Creating inter-cultural spaces for co-learning

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Abstract: Among the many inhibitors to social inclusion and mobility faced by Indigenous peoples in Australia, under-representation of Indigenous students in Higher Education has long featured as a concern for government and human rights advocates. This is due to the attendant lower social indicators than those of the wider Australian society which characterise Indigenous peoples' life experience.

UNESCO's guidelines on inter-cultural education published in 2007 provide some principles for groundwork to develop classrooms which are inclusive but not assimilationist. Models of how this might be done in practice, however, are scarce. In this paper we consider a model for inter-cultural education which uses joint analysis and dialogue surrounding self-representation of Indigenous peoples by Indigenous and non-Indigenous peers to then co-create a new, inter-cultural representation. The 'Daruganora' program involves Indigenous students leading dialogue with non-Indigenous peers and teachers to jointly interpret a purpose-built Indigenous art exhibition. We explain in this paper how spaces created by this dialogue can allow open, honest and respectful interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people relating to Indigenous representations of identity. We argue that Daruganora provides a model for inter-cultural classrooms.

Keywords: Daruganora, inter-cultural, research led learning and teaching.

'Daruganora' is an educational experience program, conducted during 2010-2011 which was designed and implemented by a multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural team at Macquarie University with the aim of developing a model for inter-cultural classrooms.

We say more about inter-cultural classrooms below, but here it is important to stress that our understanding of inter-cultural classrooms is not simply a "place where teachers and students from different nationalities and cultures meet and interact" (Kerdchoochuen, 2010), but a place which needs to be intentionally constructed through careful design by teachers from different cultural backgrounds to facilitate interaction and generation of relationships and knowledge by a group of co-learners

(including teachers as well as students) from different cultural backgrounds. In other words, it is not enough to call a multi-cultural classroom inter-cultural unless productive inter-relationships are facilitated and supported.

Daruganora is centred upon a purpose-built art exhibition showcasing diverse examples of Indigenous artworks by various artists from vastly different geographic areas ranging from the Central Desert region of Australia to the western suburbs of Sydney. These works feature different media including ochre, bark, canvas, paper and acrylic paint and are also from various eras ranging from the early 20th century until the present. The exhibition is designed to represent the diversity of Indigenous identities and their dynamic natures. Daruganora creates spaces for misconceptions to be revealed, explored and revised. We call these spaces 'inter-cultural classrooms'.

This paper presents some of the theoretical foundations, key strategies, and inspirations which have shaped the formation of Daruganora. We argue that through respectful, Indigenous led learning which generates a representation which is jointly produced by Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants, Daruganora provides a model for inter-cultural classrooms.

Why We Need Daruganora

Macquarie University is situated on the traditional Aboriginal Country of Darug people. The word 'Daruganora' is Darug language for Darug land. The choice of title for the program is a highly political one which represents recognition of the prior Indigenous inhabitants of the country and signals an engagement with particular issues around Indigenous identity, culture, representation and land.

Below we present a brief summary of key literature identifying the need to develop new and improved strategies for Indigenous peoples to access and participate in Higher Education in Australia. The ways in which Daruganora has been attentive to various issues raised in the literature is outlined as is the structure and activities incorporated into the program design. We then concentrate on the conceptual focus of the program – Indigenous art – as the method for engaging students in exploring the central topics of Indigenous identity, culture and diversity.

Representation and Outreach Programs

> Australia has not provided equal access to all groups from society. People from lower socio-economic backgrounds, those from regional and remote Australia as well as Indigenous Australians are under-represented in Higher Education compared to their incidence in the general population. Improving access and equity in Higher Education for these groups is a difficult task and the solutions that will help to solve this challenge are not immediately obvious. (Bradley et al, 2008:27)

The Australian Government's *Review of Australian Higher Education* (Final Report presented in December 2008 by Bradley et al.) recommended widespread reforms across the Higher Education sector in order to remain globally competitive and continue to contribute to the legal, economic, social and cultural capital and strength of the country. One of the main findings was that significant progress is urgently needed to increase enrolment, retention and degree attainment rates of Indigenous people and people from low socio-economic backgrounds[i]. Little improvement in participation rates of these groups has been made over the last two decades resulting in serious implications for, and detrimental impacts on, social inclusion, social justice and equality. Action by providers is crucial, and "Addressing access, success and retention problems for Indigenous students is a matter of the highest priority" (Bradley et al.,2008:32)[ii].

Research commissioned by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and conducted by Trevor Gale et al. (2009), *Interventions early in school as a means to improve Higher Education outcomes for disadvantaged (particularly low socio-economic) students*, agreed that this long-term under-representation is unacceptable[iii]. The DEEWR project focused on "early interventions by universities in schools, with 'early' defined as pre-Year 11"(Gale et al., 2009B:4), and reviewed literature and evaluated case studies from Australia, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and New Zealand[iv]. It was found that "While much good work has been done in the sector to establish outreach programs, they have largely been focused on Year 11 or 12 students" (38). If the Australian sector is going to be successful in affecting positive change "interventions to redress this inequality need to be implemented earlier rather than later in schooling"(ibid.) and be sustained long-term. The results of case studies undertaken by the DEEWR project stressed the benefits of engaging students earlier than the final two years of schooling because, as Gale (2009A:71) insists:

> it is too late in the last two years of schooling to maximise the effects of an intervention. By then academic achievement patterns are harder to turn around, aspirations are likely to be well established ….

Drawing from current research and literature, the Daruganora team—including members from various disciplines including Indigenous Studies, Education, Museum Studies, Visual Arts, and Anthropology and from various cultural backgrounds including Indigenous, migrant and 'settler'—designed the program to target students in years 8, 9 and 10. The program was aligned with key learning outcomes in the New South Wales Board of Studies Aboriginal Studies Years 7-10 syllabus. The team agreed that the maintenance of academic rigor is essential and concurred with the literature which stressed that such intervention programs must "present opportunities for learning that involve high intellectual challenge, high expectations of students producing high-quality products (artefacts of learning), and high-motivation projects and events" (Gale et al., 2009B:11). Promoting self-esteem, academic self-concept and confidence through rigorous and rewarding learning activities with high expectations positions students as capable and university as attainable (Craven & Marsh, 2004; Craven et al., 2005; Gale et al., 2009).

Daruganora's holistic approach to student engagement aims at honouring and respecting Indigenous cultures and their representations on campus and aims to

increase Indigenous school students' sense that they can belong at university. It is grounded on the conviction that the university is an environment which welcomes and values Indigenous peoples and cultures. Achieving this in an academically rigorous way using the rich resources available within the university, the three-hour Daruganora learning and teaching program introduces students (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to some of the key issues in Indigenous Studies. The program does not give Indigenous students 'special' treatment, but draws on their strengths, thus demonstrating to their peers and teachers the enrichment that inter-cultural exchange of knowledge can foster.

Daruganora prioritises the participation of Indigenous students but it is essential that non-Indigenous students also participate. Gale et al. (2009:6) argue that a key element for outreach programs that aim to address inequality is that they engage beyond the isolated individual and involve the students' peers by being cohort-based, thereby engaging whole classes of students rather than one group or another.

It is vital for effective engagement in Daruganora that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and their teachers participate together. The program's theoretical framework allows for Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge to be equally acknowledged, respected and shared between students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

In addition to the important need to recognise and incorporate the values that students (and teachers) from different backgrounds and situations bring to formal education, other key findings from Gale et al.'s (2009:6) research which identified elements constituting successful outreach programs included "Building Confidence" through methods of "Communication and information", and "Familiarisation/site experiences". It is important to provide students with information about university life via a variety of modes, including the opportunity to visit campuses to gain an understanding of what it means to be a student in that context. Thus, one of the program's key goals was to support Macquarie University to become a more welcoming and inclusive culture for under-represented students, increasing their sense of belonging and engagement through research-led outreach activities involving interaction with university staff, university students, the campus environment, and the university's Indigenous art collection.

Macquarie University undergraduate Indigenous Studies students have been a crucial element in the success of the program by acting as research facilitators and mentors. These Indigenous and non-Indigenous university students are essential for relating to school students on a more familiar and less intimidating student-to-student level. As well as modelling inclusive social behaviour, the assisting Macquarie University students invariably provide advice and information about attending university to the visiting school students. It has been evident, from observing interactions during the program, that the established research activities are interspersed with discussions about degree opportunities, students' ambitions, subject diversity, transport issues, extra-curricular activities, teachers and timetables. Participation in Daruganora evidently addresses some misconceptions about university and being a university student thereby alleviating some important anxieties and doubts. School students can start to familiarise themselves with the university and what it means to be a student in this context.

The Program

Daruganora is structured into three different activities. The first activity is a half-hour multi-media lecture which introduces Aboriginal art and identity as areas of inquiry. Students are shown a short film clip featuring the diversity of Indigenous Australian identity, a PowerPoint presentation, and overheads with different examples of Aboriginal artworks. Program staff gradually introduce students to the lexicon for talking about and identifying different aspects and ideas within art.

During the lecture students are introduced to the fundamental ideas of research and ethics. Research is presented as something in which we are all engaged in our everyday lives. We all ask questions, seek opinions, gather information from various sources, find solutions by weighing up different options, and make informed choices. In this way research is demystified and made less intimidating for students. Students are presented with two research questions they explore during the course of the program:

- Why is art important to Aboriginal culture?
- What does Aboriginal art tell us about the identities of Aboriginal peoples?

The lecture is deliberately convened in a tiered lecture theatre with material delivered in multi-media to show-case the wide variety of learning modes available at university, but also to highlight to students that university is different to school and that it offers opportunities to learn in ways that may not be offered at school.

The program always begins with a short video clip presented in the darkened theatre which is reminiscent of a cinema. This seems to calm the students who are inevitably excited and restless when they first enter the theatre. Students are then involved in various inter-active learning and teaching strategies such as 'think, pair, share' where they are asked a question relating to a key concept from the video clip, given a few moments to think about the answer, share it with the person next to them, and then report it back to the whole group.

The key concepts embedded in the video are ones which have been chosen because of their familiarity to Indigenous students. They are thus advantaged in being able to know the answer to the question, and even if they do not voice their response at this early stage in the program, their confidence that they are on familiar intellectual territory is boosted.

As it happens, often Indigenous students are some of the first to speak at this stage of the program surprising their teachers and peers who have often reported never having heard particular individuals ever speak in class at school.

Following the lecture the students are divided into smaller groups, led by program staff, school teachers and, importantly, the undergraduate Macquarie University Indigenous Studies students to whom we previously referred. The groups embark on a research adventure around the Macquarie University campus which is richly endowed with Indigenous signs, symbols and representations including sculpture, other art works, plants and animals. This stage of the program also includes a guided tour of

the artworks in the exhibition further exploring diverse artistic techniques, modes of expression, changing styles, and narratives. Leading questions engage and encourage students to share their own interpretations of the art works, how they think they were made, what they convey to the viewer. Hands start shooting up as questions are asked, with students eager to express their ideas. Following the tour, students are divided into smaller groups (of 3 to 5 students), each group is given a question sheet and a specific artwork to probe. Program staff 'float' between groups to facilitate discussion as required, but invariably students are not short of thoughts to discuss in answering the questions together. As everyone joins together for student groups to present their answers, the levels of animation and liveliness are in clear contrast to the hesitance shown in the opening lecture activities. Students often express disappointment when time runs short and not all groups are able to contribute their answers.

Finally, the small groups join together in a large classroom to disseminate their learning amongst all participants. Students are evenly divided among six tables, with a Macquarie University undergraduate student as a 'scribe' at each. They brainstorm answers to the research questions, after which they all participate to disseminate ideas and demonstrate complex understandings. This activity is called a 'World Café' (Brown and Issacs, 2005). It is a team-based, generative research dissemination strategy which visually produces an expression (on posters and a whiteboard) of the dialogue generated by the whole group of culturally diverse students.

No matter how often we have witnessed this part of the program, it is always inspirational to us. Without exception Indigenous students have 'stolen the show'. Their voices dominate. Their superior knowledge and visual literacy in relation to the material is evident and their non-Indigenous peers and teachers are often silenced creating a reversal of the social dynamics often experienced by all participants at school.

Inter-cultural Education

According to the UNESCO Guidelines on Inter-cultural Education (UNESCO 2007: 17), inter-culturality is a changing concept relating to the varied nature of society. It presupposes multiculturalism and is a result of dialogue, exchange and inter-communication between groups at the local, regional, national or international levels (ibid.). It is especially supported by education programs that encourage dialogue between students of different cultural backgrounds including religious, linguistic and belief systems (UNESCO, 2007:8). Inter-cultural education, using the UNESCO framework, is set within a perspective as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948, art. 26.2):

> Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

UNESCO's framework for inter-cultural education is one which involves multi-perspective approaches to knowledge, learning and teaching, as well as recognition and respect for different views on religion, culture, language and the world in general. It is inclusive, but not absorbing or assimilating.

Set against the UNESCO framework is Noam Chomsky's (2010) critique of Western education arguing that education 'kills culture' for minority groups. UNESCO (1995:57) define the term 'minority' to mean:

> Four different categories of groups: (1) autochthonous or indigenous peoples, whose line of descent can be traced to the aboriginal inhabitants of the country … (2) territorial minorities, groups with a long cultural tradition … (3) non-territorial minorities or nomads, groups with no particular attachment to a territory … (4) immigrants …

Education systems which can be characterised as 'non inter-cultural', that is, ones which are imposed on minority peoples by majority populations with different and dominant cultural ideologies, clearly can and do have devastating effects on the experience, self-esteem, success, retention and ultimately the ability of minority peoples to survive and thrive in the world. Minority peoples, as Chomsky (2010:23) argues, are often faced with the choice of relinquishing their cultures and participating as members of the dominant society, or relinquishing their education and resigning themselves to lives of poverty and non-participation in relation to dominant groups.

UNESCO (2007:32) presents three principles of inter-cultural education which are intentionally embedded in the design of the Daruganora program. They are:

> Principle I: Inter-cultural Education respects the cultural identity of the learner through the provision of culturally appropriate and responsive quality education for all.

> Principle II: Inter-cultural Education provides every learner with the cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to achieve active and full participation in society.

> Principle III: Inter-cultural Education provides all learners with cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills that enable them to contribute to respect, understanding and solidarity among individuals, ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups and nations.

After considering various models of inter-culturality from various disciplines and areas of study including Education (c.f. Onate and Gruber, 2008:373-381), Business Studies (c.f. Johnson, Lenartowicz, and Apud, 2006:530-539) and International Communications (c.f. Fox, 1997:88-100; Min-Sun Kim and Hubbard, 2007), it was film theory that most excited the Daruganora team with some new ideas and models for making the classroom an innovative, open and fun inter-cultural space and also provided us with some tried and true tools for thinking about ways in which more than one culture can be equally and respectfully represented in the same production. Film theorist, Laura Marks (2000:1), in her book *The Skin of the Film*, identifies 'Inter-cultural Cinema' as "an international phenomenon, produced wherever people

of different cultural backgrounds live together in the power-inflected spaces of diaspora, (post- or neo-) colonialism, and cultural apartheid." 'Inter-cultural cinema' is "characterised by experimental styles that attempt to represent the experience of living between two or more cultural regimes of knowledge" and offers "a variety of ways of knowing and representing the world". This 'inter-cultural' theory and practice informed the development of the Daruganora program. By implementing Marks' (2000: 6-7) notion of 'inter-cultural', it:

> … means that a work is not the property of any single culture, but mediates in at least two directions. It accounts for the encounter between different cultural organisations of knowledge, which is one of the sources of … new forms of expression and new kinds of knowledge.

The highly interactive, inter-cultural nature of Daruganora and the relationships of co-learning that it fosters invite students to critically reflect on socially constructed 'reality' and be open to expressing and listening to different interpretations and dissonant voices. Supporting a diversity of understandings and knowledges in inter-cultural classrooms works against the educational homogenisation and standardisation that Chomsky (2010) argues pervades Western education.

A culmination of thoughts and ideas over the period of the viewing time gathers momentum which creates an ideal space for interaction and exchange as participants move through the art exhibition and into the World Café. Stories that define identity and cultures begin to emerge throughout the program, creating inter-cultural spaces where all participants can respectfully exchange ideas, views and opinions. The learning and teaching approach used in the Daruganora program was framed to create a space that might respectfully include the cultural backgrounds of all students and teachers so that they might negotiate understandings about each other and learn together. Inter-cultural representations depend on multiple cultures participating in a single representation, so for Daruganora to be successful, it is crucial to have Indigenous and non-Indigenous students engaging together.

Intricate power relations are always operating in processes of exchange, the formation of knowledges and the construction of 'truth'. The term 'inter-cultural' also faces the problem that it could be interpreted as being a benign neutralisation of political struggles. As it is played out during the Daruganora program, and as Marks theorises it, 'inter-culturality' can involve a dynamic shift in power relations between the dominant cultural group and the minority group which acknowledges that power and control are contextual and are never static. Inter-cultural interfaces expose and revalue the interactive and creative effects of multi-vocal discourses as fundamental to cultural innovation (Crinson, 2006).

In a supported learning environment students are enabled to effectively communicate their knowledge, sharing their ideas and stories. Students become the teachers and teachers become co-learners. Students generate their own learning and disseminate it to each other. The 'World Café' provides a practical way for the school students to demonstrate their abilities to reflect on and disseminate their research findings. All who participate in the Daruganora project become part of the group of learners, learning from each other, to increase their knowledge and understandings of each other as well as themselves to challenge previously-held views. This general approach

of privileging learning over teaching, becoming co-learners with our students and recognising the knowledge and often superior visual literacy of Indigenous students has often meant that teachers have seen their students in a totally new light. Students express interesting and often astounding insights, thoughts, deep reflections, and share these with the group. An attentiveness to and respect for diversity, an openness to dialogue, a willingness to learn from others, and recognition of the enhancement that diverse groups of people bring to the learning experience results in successful and meaningful inter-cultural relations (Deifelt, 2007).

A Transformative Exhibition

Aboriginal art is the conceptual focus of the program and the means through which Daruganora engages students in thinking about important issues including Indigenous identity, diversity, culture, belonging and respect. As we mentioned in the introduction to this article, to successfully address and creatively engage students with these topics, an Indigenous art exhibition was specifically designed, curated and installed. The expertise of Daruganora team members and Macquarie University's senior art curator were utilised to develop the permanent art display. Works in the exhibition were specifically selected from the university's extensive collection to illuminate the diversity of Indigenous cultures and identities. According to Hooper-Greenhill (1999A:4), advancements in museum practice have meant re-evaluations of their learning and teaching role, whereby:

> [c]urrent emphasis within museums on access, on public value and on audience consultation, offer opportunities to work to address long-established relations of advantage and disadvantage, to enable new voices to be heard, and critically to review existing historical (and other) narratives.

The art exhibition for Daruganora steered away from the traditional gallery environment and was instead installed within a faculty building placing the exhibition in the halls of an everyday learning and teaching building. Seating areas, stairwells, classrooms, offices, a café, students and staff moving around the campus create a busy, dynamic and vibrant setting for the art. The art installation was curated to transform the space so that the art experience is not viewed as a separate entity, but becomes integral to our daily working and learning spaces and becomes a space which "emphasises the nexus between art, space, place and people" (Everett et al., 2010:73-74).

Conversations introduced during Daruganora stimulate interest, demonstrate relevance and invite the students to use existing information and experiences. Lord (2007:17) argues that, "A successful museum exhibition is one that offers a transformative learning experience, sparking a new interest or appreciation that was not there before". The innovative and creative design of the art exhibition for the Daruganora program additionally incorporated this heightened interest and appreciation into the life of the university.

An exhibition tour led by a guide assists students in understanding and interpreting the various meanings of the works. In examining and discussing styles, techniques and associated stories, including biographical stories of Indigenous students themselves in relation to the art, they illustrate views of life and conceptions of the works. Students are not left to flounder with a bewildering array of starting points for contemplating the 'meaning' of the artworks, but are guided by questions and ideas for group analysis as well as by insights and evaluations by Indigenous students which help to direct the inquiry process and build confidence. All the images (including sculptures and canvases, as well as reproduced artwork shown through digital media) are incorporated into a strategy for engagement, thus helping to facilitate a space for inter-cultural dialogue and the generation of stories about the diversity of Indigenous peoples. Images are a catalyst for discussions and fun.

Exploding Misconceptions

Daruganora is designed to challenge the category of 'Aboriginal' and understandings about who Aboriginal people are, where they come from and how they represent themselves (as opposed to how they are represented by non-Indigenous people). The dominant Australian discourse continues to perpetuate a unified Aboriginal culture and makes judgments about what is and is not 'authentic'. Little consideration is given to varied and contrary ways of being Indigenous and relating to the category of 'Aboriginal' (Cowlishaw, 2008). Wanda Deifelt (2007:116) discusses Gilles Deleuze's critique on

> … the tendency, particularly in Western philosophy, to prioritise unity over multiplicity (the one over the many) and sameness over difference. The search for the abstract "essences" of things falsifies the nature of experience, which consists of multiplicities rather than unities.

Visiting Macquarie University in the middle of Sydney - a major urban centre - and seeing Indigenous art from all over the country and from local Darug people provides students with the tools with which they can challenge their own understandings and explode misconceptions about Indigenous culture and identity. Expressing and demonstrating the diversity of Indigenous peoples via Indigenous art—itself a self-expression of Indigenous identity—challenges the belief that Aboriginal peoples and Indigeneity are a single category. The non-Indigenous students' openness and receptiveness to the artworks and to their Indigenous peers' interpretations of the artworks allow them to revise conceptions and misconceptions about Aboriginal peoples and cultures. It also enables Indigenous students to re-evaluate their own relationships with knowledge, learning and institutions and to reassess their sense of belonging in places of learning.

Students are also introduced to the notion that all artworks, and all Aboriginal artworks, in some way and to different degrees of explicitness, make political, social and cultural statements. In the contemporary Australian context all Aboriginal artwork is necessarily highly politicised because it makes explicit claims to land, belonging, identity and history. As Coleman (2009:2) argues:

> Not only does the Aboriginal arts movement challenge the legitimacy of Australia's sovereignty through its legal claim to and spiritual connection with the land, but it challenges broader historical and art historical myths – the inevitability of the demise of Aboriginal cultures, and artistic myths about the 'universality' of art.

The Daruganora program demonstrates and analyses the ways in which Aboriginal art is created using different materials, for different purposes, with different intentions, in different locations, and across different time periods. The realisation of these dynamics unsettle participants' understandings about categories of 'Indigenous', as well as 'non-Indigenous', sameness and otherness, 'us' and 'them'. In dominant Australian discourse Indigenous and non-Indigenous are habitually presented as two internally homogenous and bounded identities. This represents a common perception of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples as clearly divided groups with clearly different experiences.

We do need to acknowledge the divide that many individuals experience due to past violence and continued inequality and discrimination, but we can simultaneously consider that "the lives of many of us are enmeshed in tangled webs of inter-connection" (Rose, 2004:185). This notion of inter-connectedness undermines the division that has become normalised in everyday language and discourses with categories of 'our' (non-Indigenous) own devising, including traditional and modern, rural and urban, full-blood and half-caste (Read, 1999). These dichotomies serve to minimise the ways in which we are connected, interact together, and have mutual commitments and obligations.

By challenging the singular concept of 'Aboriginal' and problematising the entire notion of 'difference', Daruganora implicitly highlights for students the need to reflect on the category of 'non-Indigenous'. As Deifelt (2007:114-115) articulates:

> Ultimately, cultural awareness is not simply about mapping differences and similarities among ethical actors, but it also raises consciousness about our own cultural location.

Challenging the existence of categories, the processes of categorisation, and the false organisation of people into mutually exclusive groups is vital to encourage students to re-formulate understandings of identity and culture. By asking Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to reflect on their own lives and their own experiences assists them to identify the 'un-truths' in these constructions and enhances respectful inter-cultural interaction.

Conclusion

The 'shared space' of inter-cultural interaction and learning which takes place during Daruganora is facilitated through images that engage students' imaginations, encourage dissonant voices and generate narratives. Deeper understandings about the diverse perspectives and practices of Aboriginal cultures and identities facilitate more

than mere 'tolerance of the other', they involve and inform new modes of expression and respectful exchanges. Challenging understandings that cultures are tightly bounded and homogenous groups with one social 'reality' and 'truth' allows for the incorporation of alternative stories and experiences, new possibilities for reflexivity, and opportunities for co-learning. This approach of encouraging inter-cultural engagement in a creative learning atmosphere actively challenges the smothering of culturally diverse ways of learning and knowing within Western education.

Film theory (intercultural cinema) and museum practice have been valuable in informing the design of Daruganora. Inter-cultural engagement is always inflected with different levels of power. Daruganora promotes interpretation, imagination and creativity that is vital in breaking down barriers and forming new possibilities for respectful inter-cultural relations.

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[i] We acknowledge the term 'low socio-economic' is problematic. However we employ it here with the awareness that there is, as yet, no commonly-accepted alternative and it therefore remains the most accessible term for readers to engage with the topics and situation it implies. Recommendation 3 in the Bradley et al. (2008) *Review of Australian Higher Education* states: "That the Australian Government commission work on the measurement of the socio-economic status of students in Higher Education with a view to moving from the current postcode methodology to one based on the individual circumstances of each student."(xvii).

[ii] It is important to note that Indigenous peoples are highly represented in 'low socio-economic' groups.

[iii] Bradley et al. (2008:xiv) recommended a re-allocation of institutional funding to increase that "directed to the support of outreach activities in communities with poor Higher Education participation rates."

[iv] Gale et al. (2009B) developed a Design and Evaluation Matrix for Outreach (DEMO) to support universities in the creation and implementation of interventions by identifying key characteristics, strategies and equity perspectives.

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