

## **Anti-Racism and Indigenous Australians**

**Yin Paradies\***

*University of Melbourne Center for the Study of Health and Society,  
Menzies School of Health Research, Charles Darwin University*

*Indigenous Australians constitute approximately 2.4% of the Australian population and suffer from disadvantage across a range of social, economic, and health indicators compared to other Australians, including exposure to racism across all domains of contemporary Australian society. However, there has been relatively little research conducted on anti-racism in relation to Indigenous Australians. This article begins with an overview of theoretical issues pertinent to the empirical study and public policy of anti-racism. Empirical findings, from social psychology, on effective approaches to anti-racism at the cognitive, individual, interpersonal, and societal level as well as for the targets of racism are detailed with a particular focus on Indigenous Australians. Recommendations for improving and expanding institutional and legal policies to implement these approaches in relation to education and child-rearing, public service, law enforcement and media, as well as monitoring racism and promoting anti-racism in civil society, are then presented. To conclude, strategies for engendering political will to combat racism in the current neoliberal capitalist climate are explored.*

Indigenous Australians are those peoples who have maintained a relationship through descent, self-identification, and community acceptance with the precolonial populations in Australia. They constitute approximately 2.4% of the Australian population and suffer from high rates of unemployment and incarceration, low income, sub-standard housing, and a high burden of ill-health and mortality including

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\*Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Yin Paradies, Menzies School of Health Research, P.O. Box 41096, Casuarina NT 0811 [e-mail: yin.paradies@menzies.edu.au].

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a life expectancy that is 20 years lesser than other Australians (Australian Bureau of Statistics & Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2003).

Racism against Indigenous Australians permeates the very fabric of contemporary Australian society (Cowlshaw, 1997; Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, 1997; Dunn & McDonald, 2001; Hollinsworth, 1998; Mellor, 2003; Pedersen, Griffiths, Contos, Bishop, & Walker, 2000; Van Den Berg, 2002) occurring in the political domain (Augoustinos, Tuffin, & Rapley, 1999), health system (Mooney & Houston, 2002), academia (Thibodeaux, 1995), sport (Gorman, 2004), the law and criminal justice systems (Bolt, 2001; Cunneen, 2001), and civil society as a whole (Dundi, 1996; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), 1991; Lattas, 2001). An Australian survey of racism in 2001 indicated that Indigenous Australians experience racism (in a range of domains) at double the rate of non-Indigenous Australians (Dunn, Gandhi, Burnley, & Forrest, 2003). Despite this evidence there has been relatively little research conducted on anti-racism in relation to Indigenous Australians. This article attempts to summarize and synthesize research on anti-racism that is of relevance to Indigenous Australians. An overview of the theoretical issues in the study of anti-racism drawing from sociology is followed by empirical findings from social psychology on the effective approaches to anti-racism. Institutional and legal policy recommendations are then discussed in relation to the Australian Indigenous context and, in conclusion, strategies for engendering political will to combat racism in the current neoliberal capitalist climate are explored.

It has been suggested that fundamental reform of racialized systems is necessarily accompanied by struggles that reach the point of overt protest and that, although this need not be in the form of violent, racially based revolution, social systems must be shaken if fundamental transformation is to take place (Gilroy, 2002). There is no doubt that it is difficult to create anti-racist structures that “span the gulf between the elements of the [anti-racist] movement which are outside the local state and [those] which are dedicated to remaining within it”; however, it is also important not to “turn our back on the state” (Gilroy, 2002) and rely exclusively on anti-racist social movements within civil society. This article is not a treatise on how to remold society in a single revolutionary event, but instead “seek[s] to fundamentally transform state activity with respect to race” (Omi, 2001) through a focus on public policy approaches to anti-racism that could be effective within existing state structures.

### **Theoretical Considerations**

There are a number of theoretical considerations in the study of racism and anti-racism that affect the nature of empirical research and the approach to developing public policy in this area. A fundamental issue is the nature of racism and anti-racism and the way in which these phenomena are defined. This has

implications for notions of intentionality, morality, and the effect of social action. A further issue is the approach to combating racism in society: Do we seek to eliminate the notion of races themselves or only the social effects that membership of different races entails? Is anti-racism about highlighting differences, or similarities, between and within racial groups? In this section I will consider these issues and questions in the light of their application to the study of anti-racism and the development of anti-racist public policy.

In attempting to define racism it is helpful to consider it as a form of oppression that exists in a dialectical relationship with anti-racism. Both of these mutually constitutive phenomena can then be located under the rubric of racialization,<sup>1</sup> which can in turn be defined as:

A societal system through which people are divided into “races,” with power unevenly distributed (or produced) based on these racial classifications. Racialization is embodied through attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, laws, norms, and practices that either reinforce or counteract power asymmetries.

Thus racism, as a type of racialization, operates by increasing power differentials through either disadvantaging subordinate racial groups and/or by advantaging dominant racial groups. Adapting the framework used by Jones (2000), I define racism as occurring at three conceptual levels (which overlap in practice): (i) internalized racism—the incorporation of racist ideologies within an individual’s world view; (ii) interpersonal racism—racist interactions between people; and (iii) systemic/institutional racism—the racist production, control, and access to material, informational, and symbolic resources within society. Conversely, “anti-racism” is any approach that reduces power differentials through advantaging subordinate racial groups and/or disadvantaging dominant racial groups, with the levels at which anti-racism can occur, and is considered in the next section.

It is important to note that in studying racism/anti-racism or developing public policy, according to the above definition of racialization, the difference between racism and anti-racism does not depend on the intentions of social actors or institutions, but rather the actual effect of these actions. Many forms of racism operate under the guise of anti-racism as a form of legitimation<sup>2</sup> and some racism does not result in disadvantage (reduced power) for subordinate racial groups (Anthias & Lloyd, 2002). Furthermore, anti-racist approaches may produce racist outcomes

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<sup>1</sup> Racialization as used here is loosely inspired by the work of Miles (1989) who used the term to denote the social process through which people are labeled in racial terms. However, I use a very different definition here and do not adopt any of the neo-Marxist philosophy that Miles is well known for.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, in 1983 after extensive maneuvering, the Reagan administration in the United States completed its reorganization of the Commission on Civil Rights, a state “watchdog” organization that had been established in the 1950s to monitor and report on progress and problems in the achievement of racial (and later, women’s) equality. Under its new leadership, the Commission declared that addressing “reverse discrimination” (i.e., discrimination against Whites resulting from affirmative action and other similar programs) was its highest priority (Omi & Winant, 1994).

despite the best of intentions: for instance, attempts to help the targets of racism may be undertaken in ways that are paternalistic and hence disempowering and, by definition, racist. Also of importance is the fact that both racism and anti-racism may be counterintuitively related to notions of “morality”—for example, reducing the power of dominant racial groups may involve an abrogation of their “universal human rights” and hence be “immoral.”

In considering approaches to anti-racism in this article the goal sought is “the kind of society in which people can live together in harmony and mutual respect” (Anthias & Lloyd, 2002) by reducing their exposure to racism and/or its deleterious effects. It is important to stress that this article is not contending that “racism can be eliminated on its own because it is readily extricable from everything else” (Gilroy, 2002). Rather, people are differently placed in relation to racism depending on their particular context and, furthermore, types of oppression are not mutually exclusive and are both fluid and flexible over time and space. For example, a White woman may be positioned as an oppressor in terms of racism but positioned as oppressed in terms of sexism and so forth. Therefore, if such a society as described above is to be created, anti-racism needs to be undertaken alongside efforts to combat (hetero-)sexism, classism, nationalism, and other forms of oppression, together with an understanding of the complexity of oppressor/oppressed subject positions. However, the application of the strategies discussed below, as applied to a diverse range of oppression, is beyond the scope of this article as is a consideration of how research on intersecting oppressions<sup>3</sup> (i.e., gendered racism) could be utilized in the development of public policy.

Conceptually, there are two main approaches to anti-racist activism. Either the elimination of the notion of race and hence racism from society or the elimination of power differentials across races. Some have suggested that racism can only be eliminated by ending racialization within social systems and hence ending the very notion of races altogether. This would result in a situation where it would no longer be possible to have power differentials because there would be no criteria on which to base them (i.e., no races). However, the actual elimination of the idea of race should not be confused with the frequent absence of any overt reference to race in new forms of racism that rely on tropes related to culture and identity as well as nation, nationality, and national belonging to create oppression (Dei, 1997; Gilroy, 2002). This confusion aside, such an assimilationist approach begs the question, what would this race-less society look like? Young (1990) has distinguished between conformist and transformational assimilation. The former simply requires that “othered” racial groups in society conform to and become the same as the dominant racial group, while the latter approach seeks to transform the dominant racial group(s) so that the end of racialization coincides with a newly produced society that is distinct from those that previously existed. Clearly, these

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<sup>3</sup> For examples of this research see Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992), Bohmer and Briggs (1991), Cohen (1995), Hartung (1991), Brah and Deem (1986), Burgess-Macey (1992), and Gewirtz (1991).

two divergent approaches to assimilation have profoundly different consequences for research into social interventions and the development of public policy.

Another approach to anti-racism is to retain notions of difference in terms of race but as an aspect of equality, whereby racial individuals/groups are different within equalized power relations. In political theory this approach is known as “democratic cultural pluralism” or “radical pluralism” and entails a positive sense of group difference and autonomy and an elimination of hierarchical relationships between racial groups (Young, 1990). Problematic in this approach is the need to define both the boundaries of group identity (i.e., how fragmentary can racial groups practically become) and the foundations upon which such a society can be built (i.e., what axioms of social order are not negotiable) in ways that do not lead to exclusions and power differentials.

These two differing theoretical approaches to anti-racism are reflected in practice through the interplay between universalism and particularism. On the one hand, anti-racist activism can emphasize the similarities of all human beings, universal human rights, and equality of treatment regardless of race, and on the other hand, anti-racist discourses can assert the fundamental plurality of racial groups primarily through notions of “culture” and “language” leading to calls for special, or different, treatment for Indigenous peoples and other subordinate racial groups. These calls included slogans such as “equality within difference” and the need for a “multicultural liberal state.” Similarly, anti-racist approaches can either seek to suppress or assert differences within subordinate racial groups (Bonnett, 2000) depending on the implicit answer to the above question on the extent to which groups can practically be fragmented for the purposes of either research or policy.

In practice and in public policy, it is effective to emphasize both similarities and differences between racial groups in differing contexts (Pedersen et al., in press). With this in mind it would nonetheless appear that the elimination of the notion of race is the more difficult, and, given the rise of the color-blind policies to be discussed below, the more dangerous task. Thus, in this article I will focus on approaches to creating equality within difference rather than the elimination of “race” itself. However, regardless of which approach is adopted, it is important to note that addressing racism is not the sole task of dominant racial groups (i.e., White people in Australia), but also the responsibility of subordinate racial groups who need to address issues of racism, including internalized racism. The evidence and recommendations presented here pertain to and can be advanced by any and all members of society.

### **Empirical Review**

Although there is a vast body of research on racism against various target groups as well as the factors that mediate and moderate its outcomes, there has been relatively little research on how to reduce or eliminate racism itself

(Duckitt, 2001). Here I consider anti-racism strategies for both the targets and perpetrators of racism drawing primarily from the field of social psychology.

#### *Arm(or)ing Against Racism<sup>4</sup>*

Clearly, anti-racist education for dominant racial groups must necessarily be different from anti-racist education for subordinate racial groups because “both groups have historically been placed in vastly different positions through the mechanics of social oppression” (Bonnett & Carrington, 1996).

A number of studies have highlighted what actions can be taken to help targets of racism deal more effectively with this phenomenon. For experiences of chronic racism, it has been found that emphasizing the positive and trying to change the situation is most effective; while for experiences of acute racism, emotional distancing is more effective (Clark, 2000). In addition, there are benefits in seeking social support (Krieger, 1990; Krieger & Sidney, 1996) and having a strong sense of racial identity/concept (Mossakowski, 2003; Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, & Zinnerman, 2003; Williams, Spencer, & Jackson, 1999). There have also been recommendations for counseling practices to ameliorate the effects of racism, including race-specific approaches to psychotherapy (Elligan & Utsey, 1999) and counseling, which include reestablishing an adaptive in-group identity, utilizing culturally congruent coping behaviors, encouraging benign intergroup contact experiences, and being mindful of the practitioner’s race and its impacts on treatment (Dunbar, 2001).

It has been found that a worldview resonant with one’s racial/cultural group, strong racial identity, an awareness of racism and bicultural adaptation can furnish the racism-resistant armor needed to build positive well-being (Harrell, 2000). Learning about both the ubiquity of racism in society as well as the different forms of internalized racism is important to all racial group members, as is information on the forms and nature of different racial identities.<sup>5</sup>

This type of learning is known as “racial socialization” and has three main components: (i) learning to identify racism accurately and acknowledge its extent; (ii) role models who can demonstrate appropriate responses to racist situations including conversational skills and strategies utilizing polite corrections, witty repartees, jokes and stories rather than just facts and evidence (Guerin, 2003); and (iii) understanding the experience of racism, which may be fraught with feelings of difference, rejection, and confusion (Greene, 1994).

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<sup>4</sup> The title of this section was adapted from Bell and Nkomo (1998).

<sup>5</sup> There has been considerable recent work in social psychology on racial identity development, and its relation to racial worldviews and internalized racism, which could be used in such education. See, for instance, Helms (1995), Kohatsu et al. (2000), LaFleur, Rowe, and Leach (2002), and Poston (1990).

It is also possible to reduce the impact of racism through dismissing the importance of the domain in which racism has occurred (i.e., by asserting that academic achievement is not important after experiencing racism from a teacher) or by dismissing the significance of the perpetrator or their opinions (Major, Quinton, McCoy, & Schmader, 2000). Clearly, however, this approach to dealing with racism, especially in relation to domain disidentification, has potentially deleterious societal implications.

For some targets of racism it may also be possible and beneficial for them to conceal their race when faced with potential racist persons or situations. Clearly, this is not an option for many racialized individuals and does not provide protection from (and may even exacerbate) feelings of vicarious racism directed against others from their in-group who would not or cannot conceal their race. It should also be noted that, in the long-term, identification as a member of a subordinate racial group is important for collective social action (Major et al., 2000).

There are thus a number of strategies that may be employed by targets of racism in an effort to ameliorate its effects. Unfortunately, there is evidence to suggest that, at least among African Americans, only half to two thirds of parents actively engage in a process of racial socialization with their children (Thomas, 1999) and although some Indigenous children are exposed to racial socialization, including the reclaiming of “idioms of stigma” to reduce their impact in racist language (Carter, 1994), it is not clear how widespread this practice is. A discussion of effective policy approaches to promoting racial socialization appears in the final section of this article.

### *Reducing Racism*

Duckitt (2001) suggests that efforts to reduce prejudice can be organized around four causal levels of intervention: cognitive, individual, interpersonal, and societal. Duckitt’s model represents a parsimonious synthesis of a broad range of findings from social psychology on approaches to reducing prejudice and discrimination. Below I apply this framework to discuss the empirical evidence for effective anti-racist interventions with a particular emphasis on evidence in the Indigenous Australian context, where available.

#### *Cognitive Level*

At the cognitive level there is a wealth of experimental evidence to suggest that four kinds of categorization help to reduce racism: (i) de-categorization; (ii) re-categorization; (iii) sub-categorization; and (iv) cross-cutting categorization (Duckitt, 2001). It is important for individuals from different racial groups to experience personalized contact with varied out-group members so that friendship and acquaintanceship can develop (de-categorization) and this ideally occurs where

a common, shared identity through superordinate interests and goals is present (re-categorization). Generalizing these experiences from individual contacts to whole subgroups would be assisted when racial membership was salient (sub-categorization), and more positive evaluation of others would be likely when at least one category of membership is shared (cross-cutting categorization) (Duckitt, 2001). Note that cross-cutting categories work only when they are conceptualized *inclusively* rather than *exclusively* (i.e., a shared sense of group identity between White and Black women because they are women rather than exclusive subcategories such as White women and Black women) (Brewer, 2000). These perceptual-cognitive conditions are the most primary determinants of racism and changes at the cognitive level flow from interventions at the three causal levels which are discussed below.

### *Individual Level*

Individual-level interventions are of two broad kinds: (1) direct change to individuals' stereotypes, attitudes, and behaviors; and (2) change in some attribute related to racism (Duckitt, 2001). A number of studies suggest that the difference between individuals who are low and high in racism is not their ingrained beliefs but, rather, the cognitive schemas that low racist individuals call forth to counteract these ingrained beliefs (Devine, 1989). It is therefore likely that change in racist individuals occurs through internalizing new values or standards that motivate the suppression of previous stereotypes or negative attitudes, rather than through direct change (Duckitt, 2001). In general, individual-level interventions can be cognitive or affective in focus and may combat both implicit unconscious as well as explicit conscious racism (Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2000).

In the Australian context it has been found that "false (ideological) beliefs" about Indigenous Australians are very common and include notions that Indigenous people get their car loans and funerals paid for them by the government (Pedersen et al., in press). One study found that the reporting of positive views about Indigenous Australians increased after correct information on such topics had been provided to participants (Pedersen et al., in press). A three-day program designed to promote awareness of Indigenous history and culture was delivered and evaluated in relation to government employees in South Australia. Immediately after the program, increases in knowledge and decreases in endorsement of negative stereotypes were found for participants exhibiting either old-fashioned or modern forms of racism. These results were attenuated at 3-month follow-up but still remained statistically significant (Hill & Augoustinos, 2001).

Important attributes relating to racism are ideological beliefs, personality, and worldview. Two particular attributes that have been found to strongly relate to racism are "right-wing authoritarianism" and "social dominance orientation," and their underlying personality traits of "social conformity" and "tough-mindedness,"

respectively. These personality traits can be described in turn as worldviews of a “dangerous threatening world” and belief in a world akin to a “competitive jungle” (Duckitt, 2001).

Some studies suggest that, among persons with high authoritarianism, legitimate authority figures are important in reducing racism. Similarly, parenting styles that teach perspective-taking, empathy, and nonviolent conflict resolution have been found to increase the likelihood that children will adopt tolerant and nonracist attitudes and behaviors (Sanson et al., 1998). There is also some evidence that formal education reduces both racism and authoritarianism, and that it is “liberal” education, which exposes individuals to a diversity of ideas and perspectives, which is most effective in achieving this, rather than “conservative” education, which aims to preserve and inculcate traditional norms and beliefs (Duckitt, 2001). In Australia, it has been found that reduced levels of racism are associated with increased education (Pedersen et al. 2000; Pedersen & Walker, 1997), especially education about Indigenous issues.

Recent research has suggested a promising means of combating racism by combining both kinds of individual-level interventions through value confrontation, an emphasis on democracy and civil liberties, and “empathy” approaches (Devine, Plant, & Buswell, 2000; Finlay & Stephan, 2000; Pedersen, Bevan, Walker, & Griffiths, 2004; Pedersen et al., in press). These approaches work through cognitive dissonance and responses to evoked feelings of “guilt” (Devine et al., 2000; McGarty et al., under review), and may be particularly effective among both highly racist individuals and people with authoritarian or social dominance personality traits (Duckitt, 2001).

### *Interpersonal Level*

At the interpersonal level, there are two broad approaches to reducing racism: (i) changing social influence; and (ii) creating favorable intergroup contact (Duckitt, 2001). In terms of changing social influence, effective approaches include: (i) mass persuasion campaigns; (ii) promoting positive and anti-racist media portrayals of target groups; and (iii) anti-racist educational curricula.

It has been found that mass persuasion campaigns that use simple exhortations such as anti-racist sermons and parodies of racist attitudes or beliefs are not effective in reducing racism (and in the case of the latter, may even strengthen racism in highly racist individuals) (Duckitt, 2001). Rather, films and television programs with implicit anti-racist messages can have substantial effects that are inversely related to the baseline level of racism (although long-term evaluations have not been conducted to date) (Duckitt, 2001).<sup>6</sup> As noted above, in relation to

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<sup>6</sup>Levels of racism in Britain during the 1970s may have been reduced through the efforts of an organization called “Rock Against Racism,” which sought to communicate anti-racist themes through popular music (Sanson et al., 1998).

authority figures, the use of high-profile individuals as role models of anti-racist behaviors may also be efficacious (Pedersen et al., in press; Sanson et al., 1998) and anti-racist messages from high-status subordinate group members may also reduce racism against their own and other subordinate racial groups (Major et al., 2000). However, it is important to note that these approaches may also produce a feeling of resentment among some individuals leading to a “backlash” effect and increased racism (Duckitt, 2001).

In the early 1990s a 2-week media campaign designed to challenge negative stereotypes about Aboriginal people in employment was conducted in a country town in Western Australia with a population of 20,000 including about 1,500 Aboriginal people. A comparison of two independent samples of the residents pre- and postintervention showed considerable improvement in reported stereotypes of Aboriginal people in relation to employment and the most change was found in those people without strong initial beliefs, either positive or negative (Donovan & Leivers, 1993). In general, the mass media is among the most significant sites for both racial vilification and anti-racism. This importance is particularly strong for those community groups, such as Indigenous Australians, with whom other Australians have little regular personal contact due to their relatively small proportion of the national population (Hollinsworth, 1998).

Multicultural educational curricula that explicitly teach about the history and culture of subordinate racial groups, and emphasize the value of diversity, are also effective in fostering anti-racist norms and values in society. These programs are most effective when integrated into the overall curricula, introduced as early as possible in a child’s education, delivered by teachers with appropriate training, and involve cooperative learning and the development of critical thinking (i.e., liberal educational approaches) (Sanson et al., 1998; Hollinsworth, 1998; Pedersen et al., in press). This type of education needs to counter the tendency to make dispositional, rather than situational and historical attributions, for social disadvantage, should include explicit teaching on the nature of racism, how to alleviate it (Duckitt, 2001), and respond to it in discourse (Guerin, 2003). The importance of education is highlighted by the fact that the New Right has made it a significant battleground upon which to attack anti-racism through the portrayal of schools as “repositories of the authentic national culture” (Gilroy, 2002), which are being undermined by anti-racism (Palmer, 1987).

The importance of critical thinking in anti-racist education cannot be overemphasized. This type of education does not seek to merely create a dogmatic and ideological form of anti-racism to equal that of some forms of racism but rather seeks to recognize the complex, contradictory, and contentious nature of oppressive and liberatory power relations. Unfortunately, some approaches to “political correctness” are illustrative of this dogmatic approach to anti-racism. In Australia, for instance, an example of this kind of dogmatic approach can be found in an academic text that condemns the racism that is purported to exist in the name “Darwin”

and terms such as “the *blackest* mark in the history of medicine” (Patell-Gray, 1998). In the first case, the misconception that Charles Darwin “invented” social Darwinism<sup>7</sup> is used to conclude without justification that naming an Australian capital city, “Darwin,” is inherently racist. In the latter case it is suggested that the term “blackest” used in relation to the history of thalidomide and without any reference to race or racialized people is also inherently racist.

I would suggest that these dogmatic approaches to anti-racism are ineffective in combating racism as they have “backlash” effects that both alienate those with a more nuanced and critical approach to anti-racism and provide a easy target for the New Right and others who wish to portray anti-racism activism as “extreme,” out of touch with reality, and infringing on freedom of expression and belief.

In addition to the above strategies for changing social influence, a very promising model for improving intergroup relations is the “contact hypothesis” first articulated by Gordon Allport (1954). The model specifies four essential conditions under which increased contact leads to reduced intergroup racism: (i) equal status; (ii) superordinate goals; (iii) no competition; and (iv) institutional/authority sanctioning of the contact (Allport, 1954). A recent meta-analysis of 203 studies indicates that contact under these conditions is efficacious in reducing prejudice and discrimination for a number of different personal characteristics (sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, disability, nationality and age), and across a number of different settings (work, school, housing, recreation etc.) (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000). In Australia, decreased levels of reported racism have been associated with geographic areas that have high cultural diversity (Dunn & Geeraert, 2003) and, in general, the potential to reduce miscommunication across racial groups through honest discussion of the difficulties caused by racism has been noted (Devine & Vasquez, 1998).

It is also possible to create favorable intergroup contact via the contact hypothesis in schools and workplaces. For instance, evidence for the effectiveness of cooperative learning approaches such as the “Jigsaw Classroom” is now “virtually overwhelming” (Duckitt, 2001), including its efficacy in reducing racism alone, or in combination with curricula on conflict resolution and civic values (Johnson & Johnson, 2000), and its applicability in an Australian context (Walker & Crogan, 1998). However, despite these findings there has, as yet, been little implementation of these types of programs—a point I will return to when discussing policy recommendations below.

A recently completed cohort study found that infants as young as 6 months of age show preverbal categorization of race and that this measure was associated with racism in these children at 6 years of age (Katz, 2003). This study also found

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<sup>7</sup>The founding of social Darwinism is attributed to Herbert Spencer who first coined the phrase “survival of the fittest” 15 years after publication of *The Origin of the Species*, by Charles Darwin, in 1859.

that low levels of racist attitudes and beliefs for children were associated with watching more TV as infants and toddlers (particularly educational programs such as *Sesame Street*), having parents who value diversity and talk explicitly about race, and having a racial diversity of friends (Katz, 2003). These findings support the need for appropriate media portrayals, intergroup contact, and racial socialization. There is also evidence that promoting anti-racist norms is particularly effective among adolescences, even for highly racist and authoritarian individuals (Duckitt, 2001).

As part of this discussion of interventions at both the individual and interpersonal level it is important to highlight that engaging in anti-racist activities is not without risk to individuals. This process can arouse feelings of sadness, anxiety, hopelessness, anger, shame, and guilt among people of various racial groups. Intrapersonally, the struggle to overcome racism requires that individuals examine aspects of their identity that relate to their socialization as racial beings, and that they dare to confront how they are implicated in the practice of racism. Challenging racism can also lead to ostracism and rejection and the breaking of ties with significant people in one's life (Thompson & Neville, 1999) and cannot be achieved, in the end, without appropriate commitment from societies as a whole—as discussed in the section below.

### *Societal Level*

At the societal level there are a number of interventions that can be influential in reducing racism. Strengthening equality of representation as well as social justice can be achieved through liberal democratic forms of governance. This requires well-formulated and strictly enforced system of antidiscriminatory legislation and affirmative action policies to redress existing social disparities due to socio-historical racism. It should be noted that although affirmative action policies are necessary to achieve social justice they can also generate negative expectancies of subordinate group members such as self-doubt (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1996), and it is clear that these policies are most helpful to those members of the racial group who are most advantaged by class and other aspects of social location (Jones, 1999). It is vitally important that affirmative action policies do not result in the compromise of “merit” approaches (however imperfect these are) wherein people are placed in positions for which they do not have the skills, abilities, or qualifications to be successful. Backlash to affirmative action policies can be lessened through programs that are both fair and are perceived as such, which avoid simple quota systems, and include institutional education that explains the need to remedy historical injustice and the benefits of diversity (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1996).

An example of such an affirmative action policy that exists in legislative form is the requirement, by a Presidential Order, for U.S. federal contractors and subcontractors (not in the construction industry) with 50 or more employees or contracts

of more than \$50,000 to develop and maintain a written affirmative action program (AAP). As part of its AAP, the contractor must conduct a workforce analysis of each job title, determine workforce availability of women and minorities for each job group, and conduct a utilization analysis to determine whether women or minority group persons are underutilized in any job group. Based on these analyses, the contractor establishes goals to overcome underutilization, and must make a good faith effort to achieve those goals (Department of Labor, 2004). A policy requiring affirmative action programs for all private sector employers with more than 25 employees as well as all public sector employers has also been used in Northern Ireland in relation to religious discrimination (Lustgarten & Edwards, 1992) and in Australia, the Commonwealth *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999* requires that private sector companies, community organizations, nongovernment schools, unions, group training companies, and higher education institutions with 100 or more employees establish a workplace program to remove the barriers to women entering and advancing in their organization (Commonwealth of Australia, 2004).

It has been suggested that these approaches to promoting positive action rather than banning discriminatory action are more effective in promoting equity and, in fact, have spawned a culture of affirmative action that now extends beyond the domains where legislative provisions apply. Similarly, it has been noted that “financial inducements to profit-conscious employers are far more likely to overcome resistance and even stimulate voluntary innovation than the rather remote possibility of mild sanctions” (Lustgarten & Edwards, 1992).

Although it is difficult to gauge the impact of antidiscriminatory legislation, there is no doubt that similar legislation can bring about significant changes in expressed attitudes and observable behavior such as in the case of seatbelt and drunken driving legislation. Given the extraordinarily low rates of prosecution of antidiscriminatory legislation in Australia (Hollinsworth, 1998), it is important to recognize that these laws serve primarily symbolic and educational roles as important statements of societal values as well as having secondary deterrent, remedial, and punitive roles (Jones, 1997).

Despite the rhetoric to the contrary (Ben-Tovin, Gabriel, Law, & Stredder, 1992; Bonnett, 2000), the so-called color blind policies<sup>8</sup> have been found to be extremely disadvantageous to subordinate racial groups by reinforcing intolerant attitudes to group differences, maintaining covert racism and discrimination (Duckitt, 2001), and severely curtailing any possible redress through affirmative action. Instead, there is need for accurate and relevant information on outcomes, by race, across a range of social domains including data collection on the nature and extent of racism for different racial groups. As a nation, Australia should strive

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<sup>8</sup> Approaches that erase notions of race and ethnicity from public policies and hence preclude measures of differential outcomes across racial groups as well as any form of affirmative action.

toward an integrative multiculturalism consisting of strong subgroup identities within an overall superordinate identity, which exists within a safe, secure, stable environment of social justice and a cooperative and egalitarian ethos (Duckitt, 2001).<sup>9</sup>

### Policy Recommendations

Given the review of theory and empirical evidence above, there are a number of policy initiatives that could be fruitfully pursued in the Australian context with a particular focus on Indigenous Australians—including approaches at the national, state, and local levels of government. Addressing racism at all three tiers of Australian government is particularly important given the “geographically specific nature of racism” (Dunn & Geeraert, 2003), which requires racism to be tackled using multiple approaches at all possible levels of intervention. Below I will consider existing institutional and legislative policies and how they could be improved upon and expanded based on the empirical research findings discussed above.

#### *Institutional Policy*

*Education and Child-Rearing.* As discussed above, school-based interventions have proved extremely successful in reducing racism. One clear policy recommendation emerging from the above evidence is the need to provide anti-racist education that includes intercultural understanding and effective conflict resolution, in age-appropriate format, as an integral part of school curricula (Sanson et al., 1998).<sup>10</sup> The goal of a school environment free of racism is explicitly set out in the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century* endorsed by state, territory, and commonwealth ministers of education in 1999 (HREOC, 2004a). State and territory education departments are responsible for anti-racism policies and programs, in accordance with this national goal. However, implementation of these policies at a local level is a matter for individual schools and as a result there is a lack of uniformity in how racism is tackled across Australia (HREOC, 2004a). It is recommended that federal, state, and territory governments work together to promote consistent implementation of

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<sup>9</sup> Although creating an environment of social justice falls under the purview of anti-racism activism at the societal level, achieving this goal is an enormous challenge in countries like Australia, where Indigeneity is powerfully correlated with socio-economic deprivation, and a consideration of policies to address this challenge is beyond the scope of this article.

<sup>10</sup> Anti-racist education needs to address false beliefs as well as attitudes and behaviors. Existing websites such as “Racism No Way” (Conference of Education Systems Chief Executive Officers, 2000) and “Fair Go Australia” (Fair Go Australia, 2004) could be utilized as well as the studies of best practice delivery in diverse format (Hieronymus, 2003).

anti-racism policies in schools through the federal Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) (HREOC, 2004a). The MCEETYA taskforce on Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership should also develop standards for anti-racism and diversity training aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools including the use of cooperative learning models which, as noted above, have been shown to be highly effective.

There is considerable evidence that parenting, which involves the use of perspective-taking, empathy, and nonviolent conflict resolution (Sanson et al., 1998), as well as the valuing of diversity and explicit discussion of race are effective in combating racism (Katz, 2003). It is thus recommended that parenting skills courses, which promote these approaches and discourage the use of punitive, power-assertive strategies be funded by the federal government and made available through existing organizations and programs such as Relationships Australia (Sanson et al., 1998) and the Positive Parenting Program (Sanders & Markie-Dadds, 1996).<sup>11</sup> As considered above, there is a need to promote racial socialization that teaches Indigenous children how to identify, respond to, and cope with racism; and courses for Indigenous parents on effective approaches to racial socialization could also be provided through these existing organizations.

*Public Service.* For commonwealth public servants *The Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* states that government services must prevent discrimination through ongoing cultural diversity training for staff (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, 1998). This charter has been endorsed by Commonwealth, State, and Territory Governments, and by the Australian Local Government Associations; and progress toward its implementation is reported in the *Access and Equity Annual Report* by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (2004a). However, it is not clear from this report to what extent this particular recommendation is being met.

States and territories also have policies and reporting mechanisms that relate to anti-racism. For example, public sector agencies in New South Wales are required to have an Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) which shows how they will provide training for staff on cultural diversity issues. Each year the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural New South Wales assesses and monitors the performance of public sector agencies, and reports on this performance in an annual *Community Relations Report* (HREOC, 2004a). It is recommended that continued efforts are made to monitor and report clearly on the implementation and effectiveness of anti-racism training for public servants, and that incentives for private sector organizations to provide anti-racist training are also explored.

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<sup>11</sup> A recent population-based intervention in Perth indicated that an Australia-wide implementation of the Positive Parenting Program would reduce the burden of child behavior problems across the nation by 36% (Williams, Zubrick, Silburn, & Sanders, 1997).

As detailed above, the most effective anti-racism training will promote an awareness of Indigenous history and culture, dispel false ideological beliefs, and use a liberal education approach that focuses on the complexities of racism and anti-racism including the power relations embedded in material and cultural structures (Hollinsworth, 1998). Members of federal and state parliaments should also receive anti-racism training that emphasizes the need to both refrain from and rebut statements that reinforce racism, blame “victims,” and scapegoat on the basis of race.<sup>12</sup>

*Law Enforcement.* Racism in the practice of law enforcement, including racial labeling and profiling, is particularly detrimental and damaging to Indigenous Australians (Cunneen, 2001; Johnston, 1991) and hence is one area that anti-racist policies are particularly important. Police in all states and territories receive cultural diversity training as part of basic recruitment. In 1997, the National Police Ethnic Advisory Bureau (now the Australasian Police Multicultural Advisory Bureau (APMAB)) released a national standard for cultural diversity training of police across states and territories, replacing stand-alone courses tacked onto previously existing training programs (HREOC, 2004a). This is an important step forward, as is the statement by the Bureau that inappropriate use of racial labeling is “unhelpful, misleading, offensive and counter-productive to sound community relations in Australia” (HREOC, 2004a).

Established reporting procedures recommend the use of other physical descriptors such as height, hair color, distinguishing marks, and clothing before race; and that once a case has progressed beyond identification, information on racial identity is no longer used in police media reports (HREOC, 2004a). However, a scoping exercise by the APMAB in 2003 found that police were having difficulties in conforming to these procedures and in managing the use of descriptors by the media. As a result the development of a set of national standards in training police to use descriptors in a consistent and culturally informed manner was recommended (HREOC, 2004a), and once completed should be implemented across Australia and evaluated for effectiveness.

Racial profiling in law enforcement (the use of race to make judgments of criminal suspicion) is both discriminatory and ineffective in preventing crime (Glaser, under review). The collection of data on racial profiling is now mandatory in 39 states in the United States (West, 2003) and similar data are required in Australia, whereby the race of people stopped by police in their cars, or in public, is recorded. Data collected should include reason for, length and outcome of the stop,

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<sup>12</sup> Some of the comments made by parliamentarians in the past have not only failed to contribute to anti-racism goals but have actively promoted a racist society. For instance, Senator Ross Lightfoot suggested in 1995 that introducing Indigenous studies into all schools was “preposterous” because he found Aboriginal culture “distasteful” (Cunneen, 1997).

whether a warrant check or search was conducted, and police officer demographics (West, 2003).

*Media.* The media has a strong influence on societal norms and beliefs and has been shown to be an important area in which to both combat racism and promote anti-racist messages. As discussed above, there is considerable evidence that implicit anti-racist messages in the media, especially those using high-profile individuals as role models, are effective (Duckitt, 2001) and have been shown to reduce negative stereotypes about Indigenous Australians in particular (Donovan & Leivers, 1993).

It is vital that the State media including the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Special Broadcasting Service, and related radio stations adopt policies that encourage the representation of Indigenous Australians in positive and individuating ways rather than ignoring Indigenous people or portraying them in negative or low-status roles (Duckitt, 2001). It is also important for these organizations to create more possibilities for background and investigative reporting, to consider the impact of the language of political and official actors, and to support cooperation and information exchange with Indigenous organizations to promote racial diversity in the media (ter Wal, 2002). Increased efforts to enforce existing legislation against racial vilification and incitement to racial hatred in the media, are also required.

Commercial television stations' current guidelines prevent them from broadcasting "a program, program promotion, station identification or community service announcement which is likely, in all the circumstances, to seriously offend the cultural sensitivities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people" (Jones, 1997), and the commercial radio stations' code of practice also precludes the broadcast of programs that are "likely to incite or perpetuate hatred against or vilify any person or group on the basis of race" (Commercial Radio Australia, 2004). The adoption of policies recommended for the State media should be encouraged, for commercial media, through the administrative bodies of Commercial Television Australia and Commercial Radio Australia. There is also a need to redress the skewed reporting in commercial newspapers in relation to Indigenous people.<sup>13</sup> The Australian Press Council, in their guidelines for reporting of race state that the "press needs to show more sensitivity in reporting issues when minority groups are perceived in the community to be more 'different' or when they are the subject of particular public debate" (Australian Press Council, 2001). The Australian Journalists' Association Code of Ethics requires members of the Australian Journalists' Association of the

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<sup>13</sup> For example, an examination of newspaper reporting about youth in Western Australia between 1990 and 2002 found that 87% of articles identified young people as Aboriginal were primarily about crime and an analysis of the *Sydney Morning Herald* from January 1987 to April 1990 showed that 40% of all references to the word "riot" in Australia were related to Aboriginal people (Cunneen, 1997).

Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance not to “place unnecessary emphasis on personal characteristics, including race. . .” and the Association accepts complaints from members of the public if they believe that a journalist has acted contrary to this Code of Ethics (HREOC, 2004a).

It is recommended that the Australian Press Council and Australian Journalists’ Association be provided with sufficient resources to actively promote improved practice in relation to reporting of race in the Australian commercial media. It is also recommended that the Australian Broadcasting Authority and the Australian Press Council undertake information campaigns in a variety of formats to inform Indigenous Australian organizations and community members about their standards and complaint processes (HREOC, 2004a).

A sustainable reduction in racism in Australia requires on-going promotion of anti-racist values and beliefs. It would be appropriate for the federal government to launch a long-term advertising campaign, including a public statement by the Prime Minister acknowledging that racism is still prevalent in Australia in both overt and covert forms and that the Government is committed to combating it.<sup>14</sup> In association with this, a Prime Minister’s Award for Race Relations could be created to annually recognize the most innovative and successful private or public sector organization in the area of race relations (Lustgarten & Edwards, 1992).<sup>15</sup>

*Monitoring Racism and Promoting Anti-Racism in Civil Society.* The Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission is the peak government body that deals with issues of discrimination in Australia. It is recommended that this organization be sufficiently resourced to: (i) encourage and assist all institutions, professions, and organizations to examine their policies and practices to identify and address institutional racism (Sanson et al., 1998); (ii) examine all new federal government policy initiatives and legislation to ensure that they promote and maintain the ideals of social justice using social impact assessment methods;<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> This campaign could be based on documents such as “A Matter of Fact” developed to dispel myths about Indigenous Australians. The campaign should utilize music, the arts, and well-known Australians to increase its efficacy. In the 1990s the Irish government announced a 4.5-million pound 3-year government-sponsored anti-racism/interculturalism public awareness program (Lentin & McVeigh, 2002) and it is vital that similar efforts in Australia have sufficient funding to make an impact at the national level.

<sup>15</sup> Another approach that may be effective in fostering anti-racism in civil society is something akin to the “Museum of Tolerance” in Los Angeles, which focuses on the dynamics of racism and prejudice in the United States, and the history of the Holocaust (The Simon Wiesenthal Center, 2004). A similar institution in Australia on racism and cultural genocide in relation to Indigenous Australians could be explored.

<sup>16</sup> This may best be undertaken by designated senior bureaucrats in each government department, overseen by a cabinet committee chaired by a senior minister (Lustgarten & Edwards, 1992). One approach would be to emulate the social exclusion unit in the UK, a ministerial portfolio of the deputy prime minister, which seeks to formulate cross-government policy relating to social exclusion (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2004).

(iii) encourage and support programs that provide opportunities for optimal interracial contact (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000);<sup>17</sup> (iv) publicize and promote the services that they provide to the Indigenous community;<sup>18</sup> (v) handle complaints in a timely manner;<sup>19</sup> (vi) provide training to state/territory and federal police on referring matters to HREOC and state/territory anti-discrimination commissions;<sup>20</sup> and (v) in collaboration with state/territory and federal Ombudsmans and Industrial Relations Commissions, collect and publish statistics on the number and nature of complaints made in each jurisdiction by race/ethnicity (Goodstone et al., 2001).

As discussed above, data collection around issues of racism for a variety of racial groups is vital to ongoing monitoring and policy making. However, very little information on the prevalence of racism is available from either administrative sources or large-scale surveys in Australia. Although data on race hate crimes/incidents are collected in Australia, there is varying coverage across states and territories. Currently, there is limited data collection about race hate crimes by police in South Australia and Western Australia and none in Tasmania or the Northern Territory where there are no legislative provisions under criminal law for racial vilification. The other three states have well-developed data collection systems, with the most comprehensive system introduced by the New South Wales Police in October 1999. This state-wide system collects data on hate/prejudice-motivated crimes under which officers, when recording a crime report, can record a motivation, including race/ethnicity (HREOC, 2004a). Sharing information about hate crimes across the states and territories has been identified as a priority by the Australasian Police Minister's Council (APMC) and it is recommended that data sharing is accompanied by an adoption, across Australia, of the "gold standard" set by the New South Wales Police (HREOC, 2004a).

Finally, while some ethnoracial communities in Australia, such as the Jewish community maintain a significant program to monitor racism against their constituency, the Indigenous community does not have any active reporting system. As with Indigenous agencies that deal with specific land, legal, and health issues there is a need for the Indigenous community to set up a semi-formal space that provides a forum to report racism against Indigenous Australians (Browning & Jakubowicz, 2004).

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<sup>17</sup> One approach to be considered is that taken by Boston in its 2004 city-wide dialogues on race that sought to have each neighborhood in the city hold its own local dialogue group with 15–20 ethnically and racially diverse participants and two group facilitators over four sessions in the hope of bringing together a 1000 Bostonians city-wide (City-Wide Dialogues on Boston's Ethnic & Racial Diversity, 2004).

<sup>18</sup> Funding should also be provided to the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office to employ Indigenous complaints and outreach officers (Goodstone et al., 2001).

<sup>19</sup> Including the option to make oral as well as written complaints (Goodstone et al., 2001).

<sup>20</sup> There is some evidence that the police are not referring matters to these regulatory bodies appropriately (Jones, 1997), with at least one project in Australia undertaking training to address this matter (Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, 2004b).

### *Legislative Policy*

As considered above, anti-racism legislation is important in that it serves a primarily symbolic and educational purpose in promoting societal values and secondarily deterrent, remedial, and punitive roles (Jones, 1997). As such, this type of legislation has considerable potential to bring about significant changes in expressed attitudes and observable behavior (Hollinsworth, 1998).

At the federal level the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (RDA) as administered by HREOC (HREOC, 2004c), is the key legal mechanism for addressing racism. The RDA was the first piece of federal anti-discrimination legislation in Australia and is based to a large extent on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD 1969 (HREOC, 2004b)). The *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Section 9) makes it unlawful “to do any act involving a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of any human right or fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.” The Act (s. 18) also makes it unlawful to engage in a public act which “is reasonably likely in all the circumstances to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate a person or group of people, on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.”<sup>21</sup> The Act specifies that both “direct” and “indirect” racial discrimination are illegal. The latter does not require either intent to discriminate or that a particular individual or group is targeted (i.e., it is enough to demonstrate disparities at a racial group level), while the former has also been interpreted in case law as not requiring intention (HREOC, 2004b), although, in this case, a particular individual or group must be directly targeted.

However, the Act is undermined by a number of limitations. First, HREOC is established only as an administrative body and proceedings to enforce a determination by HREOC must be taken to the Federal Court. Second, complaints under the Act may only be lodged by a “person aggrieved,” which precludes members of the public without connection with the person(s) affected from bringing a complaint to HREOC, hence restricting action that could otherwise be taken in the public interest (Jones, 1997). Third, a “human right or fundamental freedom” does not cover all instances of possible racism. For example, in *Hagan v Trustees of the Toowoomba Sports Ground Trust*, a complaint of racial discrimination was brought in relation to the maintenance of a sign saying “The ES ‘Nigger Brown’ Stand” at an athletic oval. It was found that because only the complainant’s personal feelings were affected by the sign, rather than any human rights or fundamental freedoms,

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<sup>21</sup> It is not necessary to establish that all people in the relevant group may be offended by the acts complained of. It is sufficient to show that a subset of the broader group may be reasonably affected by the conduct (HREOC, 2004b).

there was no racial discrimination involved (HREOC, 2004b). Fourth, case law has made it clear that a high standard of circumstantial evidence is required to prove breaches of the RDA and evidence of statistical differences in outcomes by race is frequently not sufficient (HREOC, 2004b). Finally, the RDA has no provision for criminalizing racial hatred although such provisions do exist under the CERD upon which it is based (HREOC, 2004b).

Given these limitations, it is recommended that the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* be amended to (i) make determinations by HREOC legally enforceable with more evidential burden of proof on defendants and a less onerous standard of proof on complainants (Hunyor, 2003); (ii) allow third-party legal action; (iii) increase the scope of discriminatory acts beyond a human rights framework; and (iv) fully implement CERD by adopting provisions for criminalizing acts of racial hatred. In the meantime, the commonwealth government should legislate to make the Federal Magistrates Service a “no-cost” jurisdiction for discrimination matters where each party pays their own legal costs regardless of who wins the proceedings and promote its policy on waiver of fees for people of low incomes who lodge discrimination claims (Goodstone et al., 2001).

The various state/territory anti-discrimination acts make racial discrimination illegal in employment, education, training, the conferral of qualifications, the provision of goods and services, accommodation, at registered clubs and associations, sport, superannuation, insurance, disposal of land, access to places and vehicles, requests for information, administration of laws and programs, and local government. However, there is considerable variation in the coverage of each Act and no one Act covers all these areas, although all these Acts do make it unlawful to discriminate against a person because they have a relative or associate who is of a particular race (UTS and UNSW Faculties of Law, 2004).

All states and territories, except the Northern Territory, also “prohibit any public act which is capable of inciting hatred towards, serious contempt for or severe ridicule of a person or a group of persons because of their race” (racial vilification). Civil remedies are provided in all jurisdictions where these acts are prohibited (Lacey, 2004). However, there are no provisions for criminal offences for racial vilification in commonwealth law or in Tasmania and, of course, no provisions for such in the Northern Territory. In Western Australia the possession of racial material and the publication of racial material for display, to harass a racial group, or to incite racial hatred is a criminal offence (Lacey, 2004). The provision used in New South Wales, which serve as a model for those in the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, and Queensland, required the consent of the Attorney General for prosecution, which has never been given. Victorian legislation appears to be the most comprehensive whereby it is a criminal offence to “intentionally engage in conduct that the offender knows is likely to incite serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule” (Lacey, 2004).

Future amendments to these Acts need to standardize the areas where racial discrimination is illegal by including all the domains listed above, with racial vilification laws amended to follow the Victorian model or alternatively that of a private member's Bill entitled 'Racial and Religious Hatred Bill 2003', which seeks to amend the commonwealth *Crimes Act 1914* to prohibit the intentional incitement of racial hatred (1 year imprisonment), threats of physical harm on the ground of race or religion (2 years imprisonment), and threats to property on the same grounds (1 year imprisonment) (Lacey, 2004).

At the local government level, as town councils exist under state statute law, it is recommended that each state/territory in Australia legislate to require local councils to institute and report on anti-racism initiatives for their constituency and be provided with training in how to implement anti-racism strategies.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, affirmative action policies need to be strengthened by utilizing positive legal mechanisms, as detailed in the examples above, with a view to increasing Indigenous representation in areas such as the media, the legal system (especially law enforcement) and the professions in general. The use of financial and other incentives, such as making these policies a prerequisite for seeking federal contracts as in the U.S. example above, should also be investigated.

### **Engendering Political Will to Combat Racism**

In this article I have attempted to present an overview of the theoretical issues in the study of anti-racism of particular relevance to empirical research and public policy. By then focusing on Indigenous Australians as a population that experiences particularly high levels of racism, I have considered the existing research on effective approaches to anti-racism for both targets and perpetrators, followed by recommendations for institutional and legal policies required to implement these approaches in Australia. However, none of these policy recommendations will be implemented without significant political will and there is no doubt that powerful sections of the Australian community currently benefit from racism, and therefore will likely resist attempts to counter it (Pedersen et al., in press). The adoption of economic rationalist values, the minimization of state intervention, and the fostering of profit have shifted politics away from concern for equality of opportunity

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<sup>22</sup> A 1996–97 survey of 666 local councils in Australia, of which about half responded, found that the majority of community relations policies took the form of information provision about racialized groups in society or events to celebrate cultural diversity rather than addressing institutional racism (Dunn, Hanna, & Thompson, 2001). About 31% of councils stated that they were involved in specific programs to improve local community understanding of Indigenous people but only 24% reported similar programs for council employees. This lack of anti-racism training for council employees is especially problematic given that only 29% of councils reported having an anti-racism policy at all and that some councils seemed to position Indigenous people as outside what they see as their constituency and consider multiculturalism (let alone anti-racism) as marginal to their "core business" (Dunn et al., 2001).

(Hollinsworth, 1998) as has the whitewashing of race and color-blind politics in Australia and other First World nations.

“Hard evidence,” on an on-going basis, of both the prevalence and detrimental effects of racism in Australia will be necessary if we hope to muster the political will to address racism in our society. Therefore, as a matter of priority, research that produces national data available down to the local government level on the extent and types of racism in Australia as has been undertaken by geographers at the University of New South Wales (Dunn & Geeraert, 2003) must continue along with the implementation of recommendations for reporting under the federal and state/territory anti-discrimination acts as discussed above.

Recommendations from a 1984 Australian National Opinion Poll Market Research survey included the suggestion that the Federal government conduct a campaign to increase public awareness of Aboriginal issues. This call went unanswered. In fact, the political landscape in Australia is littered with the wrecks of reports and inquiries in Indigenous affairs whose recommendations remain partially or completely unimplemented (Jonas, 2000). In contrast to these on-going recommendations, the Federal government recently drafted legislation that aims to abolish a number of high-level positions in HREOC and reduce its powers and independence (HREOC, 2004d).

The recent World Conference Against Racism recognized “the negative economic . . . consequences of racism” (United Nations, 2001) and one scholar has suggested that it is the power of racism to “cause conflict and to ‘waste’ human resources that most excites the interest of ‘state agencies’ and ‘the ruling class’” (Bonnett, 2000). Thus, one possible way forward is to quantify the “cost of racism” to Australia and to “sell” anti-racism as a means of “dissipating conflicts understood to threaten the nation, the international order or the accumulation of capital” (Bonnett, 2000; Alexis, 1999). “Productive Diversity” is a public policy of the Australian federal government that seeks to utilize Australia’s language and cultural diversity for the economic and social benefit of all Australians (Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, 2004c). This policy takes as its basis that cultural and language diversity is one of Australia’s greatest resources that can be used to boost business productivity and access local and global niche markets. The cooption of this economic rationalist rhetoric by anti-racist activism in Australia may be the best way to advance anti-racism in the current neoliberal capitalist national and global political climate.

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YIN PARADIES is a PhD student in social epidemiology at the Centre for the Study of Health and Society, University of Melbourne. He conducts research, relating to Indigenous peoples, on topics such as stress, racism and health, racial discourses in health research, anti-racism policy, and the practice of public health. He can be contacted at [Yin.Paradies@menzies.edu.au](mailto:Yin.Paradies@menzies.edu.au).