

How can culture contribute to social sustainability?

Culture, for the human experience, is anything that is learned, read, thought about, written and known. The cultural experiences of traditional people provide a way for modern civilization to reconstruct the past. Generally speaking, this is achieved where the archaeologist locates an item which, under scientific scrutiny appears to be human made or adapted for human needs. Such an item may be a tool, implement or device and have mythological associations to a local story about life in the area. People connected things on the land to the manner in which their lives seemed to evolve. The theory of evolution is grounded in scientific truth and falseness. The problem is that scientists do not always agree among themselves as to what constitutes true and false. Social scientists tend to see the big picture about knowledge and culture. The most radical anthropologist might claim that nothing can be known with absolute certainty, that things around us are all interconnected. Nothing we can see exists in isolation from the surroundings, but rather that science and people are intrinsically related. People created scientific enquiry when scientific *truth* was able to be viewed by future generations. That is, when words written on paper were organised in such a way that they were not easily lost. Traditional people tend to rely on story telling from parent to sibling for culture to be relayed in such a way that makes life more meaningful and abundant in things that make people happy.¹

Culture contributed to social sustainability in traditional Australian Aboriginal societies because the family was at the centre of work and economic life. Aboriginal law concerning kin country meant that there were certain places that were taboo to visit. That is, a family residing in Dreaming tract x were required by law to stay there unless invited by another family into their country, Dreaming tract y. Kinship and reciprocal obligations to one another provided a secure means through which food was acquired daily. If a kangaroo was speared in home territory and hopped over to another man's country, the likelihood is that express permission would need to be sought from the owner to go and retrieve it. Food was abundant for traditional Aboriginal people before the arrival of Europeans, so there was no need to break laws. Every society has criminals though, so men continually refusing to adhere to law about country would not have lived an enjoyable life. It is obvious to an anthropologist that people who do not abide by the law get punished. Murder attracted a spear in the leg (and still might) just as stealing another person's food probably started a punch-up between men. Secret women's business is of concern to them only in the traditional political setting. The method through men hunting, women gathering idea is that getting organised outside requires rapid adjustment but prehistoric caves did not allow men to speak above normal levels in the cave.

¹ "If we acknowledge that all humans have, and will continue to have, rights to certain goods or to having certain interests protected, then our actions today may violate the rights of future people. Thus if we continue to dump massive amounts of pollutants into the atmosphere, we harm future people not by making them worse off than they would have been but by violating their rights. That is, we have failed in our duty to provide future people, whoever they turn out to be, with a certain moral minimum" Jardins, (1993) P. 79.

According to Taylor, (1998) “We share with other species a common relationship to Earth. In accepting the biocentric outlook we take the fact of our being an animal species to be a fundamental feature of our existence. We consider it an essential aspect of “the human condition”. We do not deny the differences between ourselves and other species, but we keep in the forefront of our consciousness the fact that in relation to our planet’s natural ecosystems we are but one species population among many...[on evolution, the writer challenges]...The laws of genetics, of natural selection, and of adaptation apply equally to all of us as biological” .²

As a cultural agent how would you manage population growth in terms of natural resources of your country?

I am an anthropologist as a “cultural agent” investigating how to sustain multiculturalism in Australia. We find in daily life here we are confronted by someone when alone in the street that becomes angry for no apparent reason due to the fact you personally do not have an immediate response to a question or problem they have in their new country. I worked last Saturday at the Round House and went to lunch at the E-Shed. I ordered my lunch at the counter and the assistant proceeded to gather my lunch onto the plate and then started carrying on a conversation with another patron. Within a new country people get in with a crowd of others and try to act the big shot. Unfortunately the assistant did not respond initially but a waving of hello and insistence that they attend to my meal and mine alone was crucial to me. This seemed to work. If people stay calm in enough good situations they find that supposed bad situations are not so bad and that it is difficult to change someone immediately. Though seeing a point of view from someone else slowly at first and then increasing the value put on a policy for what Joe Citizen encounters in daily life is difficult, it can be done. Self defence training from an early age together with the ability to master some kind of endeavour implied by teachings locally should have brought the population growth difficulty under control by now but it does not appear to be completely solved. My evaluation as someone with a reasonable and specialist knowledge and education, history locally for a considerable length of time and no criminal convictions is that government requires less overeating and celebration within the actual office environment.

The Australian experience continues generally though because the government literally changes offices when the experience becomes more than someone is able to deal with on a level that too many locals find unbearable. With some amount of effort Australia will realise that the government should change office due to the state of administrative mishap within various departments. John is a great PM. It is celebration by fellows in times of no war that brings us into disrepute.

² Ultimately I find scientific education without any credit in the social sciences too hard to master. People without formal training of some kind in science and social studies can not construe a functional working pattern in the real world. The way a scientist with no people skills can claim that evolution is some kind of grounding for medicine speaks to people is beyond belief. The theory of evolution is merely a way for people to label God’s phenomena while instructing children in one aspect of education. People appear to hand out these sometimes called “bits of paper” from Universities at times though it is not always the case.

Top down bottom up effects, positive-negative feedback models and a human approach to biology and human biology is a reasonable way to expect that children and parents learn early enough in Australia. Baby boom theories post war Australia in the forties have been accepted long enough for them to be regarded as good for children in the long term. There is a necessity for a combination of study, sport, work, family and living, not someone existing for the amusement of one particular person in authority. Traditional roles in Australia post WW2 were Dad ran the economic side and Mum, the household. I feel that Dad gets into trouble with Mum when she tries to remind him that a hard day's work is no reason to be too troubled around the house. The truth about religion is that people ultimately have to believe something or they have Mum and Dad visit too often during their lifetime for it to be comfortable as a family.

Australia is not a perfect place but can be for the right sort of people. Natural resource management requires stabilisation policies through person to person contractual arrangements met with agency not rudeness when people are trying to interact on a meaningful level. The goodness in people usually means that everyone in Australia gets through daily life in one piece and the whole family intact.

Is your country culturally sustainable?

The country is culturally sustainable when people see authorities about questionable government action over natural resources. If that is not effective for them to seek the assistance of medical know how where appropriate. Medicine and witchcraft have been around for centuries. It is well documented. The multicultural society seems to work OK, though not every upstart you meet will agree. It is children in the first instance that is terror to a parent, work and economic life a fairly good measure of the standard of living of many in Australia. The traditional owners of the land I live on are people I feel a reciprocal obligation to because of the truth about money and Mum and Dad wherein peoples differences concerning the way the earths resources should be managed seem to take priority over family. Overweight people in high paying government positions following serious conflict is a result of lack of planning following the last time there was a serious engagement. Too many celebrations in an actual office might result in an evacuation because it becomes too much for people to comprehend how someone can still not understand that men deal with things outside and women deal with things inside.

REFERENCES

Jardins, D., (1993), Environmental ethics as applied ethics, Chapter Four.

Taylor, P. in Zimmerman *et al* (1998), The ethics of respect for nature.