

Whiteness, power relations, resistance and the ‘practical’ recognition of Indigenous rights in Newcastle

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While fleeting references are made to Australian Federal Government policy shifts in light of different rationalities and modes of state governance, the paper is essentially a study of whiteness, power relations and resistance in Newcastle, Australia. It is framed within a discussion of the importance of history to local Kooris and Gooris in the struggle for the recognition of Indigenous rights. Specifically, the paper examines how local Koori and Goori discourses and practices expose and disrupt whiteness, as relations of power, in negotiations for the recognition of Awabakal sites and acknowledgement of local Awabakal history. That is, ‘faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible inventions open up’ (Foucault 1994: 340). The paper draws on field notes, documentary analysis, participant observation data and interview data collected while conducting a two year sociological ethnography of the recognition of Indigenous rights in Newcastle. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2009 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]*

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