

PATRICIA KELLY

## STUDYGUIDE

# Everyday Brave

### SERIES SYNOPSIS

**E**veryday Brave is a six-part documentary series profiling Indigenous Australians who have struggled every day against discrimination, apathy and ignorance to make a real difference. These individuals come from across the nation, from bush and city, former missions and coastal towns. Their achievements spread across fields as diverse as the arts, commerce, education, health and politics. What they share is their unwavering commitment to Australia's Indigenous peoples and to promoting their rights, culture and identity.

It is not easy to change entrenched attitudes and systems the way that most of these people have. It requires determination, courage and spirit. These six programmes, made by a team of mainly Indigenous film-makers, introduce us to remarkable individuals, each of whom has made a significant contribution to Australian society, and in particular, to their own communities. While these stories are about struggle and hardship, they also reflect warmth, joy and humour.

Kiddo Taylor, the Saltwater Bluesman, on the shores of Rubibi (Roebuck Bay)

*Often people create great change for their communities through the everyday battles that seem small at the time, but really add up in the long run. These everyday battles can take as much courage and determination as the big protest movements we've all heard about.*

—ROD FREEDMAN, SERIES PRODUCER

The *Everyday Brave* programme titles are:

- *For Who I Am - Bonita Mabo*
- *Stranger in My Skin - Ray Cotti*
- *Jetja Nai Medical Mob - Naomi Mayers*
- *Mistake Creek - Steven Craig*
- *Media Nomads - The Thaiday Brothers*
- *Saltwater Bluesman - Uncle Kiddo Taylor*

#### CURRICULUM LINKS

The *Everyday Brave* series is suitable for secondary students, tertiary students and any general audience. The programmes are particularly relevant to SOSE/HSIE, Australian Studies, Politics, Communication, Gender Studies, Indigenous Studies, Indigenous Education, Media Studies, Music, English, TESOL and ELICOS courses, Legal Studies, Law and Justice Studies and Community Health.

#### BEFORE WATCHING

#### ABOUT THE WARNING

The warning below appears at the start of each programme. Before

watching, discuss with your group or class why this warning is necessary and appropriate.

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers should exercise caution when watching this program as it may contain images of deceased persons.*

#### KEY TERMS

Indigenous, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, South Sea Islander, Reconciliation, Exemption, Stolen Generations, Native Title Legislation, Identity, Dislocation, Separation

#### TITLES

Discuss the potential meaning of the series title and the individual programme titles. How important are titles in attracting viewers to a film? After watching, revisit your discussions. How accurate were your first opinions? Ask students to suggest possible alternatives.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Ask students to devise a title for a similar programme to be made about their life to date. What themes would they want the programme to cover?

- Conduct this quick awareness survey of the group, anonymously, if that is helpful. In the last month have you:
  - o listened to an Indigenous radio programme?
  - o watched a television programme, documentary or feature film about Indigenous people?
  - o read a poem, short story or book by an Indigenous Australian writer?
  - o listened to a song by an Indigenous singer or band?
- Share the results of the survey and set work that gives students time to do one of the things they haven't already done and report back within a given time on what they have learned.
- Choose one of the many books now available about growing up as an Indigenous person in Australia and read a section aloud.
- Watch one of the short films in the series *From Sand to Celluloid*, or watch a feature film such as *Rabbit on the Moon* or *Rabbit-Proof Fence*. The book on which the latter is based is also available. (See Other Resources for more suggestions or seek advice from Aboriginal Education advisers in your area.)
  - After watching *Everyday Brave*, write a letter or an email to the film-

L-R: Catriona McKenzie, Mitch Torres, Donna Ives, Isabel Perez (Production Manager), Rod Freedman (Series Producer) (Photo: Penelope Clay)



makers, expressing your pleasure at something you enjoyed or learned from the programme that you didn't know before. Or write a review for a teenage magazine or the school magazine or a web site.

### COMMON THEMES

There are some general themes that are expressed in various ways in these stories. Other issues are specific to the stories and will be covered under those programmes.

### SEPARATION

Many of these individuals have suffered separation from family for various reasons. For example:

- Bonita Mabo was occupied with bringing up ten children (three of whom were adopted) alone, while her husband Eddie was busy fighting the Native Title case with which his name became synonymous.
- Bill and Mick Thaiday were exiled from Palm Island with their parents in the 1950s as a result of a strike for better wages and conditions. Their own families endured long separations while the brothers were busy setting up radio stations in rural communities around Australia.
- Naomi Mayers and her sisters suffered when their mother had to leave them in the orphanage in order to work in Melbourne.
- Ray Cotti was given up for adoption by his birth mother and separated from his next mother when the law changed.
- Steven Craig's father drowned in the Katherine River when he was young. His mother was around but he was raised mainly by his cousin.

### HEALTH

Health remains a major issue for Indigenous people. The standard is pitiable in comparison with other

countries. Consider the health issues that emerge in these programmes. For example:

- Eddie Mabo died at 56, from cancer.
- Ray engaged in acts of self-harm and attempted suicide. He also suffered from eating disorders.
- The Thaiday brothers spent years suffering from alcohol abuse before turning their lives around.
- Bonita's eyesight is deteriorating as a result of diabetes.
- Many of the women had teenage pregnancies.
- Malnutrition was an issue for many children in *Jetja Nai Medical Mob*.

### ACTIVITY

Choose one of these issues for more research. How does this issue impact on the life of the person in the programme and those around them?

- What does your research tell you about this health issue and the advice or support available to those living in poverty, single mothers or those suffering from a chronic disease?
- What lifestyle choices contribute to some of the diseases? What effect does living in poverty have on making appropriate lifestyle choices?
- How do your current lifestyle choices compare with the ideal as suggested by health promotion information?
- About his years as an alcoholic, Bill Thaiday says: *It's a community within a community, with a lot of people that care and share those times. You found caring and sharing here. You never found it up town or anywhere else.* What does this tell you about his



possible reasons for drinking in the first place?

### EDUCATION

Examine the role of education in the lives of any or all of these people, both negative and positive. What evidence can you see of change over time?

- Compare the opportunities your parents or grandparents had for a formal education with your own. What has changed? What is different across cultures and countries, if you have access to diverse experiences?
- What support is now available to Indigenous students to complete education through to tertiary level? Is financial support all that is needed to help students?
- Discuss the role of peer support or lack of it in helping to create an atmosphere in which we can learn and thrive. What can each of us do to contribute to a positive atmosphere at school and work?

### LEADERSHIP

Each of these people, in his or her own way is a leader, within extended families, communities and, for some, on a national scale. You will find examples of leadership within the programmes at some or all of these levels.

Allan Collins: Director/Cinematographer of *Mistake Creek*  
(Photo: Michael Hutchinson).

- Discuss the qualities of leadership. Do these vary for men and women or across cultural groups? Which are different and which are the same?
- Discuss the role of 'elders' in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Compare the ways people show respect to elders in as many cultures as you can. What forms of written and spoken and body language are appropriate in cultures you know about?
- Identify skills, attributes or qualities in these descriptions that mark these women as leaders:
  - o Naomi [Mayers] has a great sense of self. She has a great presence. She has a history of knowing where she's come from. She has very strong friendships and has a very strong family...and she's learnt from the experiences along the way, good and bad. —Andrew Refshauge
  - o Bonita Mabo: *I think the biggest dream I have now is to get the Australian South Sea Islander recognition out there. The white man can't tell stories about our people. We black people, we've got to get out there and do it ourselves.*
- What do these programmes reveal about Indigenous styles of leadership?
- Identify someone who is or has been a role model or leader for

- you. What difference has that made to your life?
- Identify someone for whom you are a role model or a leader, at however small a level. What responsibilities does this mean for you and how do you exercise those responsibilities?
- What price can you see any of these community leaders paying for their role? What do they gain and lose? What do their families gain and lose from living with people with these skills and public recognition?
- Debate the statement, 'Leaders are born, not made'.
- What steps could you take if you wanted to improve your leadership skills? Research what programs or courses are available locally. Arrange for a guest speaker to come and speak to your group about improving leadership skills.

#### WOMEN

The women in these programmes are all strong and courageous. As well as Bonita Mabo and Naomi Mayers, these include Jo-Anne Craig, Rose Thaiday, the non-Indigenous and Indigenous mothers in Ray Cotti's story and the grandmothers in all of the stories. Many have been left, for a variety of reasons, to bring up families by themselves.

- Investigate the support available to single parents today in terms of financial support, rent relief, accommodation and emotional support. What happens if they are suddenly faced with large unexpected bills for car repairs, appliances etc?
- Invite a representative of one of the large aid agencies to speak to you about families living in poverty in Australia today. Visit their web sites to see what work these organizations do.
- Draw up a character profile of one of the women in the programmes. What are the strengths that have enabled her to survive? Illustrate your choice through an incident from the relevant

programme that best exemplifies these qualities.

- Rose Thaiday, Bill's wife, not only had to live rough for many years, but had to live with an alcoholic as well. Listen to Bill speak about his years in the park and try to imagine what it might have been like for Rose. What effects might alcoholism have on the person affected and their family? What support is available to help the partners and children of alcoholic people deal with this disease?

#### GRANDPARENTS

Grandparents also play extremely important roles in the lives of some of these people.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Identify and share the different terms used for grandparents in any cultures with which you are familiar.
- Choose any of the grandparents mentioned or shown in these programmes. Tell a section of the story from their point of view. For example:
  - o From Naomi's grandmother's point of view, about when she took the children out of the orphanage, or when she was forced to give them back to the police;
  - o Ray Cotti's grandmother discovering where he was and meeting him for the first time;
  - o Bonita's grandmother telling her granddaughter about the South Sea Islanders being taken from Vanuatu and made to work in Queensland as virtual slaves. (See section in programme 1 notes for further information.)
- Write or give a short oral presentation from notes about why your grandmother or grandfather is the best. (Have some relevant short stories ready for students who may not have grandparents, or suggest an older 'significant other' as an alternative focus.)



Bonita Mabo



## OTHER RESOURCES

### WEB SITES

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent\\_Lingiari](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_Lingiari)

The Lingiari Foundation, founded in 2001 is named after Vincent Lingiari, whose story is told on these pages.

His leadership qualities are described as 'fortitude, determination, an astute and strategic nature but also wisdom, grace and profoundness.' For some short and inspirational profiles of young Indigenous women visit <http://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2015/03/06/20-inspiring-black-women-who-have-changed-australia>

### VIDEOS

Film Australia's *Australian Biography* series profiles some of the most extraordinary Australians of our time. Some of the Indigenous people included as subjects are:

Neville Bonner, who was the first Aboriginal person in Federal Parliament, representing Queensland as a Liberal Party Senator from 1971 to 1983.

Bill Harney, successful businessman and respected Aboriginal elder, who has made his way in both white and black communities.

Charles Perkins reflects

TOP-BOTTOM: Bonita Mabo; Ray Cotti with his partner Rebecca and their child.

on his life of exceptional achievement and recounts the experiences that fuelled his great anger against white injustice and his determination to fight for Aboriginal rights.

### PROGRAMME 1: FOR WHO I AM - BONITA MABO

Writer/Director: Danielle MacLean  
Producer: Priscilla Collins

Many people know of Bonita Mabo, widow of the late Eddie Mabo, and the historic native title claim they successfully fought on behalf of his Torres Strait Islander people. Few realise that Bonita is an Australian of South Sea Islander and Aboriginal descent, or how, through decades of work for indigenous rights, she raised ten children, often single-handedly. Since her husband's death, Bonita has a new campaign - rec-

ognition for her own people. In this program, she looks back over decades of struggle and commitment, and speaks of the pride she takes in sharing her heritage with her grandchildren and the wider community.

In watching this programme, it is important to clearly differentiate Aboriginal communities from Torres Strait Islander communities and both of these from the South Sea Islander communities. While institutionalised racism has affected them all, often in similar ways, they are distinct cultures and should be acknowledged as such.

Danielle Maclean says, 'this was the most enjoyable shoot that I ever had the pleasure of working on', as a result of Bonita's warm-hearted welcome and cooperation.

Bonita's close friend, Mary Lopez, describes her as 'the power behind the throne' in relation to her husband, Eddie Mabo. What might she mean? Watch the video *Mabo - Life Of An Island Man*, to help you understand Eddie Mabo's contribution to Australian history.

### ACTIVITIES

- In the programme, Bonita speaks to some school children and answers their questions. Prepare some questions for an interview you would like to conduct with Bonita. You may be able to contact some elders of an Aboriginal community in your area. (You will need



to find out appropriate protocols for approaching and speaking appropriately to an older person in an Indigenous community.) Discuss why this is an important aspect of talking to an elder.

- Identify protocols for speaking respectfully to elderly people in the cultures that you are familiar with. How are these similar? How do we learn these behaviours? What happens if we don't observe these behaviours? A simple example might be offering your seat to older people on crowded buses or trains.
- Organise a round-table role-play on the topic, 'Standing up for old people on public transport is unnecessary'. Ask students to devise a short description of the person they will be representing in the discussion. This can be an elderly person with arthritis, a passenger disgusted that young people don't stand up, a young person who sees no reason to move, a young person who wants to stand up but fears that friends will laugh and so on. Each person has only two minutes to put across his or her point of view. The audience can then discuss the issues as put forward and suggest workable solutions.

Bonita's hope is that this film will enable viewers to 'Get to know me for who I am.'

- Write a short description of Bonita Mabo as you have come to know her through this programme.
- Write a letter to her expressing your feelings about the programme, the issues raised and their impact on you.
- When the narrator states that Eddie died of cancer, the film image we see is that of a lone bird flying. How effective is this device in symbolising Eddie Mabo's life? What does it mean to you?

## THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS

In order to understand Bonita, we need to understand the story of the

South Sea Islanders. She was part of a successful campaign, spear-headed by Faith Bandler, to have the South Sea Islanders recognised as a distinct cultural group. The Queensland government formally recognised them in July 2000 and an Action Plan was endorsed in July 2001.

The Action Plan defines South Sea Islanders as:

*the Australian-born descendants of mainly Melanesian people who were brought to Queensland between 1863 and 1904. They came from eight Pacific islands but primarily from Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.*<sup>1</sup>

Appendix 1 in the Action Plan document contains a 'Recognition Statement' in which the government admits the terrible treatment these people received and expresses regret as well as its commitment to change.

For an informative background to this 'secret' history of Australia's slave trade, watch the documentary *Sugar Slaves*.

You could also read the information at the web sites below and compare the accounts of how these people came to Australia.

[www.janeresture.com/kanakas/](http://www.janeresture.com/kanakas/) is a good introduction to the story of how the Islanders were tricked or forced to board the ships that would take them to virtual slavery in Queensland. South Sea Islanders is the preferred term for the people formerly known as 'Kanakas'. This was the term used by those who kidnapped the Islanders and is said to mean 'boys'.

- Discuss the power relationship inherent in such terms. The term 'blackbirding' is similarly not appropriate today for referring to the process of removing Islanders by force. Discuss the role of euphemisms in disguising something that is inherently bad. For example, what did 'Lebensraum', (living space) and the 'Final Solution'

really mean in Nazi Germany? In a contemporary context you could discuss similar issues in relation to the 'Pacific Solution', 'Detention Camps', 'Boat People', 'Queue Jumpers' and 'Detainees'.

<http://www1.curriculum.edu.au/ddunits/guide/guide.htm> This is a guide to the Curriculum Corporation's Discovering Democracy resources and includes a section about racism in Australia and questions relating to the 'Kanakas'.

- What did you learn about this period of Australian history that you did not know before?
- Why do you think that Bonita had to ignore her culture in favour of Eddie's when she was bringing up the children?

## VANDALISM

- What is the difference between vandalism and desecration? How would you describe what was done to Eddie Mabo's grave? How does Bonita describe it? What effects did it have on her daily life?

## SUFFERING

There are many sad and touching moments in this film. For example, Bonita is in tears when she describes her pain at the fact that no one would help her to get to Canberra for the historic court decision and her feelings of hurt and rejection.

She also shares her feelings when she talks about the effects of diabetes on her eyesight. She has had to have painful laser treatment without Eddie by her side to support her.

- Investigate diabetes. What types are there? What are the statistics for diabetes within Indigenous communities? Why it is so prevalent? What lifestyle choices are involved with the rise of this disease in Australia generally and among Indigenous communities in particular?

- Bonita says, 'the white man can't tell our story'. What do you think she means by this?

## OTHER RESOURCES

### WEB SITES

Using any search engine on the Internet will reveal many sites about Eddie Mabo, his life and the significance of the Native Title decision. This one by historian Henry Reynolds is a good starting point. It is well written, accessible and full of humanising anecdotes. <http://www.australianhumanitiesreview.org/archive/Issue-April-1996/Reynolds.html>

Another useful site is <http://www.nfsa.gov.au/digitallearning/mabo/home.shtml>

For more straight talking from Bonita Mabo visit <http://indymedia.org.au/2012/06/03/aunty-bonita-mabo-wife-of-eddie-%E2%2580%2598koiki%E2%2580%2599-mabo-my-reflections-on-the-mabo-decision-20-years.html>

### PROGRAMME 2: *STRANGER IN MY SKIN* - RAY COTTI

**Writer/Director:** Darlene Johnson  
**Producer:** Rod Freedman (non-Indigenous)

Ray Cotti was born to Aboriginal parents but adopted at a young age by a Swiss German family in Sydney. Growing up in a European culture, he thought of himself as white. Then at the age of eight, Ray was removed from his adoptive family and, after living in a series of institutions, placed in foster care. By the time he was in his teens, confusion about his identity was taking a devastating toll. This is a portrait of a young man on a journey of self-discovery, searching for his origins. Now an active member of an indigenous community with a family of his own, he has found a sense of belonging. His journey is far from over but Ray Cotti is finally at home in his own skin.



Unlike the others in this series, Ray is not well known for his contributions to a particular field. His main achievement has been to survive. Ray hopes the film will be inspirational to Aboriginal people like him, 'who are trying to find their family and therefore themselves'.

**THEMES:** dislocation, identity, reconciliation, family life and personal growth

Ray's experience has been very different from Bonita Mabo's. He challenges anyone to, 'try to live in my shoes'. Ray says, 'I always classed myself as a white person, never a black, that's how I got along with the people in Sydney. Never had dark friends, always had white friends. I was a stranger in my skin'.

- Having watched the video, discuss what causes him to say this.
- The way in which Indigenous people have dealt with societal definitions of them has resulted in fragmentation and dislocation of the links of cultural their knowledge. Discuss how identity is ascribed to or prescribed for people from various cultural backgrounds.
- How do we decide who and what we are? Do we have to give up one self in order to be another? Who is an Australian? What does it mean to be bi-cultural?

### ACTIVITY

- What would you put in a drawing of your own cultural suitcase? Take time to discuss culture and then decide what to put in your cultural suitcase. Share those things you wish to share with a small group and then the whole group. What was similar? What was different?

Ray is fortunate in having his mentor, Jack.

### ACTIVITY

- Discuss the concept of a mentor and the roles they might perform in our lives. Write a job description for the mentor you would like to have, based on the criteria that best suit your needs. What are some differences between being a teacher and being a mentor?
- Who is a cultural role model for you? Why? Make a class list of cultural role models with their qualities next to them.

Ray describes his feelings of anger, blame and denial. Look at each of these feelings in turn and find the reasons behind them.

- If Ray was your friend or you had a friend with these feelings, what are some useful actions you could take to support him or her? Identify the support services available to young people in your

area. You could include religious groups, government agencies, private support groups, telephone services or web-based services. Are there separate or additional services available for young people of Aboriginal and Islander descent?

- Investigate one of these and report back on their services, accessibility, friendliness, cost and contact details.

## PARENTING

We don't hear Ray's biological mother's or father's story but Ray says, 'You have to earn being a father'. What do you think he means by this? Do you agree?

## ACTIVITIES

- Write down your own wish list for yourself as a possible future parent. What would you do the same as your parents or care-givers? What would you like to do differently for your children?
- Invite a parenting skills facilitator to talk to students about what they do and why such courses are useful.
- Identify what courses, programmes or services are avail-

able locally for young people or their parents to attend if there are problems in their relationships. This could include telephone help-lines or web-based support groups.

- Identify courses or relationship counselling services available for couples. How might issues such as gender expectations, attitudes



to money, childraising, religion and ethnicity affect relationships?

- Ray has succeeded in changing his life for the better. What are the main changes you can identify in his life in the period covered by this programme? What comments or incidents mark this change?

## ACTIVITY

If you decided to change something about your own life what would it be and how would you begin? You could devise a chart where you list:

- Your goals
- The reasons you haven't been able to achieve these yet
- Some steps towards them
- One thing you will do tomorrow to begin working towards your goals
- Identify some affordable short courses or programmes you could attend to help you on your way

## OTHER RESOURCES

### WEB SITE

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/education/publications/rightsed-bringing-them-home>

*This is the Bringing Them Home* report, an essential re-source for understanding the Stolen Generations issue and how this dislocation impacted on the lives of those affected, as well as their families today. Although Ray was adopted, many of the effects of his experience are similar to those of the Stolen Generations.

## VIDEO

Leah Purcell (director), *Black Chicks Talking*, Bungabura Productions, 2002, 52 mins.

Performer and writer Leah Purcell talks with five dynamic Indigenous women - Rosanna Angus, Kathryn Hay, Deborah Mailman, Cilla Malone and Tammy Williams - about what it means to be Aboriginal in Australia today.

**PROGRAMME 3: JETJA NAI MEDICAL MOB - NAOMI MAYERS**

Director: Catriona McKenzie Producer: Rod Freedman (non-Indigenous)

**THEMES: Politics and Policy, Aboriginal Health, Orphanages, Education**

Naomi Mayers is an Aboriginal health expert and a political activist. She joined the Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) in Sydney's Redfern in 1972, soon after it was set up. She began as its secretary and has now been its CEO for many years. Her contributions in building this small volunteer service into a national network have been recognized in her award of an Order of Australia medal.

Naomi recognizes her strength as coming from her roots on the old Cumeragunja mission, near Shepparton on the NSW-Victorian border. There she had a secure home and loving family until her parents split up and her mother left to work in Melbourne. She put Naomi and her two sisters into an orphanage in Bendigo.

**POLITICS AND POLICY**

TOP-BOTTOM: Naomi Mayers in the streets of Redfern, Sydney where the Aboriginal Medical Service is located (Photo: Michael Hutchinson); Naomi Mayers, 2001



Naomi mentions the 1967 Referendum at which Aborigines were finally 'recognised' as Australian citizens. This marked the beginning of an increased movement to cities, as Aboriginal people were granted a freedom of movement previously denied them. The population in Redfern in Sydney tripled as a result. The Aboriginal Medical Service was set up to treat those unable to pay for medical treatment or unwilling to attend hospitals.

Naomi states that in 1977 a survey of children in Redfern revealed that about 25% of the under-five year olds were malnourished. Discuss the possible reasons for this.

- Discuss the reasons why Aboriginal people might have been reluctant to visit public hospitals.
- What can an Indigenous health service offer that would not be available in an outpatient facility at the local hospital?
- Use the Internet and other resources to identify the main health issues that affect Indigenous people in Australia today.
- The 1960s referendum was a significant policy change. What have been some major policy changes impacting on Indigenous Australians in the last ten years?
- The community-controlled model of the health centre is now regarded as a model, not just for Indigenous health care, but for any community. What are the current problems that you see in your health service and how might a community health service help you?
- Naomi says that making any progress 'is a constant fight'. Who or what do you think the fight is against? What might change the situation?

#### DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

This is never a comfortable or easy topic to raise in multicultural classrooms in which some students may be unaware of the privilege that their colour, class or ethnicity give them

on a daily basis. Such discussions need preparation and preliminary discussion. The concept of 'triggers' may be helpful. Each of us may experience emotions triggered by certain comments. Videos are a very good way to introduce discussion on sensitive issues as you can discuss issues in general before looking at issues on a more local or personal level.

- Discuss the meaning of the terms 'discrimination' and 'racism'. What kinds of discrimination and racism exist in Australia today?
- Ask students to think of a time when they felt discriminated against, for whatever reason, (age, dress, ethnicity, religion, gender, place in family, etc). Write up the words which describe their feelings.
- Naomi's answer to being called 'nigger and black' was to have fist fights with the girls who abused her. What non-violent strategies could be used to deal with this kind of abuse?

#### ACTIVITIES

- Students could write about an incident they witnessed or were a part of, on a card, removing names and identification, wherever possible. These cards can be put into a box and then shuffled. Ask students to form groups of three and choose one of these incidents to discuss and suggest strategies to deal with them. This could lead to writing a code of conduct to guide their behaviour with each other.
- Students need to know what protection is available to them if they are harassed or discriminated against in any aspect of

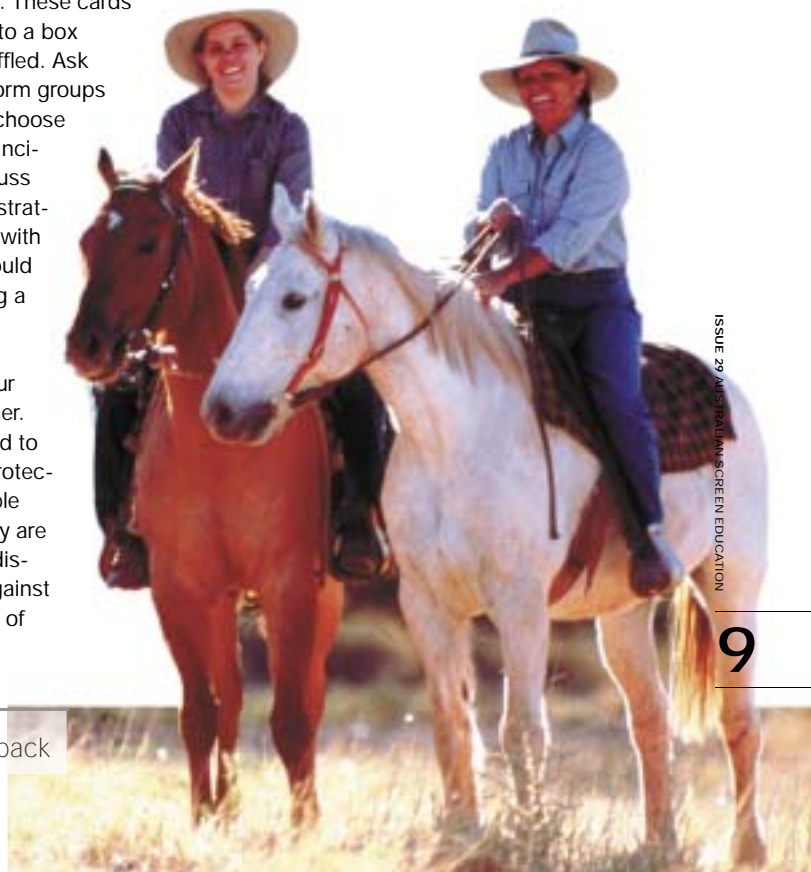
their lives, and which laws may apply if they choose to use such behaviour against others. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission is a watchdog and a place to seek redress in cases of genuine discrimination. Find out more by visiting [www.hreoc.gov.au](http://www.hreoc.gov.au).

- Ask students to read through the daily press to find an example of hatred or discrimination that has ended either badly or well. This can provide an opportunity for further research on the place or the event, using the resource centre and web-based information.
- The Aboriginal Medical Service sponsored the first Aboriginal float in the Mardi Gras parade in support of gay and lesbian Aborigines. What additional pressures or problems could being homosexual create for an Indigenous person?

#### MEMORIES

One of Naomi's bad memories was her argument with a nun at the orphanage. What has changed since then to make such maltreatment of children more difficult to hide?

Jo-Anne Craig and her daughter Lindsie on horseback





was because...I always thought that the best education for your kids is at school, but when we shifted out here I realized your kids get a better education doing School of the Air because it is one-on-one'.

- What advantages can you see to this kind of education? What would you miss if you suddenly had to do all your schooling at home?

#### RELATIONSHIPS

Jo-Anne was very unhappy when she first moved to the bush with Steven until she took an auntie's advice to start joining in with Steven. What sacrifices did Steven make for her and she make for him?

#### ACTIVITIES

- What makes a successful long-term relationship? Brainstorm behaviours and attitudes that will cause a relationship to fail, whether it is between a boy and a girl or a couple in a long-term adult relationship.
- Write down ten things you would like in an ideal partner. Relate a few that you are comfortable to share with others. Which could you compromise on? Which would prove too difficult for you to change?
- Daniel, their son, says about his father, 'He's taught me a lot of stuff. And he's proud of what he taught me, I'm proud of him for what he's done to this place too.' What evidence does this programme provide of Steven's successful management of the station? Identify the skills you would need to do this job well.

#### TEENAGE PREGNANCIES

Jo-Anne had one child when she was in her teens, before she met Steven. What do you consider the ideal age for having a child? What are the ideal conditions that you would like to have for raising a child?

#### ACTIVITIES

- Choose one of Naomi's good memories and one of her bad ones. What made them either 'good' or 'bad'?
- Choose one of your own 'good' memories and describe it. Share it with a partner. What do your 'good' memories have in common?

#### RECOGNITION

Naomi received an Order of Australia for her services to community health. What is an Order of Australia?

- Visit It's An Honour at [www.itsanhonour.gov.au/](http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/) and investigate the system of service awards. Who can nominate someone for an award and what kinds of service make someone eligible? Use the official award nomination form available from the web site to write a nomination for someone you believe deserves recognition.

#### PROGRAMME 4: MISTAKE CREEK-STEVEN CRAIG

**THEMES:** Rural Life, Success, Education, Relationships, Separation

Steven Craig manages a highly successful cattle station on the Western Australia- Northern Territory border, for the Mistake Creek Aboriginal

community.

He was born in Alice Springs and when Steven was six his father drowned. Steven did not like school and left home at 13. He was fortunate that a cousin took him into the bush, away from the potential trouble of town life. His achievement is not just his success as a manager but his strong marriage that has survived both stress and separation. He married Jo-Anne, a 'town girl' who was reluctant to join him in the bush because she thought the children would miss out on an education.

#### EDUCATION

Steven spent a lot of time on the station with his grandparents and would have preferred to stay there, but 'the welfare used to come out, pick us up and take us back to school...I went right through Grade 7, in the front door and straight out the back. That was the end of education for me'.

- What might 'the welfare' point of view have been?
- What do you think his grandparents' view might have been?
- Steven says this with humour but there is a serious question behind his comment. How do you think the education system may have failed Steven?

Jo-Anne says, 'One of the main reasons I didn't want to live out bush

- Discuss the possible effects that being a teenage parent would have on career options.
- What would you expect from the other parent of your child? What would you be able to compromise on and what would you find difficult? For example, if your partner was a different religion from you, how would you negotiate your child's upbringing?
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having children when you are young, and of parenting when you are older.



**PROGRAMME 5: MEDIA NOMADS  
– THE THAIDAY BROTHERS**

**Writer/Director:** Donna Ives. **Producer:** Rod Freedman

**THEMES:** Politics, Punishment, Family, Media (including BRACS - Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities)

This programme tells the story of Bill and Mick Thaiday, father figures in Aboriginal broadcasting. Their aim has been to give voice to Aboriginal people, where their parents and grandparents had none.

The brothers grew up on Palm Island in the 1950s, under the Aboriginal Protection Act, when the island was run like a prison. Their family left the island when their father was branded a troublemaker for being part of a group that protested about the conditions. When Bill grew up, he worked for several years on the railways before drift-

ing into alcoholism, eventually spending much of his time with his brother drinking wine in a Townsville park.

**ACTIVITY**

- Compare Bill's account of their removal from Palm Island with the voice over version from the media report of the time.

Official Report, 1957:

In an early morning operation, police rounded up seven Aborigines for transport to the mainland under a removal order. Twenty-five Palm Island Aborigines left Townsville under police escort on the Brisbane mail train last night. Three of the families will go to the Cherbourg settlement, Murgon and the remainder to Woorabinda near Rockhampton.

Bill Thaiday, 2001:  
*...they [the police] said, well you can*

*please yourself, you can either stay or get on the boats, so we said, no we getting on the boat. More or less going with what clothes we had on...It was guns, they come armed with sub-machine guns to Palm Island and this is why I based my life on these people. For their fight for freedom, recognition of basic human rights, they were called troublemakers.*

- What impression do you think the listening audience would have gained from the 1957 official report?
- What does the official report leave out?
- What does it assume about its listeners and their values?
- What has changed, to prevent this happening to Aboriginal people today?

**CIVIL LIBERTIES**

Bill speaks of his 'exemption card'. What was the significance of the exemption card? This site contains information about what was on these cards: <https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/series/17194>

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/chapter-4-introduction-social-justice-report-2009>

This is the index to



TOP-BOTTOM: Bill Thaiday, 2001; Mick Thaiday, 2001



Indigenous Social Justice Strategies and Recommendations from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. It provides a readable and comprehensive background about why and how policy needs to change. The commissioner writes, 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social justice is not simply the concern of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders ourselves, and those specific offices designated to deal with us. It is a fundamental problem of the relationship between different cultures and peoples involving the whole of Australian society.'

Older students could read and report back on one of the sections of this or similar documents.

[www.abc.net.au/message/radio/](http://www.abc.net.au/message/radio/) Use this section of the ABC's web site to check what's on the Indigenous radio programmes *Away* and *Speaking Out*. These are entertaining programmes which are also an invaluable source of current information about Indigenous opinions, issues, events and the arts.

Use the ABC's Indigenous Links page to connect with a variety of web pages related to Indigenous issues. You can even link to the band Yothu Yindi and create your own Yothu Yindi sound. It includes a video link welcome by the leader of the band, Mandawuy Yunupingu (school

principal, Honorary PhD and former Australian of the Year).

#### MEDIA

This is a scholarly paper about the reasons for the success of BRACS in the Warlpiri community (NT). [www.dcita.gov.au/crf/paper99/lydia.html](http://www.dcita.gov.au/crf/paper99/lydia.html)

#### PROGRAMME 6: SALTWATER BLUESMAN - UNCLE KIDDO TAYLOR

**Writer/director:** Mitch Torres **Producers:** Rod Freedman and Jeffrey Bruer (non-Indigenous)

Chris Taylor, better known as 'Uncle Kiddo', is an influential Broome musician. Mitch Torres, a journalist and film-maker from Broome, wanted Uncle Kiddo 'to know how much he means to the musicians and people of Broome' while he was alive. She fitted the theme of this series as a positive story of achievement against the odds.

Through Uncle Kiddo's life, we see what Broome was like in the days when society was segregated along racial and class lines. Uncle Kiddo recalls having to duck behind the piano when he was playing because the police would check that there were 'no blacks in the pub'. As soon as they left he would come out and start playing again. Uncle Kiddo is a

'seaside person', supplementing his pension with fishing and shell gathering. He has had a significant impact on a generation of younger musicians including the Pigram Brothers, now famous and part of Broome's rich multicultural music scene. There is also archival film of Uncle Kiddo's long-time partner, the late Michael Mathews, 'Uncle Micky'.

The film is not just one person's story and a musical history, but one view of the history of a whole town. 'Broome' is a western name. This is really 'Yawuru country – home of the first people'. Then followed migrant pearlers and others; Chinese, Japanese, Filipino and Indonesian. Uncle Kiddo traces his musical talent to his Trinidadian grandfather. Although Europeans were the minority, segregation was strictly enforced for many years. 'Music was the force that broke down the barriers...and made it possible for people to get together'.

Until the late 1800s the vast majority of the pearl divers were Indigenous. Many were slaves, seized by force and made to work. Their only payment was rations and if they tried to run away, they could be jailed. As a fifteen-year-old, Uncle Kiddo was registered as a 'half-caste' and paid the minimum rate.

This situation improved somewhat in Uncle Kiddo's time, but police could still stop any Aborigine and if they had less than ten shillings in their pocket, they could be arrested for vagrancy. According to 'Auntie Georgie' (Georgina Dodson), when she was young, no 'coloured' people were allowed on the streets after 6 pm. Her mother was caught doing so and sent to punishment camp, while her children were put into the orphanage. Having sexual relations with a person of another race was punishable by six months jail. These laws began to change only as recently as the late 1950s.

#### BROOME AND RECONCILIATION

[www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/)

ABOVE: Kiddo Taylor, the Saltwater Bluesman, with musical partner Micky Mathews in 1987 (photo courtesy Michael Manolis)

IndigLRes/car/1997/3/  
book5/Pages/1Community/  
07comm03.htm

This is a short and interesting web site summarising the cooperation between the three main Aboriginal groups in Broome and the shire council to bring about formal recognition of the roles and rights of Aboriginal people in the area. An interim agreement was signed in May 1996, between the Shire of Broome and the Aboriginal communities.

Under the agreement:

- The Shire of Broome acknowledges that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of the Broome region, and it remains their traditional country according to their continuing law, traditions and customs.
- The Aboriginal community recognises that non-Aboriginal people colonized the Broome area and respects the continuing rights and interests of all people in the area.
- The Shire of Broome acknowledges and respects the Aboriginal



law, customs, traditions and the special relationship Aboriginal people have with their country.

- It is acknowledged that Aboriginal people have a right to speak for their country, and have obligations imposed upon them to look after their traditional country according to laws, customs and traditions.

#### ACTIVITY

- Read this excerpt and visit the web site. What evidence of compromise do you think each side has made in this agreement? What changes do you think such an agreement might make to life

in Broome for all communities? Does such an agreement exist in your area?

#### BROOME AND TOURISM

Tourism is now a major part of Broome's local economy. Visit the History and Culture page of the Eco Beach web site at [www.ecobeach.com.au/about/history.htm](http://www.ecobeach.com.au/about/history.htm) and complete the suggested activities as follows:

- Assess the site from the point of view of a tourist intending to visit the area. What would you expect to do there? As an eco-tourist,



TOP-BOTTOM: Kiddo Taylor on stage with Broome musicians at his 1999 tribute concert; Kiddo Taylor with writer/director Mitch Torres.

what would be your responsibilities? How do they differ from being any other sort of tourist?

- Write a similar description for your town or your favourite scenic spot.
- How would you rate yourself in terms of your responsible behaviour towards the Australian environment?
- What, if anything, would you have to change about your life choices in order to be considered a responsible global citizen?

### BROOME AND MUSIC

- Music plays an important role in many of these people's lives as we see them in these programmes. How has the music been created or changed by each Indigenous community? What roles does it play in their lives and of those who share it?

### ACTIVITIES

- Identify and discuss the different kinds of music that are used in any of these programmes. How are they used to create atmosphere or to add emphasis to the narrative?
- How important is music in your life? Identify the different kinds of music that students enjoy. What kinds of music suit different moods? What music is special to certain times and places? Bring a piece of music to discuss and share with the group.
- Identify and play a variety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music. A starting point could be this music site, which includes pictures of many of the Broome musicians. If you have the software, you can also listen to some of their music. <http://naidoc.gme.com.au/thebands.html>

### TELLING STORIES

This beautifully illustrated site describes some new children's books from Indigenous writers and illustrators.

[www.antiquesandart.com.au/ArticleOwnWords.htm](http://www.antiquesandart.com.au/ArticleOwnWords.htm)

### ACTIVITIES

- Read the information on the site. Why is it important to tell our stories? Why is it particularly important for these Indigenous writers to tell stories in both English and their community languages?
- Ask each student to choose an incident from their own childhood that they are happy to share. Write it as a short story that they could read to their own children one day. They can illustrate with drawings, photographs or a collage from magazines.
- Discuss the consequences when languages 'die out'. What does the world lose when it loses a language?

### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Department of the Premier and Cabinet (2001), *Queensland Government Action Plan*, p. 2
- <sup>2</sup> Department of the Premier and Cabinet (2001), *Queensland Government Action Plan*, p. 2.

### REFERENCES

#### AUDIO-VISUAL RESOURCES

Richard Frankland, Darlene Johnson, Bill McCrow, Sally Riley, Rima Tamou, Warwick Thornton, *From Sand to Celluloid*, 1996. A series of six short films from Indigenous Australian filmmakers.

Trevor Graham, *Mabo – Life of an Island Man*, 1997, Film Australia, 87 mins. A film about Eddie Mabo - the man whose name lives on in a High Court ruling that has forever altered Australian life.

Trevor Graham, *Sugar Slaves*, 1995, Film Australia, 55 mins.

Trevor Graham & Rob Wellington, *Mabo – The Native Title Revolution*, 2000, Film Australia, CD-Rom and web site. An extensive multimedia resource that explores a landmark in Australian history—the Mabo case—as well as related issues from colonisation and indigenous culture to land rights and native title. For a preview see [www.mabonativetitle.com](http://www.mabonativetitle.com)

Phillip Noyce, *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, 2002, Miramax Films, 1 hr 34 min.

Monica Pellizzari, *Rabbit on the Moon*, 1987, Australia, AFTRS, 20 mins.

#### *Everyday Brave*

A Film Australia National Interest Program in association with Macumba Media Enterprises and CAAMA Productions. Produced with the support and assistance of ScreenWest, the Lotteries Commission of Western Australia, the National Council for the Centenary of Federation and the Australia Council and in association with the NSW Film and Television Office, Pacific Film and Television Commission and SBS Independent.

Series Producer: Rod Freedman

Executive Producer: Mark Hamlyn

Duration: 6 x 26 min

Year of Production: 2001

This study guide written for ATOM by Patricia Kelly, a Brisbane-based writer, in consultation with Maureen Ah Sam, a lecturer in the Oodgeroo Unit at the Queensland University of Technology, with many years experience at all levels of education and in working with Indigenous communities.

Study guide © NFSA and ATOM.

For information about ATOM study guides or The Speakers' Bureau visit our web site, [www.metromagazine.com.au](http://www.metromagazine.com.au)

For information about Film Australia's programmes, contact:

National Film and Sound Archive of Australia  
Sales and Distribution

PO Box 397 Pyrmont NSW 2009

T +61 2 8202 0144 | F +61 2 8202 0101

E: [sales@nfsa.gov.au](mailto:sales@nfsa.gov.au) | [www.nfsa.gov.au](http://www.nfsa.gov.au)

