

# Social justice, equity and decolonising the economy

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# The (un)lucky country

- Fewer Australians than ever consider themselves fortunate, despite living in such a rich country
- Australia lacks a bill of rights, has abysmal labour laws, draconian anti-terror legislation and unprecedented government mineral rights
- Australia is among the world's worst in land clearing, species extinction and habitat destruction
- Australian exports will be responsible for 13% of global greenhouse gas emissions by 2030

# Inequality in Australia

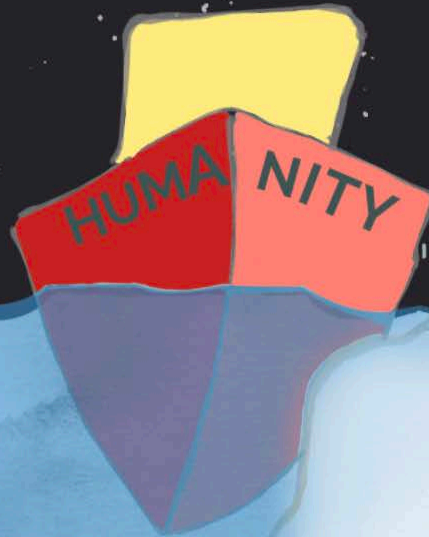
- The highest 1% of income-earners receive as much in a fortnight as the lowest 5% receive in a year
- From 2003-2016, the wealth of the top 20% rose by 53% while wealth of the lowest 20% declined by 9%
- Our community is more than ten times more culturally diverse than our elected representatives
- There are more CEOs named Andrew leading ASX200 companies than there are women

# Prosperity and inequality

- Generally, high levels of inequality are considered bad for the health, wellbeing, and cohesion of 'rich' nations while inequality is touted as a necessary part of 'beneficial' development in 'poor' nations
- In an individualist meritocratic capitalist competitive perspective, prosperity = at least some inequality
- Prosperity = equity, justice and sustainability; modern societies ignore this in squandering human potential

# THE CLIMATE ICEBERG

v. 1.0



limits  
of the  
planet

new  
populism

neoliberalism

capitalism/socialism

industrialism

colonialism/slavery

coloniality/  
separability

# Decolonisation

- Decolonisation is the process of interrupting the satisfaction we have with the so-called enjoyments, securities and entitlements afforded by modern colonial capitalist socio-political-economic system
- It is about much more than apologies, tokenistic gestures with the expectation of redemption, affirmation or gratitude; or alliance/inclusion/integration of Indigenous Peoples on colonial terms
- Decolonisation transforms understanding, sensing, being, visceral care and responsibility while confronting our fears, denials, pain, desires, rights, certainties, self-image and moral high ground

# Illusions of colonisation

- Separation (from land, other beings and each other) and superiority (denial of entanglement)
- Human centeredness, merit and innocence (denial of systemic violence and complicity in harm)
- Linear progress and the possibility of continuity (denial of the limits of the planet)
- Certainty, mastery and control that offer simplistic solutions to deep-seated problems (denial of the magnitude of the challenges we collectively face)

# Towards decolonisation

- Beyond separation between humans and nature (anthropocentrism and exceptionalism)
- Beyond a single rationality and story of progress, development, evolution and social mobility as a goal
- Beyond consumption of goods, knowledge, relationships, experiences and critique
- Beyond modern forms of social-economy (capitalism, socialism, communism), calcified hierarchies/borders as controlling relations, movement, being/becoming



# Indigenous perspectives

- Circularity, rhythms and cycles of time and space
- And/both instead of either/or binary thinking
- Wisdom, humility, respect, generosity and autonomy
- Knowing, being and doing across a diversity of senses
- Combining reason, feeling, intuition and imagination
- Caring and embodied relationship with (non-)humans, including the land, sea and sky within a living cosmos

# Indigenous

Relative autonomy within embodied constitutive  
compassionate interdependent communal  
relationships

# Modernity

Growth, order, control and exploitation within  
hyper-individualist hierarchical oppressive  
relationships



(Kwaymullina 2019)

# Foster re-localised community

- Start or join community and local groups, volunteer, mentor, skill share, time bank, donate, connect etc.
- Support ethical, local and community/customer-/worker-owned initiatives, businesses, networks etc.
- Start or join an urban/rural intentional community (garden, land care, co-housing/working, co-operative)
- Reject the ideal of competitive success and artificial scarcity and instead live slowly with pleasure in frugality, simplicity, sufficiency and radical abundance

# Think global and act local

- Seek a senseful grateful loving life that tunes in, attends to, heals, and creates flourishing and regeneration for yourself, others and all life
- Agitate, boycott, embargo, march, obstruct, petition, protest, rally, refuse, stall and strike against the system
- Reduce consumption/waste, walk/ride/bus/ train more, drive/fly less, grow food, repair, reuse, recycle
- Abolish stock/labour markets, commercial banking, compound interest, planned obsolescence, debt, private property, institutions, and nation-states

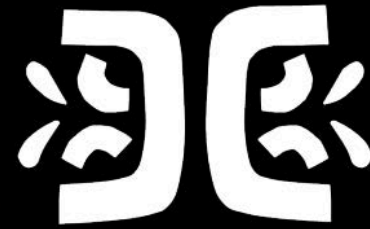
## CREATE CIRCLES, NOT LINES

Create less hierarchy and more dialogue, inclusion, and empowerment.



## BE HUMBLE LEARNERS WHO PRACTICE DEEP LISTENING

Listen deeply and approach the work with an attitude towards learning, without assumptions and predetermined solutions. Take criticism without dispute.



## PLAN WITH, DESIGN WITH

Walk with people as they imagine and realize their own futures. Be connectors, conveners, and collaborators—not representatives.



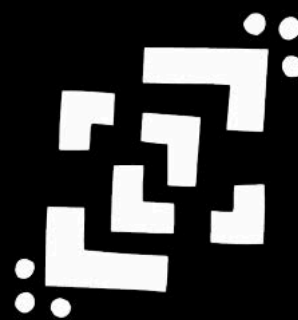
## MOVE AT THE SPEED OF TRUST

Grow trust and move together with fluidity at whatever speed is necessary.



## CENTER LIVED EXPERIENCE

Lived experience is an important expertise; center it so it can be a guide and touchstone of all work.



## SEEK PEOPLE AT THE MARGINS

Acknowledge the structures that create, maintain and uphold inequity. Learn and practice new ways of intentionally making space for marginalized voices, stories, and bodies.