

Australian Indigenous Nation Building

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THE HARVARD PROJECT ON
AMERICAN INDIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT • HARVARD UNIVERSITY



UTS: JUMBUNNA
INDIGENOUS HOUSE OF LEARNING





Introductions

What's your name?

What's your job?

Describe the community you work in



Two Views of Indigenous Australia

Colonial View

- There are blacks, whites, and ultimately you're all supposed to be the same

Indigenous View

- There are many different Indigenous *nations* and *communities*
- They have distinct preferences and needs
- They seek to be Indigenously governed
- They will interact with each other and colonial institutions in their own ways

Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development & Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management, & Policy

Why were some Native nations able to break away from a seemingly intractable pattern of poverty and what conditions were necessary for sustained community development?



NATIVE NATIONS INSTITUTE
LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND POLICY
MORRIS CENTER FOR STUDIES IN PUBLIC POLICY
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So what are the keys to making community development happen—and making it last?

- A skilled labor force
- Access to capital
- Big federal grants
- Good rules
- Natural resources
- Education
- Outside investors
- Decisionmaking authority?
- Fair enforcement of rules
- Nearby markets
- A good grant writer
- Advanced technology
- Physical infrastructure
- Lots of entrepreneurs
- Something else...?

Development Outcomes in Seven American Indian Nations (circa 1990-95)

| Nation | Nat Res | Educ | Loc | Comm Dev |
|----------------------------------|------------|------|-----|-------------|
| <i>Flathead</i> | + | +/- | + | |
| <i>Crow</i> | + | + | + | |
| <i>White Mt. Apache</i> | + | -- | + | |
| <i>San Carlos Apache</i> | + | -- | + | |
| <i>Oglala Sioux (Pine Ridge)</i> | -- | + | -- | |
| <i>Cochiti Pueblo</i> | -- | +/- | +/- | |
| <i>Mississippi Choctaw</i> | -- | -- | -- | |


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| <i>Oglala Sioux (Pine Ridge)</i> | -- | + | -- | -- |
| <i>Cochiti Pueblo</i> | -- | +/-- | +/-- | + |
| <i>Mississippi Choctaw</i> | -- | -- | -- | + |



Predictable factors matter.

But something else matters
more.



It turns out that the critical piece of
the puzzle is...

Governance

It's how your community/nation organises itself, how you (as a people) make decisions, how you resolve disputes, whether you operate under the rule of law, what message you send to both your own people and to outsiders about how the nation works.



The essential elements

- Genuine decision making ability /self-rule
- Capable/effective governing institutions
- Cultural legitimacy with the community served
- Strategic thinking
- Public spirited leadership, including succession planning

in other words...

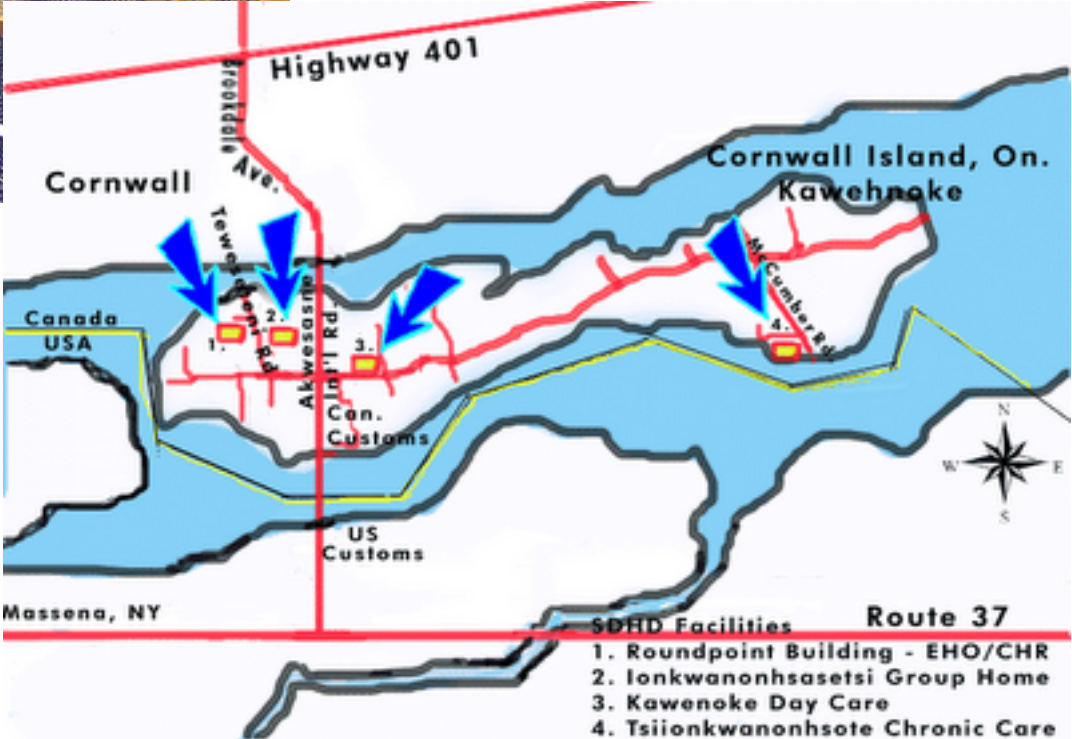
Indigenous Nation Building



**Grand Chief
Mike Mitchell**



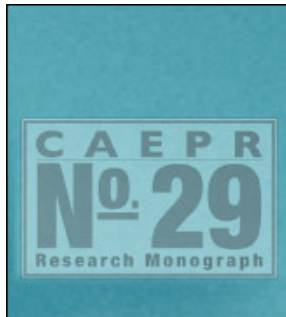
**Akwesasne
Mohawk
Nation**





Further key insights from the Indigenous Community Governance Project, 2006

J. Hunt¹ and D.E. Smith²



Research in Australia makes similar points...



Building Indigenous community governance in Australia: Preliminary research findings

J. Hunt & D.E. Smith

WORKING PAPER No. 31/2006

ISSN 1442-3871
ISBN 0 7315 4930 9



CENTRE FOR ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC POLICY RESEARCH

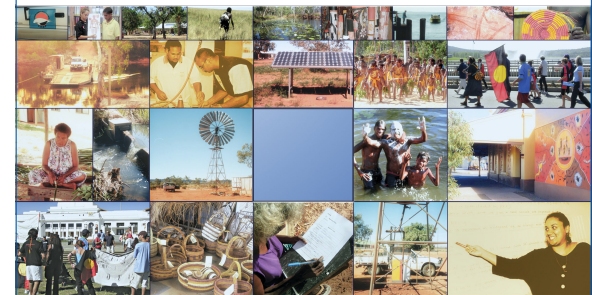
CENTRE FOR ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC POLICY RESEARCH



INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE PROJECT: YEAR TWO RESEARCH FINDINGS

J. Hunt and D.E. Smith

CAEPR WORKING PAPER No. 36/2007




ANU COLLEGE OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES




SUCCESS IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES A PILOT STUDY



AUSTRALIAN COLLABORATION
AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES


 Australian Government
 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
 Australian Institute of Family Studies

Closing the gap clearinghouse



What works to overcome
Indigenous disadvantage
 Key learnings and gaps in the evidence

Dr Fadwa Al-Yaman and Dr Daryl Higgins

2009-10



Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage

Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Key Indicators 2011 REPORT

Steering Committee
for the Review
of Government
Service Provision

2011



Characteristics of effective Australian Indigenous organisations

- Sound governance with training adapted to specific circumstances
- Efficient and responsive service delivery
- Strategic planning
- Internal and external accountability
- Engagement with the community
- Clear and transparent vision and objectives
- Flexibility and responsiveness to change
- Stewardship of relationships and partnerships



The Australian evidence emphasises:

- Genuine Indigenous control over decision making and their governance institutions
- Capable institutions and organisations that can get things done
- Cultural legitimacy in the eyes of the people they are designed to serve
- Overlapping networks of leadership and authority with succession planning



So that's the evidence...

According to the norm of evidence-based practice, what does this evidence suggest about approaches to Indigenous allied health practice?

- What does happen?
- What should happen?



Practitioner to community:

What is it about your community and workplace that aids your work?

- Can this success be understood as reflective of nation building?
- If not, does nation-building thinking provide a way to leverage the success into more success?
- Do these ideas help me bring a nation-building perspective into my practice?



Community to colonial environment:

- Nation building is a way to change the relationship between an Indigenous nation and the colonial government(s).
- Are there ways I can use nation building principles to help empower community-driven change in my practice environment?