Panel 1:

Sources, causes, forms of contemporary manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

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BACKGROUND

Recent academic reports and opinion polling all indicate that racism is widespread in Australia.

There is much less knowledge of the geography of racism in Australia. But this is not unique.

Worldwide, most studies of racism generally have generally little appreciation of spatial variations in the intensity, nature or definition of racism.

While racism is everywhere, it may be everywhere different. This is because of the different cultural make up of most regions in Australia, and different problems and tensions in different places.

More importantly from a public policy viewpoint, such variations have been largely ignored in anti-racism policy development in Australia.

WHY A GEOGRAPHY?

Experiencing diversity

It has been long recognised that those in non-metropolitan areas are generally less tolerant of cultural difference than city dwellers.

Cities produce experiences of otherness, heterogeneity and dynamism. Meanwhile, rural life gives raise to a preference for experiences of sameness, homogeneity and continuity.

Put simply, the increased exposure of individuals to cultural difference gradually enhances their tolerance and their embrace of it. Therefore, residents of areas of established cultural diversity could be expected to develop greater appreciation of difference, and have a lesser dependence upon cultural sameness.

The cultural make-up of localities

The level of intolerance differs between cultural groups in Australia. Whites, from whatever background, suffer demonstratively less ethnocentrism or racism than do non-Whites. Community groups which have been found to be the least tolerated by survey respondents in 1990s have been Muslim-Australians, Vietnamese-, Lebanese- and Turkish-Australians (McAllister & Moore 1989, pp. 8-9). Racism towards

Aborigines in Australia is endemic. The National Inquiry into Racist Violence (1991:72) most persuasively established that: "racism and racist violence permeates the day-to-day lives of Aboriginal and Islander people".

It can therefore be assumed that racism will differ across space according to the presence of different cultural groups.

Education and affluence

It has long been accepted that racism is negatively associated with affluence and educational attainment.

The residential differentiation of the Australian people by occupation, affluence and education is therefore likely to produce regional variations in racism.

The unique histories of place

The unique histories and relations of each 'place' could be expected to produce unique sets of inter-communal relations.

From a policy development viewpoint, the importance of a geography of racism has been identified:

> Not only is the antiracist struggle situated, but it occurs most effectively through an engagement of the places where it is most strongly manifested. This engagement involves an understanding of how a variety of social processes comes together in places … . The political task is therefore to situate antiracist struggles in those sites where they will have most effect (Kobayashi & Peake 2000, p.398).

RACISMS IN NSW

OHP of Table 1

Selecting migrants on the basis of 'race', religion or country of birth is racist, and is a practice associated with the White Australia Policy (Zelinka 1996). However, over one-fifth of respondents in public polls have been prepared to support a racist policy or racist legislation regarding the selection of migrants (indicator J). Perhaps as many as one in five Australians believe that migrants should be selected on a cultural

or 'racial' basis. This figure (one-in-five, twenty percent) keeps re-appearing in research as the proportion of Australians who are racist, racist by most definitions. This represents a substantial number of Australians.

Beyond that nearly ninety percent of respondents in mid-1990s polls felt that there were too many migrants from Asia (see Table 1: indicator B). Also, over one half felt that Indigenous Australians were treated "over-generously" by the government by way of welfare handouts and special treatment.

This indicates a high degree of ethnocentrism: manifest as intolerance of specific groups, or hostility to difference generally (from an assumed Anglo-Celtic-Australian norm).

In many senses, anti-Asian and anti-Indigenous racisms have the same historical and cultural roots: they are legacies of the White Australia construction of nationhood (see Vasta & Castles 1996, p.14).

NSW: RURAL / URBAN

Recent media reports talk about a "growing social divide", of "two Australias".

Are there two Australias?

This is thought to be partly a product of the "withdrawal (rationalisation) of rural services", and the uneven distribution of the costs and benefits of globalisation.

However, recent evidence, some of it generated by Australian political geographers finds very little evidence of a simple urban-rural division in racist sentiment.

Political parties that have racist policies have generally been thought to be more successful in rural areas than in urban ones, that is the media line. However, proper research by political geographers has found that the ONP vote was strongest in blue collar metropolitan fringe areas, in regional urban centers as well as in SOME rural areas (Davis & Stimson 1998; Forrest *et al*. 2001). The media has been quite effective at associating the rural and regional with "racism, violence and economic decline" (Pritchard & McManus, 2000:387).

OHP of Table 1

Anti-Asian attitudes

There is very little evidence or rural-urban variation in anti-Asian attitudes. It is strong in some rural centers, but also on Sydney's outer urban districts where Asian migrants have been settling in recent times.

Anti-Indigenous feeling

Anti-Indigenous feeling was marginally higher among respondents from rural Australia (indicator D). Although rural respondents were especially concerned about the continuation of the Indigenous bureaucratic and representative body, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) (indicator E).

These findings provide little evidence for a marked urban-rural division of attitudes to specific cultural minorities.

Anti-multiculturalism

There was some evidence of a higher rural intolerance of cultural diversity. Rural respondents were more concerned about multiculturalism than their urban counterparts (indicators G, H & I).

These results lend some support to the notion of a rural-urban dichotomy in this general area of intolerance.

Most Australians are exposed to the negative representations of multiculturalism and diversity which appear in mainstream media (see Bell 1993; Goodall *et al*. 1994, p. 187). However, those residing in areas of profound cultural diversity experience the direct benefit and dynamism of multiculturalism. Survey respondents from Sydney have a greater likelihood of having developed a more complex and balanced view of multiculturalism than those from rural NSW.

Nonetheless our preliminary findings provide only limited evidence of an urban-rural variation in ethnocentrism

NSW: REGIONAL VARIATION

The regional variations in racism further confound the idea of a simple urban-rural division.

OHP of Table 2.

Anti-Asian sentiment

The regional breakdown of attitudes suggests that anti-Asian sentiment is strongest in some rural centres, but also in the outer edges of Sydney where Asian migrants have begun settling in more recent times. Inner and middle Sydney, sites of longer standing Asian-Australian presence, were the places of greatest tolerance.

Anti-Indigenous sentiment

Anti-Indigenous sentiment, (indicators D & E), was most likely in non-metropolitan regions such as Richmond-Tweed, North Western/Far West NSW, the Hunter and the Illawarra (Table 2). Some of these regions showed a lesser than average concern regarding immigration issues, demonstrating that racisms are very much regionally specific.

There appears to be a persistence of anti-Indigenous sentiment in areas of long-standing presence of Indigenous Australians. This confounds the contact model I mentioned above.

The regionally specific nature of ethnocentrism

OHP of Figure 1

Figure 1 contrasts anti-multiculturalism with anti-indigenous sentiment. It suggests the regionally specific nature of ethnocentrism.

Racist regions

There are sections of Sydney where people harbour more racist sentiment than rural areas of NSW.

For example, Murray/Murrumbidgee and the Richmond-Tweed responses were consistently more tolerant than those from outer western Sydney/Blacktown and Fairfield/outer southwestern Sydney (Table 2).

The areas from where respondents were the most 'racist' (using these indicators) were outer western Sydney, the two regions with major industrial cities (Illawarra and Hunter), and the Mid North Coast. Respondents from affluent Sydney were more consistently and relatively less likely to put 'racist' views than those from all other regions of NSW.

And, generally, respondents from the inner areas of Sydney appear more tolerant than the outer areas.

OHP of Table 2.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF ANTI-RACISM POLICIES

A major implication of these findings is the regionally specific nature (and causes?) of racism.

This is important in the formulation of anti-racism initiatives.

International research also indicates the importance of locally developed and locally "owned" anti-racism initiatives.

Clearly, there is a responsibility for anti-racism at the grass roots or local level.

A role for local government?

Research (Dunn et al. 2002) into Local Government and their interventions into inter-communal relations reveals that most ill prepared to assume responsibility for anti-racist initiatives.

- Council officers had a poor understanding of what community relations policies entail.
- Some local councils were vociferously opposed to local community relations initiatives.
- Council administrations exhibited a lack of interest in local intercommunal relations, even when there had been evidence of recent and serious community discord.
- Others blamed local intercommunal tensions on the activities of minority cultural groups.

For example, some rural councils argued that racism had increased as a result of Native Title claims by local Indigenous people (Dunn 1998b, p. 64).

Living in Harmony grants?

"campaign messages and strategies have to be tailored for different audiences and for different parts of the country" (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA),1998, p. 1).

The Federal Government's Living in Harmony anti-racism campaign announced that "campaign messages and strategies have to be tailored for different audiences and for different parts of the country" (Department of

Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA),1998, p. 1). The success of this local sensitivity is yet to be known.

The grants have certainly been carefully allocated on a proportional basis, by states, perhaps even by Federal electorate. But the nature of the granting process, in which groups made submissions for funding, itself makes it difficult to ensure that the geography of the response matches the geography of need.

- 69 % of projects were located in major metropolitan areas
- 27% of projects are responses to interethnic discord
- 50% of projects encourage inter-ethnic interactions

OHP of Tables 6 & 7

Structural initiatives

But local or grass roots initiatives also require substantive central government support and guidance, as well as rigorous critical evaluation.

- Central support for local initiatives

Also, many of the fundamental problems of racism relate to the dominant ideas about what constitutes national identity. I would never suggest that our argument for local sensitivity and ownership should preclude government involvement in these crucial areas.

I refer to statements celebrating diversity, statements which celebrate the diverse composition of Australian society, and statements which rewrite national identity and continue to move it away from its very narrow historical roots (WAP, followed by the Anglo-Celtic norm which was operationalised thru assimilationism).

- Statements recognising and celebrating diversity
- Rewriting national identity

FUTURE WORK ON THE GEOGRAPHY OF RACISMS

A new survey (5000 sample), area stratified sample

Which should produce statistically significant samples at the level of each geog unit.

Eg. for Blacktown LGA in outer western Sydney we would need 247 completed surveys, but only 43 for Ashfield.

Constructs to be tested:

Established constructs
Tolerance of cultural difference
Extent of racism generally
Extent of racism individually
Intolerance (discomfort) of specific (out)groups
Asian-Australians; Indigenous Australians Muslim
Australians; other groups
Experience of ethnic-based discrimination

Newer constructs
Ideology of nation
Anglo-Celt cultural privilege
Racialism, separatism & hierarchy
Belief in Racialism
Belief in Racial hierarchy
Belief in Racial Separatism

So I hope that what I have had to say, and our research findings and aims, have raised issues that you might not have been familiar with, or that you may not have considered before. But these are some of the major points as we see them.

Table 1 Ethnocentrism by urban and rural, NSW, 1994 & 1996

Indicator	Indicator code	Survey question	Urban % Agree	Rural % Agree	Total % Agree
Intolerance of specific groups	A	There are too many migrants from certain areas[b]	63	53	59
	B	There are too many migrants from Asia[b]	89	85	88
	C	The proportion of Asians in our migrant intake should be reduced[c]	51	56	53
	D	Aborigines are treated over generously by the government[c]	51	57	53
	E	The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission should be abolished[c]	27	42	33
Intolerance of cultural diversity	F	Current immigration level is too high[b]	64	73	68
	G	Migrants should not be encouraged to preserve their own culture[b]	40	45	42
	H	The policy of multiculturalism should be abolished[c]	19	27	22
	I	Migrants should learn to live and behave like the majority of Australians do[a]	56	69	61
	J	Migrants should be selected for reasons including colour, religion or country of birth[b]	22	19	21

Sources: Irving Saulwick and Associates, 1994, nationwide data set
      only. Sample of 1000 (623 urban, 377 rural); ACNielsen,
      1996a, NSW sample of 559 (357 urban, 202 rural); ACNielsen,
      1996b, NSW sample of 555 (354 urban, 201 rural).

Table 2   Regions of NSW, ranked by indicators of ethnocentrism, NSW, 1994 & 1996

Region	Ranks							Total
	A	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**J**	
Inner Sydney / eastern suburbs	5	1	2	1	2	3	7	21
Murray/Murrumbidgee	2	4	6	12	1	1	3	29
Lower northern Sydney	10	3	4	6	5	2	2	32
Richmond-Tweed	1	7	14	16	4	4	1	47
Hornsby / Nthn beaches / Gosford	12	6	11	7	6	5	9	56
Inner W Sydney/ Central W Syd.	11	5	8	5	12	11	5	57
South eastern NSW	8	7	11	7	8	7	10	58
St George / Canterbury	7	9	5	10	6	9	15	61
Northern NSW	6	9	10	9	10	10	7	61
North Western / Far West NSW	3	16	16	14	3	5	4	61
Central West NSW	8	14	1	3	15	16	10	67
Fairfield / outer SW Sydney	16	9	9	1	9	13	12	69
Hunter	3	15	15	11	14	8	5	71
Outer W Sydney / Blacktown	13	12	6	3	13	12	14	73
Illawarra	15	2	13	15	11	14	12	82
Mid north coast	13	13	3	13	16	15	16	89

Where 1 indicates the rank corresponding to the region exhibiting the most tolerant response for a given indicator (as shown in table 1)

Table 3   Racial discrimination complaints, city and country, NSW, 1996-7

	City	Country
Number of reported incidents	495	184
Population	4,437,857	1,476,744
Number of incidents per 100,000 people	11.2	12.5

Sources: Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW (1996; 1997); ABS Census 1996.

Table 4   Regional distribution of racial discrimination complaints, NSW, 1996-1997

Region	Number of Incidents	Population	Rate per 100,000 population
Inner Sydney / eastern suburbs	104	507 614	20.5
North western	23	116 403	19.8
South eastern	36	188 302	19.1
Murrumbidgee	26	145 799	17.8
Inner W / central W Sydney	72	419 194	17.2
Central west	24	168 571	14.2
Lower northern Sydney	33	267 744	12.3
Far west	3	25 085	12.0
St George / Canterbury	81	682 057	11.9
Fairfield / outer SW Sydney	56	511 277	11.0
Richmond-Tweed	22	202 635	10.9
Illawarra	35	360 298	9.7
Outer W Sydney / Blacktown	58	644 773	9.0
Northern	15	175 221	8.6
Mid north coast	10	262 985	7.6
Hornsby / beaches / Gosford	46	708 631	6.5
Hunter	23	540 491	4.3
Murray	2	108 979	1.0

Sources: The Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW (1996; 1997)

Table 5   Statistical associations between racism and demographic variables: rank correlation coefficients

Indicators	Educat.	Unemp.	Income	Aborig.	Asia-Born	LOTE
A, n=16	-0.2551	0.291	-0.256	0.202	-0.185	-0.224
B, n=16	-0.1706	0.008	0.203	0.184	0.153	0.185
C, n=17	-0.5245 ****	0.281	-0.404 **	0.458 ***	-0.453 ***	-0.496 ****
D, n=17	-0.1618	0.353 **	-0.256	0.195	-0.336 **	-0.246
E, n=17	-0.2567	0.322 *	-0.430 ***	0.325 *	-0.364 **	-0.404 **
F, n=16	-0.2625	0.323 *	-0.159	0.101	-0.026	-0.029
G, n=16	-0.1088	0.071	0.067	-0.085	0.065	0.105

Where   * = significance at α = 0.25
         ** = significance at α = 0.2
         *** = significance at α = 0.1
         **** = significance at α = 0.05

and where:
A: Proportion of respondents who felt that the current level of immigration was too high
B: Proportion of respondents who felt that Australia receives too many migrants from certain regions
C: Proportion of respondents who agreed that the proportion of 'Asians' in Australia's migration intake should be reduced
D: Proportion of respondents who agreed that Aboriginals are treated over generously by the Federal Government
E: Proportion of respondents who agreed that the ATSIC should be abolished
F: Proportion of respondents who disagreed with the policy of multiculturalism (defined as encouraging migrants to preserve their culture)
G: Proportion of respondents who believed that migrants should be selected on the basis of colour, religion or country

Table 6   Location of Living in Harmony projects

	Percent
State capital city	62.6
Other major metropolitan	6.1
Regional centres	20.2
Rural	11.1
Total	100

Source: Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, <u>Living in Harmony: Grants Summary</u>.

Table 7   Anti-racism approach of Living in Harmony projects.

		Percent
Information provision program	Yes	18.2
	No	81.8
	Total	100
Interethnic interactions	Yes	49.5
	No	49.5
	Total	100
Response to discord	Yes	27.3
	No	72.7
	Total	100
Special events	Yes	19.2
	No	80.8
	Total	100
Other	Yes	21.2
	No	78.8
	Total	100

Note: projects usually contained more than one approach
Source: Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Living in Harmony: Grants Summary.

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