

Putting Meat on the Bones of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

*Megan Davis**

As an Aboriginal woman from South West Queensland who grew up in South East Queensland from Cobble-Cobble Country, I'd like to acknowledge the Kaurna people, the traditional owners of this country and pay my respects to the elders past and present.

Introduction

It was a privilege to be asked to deliver the 2013 Elliott Johnston memorial lecture. His work, especially as a Commissioner of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody is venerated by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and this is a tribute to his many achievements and his passion for Indigenous rights, as both a commissioner and as a jurist. As a very junior academic about a decade ago I was invited by him and Daryle Rigney and Martin Hinton to contribute a chapter to their seminal text *Indigenous Australians and the Law*. It is a very kind thing when senior scholars and jurists invite relatively unknown junior academics to contribute to their texts and so I was very appreciative. I think it was one of my first publications.

In preparing for today's lecture I was reflecting upon this region and this State and my own connections with the people here in South Australia and here at Flinders. In 2009 I was invited by Shaun Berg to contribute to a book on South Australia's Letters Patent, and most recently I was privileged to visit here as a member of the Prime Minister's Expert Panel on the Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Constitution. In that work we visited Adelaide and in particular Murray Bridge. I had a conversation with Mick Gooda on the weekend, because we were impressed by the consultation that we had at Murray Bridge, particularly with members of the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority. They also submitted a very significant submission to the public consultation process for the Expert Panel's work. The panel, in its deliberations, has been exposed to the exciting innovation in governance that is occurring in South Australia and by reading the work of Steve Hemming and Daryle Rigney.

* This lecture was delivered in 2013. It is an edited version of the audio record of the lecture.

This is a preview. Not all pages are shown.