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Ethnography and filmmaking for Indigenous anti tobacco social marketing

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Abstract

The smoking rates of 82% in Aboriginal communities of North East Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory of Australia are the highest in the country (Robertson et al. 2013). Macassan traders introduced tobacco as a trading commodity (Berndt, 1954) in Aboriginal communities in the 18th century and has since become part of culture. The influence of the Methodist Mission (Cole 1979) has also had a profound effect on tobacco consumption. Anti tobacco social marketing that is sensitive to Indigenous culture and history supports a more complex and gradual approach to reducing uptake amongst young people. The limitations of the Health Belief Model and the Theory of Planned Behaviour commonly used for social marketing in this context are due to the cultural value of tobacco in traditional reciprocal relationships and ceremonial practice. Through a combination of ethnography and filmmaking, this project was able to capture and showcase the cultural and historical factors of smoking in a format that is respectful to local culture, specifically in Indigenous anti tobacco social marketing. The use of ethnography and Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) (Arnould and Thompson 2005) for social marketing in this context, addresses the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings in a culturally relevant and conceptually meaningful manner. The ethnographic film is a collection of interviews as a result of introspection found in postmodern consumer research and combines insider and outsider views to provide deeper insights (Goulding, 2005) into the challenge of tackling smoking in the region.

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resources in the context of limited experience of any such support.

Conclusion

Methods and processes for moral reasoning have a long history, and there are a wide range of approaches to deliberation about practical ethical problems. Codes of ethics can be helpful rubrics to assist professionals facing practical dilemmas under time pressure. However they can never be sufficient to the task of ethical deliberation. If a CoE merely lists broad principles it will, in common with codes in other areas, "occupy the role of platitude" and be of little operational value (Malloy et al., 2009, p. 381). If a CoE is to be a living document with value as a decision-making support tool, the process of development will require "thoughtful debate" (Skubik & Stening, 2009), involve extensive consultation with, and co-creation by, social marketing practitioners, and the development of acceptable mechanisms for enforcement. Such deliberation would also be consistent with the moral values of transparency and accountability. Such process would undoubtedly be lengthy, but is potentially rewarding. In order to inform these deliberations, comparative cross-jurisdictional and cross-cultural research could be undertaken. This could gather lessons learnt by a range of professional bodies—in established professions such as medicine, law and accountancy, and related sectors such as health promotion and environmental management—when developing resources and compliance and regulatory mechanisms, and measuring effectiveness (Bull et al., 2012). However our findings suggest that other supports and resources would also be welcomed by social marketing professionals facing significant ethical dilemmas, a responsibility that could be taken up by social marketing professional organisations.(see, for example, Sha, 2011). The primary ethical dilemma the online respondents reported was being unable to do good-quality social marketing work because funders had intractable views about the nature of the problem and the solution. A code of ethics may be of limited value in addressing such a fundamental structural issue. This finding suggests that social marketing associations should not only develop a code of ethics, but also engage in the advocacy required to establish a just, transparent and open environment for the practice of good-quality social marketing.

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The incorporation of Transformative Consumer Research principles within the 'Cancer Good News' social marketing project: A Case Study

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Abstract

This paper takes a case study approach to model the use of Transformative Consumer Research (TCR) principles within the 'Cancer Good News' social marketing campaign. Overall, the paper highlights the value of TCR principles within the development of the intervention to reduce cancer stigma and fatalism and promote cancer screening within two culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. The case study suggests the potential for TCR to enhance community engagement and produce sustainable solutions within Social Marketing interventions when working with CALD communities, suggesting the need for further action to explore the benefits of TCR to address current cancer inequities.

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Ethnography and filmmaking for Indigenous anti tobacco social marketing

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Abstract

The smoking rates of 82% in Aboriginal communities of North East Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory of Australia are the highest in the country (Robertson et al. 2013). Macassan traders introduced tobacco as a trading commodity (Berndt, 1954) in Aboriginal communities in the 18th century and has since become part of culture. The influence of the Methodist Mission (Cole 1979) has also had a profound effect on tobacco consumption. Anti tobacco social marketing that is sensitive to Indigenous culture and history supports a more complex and gradual approach to reducing uptake amongst young people. The limitations of the Health Belief Model and the Theory of Planned Behaviour commonly used for social marketing in this context are due to the cultural value of tobacco in traditional reciprocal relationships and ceremonial practice. Through a combination of ethnography and filmmaking, this project was able to capture and showcase the cultural and historical factors of smoking in a format that is respectful to local culture, specifically in Indigenous anti tobacco social marketing. The use of ethnography and Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) (Arnould and Thompson 2005) for social marketing in this context, addresses the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings in a culturally relevant and conceptually meaningful manner. The

ethnographic film is a collection of interviews as a result of introspection found in postmodern consumer research and combines insider and outsider views to provide deeper insights (Goulding, 2005) into the challenge of tackling smoking in the region.

Introduction

North East Arnhem Land, in the Northern Territory of Australia, is home to the Yolngu nation. Yolngu are the Aboriginal custodians and rightful owners of the land and sea. The Yolngu are made up of two moieties, the Yirritja and Dhuwa. Each moiety has a specific number of clans that are interconnected through a reciprocal kinship system called 'Yothu Yindi', meaning 'mother and child' (Thompson and Peterson 1983). From a Yolngu perspective, tobacco is a commodity that is owned by the Yirritja clans. The Dhuwa clans act as executives and assist with the 'management' of tobacco and its related ceremonial function. This practice is more than two hundred years old and still holds until today.

Robertson et al. (2013) found that the smoking rate of 45.1% of the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population despite decreasing annually is roughly three times the rate of the general Australian population rate at 15.1%. This rate is similar to that of Indigenous people from developed countries like the United States of America, New Zealand and Canada. In the past 20 years, Robertson and colleagues (2013) show that smoking rates in remote Aboriginal communities remain unchanged and as high as 82%.

Background

Social marketing campaigns in this region have in the past utilised the Health Belief Model (HBM) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). The campaigns encouraged Yolngu to quite smoking in order to prevent cardiovascular disease. The HBM suggests that a person's belief in a personal threat of an illness or disease together with a person's belief in the effectiveness of the recommended health behaviour will predict the likelihood the person will adopt the behaviour (Green and Murphy, 2002). For example, the association of cardiovascular disease and smoking in a social marketing campaign will enable a person to quit smoking. The TPB states that the achievement of a new healthy behaviour depended on an individual's level of motivation and ability (Green and Murphy, 2002). For example, by assuming that Yolngu have the ability to quit smoking, they only require a motivational social marketing campaign to trigger the behaviour of quitting.

Based on the discussion by Green and Murphy (2002) the limitations of using HBM and TPB in the Yolngu context for tobacco control social marketing are:

1. The assumption that a Yolngu individual has acquired the opportunities and resources to achieve the desired behavior regardless of intention (Burbank, 2006).

2. They do not take into account that tobacco is a highly addictive substance.

3. The assumption that cues to action is successful in encouraging people to quit smoking (Burbank, 2006).

4. They do not acknowledge the cultural significance of tobacco in the community and in ceremonial practice (Robertson, 2013).

5. They do not take into consideration environment and economic factors that influence a Yolngu person's smoking behavior (Robertson, 2013).

A culturally appropriate social marketing campaign that is conceptually meaningful and able to meet the limitations of the HBM and the TPB underpinned by CCT was developed. According to Arnould and Thompson (2005), a study underpinned by CCT "has advanced consumer behaviour knowledge by illuminating sociocultural processes and structures related to (1) consumer identity projects, (2) marketplace cultures, (3) the sociohistoric patterning of consumption, and (4) mass-mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers' interpretive strategies".

We studied the sociocultural process, sociohistoric patterning of tobacco consumption and the consumer identity projects through ethnography and filmmaking in order to produce an anti tobacco social marketing documentary based in North East Arnhem Land. The Yolngu community wanted to tell their own story of tobacco with Yolngu representation as central to a social marketing media production (Deger, 2006).

Methodology

Marketing anthropology, according to Gummesson (2005), are data generated through personal interviews, participant observation, and conversations, which is documented in field notes, photos, artefacts and historical footage (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2010). Consumer oriented ethnography focuses on small-scale societies and the concern is with 'nature, construction and maintenance of culture'. Consumer oriented ethnography according to Arnould (1998) also suggests that "ethnography attempts to explicate structured patterns of action that are cultural and/or social rather than merely cognitive, behavioural or affective". Arnould and Wallendorf (1994) propose the use and relevance of market-oriented ethnography to develop a social marketing strategies and campaigns.

Ethnography in consumer marketing research is a process where the voices of participants are a vital source of data and "should be allowed to be heard in the written end products (which is this case in an ethnographic film) as a coherent, fluent and understandable narrative (Goulding, 2005). Arnould's (1998) useful summary of the role of ethnography in consumer research is to "explain the way that culture constructs and is constructed by the behaviours and experiences of its members…particularistic rather than generalisable." and the use of "…tactics for representative research findings that aim to unravel the layered meaning that marketing activities hold for the customer".

Participant observation was applied in this research setting as a method in which the researcher and filmmaker take part in "…daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture" (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2010).

Key elements (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2010) that were used in this method were:

1. Living in the Yolngu context and using long term personal relationship for an extended period of time to gain insight (Brymer, 1998)

2. Learning and using local language

3. An active participation in a range of daily routine

4. Using everyday conversation as an interview technique

5. 'Hanging out' – informally observing during leisure activities

6. Recording observations in field notes

The researcher and filmmaker met and socialised with people from the community at social venues and held informal conversations on the significance of tobacco and what the sharing of tobacco means in their traditional context. The observations and subsequent triangulation with cultural advisors, Aboriginal Health Workers and young people, was used to establish a preliminary script for the process of interviewing and filming.

Sampling

A set of questions was written up and a list of people to be interviewed for the documentary was put together with reference to cultural sensitivity and cultural safety protocols. The process of selecting and inviting community members for the documentary involved identifying a representative sample of young people, senior men and women including, those that were highly recommended by the community to share their knowledge. The researcher assured the stakeholders and Yolngu elders that the documentary would not seek to blame, judge nor instruct Yolngu people to quit smoking (Burbank, 2006). This guarantee and commitment was a key methodological approach in sampling interviewees and contributors.

The recruitment process made explicit the documentary's intent on respecting the Yolngu connection with tobacco and the centuries of trade with Macassans (Berndt, 1951 and Thompson, 1983), acknowledging the influence of the Methodist Mission in paying Yolngu with tobacco sticks for work done around the Mission farms (Cole, 1979), and the influence of tailor made cigarettes being sold in the town of Nhulunbuy, making it available to anyone in the community to purchase.

We conducted field trips to Yirrkala, Milingimbi and Galiwinku to meet with potential community members and explain the aim of the project and the process of documentary filmmaking. The community consultations assisted the researcher to refine the questions for the documentary, where all potential contributors were identified and

given enough notice before the arrival of the film crew. All potential contributors agreed to sign a consent form with adequate interpreting and information.

Discussions were also held with key informants such as Yolngu traditional owners, Milingimbi Clinic Manager, Department of Health (Northern Territory Government), Yirrkala Mala (clan) Leaders Committee and Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation staff. A total of twenty in depth interviews were conducted in three different communities. Permission was received to enter the community and surrounding areas of historical significance in order to film and interview community members from their respective traditional owners. Permission to use old footage with images of elders who have passed away was also requested from living descendants and other key family members.

It is vital that every member of the production crew was prepared to be flexible and accommodating to the needs of the interviewees and is prepared to support them in sharing their story (Senior 2003). As it is impolite to say 'No' to a request for an interview, the researcher and film crew decided that it was culturally appropriate to avoid assumptions and to be prepared for the interviewee at the designated location and to wait 30-40 minutes. In the case of the interviewee not showing up, we would not proceed to look for them in the community but to continue with other interview participants.

Review of historical ethnographic visual material

The Mulka Project and the Yirrkala Arts Centre were consulted on the use of historical footage for the purpose of illustrating sociocultural practices (Goulding, 2005), of tobacco use before the arrival of the Methodist Mission (Cole, 1979) and post Methodist Mission era. The use of historical footage relevant to this documentary provided a deeper understanding of the shift in behaviour over a specific time span. As tobacco was only historically used by senior clan executives, we observed the uptake of smoking by the younger generation through a review of the collection of films and documentaries known as the Yirrkala Film Projects, directed by Ian Dunlop in the 1960s (National Film and Sound Archive, Australia) and triangulated with the in-depth interviews.

Results and Discussion

The ethnographic documentary film, in Yolngu representation (Deger, 2006), takes the Yolngu and non-Yolngu viewer from the time when tobacco was first introduced until the present day. The documentary explains how Yolngu law governs the use of tobacco and how that law was challenged and how that law has been affected since its exposure to the wider Australian community, especially since the establishment of the nearby mining town of Nhulunbuy. The film was reviewed, critiqued and approved by the Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation Board of Directors, including, traditional owners, Yolngu educators, senior men and women.

The film combines animation, footage and interviews that use visual ethnography to reflect the natural story-telling style of Yolngu. The use of visual ethnography and the cultural significance of landscape, nature and places of historical and cultural significance were used in order to compliment the story telling and discussion generated by the interviewees.

The design of the animation emerged from the interviews conducted and aims to highlight, in a respectful way, the relationship and trade between Yolngu and Macassans without reducing the dignity, importance and significance of Yolngu history. This style of design that involved 'going deep' with ethnographic knowledge (Berger et al, 2009) is an important methodological approach in the making of this documentary.

The use of a cross cultural film crew with knowledge of the history and cultural exchange between the Macassans and Yolngu was an important aspect of the process of ethnographic documentary filmmaking. The film crew was experienced in working in remote Indigenous settings around Australia and skilful in creating a culturally safe and secure environment for the interviewees to share their views.

The interviewees were able to connect to anyone from the production team, who used empathic listening and cross cultural communication skills to engage the interviewee in sharing their deepest concerns, their aspirations, and their views. The researcher carefully sought after these skills in a film crew as the process of interviewing community members usually involves many hours of waiting, where

outcomes were highly uncertain (Senior, 2003).

This process of ethnography and filmmaking for social marketing, aims to show the importance of methods such as interviews, participant observations, literary and cultural study of social issues before the social marketing campaign is designed in order to avoid a reductionist approach to Indigenous health. We acknowledge the voice of Indigenous people to stop simplifying Indigenous health issues through the making of social marketing videos based on the Health Belief Model and the Theory of Planned Behaviour due to their clear limitations explained in the previous section.

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