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Attitudes toward Indigenous Australians:
The role of empathy and guilt

Anne Pedersen¹, Jaimie Beven¹, Iain Walker¹, and Brian Griffiths²
¹ Murdoch University
² Curtin University of Technology


Author notes. Correspondence should be addressed to Anne Pedersen at the School of Psychology, Murdoch University, Murdoch, WA, 6150, Australia (email address A.Pedersen@murdoch.edu.au). We gratefully thank Mike Innes (University of Adelaide) for his early input in the study, and Ngaire Donaghue (Murdoch University) for her very useful comments on an earlier draft (although the authors take full responsibility for the views stated herein). Finally, we thank Murdoch University Research Infrastructure Fund Grant for providing the funds for this survey.

Running Head: Attitudes toward Indigenous Australians
Abstract.
Previous research in Perth, Western Australia, finds a disturbing amount of prejudice against Indigenous Australians. At the forefront of much prejudice research has been the distinction between old-fashioned and modern prejudice. We constructed an Attitude Toward Indigenous Australians scale from items originating from qualitative data. We found that negative attitudes were predicted by collective guilt about past and present wrongs to Indigenous Australians (collective guilt directly linked to Indigenous issues, as well as collective guilt generally). Negative attitudes were also predicted by a lack of empathy for Indigenous Australians, and affective perspective taking generally. Socio-demographics (e.g., a lack of education) predicted negative attitudes, which indicate the necessity of taking both social-psychological and socio-demographic factors into account when examining the nature of prejudice. A number of practical implications arise from these findings arise.
Previous research in Perth, Western Australia, finds a great deal of prejudice against Indigenous Australians (e.g., Pedersen, Griffiths, Contos, Bishop & Walker, 2000). Given the efforts made by state and federal governments toward Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, this is disturbing indeed. Although there is a dearth of information regarding the impact of prejudice and racism on the well-being of Indigenous Australians, some research suggests that the perception of hostility from the outside community is significantly related to Indigenous mental health problems, suicidal behaviour, non-prescribed drug use, police problems, and prison experiences (South Australian Health Commission, 1991). It would seem, therefore, that understanding the roots of such prejudice is a worthwhile undertaking.

A new Attitudes toward Indigenous Australians scale

Research has distinguished between two kinds of prejudice (Duckitt, 1992, Pedersen & Walker, 1997): an 'old-fashioned' form characterised by overt hostility and rejection, and a 'modern' form which is more subtle and covert involving individualistic values. It would appear that old-fashioned prejudice is decreasing over the years. In the Australian setting, Western (1969) found more old-fashioned prejudice against Indigenous Australians than Walker (1990) who found more prejudice than Pedersen and Walker (1997).

Most theoretical and empirical work on modern prejudice originated in the USA (e.g., Henry & Sears, 2002; Kinder, 1986; McConahay, 1986; McConahay & Hough, 1976), with some having been conducted in Europe (e.g., Akrami, Ekehammar, & Araya, 2000; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995) and South Africa (Duckitt, 1991). In an Australian study, Pedersen and Walker (1997) found that although factor analysis showed that the two constructs were separable, the two forms of prejudice were moderately correlated. Pedersen et al. (2000) found modern and old-fashioned forms of prejudice to be highly correlated. In another Australian study, Fraser and Islam (2000a) similarly found symbolic and blatant racism to be highly correlated. In a later paper based on this data (Fraser & Islam, 2000b), they found symbolic and blatant racism to be separable, although this model was only marginally better to a one-factor solution. They further found that racial resentment (resentment because another group is seen to receive more
than it deserves) underpinned modern prejudice against Indigenous Australians and Asian immigrants. Nevertheless, modern and old-fashioned prejudice seem to have different predictive value. For example, Fraser and Islam (2000a), Pedersen & Walker, McConahay (1982), and Sidanius, Devereux and Pratto (1992) all found that modern prejudice was more successful than old-fashioned prejudice in predicting variables linked to prejudice. Yet Pettigrew and Meertens found that modern prejudice (defence of traditional values) was not as successful as blatant prejudice in predicting variables linked to racial issues such as relative deprivation. It is worth noting that the modern prejudice construct originated in the US many years ago, and may now be dated. It seems time for a new examination of negative attitudes in Australia.

Methodological issues also need to be addressed. Research findings surrounding the modern and old-fashioned prejudice distinction will obviously be constrained by the sorts of questions that are asked. This can be illustrated by an unpublished Western Australian study by the authors conducted in 1997 that examined the two forms of prejudice. Items included Augoustinos, Ahrens, and Innes’ (1994) modern prejudice scale as well as Walker’s (1994) old-fashioned prejudice scale. When factoring analysing all items together, there were three factors with eigenvalues over 1; however, the scree plot implied a one meaningful factor solution with a reliability of .89. The findings described above beg the question: what are we really measuring? It could well be argued that researchers need to defend the selection of questions used in their surveys.

The role of empathy, guilt, and socio-demographics in the prediction of negative attitudes toward Indigenous Australians

A second, and conceptually more substantial, issue considered in our research was the role of empathy when predicting attitudes toward Indigenous Australians. The relationship between empathy and attitudes to stigmatised groups is robust and enduring (Batson, Chang, Orr & Rowland, 2002), with one possible explanation for this relationship being the relative importance of affective components in the formation of intergroup attitudes (Esses & Dovidio, 2002). Australian research indicates a significant relationship between empathy and attitudes toward Indigenous Australians (Batterham, 2001); in addition, there is evidence that inducing empathy reduces racism levels (e.g.,
Finlay & Stephan, 2000). We sought to investigate the influence of empathy directly related to Indigenous issues and the relative influence of both affective and cognitive forms of dispositional empathy. Two forms of dispositional empathy were considered important - empathic concern and perspective taking - as they provided an indication of both affective and cognitive dispositional empathy. Empathic concern refers to an individual’s dispositional tendency to experience feelings of concern for others, while perspective taking is an individual’s tendency to attempt to understand another’s plight (Davis, 1994). Karacanta and Fitness (2003) found that induced empathic concern among heterosexuals predicted willingness to help out in a gay/lesbian anti-violence programme. However the relationship between attitudes toward Indigenous Australians and the different forms of empathy are unknown.

We were also interested in the role of collective guilt in predicting attitudes toward Indigenous Australians. We define guilt as an “emotional response of feeling bad about actions, and not to a legal definition of whether someone is responsible for some action” (McGarty, Pedersen, Leach, Mansell, Waller, and Bliuc (under review). Some research would support a link between guilt and prejudice; for example, in the American setting Branscombe, Slugojski and Kappen (in press) found that participants low in racism scored significantly higher on collective guilt than those high in racism. Karacanta and Fitness (2003) also found that self-induced guilt predicted support for the gay/lesbian anti-violence programme. Other research has found that collective guilt is related to ‘racial’ issues. For example, Harvey and Oswald (2000) found that white college students displayed support for Black programmes after being exposed to stimuli to induce collective guilt (a civil rights video). In another study, Iyer, Leach, and Crosby (2003) found that white guilt predicted support for compensatory affirmative action. In the Australian setting, McGarty et al. (Study One, under review) found that collective guilt predicted support for a government apology to Indigenous Australians. In a second study, collective guilt was positively related to perceived non-Indigenous responsibility for harsh treatment of Indigenous people (McGarty et al.). Thus, it is likely that attitudes toward Indigenous Australians are influenced by feelings of collective guilt.

Finally, we were interested in the impact of socio-demographics such as education, age, political leanings, or gender on attitudes toward Indigenous Australians.
Although effect sizes are often small, some research has found relationships between socio-demographic variables and prejudice. For example, lower levels of formal education, right-wing political orientation, and being male have been linked with both modern and old-fashioned prejudice (Pedersen & Walker, 1997; Pedersen et al., 2000) as well as increased age (Pedersen et al., 1997). Because age, political orientation, gender and level of education have been shown to be predictors of prejudice in past research, it is useful to assess their importance compared with the social-psychological variables described above.

Overview of the present paper
There were two primary aims of the present paper. The first aim was to construct a scale measuring attitudes toward Indigenous Australians (ATIA scale) based on statements made by the general population rather than relying on constructs originating in the United States such as the modern racism scale.

The second aim was to explore the scale’s relationship with variables that have variously been connected with previous prejudice literature such as empathy, collective guilt, and socio-demographics in predicting attitudes toward Indigenous Australians. To our knowledge, these relationships have not been explored in the one study before.

It is important to note that the findings from overseas studies (in particular, American and European studies) are interesting and important. However, there are contextual differences between cultures; e.g., when comparing the situation of Indigenous Australians with that of African Americans (see Walker, 2001). There are proportionally fewer Indigenous Australians than African-Americans as well as status differences (e.g., there are no Indigenous Australians holding such powerful positions in government as Colin Powell). Thus, it would be interesting to establish whether similar relationships among the variables apply in Australia.

Two samples
The data reported in this paper are based on two samples.
suburbs were classified as high, medium and low in socio-economic terms. Then, one suburb from each of these categories was chosen at random. Questionnaires and accompanying letters were delivered to potential respondents, and two weeks later a reminder letter was delivered. A total of 122 questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of 27%. Pertinent socio-demographic characteristics are as follows. Most respondents were quite well educated (37% had attended or were attending a tertiary institution). The political viewpoint of the sample was moderate (29% at 'Centre' on a five-point scale from left-wing to right-wing), with a slight tendency for subjects to lean toward the right. There were equal numbers of males and females (51% females). The mean age was 48.46 years (SD = 17.30).

Sample B: A sample of 500 Perth residents were drawn from three randomly selected suburbs in the metropolitan area of Perth, Western Australia in July 2002 (the same method as for sample A). Again, questionnaires and accompanying letters were delivered to potential respondents selected and two weeks later a reminder letter was delivered. A total of 157 questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of 31.4%. Pertinent socio-demographic characteristics of the samples are as follows. Most respondents were quite well educated (59% had attended or were attending a tertiary institution). The political viewpoint of the sample was moderate (29% at 'Centre' on a five-point scale from left-wing to right-wing), with approximately equal amounts of respondents reporting moderate ‘left’ vs ‘right’ views. There were more females (55%) than males, and the mean age of the sample was 51 years (SD=16.8) which is considerably older than the average age in sample A.

Construction of Attitudes toward Indigenous Australians Scale
As suggested in the introduction, there is reason to believe that prejudice in Australia may not be as simple as “old-fashioned” or “modern”. In an attempt to deal with this, we took the free-response (qualitative) data from past Perth surveys on Indigenous issues and people, and from them constructed 100 statements (e.g., ‘Urban Aborigines tend to be pretty hostile’) using the “grounded method” of collecting data. Several questions were similar to modern prejudice/racial resentment questions. Apart from the fact that
sentiments like these are commonplace in Australian society, this may also have occurred because the qualitative data we used to construct the questions came at the end of traditional prejudice questions so they easily came to participants’ minds. We also reversed some sentiments; as Henry and Sears (2003) note, modern prejudice items are often negatively worded which may lead to acquiescence biases. After reversing the wording of some statements, they were then given to three Australian experts in the prejudice field who sorted them into different themes. Major themes found were cultural awareness/history, stereotypes (both positive and negative), hostility, and individualism. Items that were considered to be the best examples of the themes were selected to form a 24-item scale. Half of the items were positive, and the remainder was negative.

In order to examine how this scale performed, it was administered to a sample A. The results were subjected to a principal axis analysis. Three items were deleted due to participants’ problems with answering them (a number of participants made comments about the questions being “unanswerable”) leaving a total of 21 items. Four initial factors with eigenvalues greater than one were found. However, the scree plot clearly implied no more than two factors. The first factor may be defined as a general attitude toward Indigenous Australians. There was some ambiguity about the second factor. Items all related to culture, but all items were positively worded. A culture-based factor would support the findings of Coenders, Scheepers, Sniderman, & Verberk (2001) who found when attempting to replicate the Pettigrew and Meertens (1995) study that two factors emerged: one general factor and another which they labelled “perceived cultural differences”. Yet in another study, Hamberger and Hewstone (1997) found different factors again depending upon country of origin when re-analysing the Pettigrew and Meertens items.

Our analysis indicated that the split could have been on the basis of a general factor and a second smaller subscale comprised entirely of positively worded items. Although some research finds that a positive and negative distinction is meaningful and useful (e.g., Gaertner & McLaughlin, 1983), some research suggests it is not (e.g., Dunbar, Ford, Hunt, & Der, 2000). In order to clarify the ambiguity in the second factor three negatively worded culture items (‘Aboriginal culture is not very advanced’; ‘I don’t like
the family based culture of urban Aboriginal people’; ‘Aborigines should do more to fit in with Australian culture’) were added to the scale and the new scale administered to sample B. A principal axis analysis suggested that the second factor was in fact made up of positively worded items rather than a cultural factor. The reliability of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} factor was unsatisfactory (.64) and was poorly predicted by the independent variables outlined later in this paper\textsuperscript{1}. Coenders et al. similarly found their second cultural factor had poor discriminatory power.

In the light of this finding it was decided to present all of the original items as a single scale. After examination of the corrected item-total correlations (CITC), it was found that three items produced CITC on or under the desired .30 and were subsequently deleted from the scale leaving a total of 18 items (see Table 1) with a reliability of .93. These items were a blend of blatant anti-Indigenous statements, more “modern” ones, as well as items surrounding Indigenous issues (e.g., the role of the media).

The role of empathy, collective guilt, and socio-demographics: Part One.
No research has examined guilt and empathy together in relation to prejudice. We do this here, and are also interested in examining the role of socio-demographic variables as outlined earlier in this paper.

Method
Sample A was administered a questionnaire. Scales were used to measure negative attitudes toward Indigenous Australians, collective guilt, empathy, and racial resentment. In each case, items were responded to on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = 'disagree strongly' to 7 = 'agree strongly'). After appropriate recoding, responses to items in each

\textsuperscript{1} Regression analyses were conducted independently for the full scale (18 items) and the small subscale (as indicated by the factor analysis). The full scale produced a model that accounted for 55\% of the variance. The regression analysis using the smaller subscale did not produce results with the same number of significant predictors, although the general pattern of prediction was similar to that of the full scale. Additionally, the model only accounted for 26\% of the variance. It was concluded that splitting the ATIA scale into two subscales (one small and one large) added nothing to the analysis and was unwise given the poor reliability of the smaller subscale (\(\alpha = .64\)).
scale were summed so that high scores indicated greater negative attitudes, empathy, collective guilt, and racial resentment.

**Attitudes toward Indigenous Australians** (the “ATIA” scale). The 18-item ATIA scale was used. The higher the score, the higher the negative attitude.

**Collective Guilt.** We used two items adapted from Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, and Manstead (1998): *I don’t think that non-Aborigines today should feel guilty about the negative things done to Aborigines* (reversed question) and *‘I feel guilty about the past and present social problems of Aborigines.* The higher the score, the higher the collective guilt.

**Empathy.** In order to assess the extent of empathy toward Indigenous peoples, respondents were asked five questions that were based on past empathy scales (Davis, 1994) and amended to fit the context of the present study. There was one sympathy question *‘I don’t have much sympathy for Aborigine’s,* two empathic concern questions (*‘I tend to get emotionally involved when I think about Aboriginal issues’; ‘I often feel empathy with Aborigines’*) and two perspective taking questions (*‘I try to understand Aboriginal issues by imagining how things look to them’; ‘I don’t spend a lot of time imagining how I would feel if I were Aboriginal’*). The higher the score, the higher the empathy.

**Socio-demographics.** Respondents were asked to state their age in years, their education level (1 = primary school only, 5 = university), political orientation (high scores = right wing; low scores = left wing), and sex (1 = male, 2 = female).

**Free response data.** Respondents were asked: Are there any other comments you'd like to make about Aborigines or Aboriginal issues, or feelings that you'd like to express?
Results.

Empathy scale. The five empathy items were analysed using Principle Axis factor analysis, with only one factor being produced with an eigenvalue over 1 (the single factor solution was also confirmed via the scree plot). This single factor accounted for 46.2% of the variance.

Scale Descriptives
Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for each scale, setting out the scale means and standard deviations, the number of items in each scale, and what percentage of respondents scored high on each scale. Respondents were deemed to have scored high if their scores fell on the positive side of the neutral point (i.e., a scale score equivalent to an average item score of 4) on these dimensions. The table also includes the scale alpha coefficients, which were all satisfactory except for empathy.

Prediction of Attitudes
A hierarchical multiple regression equation was constructed to examine the combined and the unique influences of the predictors on ATIA scores (see Table 3). The set of socio-demographic predictors was entered on step one (age, education, political position and gender), and the social psychological variables on step two (empathy and collective guilt). Constructing the equations in this way allowed us to see whether the beta weights obtained at the end of step one were modified by the inclusion of social psychological variables. Two variables were significant on step one: lower levels of formal education and increased age predicted high scores on the ATIA. At the end of step two, lower levels of formal education, age, empathy, and collective guilt significantly predicted high scores on the ATIA.

Discussion.
The lower the levels of formal education, the more negative the attitudes. This result supports past research, and indicates the need for education, although clearly it is worth noting that formal education is not the only educational avenue. Nevertheless our results indicate that formal education is a step in the right direction. Additionally, education
specifically about Indigenous issues is important. There is good evidence from past surveys that there is a need for the community at large to be better informed about the way Indigenous people have been treated in the past and the problems that they currently face. People who are in the privileged position of being educators need to do more in this regard, although they would have to be careful not to polarise opinions or cause backlash effects (see, e.g., Maio, Watt, Hewstone, & Rees, 2002).

Second, the less **empathy**, the more negative the attitudes. This finding supports past research finding a link between prejudice and empathy (e.g., Batterham, 2001; Finlay & Stephan, 2000). The five questions did not factor into perspective taking/empathic concern; perhaps due to the specific nature of the questions, or because of the small number of questions asked. Regardless of this, the strong relationship empathy had with negative attitudes has important implications. Perhaps if activists can place “the other” into the shoes of Indigenous people so empathy can occur, change may slowly happen. On a practical level, more publicity could be given to the accounts written by Indigenous people of their experiences. More publicity to reports such as those on the stolen generations may help non-Indigenous Australians to better understand what many Indigenous people have suffered over the years which could well lead to more empathy. To listen to Indigenous stories – and attempt to place oneself in the shoes of another - may be an effective means to understanding, empathy, and less negative attitudes.

Third, the less **collective guilt**, the more negative the attitude, which supports past research such as Branscombe et al. (in press). Here, the focus is on the actions of Australia as a nation both in the past and in the present rather than on the behaviour of the respondents individually. Interestingly, although the relationship between the ATIA and collective guilt was strong, opinion expressed in the free responses was very much divided as to whether collective guilt was appropriate. It is worth noting the various viewpoints in this regard.

Some people felt strongly that guilt was an inappropriate emotion as they were not responsible for the deeds of their forefathers (and mothers); therefore guilt doesn’t make sense to them. Similar sentiments were also found by Augoustinos and LeCouteur (in
press). They found that the most prevalent argument against an apology toward Indigenous Australians was that often stated by Australia’s Prime Minister John Howard: “present generations cannot be blamed for the mistakes of past generations”.

Another viewpoint was: “Guilt is only useful as a starting point for action. Guilt hopefully will transform into other emotions – sympathy, empathy, sorrow and lead to action. Underpinning this is understanding based on knowledge/information about Aboriginal peoples, culture and history; government policy (past and present).” Thus, in this view, feelings of collective guilt can be a springing-board to more concrete acts of positive social action; one can move forward from a position of guilt.

Other people saw guilt as appropriate when no social action was taken by the individual: I … believe that non-aborigines should not feel guilty about the plight of Aboriginal people only if they are trying to help solve the problem … Let’s face it Aboriginal issues today are as serious as they have ever been with mandatory sentencing, extremely poor health, systematic discrimination as well as the psychological consequences … But this person felt that if non-Indigenous people do nothing: then damn right they should feel guilty!

Others also felt that guilt is inappropriate, but collective responsibility made more sense. For example, I don’t think guilt is a helpful emotion and no one should take responsibility for what is not their doing. But we use this as an excuse not to acknowledge that we are responsible for a culture that is racist and continues to reap benefits of generations of theft and oppression. Similarly, another participant felt that guilt is “a paralyzing kind of response. However, I do feel responsible for needing to work to change social attitudes”.

Finally, one woman noted: “As long as the injustice persists, as long as non-Indigenous Australians are not acknowledging the causes of this injustice nor doing anything to change things, and are continuing to benefit from participating in a society that has been set up at the expense of Indigenous peoples' basic human rights, I think that non-Indigenous should feel a sense of collective guilt – because guilt to me means feeling a
gnawing sense that maybe one is responsible, but not doing anything about it. There are two ways to respond to guilt – to stick ones' head in the sand, deny that one should feel guilty and turn the blame back on Indigenous Australians (eg they can't / don't want things to change), or to allow that guilt to MOTIVATE ACTION. It's only through acting to contribute to change that feelings of guilt are eased. However hopefully action is not purely to alleviate guilt, but is motivated by a deeper sense of understanding of the injustice, of grief at what has happened, of compassion, and a desire to do something to contribute to change”.

There appears to be a paradox in the relationship between collective guilt and attitudes. On the one hand, less collective guilt was associated with more negative attitudes; on the other hand, most participants did not feel a sense of collective guilt – only 23% felt such guilt. The small number of participants feeling collective guilt is in line with past research. For example, only 14% of participants in a 2000 study of mainstream Australians felt group-based guilt about the situation of Indigenous Australians (McGarty et al., Study One, under review). These findings are not altogether surprising. Given that guilt is a self-blaming emotion that is aversive in nature, people are likely to avoid it (Iyer, Leach, & Pedersen, in press). Hence, the ‘guilt’ angle may be an uphill battle when attempting social justice action; similar conclusions have also been drawn by other researchers such as Augoustinos and LeCouteur (in press) and Leach et al. (2002). We do not take a position on the ‘correctness’ of a particular view. However, what we will say is that if activists do engage in discussions about collective guilt, they need to specify the kind of guilt they are referring to. There is a clear difference between feeling personally guilty for committing or benefiting from injustices against Indigenous Australians, and feeling collectively guilty for the injustices Australia has - and is - committing.

Finally, people who were older also scored higher on the ATIA. This finding has been found in previous studies using the modern racism scale (e.g., Pedersen & Walker, 1997). If the correlation between prejudice and age is a cohort effect, rather than a maturation effect, the influence of this proportion of the population will gradually decrease over time. As an aside, there was a moderate correlation between age and
education. The next generations are more educated (a significant correlate of prejudice), and – in addition – may be more informed about Indigenous issues. However, socio-demographic variables often are less predictive of negative attitudes compared with social-psychological variables (see, for example, Pedersen & Walker, 1997) and this was the case here.

To conclude, education, empathy toward Indigenous Australians, collective guilt and age were strong predictors of negative attitudes toward Indigenous Australians. Some remaining questions though: might it be that people who are generally more empathic, and those who believe in a nation taking responsibility for its actions, be less negative? Additionally, if we used general empathy questions, would we get the affective/cognitive split that has been found in other research?

The role of empathy, collective guilt, and socio-demographics: Part Two
Our aim was to replicate Study One with a similar sample of Perth residents. However, in Study One we were interested in empathy and collective guilt specific to Indigenous Australians, in this second study we were interested in individual levels empathy (as a personality characteristic rather than specific to Indigenous issues) and collective guilt generally (i.e., more as guilt as a general emotion rather than specific to Indigenous issues). Additionally, we tested two constructs that were linked with modern prejudice in a previous study by us (Pedersen et al., 2000) to test the scale’s validity (i.e., political correctness and false beliefs).³

Method.

³ Added validity was found with respect to the ATIA in that a second sample of 204 was used who were sympathetic to Indigenous issues. Mean differences on the ATIA were found when comparing the community and sympathetic sample. Negative attitude levels were higher in the community sample (t (161.96) = -16.36; p < .001), collective guilt was higher in the sympathetic sample (t (197.19) = 11.44; p < .001), and empathy was higher in the sympathetic sample (t (320) = 8.37; p < .001). These between-sample differences were predictable, and add support for the scales used in the present study. In developing a new scale, it is also important that it should predict other variables previously connected with the construct in question. Previous research indicates a relationship between prejudice and being anti-political correctness, acceptance of false beliefs (Pedersen et al., 2000) and racial resentment (Fraser & Islam, 2002b). These three variables also significantly related to the ATIA scale in the present study.
Sample B was given identical measures as sample A with the exception that collective guilt and empathy were aimed at measuring global constructs rather than being specific to Indigenous issues. In each case, items were responded to on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = 'disagree strongly' to 7 = 'agree strongly'). After appropriate recoding, responses to items in each scale were summed so that high scores indicated greater negative attitudes, collective guilt, and empathy.

Collective Guilt. This scale was developed from the qualitative data relating to collective guilt toward Indigenous Australians, but with the focus more general. There were four items that were opposed to collective guilt (e.g., ‘To the extent that mainstream Australia feels guilty, it just needs to get over it’) and four items that were in favour of collective guilt (e.g., ‘People who don’t feel collective guilt are simply making excuses so they don’t have to work on changing injustices’).

Empathy. In order to assess the extent of general empathy, respondents were asked a series of 14 questions that were based on a shortened version of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Beven 2002). There were 7 positive questions (e.g., ‘I feel concerned for people having a hard time’) and 7 negative questions (e.g., ‘I don’t feel sorry for people with problems’).

Socio-demographics: These questions were identical to those used for sample A.

Results.

General empathy. A principle axis factor analysis supported a three factor solution to the empathy scale, rather than the two scales initially proposed. Factor two corresponded to the empathic concern subscale, although item 5 failed to load on this factor or the other two. Factors 1 and 3 were comprised of the perspective taking items, however, formed an interesting split in this subscale. Factor one appeared to constitute a form of cognitive perspective taking that was detached in nature, while factor three consisted of items that described a respondent’s tendency to engage in affective perspective taking. Although
the distinction between affective and cognitive perspective taking has been made in literature relating to children, research into the perspective taking of adults has been combined into a single construct (Davis, 1994). Given the interest in the relative influence of affective and cognitive constructs on intergroup attitudes, this factor split was utilised.

Scale Descriptives
Table 4 presents descriptive statistics for each scale, setting out the scale means and standard deviations, the number of items in each scale, and what percentage of respondents scored high on each scale. Respondents were deemed to have scored high if their scores fell on the positive side of the neutral point (i.e., a scale score equivalent to an average item score of 4. on these dimensions). The table also includes the scale alpha coefficients, which were all satisfactory except the false beliefs and the political correctness scale.

Prediction of negative attitudes.
A hierarchical multiple regression equation was constructed to examine the combined and the unique influences of the predictors on the ATIA scale (see Table 5). The set of socio-demographic predictors was entered on step one (age, education, political position and sex), and a set of social psychological variables on step two (the three empathy scales and the collective guilt scale). Three variables predicted negative attitudes on step one. First, the higher the scores on the ATIA, the lower the levels of formal education, the more right-wing the political position, and more likely the respondents were to be male. At the end of step two, four variables significantly predicted higher scores on the ATIA: being male, having right-wing political views, perspective taking, and collective guilt. Once the psychological variables were entered, education became marginally significant \( (p = .057) \).

Discussion.
With respect to the socio-demographic variables, the findings of Part Two primarily support those of Part One, with the exception that education lost its significance in Step
Two. This (debatable) loss of significant effect may indicate that in certain circumstances education may be more indirect, which does not denigrate its importance.

Regarding the addition of the social-psychological variables, Part Two adds to the findings of Part One in two ways. First, it would appear that there is little difference in the prediction of negative attitudes whether collective guilt relates to Indigenous Australians specifically, or just a general disposition supporting collective guilt. Both forms of guilt were strongly related to negative attitudes. Yet it may be that methodological issues are relevant here. When we asked participants to respond to the collective guilt scale, we stated “this is not about any specific cultural group in Australia”, and noted collective guilt could relate to other groups such as asylum seekers. However, participants did know the study related to Indigenous issues; so we cannot be sure that we simply replicated the specific collective guilt findings of Part One; only further research can untangle this. However, it is clear that a lack of collective guilt – whether global or specific – does relate to more negative attitudes.

A different story emerged regarding the relationship between negative attitudes and empathy. In Part One, there was a significant relationship between negative attitudes and empathy toward Indigenous Australians (r = -.63). However, in Part Two, there was a much weaker relationship between negative attitudes and affective perspective taking (r = -.28) and no relationship between negative attitudes and cognitive perspective taking, or empathic concern. Thus, it would appear that while affective perspective taking as a personality variable is weakly related to negative attitudes, empathy regarding Indigenous issues specifically has a much larger effect. Thus, when attempting to change negative attitudes, the more specific the strategy the better. This is in line with traditional social psychology literature that finds that there is a stronger relationship between attitudes and behaviour when researchers are being specific about their target.

In short, aside from the interesting finding that members of the Australian public did not make the old-fashioned/ modern distinction that some have found using a different approach, the ATIA scale appears to be functioning much the same way as previous prejudice scales. It shares similar correlates (e.g., anti-political correctness, false beliefs, racial resentment, certain socio-demographics). Thus, although more work with the scale would be useful, early indications suggest that it is a valid instrument
(particularly so as items are not based on European/American norms), with acceptable reliability.

**General Discussion**

One focus of this study was to construct a scale measuring attitudes toward Indigenous Australians thus exploring the old-fashioned/modern distinction that has been found in previous literature (e.g., McConahay, 1982; Pedersen & Walker, 1997; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995). By constructing the scale the way we did, we did not want to impose a structure on participants, but wanted to develop a pool of items from the community and then see whether the old-fashioned/modern distinction emerged without priming from the researchers. When we asked people about Indigenous issues there appeared to be a number of themes that are clearly not old-fashioned or modern prejudice. While we acknowledge that people may not always spontaneously offer interviewers their most central attitudes (see, for example, Schuman & Presser, 1981), it cannot be ignored that the modern and old-fashioned distinction is becoming “blurry” over time, and in our Australian study people did not make such a distinction based on North American norms. Given the single meaningful factor of the ATIA scale, it would seem that the modern and old-fashioned distinction that has been found in previous research across the world is not reproduced in Perth, Western Australia.

We do not argue that modern or old-fashioned sentiments in the community do not exist any more. Some of the ATIA items had modern prejudice overtones. In fact, one question that originated from the Perth community was similar to modern prejudice items (e.g., ‘Land rights for Aborigines are just a way of them getting more than they deserve’). Some items were quite hostile (e.g., ‘Aboriginal people have no regard for their own or anybody else’s property’). This hostility supports the findings of Mellor (2003) who notes the prevalence of old-fashioned racism directed at Koori Aborigines in Melbourne. Also, as noted in previous papers by us (e.g., Pedersen & Walker, 1997), it is not that old-fashioned prejudice does not exist; its themes are simply not as commonly expressed as modern ones. Thus, we are arguing that people’s modern and old-fashioned views are more difficult to disentangle than first thought, and are also more integrated with other related subjects (e.g., the role of the media).
Returning now to the utility of the ATIA scale, Bergin (2002) also examined attitudes toward Indigenous Australians. She used both the 21-item ATIA scale and the Augoustinos, Ahrens and Innes (1994) modern prejudice scale as well as a number of media-related items. She constructed two multiple regression equations with socio-demographic variables on step 1, and a number of media-related variables on step 2. She found that the total $R^2$ change was very similar with the Augoustinos et al. modern prejudice scale (.43) and with the ATIA scale (.42). Additionally, the two scales worked in the same way with identical variables predicting negative attitudes toward Indigenous Australians; the correlation between the two scales was .87.

This poses the question: what exactly do negative attitudes toward Indigenous Australians involve? How relevant is ‘modern’ prejudice in Western Australian society today? Are people’s views more simplistic, or more complex, than previously hypothesised? We would argue that the problem lies in the earlier concept of modern prejudice. Specifically, problems exist in that it is often not linked to individualism (Pedersen & Walker, 1997), a major tenet of modern prejudice. Also, as previously discussed, its relationship to old-fashioned prejudice is often very strong (see Walker, 2001). In sum, the findings of the present study give further evidence that the two constructs are not as separate as originally thought. This is not a new argument (see also Sniderman & Tetlock, 1986).

Just under one-half of participants from both our community samples showed evidence of negative attitudes toward Indigenous Australians. It would seem that we need a great deal of action to remedy this situation given the link with Indigenous well-being. There were two social psychological variables that strongly related to negative attitudes: empathy (this was particularly the case with empathy specific to Indigenous people) and collective guilt. Socio-demographic variables were related to the attitudes of our respondents. Therefore, not only do we need action at grass-roots level by individuals, but we need social reform, especially by those with power. For example, given the significant relationship between education and negative attitudes, this would indicate the need for more widespread education. Education about Indigenous issues would be particularly beneficial; historical but also factual about the ‘real’ benefits that Indigenous people receive.
It’s important not to leave Indigenous people out of the process, although negative attitudes is a non-Indigenous problem and must be tackled by the non-Indigenous population. As one participant noted: *We must find out what Aborigines want and work with them in a collaborative and mutually beneficial way. We can learn much from them about how to live in harmony with this environment and how to have a more sharing society.* More collaboration is needed.

But what can the average person do? As one participant said: “*Sometimes I simply don’t know the right things to do. My main (primary) feeling about Aboriginal issues is futility*.” At an individual grass-roots level, there is little point in hitting people over the head with angry accusations such as “racist!” This will not be helpful in changing negative attitudes. As one participant commented: *I am not a racist, nor do I believe that any of the answers I have given have racist overtones, however I believe many people would just dismiss this and adjudge me a racist because I do not conform with the politically correct.* If people feel under attack, they are less likely to listen or change their views. Our results indicate that we need to take into account both people’s affect (feelings) and cognition (thoughts). For example, we found empathy to relate to a lack of negative attitudes implying that interventions that manage to induce empathy will likely also produce reductions in prejudice. Regarding the changing of cognitions, when we hear inaccurate or racist misinformation, we need to be active and speak out (although some judgment is called for here!) By doing so, we run the risk of being called ‘bleeding hearts’ or politically correct’. But we do need to speak out, however uncomfortable this may be. Otherwise, we play an active role in keeping negative attitudes alive and well.

In sum, the results set out above indicate that the issues surrounding Indigenous disadvantage and negative attitudes are a combination of both individual and societal processes. As such, we need both individual action and collective action; social reform needs both forms of action to be effective. And, as noted by a number of participants, social justice will not only benefit Indigenous Australians but all Australians. As one respondent stated: *We will all benefit - by denigrating, misunderstanding and showing no interest in Aboriginal worldviews white western culture cuts itself off from a valuable source that can help us reflect on our own worldview, which we need to do to stop raping cultures everywhere, the Earth, our humanity and our mental environment.*
Finally, as one respondent of our “sympathetic” sample (see footnote 2) wrote, quoting Margaret Mead, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful and committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever does” (Margaret Mead). Let’s hope that she is right.

References.


(Eds.), *Collective Guilt: International Perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press.


Table 1: Factor analysis using a two factor solution for the 21 item ATIA scale
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal people should not have to change their culture just to fit in **</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aborigines would be lost without white Australians in today’s society</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal people work as hard as anyone else</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal people are more racist than just about any other group in Australia</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We should all be working toward better cultural understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal people have no regard for their own or anybody else’s property</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Aborigines are not real Aborigines</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aborigines are a proud people</td>
<td></td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal people really have no sense of what’s right and what’s wrong</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Aborigines tend to be pretty hostile</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I respect the Aboriginal dreaming (e.g., creation stories)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal people are too vocal and loud about their rights</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aborigines should try harder to fit in with western society</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The media is often biased against Aborigines</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land rights for Aborigines are just a way of them getting more than they deserve</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many problems associated with Aboriginal populations, such as crime and alcoholism, are the result of a clash of culture **</td>
<td></td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal people get given more government money than they should</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The only racial discrimination in Australia these days is in favour of Aboriginal people</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politically correct do-gooders allow Aboriginal people to get away with just about anything</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The “bad” Aboriginal people in our society are a product of the system**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Australians need to understand Aboriginal history and culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Excluded because of CIRC <=3
Scale items = 18
Table 2. Descriptive Characteristics Of Scales (Part One)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATIA</td>
<td>3.97 (1.25)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Guilt</td>
<td>2.90 (1.81)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>3.93 (1.29)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial resentment</td>
<td>3.71 (1.9)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. A) The % indicates the percentage of respondents who scored above the scale midpoint. (comparatively, high on negative attitudes, collective guilt, empathy, racial resentment, incorrect on false beliefs, and opposed political correctness).
B) The racial resentment findings are discussed in Part Two
C) All ranges were from 1-7

Table 3: Hierarchical regressions predicting Attitudes toward Indigenous Australians (Part One)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables entered</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>b(a)</th>
<th>b(b)</th>
<th>R² change</th>
<th>Total R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.35***</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>-.17*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political position</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.31***</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.19***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>-.62***</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.55***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective guilt</td>
<td>-.62***</td>
<td>-.39***</td>
<td>.36***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. * p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001 (all two tailed).

b(a) denotes beta weights for variables after first step.

b(b) denotes beta weights for variables after second step.
Table 4. Descriptive Characteristics Of Scales (Part Two)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>Mean/SD</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATIA</td>
<td>3.72 (1.28)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>.92</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collective Guilt</td>
<td>3.39 (1.66)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive Perspective-taking</td>
<td>5.77 (1.01)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Perspective-taking</td>
<td>5.51 (1.14)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathic concern</td>
<td>5.63 (0.91)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False Beliefs</td>
<td>1.93 (0.54)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political correctness</td>
<td>5.43 (1.51)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. A) The % indicates the percentage of respondents who scored above the scale midpoint (comparatively, high on negative attitudes, collective guilt, perspective-taking, empathic concern, incorrect on false beliefs, and opposed political correctness).
B) All ranges were from 1-7

Table 5: Hierarchical regression predicting Attitudes toward Indigenous Australians (Part Two)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables entered</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>b(a)</th>
<th>b(b)</th>
<th>R² change</th>
<th>Total R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>-.29**</td>
<td>-.28***</td>
<td>-.23***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.33***</td>
<td>-.26**</td>
<td>-.14c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political position</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.31***</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathic concern</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive PT</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective PT</td>
<td>-.28**</td>
<td>-.17*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective guilt</td>
<td>-.64***</td>
<td>-.45***</td>
<td>.26***</td>
<td>.55***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. c p=.057  * p<.05  ** p<.01  *** p<.001 (all two tailed).
b(a) denotes beta weights for variables after first step.
b(b) denotes beta weights for variables after second step.