are discussed in more detail below).

Institutional racism describes forms of racism that are structured into political and social institutions and discriminate, either deliberately or indirectly, against particular racial groups. Institutional racism routinely and systematically advantages the dominant cultural or ethnic group while disadvantaging and excluding others. Because it reflects the cultural

assumptions of the dominant group, institutional racism can be hard recognise as the practices of the institution are seen as the norm to which other cultural practices should conform. Such institutions often fail to recognise the structured ways they disadvantage racial minorities because this discrimination is not (usually) deliberate.

For example, poverty and inferior access to health care may cause poor child development and delay school attendance. Racism experienced by students at school may result in lower educational outcomes and early school dropout. Poor education combines with discrimination in employment to result in limited employment opportunities and high levels of unemployment after leaving school. Low paid jobs and unemployment combines with discrimination in the provision of goods and services, especially access to housing and health care. In this way, institutional racism operates as a "wheel of discrimination" but its effects are frequently interpreted by key institutions and agencies as evidence of social dysfunction and pathology sometimes called a cycle or culture of poverty or welfare dependency (McConnochie, Hollinsworth and Pettman, 1998: 36-39).

Racial discrimination can be **direct** (overt) or **indirect** (covert). Direct discrimination refers to less favourable treatment of a person on racial grounds. An example would be a taxi driver who refuses to pick up someone on the basis of their cultural or linguistic background. This type of discrimination is typically deliberate. Indirect racial discrimination results where a practice appears fair but actually disadvantages people from particular racial groups. For example, a rule that British army personnel must not wear anything other than regulation caps and helmets meant that Sikhs and some other religious groups were unable to enlist. This sort of indirect racial discrimination can occur even when there is no intention to discriminate.

What do we mean by 'race'?

Many people use the idea of race or identify people by racial labels in their everyday language. A race is usually defined as a group of people with common ancestry who differ from other groups in terms of physical features such as skin colour or eye shape. Older Australians were often taught to identify particular races such as Mongoloid, Negroid, and Caucasian. Others confuse the idea of race with nationality, language or ethnicity. Thus the belief that races exist as biologically distinct human populations is widespread and strongly held in Australia and many other parts of the world.

In fact, modern scientific study has shown that what we refer to as races have no biologically meaningful existence. For example, genetic mapping has shown that there is enormous overlap between apparently different racial groups. There is more genetic variation within so-called races than between them. The visible physical differences such as skin colour that we use to distinguish between races actually occur as subtle gradations across different populations that merge with their neighbours. They do not mark clear and significant boundaries between those populations. Consequently most scientists have stopped using the term, preferring to talk of populations in ways that remind us of this enormous biological variability and the endless different combinations within them.

Because this is contrary to what many of us believe (and can "see with our own eyes"), it has been hard to get this scientific truth accepted or to get the media and politicians to take it on board. As we shall see, the laws about racial discrimination still use this faulty language. For details of the science in relation to 'races', genetics and populations, see Hollinsworth (2006: 24-26).

Race as social construction

Given that human populations cannot be divided into any clear and consistent biological categories, the boundaries we identify between racial groups are

based on cultural and historical distinctions (Brace, 2005: 4-16). Another way of saying this is to say that races are 'socially constructed'. That is they were created in our cultural imagination and then learnt through socialisation by subsequent generations, who then 'took them for granted' believing them to be "real" divisions in nature. We are taught to notice particular differences that have been regarded as important, and to disregard the overlap between racial groups, and the variations within groups seen as alien or other. Research on infants repeatedly confirms that children need to learn both the markers or indicators of racial differences and their significance (Augoustinos and Reynolds, 2001).

One way this idea of race as socially constructed is reinforced by some writers is to use quotation marks around the word: 'race'. We have done this sometimes in this handbook but many other words are equally socially constructed and it can look clumsy.

Related concepts that should help you understand the idea of social construction are ideology and discourse. **Ideology** can be defined as the social processes that produce, reproduce, change and distribute meanings including our own identities and those of 'others'. These meanings are often structured around opposites such as hot or cold, brave or cowardly, beautiful or ugly, and of course, black and white. This means that much of one's identity is defined in terms of what we are not. For instance, masculinity is often represented as the inverse or opposite of femininity, when most of us can recognise that these gender characteristics can be found to varying degrees among males and females. However, over time ideology normalises or naturalises meanings so we are unaware of their historical and social construction. They become taken-for-granted and assumed to be permanent and universal, when they are actually culturally and place specific. Ideologies can be dominant, but are also resisted or challenged especially with regard to our subjectivities.

The related concept of **discourse** refers to the organising power of ways of comprehending, understanding, and expressing particular subjects or

concepts. A discourse can be understood as similar to a language, which has its own vocabulary, grammatical rules, behavioural codes and performative styles. Discourses produce effects. They provide the means by which we experience and comprehend our world. They generate knowledge as well as the forms in which that knowledge is expressed and disseminated. The power and authority of a discourse rests in its ideological ability to naturalise itself, that is, to appear inevitable and permanent rather than socially constructed and historically specific.

A discourse includes not only the content of that language, but even more importantly a discourse sets out what is appropriate and inappropriate to say and in what form, who can speak with authority, and who is silenced, which ways of speaking and authorising are obeyed or can be ignored. This means that discourses are not objective or innocent because they empower some categories or subject positions while disempowering others.

While race has no meaning outside of discourse, racism is more than discursive. The idea of race has been used to establish and legitimate real subjugation and oppression. Slavery, 'ethnic cleansing', police brutality and infant mortality are not just discourses, even though discourse and ideology shape the ways in which these very real events occur and their explanations. Discourses of merit, good parenting, racial mixing and risk, combined in complex ways to support the removal of many Aboriginal children by Australian governments. Thus social constructions become social 'facts'.

As Jan Pettman (1992:3) explains, because people believe in these socially constructed ideas, they are made real in their consequences:

Nation, race and ethnicity are not only imagined, or part of political discourse. There are real and sometimes deadly consequences for those who are named as belonging to, or outside, particular boundaries. Nations, race and ethnicity are constructed through, and as, relations of dominance and subordination … They are social constructions, and they constitute and represent unequal power relations.

How is the concept of race linked to culture, ethnicity and nationality?

In the quote above Pettman links race with nation and ethnicity. She does this to remind us of their interconnections and the parallels in they ways these terms are used (and abused). It also points to some important connections between racism and (extreme) nationalism, and between racism and xenophobia.

Some ways of thinking about races refer to (imagined) biological or physical factors as distinguishing between racial groups. This has lead some writers to want to distinguish between races and ethnic groups with ethnicity being understood as group identity founded on (believed) common cultural antecedents and shared cultural values, beliefs and practices. In this model Greekness is an ethnicity, while African is a race.

Developing this idea further, some writers want to differentiate between racism where the perceived superiority of one group is based on genetics, versus ethnocentrism where the superiority of the group derives from perceived cultural superiority (McConnochie, Hollinsworth and Pettman, 1988:

23-32). This position implies that ethnocentrism is virtually universal while racism is unusual and emerged in response to specific historical forces associated with colonialism and imperialism (for further discussion, see Hollinsworth, 2006: 43-45).

This usage has been abandoned within academic literature in recognition of the general discrediting of nineteenth century notions of biological racial hierarchies and the discursive shift to notions of cultural differences and the incompatibility of fundamentally different values and beliefs (Donald and Rattansi, 1992; EMCRX, 2005: 3).

In the 1980s this shift was described as "new racism" defined as:

A cluster of beliefs which holds that it is natural for people who share a way of life, a culture, to bond together in a group and to be antagonistic towards outsiders who are different and who are seen to threaten their identity as a group. In this, the proponents of the new racism claim that they are not being racist or prejudiced, nor are they making any value judgements about the 'others', but simply recognising that they are different. Whether people's fears about the 'threat' from outside are justified does not matter. What matters is what people feel (Gordon and Klug, 1986: 22).

More research has shown that rather than being 'new' this culturalist version of racism has been more widespread and more typical of different historical periods than the so-called 'scientific' or social Darwinist form, which assumes biological superiority (Hollinsworth, 2006: 45-47).

Many modern day ethnic identities also function as nationalities (such as Greek) but there are obviously many Greek citizens who may identify as Macedonian or Turkish or Kosovan. Spanish is a nationality but for many

Spaniards, regional identities such as Basque or Catalan may be more significant. Yet in many modern nations, some political parties mobilise on the basis of supposedly core national values and identities and urge strict controls on the practice and expression of 'alien' values associated with religious or ethnic or racial minorities. Again there is considerable confusion between terms and inconsistent or sloppy language such as the nonsense of the label "of Middle Eastern appearance" or the argument that certain second-generation migrants are incapable of absorbing or integrating into 'Australian' values or way of life.

By now you may be wondering if and when the so-called experts are ever going to get their stories straight on what race and racism are. There is certainly a lot of confusion and disagreement about these definitional issues. However, part of the problem, is the way in which prevailing discourse changes in response to the capacity of powerful interest to create fears and anxieties for political purposes (Poynting et al, 2004).

Mainstream political parties in Australia are currently engaged in a debate about citizenship, core values and the capacity of Muslim and Arabic speakers to integrate into Australian society. The words and images used are sometimes crude and stereotypic but can be more subtle and apparently persuasive. For instance, few would disagree that competence in English helps individuals get good jobs and participate more fully. Less clear is the implied connection between English proficiency and commitment to Australia or "Australian values". Migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds take up citizenship much more commonly than those from New Zealand or Britain. If as the Prime Minister states, respect for women is an essential Australian value, then why are so many Islamic women assaulted on the street and their religion vilified as oppressing women and girls? When we attempt to confront racism and promote positive community relations, we will need to develop critical skills in examining and often challenging these sorts of public discourse especially in the media. Details on the media are presented later in these materials.

As you will have gathered from our earlier discussion of the changing manifestations and discourses of racism, it is not possible to clearly or sensibly distinguish between racisms based on physical appearance, culture, values, nationality, and religion. Much racism is indirect and unintended. Groups are increasingly vilified and harassed on the basis of their alleged way of life, or because they cannot assimilate into prevailing social and cultural values and practices. For many people born in Australia, their apparent cultural or religious affiliations mark them as "forever alien" and they are repeatedly told to "go back where they came from!" Migrant communities of European background are officially applauded for their success in assimilating, raising for some strange memories of hostility, ridicule or discrimination.

Understanding racism

There are a great many definitions of racism and considerable debate about its causes and forms. This section will briefly canvass some of the key issues around these questions but you are encouraged to use the references provided to continue investigating these complex issues.

Fundamentally we can understand **racism** as a set of beliefs and behaviours that assume that 'races' exist in nature and that there are fundamental and essential differences between racial groups. On the basis of these alleged inherent differences certain groups are treated less favourably and denied access to full participation and social benefits. In the past racial differences were predominately explained in terms of alleged physical or biological differences such as skin colour, eye shape and stature.

Today, racial differences are most frequently discussed in terms of fundamental cultural, moral or religious differences. Instead of being seen as physically inferior, 'other' peoples' lifestyles and beliefs are seen as incompatible with the dominant or majority population. For example, many

Australian politicians have recently questioned whether Islamic migrants were ever able to fully assimilate into the Australian community.

Some writers distinguish between racism by which they mean those beliefs outlined above, and refer to the associated behaviours as **racial discrimination**. Article 1 of the United Nations' *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (1965) defines racial discrimination as:

> Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

While racism has occurred in many different societies over many centuries, the language of racism and the underlying logic of racial differentiation change in different contexts. In some settings cultural practices such as dietary differences, clothing, family relationships, and economic activities have been used to mark racial or ethnic differences. In other contexts, emphasis has been on ancestry, 'blood' and alleged biological differences. In many contexts such cultural and biological markers were taken as indicating key moral or character differences that required segregation, exclusion, control or extermination of those who would otherwise be a threat.

For much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Australia racist beliefs took a pseudo-scientific form emphasising biological inferiority on the part of 'non-white' races. Particularly influential were ideas we now refer to as 'Social Darwinism'. This ideology not only explained social and economic differences between nations and peoples in terms of fundamental biological differences but also argued that these differences were crucial in human development and that the imperial domination of European powers was not

simply a military or political achievement but the result of unquestionable laws of nature. For example, not only were Aboriginal people regarded as less important and less able than European settlers, they were expected to become extinct in contact with their superiors. This so called 'dying-race theory' was at the heart of Aboriginal policy in the various colonies and states as well as the disastrous policies of child removal known as the 'Stolen Generations'.

Today explicit reference to racial inferiority and biological differences is relatively rare and most Australians would deny they held racist beliefs. For example, when John Howard or Geoffrey Blainey reject any suggestion that they are expressing racist arguments, they have in mind this earlier form of racism as Social Darwinism. That is, racism for them involves the assertion that other races are demonstrably inferior within some racial hierarchy. On the contrary, what they suggest is that their arguments are in defence of Australian values, 'our way of life'.

That is, racial discourse in recent times is overwhelmingly conducted in terms that seek to avoid accusations of racism by referring to values, to cultures, rather than to biology and assertions of inferiority. When a racial or ethnic group is defined or described in terms of fixed notions of inherent moral or cultural 'essences' we describe such explanations as 'essentialist'. When speaking of our own community or identity we rarely employ such rigid and overgeneralised explanations. Essentialism is attributed to other groups as a way of distancing ourselves from them and of relieving ourselves of the responsibility to realistically recognise and engage with their diversity and with the commonalities we share with them. In this way even those forms of imagining and describing other groups that scrupulously avoid reference to physical features or biological hierarchies retain their fundamental racist logic.

Many statements today speak of legitimate concern that 'we' are being asked to make sacrifices for others, that 'our' values and beliefs are being denigrated or ignored by others. For example, Pauline Hanson, in her

maiden speech on 10 September 1996, invoked anti-immigration and anti-Aboriginal prejudices, attacking "the reverse racism [that] is applied to mainstream Australians by those who promote political correctness and those who control the various taxpayer-funded 'industries' that flourish in our society servicing aboriginals [sic], multiculturalists and a host of other minority groups". She also declared "I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians" (Hansard, House of Representatives, volume 192, 10 September 1996, p. 3860).

Cultural or religious differences do not create racism. It is not our differences with other groups that cause racism and prejudice but rather, our racism and prejudice that 'create' or make us interpret those differences in particular ways. We attach significance to minor cultural markers or apparent physical differences, which on close examination are either meaningless or highly variable in their significance and effect. We have already noted that the whole idea of race as a meaningful biological term is an illusion and that races are socially constructed. The identification of races and the attachment of negative evaluations to racial categories are best explained in terms of underlying conflicts in economic and political terms. The generation of much racial thinking and the enormous cultural investment made into such a racialised worldview accompanied the spread of European power and colonisation of the globe including the worldwide slave trade. Even today most racial and ethnic conflict is best understood in terms of conflict over resources, including land and water, and the capacity to benefit from their exploitation.

Put differently, racism is not just prejudice or the result of some psychological illness or moral failing. Racists are not simply mad or bad people. Racism is very complex, widely dispersed and often socially acceptable. It is best understood as a relationship of dominance and subordination. Racism exists as much in our established and respected institutions (the ways things are and should be done) as in the hearts and minds of those who work in institutional settings.

This is not to deny that there are many people (including some of our colleagues, clients and friends) who have strong feelings of hostility or contempt for others based on their assumed racial or cultural inferiority. However, even someone who does not possess or express such hostility to others can nonetheless behave in racially discriminatory ways where the dominant values and practices of our agency exclude or ignore the beliefs and values of some clients. For this reason we need to understand the different forms and manifestations of racism so we can more effectively identify and counter their effects.

Forms of racism

As we have noted racism takes on many forms and is often hidden or denied. Racism can be overt and direct or can be hidden and indirect. It can be intended or unwitting. It can result from specific discrimination or from the unintended effects of apparently equitable or fair treatment. For example, policies around participation in sport, exposure to sex or religious education, particular assessment strategies and some codes of discipline can all have discriminatory impacts on particular groups in a school setting. It may be that to achieve genuine equality some children will need to be treated differently.

It is useful to distinguish different levels of racism. The most commonly used model distinguishes between individual, institutional and cultural racism. **Individual racism** is defined as behaviour of individuals usually in face-to-face situations where people are treated less favourably than others because of their racial or ethnic background. Individual racism can include violence, the threat of violence, and abuse; it can take the form of discrimination in employment or housing or education or the provision of services such as healthcare or child protection. The key factor here is that the behaviour is assumed to result from racist attitudes of the perpetrator. Sometimes this link is very difficult to establish as most people routinely deny they are bigoted.

Some people argue that the question of underlying attitudes doesn't matter as the impact of a racist incident is unrelated to the intention of the perpetrator. Similar to sexual harassment, the perceptions and reactions of the 'victim' are fundamental to the interpretation and handling of such events. However, it can be difficult to adopt the victim's point of view because of legal requirements or the desire to appear even-handed.

Institutional racism refers to the ways that social institutions routinely maintain social inequality between racial groups. Jan Pettman defines institutional racism as:

> A pattern of distribution of social goods, including power, which regularly and systematically advantages some ethnic and racial groups and disadvantages others. It operates through key institutions: organised social arrangements through which social goods and services are distributed (Chambers and Pettman, 1986: 7).

In the past many of our institutions were officially and quite consciously racist as in immigration policy for most of the twentieth century or in the various regulations that applied to Aboriginal Reserves. Nowadays a lot of institutional racism is systemic and unintended and therefore unnoticed or ignored. For example, fundamental professional beliefs and practices may impact adversely on particular families and communities that historically were not valued or did not participate fully in the development of these institutions and their structures and processes. This is most obviously the case in Australia with regard to indigenous people but is equally true for many of those minority populations who have come to Australia in recent years.

The notion of institutional racism is very valuable in alerting us to these largely taken for granted structures and processes and for shifting our attention away

from more obvious direct discrimination by individuals. It allows us to develop much more powerful ways of understanding and hopefully combating racism as it is manifest in the everyday lives of many Australians. Institutional racism can be very difficult to directly observe as it lies deep within institutions and is rarely formally or officially sanctioned.   Its effects, however, can be demonstrated by the significantly unequal outcomes of these practices.

Often the existence of institutional racism is only revealed through statistical differences between groups such as in rates of unemployment, imprisonment and in health outcomes such as life expectancy or infant mortality. For example, gross overrepresentation of particular groups in prison or significant absences of some communities among those accessing a service or participating in its management structures.

An excellent example is the 1987-1991 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC)'s analysis of the reasons for indigenous over-representation in custody. This Commission documented the appalling over-representation of indigenous Australians in police and correctional custody that resulted in extraordinarily high rates of death in custody. Commissioner Hal Wooten noted:

> On an Australian wide basis an Aboriginal was 27 times more likely to be in police custody than a non-Aboriginal … Australia wide an Aboriginal was 11 times more likely to be in prison than a non-Aboriginal… Had non-Aboriginals died in custody during the period investigated by the Royal Commission at the same rate as Aboriginals there would have been roughly 7400 non-Aboriginal deaths rather than the 400 which did occur (1991: 21-22).

The rates for indigenous women and juveniles are significantly higher than these averages.

Many indigenous people believed that such a disproportionate death rate must have involved murder and racist violence by police and correctional service staff. To their amazement, no criminal charges were laid. The Commission reports highlighted underlying social, health and economic issues to explain the over-representation and consequent deaths.

In one such case, the death of 23 year-old Mark Quayle, Wootten concluded that:

> While no other person intended or took part in his death, it resulted form shocking and callous disregard for his welfare on the part of a hospital sister, a doctor of the Royal Flying Doctor service and two police officers. I find it impossible to believe that so many experienced people could have been so reckless in the care of a seriously ill person dependent on them, were it not for the dehumanised stereotype of Aboriginals so common in Australia and in small towns in western New South Wales in particular. In that stereotype a police cell is a natural and proper place for an Aboriginal (1991: 1-2).

Wootten's conclusion emphasises the entrenched and routine nature of much Australian racism. Such outcomes are often hard to directly link to covert discriminatory practices. Explanations that 'blame the victim' are often put forward for these unequal life chances. People working in such institutions can be quite varied in terms of their tolerance of cultural difference but still act in ways that have racist effects. They frequently find it very difficult to recognise that they are implicated in maintaining racist inequalities, operating as they usually do from a prejudice model that limits racism to **intentionally** abusive behaviours by individuals.

Overall, the concept of institutional racism can be very useful in shifting discussions of racism and exclusionary practices away from accusations and denials of individual racism. For those of us who work in such institutional

settings, the concept can explain some of the difficulties of corporate inertia and apathy in responding to systemic racism. It reminds us that institutions such as police or universities have their own cultures which can normalise and naturalise practices that are exclusionary and discriminatory while appearing commonsense and fair.

To help us to a better understanding of the specific beliefs and discourses that sustain institutional racism, and of the opportunities for confronting it, a third concept of cultural racism has been developed. **Cultural racism** refers to shared beliefs, stories and assumptions about the 'nature' of racial and ethnic groups and racial differences. These typically operate in ways that blame minorities for their own disadvantages or 'naturalise' those disadvantages as if they were the result of the values or behaviour of those groups.

Cultural racism exaggerates differences between groups and ignores the diversity within them. It essentialises differences that derive from historical accidents or social preferences as if they were fixed, immutable and inherent. Such commonsense explanations divert attention from the actual historical causes and contemporary outcomes of discrimination. Cultural racism underlies much of the difficulty experienced by many government and non-government agencies in adequately engaging with and servicing CALD families. Prevailing beliefs, ideas and practices reflect the gaps in knowledge and presumptions made by staff about the behaviour and values of these families. The shared nature (often legitimated by formal training and accreditation) of those beliefs and practices hide the extent of this failure. At the same time, differing class, educational and social experiences between agency staff and clients compound the effect of cultural racism.

In summary, cultural racism can be described as the commonsense understandings of racial or ethnic group differences. It explains racial inequality in ways that 'blame the victim" and divert attention away from the underlying structures and entrenched practices that systematically disadvantage minority groups. Such explanations are reinforced and reproduced through many different narratives and discourses. They tell us

who and what is valued, what makes people and things 'good', true, worthy, and reasonable. They are encoded in models of family life and community development, in the common law, in aesthetics and national histories, and the literature we read and the television we watch.

The 1997 *Bringing them home* report of the national inquiry into the stolen generations is a powerful example of the ways such narrow and ill-informed assumptions can have disastrous consequences when enacted by welfare or legal authorities. Almost all non-indigenous officials, missionaries, and the adoptive families were convinced that removal of children from their Aboriginal families was in the 'best interests of the child'. With hindsight, the effects of these forced removals have been recognised as almost universally disastrous and as having caused enormous hardship and mental anguish to those taken and those left behind. It would be arrogant as well as foolish to dismiss such events as the product of an ignorant past quite removed from these enlightened times. Over time, many of our taken for granted beliefs will similarly be proven to be inadequate or incomplete, which is why we need to foster a climate of critical and dynamic dialogue about the shifting forms of racism.

3.   Racial discrimination legislation in Australia

In 1975 Australia enacted the *Racial Discrimination Act* (RDA) following its ratification of the 1965 *UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination*.   Ratification of international agreements means that the nation-state must enact parallel legislation at the domestic level.

> In 1995 the High Court determined in the Teoh case that signing an international agreement implied a nation would abide by its principles, even in the absence of national legislation.   However, the Keating and Howard governments have tried to introduce legislation that reverses this decision.   It appears that Australian governments are progressively avoiding their responsibilities under international law for short-term political advantage.

The RDA prohibits discrimination; that is, treating someone less favourably, because of any difference in 'race', colour, ancestry and/or country of origin. Discrimination is prohibited in:

- Employment, advertising and recruitment
- Education
- Provision of goods and services
- Land, housing and accommodation
- Access to public places and facilities

However, private or personal settings in which racism might occur are not covered by the RDA.   For example, a mother might tell her child she cannot have her friend over to stay at their house because her friend comes from a Muslim family and this is not illegal.

What does the RDA mean by 'race'?

The RDA is primarily a law which people can use to complain about discrimination on 'racial' grounds.   But what does the RDA mean by 'race'?

Despite scientific evidence that race is not a biologically meaningful term, the law and the courts continue to use the term. The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of 'race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin' (HREOC, 2004a:5-11). However, national origin does not tell us anything about the 'racial' appearance of a person. For example, there are many 'black' people born in Britain, or 'white' people born in Africa. In a similar way in Australia, the term 'ethnic' usually means non-Anglo or of non-English speaking background, but every culture, even the dominant Anglo-Celtic culture, expresses a particular 'ethnicity'. What, if anything, does 'of middle Eastern appearance' mean when applied to Australian-born youth?

What about other types of discrimination?

As we will see, the RDA does not prohibit discrimination on religious grounds, except where courts regard a religious community as effectively a national or racial group such as Jews (but not Muslims). Other forms of discrimination based on gender, sexuality, age or disability are covered by their own legislation. In some cases it is hard to decide whether discrimination is on racial, religious, gender, or other grounds, or some combination of them all.

Obviously many people disguise discrimination by using an excuse, or by developing criteria or conditions that will exclude certain people. For example, in a job interview someone might be excluded because of their accent but nobody will openly acknowledge that is the reason they are 'not suitable'. Sometimes simply maintaining the 'status quo' of an organisation and its practices will discriminate against those who are not able to access or benefit from its services. For example, all states use supposedly 'fair' assessment of school performance to gain entry to universities, but the curriculum, teaching and assessment methods may favour some groups and alienate or penalise others.

Sometimes people who are a relative or associate of someone experiencing racism might be protected by anti-discrimination legislation. For example, parents who adopt a child from overseas may be able to complain about treatment they receive as a family as well as on the child's behalf.

So discrimination is complex and varies with differing contexts and situations, and there are different ways of thinking about and defining discrimination in its various forms.

Which of these examples of discrimination are unlawful?

A Muslim worker is ridiculed and verbally abused by his co-workers on a daily basis about his dietary and prayer requirements, and accused of oppressing women and supporting terrorism.

An Aboriginal youth is followed around a sports store by a security guard who apparently assumes he will steal something.

A Chinese-born man refuses to consider resumes from any woman at a dating service who is not what he calls "white".

An Indian scientist is repeatedly passed over for promotion and denied opportunities for high-level research and professional advancement in her university. Her complaints are ignored or met with accusations of "not being a team player".

An Aboriginal woman spends weeks trying to get rental accommodation despite being employed and having good references from previous tenancies, but the real estate agent keeps making excuses or says the house has been let to someone else.

A Sudanese soccer player never gets picked for the team even though his skills are better than the others.

Discuss: What kinds of things might be hidden, not stated, or ignored, if somebody complained that these incidences were discriminatory and unlawful?

Direct and indirect discrimination

Discrimination can be direct in that a person is treated differently on the basis of their race or nationality. However, much discrimination is indirect in that people are apparently treated in the same way but the criteria or expectations exclude or advantage one group more than others (HREOC, 2004a: 11-21; O'Neill et al, 2004: 523-540). For example, some jobs now ask for a university qualification when that is not actually necessary to perform the duties. Another example would be physical size and fitness requirements for employment in the military or the police, which were recently modified to avoid discrimination against women and some 'racial' groups.

What is meant by the 'race power'?

Under the *International Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination 1965* it is permitted to use 'special measures' that temporarily favour a particular ethnic or racial group in order that they might overcome past discrimination or current disadvantage. For example, some countries have quotas for particular minorities in their education system, or people might receive free medical assistance because of their refugee status and temporary health needs. Once the inequity is redressed, the special measures would no longer apply or would become illegal.

In Australia, this 'race power' has been incorporated into the RDA and makes possible many of the special programs for indigenous Australians and for some other groups. It is important to understand the need for such special measures and their temporary nature in order to counter those who attack these programs as 'reverse racism' or unfair on 'ordinary Australians' (Behrendt, 2003:21-85).

Racial vilification and racial hatred legislation

While the RDA prohibits some forms of discrimination in public settings there has been, until recently, no protection against racial vilification or public incitements to racial hatred. For a long time, such laws were opposed as contrary to freedom of speech or unnecessary in a country like Australia (McNamara, 2002).

Between 1989 and 2001 all states passed some form of laws to prohibit racial vilification or racial hatred. For example, the 1991 *Queensland Anti-discrimination Act* (Section 126) outlawed incitement to racial and religious hatred, and in 2001 a further amendment made racial and religious vilification unlawful.

The Commonwealth Racial Hatred Act 1995

The Australian government investigated racist violence in 1991 and HREOC recommended amendments to the RDA and the *Commonwealth Crimes Act* to prohibit racial harassment and racist violence. After intense debate in the media and parliament the *Racial Hatred Act* (RHA) amending the RDA was eventually passed in October 1995 (McNamara, 2002:40-49). The RHA made unlawful public acts which were 'reasonably likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate' a person or group of people, on the basis of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin (McNamara, 2002:50-109).

Examples of unlawful vilification or incitement might include:

- Racist abuse in public
- Racist graffiti in a public place
- Making racist speeches at a political rally
- Putting up racist posters or distributing racist leaflets
- Racist comments or drawings in a newspaper, website or other publication.

The RHA includes many exemptions for artistic, academic or fair comment on a public issue as well as the blanket excuse of what might or might not be 'reasonably seen' as offensive or likely to cause racist violence (see http://www.humanrights.gov.au for examples of how these terms have been interpreted in court).

Recent controversy about cartoons depicting Mohammed reminds us of the problems such exemption and personal or religious perspectives might cause in deciding these things. In September 2006, an attempted prosecution under Western Australian legislation of an Aboriginal girl accused of racially abusing a 'white girl' in Kalgoorlie was dismissed on the grounds that while the language was offensive, it was a normal part of her everyday speech (Taylor, 2006).

Religious discrimination and religious vilification

In 1980 the Australian government ratified the United Nations *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) adopted by the UN in 1966. Ratifying nations under Article 20 of the ICCPR are required to legislate to prohibit incitement to hostility, discrimination and violence on a number of grounds including religion. However, various Australian governments have chosen not to amend the RDA to prohibit discrimination or vilification of the grounds of religion. Someone who believes they have been discriminated against at work, or when applying for a job, on religious grounds may be able to complain under the federal *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986* (see HREOC website for details on this legislation).

Along with most states and territories, Queensland has enacted anti-discrimination legislation that makes both discrimination and vilification on religious grounds illegal. However religious vilification and discrimination are not illegal under the anti-discrimination legislation in New South Wales or South Australia (O'Neill et al, 2004: 505). As noted above, there is considerable inconsistency between various jurisdictions in what the laws say, and how the courts have ruled in relation to religious discrimination and incitement to religious hatred (HREOC, 2004a and 2004b).

4. Complaint mechanisms and procedures

State and federal anti-discrimination laws are designed primarily to respond to individual cases of (mostly direct) discrimination in a limited number of public situations. They are much less able to address systemic discrimination or to reduce the impact of everyday racism. People who experience racial discrimination are able to complain using either state or Australian government mechanisms. In Queensland the state structure is the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland (ADCQ). The Australian government structure is the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC).

This section will describe the core elements of complaints mechanisms and some of the issues facing those who wish to use them effectively.

If you have experienced racial discrimination or vilification, you can:

- Complain directly to the person or organisation responsible (remember to get your story straight, take notes, get witnesses if any, put your complaint in writing if not satisfied, record the actual words used by the person to whom you complain as well as the original incident).

- Seek help from a community organisation such as a Community Legal Service, church, or Community Association.

- Seek support from a prominent community member, religious leader, or local politician, who is confident in dealing the authorities and is aware of anti-discrimination laws and processes.

- If you are assaulted or threatened with racist violence (including harassment and bullying), you can report it to the police, or to teachers or student services if it occurs at school or university, or to management if you are at work.

- If the vilification occurred in the media you can complain to the Press Council for newspapers and magazines, the Australian Broadcasting Authority for electronic media such as TV and radio, and to the Australian Advertising Standards Council about advertisements.

- If you are abused or harassed by neighbours, you can complain to your landlord or the Housing authority, or seek mediation through local council.

- Make a formal complaint to HREOC or to your state Anti-Discrimination Commission. You can ask someone else to make the complaint on your behalf.

HREOC complaint procedures

Since the introduction of the RDA in 1975, HREOC has received over ten thousand complaints of racial discrimination. In the year 2002-3 HREOC accepted 182 complaints lodged under the RDA. Forty-two percent of these complaints related to employment, 24% to the provision of goods and services and 13% were about racial hatred. People of non-English speaking background lodged fifty-eight percent of these complaints while 28% came from indigenous people. The remainder came from people of English-speaking backgrounds (HREOC, 2003: 72).

In 2002-3 HREOC finalised a total of 258 complaints. Of these 258, 78% were terminated by the Commission and 7% were withdrawn by the person lodging the complaint. The remaining 15% went to confidential conciliation where a HREOC mediator met with the complainant and the perpetrator to discuss the complaint (HREOC, 2003: 75).

HREOC conciliation processes operate on the basis of 'no admission of liability' by the alleged perpetrator called the 'respondent'. Typically the respondent denies intent but often apologises and undertakes to avoid any future acts of discrimination. Occasionally a victim is compensated or reinstated. Sometimes an employer or agency undertakes training or changes its recruitment practices to reduce the likelihood of future discrimination (O'Neill et. al., 2004: 558-562).

In earlier years HREOC actually decided on complaints and issued orders for compensation or an apology. However, in 1995 a High Court decision (*Brandy v. HREOC*) found that HREOC was an administrative body not a court of law and therefore its orders were not legally enforceable (O'Neill et. al., 2004: 201). This decision has meant that HREOC can only use conciliation to resolve a dispute and effectively cannot determine the 'truth' of the matter. If conciliation is impossible the Commission terminates the complaint and the complainant has the option to take the case to the Federal Court or to the Federal Magistrate's Court. Obviously for many people this is extremely difficult, time-consuming and costly (O'Neill et. al., 2004: 559-561).

Reasons for not making a formal complaint

In 2002-3 HREOC received less than 200 complaints of racial discrimination. Clearly this is only a tiny fraction of the number of such incidents that would have occurred in that year. Most people choose not to complain and that decision needs to be respected and understood. Sometimes people are uncertain as to whether or not an incident is racially motivated. As we have seen, it is often quite difficult to decide whether an act or someone's comments are intentionally racially hurtful or the result of ignorance or just 'bad manners'. While intention is not a legal requirement under the Act for discrimination to have occurred, people often choose not to complain if they think the perpetrator 'didn't really mean it'.

Very often people choose not to complain because they just don't want to have to deal with such unpleasantness. Sometimes people will say that a racist incident is not important or that it is out of character with the general acceptance they experience in the community. On other occasions people explain not complaining because they doubt that anything useful will ever happen as a result.

On many occasions choose not to complain, especially in their own workplace or school, because they do not want to be labelled as a 'whinger' or 'trouble-maker' by their superiors. There are many, many examples where the 'victim' of racial abuse or vilification is harshly dealt with or blamed by the organisation or by their colleagues or schoolmates. People are described as having 'no sense of humour', as being 'too sensitive' or accused of being 'politically correct'. In the work setting people are often harassed or vilified for years before making any kind of complaint because they fear losing their job if they complain. Rightly or wrongly, many victims of racism fear that they will be further victimised if they complain.

While people may choose not to make a formal complaint it can still be very important to acknowledge the victim's perspective and the hurt caused by the incident. Sometimes people just want to be heard or to have acknowledged by someone else that an event took place and that it was unreasonable or not 'their fault'. The *Confronting Racism in Communities Project* survey in 2006 found that many people who had not complained formally nonetheless greatly appreciated the opportunity to report an incident to a sympathetic audience.

Making a complaint to HREOC or ADCQ

Formal complaints are often very slow, extremely stressful and unless the respondent is genuinely prepared to acknowledge their actions and seek conciliation, complaining can produce no useful outcome. It is not unusual for somebody who is known to have made a complaint to be subjected to intense criticism and further vilification. For example in a work setting colleagues

might shun the complainant and repeatedly criticise them for taking up the matter. It is absolutely essential that management accept (or be forced to accept) their responsibility in protecting those who have made a complaint and in fostering an environment in which respectful and non-discriminatory behaviours are expected and officially supported.

Despite these concerns it is obviously important that formal complaints are made and dealt with appropriately. Apart from hopefully resolving the particular issue, they provide critical examples of the kinds of discrimination that occurs quite frequently in the community and challenge authorities to develop appropriate strategies to respond and hopefully to reduce their frequency.

If you witness a racist incident or are told about one (but are not yourself a member of the group discriminated against or vilified, you are not able to complain to HREOC. You can however, with the written permission of the person directly involved, complain on their behalf. This limitation is often difficult for community workers who are aware of many cases of racial vilification or racial discrimination, but are unable to complain as those subjected to racism do not wish to pursue the matter formally. It can be very important for community workers to keep some sort of record of such incidents (with the consent of those involved) in order to build up a log or picture of their extent and nature for use in their organisation or in lobbying local authorities. This was a core objective of the Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care's *Confronting Racism in Communities Project.*

Things to remember when you formally complain:

- Before you make a complaint you may want to get advice from a Community Legal Service, or trade union, or community worker familiar with anti-discrimination processes.

- Your complaint must be in writing but can be made in any language.

- The Commission will arrange for an interpreter in your language if necessary.

- There is no fee or charge to lodge a complaint.

- Provide full details of the complaint: what happened, when and where it happened, any reason given for the behaviour, what you did, and any witnesses.

- Give the reason you think you were badly treated (race, disability, gender etc.). This is called the grounds for the discrimination.

- Describe what you were doing when you were treated badly (at work, in a public space, trying to go to a club or hotel etc). This is called the area for the discrimination.

- You can now lodge your complaint electronically through the HREOC website
  www.humanrights.gov.au
  or download the form from the QADC website
  www.adcq.qld.gov.au

Supporting those subjected to racial discrimination

Community workers can support those who are subjected to racial discrimination or racial vilification in a variety of ways. Perhaps the most important is a commitment to genuinely listening to the victim including when they are not able or not willing to speak about the incident. We sometimes are unaware or forget how deeply painful and traumatic such incidents can be. Sometimes you will meet someone who continues to suffer from the impact of racial vilification or discrimination decades after the event actually occurred. They may have told nobody else including their family about the incident yet it continues to burn within their consciousness.

We also need to be well informed about the various options available including formal complaint mechanisms and procedures. We should know where to refer people for advice and assistance if they wish to pursue a formal complaint. We should also be able to discuss the potential stresses of making a formal complaint and alternatives that may be more productive or less difficult.

Sometimes our own experiences of racial discrimination or our passion to oppose racism can inhibit our ability to properly support victims of racism. We need to be careful to avoid pushing our own choices and agendas onto those who have been subjected to racial discrimination. We also need to separate out our own sense of hurt or injustice from the feelings and decisions of those we are trying to help. We should also look to other networks and organisations for support such as trade unions, legal services and colleagues with expertise and experience in these areas.

Outcomes of complaints

As noted above, more than half the complaints lodged with HREOC are terminated presumably because the respondent was unwillingly to enter into conciliation or even acknowledge there was any basis to the complaint. Some complaints are withdrawn by the complainant. Some of those terminated by the Commission are put before the Federal Court or the Federal Magistrates Court.

Examples of HREOC conciliation outcomes

A Chinese worker was racially abused by his co-workers who would mimic his accent and make racist comments such as "bloody Chin-Chong, the room smells like dim sim" and "Don't hug the Chin-Chong, he has got AIDS". He also believed that he had been treated unfairly by the employer. The company denied the verbal abuse had occurred and argued that the other issues were industrial matters unrelated to the complainant's race. The complaint was resolved by conciliation. The complainant agreed to withdraw his complaint when the company agreed to provide him with a written apology and a reference and pay $5000 in recognition of the humiliation and stress he may have endured during his employment. Note that the company's actions do not constitute an admission of liability, but rather a negotiated response to the hurt and harm felt by the complainant (HREOC, 2003: 50).

An Aboriginal man complained about a notice pinned on a staff notice board entitled 'Aboriginal application for employment'. This mock application form included extremely racist stereotypes about indigenous people. In the section entitled 'Income' the following was listed "theft-unemployment-armed robbery" and the words "rapist, VD spreader, and pub fighter" were written under the 'Abilities' section. The company argued that it was not responsible and had responded appropriately by informing all the workers that the document was racist and unacceptable. The management notice further stated that any worker found to be responsible for posting such racist material would be disciplined. After conciliation the complainant agreed to withdraw on the basis that the company would review its EEO policies and procedure and appoint Harassment Contact Officers. The company further agreed to introduce cultural awareness training for all staff and provide the complainant with a statement of regret (HREOC, 2003: 53).

For other examples of judgements under the RDA see
http://www.humanrights.gov.au

5.   Anti-racism

While anti-discrimination laws and complaints mechanisms are needed to confront racial discrimination and vilification, they are often less helpful in combating indirect and systemic forms of racism and cultural exclusion. Anti-discrimination processes cannot deal adequately with forms of indirect discrimination where no specific incident or perpetrator can be identified.

As we have seen entrenched institutional racism and unthinking cultural racism sustain high levels of racial inequality while largely concealing their effects within discourses of individual merit and effort, and notions of "a fair go". We need to develop a range of techniques and strategies that can widen possible responses to racism and pro-actively address marginalisation and exclusion on the basis of race or religion.

In part that will require we reflect on our own identities and experiences. This may include being subjected to racial discrimination, or of acting in racist or demeaning ways to others. It will require us to consider how we benefit from existing patterns of inequality and discrimination. For example, are we advantaged in going for jobs, in being served in shops or when dealing with authorities because of our racial designation or our educational and linguistic attributes? Are we privileged in not having to face harassment or verbal abuse? How committed to combating racism are we? What would we risk or endure?

We also need to develop strong and persuasive arguments against racism and in favour of active efforts to address disadvantage (see the next section on "Why we should be concerned with racism"). We need to get racism on the agenda at work and in the community. We will need to think of ways to refute the arguments of those who say racism is not a big issue here or that it is too controversial or political to attack racism in our community. We need to practice these arguments and build up knowledge and confidence to address

difficult questions. Finally we need to connect with friends and allies and work to sustain each other when the going gets tough.

Why should we be concerned about racism?

We may think that it is obvious that racism is unacceptable and inhumane. However, many Australians hold racist beliefs and some practice racist behaviours. Virtually all of our institutions and many of our organisations have been affected by prevailing racist or exclusionary beliefs and ideologies that were commonly accepted in earlier times. We therefore need to make explicit reasons for resisting racism and develop persuasive arguments why this should be made a priority. The following brief discussion of some of the grounds on which we should be concerned about racism should provide a basis for you to develop your own set of reasons.

- **Racism is morally wrong**

Racism is contrary to basic human rights and respect for each other's humanity. These fundamental rights to equal enjoyment of the resources and social benefits of a society cannot be taken for granted but should form an essential plank in modern philosophical and political systems. One important aspect in considering equal rights with regard to racism is the need to remember collective or group rights as well as the rights of individuals so prominent in much liberal philosophy.

- **Racism damages its victims**

Racism in all its forms but particularly the everyday experience of racist marginalisation and exclusion can be extremely damaging to those targeted. This is something that those of us fortunate enough to not be the victim of racist abuse and discrimination can find difficult to understand. While we may recognise the impact of actual violence or direct discrimination, we are often unaware of the more subtle and systemic forms of racism. This lack of

awareness is sometimes compounded by unwillingness on the part of those who experience racism to speak out about such issues for a variety of reasons discussed later in this handbook.

- **Racism harms all members of society**

Racist beliefs and practices not only damage those who are targeted, but also have negative effects on the whole of society. Racism reduces the capacity of a society to function effectively with minimum levels of violence, anxiety and conflict. Racism denies society valuable resources through preventing or limiting the enormous contribution potentially available from within racially oppressed groups. The inflexibility and bigotry that underlies much racism in Australia limits the capacity of those who subscribe to such beliefs to respond appropriately to new challenges or to imagine more positive social interaction and outcomes. All of us not only bear some responsibility for the prevalence of racist practices, we will also have to bear the costs of responding to the effects of such racism, for example, in the poor health and employment outcomes of those who are racially discriminated against, or in the policing and detention of some who respond to racism in 'anti-social' ways.

- **Racism prevents us from working effectively**

Like sexual harassment, racism has direct impacts on productivity and on the capacity of organisations to function effectively. Many of us are less able to perform our duties and to produce our desired outcomes because of racism. Often this racism occurs as an inability to understand or empathise with different cultural perspectives. Sometimes our professional education was extremely narrow in terms of its skill base and knowledge. Frequently our training did not include rigorous and effective instruction in how to work effectively with diverse communities or in situations where historical oppression and contemporary power differences continue to distort relationships. For example, many Queensland police officers remain poorly prepared for work in indigenous communities and lack the skills necessary to

perform positive relationships with indigenous people who have experienced routine mistreatment at the hands of the authorities for generations.

- **Racism is against the law**

A final reason to be concerned about racism is that racial discrimination is illegal under international, national and state law. Apart from the argument that we should generally obey the law, identifying and combating racial discrimination is an obligation under international provisions such as the United Nations *Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination 1965* and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966*. Many of our organisations and agencies have their own policies or commitments to non-discriminatory and equitable service delivery. Australia in particular is known internationally as a country that has officially discriminated against non-white foreigners and indigenous people for much of its history. If we are to participate fully in our region and internationally then Australians today must be seen as actively committed to non-discrimination and to addressing racial disadvantage.

The 'R' word: naming racism for what it is?

We may feel reluctant to use the word 'racism' because of other people's harsh reactions. We may be uncertain that what we, or others, are experiencing actually is racism. Other people including family members, colleagues, bosses or friends may contradict us or want to deny or minimise the existence, extent and effects of racism. For example, Prime Minister Howard's refusal to acknowledge that racism and Islamophobia were central to the Cronulla riot.

Let's try to untangle some elements of this reluctance or refusal to name racism as such. On the one hand, many people, for whatever reason, want to deny the existence of racism, which is 'very bad' and not something that 'we' could ever be party to. This reaction follows from an inadequate

understanding of racism as meaning deliberate acts of violence or intimidation; extreme behaviours. We therefore need to explain that racism occurs in a variety of forms and that intent is not required for actions and effects to be accurately described as racist.

In a similar way many people believe that racism is based on beliefs that racial groups other than one's own are biologically inferior (social Darwinism). In the absence of any such explicit reference to genetically based superiority some people (such as Geoffrey Blainey) deny their positions are racist. On the contrary they claim to be defending our British cultural heritage or upholding the fundamental democratic and Christian values at the heart of this 'great country'. We can all recall hearing the catchphrase: "I'm not a racist, but ... ". Once again, we will need to argue that racism is usually couched in terms of cultural and moral preferences or claims that are used to deny some people the right to feel 'at home', secure and valued in Australia (Noble, 2005).

In conclusion, despite reluctance and opposition to its use, it remains important to put racism at the centre of one's personal, professional and organisational agenda. Don't be intimidated from naming it and pushing for it to be made a priority.

Anti-racist policies and codes of practice

As noted, people who complain about racial discrimination or try to raise issues of racism in workplaces and community organisations often encounter resistance or a denial that the problem exists. We may be told that we're being 'oversensitive', or that the issue is just a personality clash or differences in style or the way people use language. Often it is difficult to readily identify or prove the existence of racial discrimination, which can occur in subtle and covert ways.

One important strategy to combat such denial and minimisation, and to take some of the pressure off individuals, is to develop anti-racism codes of practices and policies. These often take a long time and you may encounter considerable resistance, but the effort is usually worthwhile in that the changes that result can become institutionalised or embedded in the practices of your organisation and no longer are subject to the 'goodwill' or support of managers.

Eventually we should be aiming to make anti-racism training, monitoring and proper grievance procedures part of the fabric of our organisations. That is, anti-discrimination and equity are mundane or ordinary, not seen as extra or only the concern of those few people who might experience discrimination. This is often referred to as making anti-racism part of the normal duty of care of management in similar ways to occupational health and safety matters. Indeed, the language of health and safety, and risk management, is often the most effective way of appealing to management for support in introducing such policies. The responsibility should be firmly located with senior management who are required (often by law) to maintain a safe, non-discriminatory environment for all employees. Again, we aim to make non-discrimination a basic industrial or social entitlement rather than an extra or peripheral measure to deal with special interest groups.

Confronting racism through education

Alongside legal processes to respond to discrimination, most commentators recommend education as the most important means by which to confront racism and promote harmonious community relations. It is often suggested that children in particular should be exposed to educational programs that encourage tolerance and reduce bigotry. Less frequently, such programs are well thought through in the light of contemporary research and understandings of the complex nature of racisms and the contexts in which they operate.

Some of you will be familiar with debates about the difference between multicultural education versus anti-racist education. Major contributions were made to the debate in Australia by Bill Cope, Mary Kalantzis and Fazal Rizvi. Multicultural education was criticised as failing to adequately address institutional racism in teaching or the curriculum, and for presenting positive but stereotypic notions of ethnicity. For example, Madan Sarup criticised British efforts:

> Multicultural education focuses only on culture – moreover it reflects a white view of black cultures as homogenous, static and conflict-free. It is preoccupied with exotic aspects of cultural difference and ignores the effects of racism. After all, just to learn about other people's cultures is not to learn about the racism of one's own (1991: 31).

Anti-racist education aimed to directly engage with institutional racism by exposing the narrow class and cultural frameworks of schooling by examining school governance and teaching methods as well as curriculum. There is a wealth of literature on these debates and on more sophisticated critiques of both approaches (see Sleeter and McLaren, 1995; May, 1999; Ladson-Billings and Gillborn, 2004; Knowles and Ridley, 2005). More relevant to the needs of community workers are similar debates about community approaches to cross-cultural and anti-racism training.

Different approaches to cross-cultural and anti-racism training

To help identify different approaches and the models of racism on which they are based, we can distinguish between four main approaches:

- cultural awareness training (CAT)
- racism awareness training (RAT)
- anti-racism strategies (ARS)
- social justice strategies (SJS)

In **Cultural Awareness Training**, cultural difference and consequent misunderstanding is seen as the problem and cultures are essentialised. In **Racism Awareness Training** the problem is understood as individual 'white' racists. In contrast, **Anti-racism Strategies** focus on the power relationships embedded in institutions and on the discourses that reproduce and legitimate those relations (Hollinsworth, 1992). Finally a **Social Justice Strategy** extends the analysis of power relations in ARS to include other intersecting discourses of gender, class, nationalism, sexuality, age and dis/ability. We shall briefly consider each approach to show why we might chose a particular strategy for our needs.

As with multicultural education, most Australian cross-cultural training is from a CAT approach presenting 'cultures' as homogenous, static and ignoring gender, generational, class and political divisions. Presentation of positive group images and explanations of their cultural practices is assumed to 'drive out' racial intolerance. This approach to 'teaching tolerance' is based on a belief in the power of rationalist pedagogy and sees racism as stemming from irrationality or ignorance (Cohen, 1992). Examples of this approach might include festivals that showcase the art, dance and food of ethnic communities, or workshops that present information about the culture and contribution of immigrant groups. These can be very enjoyable and informative occasions but will rarely result in a reduction in racism by itself. In some cases such information can be counter-productive by over-emphasising cultural 'otherness' and ignoring the diversity and dynamism of communities.

RAT has been widely used in the United States of America and Britain to shift the focus from cultural differences to 'white' racism (Katz, 2003). Jane Elliott's *Blue Eyed* program is a popular RAT approach that can have serious negative outcomes (Available at http://www.newsreel.org/guides/blueeyed.htm). In December 2001, Elliott brought her program to Australia declaring that: "Australia doesn't have a unique form of racism. Racism is racism". RAT has been criticised as employing a doctrinaire and poorly theorized approach that ignores the intersections between racism and other forms of oppression. By accusing 'whites' of being inevitably racist RAT alienated many of those who

should have been listening and deflected attention away from social and structural change to internal feelings and emotions (Gurnah, 1984).

Anti-racist strategies cover a broad range of initiatives that may share elements of CAT and RAT. The main difference lies in ARS' emphasis on complex power relations embedded in dominant structures and processes. ARS pays more attention to social and economic inequality and aims to decentralise decision-making and introduce greater community participation and accountability (Anthias and Lloyd, 2001; Bhavani, 2001).

Anti-racist strategies may incorporate the information-giving and positive representation found in cultural awareness approaches but they are coupled with other efforts designed to bring about more comprehensive cultural change. We might describe this as seeking to re-engineer organisations and institutions to ensure equity and cultural inclusivity rather than aiming to change attitudes. This is not to deny the importance of attitudes but to question whether mere exposure to positive images and rationalist appeals to behave in non-discriminatory ways can actually produce the hoped-for outcomes (Cohen, 1988 and 1992). By focussing on structures and processes rather than ignorant or 'bad' people, anti-racist strategies offer more textured responses than CAT or RAT that with time and resources can bring about more fundamental changes that are not dependent on the vigilance and energy of a few key individuals. We can think of this as institutionalising or embedding inclusive and non-racist values in the everyday practices of an organisation thereby supporting those who embrace differences and value non-discrimination. Such re-engineering assists in the identification of failures to address racism in both the behaviours of individual staff and the structures and processes of an organisation.

Social justice strategies share the focus of ARS on underlying institutions and structures but sees racism as just one of many discourses that rationalise and justify inequality (Everingham, 2003). Social justice strategies need to address all forms of social exclusion and oppression regardless of their forms or their ideological justifications. Some ARS approaches can overemphasise

cultural differences and ignore the many shared concerns and experiences that unite us as neighbours, students, workers, women or men, parents or carers regardless of our ancestry, racial or cultural labels. For example, it may be preferable to initiate a whole-of-school approach to confront bullying of any kind rather than introduce a program to protect a specific racial group (see www.bullyingnoway.com.au for more information).

This attempt to distinguish between CAT, RAT, ARS, and SJS is designed to help us critically examine our own and others' efforts to counter racism and intolerance. Actual programs and activities typically contain aspects of more than one of these approaches, and the different approaches may contain some common elements. We may need to use elements or techniques from various approaches to effectively engage and combat racism as it is actually impacting on our community.

Based on the collective wisdom of many community workers and activists, we propose the following guidelines for effective anti-racist and social justice organising:

- Make objectives clear, achievable and easy to communicate.
- Analyse the problem identifying both barriers and supports.
- Be flexible, ready to shift focus or take advantage of unexpected opportunities.
- Work out strategies and tactics carefully, remember to begin where people *are* and to pay attention to who they are and what they know or believe.
- Avoid vilifying your opponents and those who are unable to see how racism is implicated in their everyday lives.
- Celebrate successes, write songs, keep photos and mark anniversaries to build a tradition of anti-racism and social justice.

- Work hard at communication within your own group, at consulting with people from other racial and ethnic groups who are affected by our actions but may be under-represented in decision-making.

- Make and maintain relations with other groups with similar aims, work hard on coalition politics while keeping your focus and autonomy.

- Don't reinforce stereotypes and cultural essentialism; acknowledge diversity within racial or ethnic communities and intersections with other categories such as gender, class, sexuality and age.

- Keep records of activities and evaluations, add your own suggestions to this list, and discuss failures and successes with others.

- Take time out to be with friends, lovers, dogs and do things completely unconnected with the struggle

(Adapted from Hollinsworth, 2006: 279).

Obviously these suggestions could go on and on. You should work with your colleagues, friends and clients to modify, add to, and detail these ideas in your personal and professional lives. Remember that most people don't have any knowledge of the research, concepts and analysis contained in these materials. You will need to support them to think through the issues, not just tell them what they should think or do. To support and sustain your efforts in most cases it will be sensible to try to have some form of policy or formal commitment adopted by your organisation or employer.

6.   Racism in the media

Mass media including newspapers, television, radio, film and the internet are among the most powerful institutions generating and disseminating racial imagery and stereotypes. Many Australians have little direct ongoing contact with particular 'racial', ethnic or religious groups. Rather they encounter and learn about these groups through media representation. There is considerable evidence that the media not only racialises minority groups but also encourages racist behaviour including violence and intimidation (ADB, 2003, HREOC, 2004b). On the other hand, we can use the media to identify and counter racism and to encourage respect and understanding across cultural differences. This section includes information about the ways we can complain about media representation and some strategies to improve media coverage of racial and ethnic differences.

Members of minority cultural and racial groupings appear in the media in very specific ways and within specific genres. For example, there are many articles about political conflict or law and order that focus on Aboriginal people, 'Lebanese youth', and other target communities. At the same time they are rarely portrayed within popular drama or comedy programs and when they do appear it is often within very outdated and limited stereotypes. While SBS (and to some extent ABC) radio and television do portray the broad sweep of multicultural Australia, relatively few people regularly watch or listen to these programs. We need to be aware that what we consume from the media and how we interpret or react to the media may be quite atypical.

Media representations may not be intentionally racist but have racist effects, especially given prevailing cultural and ideological beliefs that have emerged over the past 200 years. The commercial media is overwhelmingly shaped by the need for ratings or readership in order to sell advertising space. This has resulted in dominant 'house' values of sensationalism and conflict, where negative or threatening stories are preferred to positive or collaborative ones.

Regardless of what audiences may actually want to see or read, editors and managers usually believe that stories that encourage understanding or familiarity with cultural minorities 'don't rate'. Even before a journalist starts to write a news story the basic structure of that story, the fundamental rules of what's important and who's point of view will be presented are laid down. The 'man in the street' is very much an 'ocker' Australian or one of 'John Howard's battlers'. The situation with talk-back radio is even more unsatisfactory where defamatory and sensational accusations are thrown around by 'shock-jocks' and any attempt to disagree is ridiculed or simply excluded (ADB, 2003, Mickler, 1998). Recent examples include the banner headline "Aborigines Own Perth" in response to the recent native title determination, and references to 'Jihad Jack' and 'Osama bin Laden' and 'terrorism' in a report of Jack Thomas' *acquittal*. Where stories run counter to the dominant metaphors and images they receive very little coverage.

Strategies to improve media representation of racial and ethnic differences

The 2004 HREOC Isma-Listen report recommended a list of initiatives to control the publication and broadcasting of racially vilifying material and to improve media representation of racial issues. Recommendations included the following:

- Increasing CALD and indigenous employment in media organisations

- Development of training programs to facilitate CALD and indigenous employment

- Support for ethnic and indigenous media organisations and programs

- Development and implementation of codes of practice relating to the presentation of CALD and indigenous issues

- Enactment of legislation prohibiting racial vilification and incitement to racial hatred

- Community-based training programs for ethnic and indigenous communities on media rights and how to complain

- Specific training and education to deal with CALD and indigenous issues in journalism courses and for media workers

- Promotion of formal and informal contacts and exchange between media workers, and ethnic and indigenous communities

- Education and training to equip all of us to read/see the media more critically and empathetically.

Complaints about racism in the media

Media codes of practice and complaints mechanisms remain the principal avenues for responding to racism in the media (ADB, 2003: 114-115). There have been attempts especially by the ABC and SBS to recruit and train CALD and indigenous journalists. Such initiatives may be limited to on-screen roles with less attention to technical or production positions. Media workers from CALD and indigenous backgrounds are often seen as only able to operate within their own community or to report on ethnic or indigenous issues.

In Australia there are a range of industry-based or legal mechanisms for complaints about racism in the media (Pearson, 2004). Some media organisations and some unions have codes of ethics or good practice that can be appealed to in relation to group defamation or racial vilification.

Print media

Apart from defamation and obscenity, there are no government regulations of the print media. While we might regard racial vilification as both obscene and defamatory, Australian laws do little to protect us. The RHA can sometimes apply but overwhelmingly the press is able to use the exemption granted for 'fair comment' to protect it from prosecution.

It is possible to complain to the Australian Press Council (an industry funded committee) alleging breaches of the APC principles. Principle 7 states that:

Publications should not place any gratuitous emphasis on the race, religion, nationality, colour, country of origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, illness, or age of an individual or group. Nevertheless, where it is relevant and in the public interest, publications may report and express opinions in these areas (APC, 2001).

Obviously there is room for considerable disagreement as to what constitutes 'gratuitous' emphasis. We would all be able to provide examples of unnecessary identification or emphasis as 'Muslim', 'Lebanese', 'Aboriginal', 'South Sea Islander', 'Asian', or 'of Middle Eastern appearance' people in recent news stories. Discussion of this principle including examples is available at http://www.presscouncil.org.au/pcsite/activities/gpr.html

The APC requires you to have first lodged your complaint to the relevant publisher and to be dissatisfied with the response before referring a complaint to the APC. The APC cannot order a paper to make an apology or pay compensation but if a complaint is upheld the media organisation is supposed to publish that decision. Often coverage of the decision is much more extensive in rival newspapers. Some major publishing organisations are no

longer members of the APC, and in recent years under the leadership of David Flint, the APC has dismissed more than 60% of complaints as being 'fair comment' or 'in the public interest'. This record has resulted in a decline in the number of complaints lodged but it may still be worthwhile following through on a complaint, including asking for a right of reply (Stockwell and Scott, 2000).

The union covering most media workers, including journalists, is the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (see the website http://www.alliance.org.au). The MEAA has a code of ethics that requires members to observe honest, responsible and equitable standards, and specifically to avoid unnecessary emphasis on such personal characteristics as race, ethnicity or religious belief (Stockwell and Scott, 2000: 7). You can complain to the MEAA about a story where the journalist or broadcaster is a union member. However, many of those who work in the media today are not union members and few penalties are imposed.

It is sometimes possible to sue a newspaper or broadcaster for defamation but this is expensive and can be very time consuming. Courts often deny applicants the right to bring a case where they were not personally attacked but rather, a group or community to which they belong was defamed (Pearson, 2004).

Radio and television

Because radio and television broadcasting is limited by the available broadcast spectrum, the government issues licences which are extremely valuable. Part of the licensing process includes government regulation of what commercial media organisations can broadcast. The Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) is a government appointed body that regulates electronic media and the internet, but not the ABC or SBS as these are government-owned, each with their own legislation (ADB, 2003: 88). In addition, the various groupings of broadcasters such as the Federation of

Australian Radio Broadcasters, the Federation of Commercial Television Stations and the Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association each have their own codes of practice regarding the broadcasting of 'offensive' material (see http://www.aba.gov.au for copies of these codes).

For example, the current Commercial Television Code of Practice proscribes material that would:

- Seriously offend the cultural sensitivities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or of ethnic groups or racial groups in the Australian community

- Provoke or perpetuate intense dislike, serious contempt or severe ridicule against a person or group of persons on the grounds of age, colour, gender, national or ethnic origin, disability, race, religion or sexual preference (FCATS Code, 2004: 6-7).

However, as with the RHA, this code exempts material broadcast in good faith as an artistic and dramatic work, for academic debate, public interest or fair comment about a matter of public interest. Complaints must be made in writing after formally complaining to the broadcaster, and receiving no satisfaction. Again very few formal complaints are made, perhaps because of cynicism about the process and/or the outcome (ADB, 2003). In 2002-3 despite numerous complaints especially about talkback radio comments about Muslims, the ABA considered only one complaint about racially offensive material, which was dismissed (ABA *Annual Report 2002-03*, Appendix 4).

Issues of racial vilification and incitement are particularly common on talkback radio (ADB, 2003). For example in 1995 Alan Jones, a Sydney-based talkback host, attacked a decision of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board that found refusal of rental accommodation to an Aboriginal woman in Dubbo constituted racial discrimination. Jones declared that if he owned a property he had the 'right' to refuse to rent it to anybody: "I don't care what colour he

is, looking like a skunk and smelling like a skunk, with a sardine can on one foot and a sandshoe on the other and a half drunk bottle of beer under the arm …". The WA Aboriginal Legal Service complained to the NSW ADB and after five years of delays the case came before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. The AAT found that Jones' allegation that Aboriginal people were unsatisfactory tenants constituted incitement to racial hostility. However, as the Aboriginal Legal Service was an organization, no financial compensation was possible, however, Jones was ordered to broadcast an apology (Jones, 2000).

The spread of new technologies (including mobile phones, the Internet, pay TV and computer games) makes effective regulation of the broadcasting of racist material much more difficult (HREOC, 2003). Publication of racist material on the Internet is subjected to both the RDA and the RHA, although the allegedly private nature of emails and internet chat rooms makes legal action in these cases more difficult. The ABA or HREOC can handle a complaint about internet material where the author of the website is in Australia and the internet provider can be correctly identified. However, an enormous amount of racist material originates overseas and much of it is protected by elaborate efforts to disguise its origins using mirror or dummy sites.

In 2003 Holocaust denier Frederick Toben was found by HREOC to have breached the RDA on a website set up by the Adelaide Institute. When the case went to the Federal Court, the court upheld HREOC's decision, finding that, despite Toben's defence of 'academic freedom and freedom of expression', the site had many links to 'white supremacist' sites and incited racial hatred of Jews (McNamara, 2002: 100). Information about the Toben case can be found at HREOC's Cyber-Racism site, available at:
http://www.hreoc.gov.au/racial_discrimination/cyberracism/index.html

While HREOC has been quite active in discussing how to regulate racially offensive electronic material, the ABA appears much more concerned about sex and violence than combating racial hatred. For further discussion of the role of HREOC and the ABA with regard to the Internet see: http://www.hreoc.gov.au/racial_discrimination/cyberracism/regulation.html.

Many inquiries have established the need for stronger legislation and more workable and enforceable media regulations to deal with racial vilification (ADB, 2003). It is equally important to inform communities about complaints mechanisms and to support those making complaints.   Strategies for influencing the media and responding to bad reporting are covered below.

Suggestions for dealing with the media

Most of us have little experience dealing directly with the media but the skills and confidence needed are not much different to more familiar tasks of running meetings, writing reports and working in our organisations. Good principles of clear communication and the need to provide evidence and examples for our arguments are the same regardless of the medium we are using. The more practice we have in these areas the more confidence and capacity we will develop. Remember to congratulate the media on good stories (especially ones we give them) as well as complain about bad stories.

Many community organisations and campaigns have learnt to use the media in creative and effective ways. As well as traditional media such as radio or newspapers, these organisations use electronic newsletters and email lists to distribute information and rally support for their campaigns. Remember the recent campaign to lobby Coalition Senators to defeat the oppressive proposed amendments to the Migration Act in 2006. Despite intense pressure on individual senators including threats to their pre-selection, these brave souls were sustained by thousands of emails and messages of support from all over Australia. Email lists around issues such as asylum seekers, Aboriginal rights and religious freedom can provide examples of submissions,

draft letters and contact details for MPs for you to adapt and use either with the media or politicians.

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor can be quite influential in responding to media stories or political debates. In particular it is comparatively easy to get a letter printed in your local or regional newspaper. Short letters around 200 words are most likely to be published. Remember to sign and date your letter and include your contact address and phone number. However, if you are frightened that you may be attacked for expressing your views you can ask for your name to be withheld. Avoid abusive or potentially defamatory statements. Try to make the opposition appear unreasonable or ill informed. On a major issue you can ask for a right of reply, which allows for a longer opinion piece than a letter to the editor.

Writing a media release

You can use a media release to publicise an event or project you are involved with or to respond to a decision or event that affects you and your community. Media releases must be newsworthy if they are going to be published by the paper or broadcast by the radio or TV station you send them to. They must be quickly written and sent, as the attention span of media organisations is very short. They should be well written, interesting and have some punch. In particular direct quotations are often used to add to the immediacy of the release and to encourage the media organisation to ring up the contact people listed on the media release. A media release should contain the key facts: who, what, when, where, and why. The bulk of the release will provide more detail and context, linking it to current debates or events.

Media releases should be kept to one page, using an easily read font such as Ariel 12point, and must include contact numbers and addresses. Indicate the name of the person or persons willing to be interviewed who must keen their

mobile phone on, as they won't ring back if they miss you. When you have faxed your media release to the newspaper or TV or radio station, ring up to promote your story and persuade them that it's worth an interview and follow up. Obviously, a local community paper is more likely to respond than *The Australian*. Prepare by collecting the names, positions, phone and fax numbers of local, state and national media, as well as those of relevant politicians.

Being interviewed for radio or television

As with writing letters to the editor, being interviewed for radio or TV is not much different to being interviewed for a job or making a presentation about your project to a management committee. We may have very little experience in working with the media but still have the basic skills and with practice the confidence that will enable us to do a decent job of being interviewed. Spend some time thinking through the key messages you want to get across, and what facts or background information you want to present. Work with other people to guess what sort of questions you may get asked and practice answering them with your colleagues or friends. When you talk to the journalist involved make clear what your point of view is and ask to discuss the questions he or she intend to ask.

Remember that much of what is recorded will probably be edited out to create a ten or twenty piece (longer for radio probably). Stick to your key message! Even if the journalist asks you a question that you don't want to answer or that is off the point, remember you can reply 'on message' by repeating what it is that you want them to broadcast. Try to relax, if being filmed, look straight at the interviewer, not the camera, talk slowly and clearly, and don't get angry or defensive even if the interviewer tries to trip you up or says something outrageous. For further discussion of dealing with the media see Eggerking and Plater (1992); Plater (1994).

7.   Chronology

60,000 BP	Aboriginal people arrive in Australia
1500	Macassan (Indonesian) traders commence regular visits to northern Australia
1642	Tasman claims Van Diemen's Land for the Dutch
1770	James Cook lands at Botany Bay
1788	First Fleet arrives at Sydney Cove
1804	Settlers in Tasmania are authorized to shoot Aboriginal people
1835	John Batman tries to buy Melbourne from Aboriginal people but his treaty is overturned by the British government
1836-9	German, Chinese, Italian and Greek migration begins
1855	Victorian legislation to control Chinese arrivals
1860	Afghan camel drivers brought to South Australia
1863	South Sea Islanders are brought to the Queensland canefields as indentured labour
1869	Aboriginal Protection Board established in Victoria
1880	First Inter-Colonial Conference recommends bans on Chinese immigration and limits to Irish immigration
1886	NSW Protection Board has power to remove Aboriginal children
1888	First mosque established in Adelaide
1897	Dictation test introduced to control all non-European immigration
1897	*The Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act* enacted in Queensland controls all aspects of Aboriginal peoples' lives
1900	Federation of the Commonwealth of Australia
1901	*Immigration Restriction Act* and *Pacific Island Labourers Act* enacted by Federal parliament
1903	All non-Europeans denied the right to apply for naturalization as Australian citizens
1906	Most South Sea Islanders repatriated to Pacific Islands
1914	World War I, German and Austrian born Australians interned

1937	Commonwealth and State Ministers Conference adopts absorption (assimilation) policy for Aboriginal people with some European ancestry
1938	Aboriginal Day of Mourning and 150th anniversary of British settlement
1939	World War II, German, Italian and some Jewish refugees interned as enemy aliens
1943-1969	NSW legislation allows Aboriginal people to seek exemption from the Aborigines Act but requires they cease all contact with non-exempt family members
1946	British assisted passage scheme (the ten pound tourists)
1947	Displaced Persons (European refugees) accepted into Australia
1949	Australian Nationality and Citizenship laws enacted
1957	Non-Europeans are allowed to apply for citizenship after fifteen years residence (reduced to five years in 1966)
1962	Indigenous Australians given the right to vote in federal elections but voting not compulsory
1966	Australia signs the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racism* (ratified in 1975)
1967	Referendum removes clauses that discriminate against Aboriginal people from the Constitution, including counting them in the Commonwealth census for the first time, 92% vote Yes
1972	Aboriginal Tent Embassy and Gough Whitlam (ALP) elected Prime Minister
1973	Final elements of White Australian Policy removed
1974	Al Grassby announces multiculturalism as a government policy
1975	*Racial Discrimination Act* passed
1976-1979	Significant numbers of Vietnamese asylum seekers arrive by boat
1978	Galbally report on settlement policy
1981	Human Rights Commission established
1983	Bob Hawke elected as Labor Prime Minister
1984	The Blainey debate on Asian immigration
1984	Significant numbers of African (mostly Ethiopian) refugees arrive

1986	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission established, Irene Moss appointed first Race Discrimination Commissioner (1986-1994)
1988	Bicentenary (200th anniversary) of British settlement.
1988	Fitzgerald report on immigration policy, John Howard calls for One Australia and restrictions to Asian immigration
1990	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) established as an elected representative body
1991	HREOC releases report of National Inquiry into Racist Violence
1991	First detention centre for unauthorized boat arrivals opened at Port Hedland, WA
1992	Mandatory detention introduced by the Keating government for all unauthorized arrivals
1992	Mabo decision in the High Court recognizes Native Title rights to land and resources for some traditional owners
1993	*Native Title Act* passed
1994	Commonwealth government officially recognizes the Australian South Sea Islander community as a distinct ethnic community
1994	Zita Antonios appointed Race Discrimination Commissioner (1994-1999)
1995	*Racial Hatred Act* passed making racial vilification unlawful
1995	*Brandy vs HREOC* case, Federal Court decides that HREOC cannot make legally binding decisions on discrimination complaints because it is not a court.
1996	John Howard elected Prime Minister in a Coalition government. Pauline Hanson elected, and starts the One Nation Party
1997	HREOC report of the Stolen Generations Inquiry (*Bringing Them Home*) released
1999	Bill Jonas appointed Acting Race Discrimination Commissioner (1999-2004)
2001	The Tampa picks up drowning asylum seekers but is prevented from landing at Christmas Island, the Navy seizes the Tampa, asylum seekers are sent to Nauru

2002	First racial vilification case heard in Federal Court (*Jones vs Toben*) finds the Adelaide Institute website denying the Holocaust vilifies Jewish people
2004	HREOC releases '*A Last Resort?*' a report of the National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention
2004	HREOC releases *Isma-Listen*, a report of national consultations on eliminating prejudice against Arab and Muslim Australians
2004	Tom Calma appointed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner and Acting Race Discrimination Commissioner
2005	ATSIC abolished
2005	Cronulla riot highlights racial conflict and hostility towards Lebanese in Sydney
2006	Howard government announces changes to citizenship provisions and introduces tests on adherence to 'Australian cultural values'.

8.   Websites

Complaints and Information about discrimination

HREOC

http://www.humanrights.gov.au

Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland

http://www.adcq.qld.gov.au

Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care

http://www.multiculturalcare.org.au

Racism No Way

http://www.racismnoway.org.au

Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Immigration

A Just Australia

http://www.ajustaustralia.com

Amnesty International-Australia

http://www.amnesty.org.au/refugees/index.html

Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs Fact Sheets

http://www.immi.gov.au/facts/index.htm

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia

http://www.fecca.org.au

Multicultural Affairs Queensland

http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/multicultural

Project SafeCom [excellent news cutting service/newsletter]

http://www.safecom.org.au

Refuge Council of Australia

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au

Rural Australians for Refugees

http://www.ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org/

Indigenous

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner (HREOC)

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/index.html

Indigenous Portal-Australian Government

http://www.indigenous.gov.au/

9.   Key terms

Prejudice: Unfounded opinion or attitudes that represent an individual or group usually unfavourably.

Stereotype: An overgeneralised set of characteristics and traits attributed to a specific ethnic, national or racial group that assumes that individual members of that group will conform to these expectations.

Discrimination: Treating someone less favourably than others in the same situation.

Racism: A complex set of beliefs that assume races are distinct human groups that have specific characteristics that determine their cultures, beliefs and moralities, usually in ways that devalue and renders members of other racial groups inferior and of less worth.

Individual Racism: the expression of racist attitudes or behaviours by individuals.

Institutional Racism: Forms of racism that are structured into social and political institutions such that their normal operation affects different groups less favourably, whether or not, this discrimination is deliberate.

Cultural Racism: Social myths and discourses that express dominant beliefs about the sources and nature of other racial groups' inferiority and justifies their disadvantage or exclusion.

Intersectionality: The interconnections and interplay between various systems of subordination and oppression, for example, between class, gender and race or between sexuality, ethnicity and age.

Racial Hatred (or vilification): A public act based on the race or ethnicity of an individual or group that is likely to insult, offend, humiliate, intimidate, or incite violence.

Racial Harassment: Behaviour that offends, humiliates or intimidates based on the race or ethnicity of an individual or group.

Anti-racism: Efforts to confront and combat racism in all its forms, includes legislation, complaints and mediation, education, political and community campaigns.

Races: Divisions believed by many to exist between distinct human populations, based on fundamental physical and cultural characteristics. While commonly accepted as 'real', modern science has shown that there are no such distinct genetic or cultural groupings and that 'races' only exist as social constructions.

Culture: The sum total of ways of living shared by a social group or population that is transmitted from generation to generation by socialisation.

Ethnicity: The identity of a social group or population based on shared characteristics such as language, culture, history or geographic origin.

Indigenous: Peoples whose special connection to specific territories over millennia is recognised internationally. Indigenous Australians is a collective term for all those with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander ancestry who identify and are accepted as such by the Indigenous community where they live.

Whiteness: Refers to the unacknowledged position of unearned privilege that 'white' people occupy in countries such as Australia, Britain and the United States.

10.   References

ADB (Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW). 2003. *Race for the Headlines: racism and media discourse.* Sydney, ADB.

Ahmed, S. 2004. Declarations of Whiteness: the non-performativity of anti-racism. *Borderlands.* Volume 3 (2). [http://www.borderlandsejournal.adelaide.edu.au]

Anderson, M. 2003. Whitewashing Race: a critical perspective on whiteness. in A. Doane and E Bonilla-Silva (eds). *White Out: the continuing significance of racism.* London, Routledge: 21-34.

Anthias, F. and C. Lloyd. 2002. *Rethinking Anti-racisms: from theory to practice.* London, Routledge.

Aveling, N. 2004. Being the descendents of colonialists: white identity in context. *Race, Ethnicity and Education.* Volume 7 (1): 57-71.

Behrendt, L. 2003. *Achieving social justice: indigenous rights and Australia's future.* Sydney, Federation Press.

Bonnett, Alastair. 2000. *Anti-racism.* London, Routledge.

Bourne, J. 2002. Does legislating against racial violence work? *Race and Class.* Volume 44 (2): 81-85.

Brace. C. L. 2005. *Race is a Four-Letter Word: the genesis of the concept.* New York, Oxford University Press.

Bhavani, R. 2001. *Rethinking interventions in racism.* Stoke-on-Trent, Trentham Books.

Carter, J. 1988. Am I too black to go with you? in I. Keen (ed). *Being Black: Aboriginal Studies in Settled Australia*. Canberra, Aboriginal Studies Press: 65-76.

Chambers, B. and J. Pettman. 1986. *Anti-racism: a handbook for adult educators.* Canberra, AGPS.

Coady, T.; S. James, S. Miller and M. O'Keefe (eds). 2001. *Violence and Police Culture.* Melbourne University Press.

Cohen, P. 1992. 'It's racism what dunnit': hidden narratives in theories of racism. in J. Donald and A. Rattansi (eds). *'Race', Culture and Difference.* London, Sage: 62-103.

Cole, M. (ed). 2002. *Education, equality and human rights: issues of gender, 'race', sexuality, special needs and social class.* London, Routledge/Falmer.

Cole, M. 2004. 'Brutal and stinking' and 'difficult to handle': the historical and contemporary manifestations of racialisation, institutional racism, and schooling in Britain. *Race Ethnicity and Education.* Volume 7 (1): 35-56.

Cowlishaw, G. 1990. Helping Anthropologists. *Canberra Anthropology.* Volume 13 (2): 1-28.

Crowley, Vicki. 1993. Teaching Aboriginal Studies: some problems of culturalism in an inner city school. *The Aboriginal Child at School.* Volume 21: 33-44.

Cunneen, C. 2001. *Conflict, Politics and Crime.* Sydney, Allen and Unwin.

Cunneen, C.; D. Fraser and S. Thomsen (eds). 1997. *Faces of Hate: hate crime in Australia.* Sydney, Hawkins Press.

Dlamini, S. 2002. From the other side: notes on teaching about race when racialised. *Race, Ethnicity and Education.* Volume 5 (1): 51-66.

Donald, J. and A. Rattansi (eds). 1992. *'Race', culture and difference.* Milton Keynes, Open University Press.

Dyer, R. 1997. *White.* London, Routledge.

Eggerking, K. and D. Plater. 1992. *Signposts: a guide for journalists.* Sydney, University of Technology, Centre for Independent Journalism.

Ferguson, R. 1998. *Representing 'Race': ideology, identity and the media.* London, Arnold.

Fine, M.; L. Weis, C. Powel and L. Mun Won (eds). 1997. *Off White: readings in race, power, and society.* London, Routledge.

Frankenberg, R. 1993. *White Women, Race Matters: the social construction of whiteness.* London, Routledge.

Frankenberg, R. 1997. Growing up white: feminism, racism and the social geography of childhood. In L. McDowell and J. Sharp (eds). *Space, gender, knowledge: feminist readings.* London, Arnold: 209-218.

Gillborn, D. 1995. *Racism and Antiracism in Real Schools.* Buckingham, Open University Press.

Gillborn, D. 2000. Anti-racism: from theory to praxis. In B. Moon, S. Brown and M. Ben-Pertez (eds). *International companion to education.* London, Routledge: 476-488.

Gould, S. 1996. *The mismeasure of man.* 2nd. Edn. New York, Norton.

Hage, G. (ed). 2002. *Arab-Australians: citizenship and belonging today.* Melbourne University Press.

Hage, G. 2003. *Against Paranoid Nationalism: searching for hope in a shrinking society.* Sydney, Pluto Press.

Hatchell, H. 2004. Privilege of whiteness: adolescent male students' resistance to racism in an Australian classroom. *Race Ethnicity and Education.* Volume 7 (2): 99-114.

Hawkins, M. 1997. *Social Darwinism in European and American thought, 1860-1945.* Cambridge University Press.

Hollinsworth, D. 1992. Cultural awareness training, racism awareness training or antiracism? Strategies for combating institutional racism. *Journal of Intercultural Studies.* Volume 13 (2): 37-52.

Hollinsworth, D. 1997. The work of anti-racism. in G. Gray and C. Winter (eds). *The Resurgence of Racism.* Clayton, Vic. Monash Publications in History No. 24: 129-138.

Hollinsworth, D. 2006. *Race and Racism in Australia: Third Edition.* Melbourne, Thomson and social science Press.

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC). 1991. *Racist Violence: report of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia.* Canberra, AGPS.

HREOC. 1998. *Race for Business: a training resource package.* HREOC, Sydney.

HREOC. 2001a. *"I want respect and equality": A Summary of Consultations with Civil Society on Racism in Australia.* Sydney, HREOC.

HREOC. 2001b. Gender and Race Intersectionality. Available at: http://www.humanrights.gov.au/worldconference/aus_gender.html

HREOC. 2003. Cyber-Racism: racial hatred on the Net. Available at: http://www.hreoc.gov.au/racial_discrimination/cyberracism/index.html

HREOC. 2004a. *Federal Discrimination Law.* Sydney, HREOC.

HREOC. 2004b. *Isma-Listen: national consultation on eliminating prejudice against Arab and Muslim Australians.* Sydney, HREOC.

Jakubowicz, A. (ed). 1994. *Ethnicity, Racism and the Media.* Sydney, Allen and Unwin.

Johnson, C. 2000. *Governing Change: Keating to Howard.* St. Lucia, University of Queensland Press.

Jones, A. 2000. (*WA Aboriginal Legal Service Ltd. V. Jones and Radio 2UE Sydney Pty. Ltd. 2000*, NSWADT 102, 31 July 2000). Available at: http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/nsw/NSWADT/2000/102.html

Katz, J. 2003. *White awareness: handbook for anti-racism training.* 2nd edition. Norman, University of Oklahoma Press.

Keeley, S. 1995. *Racial Vilification.* Melbourne, VCTA.

Knowles, E. and W. Ridley. 2005. *Another Spanner in the Works: challenging prejudice and racism in mainly white schools.* Stoke-on-Trent, Trentham Books.

Ladson-Billings, G. and Gillborn, D. (eds). 2004. *The RoutledgeFalmer reader in multicultural education.* New York, Routledge/Falmer.

MacPherson, W. 1999. *The Stephen Lawrence enquiry.* London, The Stationary Office.

Mahoney, K. 1994. *Hate vilification legislation with freedom of expression: where is the balance?* Brisbane, Bureau of Ethnic Affairs, Qld. and Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW.

Markus, A. 2001. *Race: John Howard and the politics of race.* Sydney, Allen and Unwin.

May, S. (ed). 1999. *Critical Multiculturalism: rethinking multicultural and anti-racist education.* Lewes, Falmer Press.

McConnochie, K.; D. Hollinsworth and J. Pettman. 1988. *Race and Racism in Australia.* Katoomba, Social Science Press.

McNamara, L. 2002. *Regulating Racism: racial vilification in Australia.* Sydney Institute of Criminology Monograph Series No. 16.

Meadows, M. 2004. Media images of Indigenous affairs in Australia. In J. Leigh and E. Loo (eds). *Outer Limits: a reader in communication across cultures.* Canberra, Language Australia: 273-289.

Mickler, S. 1998. *The Myth of Privilege; Aboriginal status, media visions, public ideas.* Fremantle Arts Centre Press.

Miles, R. 1993. *Racism after 'race relations'.* London, Routledge.

Nielsen, L. 2002. Subtle, Pervasive, Harmful: racist and sexist remarks in public as hate speech. *Journal of Social Issues.* Volume 58 (2): 265-280.

Noble, G. 2005. The discomfort of strangers: racism, incivility and ontological security in a relaxed and comfortable nation. *Journal of Intercultural Studies.* Volume 26 (1-2): 107-120.

O'Neill, N.; S. Rice and R. Douglas. 2004. *Retreat from Injustice: human rights law in Australia.* Sydney, 2nd Edn. Sydney, Federation Press.

Ouseley, H. 1992. Resisting Institutional Change. in D. Gill, B. Mayor and M. Blair (eds). *Racism and Education.* London, Sage: 119-133.

Plater, D. 1994. *Going for Red Black and God, the Indigenous Media Manual.* University of Technology Sydney.

Poynting, S; G. Noble, P. Tabar and J. Collins. 2004. *Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other.* Sydney, Federation Press.

Reid, S. and R. Smith. 1998. *Regulating Racial Hatred.* Canberra, Australian Institute of Criminology, No. 79.

Rizvi, F. and V. Crowley. 1993. Teachers and the contradictions of culturalism. in G. Verma (ed). *Inequality and teacher education, an international perspective.* London, Falmer Press: 144-164.

Roman, L. 1993. White is a Color! White defensiveness, postmodernism, and anti-racist pedagogy. in C. McCarthy and W. Crichlow (eds). *Race, identity and representation in education.* London, Routledge: 71-88.

Sarup, M. 1991. *Education and the ideologies of racism.* Stoke-on-Trent, Trentham Books.

Sociological Research Online. 1999. The Stephen Lawrence Murder and the Macpherson Inquiry and Report. *Sociological Research Online.* Volume 4 (1). Available at:
http://www.socresonline.org.uk/4/1/lawrence.html

Solomon, R.P.; J. Portelli, B-J. Daniel and A. Campbell. 2005. The disclosure of denial: how white teacher candidates construct race, racism and 'white privilege'. *Race, Ethnicity and Education.* Volume 8(2): 147-169.

Stasiulis, D. and N. Yuval-Davis. 1995. Beyond Dichotomies - gender, race, ethnicity and class in settler societies. in D. Stasiulis and N. Yuval-Davis (eds). *Unsettling Settler Societies.* London, Sage: 1-38.

Sleeter, C. and P. McLaren, 1995. *Multicultural education, critical pedagogy, and the politics of difference.* Albany NY, State University of New York Press.

Stepan, N. 1982. *The idea of race in science: Great Britain 1800-1960.* London, Macmillan.

Stockwell, S. and P. Scott. 2000. *All-Media Guide to Fair and Cross-Cultural Reporting.* Griffith University, Australian Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy.

Taylor, P. 2006. 'Street language' ruled not vilification. *The Australian.* 15 September 2006.

Wight, C. 2003. The Agent-Structure Problem and Institutional Racism. *Political Studies.* Volume 51: 706-721.

Wootten, H. 1991. *RCIADIC, Regional Report of Inquiry in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania.* Canberra, AGPS.