# Sport development programmes for Indigenous Australians: innovation, inclusion and development, or a product of 'white guilt'?

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Under the legacy of neoliberalism, it is important to consider how the indigenous people, in this case of Australia, are to advance, develop and achieve some approximation of parity with broader societies in terms of health, educational outcomes and economic participation. In this paper, we explore the relationships between welfare dependency, individualism, responsibility, rights, liberty and the role of the state in the provision of Government-funded programmes of sport to Indigenous communities. We consider whether such programmes are a product of 'white guilt' and therefore encourage dependency and weaken the capacity for independence within communities and individuals, or whether programmes to increase rates of participation in sport are better viewed as good investments to bring about changes in physical activity as (albeit a small) part of a broader social policy aimed at reducing the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in health, education and employment.

## Introduction

As the great western prize of a liberal democratic economy becomes the sine qua non of a functioning society, independence, freedom, personal responsibility and civic participation through entrepreneurialism underpinned by private property law appear to be the 'endgame' of a civil society. Similarly, contributing to this condition is the progressive dismantling of the 'demon' of centrally planned economies. It is appropriate to consider how, under the legacy of this discourse generally referred to as neoliberalism [1] the indigenous peoples of the world, and in this case of Australia in particular, are to advance, develop and achieve some approximation of parity with broader societies in terms of health, educational outcomes and economic participation. Given the dominance of neoliberalism as a political theory of economic development and growth over the last 40 years [2] answers are far from clear.

What is clearer perhaps is that the glittering prize of this 'freedom' from the colonial yoke or economic determinism (allegedly universally available under the conventions of the drip-down efficiencies of markets) comes at a price. For Indigenous communities, this price might include loss of cultural heritage, loss of languages, loss of connection to land or country, loss of a sense of identity and loss of economic participation. The triumphalism of the 'west' ensures that how the world is most readily understood is through the prism of its own Enlightenment-inspired epistemological lens. Concomitantly, this means that

importance or capital [3] attached to traditional (or other) ways of knowing of, for example, the subaltern class [4] whilst often regarded as artefact (frequently because it suits the tourist dollar), is routinely dismissed as being neither serious nor pragmatically worthwhile, or worse still in need of systematic eradication [5]. We also see an accompanying and perhaps curious paradox of increased 'rights' yet decreased sovereignty of peoples. Of concern to some is the perceived role of the state intervention to 'put things right'.

This statist view of compensatory politics and welfare economics is well established in social policy in Aboriginal affairs in Australia. Similarly established is the inclusion of sport in such practices. Indeed, in Australia, sport has a history of being incorporated into strategies targeting the health and well-being of the Indigenous population. A key example is with respect to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1987 – 1991) that emphasized the importance of access to sport and recreation as an aid to discouraging anti-social and criminal behaviours as well as developing and sustaining community cohesiveness. The Australian Government's response was to support the establishment of the Indigenous Sport Program through the Australian Sports Commission in 1993 with the focus of encouraging Indigenous Australians to be more active and to play sport at all levels. The body of literature regarding the use of diversionary strategies for anti-social behaviour and self-harm gained strength from the Royal Commission recommendations and has maintained momentum ever since [6].

In this paper we explore the relationships between welfare dependency, individualism, responsibility, rights, liberty and the role of the state in the provision of Government- funded programmes of sport to Indigenous communities in Australia. In doing so we consider whether funded programmes for Indigenous communities are a product of a phenomenon referred to as 'white guilt' [7] and therefore encourage dependency and weaken the capacity for independence within communities and individuals, or whether programmes to increase rates of participation in sport are better viewed as good investments to bring about changes in physical activity as (albeit a small) part of a broader strategy to 'close the gap' – an overarching policy aimed at reducing the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in relation to areas in health (e.g. life expectancy and child mortality), education (e.g. access to early childhood education and secondary achievement) and employment (e.g. employment outcomes). To undertake this task, we will draw on theory from sociology, politics and economics.

**Australia – a shared land**
The colonial history of Australia remains controversial mainly across an ideological divide. That said, Australia is generally considered to be a settler-colonial state [8]. This means that the primary purpose of the Australian colonization was the sequestration of land rather than the franchised approach to colonization where the available labour, in other words the local population, is mixed with land seizure, such as in the case of India under British rule. The logical extension of this is the elimination of native populations since their presence serves no obvious

purpose to the intended use of the land. Given that Indigenous Australians have endured, their continued presence on the land denoting a remarkable durability and the settlers were not repelled, as Wolf suggests the relationship between settlers (and their continual flow over time) and the indigenous population 'has been historically realised as a range of shifting balances' [9]. Many Indigenous spokespersons would argue that no matter how the balances have shifted over time, they have generally tilted in favour of the settlers. In the Ben Chifley Memorial Lecture delivered in 2000 by Noel Pearson [10], it was suggested that the 'daggers of impediment' (Pearson's term) thwart the attempts of Indigenous Australians to make progress in Australian society. It is against this complex backdrop that social policy in terms of health, provision of facilities, recreational opportunities, education and economic activity gets played out.

**The so-called curse of welfare and 'big' government**
Most developed countries have a system of welfare of some kind or another no matter how small or how it is organized. If taxes, rates or fees are collected and then used for the improved welfare of society (better roads, more or better equipped schools, improved health care or transport systems and support for the dispossessed and disenfranchised), then it is a welfare culture. Welfare states have a long and contested history back to Bismarck Germany and generally include a range of models (UK, Scandinavia, etc.) as to how they can function. In the current social and political milieu, welfare culture, as most would recognize, is highly contested. As Europe grapples with the continuing fallout of the global financial crisis (GFC) with contentious calls for austerity and belt tightening, visions of small government vie for supremacy with Keynesian interventionist advocates [11].  It boils down to a big versus small government ideology. In 2012 the USA faced a presidential election for the most part fought on a 'role of government' ticket with the Democrats led by Obama claiming moral high ground on matters related to health, education and support for disenfranchised segments of the economy and Republicans under Romney arguing that such a level of intervention in the lives of ordinary citizens is unconstitutional and breaks with the traditions of the Founding Fathers [12]. In Australia we seldom see such extremes, though the ideological battleground that is opening up currently is likely to be framed around a Hayekian-inspired small government [13] less regulated marketplace ideology versus an interventionist large government allegedly looking after 'ordinary working Australians' – a much overused political euphemism for the electorate if ever there was one. The fact is that Australia's economic landscape is highly liberalized with low protectionist tariffs and significant market freedoms but generally is managed by a government, which as a lead political writer George Megalogenis argues, 'still sticks its nose where it belongs .. . ' [14]. That is to say that, in general, Australian governments over the last 30 years have progressively freed up the economy but have been prepared to play a role in ensuring safety nets and support for the most savagely disadvantaged groups. As a result, social policy researchers such as Peter Whiteford have argued that, based on OECD data, Australia has one of the fairest welfare state systems in the world, based largely on progressive systems that redistribute wealth [15]. Moreover, during the GFC the Government of the day was prepared to resort to a Keynesian-

like raid on the Treasury (or the Exchequer) coffers to stimulate the economy through increased demand – the antithesis of supply side economics, to avoid a recession that would have harmed those most vulnerable. Joseph Stiglitz claimed that this 'saved' the Australia economy, though inevitably this is disputed [16].  It is against this backdrop then that Australia continues to struggle with how best to support its Indigenous communities in ways that could be considered socially just, morally sound and effective in outcome. It is this, albeit well- meaning, position, Noel Pearson would argue, that has led to, for Indigenous Australians, a most destructive culture of what he terms 'passive welfare' [17].  Passive welfare, he suggests, is a direct product of white guilt.

**Passive welfare and the spectre of white guilt**
More recently, the attractions of the laissez-faire style of governance, the ubiquity of a market mentality and moralistic claims for more personal responsibility have been neatly folded into the striking discourse of white guilt proffered by Shelby Steele [18]. Steele argues that white guilt, rather than improving the lives of those disenfranchised through the historical legacy of 'race' (such as the Jim Crow laws in the USA, or in Australia the non- recognition of the first Australians as citizens for much of its [colonial] history), has in fact fostered generations of people highly dependent on government policy in the form of welfare, protectionist industrial and employment laws, equal opportunity laws and racial discrimination acts brought into existence through parliamentary process. The discourse advanced by Steele, informed as it is by the writings and philosophy of Booker T. Washington, has found support in Australia through the writing of Noel Pearson whom we introduced earlier. Pearson is generally recognized as an Aboriginal activist, lawyer, community leader and more recently as a public intellectual. Therefore, although the origins of such claims are different (Steele argues that the promise of the Civil Rights Movement in the USA was undermined by a weak discourse of equality), Pearson suggests that increased recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as citizens has brought about a culture of welfare dependency and this, Pearson argues, is a product of Australia's white guilt. This discourse in the USA is considered to be a particularly potent arm of a growing movement described by Bracey as 'black conservatism'. It is a movement, Bracey argues, that cannot be ignored [19].  In Australia, the discourse that Pearson favours might also represent an apparent move to conservatism, though this is generally ridiculed by his supporters within the academy and also within certain elements of the Australian media [20].  Steele's conservative credentials are perhaps more cemented through his membership of the Hoover Institute at Stanford University, though Pearson himself challenges the conservative charge made against Steele, suggesting good policy will not flow until white guilt is recognized [21].

The impact of white guilt, Steele suggests, was to lead to successive generations of African-Americans claiming a raft of rights but accepting almost no responsibility, preferring to blame poor educational outcomes on oppressive school systems and expectations of employment and support on the basis of colour rather than ability. The long-term effect of this, Steele argues, is a culture

of expectancy and entitlement, which in turn, he suggests, has led to a decline in work ethics, value of learning, striving for independence through one's own endeavour and effort. It is this argument that has inspired Noel Pearson to draw parallels between the African-American struggle for liberty and the Indigenous struggle for sovereignty and recognition and indeed reconciliation in Australia with less but not indifferent attention to the First Nations people of the North American continent. Though the contexts are entirely different, Pearson argues that catastrophic outcomes that he suggests have flowed from low expectations, limited responsibility, alcohol and substance abuse and moral decline and social disorder are exactly the same as those argued by Steele [22].

**Australian white guilt**
It is suggested that policies related to the 'management' of Indigenous Australians (Australian Indigenous Affairs policies) come under three headings that might also represent the period in which they were enacted. Broadly, these are considered to be protection, assimilation and, finally, self-determination [23]. Within the assimilation period, there was a modest move from protectionist policies to programmes of life skill development though training schemes attracted a small payment. Emphasis was on education, though protectionism continued through the non-allowance of alcohol and drugs. From about 1972, through a change of government, a policy of self-determination was prosecuted in an attempt to escape previous policies agendas seen largely as paternalistic and highly racialized. This approach included a raft of changes including the abolition of training allowances, the extension of welfare, the removal of Protectors and Superintendents, and the establishment and funding of local community councils. In addition, a range of government and non-government bodies (with significant Indigenous membership and participation and in some cases significant power) were set up to pursue a development agenda for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. There is a body of support that suggests that social deterioration began around this time [24]. Whilst generally agreeing, Pearson suggests that it was prior to this in 1967 that the seeds of social deterioration were sown [25]. Although Aborigines had been citizens of Australia since about 1949, the States interpreted this citizenship in various ways. In 1967, under the auspices of amendments to the Australian constitution, the Indigenous population, for the first time, were included in the count as citizens and specific reference to Indigenous Australians was removed from the constitution altogether. Pearson suggests that during this period a train of events was set in motion that have had a lasting and devastating, albeit unintended, effect. A year later, Indigenous Australians had the right to the same wages as white Australian workers.

The unintended consequences of this policy triumph were wholesale lay-offs and removal from the job market. A particularly notable case was the Aboriginal stockmen of northern Australia who had managed to retain some semblance of traditional life with gainful employment. Sutton, however, indicates that whilst the influence of the equal pay policy was important, this was a time of developing technologies that would render the stockman on horseback and long cattle drives as virtually obsolete [26]. Sutton continues that this period was the onset of what

he describe as the 'descent into the gates of hell' [27]. Up to this point, Pearson argues, though there had been widespread sequestration of and, the imposition of 'whitefella' rule through protectionism and assimilationist policies, stolen children and brutal and savage treatment of the first Australians, the sense of responsibility to family, obligation to future generations, a commitment to fight for rights through argument and the Common Law of Australia, and a propensity for hard work remained strong within Indigenous communities. The removal of work and the granting of compensation by the Australian Government (of the time and since) that was considered to be 'right and just' resulted in the downward spiral that Pearson labels 'passive welfare' or more pejoratively 'sit down' money where reward for doing nothing (a form of compensatory politics) simply suppressed any motivation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to succeed by virtue of their own endeavor [28]. Whilst unintended, the politics (and indeed economics) of overcompensation or white guilt is said to have had long-term catastrophic results.

In the USA, contemporary Black conservatism is wrapped up in discourses of libertarianism, the centrality of the individual, responsibility and economic freedom [29]. These ideas can also be directly linked to the Friedrich Hayek discourse laid down in the Road to Serfdom where the virtues of a competitive market-driven society that valorizes the liberty of the individual, the right to choose and the accumulation of capital dominate the case he makes for how a society functions best [30]. It is a discourse that Pearson finds attractive and one of the reasons is that it moves marginalized people away from the notion of what he terms victimhood towards his preferred term peoplehood. Victimhood, Pearson suggests, is what defines the relationship between Indigenous Australians and (mostly white) non-Indigenous Australians, and like Steele, he believes victimhood was what managed to draw failure from the jaws of success of the promise of constitutional reform (or in the case of the USA, the Civil Rights Movement). Victimhood, Pearson alleges, grew out of a denialist Australia and its heavy mix of idealogues and those of moral vanity who between them created an identity of First Australians that ranged from lazy, slow- witted savages to victims of the colonial oppressors. One way or another these various constituencies (Pearson's word) have cast the Indigenes as beyond help, thereby meaning they do not 'deserve' support or should be totally supported in the way they choose to live.

And there is the rub: how much of a choice do Indigenous Australian's actually have? It is here that the politics of the righteous (either left or right of the broad political centre) seem horribly confused. Regardless, Pearson suggests that the worst thing about victimhood is that it encourages those who are victims of injustice to see and think of themselves as victims and this, he says, renders them 'passive'. This is exactly what Booker T. Washington warned against in America [31]. Passivity, Pearson suggests, has been a scourge on the Aboriginal quest for economic independence, the right to sovereignty and a sense of peoplehood. The heart of the matter There is a much-cited sentence drawn from John Stuart Mill's famous text On Liberty [32]. It goes:

> That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. (12)

This sentence alone, and the philosophy it appears to engender, is frequently cherry-picked as the asserted case for individualism and much of Stuart Mills' work (this sentence in particular) frames national constitutional documents not least of which is the American Constitution. However, there is much more to be learned from Stuart Mill. He later writes about the independence of persons to be a right and governance of one's own body and mind as being sovereign. A similar theme indeed, yet this following section is either conveniently forgotten or intentionally omitted by those for whom Stuart Mill is an inspiration.

It would be a great misunderstanding of this doctrine, to suppose that it is one of selfish indifference, which pretends that human beings have no business with each other's conduct in life, and that they should not concern themselves about the well-doing or well-being of one another, unless their own interest is involved. (92)

And later:

> I am the last person to undervalue the self-regarding virtues; they are only second in importance, if even second, to the social. (92)

Though the latter of these quotations might seem like a more tepid endorsement of the role, say, of community or even government, taken together they paint a rather broader canvas than perhaps Stuart Mills' more oft-cited sentence. However, for us, this is what lies at the heart of the matter and it is absurd to position the well-being of citizens as an 'either/or' discourse, surrounding sovereignty of the self versus the nanny state. Rather, it is about the delicate, often shifting, relationship between the State, the self, the 'welfare' of others and the centrality to the human condition of idea of liberty. Most have probably come to accept that the sovereignty of the self is sacrosanct [33] but surely we are also guided by Stuart Mills' proclamation that any such doctrine is not an exercise in selfish indifference since this is not what defines us as humans [34]. As a consequence, we are drawn as individuals with communal interests to seek ways to advance as a society rather than find ways to advance some members of society at the expense of others.

Hence, we may be drawn to ask: if neoliberalism is here to stay, what can we do with it. Even for those for whom Friedrich Hayek is the devil incarnate might be surprised to learn that his advocacy is not to simply succumb to the vagaries of markets in the hope that Adam Smith's invisible hand (which incidentally Joseph Stiglitz argues does not actually exist) will somehow bring balance for all. Rather, under the section on planning and

specifically the sections on security and freedom in Road to Serfdom, Hayek suggests that there are minimum standards of living, particularly in countries that are regarded as wealthy, that should be guaranteed. Whilst acknowledging the possible dangers of state intervention, he says ' .. . but there can be no doubt that some minimum of food, shelter, clothing, sufficient to preserve health and the capacity to work, can be assured to everybody'.35 Later, in the same section, Hayek makes the case for a programme of social insurance as being both appropriate and not incompatible with a market economy and individual freedom.36  Moreover, Hayek suggests 'Nor is there any reason why the state should not assist individuals in providing for those common hazards of life against which, because of their uncertainty, few individuals can made adequate provision'.37 Or to paraphrase Megalogenis, the state should know when to poke its nose in.38


Characterizing Indigenous  Australians based on Government data
The impact of the history of indigenous displacement is significant and often those who identify as 'Aboriginal' or 'Indigenous' sometimes find it difficult to identify as a member of a particular tribe, group, clan or mob (all of these English words are widely used). Nelson, drawing on the work of Jonas and Langton, indicates that an 'Aboriginal person is a descendant of an Indigenous inhabitant of Australia, identifies as an Aboriginal, and is recognized as Aboriginal by members of the community in which he or she lives'.39  One can see that even this definition has the potential to be regarded as politically charged. At a general level, the collective terms 'Indigenous' (capitalized) and 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' people (title capitalized) appear to be broadly acceptable terms.40
To acknowledge the diversity of Australia's Indigenous people and groups is to recognize different historical patterns of land tenure, customs, languages and associations with country. As indicated above, Indigenous groups cannot be considered to be homogenous as there is much diversity between and within groups.41  It is therefore important to note we do not take essentialist view of who Indigenous people are and how they develop. Rather, in this paper attempts are made to describe and discuss the experiences of some individuals and their communities in site-specific surfing programmes.
There are, however, certain characteristics that do enable the Indigenous population of Australia to be considered as a whole. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is relatively young (median age of 21.0 years compared with 37.0 years for the non-Indigenous population). This is generally attributed to the higher fertility and deaths rates stubbornly occurring at younger ages amongst the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.42 In terms of where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders live, a little over 30% of the population are in major cities, approximately 45% in major regional areas and the remaining in remote and very remote regions.43 This information served to inform this research in that it inevitably had a youth focus (although not exclusively) and the majority of sites are in metropolitan and major regional centres.

Within the context of our broad research agenda, beyond these basic descriptors of Indigenous Australians, the problem has historically been that 'The area in which (mainstream) research evidence is strongest, that is, physical activity and physical health, is not necessarily the area of most immediate relevance to Indigenous people, or the most practical or culturally appropriate in terms of data collection'.44 Whilst this should not be taken to imply that Indigenous people are not concerned with burden of chronic disease, it does indicate that family, community and Indigenous 'ways of knowing' have not been considered well (or even routinely ignored) in mainstream Indigenous research.45 Indeed,

Indigenous views of health differ from white western views of health in that it is generally a more holistic conception that is centred on connectedness.46 As a result, in our research we have consistently accepted the position of Fox et al. that, in Indigenous settings, sport cannot be separated from spiritual, cultural, social or physical connections.47

Our research agenda

Our work ranges from interventions in Island communities to remote land based communities and finally to salt water coastal communities on the Eastern seaboard of Australia. Our partners in this work are invariably State or Federal bodies, such as the Australian Sports Commission and the Women in Sport Department of Queensland Sport and Recreation, and national sporting associations such as Surfing Australia, and we have benefited from an injection of research funds from the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation. This is a major international charitable organization based in London, committed to the delivery of sports programmes to marginalized communities and groups. The mission of the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation is to utilize what it considers to be the power of sport to address social challenges through a worldwide programme of sports-related community development initiatives, using sport as a tool for social change. This connected with our agenda of sport as development, itself influenced by Sen's notion of development
as freedom.48 Research that links sport programmes with various health and social
outcomes is well established; in addition, the use of sport to address social issues in mainstream society is well documented.49

Surfing programmes

Whilst the purpose of this paper goes beyond pragmatics and draws on our experiences in a variety of settings, it is appropriate at this point to provide some further detail in order to contextualize this research. More specifically, it is worth sharing some of the data gathered through a collaborative project between ourselves, the Australian Sports Commission and the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation specifically because there were, across the life of the project (three years), significant references made to the funding of projects, the right of entitlement to programmes, the roles of the individuals and communities, and the idea of community-based development.

The collaborative study sought to inform the evaluation and development of sport programmes for Indigenous youths in Australia. More specifically, the overall aim of the project was to investigate how surfing, as an area of physical activity, contributed (or otherwise) to the lives of people in Indigenous communities. Based on recommendations from our sporting partner (Surfing Australia), research sites were approached in Queensland (regional city), New South Wales (two regional cities), Victoria (major urban city) and South Australia (remote site). The research involved 54 participants with a variety of roles including surfing

participants, programme providers and community members. The surfing programmes all operated independently and were chosen because of variability in relation to how they were run (e.g. local high school, city council, Aboriginal cooperative, state surfing body), how long they had been in existence (e.g. brand new to more than a decade old), their frequency of operation (e.g. weekly during school semester, monthly during summer, twice a year), format (e.g. two-hour 'lesson', two-day camp) and the rationale for their establishment (e.g. part of council policy, promotion of positive risk taking, diversionary activity).

Our methods were meticulous and we developed highly reflexive protocols in a realistic attempt to overcome paternalistic colonialism. We were not always successful in this and the methodological journey was as important as the data we gathered. However, we do detail the methodological approach we took in the project elsewhere and hence we will not include that detail here.50 Suffice to say at this point that our methods included face-to-face questionnaires, field notes, photographs, video footage, participant observation, document analyses, semi-interviews, photo elicitation and focus groups.

Sport and health

The consensus is that physical activity (read sport) is an important contributor to health for all people.51 Within the context of our work, however (and the work of some of our other colleagues), what is not so clear is what sport means in the lives of Indigenous Australians and indeed what impact (if any) programmes of sport have.52 What has been established is that sport is embedded in a complex web of meanings in relation to family and the broader Aboriginal community.53 The Australian Government has demonstrated some commit- ment to achieving health outcomes for Indigenous Australians through initiatives and campaigns such as 'Close the Gap', and it has been argued that sport is a valuable community development tool that can assist with improving Indigenous social and health outcomes.54 The caution remains, however, that there is a need to move away from simply identifying problems in Indigenous communities towards a focus on providing realistic, evidence-based solutions to deal with the social and health issues facing Indigenous people.55

The question of entitlement

At one level, the mere mention of the word entitlement would immediately draw criticism. However, some of the arguments presented to us demonstrated a well-reasoned position. For example, Sam, an Indigenous community member and surf programme provider, suggested that Indigenous people had been volunteers in their own country for years. As he said, 'I'm a believer if you want to do something for Aboriginal people, they deserve the best ... My attitude is, us Aboriginal people we've been volunteers in our own country for too long'. His view was that surf programmes, given the potential danger of variable environmental conditions, required levels of technical competence only possible through engaging coaching expertise. Given how he was funded to run the project, Sam argued:

So I pay – there's six professional surf people down there on that beach. I pay the lot of them. They're all on overtime. I don't have volunteers very much .. . So basically I pay for all of the staff to make sure it works properly.

Hence, all programmes were provided free to Aboriginal youth and funding support was thus needed for equipment, coaching and other requirements. This was sourced from government bodies such as state departments of sport and recreation and justice, local councils, as well as Indigenous Councils and groups

such as Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal Cooperatives. The surf industry (surfboard rider foundations and surf clothing companies) and sporting bodies (Surfing Australia and the state and territory surfing organizations) also supported the programmes, which operated on cash budgets ranging from $3500 (for the school programme that could leverage other resources and support) to $30,000 (for programmes that ran on multiple occasions each year). Again the idea that all
this 'comes free' was challenged not so much on entitlement grounds but more justified in terms of a moral argument. Kate, a mother of a surfing participant and active member of

the local community, was particularly scathing of the idea that programmes were free in the broader philosophical sense – acerbically arguing that Aboriginal people had been getting plenty for free since settlement: ' .. . [free] racism and there's [free] stereotyping. I don't know if you've seen your kids copping that? All those sort of things for free?' Moreover, the idea that outcomes from such programme tied to such funding should demonstrate 'value for money' also seemed to miss the point specifically of development:

Sometimes I think to receive funding they expect the big picture but don't know the positive impact of a little picture of having 300 Aboriginal people on the beach enjoying nature, having a go at a new sport, will probably come along next year ... It's those little things that are really significant over that weekend that probably funding bodies want to see a bigger picture or a really big outcome. We can show that in participation and attendance but if you were able to judge happiness and a great weekend and things like that we'd get all the ticks. (Sally, programme leader and local community member)

Clearly, whilst a position of entitlement that could be easily justified was present, the idea of investment was also weaved into the discourse. In other words, funded programmes were seen by some not only as an entitlement, but also as forms of investment in the future of communities and children's lives. Bill, one of the programme providers, argues this exact point. This kind of programme was a long game and if it was not seen as such any gains would simply dissipate:

... if it was a five year program and ... at the rate it's going, it's a bit scary about where it could wind up in five years. Because we would have the Indigenous surf coaches .. . you have to build the relationships, and that just takes time  ... You can't do that in one year. That would probably be the limitation [with] the one-year funding. You've really got to bite the bullet .. . what you're really talking about is a long term thing ... Otherwise what happens when the money stops?

Whilst highlighting the potential financial impacts on the sustainability of programmes, this statement and others like it clearly identified broader economic possibilities from surfing programmes. There were employment possibilities within sport and recreation, particularly in surf coaching, which were regarded as genuine and of value to the communities. Moreover, the desire to run surf programmes with reduced support specifically in terms of personnel was clearly within the context of self-management. This might be a somewhat overworked term but the sentiment was strong. There were ways and means across the long game of these programmes where a developing degree of independence was regarded not only as possible, but also as desirable.

Getting connected and learning from others

A major story to emerge has been the impact of surf programmes on the ways in which Indigenous people can both connect with and learn from others and the environment. This has specifically related to connections with and learning from

the ocean, programme providers and Indigenous community members. The theme of forming connections was closely aligned with the notion of surfing events as a reason to come together. Sally made the following representative comment:

It's all about connecting back to community and [countering] isolation and all that's – those things are really significant in those events. That's one event in particular recently that I sat back and looked at that side of things with some families. How valuable those little days and significant they are.

With respect to what became understood as 'coming together', Bill, a senior community member, noted that the more social networks and associations that Indigenous youth have

(with both Indigenous and non Indigenous Australians), the more equipped they are to deal with life. Moreover, he emphasized that 'although it's surfing, what you've actually created is a group which is actually strengthening the ties within the Indigenous community, amongst themselves'. As represented in Bills' comment, the social capital literature suggests that a process of bonding helps individuals to 'get by'.56

Surfing participants and others spoke of learning that related to the making or rekindling of a spiritual connection to land and ocean. Throughout colonial history in Australia, Indigenous people have been excluded from opportunities for connection with the water, even those from salt water, communities. Some of this exclusion occurred through government policies denying access to swimming pools. More significantly, though, broader exclusionary policies resulted in dispossession of traditional lands and this includes oceans.57 Hence, surf programmes were regarded as important in helping to (re-) establish the connections to country for surf participants. Community leader Sam was emphatic about the importance of surf programmes in (re)connecting the youth and community more generally with the ocean as he said 'we [Aboriginal people] all have a

connection .. . if you look at an interconnection with culture, the sea has been one of the mainstays of Aboriginal culture throughout generations'. Traditional lands and seas have previously been described as places of safety and significance.58 A number of programme providers and support personnel made reference to this aspect when discussing the significance of the ocean to the participants.


Discussion
Earlier on we acknowledged that no two Indigenous communities are the same (perhaps this is consistent across other communities?). The reason to raise this here is twofold. First, our experiences across communities have reinforced for us the many differences within and between sites related to areas such as physical ability, age profile and motives for participation. Second, if we follow the broad-brush approach to white guilt, it is reasonable to suggest that all communities and individuals are equally dysfunctional because of white guilt. We are sure that this is not what Pearson would have us believe. Given the important differences across the communities with whom we worked most closely (e.g. in terms of ability and demography), it is likely that the degree of
'dependence' across communities will also differ. In considering programmatic sustainability and viability factors across all sites, we found this also to be true. So whilst we understand the idea of the white guilt discourse and its catastrophic impact on Indigenous people through passive welfare – not all groups or individuals could with any confidence be described in this way. None the less, we are inevitably compelled to address our fundamental question: are government-funded programmes of sport and recreation for Indigenous communities a product of white guilt encouraging dependency and weakening the capacity for independence, or are such programmes in fact good investments that contribute to individual and community development and particularly as a means to freedom

and liberty. The libertarian discourse, underpinned as it is by social and economic freedom available only through the primacy of efficient and rational markets,59 has a fundamental but significant flaw. This is that investments made in human capital are only seriously measured by relatively narrow economic metrics. This flaw, as Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi argue, sets the scene for misinformed judgements about the 'worth' of economic activity (such as publicly funded schemes) within systems specifically because they fail to 'measure' the sense of well-being in communities as being something broader than consumption and capital accumulation,60  neither of which

remotely capture the value of connectedness, belonging or learning reportedly fostered through these programmes.

So that being said, what can be made of the investments made by the Australian Sports Commission (a Federal agency) and partially reported in here in terms of issues of white guilt, equality, liberty and most significantly perhaps justice? It would be simply fallacious to suggest that a single programme (albeit an ongoing one) could singularly bring about a

'just' world. However, that is not the point. As Sen suggests, perfect justice will not be brought about through social actions, rather the purpose is to eliminate injustice.61

Additionally, we cannot proceed from the Rawlsian position of the 'veil of ignorance',62 since 200 plus years of colonization of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land have indeed brought about what Pearson calls the dagger of impediment. On the other hand, can

we genuinely rely on statism to deliver justice when it has historically been the vehicle that delivered the settler state in the first place? Herein lies the problem; the politics of compensation as we generally understand them in Australia, whilst mostly well meaning, have, it is argued, brought about catastrophic and unintended outcomes. Of course, the

'bad press' accumulated under a nanny statism moniker simply stoke the fires of rampant neoliberalism and the individual is both vilified for ineptitude and rallied to rise up through individual endeavour and personal responsibility.

What emerges from this research is that not only is there a propensity for individual and personal responsibility, but also these were identified as desirable by many community members themselves. So whilst there is a pervading sense of entitlement within these data, there exists also a sense of the right to take responsibility.63  Pearson (2009) suggests elsewhere these are the first steps to moving away from 'passive welfare'.64  Programmes of development through sport are not a panacea; they do, however, have the capacity to create opportunities for development. Pearson goes on to argue that it is by taking responsibility that self-determination can occur and start to alter the relationship individuals and communities have with real economies.65  As part of a broader raft of programmes, sports development may contribute to overcoming what could reasonably be argued as inadequate opportunity66 to achieve some things that might be seen as desirable, for example the right to take responsibility.67 These programmes (admittedly in varying degrees) demonstrated this possibility. Therefore, if we regard the role of the state as being to invest in communities (and the individuals that make up those communities), then the notion of justice takes a different turn. Concomitantly, we are required to consider the return on that investment in broader terms than narrow economic measurement. If the investment made in communities and persons seeks to protect basic physical and psychological integrities that ensure the freedom of the individual as basic rights and liberties, then, far from being a product of white guilt, they are upholding the virtues of most liberal democracies. Remember even Hayek suggested there were minimum standards of living that should be guaranteed. Such investment then needs to be understood in terms of potential outcomes that support basic rights

and freedoms and create the space for independence, community development and the taking of both individual and communal responsibility. These are virtues of a quality of life that reach beyond the material limits of economic production as Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi suggest. Moreover, they go on to argue that such an approach to assessing quality of life is not limited in its application to developing countries but 'is even more salient for rich industrialized countries'.68

We would argue that the outcomes of the particular project alluded to here are not measurable in conventional economic or socially essentialist ways. Indeed, we would argue that it is their 'immeasurability' that makes them so valuable. The opportunities to

connect young people to country, to develop independence in the pursuit of programmes of sport and to acquire sporting and organizational expertise hardly seem to us an exercise in passivity. Rather, it is an attitude of responsibility, an intention to build capacity and a commitment to investment in the well-being of the young people of a community. So whilst it is possible (and desirable) to engage in evidence-based sport programme design, when present, programme evaluations typically fail to capture these
'immeasurable' outcomes or are too easily dismissed as lacking scientific clout. The expectations of the individual as being responsible for their own well-being and self-interest that run deep in the veins of the neoliberal discourse are the counterbalance for nanny state investments in communities. However, this binary is not as incompatible as it might seem. Indeed, with Mill and Hayek in their own way arguing that the sanctity of the individual is not an exercise in blind indifference to the well-being (and well-doing) of others, the role of the state as we have described it here might be the frame of a more modest neoliberalism that has more to do with the investment in human capacity. The investment of public funds into community-based projects has expectations of viable outcomes. Our argument is that there is a case for optimism for such schemes even in the face of severe libertarian criticism and that optimism is based not in a passive recipient culture but in a strong and non-dependent culture of liberty, freedom and achievement. In short, these programmes have the potential to contribute to the lives of participants in important ways (e.g. in relation to the development of individual and organizational capacity) and in ways that are not possible through other means. In other words, sport programmes may well be one of the few ways to foster certain social outcomes and broader 'welfare' objectives.

Notes
1. Harvey, Brief History of Neoliberalism.
2. Krugman, Conscience of a Liberal.
3. Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory.
4. Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?'.
5. Ibid.
6. Cairnduff, Sport and Recreation.
7. See Pearson, 'White Guilt'; Steele, White Guilt.
8. Wolfe, 'Nation and Miscegenation'.
9. Ibid., 94.
10. Pearson, 'Light on the Hill'.
11. There were many texts we could have drawn upon here. We chose highly contemporary piece from Paul Krugman from the NYRB. Krugman, 'How the Case for Austerity Has Crumbled'.
12. Ronald Dworkin has written widely on American constitutional law as an academic and as a lawyer. He has been a supporter of Barack Obama's health reform on constitutional grounds.
For the purposes of this paper, we used Dworkin, 'Why the Mandate'.

13.   There are many versions of Hayek's most well-known work Road to Serfdom; we used a celebration edition (2009) edited by Bruce Caldwell and this work includes other documents associated with the central text.

14.   Megalogenis, The Australian Moment, 3.

15.   Whiteford, 'How Fair Is Australia's Welfare State?'.

16.   During Stiglitz's visit to Australia in 2010, the story of his approval of and support for the economic stimulus package developed and implemented by the government of the day (seeking
re-election in 2010) was widely reported particularly by the Fairfax media group. Economic
commentators from other media groups (e.g. NewsCorp) were more prepared to criticize
Stiglitz's position on the stimulus package. This story was taken from the Sydney Morning
Herald's (a Fairfax broadsheet newspaper) online resources: Irvine, 'Nobel Laureate Lauds'.

17.   See Pearson, 'White Guilt'; Up from the Mission.

18.  Steele, White Guilt.

19.  Bracey, Saviors or Sellouts.

20.  See Langton (a professor at the University of Melbourne), 'Trapped in the Aboriginal'. Also
The Australian newspaper (published by NewsCorp) in Australia has been a supporter of Noel Pearson especially since he developed his rights and responsibilities agenda in Cape York, in far North Queensland (The Weekend Australian covered this initiative extensively on 25 – 26
August 2012). Pearson often contributes a column to the Weekend Australian and it is this alliance that often leads to charges of acquired conservatism. As to whether Pearson is genuinely politically conservative is a matter of conjecture – readers will note he tends to favour a position that he calls a 'radical centre'.
More likely, Pearson is frustrated (as is Marcia Langton) at the constant politicking around Aboriginal Affairs in Australia and is similarly frustrated at what he considers to be a lack of progress in improving certain outcomes (health, education and economic participation) within Aboriginal communities. Whilst Pearson carries plenty of support across the political spectrum, not everyone (including Indigenous Australians) supports his views. Regardless, there can be no denying the power of his voice within Australian Aboriginal Affairs and Australian politics more broadly.
Langton also alluded to some of this in the Boyer Lectures in 2012 with the overarching title The Quiet Revolution: Indigenous People and the Resources Boom. The Boyer Lectures are hosted every year by the Australian Broadcasting Company.

21.  Pearson, 'White Guilt'.

22.  Ibid.

23.  Sanders, 'Ideology'.

24.  Beadman, Northern Territory Coordinator General; Neill, White Out; and Sutton, Politics of
Suffering.

25.  Pearson, 'White Guilt'.

26.  Sutton, Politics of Suffering.

27.  Ibid., 53.

28.  Pearson, 'White Guilt'.

29.  Bracey, Saviors or Sellouts.

30.  Hayek, Road to Serfdom.

31.  Bracey, Saviors or Sellouts; Pearson, 'White Guilt'; and Steele, White Guilt.

32.  Mill, On Liberty; these selections appear on pages 12 and 92 as indicated in the text.

33.  See Nozick, Anarchy, State, and Utopia, for a particularly libertarian discussion of the sanctity
of the self and the idea surrounding personal freedom, and a direct challenge to Rawls' notion of justice.

34.  Mill, On Liberty.

35.  Hayek, Road to Serfdom, 148.

36.  Ibid.

37. Ibid., 148.
38. Megalogenis, The Australian Moment.
39. Nelson, 'Sport', 109; Jonas and Langton, Little Red.
40. The Torres Strait is a body of water that separates the northern tip of
Queensland from the
Western Province of Papua New Guinea.
41. Nelson, Abbott, and Macdonald, 'Indigenous Australians'. See also Parker et
al., 'Our Games
Our Health'.
42. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Health and Welfare'.
43. Ibid. See also Shilton and Brown, 'Physical Activity among Aboriginal'.
44. Beneforti and Cunningham, Investigating Indicators, 14.
45. Cowlishaw, 'Eupemism, Banality, Propaganda'.
46. Nelson, Abbott, and Macdonald, 'Indigenous Australians'.
47. Fox et al., 'Cultural Perspectives'.
48. Sen, Development as Freedom.
49. Thomson, Darcy, and Pearce, 'Ganma Theory'.
50. See Rossi, Rynne, and Nelson, 'Doing Whitefella Research'.
51. Nelson, Abbott, and Macdonald, 'Indigenous Australians'.
52. Cairnduff, Sport and Recreation.
53. Thomson, Darcy, and Pearce, 'Ganma Theory'.
54. Cairnduff, Sport and Recreation.

55. Ibid.
56. Weller, 'Skateboarding Alone?'.
57. Hall, 'Indigenous Australians and Leisure'.
58. Nelson, 'Sport'.
59. See Wallace, 'Libertarian Nation by Stealth'. Wallace gives an account as to how the libertarian project was advanced under a Howard Conservative government once it came to
office but was done so in ways that were seemingly bolstering the role of government in
people's lives. Wallace indicates that this process was started and continued under Labor administrations in the early 1980s but with specific safety measures in place. See Megalogenis, The Australian Moment, for a fuller account of Labor's approach to liberalizing the economy.
60. Stiglitz, Sen, and Fitoussi, Miss-measuring Our Lives.
61. Sen, Idea of Justice.
62. Rawls, Theory of Justice.
63. See Tingle, 'Great Expectations'. Laura Tingle gives an account of what she sees as the great
Australian expectation of entitlement. Her analysis is not necessarily a criticism of such expectation, rather it is seen as a logical outcome of years of government paternalism framed by Australia as 'the Lucky Country'.
64. Pearson, Up from the Mission.
65. Ibid.
66. Sen, Development as Freedom.
67. Pearson, Up from the Mission, 143.
68. Stiglitz, Sen, and Fitoussi, Miss-measuring Our Lives, 62.

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