

Recommended reading

Books and research focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

Reports and documents

State of Reconciliation in Australia report (2016)

Reconciliation Australia

The first of its kind since 2000, the *State of Reconciliation in Australia* report highlights what has been achieved under the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, unity, and historical acceptance and makes recommendations on how we can progress reconciliation into the next generation.

How to access:

The *State of Reconciliation in Australia* is available in full or summary [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2009)

United Nations, illustrated by Michel Streich

On 13 September, 2007 the General Assembly of the United Nations, with an overwhelming majority of votes, adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration was over 22 years in the making. Its purpose, as described by the UN, is to set an important standard for the treatment of Indigenous peoples and to act as a significant tool in eliminating human rights violations against the planet's over 350 million Indigenous people, while assisting them in combating discrimination and marginalisation. Only four countries voted against it: the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. In 2009, the Australian government decided to endorse this landmark Declaration. Michel Streich's simple yet moving illustrations add power to The Declaration—a clear and strong statement of hope, belief and purpose and one of the most important documents of our time.

How to access:

This illustrated edition of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* is currently out of print but can be borrowed from the [National Library of Australia and other libraries](#). The plain text of The Declaration can be accessed [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Memoir and social commentary

Talking To My Country (2016)

Stan Grant

Talking To My Country is an extraordinarily powerful and personal meditation on race, culture and national identity. In July 2015, as the debate over Adam Goodes being booed at AFL games raged and got ever more heated, Stan Grant wrote a short but powerful piece for The Guardian. His was a personal, passionate and powerful response to racism in Australia and the sorrow, shame, anger and hardship of being an Aboriginal man. This book is Stan's very personal meditation on what it means to be Australian, what it means to be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and what racism really means in this country.

How to access:

Talking To My Country is widely available at bookshops and online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Dog Ear Café (2010)

Andrew Stojanovski

In 1994, over 60 young people, more than half the teenage population in the Central Australian community of Yuendumu, were sniffing petrol—threatening their lives and the future, Yuendumu was a community that was powerless to stop them. *Dog Ear Café* is a true-life story about how this Aboriginal community beat the odds and combatted petrol sniffing through the Mt Theo Petrol Sniffing Program. In a colloquial and narrative manner, this book invites the reader to a deeper analysis of the assumptions behind white and black economics, alcoholism, welfare dependency and the failure of well-intended policy and programs.

How to access:

Dog Ear Café is available as an e-book through [Amazon](#) and [iTunes](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups

- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Back on The Block: Bill Simon's Story (2009)

Bill Simon, Des Montgomerie and Jo Tuscano

Stolen, beaten, deprived of his liberty and used as child labour, Bill Simon's was not a normal childhood. He was told his mother didn't want him that he was 'the scum of the earth' and was locked up in the notorious Kinchela Boys Home for eight years. His experiences there would shape his life forever. Bill Simon got angry, something which poisoned his life for the next two decades. A life of self-abuse and crime finally saw him imprisoned. But Bill Simon has turned his life around and in *Back on the Block*, he hopes to help others to do the same.

These days Bill works on the other side of the bars, helping other members of the Stolen Generations find a voice and their place; finally putting their pain to rest. He works on the streets, in jails, in churches and his home in Redfern is a drop-in centre for anyone in need. From his home on The Block in Sydney's Redfern, one of the most contentious and misunderstood places in Australia, Bill Simon tells the truth about life in one of Australia's most terrible juvenile institutions, where thousands of boys were warehoused and abused.

How to access:

Back on The Block can be purchased through the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Other People's Country (2008)

Maureen Helen

When comfortable housewife and mother of six adult children, Maureen Helen reached her late fifties, she decided she wanted to do something a little different. She chose to use her rusty skills to become a RAN: a remote area nurse, in an isolated Aboriginal settlement in WA's Pilbara region. Faced with the terrible health problems of the community, inadequate equipment and a growing sense that she didn't belong, Helen battled her own crisis of confidence as well as the harshness of her environment. In *Other People's Country*, Helen offers penetrating insights into the cultural clash between Aboriginal and white Australia, and examines her own moral compass in the face of a demanding and hostile environment.

How to access:

Other People's Country is available online through [Readings](#) and [Amazon](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends

- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

The Tall Man (2008)

Chloe Hooper

The Tall Man is the story of Palm Island, the tropical paradise where one morning Cameron Doomadgee swore at a policeman and forty minutes later lay dead in a watch-house cell. It is the story of that policeman, the tall, enigmatic Christopher Hurley who chose to work in some of the toughest and wildest places in Australia, and of the struggle to bring him to trial. Above all, it is a story in luminous detail of two worlds clashing—and a haunting moral puzzle that no reader will forget.

The death of Cameron Doomadgee in police custody is also explored in the [SBS documentary series](#) of the same name.

How to access:

The Tall Man can be purchased online from [Booktopia](#) and [Angus & Robertson](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Cleared Out: First contact in the Western Desert (2005)

Sue Davenport, Peter Johnson and Yuwali

In 1964, a group of 20 Aboriginal women and children in the Western Desert made their first contact with European Australians—patrol officers from the Woomera Rocket Range, clearing an area into which rockets were to be fired. Yuwali, 17 at the time, remembers every detail of the drama. In *Cleared Out*, her sharp recollections sit alongside the colourful official reports of the patrol.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to read a first contact encounter in Australia. The documentary *Contact* also examines this encounter and includes real life footage from 1964.

How to access:

Cleared Out and *Contact* can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations

- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Why Warriors Lie Down and Die (2000)

Richard Trudgen

Why Warriors Lie Down and Die is essential reading for anyone interested in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. It offers deep insights for those who would like a greater understanding of the issues involved in achieving true reconciliation, and provides hope and new direction for those searching for the answers as to why these problems seem to persist in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In Arnhem Land, as in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia, the situation is dire—health is poor, unemployment is rife and life is short. This book provides a fresh analysis of this crisis and offers examples of how people can once again take control of their own lives. Finding the real cause of this crisis requires the reader to look at it from the other side of the cultural/language divide—the side where the Yolngu people live. *Why Warriors Lie Down and Die* takes us to that side.

How to access:

Why Warriors Lie Down and Die can be purchased online [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Don't Take Your Love to Town (1998)

Ruby Langford Ginibi

With sales of over 30,000 copies since publication in 1988, *Don't Take Your Love to Town* is now a seminal work of Indigenous memoir. It has been set for HSC over a number of years and is one of the most important Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander life stories to be published in Australia. Ruby Langford Ginibi is a remarkable woman whose sense of humour has endured through all the hardships she has experienced. This book, her first volume of memoir, is a story of extraordinary courage in the face of poverty and tragedy. She writes about the changing ways of life in Aboriginal communities – rural and urban; the disintegration of traditional lifestyles and the sustaining energy that has come from the renewal of Aboriginal culture in recent years.

How to access:

Don't Take Your Love to Town can be purchased from [University of Queensland Press](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups

- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and upper secondary)

Histories and cultures

Dark Emu (2014)

Bruce Pascoe

Dark Emu argues for a reconsideration of the 'hunter-gatherer' tag for pre-colonial Aboriginal Australians and attempts to rebut the colonial myths that have worked to justify dispossession. Accomplished author Bruce Pascoe provides compelling evidence from the diaries of early explorers that suggests that systems of food production and land management have been blatantly understated in modern retellings of early Aboriginal history, and that a new look at Australia's past is required.

How to access:

Dark Emu can be purchased from good book shops and online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and upper secondary)

The Little Red Yellow Black Book: An introduction to Indigenous Australia, 3rd edition (2012)

Bruce Pascoe and AIATSIS

The Little Red Yellow Black Book has established itself as the bestselling 'standard' introduction to Indigenous Australia. It is being read and used by tourists, schools and adults, across state and federal departments, authorities and NGOs for reconciliation plans and cross-cultural training. Written from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewpoint, this book covers subjects as diverse as languages, education, governance, sport, arts, native title, health resistance and activism. *The Little Red Yellow Black Book* facilitates understanding, respect and reconciliation between all Australians. The book is accompanied by [The Little Red Yellow Black Website: An introduction to Indigenous Australia](#).

How to access:

The Little Red Yellow Black Book can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations

- Schools and early learning services (upper primary, secondary and professional learning)

Aboriginal Sydney: A guide to important places of the past and present (2010)

Melinda Hinkson and Alana Harris

Sydney has a rich and complex Aboriginal heritage. Hidden within its burgeoning city landscape lie layers of a vibrant culture and a turbulent history. But, you need to know where to look—*Aboriginal Sydney* supplies the information. It is both a guide book and an alternative social history told through an array of places of significance to the city's Indigenous peoples. The sites, and their accompanying stories and photographs, evoke Sydney's past and celebrate the living Aboriginal cultures of today.

[Aboriginal Darwin](#) by Toni Bauman and Samantha Wells (2006) and [Melbourne Dreaming](#) by Meyer Eidelson (2014) are similar resources for exploring Darwin and Melbourne.

How to access:

Aboriginal Sydney can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning, primary and secondary students)

First Australians: An Illustrated History (2008)

Rachel Perkins, Marcia Langton, Wayne Atkinson, James Boyce, RG Kimber, Steve Kinnane, Noel Loos and Bruce Pascoe (Editors)

This is the story of the violent clash of culture, religion and ideas at the heart of Australia's history. Beginning with Aboriginal travellers landing on Australian shores around 70,000 BC, it chronicles the fierce war with colonists, the blood massacres and the earliest civil rights movement the world has ever seen.

Drawing on a rich collection of historic documents and haunting images, it brings to life a cast of characters including Bennelong, who is kidnapped by the British and is the first Australian to set foot on British soil; Truganini known as the last Tasmanian who is broken by the betrayal of her people; and Lieutenant Dawes, a British officer who defies the authority of Empire by falling in love with a young Indigenous woman. Alive with colonial detail, *First Australians: An Illustrated History* is the companion book to the [SBS series](#) and tells the story that gave birth to the nation.

How to access:

First Australians can be purchased from the [SBS Shop](#) online. A timeline with short clips from the SBS series can be accessed online via the SBS website.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Treading Lightly (2006)

Karl-Erik Sveiby and Tex Skuthorpe

In *Treading Lightly*, a Scandinavian knowledge management professor meets an Aboriginal cultural custodian and dares to ask a vital question: what can we learn from Aboriginal cultures to create a sustainable society in modern Australia? This book explores how traditional Aboriginal stories and paintings were used to convey knowledge about the environment, law and relationships from one generation to the next. It takes us on a unique journey into traditional Aboriginal life and cultures, and in so doing, offers a powerful and original model for building sustainable organisations, communities and ecologies.

How to access:

Treading Lightly is available through the [ABC Shop](#) online or [Amazon](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

An Intruders Guide to East Arnhem Land (2001)

Andrew McMillan

An Intruder's Guide to East Arnhem Land is part history, part journalism, part literature, part love story with a people and a place. The writing is both edgy and contemporary—a narrative of history in remote Australia where the echoes of the past continue to resonate with us today. This book is often considered essential reading for anyone looking to understand the Yolngu and Anindilyakwa peoples, the Traditional Owners of East Arnhem Land and Groote Eylandt.

How to access:

An Intruders Guide to East Arnhem Land is difficult to find but can be borrowed from the [National Library of Australia](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Policy and politics

Quarterly Essay: A Rightful Place. Race, Recognition and a more complete Commonwealth (2014)

Noel Pearson

In *A Rightful Place*, Noel Pearson shows how the idea of “race” was embedded in the constitution, and the distorting effect this has had. Now there is a chance to change it – if we can agree on a way forward. Pearson shows what constitutional recognition means, and what it could make possible: true equality and a renewed appreciation of an ancient culture. This is a wide-ranging, eloquent call for justice, an essay of remarkable power that traverses history and culture to make the case for change.

How to access:

A Rightful Place can be purchased as an e-book or paperback [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Beyond White Guilt (2011)

Sarah Maddison

Deep in our hearts, Australians know that our nation was built on land that does not belong to us. Some of us now assert that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should simply take advantage of opportunities offered by white society. But many others feel guilt, often turning this guilt inwards, feeling helpless in the face of the appalling conditions in which many of the original inhabitants of this country now live. Successive government policies of obliteration, assimilation, cultural maintenance and intervention have manifestly failed to bridge the gulf between black and white Australians, and to improve the lives of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. In *Beyond White Guilt* Sarah Maddison argues that there is no point in looking again to governments for a solution to these challenges. Rather, it is up to us, all of us. We need to acknowledge our collective responsibility, change at a deep level, and develop a revitalised view of our national self. Only then will we develop policies and practical solutions that work.

How to access:

Beyond White Guilt is available at good bookshops and online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations

- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Resistance and Activism

Jandamarra (2013)

Mark Greenwood and Terry Denton

This book tells the epic and tragic story of Jandamarra, Indigenous hero of the Kimberley, through text and illustrations. To the settlers, he was an outlaw to be hunted. To the Bunuba, he was a courageous defender of his Country. Mark Greenwood's text and Terry Denton's watercolour illustrations bring this story of conflict and divided loyalties to life, giving a unique insight into an extraordinary man and a dark but important part of Australia's frontier history. *Jandamarra* is story for all Australians.

How to access:

Jandamarra can be purchased from bookstores such as [Booktopia](#) and [Allen & Unwin](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning, primary and secondary)

The 1967 Referendum: Race, power and the Australian Constitution (2007)

Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus

The 1967 Referendum explores the legal and political significance of the referendum and the long struggle by black and white Australians for constitutional change. It traces the emergence of a series of powerful narratives about the Australian Constitution and the status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, revealing how and why the referendum campaign acquired so much significance, and has since become the subject of highly charged myth in contemporary Australia.

How to access:

The 1967 Referendum can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Fight for Liberty and Freedom: The origins of Australian Aboriginal activism (2007)

John Maynard

The Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association (AAPA), began life in 1924. Although less known today, current Aboriginal political movement is drawn from these roots. Decades earlier than is commonly understood, Aboriginal people organised street rallies and held well-publicised regional and metropolitan meetings. The AAPA showed incredible aptitude in using newspaper coverage, letter writing and petitions, and collaborated with the international black movement through founder Fred Maynard's connections with Marcus Garvey, first president of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). *Fight for Liberty and Freedom* is a passionate exploration of the life of Fred Maynard and reveals the commitment and sacrifices made by early Aboriginal activists.

How to access:

Fight for Liberty and Freedom can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Pemulwuy: The Rainbow Warrior (1987)

Eric Wilmot

Pemulwuy, the Rainbow Warrior, led his people in the grim struggle against the British invaders from 1788 until his death in 1802. At the time, the British not only tried to destroy him and his people, but also attempted to obliterate evidence of his very existence. In his first novel, Eric Willmot, a prominent member of the Australian Aboriginal community, reveals the dark story of those early years of conflict and tells the story of the man who became the first Australian patriot.

How to access:

Pemulwuy: The Rainbow Warrior is out of print but can be found at libraries, second hand bookstores and [Amazon](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary)

The Other Side of the Frontier: Aboriginal Resistance to the European Invasion of Australia (1981)

Henry Reynolds

The publication of this book in 1981 profoundly changed the way in which we understand the history of relations between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and European colonisers. It has since become a classic of Australian history. Drawing from documentary and oral evidence, the book describes in meticulous and compelling detail the ways in which Indigenous peoples responded to the arrival of Europeans. Reynolds' argument that resistance to the colonisers was fierce was highly original when it was first published.

How to access:

The Other Side of the Frontier can be purchased from [Reading Australia](#) or [Amazon](#) online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary)

Sport

Boomerang and Bat: The Story of the Real First Eleven (2016)

Mark Greenwood and Terry Denton

The first Australian cricket team to tour England was a group of Aboriginal stockmen. This is their story. In 1868 a determined team of Aboriginal cricketers set off on a journey across the world to take on England's best. Led by star all-rounder Johnny Mullagh, and wearing caps embroidered with a boomerang and a bat, they delighted crowds with their exceptional skill. From the creators of *Jandamarra*, this is the remarkable story of the real first eleven. *Boomerang and Bat* is children's non-fiction which is enjoyable and informative for adults too.

How to access:

Boomerang and Bat can be purchased [Allen & Unwin](#) online and good bookstores.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning, secondary and primary students)

The Aboriginal Soccer Tribe (2011)

John Maynard

This book is a celebration of the extraordinary journey taken by Aboriginal sportsmen and women who forged the way ahead for the present crop of talented players involved in the 'world game'. The multicultural environment of Australian soccer after World War II provided Aboriginal players with a haven from the prejudice and racism of wider Australian society. *The Aboriginal Soccer Tribe* interweaves personal narrative with links to broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

How to access:

The Aboriginal Soccer Tribe can be purchased from [Magabala Books](#) online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary)

Legends: AFL Indigenous Team of the Century 1905-2005 (2011)

Sean Gorman

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia have given us some of our greatest football champions. With names like Farmer, Winmar, Long, Rioli and Goodes, the stories of Indigenous footballers are some of the most compelling in the great game of AFL. What makes their stories so important? The set of biographies in *Legends* uses the players' own descriptions of their lives, their careers and the people who helped them achieve success.

For many non-Indigenous Australians, their only engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is through watching sport, on television or at a match. Sport in many ways has offered Indigenous Australians a platform from which to begin the process for social justice and equity. Sport also provides a lens through which to view the many overlapping themes, including politics, race and history.

How to access:

Legends can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Black Gold: The Aboriginal and Islander Sports Hall of Fame (2000)

Colin Tatz and Paul Tatz

In 1995, Professor Colin Tatz and a panel of sportspeople and historians selected 129 athletes for the inaugural Aboriginal and Islander Sports Hall of Fame. Since then, 43 new stars have been inducted. *Black Gold* features all 172 members, from 30 sports. The chapters showcase our Olympic heroes, superb sportswomen, football giants, boxing legends, lightning sprinters and more — from darts champions to world class weightlifters and woodchoppers. Some of the people in this book are members of the Stolen Generations who were raised in ‘assimilation’ homes but pursued their dreams against all odds. Many grew up in remote, impoverished settlements where ‘sports facilities’ were bumpy dirt tracks, scrubby pitches or dustbowl ovals with sticks for goalposts. *Black Gold* honours all who have leapt the twin hurdles of racism and competition to realise their talents in the elite arenas of national or international sport.

How to access:

Black Gold can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Biography

Darby: One Hundred Years of Life in a Changing Culture (2006)

Liam Campbell

Born in the bush before ‘Whitefellas’ entered his country, Darby Jampijinpa Ross lived through a time of great change for his people and died the day after his hundredth birthday. He survived the deaths of his family in the 1928 Coniston massacre before travelling widely as a stockman, cameleer, drover and prospector. After assisting the war effort, he returned to his traditional Country northwest of Alice Springs, where he became a much loved community and ceremonial leader. He gained recognition as a successful artist and strong advocate for Aboriginal law and culture.

Darby author Liam Campbell was a teenage schoolboy in 1989 when he first came to Yuendumu, the large Warlpiri community in the Tanami Desert where Darby spent most of his later years. It was there Campbell met Darby and listened to the old man, entranced. Four years on, he came back to Yuendumu and dedicated himself to the task of recording Darby's stories.

How to access:

Darby is difficult to find but can be borrowed from the [National Library of Australia](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups

- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Rob Riley: An Aboriginal leader's quest for justice (2006)

Quentin Beresford

Widely regarded as one of the great Aboriginal leaders of the modern era, Rob Riley was at the centre of debates that have polarised views on race relations in Australia: national land rights, the treaty, deaths in custody, self-determination, the justice system, native title and the Stolen Generations. He tragically took his own life in 1996, weighed down by the unresolved traumas of his exposure to institutionalisation, segregation and racism, and his sense of betrayal by the Australian political system to deliver justice to Aboriginal people. His death shocked community leaders and ordinary citizens alike.

Set against the tumultuous background of racial politics in an unreconciled nation, the book explores Rob's rise and influence as an Aboriginal activist. Drawing on perspectives from history, politics and psychology, this work explores Rob's life as a 'moral protester' and the challenges he confronted in trying to change the destiny of the nation.

How to access:

Rob Riley can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Paddy's Road: Life Stories of Patrick Dodson (2003)

Kevin Keffe

In *Paddy's Road*, Kevin Keffe brings us stories of Dodson's life woven from interviews, government archives and family stories. This source material and Keffe's social and political analysis uniquely describes the life and the political, cultural and spiritual beliefs of Australia's first Aboriginal Catholic priest, land rights activist, Royal Commissioner and founder of Australia's reconciliation movement. *Paddy's Road* shares the story of Patrick Dodson's life and extraordinary family history. From the moment of colonisation in the Kimberley to the era of native title, from pearling to pastoralism, through missions and institutions, this Aboriginal family has survived an uncaring and intrusive state system.

How to access:

Paddy's Road can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends

- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence (1996)

Doris Pilkington

Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence is an extraordinary story of courage and faith. It is based on the actual experiences of three girls who fled from the repressive life of Moore River Native Settlement and followed the rabbit-proof fence back to their homelands. Assimilationist policy took the young girls from their kin and their land in order to make them 'white'. Never having seen the ocean before, the three girls' experience of transportation by boat to the settlement was tormenting—but this was just the beginning of their torment. Settlement life was unbearable with its chains and padlocks, barred windows, hard cold beds and horrible food. Solitary confinement was doled out as regular punishment. They were not even allowed to speak their language. Of all the journeys made since colonisers set foot on Australian soil, the 1931 journey made by these girls, born of Aboriginal mothers and white fathers, speaks something to us all.

How to access:

Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence is widely available at bookshops and online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Auntie Rita (1994)

Jackie Huggins and Rita Huggins

'Most people call me Auntie Rita, whites as well as Aboriginal people. Auntie is a term of respect of our older women folk. You don't have to be blood-related or anything. Everyone is kin. That's a beautiful thing because in this way no one is ever truly alone, they always have someone they can turn to.'

Rita Huggins told her memories to her daughter Jackie, and some of their conversation is in this book. We witness their intimacy, their similarities and their differences, the 'fighting with their tongues'. Two voices, two views on a shared life.

Jackie Huggins is a highly respected Aboriginal rights activist and author from the Bidjara and Birri-Gubba Juru peoples of Queensland. She has taught in the university sector and held many senior positions in Aboriginal and statutory organisations, including chair of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. She was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2001.

How to access:

Auntie Rita is available from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning and secondary students)

Anthropology and Sociology

Culture Crisis: Anthropology and Politics in Aboriginal Australia (2010)

Jon Altman (Editor), Melinda Hinkson

Written by Australia's leading anthropologists, this valuable examination explores the Australian government's intervention in terms of health, safety, and education of the nation's remote Aboriginal citizens via the Northern Territory National Emergency Response. Dissecting the notion of difference and probing the idea of Indigenous disadvantage and autonomy, this record questions the role of anthropology in provoking policy change and unflinchingly confronts the policies that have failed these communities. An urgently needed dialogue, this account argues that anthropology can still provide hope.

How to access:

Culture Crisis can be purchased from [Amazon](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Throwing Off the Cloak: Reclaiming self-reliance in Torres Strait (2009)

Elizabeth Osborne

For 160 years the Torres Strait Islanders have resisted governments' continued dismissal of their ambitions. In *Throwing Off the Cloak*, Osborne explores the debates centering on the Islanders' struggle to recover their rights to their land, sea, fish resources, and to make decisions for their own wellbeing. One Torres Strait Island leader articulated what identity means to him when asked, 'What are you claiming, are you claiming the sea, the beach or the resources?' He replied, 'If an oil tanker ran aground it kills the bed, kills the fish and it kills me'. *Throwing off the Cloak* is essential reading for anyone interested in Torres Strait Islander responses to colonisation.

How to access:

Throwing Off the Cloak can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

The Politics of Suffering (2009)

Peter Sutton

In this ground-breaking book, Peter Sutton asks why, after three decades of liberal thinking, has the suffering and grief in so many Aboriginal communities become worse? The picture Sutton presents is tragic. He marshals shocking evidence against the failures of the past, and argues provocatively that three decades of liberal consensus on Aboriginal issues has collapsed. Sutton is a leading Australian anthropologist and linguist who has lived and worked closely with Aboriginal communities since 1969.

How to access:

The Politics of Suffering can be purchased from [Melbourne University Publishing](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Yuendumu Everyday: Contemporary life in remote Aboriginal Australia (2009)

Yasmine Musharbash

Yuendumu Everyday explores intimacy, immediacy and mobility as the core principles underpinning contemporary everyday life in a central Australian Aboriginal settlement. It analyses an everyday shaped through the interplay between a not so distant hunter–gatherer past and the realities of living in a first-world nation–state by considering such apparently mundane matters as: What is a camp? How does that relate to houses? Who sleeps where, and next to whom? Why does this constantly change? What and where are the public/private boundaries? And most importantly: How do Indigenous people in praxis relate to each other?

How to access:

Yuendumu Everyday can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends

- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Whitening Race: Essays in social and cultural criticism

Aileen Moreton-Robinson (Editor), 2004

With its focus on Australia, *Whitening Race* engages with relations between migration, Indigenous dispossession and whiteness. It creates a new intellectual space that investigates the nature of racialised conditions and their role in reproducing colonising relations in Australia.

How to access:

Whitening Race can be purchased from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [here](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Fiction: Children and Young Adults

Stories for Simon (2015)

Lisa Miranda Sarzin, illustrated by Lauren Briggs

When Simon unwraps a beautiful boomerang wrapped in an old newspaper, he learns of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations. Who were the Stolen Generations and how can saying 'sorry' help? Through a new friendship and a magnificent collection of stories, Simon gains a deep appreciation of the past and a positive vision for the future. *Stories for Simon* is a beautiful story of acknowledging the past and working together for a brighter future.

How to access:

Stories for Simon can be purchased from [Random House](#) online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends (primary-aged children)
- Community groups (focused on primary-aged children)
- Schools and early learning services (primary)

Possum and Wattle: My Big Book of Australian Words (2010)

Bronwyn Bancroft

An eye-opening vocabulary book featuring words taken from Australia's inspiring natural environment—with a glossary of Aboriginal terms. Words include blossoms and bees through to wombats and willy willys. The pages range from neatly vignettted illustrations to large narrative landscapes. The book is designed to intrigue, captivate and nurture inquisitive minds and to celebrate the uniqueness of Australia. Author and illustrator Bronwyn Bancroft is a descendant of the Bunjalung people of New South Wales whose artwork has been collected and exhibited by galleries and museums throughout the world.

How to access:

Possum and Wattle can be purchased from good bookshops and online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends (parents of young children)
- Community groups (focused on early childhood and primary)
- Schools and early learning services (early learning and primary)

Sam's Bush Journey (2009)

Sally Morgan and Ezekiel Kwaymullina, illustrated by Bronwyn Bancroft

Sam doesn't like the outdoors and would be happy if it all disappeared. But when he goes to stay with his grandmother he learns that the outdoors has an abundance of things to offer. *Sam's Bush Journey* is brimming with themes that will promote discussion amongst young readers: journeys, the environment, storytelling, Aboriginal knowledge of the bush and intergenerational knowledge.

How to access:

Sam's Bush Journey can be purchased from good bookshops and online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends (parents of young children)
- Community groups (focused on early childhood and primary)
- Schools and early learning services (early learning and primary)

The Rabbits (2008)

John Marsden, illustrated by Shaun Tan

The Rabbits is an allegorical fable about colonisation, told from the viewpoint of the colonised. An unseen narrator describes the coming of 'rabbits' in the most minimal detail, an encounter that is at first friendly and curious, but later darkens as it becomes apparent that the visitors are actually invaders. The style of the book is deliberately sparse and strange, with both text and image conveying an overall sense of bewilderment and anxiety as native numbat-like creatures witness environmental devastation under the wheels of a strange new culture.

How to access:

Stories for Simon can be purchased from good book shops and online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends (primary-aged children and young adults)
- Community groups (focused on primary-aged children and young adults)
- Schools and early learning services (primary and secondary)

Yirra and Her Deadly Dog Demon (2007)

Anita Heiss

Yirra's mum is sick of vacuuming up fur balls, the neighbours are fed up with having their undies nicked from the clothesline, and her step-dad just wants his slippers back. If Yirra doesn't find a dog-trainer soon, she'll have to give her beloved Demon to a new family - one who likes dogs who run and dig a lot. Bursting with energy and madcap fun, *Yirra and Her Deadly Dog, Demon* gives young readers a contemporary view of urban Indigenous life in Sydney.

How to access:

Home can be purchased from [Booktopia](#) and [Boomerang Books](#) online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends (primary children)
- Community groups (focused on young adults)
- Schools and early learning services (secondary)

The Outback (2005)

Annaliese Porter, illustrated by Bronwyn Bancroft

Annaliese Porter was only eight years old when she wrote *The Outback*. She has captured the Australian outback in all its moods in this moving bush ballad about the country's vast interior. Illustrated by respected Aboriginal artist Bronwyn Bancroft, *The Outback* depicts recognisable Australian landscapes and animals such as Uluru, dingoes, cockatoos, snakes and goannas.

How to access:

The Outback can be purchased from [Magabala Books](#) and [Amazon](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends (parents of young children)
- Community groups (focused on early childhood and primary)
- Schools and early learning services (early learning and primary)

Walking with the Seasons in Kakadu (2005)

Diane Lucas and Ken Searle

This sumptuous book follows the seasonal calendar of the Gundjehmi-speaking people of Kakadu. It invites us to closely observe the birds, plants and animals that inhabit the unique environment, through an understanding of the six Aboriginal seasons and their characteristics.

How to access:

Walking with the Seasons in Kakadu can be purchased from good bookshops and online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends (primary-aged children)
- Community groups (focused on primary-aged children)
- Schools and early learning services (primary)

Home (2004)

Larissa Behrendt

A story of homecoming, this absorbing novel opens with a young, city-based lawyer setting out on her first visit to ancestral Country. Candice arrives at "the place where the rivers meet", the camp of the Eualeyai where in 1918 her grandmother Garibooli was abducted. *Home* is a powerful and intelligent first novel from an author who understands both the capacity of language to suppress and the restorative potency of stories that bridge past and present.

How to access:

Home can be purchased from [Booktopia](#) and [Book Depository](#) online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends (young adults)
- Community groups (focused on young adults)
- Schools and early learning services (secondary)

Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo (2000)

Alison Lester

Ernie is going to live in Arnhem Land for a year. He flies above the desert for hours, travels over the floodplains, crosses the East Alligator River and arrives at his new home. *Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo* is a book of Ernie's letters, describing the life he discovers with his new friends in their wild and beautiful land.

How to access:

Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo can be purchased from [Booktopia](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends (parents of young children)
- Community groups (focused on early childhood)
- Schools and early learning services (early learning services)

Big Rain Coming (1999)

Katrina Germein, illustrated by Bronwyn Bancroft

This book tells a lyrical story about waiting for the rain to come to an isolated Aboriginal community. Tension in the community builds as the rain clouds thicken and grow dark. Everybody waits. When will the rain come?

How to access:

Big Rain Coming can be purchased from [Booktopia](#) and [Amazon](#) online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends (parents of young children)
- Community groups (focused on early childhood and primary)
- Schools and early learning services (early learning and primary)

My Place (1988)

Sally Morgan

My Place begins with Sally Morgan tracing the experiences of her own life, growing up in suburban Perth in the fifties and sixties. Through the memories and images of her childhood and adolescence, vague hints and echoes begin to emerge, hidden knowledge is uncovered, and a fascinating story unfolds – a mystery of identity, complete with clues and suggested solutions. *My Place* is a deeply moving account of a search for truth, into which a whole family is gradually drawn; finally freeing the tongues of the author's mother and grandmother, allowing them to tell their own stories.

How to access:

My Place can be purchased from good bookshops and online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Schools and early learning services (primary and secondary)

Fiction: Adults

Ruby Moonlight (2012)

Ali Cobby Eckermann

Ruby Moonlight is a verse novel that centres around the impact of colonisation in mid-north South Australia around 1880. Ruby, refugee of a massacre, shelters in the woods where she befriends an Irishman trapper. The poems convey how fear of discovery is overcome by the need for human contact, which, in a tense

unravelling of events, is forcibly challenged by an Aboriginal lawman. The natural world is richly observed and Ruby's courtship is measured by the turning of the seasons.

How to access:

Ruby Moonlight can be purchased online from [Magabala Books](#).

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Businesses and organisations
- Schools and early learning services (professional learning)

Jasper Jones: A Novel (2010)

Craig Silvey

Late on a hot summer night in the tail end of 1965, Charlie Bucktin, a precocious and bookish boy of thirteen, is startled by an urgent knock on the window of his sleep-out. His visitor is Jasper Jones, an outcast in the regional mining town of Corrigan. Rebellious, mixed-race and solitary, Jasper is a distant figure of danger and intrigue for Charlie. So when Jasper begs for his help, Charlie eagerly steals into the night by his side, terribly afraid but desperate to impress. In the simmering summer where everything changes, Charlie learns why the truth of things is so hard to know, and even harder to hold in his heart. *Jasper Jones* is about outsiders and secrets, and what it really means to be a hero.

How to access:

Jasper Jones can be purchased from good book shops and online.

Recommended audiences:

- Individuals and friends
- Community groups
- Schools and early learning services (upper secondary students)