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Australia, Alcohol and the Aborigine: Alcohol Consumption Differences Between Non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians

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### ABSTRACT

While Australia was colonised by settlers with a strong dependency on alcohol and strongly established behaviours associated with its consumption, the indigenous inhabitants had no experience with this commodity. In the two centuries that followed, but especially in the brief period since alcohol became universally available to Aborigines, this situation has changed dramatically. Alcohol problems within Aboriginal society are severe. This paper investigates the similarities and differences that exist between the alcohol consumption behaviours of non-indigenous and indigenous Australians.

### ARTICLE

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### Introduction

While Australians are renowned for being ardent consumers of alcohol, this reputation is generally considered in terms of the component of the population that has a European heritage. Australia's indigenous Aborigines comprise only two percent of the Australian population, and have alcohol consumption behaviours that are distinctive from those of their European-heritage counterparts. To date there are few papers on alcohol consumption outside of the health and social sciences (for an exception see Doern and Kates 1998), and there exists a need to provide accounts of this form of consumption that can contribute to the consumer behaviour literature. In particular, there is a need for research in the Australian context that can assist in providing an understanding of

the differences that exist between non-indigenous and indigenous alcohol consumption behaviours. This paper explores the key differences that exist between the alcohol consumption behaviours of indigenous Aboriginal and non-indigenous Australians, with the intention being to provide an understanding of the ways in which these consumption behaviours reflect broader cultural and social differences between the two groups.

### **Non-indigenous Australians**

Alcohol consumption has played a central role in social relationships since the European settlement of Australia. Freeland (1966) writes that within a day of settlement, the 750 convicts of the first fleet, under the influence of a special ration of rum, indulged in a night of feasting, drinking and debauchery unparalleled in the history of colonial settlement. This led to the colony's first legislation, the prohibition of trading in alcohol. Over the ensuing months, magistrates spent a considerable amount of their time involved with violations of this legislation. Following the removal of the prohibition in 1792, the public house became the cornerstone of the nation's social developments. Pubs usually preceded churches and often afforded the sole opportunity for public congregation. Australia's first bank, oldest existing newspaper, foundation postal services, art gallery and public lending library were all established in pubs. Pubs also became offices for most of the nation's sporting clubs (Freeland 1966). It is little wonder that the consumption of alcohol came to play such a dominant role in Australian society.

Contemporary Australians, on average, are relatively heavy consumers of alcohol, ranking nineteenth in the world in terms of consumption per capita (Productschap Voor Gedistilleerde Dranken 1999). Average alcohol consumption rates are equivalent to approximately three cans of full-strength beer per day (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] 1995). While Australians have been criticised as being heavy drinkers (King 1978), current consumption levels are not excessive among large proportions of the population. Instead, high levels of consumption tend to be polarised to particular segments, with males, younger drinkers, and those living in the warmest parts of Australia consuming significantly greater amounts of alcohol per capita than other Australians (ABS 1990, 1995). Douglas (1987) describes drunkenness as culturally prescribed, and therefore expressive of the culture in which it occurs. Non-indigenous Australians have long associated drunkenness with egalitarianism due to the tendency for social distinctions become less noticeable and meaningful among the intoxicated (Fiske, Hodge, and Turner 1987; King 1978).

### **Indigenous Australians**

Alcohol has been central to Aboriginal-European social relations since occupation. It signifies more than simply another commodity and its use by Aborigines symbolically represents acceptance and inclusion within non-indigenous Australian society (Hunter 1993). By the commencement of the twentieth century, most Aborigines lived on reserves and depended on Europeans for scarce employment (Stanner 1979). Over half of Australia's Aborigines remain unemployed. In the remote Kimberley where half the data were collected, ninety percent of Aborigines live below the poverty line (Evans 1989) and almost all survive on government welfare (Yu 1994). A large proportion of this welfare is returned to the Government through the medium of taxes, especially on alcohol sales (Langton, 1993). The ban on Aborigines' consumption of alcohol was only lifted in 1967 (Biskup 1973). While a smaller percentage of Aborigines consume alcohol than non-indigenous Australians, consumption per capita is greater (Gray and Chikrizhs 2000). Figures show that an estimated 85 percent of the Kimberley Aborigines who drink alcohol have an alcohol problem (Hunter, Hall, and Spargo 1992). The median consumption rate per drinking day for young Aboriginal males is equivalent to eleven cans of full strength beer, while young Aboriginal women consume around half this average (Hunter 1993, p.104).

Pre-occupation Aboriginal society had a deep-seated sharing ethos that was needed for survival. This involved a network of commitments, duties and debts, based upon reciprocity with sanctions for non-reciprocity (Thompson 1949). The act of giving, however, was usually considered more important than the gift itself (Stanner 1979). In contemporary Aboriginal society there is a strong expectation that durable goods, such as rifles, video recorders, and motor vehicles, will be shared communally. Cash is shared even more than market foods, being readily asked for and given, especially with the arrival of food supplies in remote areas. Although no records are kept, a balanced reciprocity prevails over time, and those who continually fail to reciprocate are avoided (Shaw 1979). Communal gambling and alcohol drinking are also major occasions for sharing cash (Altman 1987). While gambling and drinking are considered occasions for leisure, excitement and social cohesion, they also often result in dissension, conflict and dispersion. Alcohol continues to wreak havoc among communities and suicides continue at well above the rate of non-indigenous Australians (Hunter 1993). Alcohol occasions neglect and abuse within the family and exacerbates already severe health problems (Hunter et al. 1992).

The upsurge in Aboriginal alcohol consumption since 1967 has been attributed to a diversity of causes. These include; (1) the

breakdown of traditional social control mechanisms; (2) a lack of means for establishing and ritually enacting group identity; (3) a lack of traditional rules for alcohol consumption behaviours; (4) the culturally infused sharing ethos; (5) resistance to imposed controls on Aboriginal society; and (6) a lack of processes for reducing tensions and frustrations occurring as a result of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, boredom and dislocation (Altman 1987; Huffer 1983; Langton 1993; Sackett 1988). This last reason, in particular, could explain the greater incidence of alcohol abuse among males who have lost more status than females in the change from a tradition-oriented to welfare culture.

The first European settlers of Australia comprised an unsavoury collection of murderers, forgers, gamblers, pimps and thieves, with over a third of the women being convicted prostitutes (Clark, 1963). For most, intoxicants became a need rather than a desire, with the cruelty of colonial authority and the boredom of nights fuelling these needs (Freeland 1966). Aboriginal society, on the other hand, had no form of intoxicant prior to the arrival of the Europeans. Alcohol was but one of the many consumer goods for which proscribed consumption behaviours did not exist prior to European settlement. Although these developed within the guidelines imposed by Europeans, they were modified by Aboriginal cultural beliefs and practices. This paper attempts to understand the differences between the alcohol consumption behaviours of these two groups.

## **Methodology**

The data used in this study were derived from two separate ethnographic studies of alcohol consumption in Australia. The data for the Aboriginal study were collected within remote communities in the north-west region of Australia. These included three self-contained, Aboriginal controlled, coastal communities that have been strongly influenced by mission contact and two larger country towns where Aborigines live as fringe dwellers. The data collection comprised observations of daily consumption activities, which were recorded into field notes, as well as unstructured interviews with Aborigines and non-Aboriginal store managers, health workers, school teachers, general workers, police officers and mission personnel. Both participant observation and semi-structured interviews were conducted. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the anonymity of informants.

The second study focused on the non-indigenous population and involved both in situ interviews in drinking venues and interviews in people's homes, in schools, and in retirement villages. For the in situ interviews, 115 people were interviewed and observed in 23 pubs and clubs in three Australian states (Western Australia, New

South Wales, and Victoria). The remaining interviews were conducted with approximately 300 Australians in other locations to obtain information pertaining to the role of alcohol in non-indigenous Australian culture. Interviewing was conducted in different areas across the three states to ensure coverage of various age and socio-economic groups.

## **Findings**

### *Alcohol consumption behaviours among non-indigenous Australians*

The interview and observation data yielded three major characteristics of alcohol consumption among non-indigenous Australians: (1) the importance of social aspects of alcohol consumption to drinkers, including the communication of group membership and the facilitation of bonding activities; (2) the stratified nature of alcohol consumption, particularly among drinkers of different genders; and (3) the ritualised nature of alcohol consumption.

### ***Social Consumption***

Among non-indigenous Australians alcohol consumption is used as a means of achieving social interaction and communicating group membership. At the aggregate level it signals a degree of "Australianness" that aligns the drinker with other members of the national culture. This symbolism can only be accessed, however, when the drinker consumes alcohol in a social context. Cultural conditioning effectively ensures a favourable attitude to social drinking, and a suspicious, condescending attitude to private drinking:

*Male 1: A beer or two after work is alright, but just sitting home getting drunk by yourself is not real good.*

*Male 2: There is a big difference between getting drunk for a laugh with your friends and getting pissed for the sake of getting pissed by yourself.*

*Male 1: People tell us we drink too much, but if we were to sit at home and drink by ourselves, that is a full-blown alcoholic. That is not social drinking (adult males).*

These informal sanctions against drinking alone are accompanied by the expectation that "real" Australians engage in alcohol consumption during most social events. Informants noted that it is virtually unthinkable that a social gathering could occur between friends without the presence of alcohol. The relationship between alcohol and socialising is particularly strong where food is consumed, and as the informant below states, "it is very hard to get away from the alcohol side of it."

*Researcher: Tell me about your normal drinking behaviour.*  
*Female: Gosh, very social. We have lots of social events, so I guess they revolve around food and alcohol.*  
*Researcher: In that order? Female: Yes, I love to cook, so to me the food is more important. But it is very difficult to get away from the alcohol side of it.*  
*Researcher: Would people think you were strange if you invited them over to dinner and then didn't serve any alcohol?*  
*Female: Yes, definitely. All our friends drink (adult female).*

The consumption of alcohol in social situations enables non-indigenous drinkers to link their identities with those of their peers. Importantly, it allows them to simultaneously communicate their membership of particular social groupings and the broader Australian culture. As such, alcohol performs the important functions of facilitating interactions between individuals and locating them within the cultural sphere.

### ***Stratified Consumption***

Among non-indigenous Australians the consumption of beer is highly male-dominated while females are more strongly associated with wine consumption. Due to the high levels of gender symbolism attached to different alcoholic beverages, the vast majority of non-indigenous drinkers conform to societal expectations, choosing to stay safe in the accepted symbolism of their "chosen" beverage:

*Researcher: So do you know any males who don't like beer?*  
*Male: No, see well, we don't knock around with that sort of company...Anybody we know will have a beer (adult male).*  
*Researcher: Are there any differences between women who drink beer and women who don't?*  
*Male: I think so, yes. (Those who drink beer) are usually a little bit fatter, a bit more butch, and they don't carry themselves very well (adult male).*

Thus while non-indigenous males and females can choose to consume alcoholic beverages outside of those that are socially prescribed, they do so at the risk of alienation from others. To a lesser extent, age and social class were also found to be alcohol consumption variables. Younger informants perceived a need to drink in larger volumes to achieve intoxication, while older informants typically reported engaging in more restrained consumption. Some categories and brands of alcohol were generally considered more suitable for younger drinkers, while others were deemed to be the consumption domain of older drinkers. Similarly, wealthier informants exhibited preferences for specific varieties of alcohol that differ in price and symbolism from those types favoured by less-affluent drinkers.

### ***Ritualised Consumption***

There are several specific rituals associated with alcohol consumption among non-indigenous Australians, each serving to facilitate the communication of core cultural beliefs. For example, by engaging in shouting rituals drinkers express their belief in egalitarianism. Shouting entails each member of the drinking group paying for a round of drinks in turn, introducing a system of reciprocity to the drinking process (Brady 1992). It ensures that individuals consume at levels considered appropriate by the group, and thus has a coercive element despite its perceived equity (Fiske et al. 1987). The ritual of shouting often results in the tendency to choose the same brand as one's peers, thus reinforcing the social bonding that is a primary objective of the alcohol consumption process:

*I am usually a VB drinker, but Steve had a New tonight, so it was easy just to ask for two News at the bar, and it was simple to ask for (adult male).*

Similar in nature is the ritual of contributing to the alcohol supply where drinking occurs in social environments other than pubs. For example, when attending a party, drinkers are typically expected to bring alcohol with them to be shared with others during the event. Other rituals include pub attendance and bingeing (where drinkers consume large volumes of alcohol in a single sitting [Health Department of Western Australia 1997]). Through the ritual of pub attendance, many male drinkers communicate their bonding with other males and their difference from females. The consumption of alcohol in a friendly pub environment also operates as an escape from the stress and complexities of home and work lives (Fiske et al. 1987). By engaging in binge drinking, male drinkers believe that they communicate their strength and masculinity, and where females participate in this activity they often hope to communicate their assertiveness and desire for equality (Mackay 1989). Combined, these rituals provide non-indigenous drinkers with guides for alcohol consumption that facilitate the social interaction with others that can result in satisfactory identity formation and maintenance.

### **Alcohol consumption behaviours among indigenous Australians**

Contrary to the Australian stereotype of "the drunken Aboriginal man" (Langton 1993), figures show that the Kimberley Aborigines have a higher percentage of non-drinkers (24 percent among males and 54 percent among females) than the general Australian population and a significantly higher proportion of reformed drinkers than the non-Aboriginal population of the Kimberley (Hunter et al.

1992). Part of the explanation for the 'drunken man' stereotype is the greater visibility of Aboriginal drinking in public open spaces, compared to non-indigenous Australians who indulge within the privacy of houses or the sanctity of the pub. This interpretation is supported by Terry, a fifty-year-old mission-educated Aboriginal male, who joined a cattle station and learnt the skills needed to become a ringer <sup>2</sup>. After several periods in prison for alcohol-related crimes, he reformed and now leads an anti-alcohol program in the Kimberley. He speaks of the difference between 'whitefellas' and Aborigines and the unfortunate reputation that his people have earned:

*The main fact is for the gudija people, or non-Aboriginals, they're hidin'. Yeah they hide and drink. The whitefellas are just as bad with drinkin' but you don't see them, they drink at home and in the pubs. Our mob drink in the open. So everyone says, "Look at them blokes! Got no bloody control see."*

The stereotype of the 'drunken Aboriginal man' is not justified by statistics but is rather the result of social perception. Terry, went on to explain how this stereotype is reinforced:

*We got tourists comin' in, pull up for one day and see two or three Aborigine people fall arse over head and they're drunk. And they go to the next town and they say Aborigines is a bunch of drunks.*

Aboriginal informants also claimed that alcohol offers an opportunity for the release and expression of emotions that are otherwise culturally inappropriate. This is illustrated by comments about drunken bragging, spousal abuse, belligerent talk, and other violence. Kenny, a reforming forty year-old Aboriginal male alcoholic, explains the tendency of his people toward showing emotions while drinking:

*I see alcohol as something that can bring out an emotion that they don't normally, you will never, never see, but being on alcohol they can use that emotion. You are a different person, a lot bigger, a lot whatever, talkative. I know blokes that you won't get three words out of them in a day, but give them a couple of beers, and they've "Been there, done that". It brings out an emotion that they can't or won't normally bring out. Drinking more or less gives them courage to say things they won't say when they're sober or do things that they won't do when they're sober.*

At the same time, after a drunken binge there is often a suggestion that this 'lack of responsibility' can be explained away because the alcohol was in control. As Kenny and his friend put it:



*Kenny: It's like you can go and stab that bloke, but it's all right because you was drunk.*

*Tommy: Naw, not my fault, I was drunk. But if you was sober and done that, it's bad.*

Among Aboriginal groups in the Kimberley, the government-imposed prohibition on aboriginal alcohol consumption encouraged secretive binge drinking. Further social disruption occurred when 'card carrying'<sup>3</sup> mixed descent Aborigines, who were not subject to these restrictions, attained higher status in their communities because of their ability to drink in the 'whitefella's pubs,' as well as provide illegal supplies to other Aborigines. Terry describes how this system operated when he was a ringer:

*So he had the citizen rights but he used to buy grog for all his ringers, you know, all his working men and they sort of drink in the quiet. And they were frightened to drink out in public because they didn't want to get caught. Probably the bloke who bought the grog he would have been in more serious trouble, you know. Probably the whole lot would have got locked up. All I can say is I think the citizen rights really buggered everybody up, all the Aboriginal people. You see alcohol was never a problem before citizen rights came out.*

Following the granting of citizenship rights to all Aborigines in 1967, the situation changed dramatically and social disruption increased further. Terry goes on to explain the difference in contemporary thinking between the younger and older Aborigines:

*The old people usually say to the young fella, "You fella no good. When I was young we never used to do them sort of things." But when they was young there was no bloody drinking then see. So they never had no access to alcohol and all this sort of thing. So the young fellas could be doing the same thing if living in the country back then, you know. I suppose myself as well. But we were born in the citizens rights days and everything changed now.*

With regard to identity, the ringer is the most alluring and enduring role model for Aboriginal males in the Kimberley. For many, the initial attraction to drinking is related to this glamorous lifestyle of which alcohol is perceived to be an integral part. Once they begin drinking, peer pressure or 'mateship' often reinforces their alcohol consumption behaviours. Terry reflected on the original reasons for his own drinking problem:

*Well in the ringing days there is some sort of word out that everyone felt that all the ringers were the tough men...So every time they come in town they all got on the booze... the people used*

*to work in town, they was all the weak mob. The ringers were all the tough mob. So to be one of them I had to drink with them as well because well otherwise they kept saying that if you don't drink with us you're not one of us. You know. So I thought to myself "Why not". So I joined the party. So I drank and I carried on I think the way everyone else did. Like boozing up and fighting and so on...Yeah, well, I think it was peer pressure from this mob I think which made me drink.*

However, it is not only the role model of ringers that is used as a form of identity. There is also a strong network of younger males who associate through drinking either through attendance at music gigs or by driving to nearby communities where alcohol restrictions have not been implemented. Gambling sessions offer a further opportunity for socialising and often include the consumption of alcohol. Strong community divisions also exist between 'the drinkers' and those who refrain.

The lack of rules relating to inebriation in subgroups within Aboriginal culture, combined with the culturally infused sharing ethos, exacerbate the problem of alcohol consumption. A police officer in a town in close proximity to one of the communities studied, and often frequented by nearby community members, describes the scenario of daily events prior to the introduction of an alcohol containment policy in the town:

*...they drank casks of Coolabah Moselle wine. It's cheap for the volume you get and it's twelve percent alcohol and it does the job more or less. People up here, you have to perhaps understand, that they don't come home at the end of a day after a hard day's work and have a couple of beers. Most of these people don't work or they can't work, there's just no employment for them and it's not having a social drink with friends. It's a situation where you buy your grog, you then drink it as quick as you can or someone else will drink it on you. And once you've drunk yours you go and look for someone else who's got some grog if you have no money... If you've got alcohol you're obliged to share it with everybody.*

The proposal that drinking to excess is a form of resistance (Sackett 1988), expressed through non-compliance with the order imposed by the non-Aboriginal world, was supported by field observations of the conspicuous litter of beer cans and wine cartons, plus the increased aggressiveness toward non-indigenous Australians following consumption of alcohol.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

A comparison of the major characteristics of non-indigenous and indigenous alcohol consumption revealed distinct similarities and differences. The similarities include the use of alcohol consumption to achieve identity formation and maintenance and to provide a form of escapism for drinkers. By comparison, the differences in consumption patterns take the form of subculture inclusion and exclusion, the extent of sharing between drinkers, and the physical locations in which drinking takes place.

### **Similarities**

The use of alcohol consumption to establish and communicate an identity has been noted across different cultures (Douglas 1987; Gough and Edwards 1998; Patterson and Pegg 1999), and was found in this study to be relevant to both non-indigenous and indigenous drinkers. Non-indigenous Australians seek to identify with the broader Australian culture, as well as with specific subcultures, particularly those relating to gender and age, and to a lesser extent social class. Indigenous Australian males relate alcohol consumption to the coveted lifestyle of the outback ringer, while younger indigenous drinkers also associate drinking with their attempts at self-expression through music. In addition, alcohol is perceived by indigenous Australians to be an important link with non-indigenous Australian culture. In both streams of Australian society the consumption of alcohol facilitates specific behaviours that enable individuals to communicate their participation in Australian culture and their membership of specific subcultures within the broader cultural environment.

Alcohol use as a form of escapism is another theme that is widely recognised in alcohol studies (Ackoff and Emshoff 1975; Mackay 1993; Treise, Wolburg, and Otnes 1999). Both non-indigenous and indigenous Australians take advantage of the inebriating effects of alcohol to enable them to manage their daily lives. Indigenous Australians consume alcohol as a respite from the poverty and boredom that characterise their lives, while non-indigenous Australians are seeking to obtain temporary relief from the stresses associated with their work and family roles. Drinkers from both groups sacralise their drinking time for the liberation it provides in the form of physical and mental relaxation.

### **Differences**

The first major area of difference between indigenous and non-indigenous alcohol consumption is the use of alcohol as a form of inclusion and exclusion. Prohibition was used as a way of excluding indigenous Australians from alcohol consumption, effectively restricting the activity to the non-indigenous population for almost 200 years. Although prohibition was repealed in 1967, alcohol

consumption is still perceived to be a major point of differentiation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians in terms of the extent of control the individual has over the volume of alcohol consumed and any resulting behaviours (Brady 1992).

While alcohol consumption has an inclusive pattern among indigenous Australians, within the non-indigenous population it is highly stratified according to gender, and to a lesser extent by age and social class. It thus offers a means of exclusion, effectively demarcating different groups within the non-indigenous population. By comparison, alcohol consumption in remote indigenous communities is characterised by communal drinking behaviours, with people of different genders, ages and income levels drinking the same beverages in the same locations at the same time. One important reason for the more inclusive nature of indigenous drinking is the level of poverty among these Australians. A lack of purchasing power effectively prevents the use of different forms of alcohol to communicate the differences that exist between members of the indigenous population. At the same time, however, 'drinking' and 'non-drinking' groups are more delineated amongst indigenous than non-indigenous Australians.

The second category of difference is the extent of sharing of alcohol that occurs between drinkers. Non-indigenous Australians often engage in shouting and contribution rituals while drinking, rituals that entail each individual contributing equally to the total pool of alcohol consumed by group members on each occasion. In this way, reciprocity is immediate and direct. By comparison, reciprocity amongst indigenous drinkers is more generalised and occurs over much longer time periods. Those with alcohol are expected to share with those without, thus ensuring that nobody is left out of the consumption process. Indigenous drinkers sacrificing their alcohol to others can be assured that once their supplies are exhausted they will be able to rely on others to share with them. The non-indigenous drinker without the financial resources to obtain alcohol is much less likely to participate in consumption, instead waiting until the time comes when the necessary resources are once again available.

The third area of difference is the physical locations in which drinking occurs. Reflecting their European heritage, non-indigenous drinkers tend towards indoor locations, particularly homes and pubs. The drinking patterns of indigenous drinkers reflect their closer relationship with the land, and tend towards the consumption of alcohol in outdoor locations. Such differences in consumption locations have resulted in harsher judgements of indigenous drinking, primarily because of its sheer visibility and variation from

European norms. Once again, the extreme poverty of many indigenous Australians contributes to this difference, with consumption location options severely limited by a lack of financial resources. Alcohol prices are significantly dearer in pubs compared to the bottle shops where supplies can be purchased for consumption elsewhere.

To conclude, this study of alcohol consumption in Australia identified similarities and differences in consumption patterns between non-indigenous and indigenous members of the Australian population. The differences, in particular, reflect the social and cultural variations between these two groups. The poverty levels experienced by indigenous Australians mean that they have fewer product options available to them, with most drinking the least expensive forms of beer and wine available to achieve their identity and escapism objectives. Also, their poverty largely restricts their consumption to outdoor locations, an outcome also encouraged by their cultural heritage that emphasises the importance of the land to the individual and the group. Non-indigenous Australians, by comparison, readily employ product and brand symbolism to communicate socially decreed distinctions between members of different subcultures, such as those of different genders and social classes.

In terms of contribution to the literature, this study provides an analysis of alcohol consumption that has the potential to inform public policy makers of some of the issues surrounding alcohol consumption as perceived by Australians themselves. In particular, the findings suggest that very different social marketing interventions would be appropriate for indigenous and non-indigenous Australians due to the different motivations and rituals surrounding alcohol consumption between the two groups. This wide disparity between the alcohol consumption behaviours of two Australian subcultures illustrates the need to understand the differences within cultures rather than attempting to make generalisations that may gloss over behavioural differences in an effort to provide a coherent and easily-assimilated account.

## **Footnotes**

1. In this paper the term indigenous refers to those Aboriginal Australians living in the remote outback regions of Australia, either in their own communities or as fringe dwellers of larger country towns. The terms non-indigenous and European Australians refer to the predominantly Caucasian population of the major urban cities.

2. The term *ringer* refers to a person handling cattle, like the term 'cowboy'.

3. Aborigines could apply for citizenship that was identified by the carrying of a card. However, this citizenship was subject to meeting prohibitive conditions. These included the supplying of two references from reputable citizens certifying industrious habits; evidence that citizenship would be conducive to the applicant's welfare; and that the applicant was fluent in English, was of good reputation and not suffering from disease. Citizenship could be revoked for any offence including drunkenness.

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