



# The Australian Anthropological Society

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## THE 2011 DISTINGUISHED LECTURE IN ANTHROPOLOGY

# Themes in the history of Indigenous political thought

## Tim Rowse

**Professor Tim Rowse is Professorial Fellow with the Centre for Citizenship and Public Policy at the University of Western Sydney.** Although much of what he writes can best be described as History, his formal training has been in Government, Sociology and Anthropology. He has taught at Macquarie University, the Australian National University and Harvard University (where he held the Australian Studies chair in 2003-4), and he has held research appointments at the University of Sydney and the ANU. Since the early 1980s, his research has focused on the relationships between Indigenous and other Australians, in Central Australia (where he lived from 1989 to 1996) and in the national political sphere. In the 1990s, this and other interests led him to write two books about the life and works of Dr. H.C. Coombs.

**The study of Indigenous political thought** requires us to read a variety of sources: sermons, essays, short stories, autobiographies, histories, petitions, letters (to politicians and to newspaper editors), official memoranda, ministerial statements. In this paper I will use such sources authored by five Indigenous intellectuals from Anglophone colonies who lived and worked in the period 1800-1950: Peter Jones (Ojibway), Charles Eastman (Sioux), Zitkala-Sa (Sioux), Apirana Ngata (Maori - Ngati Porou), Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna (Fijian) and William Cooper (Yorta Yorta). I will trace several continuities in the outlook that they revealed in their writings on the historical trajectories of their people: their relationship with Christianity and with the Crown, their narrative of colonialism's impact, their advocacy of agriculture, their stance towards the aestheticization of their heritage, their ambivalence about generational discontinuity, their sense of being part of a global native predicament. I will suggest that there is a coherent tradition here, an extended consideration of indigenous acculturation and of the possibilities of modernity. I will conclude by considering a sixth Indigenous intellectual, suggesting that the work of Noel Pearson can be understood as belonging to this tradition.

### Monday July 4th, 2011

**Lecture from 6.30 - 7.15pm**

**Refreshments from 7.15 - 8pm**

### The State Library of Western Australia

**Perth Cultural Centre  
25 Francis St, Perth**