

TELLING IT LIKE IT IS:

ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES ON RACE AND RACE RELATIONS*



The unevenness of race relations has meant Aboriginal perspectives on race relations are not well known. This is an obstacle for reconciliation, which by definition, must be a reciprocal process. It is especially problematic in regions with substantial Aboriginal populations, where Indigenous visibility makes race relations a matter of everyday experience and discussion. There has been considerable research on how settler Australians view Aboriginal people, but little is known about how Aboriginal people view settler Australians or mainstream institutions.

Telling It Like It Is: Aboriginal Perspectives On Race And Race Relations is a 3-year Australian Research Council funded Linkage project undertaken by Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation (LNAC), the University of Tasmania, and the University of Sydney. It aims to turn the lens by asking a wide diversity of Aboriginal people to tell their views on race and race relations. The aim is to provide an evidence base for attitudinal change, to develop new strategies for racial harmony, and to improve the way services are provided to Aboriginal people.../cont.

THE RESEARCH TEAM

The investigators on the project are Associate Professor Daphne Habibis¹ (lead researcher), Penny Taylor², Professor Maggie Walter¹, and Associate Professor Calriona Elder³.

Alex di Georgio is a PhD student on the project. The fieldwork team comprised Kellie Pollard, Joel McLennan, Baden Adkins, Christine Rowan, Genaya Williams, Matt Heffernan, Dede Quall, Pauline Baban, and Will Crawford.

The project was instigated and advised by Ilana Eldridge former CEO of Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation.

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Telling It Like It Is: Aboriginal Perspectives on Race And Race Relations collected data from nearly 200 in-depth interviews with 44 respondents from a cross-section of Darwin's Aboriginal residents and visitors, a survey of 474 Aboriginal people living in, or regularly visiting, Darwin (matched to the socio-demographic profile of Darwin's Indigenous population based on the 2011 Census of Population and Housing), and a community Facebook page.

The study asked these respondents:

- how they view the relationship between themselves and settler Australians
- their perceptions of settler Australian politics, values, priorities and lifestyles
- their views on arrangements for governance in Australia
- what can be done to improve race relations between the Aboriginal population and settler Australians.

Some of the findings from our early analysis are provided in the pages that follow. In presenting these findings we would like to thank the many people who helped make this project possible, including the members of our Advisory Group, and especially our respondents who agreed to share their views, and the many contributors to the Facebook community page. We also thank the Law Society Public Purposes Trust and Telstra for their generous support of the project.



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INTERVIEW FACT SHEET 1

LIVING IN DARWIN

Respondents described Darwin as a pot of different ethnic groups, but one that isn't melting. They expressed concern at how rapidly Darwin is changing. There are already few spaces where Aboriginal people can be themselves without feeling judged or controlled and the influx of people has increased segregation and tensions. Respondents felt there should be more Aboriginal control and involvement in decisions about the city. This was especially the view of respondents who identified as Larrakia people. As descendants of the traditional owners of the Greater Darwin area, they felt their right to a say in the city's future was not adequately recognised.

“They do a lot of things wrong, the non-Indigenous, and the greatest wrong (is) not acknowledging the Larrakia people.”

“All that stuff that we're supposed to be doing. We're trying to do it but it's 'after'—after work or after the footy or you know. We're trying to cram, squeeze in our culture. We can't...do it, we can't.”

“Yeah so we have these jokes all the time that we step out of our house and we're white...we're restricted...we feel like we're in a straitjacket.”

“A lot of people act stupid. A lot of people act aggro people, especially whites. They don't like our colour. They're racist people. We don't talk to them any more. We just stay on our home. We don't bother about them. They want to be them kind of person, we don't care.”

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INTERVIEW FACT SHEET 2

WHITE VALUES OF INDIVIDUALISM AND MATERIALISM ARE PROBLEMATIC

Many respondents admired white Australians for some of their values, including goal setting, education, hard work and self-discipline. However, white values of individualism and materialism were perceived as problematic and damaging for people and communities. There was a strong theme that pressure to be materially successful came at the expense of connection to family and resulted in loneliness and high levels of stress. It made people selfish, and reluctant to share in the face of need. They saw white people as valuing having a smart car or home more than they valued looking after family and friends.

Some respondents described being tired of being judged for not buying into the consumer culture, or because they put family ahead of work or saving money. Many contrasted their appreciation of a more moderately paced lifestyle with the constant demands of white ways. They valued their freedom to be who they are, and not to be controlled by white rules that required them to become a different person. The individualism of white Australian culture was perceived as rewarding self-promoting and self-serving behaviour. In white culture, it is culturally acceptable to put yourself first, even when it is not fair or right to do so. For this reason, some respondents said engaging with white Australians could be stressful and they had difficulty trusting them.

“White people...they are like a slave, you know, to their work.”

“White people stress to the point where they are like [need] medications to calm themselves down.”

“I still think there's a feeling of loss there and disconnection....On the surface you're happy with this money and this car and this house, but, yeah, I don't think so.”

“But I just don't understand why white people buy their homes, renovate it, get expensive stuff and then they're old all of a sudden, you know.”

“People give up their family, they feel sad, they get homesick but they get a nice house.”



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INTERVIEW FACT SHEET 3

LIVING IN A NO-WIN WORLD

Respondents described their daily experience as one of loss, where the odds are stacked against them, no matter what they do. They have already lost their land, and have to deal with the legacy and the damage caused by colonisation. Now they face enormous pressure to lose their culture. They fight to hang onto the things that are important to them but it feels like they never have a fair go or a chance to put their view in a way that will be respected.

If they want to be successful they have to conform to the demands of white culture and sacrifice the things that make them who they are - family, culture, language and law. This is an impossible, unfair trade-off. Family provides safety, security, comfort, knowledge and a place where you can be yourself. If they stay true to who they are the chance of success in a white world is limited. Working hard is good, but you only succeed if you're white. If you're Aboriginal the trade-off only buys entry to the lower rungs of white society. Employers stereotype Aboriginal people as unreliable and there's a lot of discrimination. Respondents described going for jobs but no one calls back, or being recruited to meet Indigenous employment targets with no commitment from employers to providing long term or meaningful employment.

“It always defaults to the expectation that that Aboriginal person must lose, give up that value, that expectation to attend that funeral. That's what it defaults to: the Aboriginal person must lose that value. [But] you can't just lose that value.”

“Daily I'm juggling with who I am...how I talk, how I act and look and whatever. So you get it from the whitefellas, you know, that you can't talk good English, and then these blackfellas, 'Why are you acting white, talking white?'”

“We're fighting, fighting all the time and none of us mob are winning. Our old mob are dead and gone, the mob that used to fight for our rights, you know. You get asked 'Where's the fair go?' There is no more fair go.”

“It's very hard to work in Darwin because of rejection and refusals.”

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INTERVIEW FACT SHEET 4

BEING MADE TO FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN WHITE SPACES

Almost all respondents described how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people occupy different spatial and social worlds. Different values and cultures make mixing difficult. Respondents said they were most comfortable in spaces that are predominantly Aboriginal, where they can be themselves and feel safe. Outside of these spaces they reported not feeling safe to express opinions or to relax and behave freely and unselfconsciously. A lack of physical and emotional safety was associated with being the only Aboriginal person in a public place or gathering. Many Aboriginal people feel watched, judged or patronised when out in public. There were many accounts of feeling uncomfortable in places such as restaurants and shopping malls because of being made to feel like they're different and don't belong there. For example, being stared at and followed round by security guards. There was a sense of constantly having to watch how to behave to meet white expectations. These demands make mixing socially with white people difficult.

"I don't feel comfortable going to a restaurant, going to the shopping centre... I'm just scared of them staring at us."

"When I go out I just want to go to that place and come straight back without any hassles...It's how people are raised you know...to be against Indigenous mob."

"Well like me I will be like walking around barefoot into the shopping centre here for instance you know and then people will be looking at me differently, like 'Why doesn't he have any shoes on', you know? Stuff like that. That's why I feel uncomfortable talking to people. They look at me differently— like I am different."

"You know 'you live this, we live this way and you can't live that way' because people want to sit under a tree, sit down on the ground or sit down at a shopping centre and eat outside of the shopping centre on the ground. Why is it not acceptable to do that?"

"A lot of the times when I'm in a group and they're discussing things and it's that funny and I find myself not laughing and they're laughing - what am I missing here? That kind of stuff. That's why Yolngu don't feel like doing this with Balanda."

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INTERVIEW FACT SHEET 5

ABORIGINAL PEOPLE KNOW WHO THEY ARE AND WHERE THEY COME FROM

Respondents saw white people as rich in material things, but Aboriginal people are rich in family and culture. They know who they are and where they come from. They pointed out that Aboriginal culture is thousands of years old and is unchanging. Aboriginal people know what their values are, who and what is important and what their relationship is to other Aboriginal people. They see white people know none of these things. They have to make it up as they go and this makes them unhappy, disconnected, hypocritical, selfish and lonely. Many respondents described white people as unable to face the reality of their history in Australia. White culture encourages people to be image conscious, to lack authenticity and hide emotions and personal problems. Because it leads to insincere exchanges it makes white people hard to connect with.

“The white man gets power from whatever they get their power from - bling, bling, I don't know - money, or whatever it is. We get our power from knowing we are connected. ...knowing who your family is, who your background is, got the country, how you're connected, what your totem is, your dreaming is like...it's so wonderful, but there's this other culture that says no, that's not power. Bling, bling, diamonds, flash car, big house - that's power...But that power comes at a cost.”

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INTERVIEW FACT SHEET 6

VIEWS ON THE LEGAL SYSTEM

The criminal justice system and the child protection system were the two areas of law that respondents wanted to discuss. There was a strong view that the criminal justice system is deeply racist. Policing was intensely criticised as operating under 'two laws' – one for non-Aboriginal citizens and one for Aboriginal citizens. Although most respondents agreed that when they did something wrong they had deserved to be penalised, they also felt the system was unfairly punitive. It did nothing to address the underlying causes of offending.

Child protection law was particularly criticised as a form of control and punishment for parents rather than for the protection of children. Misunderstandings and miscommunications were described as common place, some with significant consequences. The authority of state law was questioned for being arbitrary and constantly changing, and because Aboriginal people had never ceded sovereignty.

“That's the law you've got to understand. It's not from Aboriginal that's put that law there, it from the white man. But that white man he's got to listen to our law too.”

“It doesn't even work. Like I said, they come back and do the same thing over and over.”

“White people, they got law, but every year they bloody change it... and they stuff us mob up.”

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INTERVIEW FACT SHEET 7

VIEWS ON THE RELATIONSHIP WITH NON-ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Many respondents were reluctant to talk about how they saw non-Aboriginal people because they don't want to stereotype them. Many expressed a reluctance to distinguish between their Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal friends and family, were uninterested in engaging with divisive categories and keen to achieve racial harmony. But in general they described a lack of trust as a key feature of the relationship. Non-Aboriginal people don't trust Aboriginal people with responsibility or material items. They only listen if it's a non-Aboriginal person talking. Aboriginal people don't trust non-Aboriginal people because they have broken so many promises in the past, are self-serving and value money and things over land and people.

Racism, discrimination and disrespect was a daily experience. Respondents felt stereotyped, judged, patronised and found wanting. White people think they are better than Aboriginal people and show this in their interactions with them. They are also ignorant of the depth and richness of Aboriginal culture and its strengths. There's no understanding of how well Aboriginal people are doing given what they've had to deal with. Respondents saw talking about the past as a first step for reconciliation but it's misinterpreted as an excuse for any difficulties they have. They said Aboriginal people get told they can't let go of the past, but it's white Australians who won't own it or let go of a false version of events.

Some respondents described positive experiences with non-Aboriginal people, especially those who had grown up with Aboriginal people, or worked with them in Aboriginal communities or Aboriginal organisations. They found many tourists were friendly and appreciative of Aboriginal culture.

"They all stereotype us, you know. And I say to them 'I've paid taxes for 35 years you know. I pay your children's Centrelink too'."

"They say...we're drawn to the past and we can't move on. That's not true, it's them that don't want to move on. They keep saying it didn't happen and...don't want to talk about it...they're denying, just total denial."

"I just need to talk about it, to get it off my chest that's all...maybe I shouldn't talk like this because people get offended...Why can't we all just be friends in this country? Why can't we just all face what happened?"

"My grandmother didn't have a white person's education, my father didn't have a white person's education...and I think that we're doing really, really, really well, considering."

"Because they're just judging the outside and they don't know that I don't drink and I don't do drugs and I don't whatever...I feel sorry for people who think that way. And I know I should be angry, but they need to educate themselves I think."

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INTERVIEW FACT SHEET 8

IMPROVING RACE RELATIONS

For things to improve white people need to make an effort to form a genuine relationship with Aboriginal people that is based on experience and participation in Aboriginal worlds. Rather than Aboriginal people always having to take responsibility for explaining the issues, many respondents believed more white people need to take responsibility to learn more about Aboriginal culture and make more efforts to understand the nature and extent of racism in Australia and their own role in it. They should also spend time with Aboriginal people and on country. Some respondents also said Aboriginal people need to spend time with white people so they learn to understand them better. There should also be more meaningful measures towards reconciliation than have occurred so far.

“The level of racism and prejudice is horrific. Daily accounts of misunderstandings or ignorance. It's real ignorance and a lack of wanting to understand or accept difference.”

“I'm at a point now where I don't bother really I just shut off ...It's like explaining gravity or that the earth is round to a person that believes the earth is flat. You know I'm not going to waste my time with that... It's flipping it back on to me then, it's me that's not engaging nicely enough, it's me who's got the problem rather than the racist moron.”

“Neighbours are supposed to be friendly. They are friendly, but they never come and wait. I'm just here stuck with my family. ...They just keep things to themselves, we keep things to ourselves.”

“The white man and the black one (have) go to come together to talk about all the issues - about Long Grass, about town camps, about communities, you know. What can be done to make it better for these two people to get together, to be together, white one and black one.”

“You know, maybe come along and sit in with all the Aboriginal people, sit in and talk, what's your issue? Don't be afraid of me, I'm not going to do anything bad to him.”

“But it has to start with you. Each parent, each individual person you know... because we all live in Australia and Australia is our home.”

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SURVEY FACT SHEET 9: SOCIAL PROXIMITY



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HOW MUCH ABORIGINAL AND WHITE PEOPLE ARE AROUND EACH OTHER

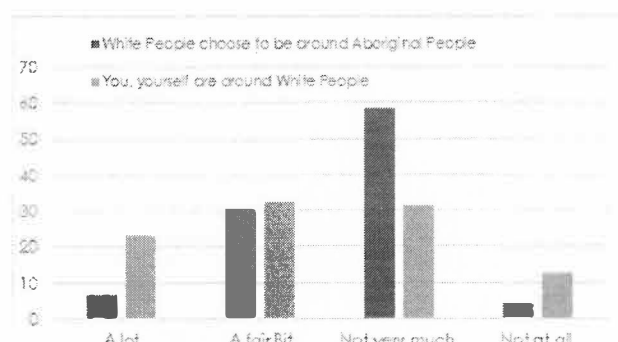


Figure 1: Social Proximity

- More than 60% do not think White people choose to be around Aboriginal people much.
- 45% said they, themselves, are not around White people much.

A small majority of respondents (56%) said they were around White People either a lot or a fair bit. The highest level of interactions for respondents was in shops as customers, at work and as friends (see Figure 2 below). Fifty four percent of respondents said they mixed with White people as friends, but only 21 percent said they had visited a White friend's home in the last 6 months.

There were no statistical differences between the level of White interaction by gender or by age level. Those in employment and those with higher educational levels had higher levels of White interaction.

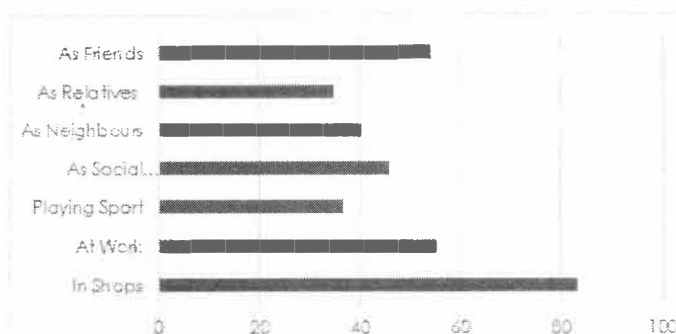


Figure 2: Where Aboriginal people mix with White people 'A lot/A fair bit'

- Just over half say they mix with White people 'A lot' or 'A Fair Bit' as friends.
- Less than half say they mix with White people 'A lot' or 'A Fair Bit' at social events.

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SURVEY FACT SHEET 9: SOCIAL PROXIMITY



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As per Figure 3, there is little difference between men and women on levels of social proximity with White people in Darwin. By age, those in mid years tend to mix more than those aged 18-24. Those aged 55 years and over have the highest nominated level of interaction, possibly in relation to receiving of health and welfare services. The largest differential is by housing tenure. More than three quarters of those owning their own homes recording high levels of interaction. In comparison, less than 20% of those who do not have permanent housing report high levels of interaction with White people.

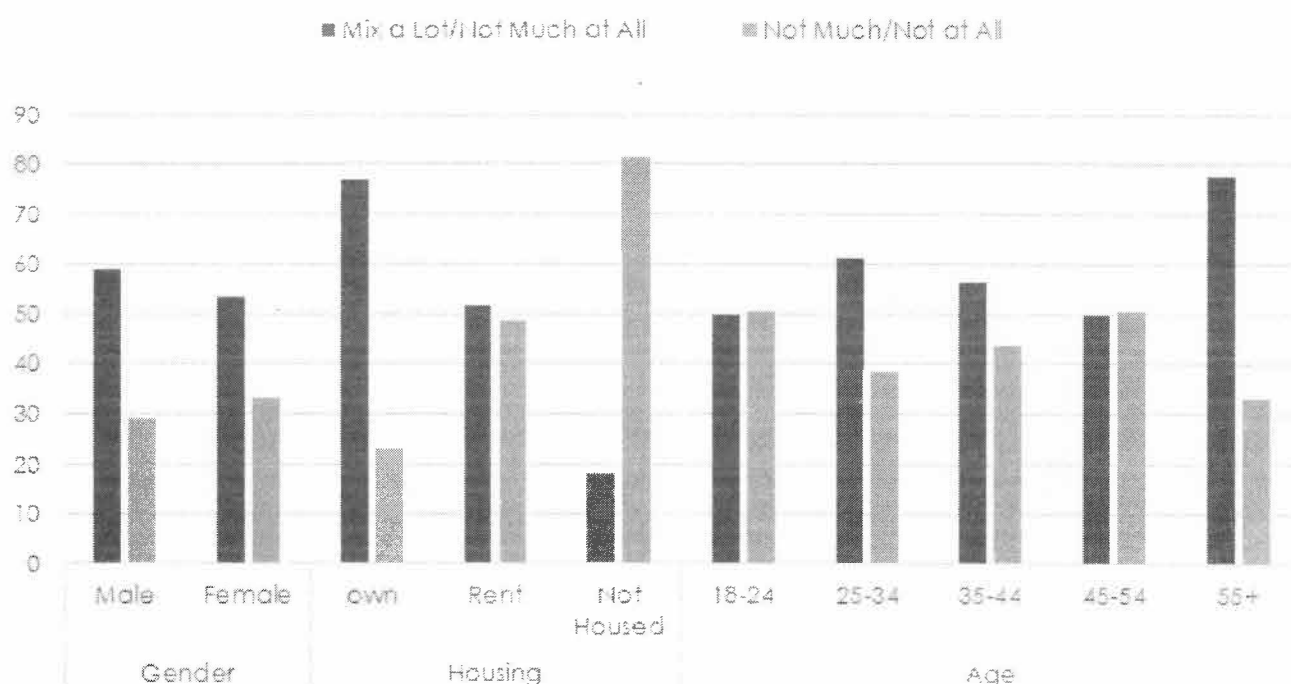


Figure 3: How Much Aboriginalies Mix with White People by Gender, Age and Housing Tenure

- Only 50% of those aged 18-24 say they mix with White people regularly.
- 75% of Aboriginal people over 55 say they mix regularly with White people, the highest of the age cohorts.
- A third of Aboriginal people reported mixing 'Not Much' or 'Not at All' with White people.
- Over 80% of those without permanent housing say they mix 'Not Much' or 'Not at All' with White people.

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HOW RACE RELATIONS ARE PERCEIVED

How do Aboriginal people rate current relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Darwin? As shown in Figure 1, only 25% of survey respondents thought current race relations were 'good' or 'very good'. A similar proportion rated race relations as 'very bad' or 'pretty bad'.

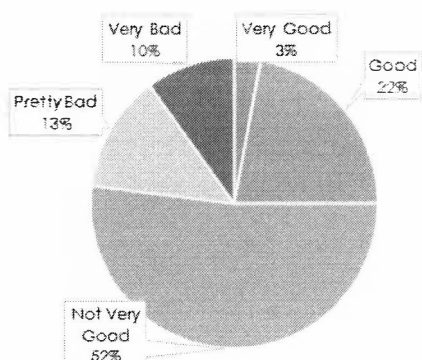


Figure 1: Race Relations Now

- Only one quarter of respondents rate race relations in Darwin as 'good'/'very good'.
- Three quarters rate race relations as not very good or bad.

- Less than 20% think race relations have improved in the last 10 years.
- Over half say race relations are worse now than 10 years ago.

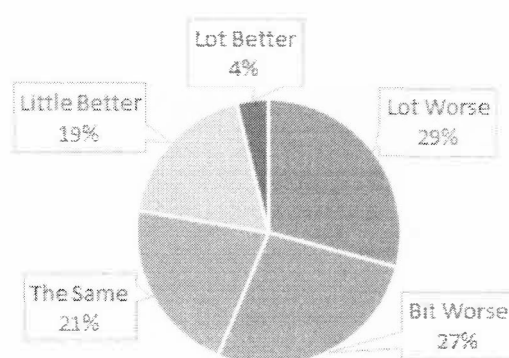


Figure 2: Race Relations Better or Worse in Last 10 Years

When asked whether they thought race relations had improved or worsened over the past 10 years only 23% saw race relations improving during this period. 58% rated race relations as worsening over the last decade and the other 22% thought they were about the same.

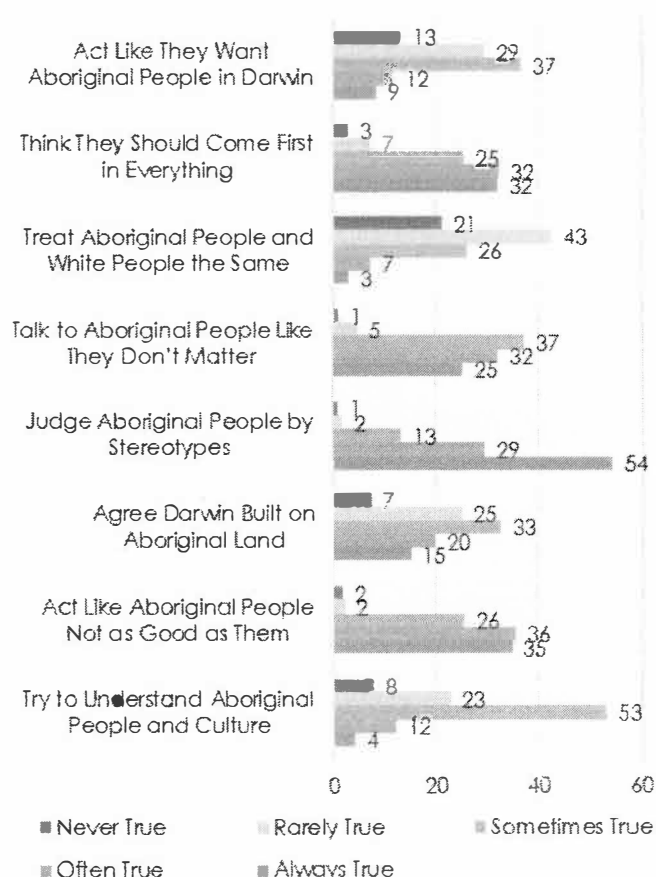


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HOW RACE RELATIONS ARE PERCEIVED TO BE ENACTED

Negative race relation perceptions reported during the qualitative interview stage of the TILII project. To see if these views were reflected more generally among the Aboriginal Darwin population, a set of eight statements were developed. These statements drew asked about the behavior of 'Most White people' within race relations. Respondents were asked to state how true they thought each statement was, selecting from responses of 'Always True', 'Often True', and 'Sometimes True'. The statements were put in both negative and positive formats to avoid response bias. These are detailed in Figure 3.

As shown, the qualitative data do reflect respondents' perceptions of White behavior more generally. Only 6% of respondents thought the statement that most White people treat Aboriginal people like they don't matter was either 'Never True' or 'Rarely True'. And 83% felt most White People judge Aboriginal people be stereotypes to be 'Always True' or 'Often True'.



- Over 50% feel Aboriginal people are not wanted in Darwin, despite many being traditional owners.
- Nearly two thirds say Aboriginal and White people are never or rarely treated the same.

- 94% say Aboriginal people are talked to like they don't matter.
- 96% say White people judge Aborigines by stereotypes.
- Only 16% think White people often or always try to understand Aboriginal culture.

Figure 3: Perceptions of Most White Darwin People's Race Relations Behaviours



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PERCEPTIONS OF RACE RELATIONS IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM

Survey respondents were asked to state how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements on Aboriginal peoples' position in the legal system. As per Figure 1, nearly 80% agreed there was one law for White people and another law for Aboriginal people. 77% disagreed with the statement 'White law looks after what Aboriginal people think is important as much as things that White people think is important'. More than 90% also agreed that 'to keep traditional lore sometimes White law has to be ignored.' However, two thirds also think that White law is needed to keep order.

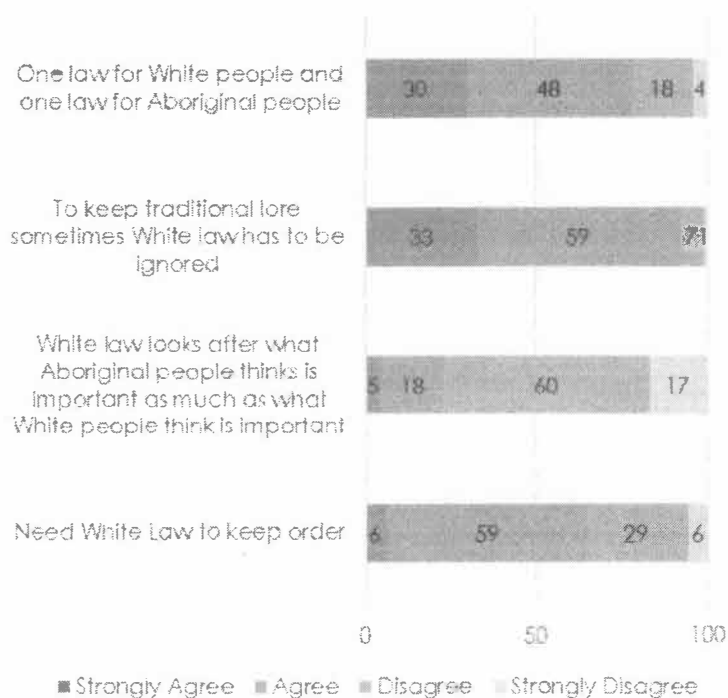


Figure 1: Perceptions of the Legal System

- 78% feel they are treated differently than White people within the law.
- 92% feel that to keep traditional lore, sometimes White law has to be ignored.
- 77% say that White laws look after White peoples' interests over Aboriginal interests.
- Two thirds believe White law is needed to keep order.

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PERCEPTIONS OF RACE RELATIONS IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

Respondents were similarly distrustful of the political system. As per Figure 2, more than 80% disagreed that the political system looks after what they think is important as much as what White people think is important. A similar proportion disagreed that 'politicians pay attention to what Aboriginal people think about Aboriginal issues'. 75% thought voting was a waste of time as nothing changed for Aboriginal people. The suggestion that there be Aboriginal specified seats in the Northern Territory Parliament, however, was overwhelmingly supported by respondents.



- 94% say some seats in the NT parliament should be just for Aboriginal people.
- 80% do not think politicians listen to Aboriginal people about Aboriginal issues.

- 76% feel voting is a waste of time as nothing changes for Aboriginal people.
- Over 80% feel the political system looks after things White people value more than it does what is important to Aboriginal people.

Figure 2: Perceptions of the Political System



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Negative racialised interactions (interpersonal racism) cause more than hurt feelings. They are linked to poorer health, educational outcomes and psychological distress. Interpersonal racism experiences accumulate, resulting in ongoing concern/worry often leading to an avoidance of public spaces.

The TILII survey looks at three types of negative racial interactions: disrespect, discrimination and alienation. Respondents were asked how often in the last 6 months they had felt disrespected; treated unfairly and found it hard to go anywhere without being judged, because they were Aboriginal. Response items were 'A Lot', 'Sometimes', 'Hardly Ever', and 'Not at All'. As per Figure 1 interpersonal racism is an everyday experience for Darwin Aboriginal residents. More than 70% reported feeling disrespected; 70% felt they were treated unfairly; and 56% felt judged 'a lot' or 'sometimes' in the last six months.

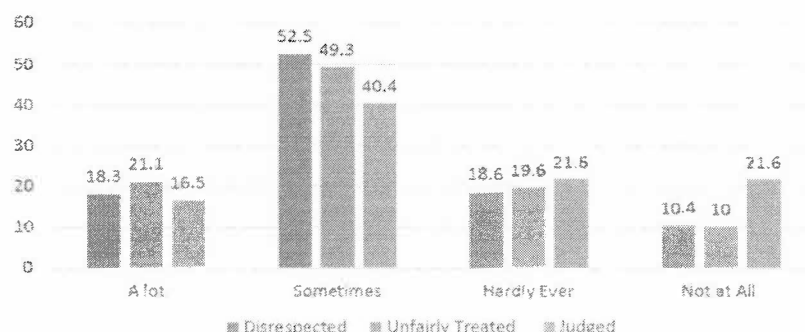


Figure 1: Frequency of Negative Racialised Interactions

- Over 70% felt they were disrespected 'A Lot' or 'Sometimes' in the last 6 months.
- Over 70% felt they were unfairly treated 'A Lot' or 'Sometimes' in the last 6 months.

Those reporting a disrespect or discriminatory event also said how they responded. As per Table 1, mostly they tried to correct the person, followed by just walking away. Almost an equal group report getting angry or feeling upset. Only 13 percent reported complaining to someone about their treatment.

Response	Disrespected (n=333) %	Treated Unfairly (n=330) %
Tried to Correct the Person	30.6	25.8
Got Angry with the Person	12.9	13.3
Complained to Someone	7.8	9.7
Felt Upset	12.0	14.5
Just Walked Away	23.7	23.3
It Didn't Bother Me	12.9	13.3

Table 1: Response to being disrespected or treated unfairly

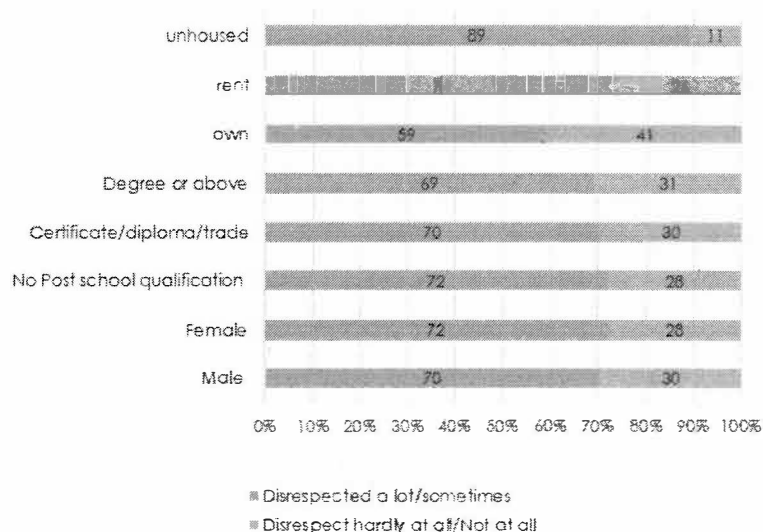
Most people who complained said they complained to a manager or superior. This suggests most experiences occur in public settings.



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INTERPERSONAL RACISM BY SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC STATUS

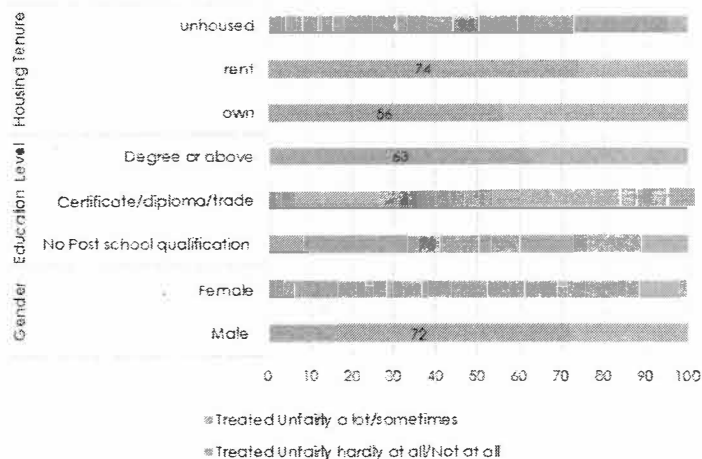
Do socio-economic factors affect the likelihood that a person will experience interpersonal racism? As shown Figure 2, neither gender, nor education level affected the likelihood of feeling disrespected. Male and female respondents and those across educational levels all recorded similar rates of experiences of disrespect in the last six months. Differences are observed by housing tenure with homeowners statistically less likely to report feeling disrespect 'a lot' or 'sometimes' over the last six months and those without permanent housing being much more likely to report experiences of disrespect.



- Around 90% of those without housing felt they were disrespected 'a lot'/'sometimes'.
- Almost 70% of those with a university degree or above report feeling disrespected 'a lot'/'sometimes'.

Figure 2: Level of Feeling Disrespected by Socio-Demographic Status

Figure 3 below, reports on levels of feeling treated unfairly in the last six months. There are differences by gender or level of education but these are not statistically significant. Housing tenure retains its status as a predictor of experiences of feeling treated unfairly. As shown, around 95% of those not housed reported that they felt they had been treated unfairly 'a lot' or 'sometimes' in the last six months.



- 95% of unhoused respondents reported being treated unfairly 'a lot'/'sometimes' in the last 6 months.
- 63% of those with a degree or above reported being treated unfairly 'a lot'/'sometimes' in the last 6 months.

Figure 3: Level of Feeling Treated Unfairly by Socio-Demographic Status

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The Telling It Like It Is (TILII) Darwin Survey is part of the wider Telling It Like It Is research project. Researchers from the University of Tasmania and the University of Sydney, in partnership with Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation, conducted the TILII project. A central aim was to research Aboriginal views on race relations in Darwin. The survey was conducted in October/November 2015 by a team of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal interviewers with a sample of Aboriginal people residing in the Darwin area. The sample (n=474) were selected to match the socio-demographic profile of the adult (18 years and above) Indigenous population of Darwin as reflected in 2011 Census of Population and Housing data.

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW RACE RELATIONS MIGHT BE IMPROVED

In the qualitative phase of the Telling It Like It Is project, interviewees nominated how race relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Darwin might be improved. The most common suggestions were included in the survey and respondents rated each by how much they thought each might help. In Table 1, the top 12 rated suggestions are listed by level of support.

Measure	Help a Lot %	Help Little/ Not at All %
More Aboriginal people got into positions of power	82.9	17.1
There were better ways of helping Aboriginal homeless people in Darwin	82.0	18.0
More good news stories about Aboriginal people in the Media	78.1	21.9
Aboriginal culture more celebrated i.e. Aboriginal Cultural Centre	76.5	23.5
More places in Darwin that Aboriginal people feel are theirs	73.3	26.7
White people being more willing to talk about the poor treatment of Aboriginal people	66.8	33.2
More effort to bring Aboriginal people and White people together to talk about the relationship	63.6	36.4
Aboriginal people and White people trusted each other more	59.7	40.3
White people spent more time with Aboriginal people	58.5	41.5
Information on how to behave with Aboriginal people was more widely available	55.5	44.5
White people need a qualification like a diploma to work with Aboriginal people	55.7	44.3
Some Aboriginal people behave better in public (e.g. fighting or drinking)	43.6	56.4

- 83% say more Aborigines in positions of power would improve race relations.
- 82% say better ways of helping homeless people in Darwin needed.
- 76% say Aboriginal culture needs to be celebrated more.
- 78% say more good news media stories about Aboriginal people would improve race relations.

Table 1: Rating of Suggestions on Improving Race Relations

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HOW HARD ARE PEOPLE TRYING TO IMPROVE RACE RELATIONS?

Respondents also rated how hard they thought White people and Aboriginal people were trying to improve race relations. The rating scale was 1-10, with 1 equaling 'Not trying at all' and 10 equaling 'Trying very hard'. Respondents rated both groups across the scale, as per Figure 1, but overall Aboriginal people were rated as trying harder to improve race relations (mean = 7.0) than White people (mean = 4.4).

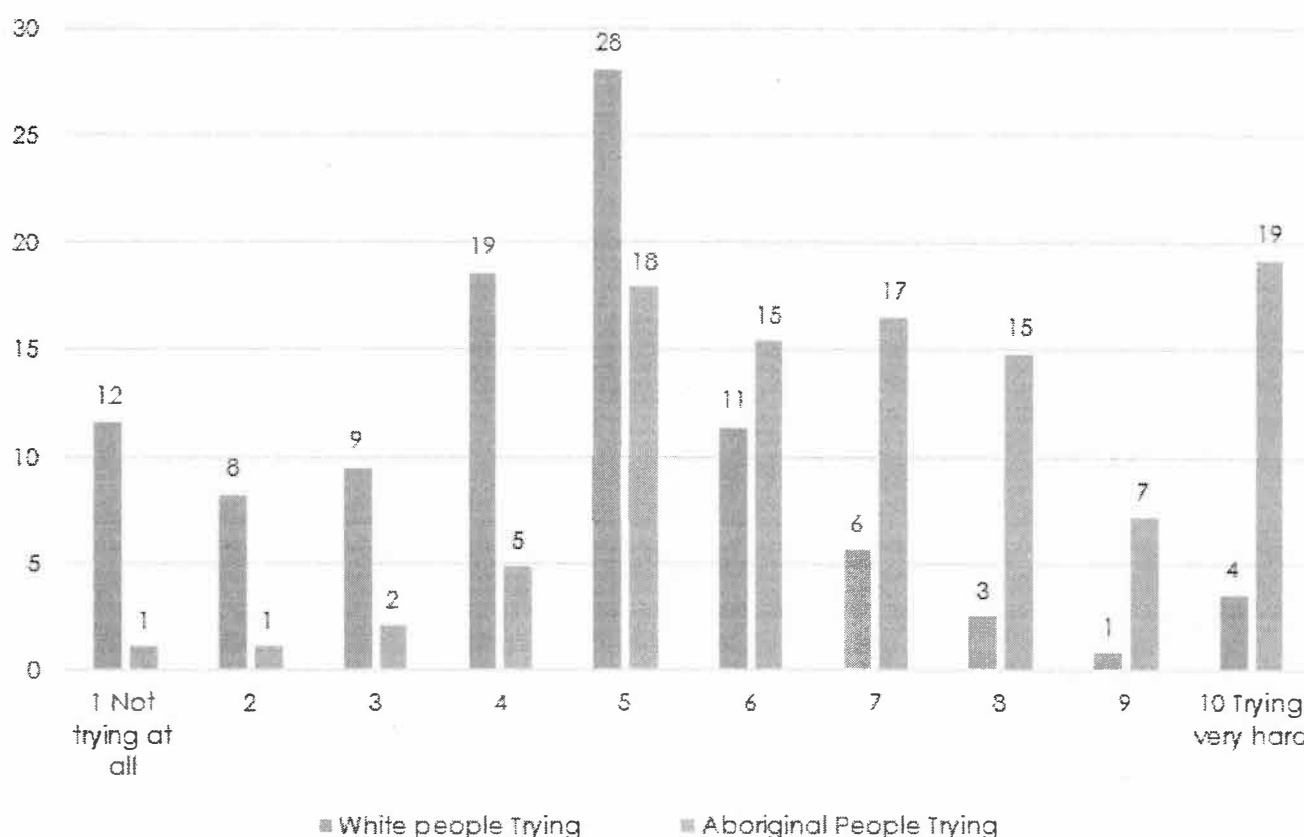


Figure 1: How Hard White and Aboriginal People Trying to Improve Race Relations

- 76% of Aboriginal respondents rated White peoples' efforts at trying to improve race relations in Darwin on the lower half (1-5) of the scale.
- 73% of Aboriginal respondents rated Aboriginal peoples' efforts at trying to improve race relations in Darwin on the upper half (6-10) of the scale.
- 19% of Aboriginal people said Aborigines were trying very hard to improve race relations.
- Only 4% said they thought White people were trying very hard to improve race relations.