

## **Closing the Gap and Community Risk Management: A discussion of children as producer goods, consumer goods and worse for the community and others**

Float like a butterfly; sting like a bee. (Mohammed Ali)

Brother, who was looking after the nine kids? I used to say this to the Buddha but at least his family was rich. Does this type of growth not matter enough to discuss in modern times? Men are full of shit and lawyers and politicians are just at the tip.

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### **Introduction**

**Recommendation 1:** The most important recommendation for child protection is a two child limit for the demonstrably incapable mother: (Fathers don't count, as you've got to get child support money off them, which may largely be unrealistic.)

**Recommendation 2:** For wellbeing, women are ideally advised to consider maintaining, rather than increasing the number of their children once they have two. Men are generally encouraged to take a more intelligent interest in these matters.

For mothers who have clearly had difficulty coping with the role, of whatever origin or for whatever reason, having no more children than two appears to be the key child protection strategy whether the mother is indigenous or not. In its absence, the services gap between the rich and poor globally, and between non-aboriginal and aboriginal Australians is highly likely to widen rather than close. One regards this as an economic and political statement of the comparatively obvious, discussed later.

In terms of global and regional development, the manufacturing and service revolutions have increasingly transformed children from producer goods to consumer goods. Like women, children are traditionally producer goods to the extent that they have been traded as goods between men and their families to be set to work. With modern expectations of community standards of health and wellbeing, children have been turned into consumer (luxury) goods for parents, because they must be kept at school, outside of work for so long. In countries with substantial welfare states, like Australia, it appears counterproductive to the wellbeing of aboriginal and other communities to provide incentives for increasing, rather than reducing the number of children any apparently damaged and damaging woman may have, beyond two. (This means they only get to make two children's lives miserable and insecure.)

The data later shows why the inequality gap between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Australians is unlikely to be closed and will probably grow worse unless key birth rates drop. The idea that the disadvantage gap between cities and rural and remote areas can be reduced without birth rate intervention seems vainly optimistic. The Youth Jobs PaTH from the last budget is ideally adopted in related regional contexts and is presented as a way forward in the attached discussion of property rights, human rights and land rights in a response to the Productivity Commission (PC) draft report on Intellectual Property (IP). Unless we are slaves or children we cannot avoid being our own property. The land and housing context is discussed later and attached. The International Declaration of Human Rights implies we cannot escape choice in our own eyes, not somebody else's. This is the lesson of Mohammed Ali.

### **Demographic issues related to closing the inequality gap between indigenous and non-indigenous people in Australia and globally**

The key way for aboriginal people to close the gap between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Australians is for certain aboriginal or other demonstrably high risk and high stress women to have fewer children than the norm, rather than more, as at present. This conclusion is confirmed and recommended more broadly as a result of comparing the **'Statistical Overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia'** (currently on the website of the Australian Human Rights Commission), with findings in **'The Global Burden of Disease: a comprehensive assessment of mortality and disability from diseases, injuries and risk factors in 1990 and projected to 2020'**, published in 1996 by the Harvard School of Public Health on behalf of the World Health Organization and the World Bank.

The risk management and life cycle perspectives one adopts on the particular land and its persons, institutions, insurance, fund management and related matters follow the directions of the International Declaration of Human Rights, which Australian government has adapted into or with its earlier law. I shared common responsibility for implementing this in many NSW government institutions, mainly from the Department of Industrial Relations and Employment, followed by the WorkCover Authority, in my case. From this regional health perspective, which is different from that taken in courts, sexual abuse is just one of many risks children may face in early life. According to the 'Global Burden of Disease', a baby girl born in Sub-Saharan Africa faces a 22% risk of death before age 15. In China, the risk is less than 5% and in the Established Market Economies the risk is just 1.1 percent (p. 18).

China emerged as substantially the most 'healthy' of the developed regions, with 15% of the global disease burden and a fifth of the world population (p. 23). Australian aborigines in remote and rural areas of Australia have a comparatively unusual situation for rural minority people as they are supported, as are we all in

Australia, by a strong welfare state. Aborigines were first in the Census in 1971 and from the middle of the 1960s their infant mortality began to reduce rapidly through greater medical intervention. This has occurred over the same time that a key aspect of Chinese urbanization and development was the recognized need to cut women's reproduction levels and provide them with education and paid work to go forward more equally with men against the normal uncontrolled population cycles of increase, war, starvation, etc. These cycles may still be clearly seen in Africa where election may primarily be violent and disturbing rearrangements of the spoils of office and foreign intervention. Australia has a great deal to learn from Chinese planning direction and should not kid itself. (*Only one in every home? I must be joking? Like Freud I do it through gritted teeth, Joyce. It takes a village? Tell me about it?*)

The 20th century development trajectory has often been for comparatively rich women to reduce the number of children they produce and for very poor women to maintain or increase rates of child reproduction. This development trend, along with movement from predominantly peasant economies to international manufacturing and services economies in cities, also added years to human life. It also led to women increasingly entering a paid workforce rather than working in fields or being traded for subsistence, as is often the traditional tribal or feudal behaviour. This historical and uneven economic and population trend of richer women having fewer babies who also live longer is called the epidemiological transition. It was made possible by growing work, public health, housing and sanitation measures and by successful medical intervention in mother and baby care globally and regionally. (In short, only a few got it sitting around in institutions piling up expensive degrees, enjoyable or not as they found it. Writing and filming and music are great works to me and the more I revisit the past in old age the more I feel lucky in this Hillary first generation to see life so clearly twice, as it were, on the early and late screens.)

In the developed regions, for example, Norman Haire, was an Australian who was last in a family of thirteen. He became a doctor and a homosexual pioneer of sexual and contraceptive knowledge and safe services for women in clinics in London beginning in 1919. See, Diana Wyndham's '**Norman Haire and the study of sex**' for this development story at a time female contraceptive knowledge was considered criminal if spread. The contraceptive pill invented in the 1960s was followed in Australia by the no-fault divorce in 1975. This was followed by anti-discrimination acts and the availability of safe abortion on Medicare and then by supporting parents' benefits, and disability and carers' pensions in the 1980s. Child care saves the child?

Thus the state took many of the financial risks and costs of death, ill-health, poverty, persecution and ignorance from the general population, by transferring key costs of their financial and service support to the state. This has meant greater freedom for all but especially for women. The national process is driven by Australian adoption of the International Declaration of Human Rights at the end of World War 2, which

stated all are born with equal rights and fundamental freedoms. The concept of responsibilities lies in much inconsistent legislation. It is a feudally driven mess.

If aborigines got the fact that they actually existed before the British came to Australia recognized in the Constitution; and also made a song and dance about it; this could only help because it is empirical truth, against the dominating legal lie. Whoever ends up with the money, the system is still rigged against common sense. Many men and women of science hate it and they should because it stops them doing their job properly. Intelligence is a curse? Open it up. The plant breeders' rights system appears to be a good development way forward. It is discussed in the PC IP draft report and addressed attached in related direction. Basically government provides particular seed to farmers freely. Farmers then grow it freely, advised openly by researchers, so that farmers may benefit further from the seed they get from their successfully mature crop. Is this as clear, simple and rational a development model as it seems? (It appears too intelligent to be true.)

The 'Statistical Overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia', states the proportion of people that live in remote or very remote areas is much higher for the indigenous population than for the non-indigenous population and they are also having more children. 26.5% of aboriginal people live in remote or very remote areas, compared to just 2% of the non-indigenous population. The much younger age structure of the indigenous population is largely a product of high levels of fertility and mortality compared with the non-indigenous population. In 2014, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women had more babies and had them at younger ages than non-indigenous women. Teenagers had 17% of the babies born to Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander women, compared with teenagers having only 3.1% of those born to all mothers. The fertility rate of teenage indigenous women (57.3 babies per 1,000 women) was over four times that of all teenage women (13 babies per 1,000). *This is a lot of kids to expect poor women to handle.*

Between 1991 and 1996 there was a 33% increase recorded in the numbers of indigenous people in Australia and between the 1996 and 2001 census there was a 16% increase. In contrast the total population in Australia increased by 5% between 1991 and 1996 and 4% from 1996-2001. It is still believed that aboriginal undercount is occurring. I guess this growing trend is often driven by people in comparatively remote areas who may also travel to town to stay with others. The capacity of traditional people to adapt to modern norms is a key factor in closing the inequality gap regionally and globally. From the global perspectives of capital, labour and conscious women, child reproduction rates are a problem or a solution. One naturally here takes the logical position of labour and women, mainly grateful to the Australian state and seeing its guidance as comparatively enlightening today. (*You must be kidding me? What about rental housing? This is discussed later.*)

Researchers for 'The Global Burden of Disease found the ten major risk factors contributing to disease in each region were: **malnutrition; poor water supply; sanitation and person/domestic hygiene; unsafe sex; tobacco use; alcohol use; occupation (that is exposure to hazards through work); hypertension; physical inactivity; illicit drug use and air pollution.** In Australia indigenous people in rural and remote populations appear to experience all these risks more highly than others, except air pollution (?). Risk also appears to be growing through comparatively rapid indigenous population increase in spite of the fact that the most frequently reported stressors in the past year for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were death of a family member or close friend (46%). To care for children to the expected modern standard appears to be an added stress. In 2002-2003, for example, indigenous youth 10 to 17 years of age were detained at ten times the rate of all young people. A study in Queensland reported that 89% of indigenous male juveniles on supervised care and protection orders had progressed to the adult system with at least 71% having served at least one term of imprisonment.

A study of relevant international and national data suggests that in Australia, the health and wellbeing of aboriginal women and their children now depends on some reducing their rates of reproduction lower than its natural level. This seems the most relevant alternative to the extreme of reverting to the rates of reproduction and infant death which were typical in Aboriginal populations before an increase in the perinatal health care services provided to them began in the 1960s and continued to increase.

In 2003 the teenage (15-19) birth rate for indigenous women was more than four times the Australian teenage birth rate and teenage pregnancies were associated with low birth weight. This often indicates foetal malnutrition which means, among other things, that the body will incline to chronic diseases later in life. Significant numbers of indigenous children show failure to thrive. In 2001 the ABS National Health Survey classified 61% of indigenous respondents over 15 years of age as overweight or obese, compared with 48% of non-indigenous respondents. 49% of indigenous respondents aged 18 or over were smokers compared with 24% of the general population. Stress often begins in the country areas as indigenous people in comparatively traditional situations are unable or unwilling to conform to modern ideas about care of children. This starts with the numbers one can afford to keep.

Indigenous people are much less likely to be engaged in the labour force than non-aboriginal people, which condemns them to comparative poverty, especially in rural and remote areas. Reasons for not entering or dropping out of the labour market include **carer responsibilities, illness, disability or lack of market opportunities,** according to the Australian Human Rights Commission. For aboriginal people the most frequently reported stressors in the last twelve months were the **death of a family member or close friend (46%); serious illness or disability (31%) and inability to get a job (27%).** However, for those living in remote areas the most

frequently reported stressors, after **death of a family member or close friend (55%)** were **overcrowding at home (42%)** and **alcohol and drug-related problems (37%)**. Increased reproduction rates are likely to exacerbate all these stressors. Living remotely under the expectation of urban standards appears doomed to fail. The most obvious antidote lies with better community control of reproduction in cases where a woman has shown she cannot cope with motherhood.

In short, the aboriginal population has risen beyond the levels of increase in the general population and is centred in remote and rural areas where some women appear more unfit for stresses and costs of motherhood in the modern era. Unless they have no more than two children, many problems appear likely to grow. Women are currently the fastest growing prison population in Australia with a 420% increase in the indigenous female prison population between 1993 and 2005. Between 1993 and 2003 the general female prison population increased by 110% compared with a 45% increase in the general male indigenous population. Aboriginal people appear between 10 and 19 times more likely to be in prison than the broader population. Surely in the modern era one should not hold any man's right to impregnate a woman or her right to be impregnated and carry the sperm to term to be supreme? This kind of attitude appears to be storing up trouble for unequal and stormy futures.

The significance of injuries has been largely overlooked by the health sector in many countries, according to The Global Burden of Disease. Worldwide in 1990, about 5 million people died of injuries of all types, two thirds of them men. Most of these deaths are heavily concentrated among young adults. In this age group road traffic accidents, suicide, wars, fire and violence all featured in the ten leading causes of death. In the Australian data, among indigenous respondents aged 15 years or over, it was found that just over one third had a disability or long term health condition. This is the kind of data which may largely remain unrecorded outside a welfare state.

I guess such cultural and economic dilemmas of inequality, which is partly due to increasing birth rates in some traditional, comparatively impoverished cultures, is felt around the world in relation to particular populations, settled or not, whose entrance and reproduction rates are higher than modern norms, for whatever reasons. In 2005, the national rate for indigenous children living in out of home care was over six times the national rate for other children. 69% of indigenous children in out of home care across Australia were placed according to the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle which outlines a preference for placing children with an indigenous family. It outlines a preference for placements first with extended families, second with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and third with indigenous people before placing the child with a non-indigenous family. This sends unwise and unfair financial incentives for reproduction to some of the most stressed people in Australia.

It is important today, when housing is ideally managed on better regional and place based circumstances than under current policy settings, not to provide poor mothers with incentives for having more than two children, in whatever sense of the word 'poor' one uses. We are no longer living purely with principles of the particular folks who apparently want more children of their own, or who have been given more to care for by God, whether or not against their will, or life. One seeks an inclusive and healthy Australian society ideally based on personal choice and accommodation. This is also the message of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights which is embodied in some highly distorting forms in anti-discrimination acts. In the context of older legislation, these may often favour the rapaciously feudal lawyer most, depending on particular circumstances and courts where cases and costs wind up.

This is discussed in consideration of property rights, human rights and land rights in the attached response to the Productivity Commission (PC) inquiry draft report on intellectual property (IP). One's key belief is we must start as our own intellectual property and do what we like with it, within our environmental constraints. I guess this is broadly consistent with the Australian Law Reform Commission and National Health and Medical Research Council position on the protection of Human Genetic Information in Australia in the report entitled 'Essentially Yours'. We cannot escape or avoid free will no matter how fettered we remain by our surrounding conditions. This was the message of Existentialist philosophers like Simone de Beauvoir. Collective organization often works only if there is clear responsibility for action.

In an ideal world, one might expect that people incapable of looking after their children to key living standards would use contraception and abortion to prevent having more. This seems a Utopian state of affairs so one merely suggests that those women who have shown themselves to be needing care, rather than being capable of providing it, should be limited to two children by appropriate community and service intervention. Common indications of incapacity to care for more than two children appear to be alcohol and drug addiction; child removal; child neglect, such as incapacity to ensure a child goes to school; and dependence on government for welfare and housing support. People, like children, often benefit from clear guidelines. Who can blame us? We may cast them aside if they do not fit our case. Let all try to explain it personally as one often wonders why it should be so hidden by the occupational norms of expression which often bind us so comparatively narrowly. Even if lying, the exercise may mean we are more able to see the truth for ourselves. This is often the legacy of news and the more rounded view of life in film and song. In this global and related regional context the Digital Dividend Direction is attached.

The concept of joined up government requires that all relevant health information for a particular child which is kept by the state should entail services tied to the child, rather than to a state department or other institution operating separately from the state. This requirement is necessary to ensure holistic knowledge of services to a

particular person across their linked environments. The universal Medicare system appears far ahead with its regional and related life cycle approach to data recording based on seeing the person more holistically on their grounds. Yet bureaucratic and professional silos still drive many related operations separately and secretly on public or other money. This is to be avoided as it entails dangerous ignorance of factors which may be key to a particular situation. For example, a submission to the public hearing into criminal justice issues is attached which deals with all the terms of reference related to 'the experiences of survivors of child sexual abuse'. However, matters related to this particular risk of early scarring are necessarily considered under term of reference 5. *Any related matters.* More effectively historic and holistic approaches to the person and recording have key implications. One seeks an end to the fracturing and obscuring of personal identity that is common in any problem treated by feudal lawyers and their state and professional circles of influence.

### **On being hidden from history**

This submission was made more urgent for me by watching the **ABC TV Four Corners program**, entitled '**Callous Disregard**'. **In this case two alcoholic men had violent sex on a beach with an alcoholic woman until she was dead from internal injuries. The following morning the two alcoholic men were surprised they had killed her. This is, no doubt, a very old story, easily covered up across the world for thousands of years at every level, in every social and ethnic strata, to varying extents, often related to culture and wealth. The dead woman was in her early thirties and a mother of 7 children.** Lynette Daley, also known as Norma, was found naked, bruised and bloodied on Ten Mile Beach in Northern NSW in January 2011. An autopsy would later find she died from blunt force genital tract trauma.

On two separate occasions **the NSW Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) formally declined to prosecute the men who had clearly killed Ms Daley**, despite the urging of the investigating police and recommendations of the NSW Coroner. Her family said they were deeply traumatised, shocked and confused with the DPP decisions. They said they could not understand why the case had not been prosecuted and why both men have not been held to account over the violent death of their daughter. They called for justice and asked whether this apparent neglect by the DPP was because Ms Daley was an aboriginal Australian.

Race Discrimination Commissioner, Dr Tim Soutphommasane, said the coroner's findings about Ms Daley's death were "*unambiguous*". "*It would be deeply troubling if race featured in the DPP's deliberations about prosecuting those involved,*" he said. **On the Four Corners program, Marcia Langton also spoke, as a highly and academically respected aboriginal elder. She said she was appalled and outraged over the NSW DPP's decision and stated the case should be taken to court. She said: "this case will remain in the public mind as one of those cases where**

*justice hasn't been done and it will gain a certain infamy because it's a denial of justice. I would like to see the NSW Attorney-General take action to ensure that this case goes to court.*" The NSW Attorney-General, Gabrielle Upton, issued a statement to the ABC saying the DPP was currently working on the case. Pressure is now growing on the NSW DPP to overturn its decision not to prosecute. This is the case to show why prosecution would be comparatively beside the point for justice for anyone in Australia, aboriginal or otherwise. Start opening up from the other end.

A key question facing the DPP and others is whether justice ideally lies in trial, punishment and the continuing hope for personal redemption when the latter, on the evidence, may appear to be a lost cause under the normal circumstances. I prefer a view of justice which starts with community protection rather than equal treatment for apparent crime or civil offence. I take this view on any cases dealing with repeatedly damaged and damaging people, whatever their ethnic, religious or other cultural background. I do this because the evidence is that it is more important for the community and state to gain protective population and planning direction for women and children first. The normal court action appears comparatively beside the point or worse from this welfare state perspective, which is centred on future harm prevention through more reasonable population measures, depending on the situation.

My case is that Ms Daley was not a fit person to be the mother of 7 children and it is a disgraceful reflection upon Australian women's understanding of the importance of their place in the world, that her community and Australian service authorities allowed her to go on reproducing children when they were so highly likely to become the badly damaged responsibilities of other people. Beside the fate of children, that of the damaged adults must generally be of less concern. I speak as a feminist grandma, author and editor of 'Family Violence in Australia', Longman Cheshire, (1982). There is nothing in this book about the comparative situation of aboriginal women. At the time we asked many aboriginal women to contribute but all declined, other than NSW magistrate, Pat O'Shane, who then became too busy. Nothing has suggested to me since that anybody here cares how many new people a damaged person may infect by bringing more of them into the world. To any who should have doubts one points out emphatically that this view is globally inclusive and grateful to the leadership of the Chinese Community Party for their development capacity. This is the stage where native sophistication must lead or we are lost. (Where are you going with population and family planning? All over the place?)

I write to help broader understanding and positive action as I guess this involves vital matters of policy which will be cosmetically left to women to address and few other than those at Four Corners will have the courage or capacity to touch. I mainly blame men for this. I've wanted these family planning matters to be faced by more Australian women since the common post-war fear that Asians were coming south to over-run Australia morphed into the newer racist view that China's one child policy

was anti-social, rather than a disciplined necessity for the health and well-being of women and children of that nation and the world. The Chinese government recently adopted a two child limit. Have you compared Africa, India and China since 1970?

From this view, the principle issue is not whether the men who killed Ms Daley are imprisoned but whether putting them there is worthwhile protection for anyone. I guess it is not. For me it would be equally or more horrifying to think of the number of damaged children Ms Daley might have produced had she lived on with the lot supported on social services or not. From this perspective, for the state to limit the number of babies to two in the case of women demonstrably incapable of supporting them to a reasonable standard appears to be humane and intelligent policy. Women of good sense can be trusted to make their own decisions in the normal liberal way. The rest have had two to practice on and should be strongly warned against more.

Why do women who can avoid it keep having more than two children, when they are having difficulty in personal coping? Could they be hoping to palm their support off to somebody else, and thus secure their own protection more firmly, at least in their own eyes? Sister, wake up and start talking about this because the men are too much like gutless liars ever to do it. You will have to force it open so I'm naturally only talking to the brave. The women architects at Sydney University impressed me with their occupational frankness in public. Let's open it up and change it to make actions more protective of international grounds. The last time I heard honesty like that was from three Catholic priests. But Baby, we could go so much further with candour. (Is that a fungal infection?) If I have questioned myself about this and shared it, why shouldn't others? Surely it gets one closer to the correct response for oneself? Don't they expect a reply? (By all means think of me as the nanny state.)

In Jane Hutcheon's program 'One Plus One', she recently spoke with Kon Karapanagiotidis. He banded together with others to establish a major support and service network for refugees. This began out of a Melbourne shop front the owner had donated for the learning exercise begun with this technical and further education (TAFE) teacher and his students. They decided the first thing people need available to them is food and acted to source and distribute it, along with related information and services. I greatly admire the service capability of Karapanagiotidis and others like him but take another view of life and how to improve it. It is an empirical matter. It seems we all agree forcefully that education is power that has legitimacy (except for the back row perhaps). Let them learn when working under supervision instead.

I want to take issue with key views of Kon Karapanagiotidis, who thinks that individualism is a purely pecuniary response to the world. He supports family and related forms of human compassion instead. He speaks of the need for an '*eco-system of compassion*' also based on the view that '*saving a life is a universal good.*'

Whether saving a life is viewed as good or not depends on particular cultural and feudal economic relations, such as wars over land at margins or not. Individualism has historically been necessary for the liberation of women and men who would otherwise be held in thrall to dominant male relations, including financial relations, which may only value or try to force price, in public or not. The development of the caring or welfare state was made possible by related intellectual approaches. This is one based on the global and regional demographic data also fuelling the analysis. From this perspective, collective organization should not mean the chance for hiding action from each other as without clear responsibility the endeavour goes to pot.

What is considered corrupt depends upon the spot and thus also should be open to other inspection and judgment. For example, and as discussed attached, the views of outgoing Northern Territory senator Nova Peris are wrong when she stated to TV news on her resignation 'until you are an aboriginal person, do not criticize me for the decisions I have made'. Compassion should not be related to blind trust. As a senator she is supposed to represent all people in her electorate and anybody can criticize her, with good justification in this case. The Senate is not another little club or secret society, represented by lawyers. Government or other independent inquiries are more equipped to investigate matters more openly with people ideally being prepared to freely contribute to them in the service of themselves and others.

As Linda Burney, another aboriginal political candidate, albeit in the coming election, pointed out when Chairperson of the NSW State Reconciliation Committee and member of the NSW Crime Prevention Council, there is no pan-aboriginal perspective and each aboriginal person can really only speak for him or herself, the same as anybody else. Nova Peris said aborigines don't inherit wealth like non-aboriginal Australians do. Land rights appear to be forms of inherited wealth and I can only guess many Australians inherit little wealth or may support parents in old age. As the Australian population is ageing and migration is common, the ways people die as well as live and receive services from many quarters deserve broader attention. The leaders of Liberal and Labor parties claim to be committed to improving outcomes for aboriginal people to a level more like the general population. One seeks to point out that the strategy presented here may be the best, fairest and even the only way to do it from the perspective of other members of the Australian community, including aboriginal people. These are mainly empirical questions which include emotional reactions, rather than starting from the Karapanagiotidis point. It would be better if more aborigines and others took a policy interest in this. Women or men. I'm not fussy. Population ideally appears the responsibility of both sexes.

It often seems to me that normal political and bureaucratic capacity constrained and protected by its iron cages of regulation works in a comparatively glacial manner in housing. For example, in the 1970 there were a lot of empty houses in the inner city and people sometimes used to squat. I once helped to find a new place in a squat

for an aboriginal woman living in Redfern whose many children were a constant disturbance to her neighbours. They came to the Settlement, where I worked as a volunteer, to ask for help to get her away from their area and the procession of men coming through from the country to stay at her place. Today there are still plenty of empty houses in the inner city but people are living in parks. I bet a lot of the empty places belong to particular government departments and churches as well as to private individuals whose whereabouts are also unknown. As Jamie Parker, Tanya Plibersek and Clover Moore all represent the same ground, even though they work for different levels of government, you'd think they'd be able to do something about this by acting together to find the owners of empty houses to help to manage them. They shouldn't have to leap over roofs or back fences to see if they are really empty. From regional planning perspectives the legal system is genuine service avoidance.

To do something about problems one may eventually have to recognize hard truths. In this case I guess this is that there are bad aborigines. An American currently working at Sydney University said on TV recently that homophobia is violence. It is not violence any more than sexism or racism or hating US soldiers or lawyers is violence. Violence is violence! To confuse speech and action, as if the first is the same as the latter is wrong. The view that perception is reality is the usual US driver and a sign that the market, including the market for guns, has yet again won over common sense. Wall Street wins over Main Street again and they do it through the English speaking universities of the world. The fact you should watch your language is one of the reasons that I swear so much. Don't worry, I'm not going to hurt you.

Cheers

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