Paper 1: Both-ways: the philosophy

by Robyn Ober & Melodie Bat

The both-ways research project

Defining both-ways and translating it into Batchelor Institute practice

This project represents one small part in a much bigger picture of the work being undertaken by the Institute to understand and express the both-ways philosophy. It is recognised that this work is being done in parallel with the work being done in the Institute, on the development of understanding the both-ways 'philosophy' and on the development of cultural standards within the Institute.

The project is one that received funding through the Institute's internal research grants process and has been implemented by Robyn Ober and Melodie Bat. Essentially, the project involved an extensive literature review combined with a reflective dialogue between the two researchers using their previous experiences and professional and personal relationship as a starting point to create resources aimed at supporting the staff and students in their own explorations of this philosophy and practice.

Paper 1: Both-ways: the philosophy

Paper 2: Both-ways: philosophy to practice

Paper 3: Self-empowerment: researching in a both-ways framework

Both-ways: an annotated bibliography

Both-ways: a timeline of significant events and theories

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Melodie Bat *is an experienced educator, having taught in both primary and tertiary sectors, in a variety of contexts, including remote NT communities. Melodie has this year transferred to SPARC (Specialised Publications and Academic Resource Centre) where she works as an academic support person and researcher. She is currently enrolled with CDU to do her PhD and is also completing a Diploma of ELearning with Cairns TAFE.*

These resources will all be published within the Institute and the two papers published in Ngoonjook; the Institute's journal, as well as externally. 'Talking circles' will be undertaken within the Institute to broaden scope and involvement in the project and to help disseminate the resources created in the project.

About this paper

This paper will present to you the philosophy of teaching and learning at Batchelor Institute—the both-ways philosophy. We have written this paper to share with you our understandings of both-ways as a real, living and growing philosophy of practice. It is our intention to provide an explanation and starting point for those new to this approach, but also to contribute to the current revitalisation of the philosophy within Batchelor Institute. And of course, as is the nature of both-ways, we have written this paper as part of our own continuing reflection and evaluation of our teaching and learning. 'It is important for the dialogue to continue and for the scholarship to be continued in order to develop the body of knowledge in this regard. It is essential for this conversation and the resulting changes/approaches to be embedded within the philosophical approach at Batchelor Institute' (Fraser 2006, p.7) .

To introduce the concept of both-ways, we will use a story to illustrate a real life example of 'living the philosophy' and discuss some of the complex human interactions within that story. We have called this our 'kapati' (cup of tea) story. We will then present a short overview of the historical development of the both-ways philosophy and practice, drawing on the work of the many people before us who have contributed to the development and the theorising around this philosophy. This leads us to the present day and how we conceptualise the both-ways philosophy in the now. We use a diagram to represent the learning journeys that we all undertake at Batchelor and from that diagram, elicit three principles of practice that we are proposing as the foundation principles of the both-ways practice. We conclude the paper with some of the new questions that we see are beginning to confront us in the education sectors and as the information age moves rapidly toward an electronic world.

What is both-ways?

At Batchelor Institute, students undertake a learning journey that strengthens their identity and gives them the success that transforms their lives. This is achieved through two approaches—the first is that of self-determination and the second is through our both-ways philosophy.

Stories and metaphors are powerful vehicles to communicate abstract understandings, concepts and theories, so in keeping with our way

of passing on information, we will share a kapati story to explain and display both-ways in action.

> 'To represent our worlds is ultimately something we can only do for ourselves using our own processes to articulate our experiences, realities, and understanding. Anything else is an imposed view that excludes the existence of our ontology and the interrelationship between our 'ways of knowing, ways of being and ways of doing' (Martin, K 2003, p.206).

The metaphor of kapati was chosen because cups of teas in many cultural societies are opportunities when social interactions take place. This is no different in Indigenous societies where kapati time, is an important social event that strengthens family, kinship and community ties. As a child is growing up, it is a common and expected practice for family members to invite visitors in for a kapati. Kapati time has become integral to the cultural norm of Indigenous society, where the announcement of kapati signals yarn time. Yarn time means catching with family and community news, sharing stories, reflecting on the past, telling and retelling humorous stories, basically a time for strengthening family and kinship ties.

Both-ways is real life

My kapati story

by Robyn Ober

My kapati story revolves around my father, an elder and spiritual leader in our family and community. Dad is a strong and wise person whom I have admired and learnt a great deal from as I observed him handle some difficult situations in life, with calmness, strength, love, firmness and wisdom.

Kapati times in our family are an important and often enjoyable event. It is a time for social interaction; this includes a time to laugh, cry, gossip, be angry, be reflective, and simply to celebrate our survival as an Indigenous race in a culturally supportive environment. This kapati metaphor is shared with other Indigenous people both in Australia and overseas. In relation to Indigenous ecological knowledge and its application to management in north-western Australia, Horstman and Wightman (2001) use this same metaphor, but with different spelling—karparti.

> 'The term karparti is based on the Kriol word for the English expression 'cup of tea'. Although pronunciation varies across north Australia (it can also be heard as 'garbodi'). The phrase 'karpati

> approach' is used here as an analogy for an unhurried and respectful approach to discussions or research with senior custodians of knowledge on mutually beneficial terms' (Horstman & Wightman 2001, p.102).

The need for social interaction over a kapati is embedded and intertwined within our social and cultural domain. We as family and community members have obligations, expectations, ethics, morals, roles and responsibilities that connect us to our culture.

> 'For us Karparti with traditional owners involves remote localities, tucker boxes, shady trees, boiling billies, storytelling and making the time available to properly discuss plants and animals, land and sea management and a range of related issues' (Horstman & Wightman 2001, p.102).

There are cultural protocols, rules and invisible boundaries that are set in place to guide us in our interactions with various members of our family and community. Community may include family, work, sporting clubs, church, student groups, or just social and cultural groups in general. We are taught these social rules, laws, and guidelines from birth and they are continually strengthened, reinforced and developed as we mature from childhood to adulthood.

Set against this background, I would like to share a kapati story, of my father who in recent years was briefly employed as a Student Counsellor at Batchelor Institute. Now it was during this period of employment, that various staff members would observe he seemed to be always having kapati mainly with students but sometimes with staff. Many students would affectionately call him Ol' Man, or Uncle, as a sign of respect towards him as an elder in the community of Batchelor Institute and beyond.

A comment by a non-Indigenous staff member perceived these long periods of kapati times with students, as being a bit slack, negligent and un-professional on the part of the student counsellor. In fact, what that staff member was really saying is, the Ol' Man did not fit into the mould of what a typical student counsellor should be.

In my own experience when accompanying family members on visits to professional counsellors, there are certain processes and procedures observed within the profession. After initial introductions are carried out, the counsellor moves on to ask direct questions to identify the problems and issues at hand. The client is expected to give an accurate response to the questions to assist the counsellor in arriving at an appropriate assessment of the situation. As one counsellor expressed to me, because the illness is not a physical medical condition, direct and explicit questions must be asked to ascertain where the pain is coming from. So from my perspective, it is a series of questions and responses to identify the problem, which the counsellor can then respond to

appropriately from a professional position.

From an Indigenous perspective, my father was actually carrying out his duties as a student counsellor but in a way that was culturally appropriate to both him and the client. Students often arrive at the student counsellor office upset or distress about a problem they have encountered. It is interesting that the Ol' Man goes out to meet them, not expecting them to come knocking on the office door. He is sitting outside already probably having his own kapati. His desk and office is actually around the kapati table.

So his initial response when meeting clients, is not 'How are you? Is everything alright?'; it is actually, 'Come on sit down, have a kapati with me'. This actually catches the student off guard, they are not really expecting that, but it is something they are also comfortable with. The Ol' Man may talk about everything else under the sun, such as social and family connections, country, studies, work, etc. When the student is much calmer and relaxed, they are able to share their problem in a reasonable and logical way.

Counselling does take place, but in a manner that is relaxed, comfortable and culturally appropriate for both counsellor and client. Of course there are times, when counselling does take place behind closed doors for obvious reasons depending on the issue, but you can be assured that kapati is also served as part of protocol for social interaction.

Analysis of kapati story

In analysing this story, it seems that a variety of factors determine the appropriate language and behaviour utilised. These factors include relationship, topic, and situational context. Relationship and status in Indigenous societies carry obligations and responsibilities. Malcolm (1979) explains that interaction in Indigenous communities is characterised by an ever-present awareness of the personal identity and status in the eyes of the group of the persons communicating and witnessing the communication.

As an Indigenous elder, my father held status and position in the Batchelor Institute and Batchelor community. Younger people spoke with respect and courtesy when addressing him, often referring to him as Uncle Laurie, Uncle or just Ol' Man regardless of whether they were related or not. Relationship determines the type of speech we use when communicating with others. Age, gender, kinship ties and previous experiences often determine our speech code.

A feature of Aboriginal English is the use of indirectness when making certain requests. This is evident in the kapati story, when Dad initially

talks about everything else, except the main topic at hand. This would be gently bought into the conversation, as the student is more relaxed and willing to talk. Indirectness is usually seen as a soft approach, not so demanding, so the speaker or initiator of the conversation isn't perceived as being so bossy.

> 'Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures have different assumptions about appropriate and effective ways of obtaining information. While direct questions are used in Aboriginal society to determine background information, such as where a person is from, detailed or personal information is sought as part of a two-way exchange of information, where the questioner contributes information and waits for a response from the other participant(s)' (Queensland Government, p.13).

As was previously mentioned when addressing indirectness, a person's socio-cultural upbringing determines their behavior, action, thought pattern and assumptions in any social encounters on a daily basis. There are often clashes with mainstream society when assumptions and expectations are on different levels. At times these clashes can lead to frustration, confusion and anger on both sides if awareness and acknowledgement of cross-cultural differences is not in place.

An example of a cross-cultural clash is evident when the non-Indigenous person viewed my father as being lazy, unprofessional, and basically not doing the job that he was being paid to do. This displays a difference in assumptions, expectations, processes and perspectives of the situation at hand. The actual situation is the student has a problem that needs to be addressed at some time. This doesn't mean an immediate rush to arrive at an instant solution, as we all know in many cases instant solutions just don't happen. Instead, Dad allowed the problematic situation to sit in the back of his mind, until the time was right to bring it to the forefront. I have observed the regular occurrence of this practice and process of problem solving in our family and community, where there tends to be a gently, gently approach to reaching a solution or making requests.

Defining the philosophy

Given such complexity of human and cross-cultural interactions, finding a definition of both-ways is somewhat of a challenge. Both-ways is a philosophy of education that 'brings together Indigenous Australian traditions of knowledge and Western academic disciplinary positions and cultural contexts, and embraces values of respect, tolerance and diversity' (Batchelor Institute 2007, p.4).

In many ways, giving a definition is itself anomalous, as both-ways is a continuous question rather than a definitive answer. 'And yet it is this

dilemma that is the dynamic of the College, that continually throws up the questions that have to be faced and answered, that challenge all preconceptions about teaching styles, content and philosophy' (Morgan 1988, p.5).

Both-ways informs the work that we do and is a state of mind as much as it is a philosophy of education. It's also much more than just an education philosophy, because it frames all the administrative and support work as well. Who we are is as important as what we know in both-ways. Relationships underpin all learning and strengthening identity is an integral aim of the Institute (Arbon 2002; Batchelor College 1991; Biosocial Studies D-BATE students 1988; Boyukarrpi et al. 1994; Christie 2007; Murphy and Rickard 2007; Stage 4 Teacher Education Students 1998).

Brief history of both-ways

The development of both-ways

Even as we work to reposition both-ways in this new millennium, it is important to remember where both-ways has come from and to not forget the past but rather to reflect on it and make use of the knowledge and experiences of the time (White 2005).

The first recorded articulation of this philosophy was given by Pincher Nyurrmiyarri at Dagaragu in 1976 (Harris 1989; McConvell 1982). The Gurindji were worried about the schooling their children would receive. Pincher described the current school as a 'one-way school'—that is, 'only *kartiya* (European way)' and gave the alternative as a 'two-way' school—'both *kartiya* way and *ngumpit* (Aboriginal) way' (McConvell 1982, p.62). Pincher Nyurrmiyarri developed and discussed this concept of 'two-way' schooling, which involved reciprocity and obligation, involving curriculum, knowledge, policies and power. A further aspect of the two-way schooling as explained by Pincher was 're-establishing a healthy relationship between the younger and older generations of Gurindji, healing rifts that had developed in the transmission of traditional knowledge, largely through the interference of schools in the process' (McConvell 1982, p.63). The younger people would bring home the new knowledge they had learnt at school and the old people would be educating the young people both within the school and at home.

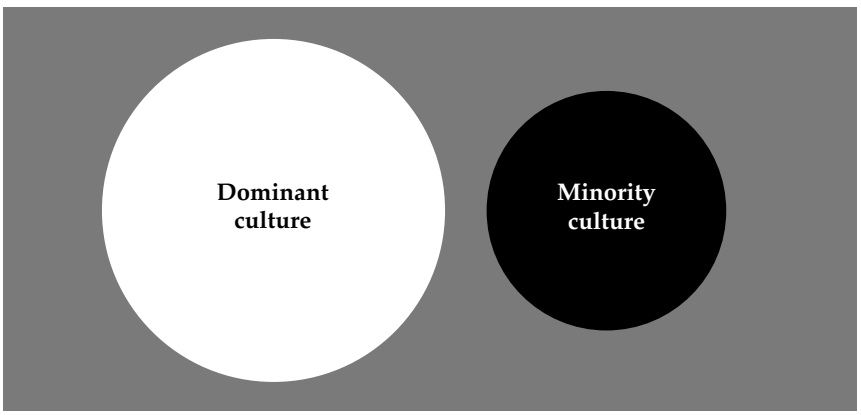
This philosophy had been developed within the school context and continues to be discussed and developed within that sector, most particularly in the continuing dialogue around bilingual education and two-way schooling. It was natural that Batchelor Institute, which began as a training program for Indigenous Assistant Teachers, would be part of those discussions, debate and the development of the philosophy,

both within schools and then within the Institution as a place involved in adult education. The implementation of bilingual education in a number of schools in the Northern Territory during the early 1970s gave a new focus to the training of Indigenous teachers that saw a shift from 'aide' to 'teacher'. This then presented a further need for expanded training and gave an opportunity for an expansion of the both-ways practice at Batchelor College (Department of Employment Education and Training 2006; McClay 1987; Watts et al. 1973).

The 80s were an important time for the Institute, for many different reasons.

> '..the move to self-determination began to take place. Indigenous people were now more empowered to take over their own affairs, hold key positions in various organisations and they began to make important decisions about how they wanted their communities run' (Ober 2004, p.8).

There was an expansion of programs and a lively debate on the philosophy and practice of the College, which involved staff, students and community members. At this time, the 'domain separation' theory as proposed by Harris and others gained some popularity. 'Aboriginal survival history and current insight generally support the view that at least partial separation is crucial to survival' (Harris 1988, p.78). At this point, the term 'two-way' schooling was introduced as a way to shift the discussion from centring solely on bilingual education.



Model 1: both-ways as cultural separation

Harris explains this model as learning to play a role-play game and suggests ways of living two-ways, for the small culture to continue side by side the majority culture (Harris 1989, p.174). He proposes that separating the two cultures would give the small culture a 'safe place to be itself and to grow' (Harris 1989, p.174) and then lists eight steps for this to happen - physical separation (e.g. outstations); maintenance of language in the home and school; Aboriginal influence in the media;

economic independence; local control of Aboriginal schools; group action; social change (borrowing across cultures); and becoming highly expert in majority culture skills (at least some members).

This theorising of both-ways, while useful to promote and further discussion and debate, received much criticism for its othering of Indigenous people and its oversimplification of Indigenous culture (Keefe 1989; McTaggart 1988; McTaggart 1989; Stewart 1989; Willis 1996). In the domain separation model, the cultural universals are situated within the dominant culture. Thus, whilst the minority culture maintains control over its own cultural specifics such as language, culture, perception etc, there is the inherent risk that, through separation, the dominant culture retains control of the cultural universals and the members of the minority culture remain as outsiders (Stairs 1988, p.309).

There was also concern expressed about the theorising being done by non-Indigenous academics.

> 'The point is here not so much whether Harris is 'right' or I am, but that both of our viewpoints are couched in terms imposed by a Western discourse about non-Western cultures. Europeans in education continually 'read back' versions of white discourse about Aborigines to Aboriginal people themselves' (McConvell 1991, p.21).

The concern was also being expressed that theorising done by the non-Indigenous staff as to the meaning of both-ways ran the risk of being paternalistic and in fact for the ideology of the Indigenous people to be taken over and become a new 'colonisation of the mind' (Jordan 1989, p.55).

The domain separation theory, then, was under serious contestation and the philosophy shifted to a more interactive positioning. What emerged was a more socially critical model of both-ways practice that was represented as two overlapping circles, where the two worlds, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, intersect. In this model, the cultural universals are positioned in the intersecting section.

> 'This intrinsic development process moves towards indigenous education based not just on cultural content, but on the world-view, social roles and interactive style of the indigenous culture' (Stairs 1988, p.311).

The work being done at the Institute at the time was innovative and constructivist in nature with the teacher education curriculum being built around principles of negotiation and action research (Batchelor College 1985; Batchelor College 1991; Batchelor College 1997; Jordan 1989; Morgan 1988; Roche and White 1990).

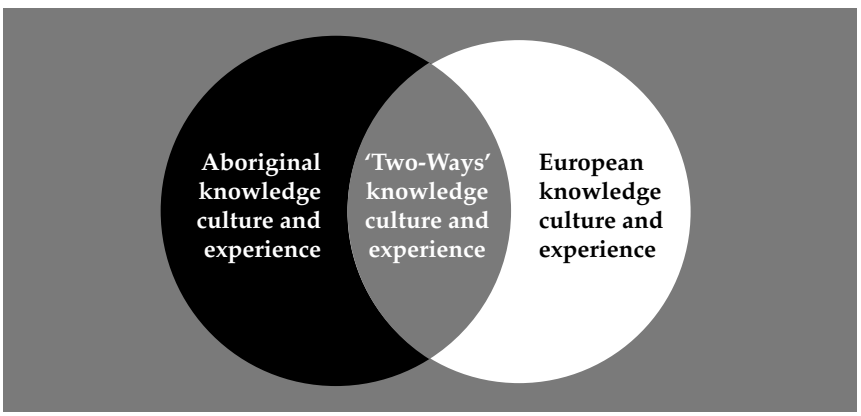
In a report to the College staff who were responsible for writing the 1985 teacher education document in which we find the first concrete

example of curriculum development using a both-ways perspective, Jordan writes that she has found that Indigenous interpretations of both-ways include: 'taking' what they want from the white world; mutual sharing across the boundaries; and Indigenous people educating non-Indigenous people to become better teachers (Jordan 1989, p.56). In a later report from the Endangered Languages Project at Wadeye, this third aspect is used to develop the project and research methodology.

> 'It is the latter case under which the Wadeye model operated—mutual sharing across boundaries where Aboriginal people educated non-Aboriginal people, so that exchange, communication and outcomes could be more effective' (Ford & Klesch 2003, p.31).

A Batchelor graduate, Wali Wulanybuma Wunungmurra states it clearly.

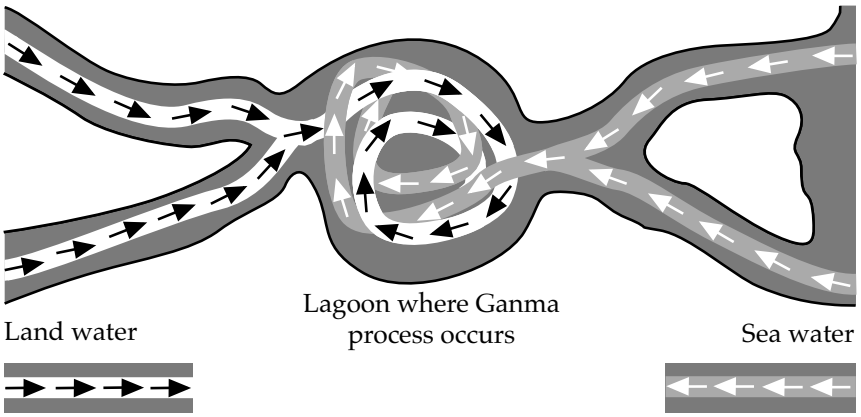
> 'We cannot hold back change which will happen whether we like it or not. But as a minority society we can adapt by finding common ground with the majority society. It is through an exchange of meanings that we can produce a 'two way' school curriculum. In an exchange of knowledge both sides learn from each other instead of knowledge coming only from the Balanda side. But Yolngu and Balanda knowledge will only come together if there is respect for our knowledge and where Aboriginal people are taking the initiative, where we shape and develop the educational programs and then implement them' (Wunungmurra1989, p.12).



Model 2: both-ways as intersection of cultures (adapted from AhChee 1991, p.12).

In the mid 1990s the Yolngu people shared the metaphor of Ganma as a way of explaining the both-ways philosophy (Batchelor College 1994; Christie 2007; Marika et al. 1992; McConvell 1991; Ober 2004; Willis 1996). This was in contrast to the domain separation theory and gave a potentially richer image than the socially critical model. The Ganma metaphor was acknowledged as more appropriately representing the original 'two-way' education as proposed by Pincher (McConvell 1991; Willis 1996).

> 'This had a flow-on effect back to the College—'it began to influence the work and shift the mindset of academics and students at Batchelor. People could see Batchelor as that meeting place too, where two world views could come together and create new knowledge in various fields of profession, and where those underlying currents, sites of contestation, meant our ways of doing things and learning were often in conflict with non-Indigenous people and vice-versa. So we recognised there would be struggles and debates, but also negotiation and balance, respect and acknowledgement, so that those new kinds of learning began to emerge to the surface' (Ober 2004, p.9).



Model 3: Ganma metaphor (Marika 1999, p.112)

> 'In terms of the Ganma Project, ganma is taken as describing the situation where a river of water from the sea (in this case Balanda knowledge) and a river of water from the land (Yolngu knowledge) mutually engulf each other on flowing into a common lagoon and become one' (Marika et al. 1992, p.28).

The Wadeye Endangered Languages Project further explores the notion of the 'common ground' where Indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge and systems interact, using this intersection model and provides an example of the dynamic nature of such a space.

> 'The common ground is a negotiated, collaborative site where knowledge, experience and desired outcomes are contested to achieve mutual understandings of what will be learned and the processes that will be undertaken to achieve these goals' (Ford & Klesch 2003, p.32).

A common thread, which emerged in the mid to late 90s, was that of identity and culture. '...to live in both worlds we need to achieve a high standard in education but keep our own identity' (Ford 1993, p.76). The complex nature of the Indigenous culture and worldview was beginning to be shared through academic writing by Indigenous academics and others. 'People, therefore, gain their identity through extensive webs of connectedness, stretching back and forth across the land, liking disparate groups and entities' (Christie 1993, p.7). There came a growing

recognition in the literature that Indigenous knowledge and ways of being and learning had much to offer to the theories of teaching and learning (O'Loughlin 1996). We see the perspective shifting from understanding the process or methodology of both-ways to picturing the learning journey from the student's perspective.

> Linda Anderson: 'Everything is interconnected and so the teaching and learning needs to happen in an integrated holistic way. All learning is linked to relationships' (Stage 4 Teacher Education Students 1998, p.12).

> Berna Timaepatua: 'As the tide comes in and goes out, students' learning about both ways education and about the wider world. When the stone is dropped in the middle of the water, it makes ripples and these represent the journey' (Stage 4 Teacher Education Students 1998, p.14).

Also apparent in the late 90s and leading up to the now, has been the tension existing between meeting the needs of students and the push for 'standards', and the pursuit of gaining university status (Uibo 1993). Whilst these are not mutually exclusive, it has meant that a lot of energy has gone into compliance and the creation of robust reporting systems, while still maintaining strong programs.

> 'In many ways we have seen the Institute lose its bravery in curriculum as it has fought for acceptance as an independent institution. Perhaps this has been a strategic retreat in times of increasing political implacability' (Purdon 2004, p.19).

Added to this has been the ever present need to ensure that funding is maintained and increased. It is understandable then, that for the past few years the focus has been on survival issues (Ingram 2004).

> 'The restraints imposed by external funding bodies often meant inadequate time was being allocated to the development of the negotiated and contested site of common ground. The term two-way was losing ground and increasingly becoming the rhetoric of all expedient cross-cultural Aboriginal community interactions' (Ford & Klesch 2003, p.33).

> 'However, funding has increasingly been withdrawn and much of the teaching/thinking has been done by others. As a result the both-ways approach, so heavily drawn on by the Institute, has not brought Aboriginal ways of knowing and understanding the world to bear in learning and action in powerful and valuable ways. This has allowed the learning/thinking agenda to be driven from a Western scientific position' (Arbon 2004, p.8-9).

Most recently, over the past five years, there has been a lively debate within the Institute surrounding cultural competence, cultural standards, cultural values and intellectual property and a call to re-conceptualise what both-ways means today. In a paper proposing the adoption of a Cultural Standards Framework within the Institute, the

then-Director suggested this as the way to progress both-ways to a new positioning where Indigenous ways of knowing and understanding are more strongly adopted within all aspects and operations of the Institute. The proposed framework was to be based on the Alaskan Native Network Cultural Standards.

> 'Further, there is a need to move and explore beyond the 'gut' feelings of the present to new ground that actually documents positions and takes a range of critical aspects from rhetoric to reality, intentionally' (Arbon 2004, p.9).

The debates and dialogue around the development of the Cultural Standards have at times caused considerable contention amongst the staff and this journey continues.

Another shift in the thinking and reflection about both-ways is how we incorporate this philosophy into all of our practice, not just teaching and learning. There are things to remember from what we have learned before.

> 'While the area of common ground can be an extremely complex and difficult site of engagement for all participants, it creates a sense of community as it relies on mutual exchange, mutual trust, mutual respect and is a domain where all participants hold the authority of their intellectual property' (Ford & Klesch 2003, p.32).

There is some movement to the development of cultural standards within our workplaces (Murphy and Rickard 2007) and we have been given a sound basis for the forward journey from the work of Fraser (2006) and Smith (2006).

> 'Both-ways is not about inclusive practices but about allowing Indigenous peoples to control the curriculum and andragogy to the extent that it supports their defining epistemological forces. This is possibly the most difficult component of this discussion as much of the nature of Indigenous epistemological theory is yet to be articulated, however the formal introduction of the Community Education tradition to Batchelor Institute has provided the stimulus to do so, and provides some ability to articulate the issues as highlighted in the pedagogy projects and published documents such as *Strong Voices'* (Fraser 2006, p.4).

Both-ways today

In reflecting on current practice at the Institute and on the systemic pressures of the past few years, we found it challenging to give a definitive explanation of teaching and learning at Batchelor. The Institute has satisfied the audit requirements of both the Vocational and Higher Education sectors and been recognised as a leader in the field. The need for the Institute to further develop understandings and publication around both-ways was highlighted in the 2006 audit report

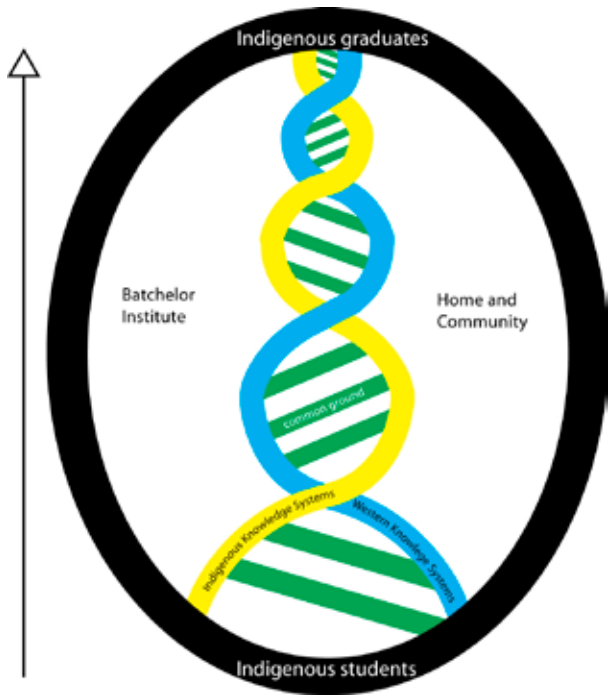
from the Australian Universities Quality Agency as an issue that needed attention.

> 'AUQA recommends that BIITE carry out further investigation and development on expressing how both-ways may best work for BIITE over the coming years, including its relation to BIITE's values, research, curriculum and teaching (AUQA 2006, p.5).

We struggle with issues of recruitment and retention, as do all other tertiary institutions. The impact on the Institute, though, is that, without a clear induction and professional development program that gives staff knowledge and skills to work within the both-ways framework, and without strong dialogue with students and their communities, there has been something of a forgetting. We are suggesting in this paper, that not only has the time come to remember our both-ways philosophy, but also that it is time for us to detail and share our practice. Both-ways is not just something to read about and implement, it's something to understand and live.

Another way of thinking about both-ways

Both-ways is about the learning journey that everyone takes together



Model 4 : Both-ways diagram[1]

Explaining the methodology of the both-ways philosophy

The diagram explained

Indigenous students come to Batchelor Institute as part of their life's learning journey. They bring with them their own knowledge, language/s and culture and come as adults with previous life and education experience. They journey with Batchelor and continue to journey with their home community and family, at the same time.

While they are learning at Batchelor, they are building on their knowledge and skills. Students have these in both Indigenous knowledge and ways of learning; and in Western knowledge and ways of learning. Students, lecturers and support staff all journey together. Through this journey a rich and supportive teaching and learning environment is created. This learning is situated sometimes on campus, and sometimes on the community, sometimes at work. Some students do workshops at home; some students travel to campus for workshops. The learning at Batchelor builds on learning from home and also contributes to the knowledge that students share in their home communities. For many students, this means validating their new knowledge and learning with their elders. Batchelor graduates are highly skilled, bi-cultural leaders with a strong identity and skills in learning and problem-solving.

In working to describe our diagram, we have developed three main principles of both-ways practice.

Principle 1: Both-ways is a shared learning journey

Both-ways is all about the learning journey. In this learning journey, everyone participates—students, their families and communities, the lecturers and the support staff. The aims of the journey and the end points will differ for everyone.

> 'As one D-BATE student commented: "Our communities are an important part of our library" ' (McTaggart 1991, p.310).

The learning journey is undertaken by the students as a group, as well as the individual student. The both-ways philosophy is about the shared journey and each individual becomes part of this shared journey. Both-ways learning is about shared learning, about working in groups, about collaboration rather than competition (Batchelor College 1991; Burrunali et al. 2001; Byrnes 1993; White 2005).

> 'I think Batchelor has an important role in Aboriginal TAFE and higher education. I think that Aboriginal people should take advantage of it and use the courses and programs that are run here to extend their learning. Not only that but to share their knowledge too with other people from other places. I see Batchelor College as a place where people come together to learn together and share together.' (Robyn Ober in Batchelor College 1994, p.23).

These learning journeys take place both at Batchelor and at home in the students' home communities.

Batchelor learning

At Batchelor Institute, there are people who journey with the students—the lecturers and all the support staff, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, who work together to go this journey of learning and empowerment. The learning at Batchelor includes Indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge.

Community learning

At home, there are people who journey with the students—family and community who support the students and continue their education at home. Students will bring home new learning to share and to be validated with their elders. Students will undertake learning at home that they bring back to Batchelor to share. The learning at home will also include Indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge. Many students are also undertaking their Batchelor studies at home in their community.

> 'The Aboriginal people learn their culture by talking to the Elders and walking and seeing things around about and having respect for their culture' (Bilbil 1991, p.25).

Principle 2: Both-ways is student-centred

Adult Indigenous students

Indigenous students come to Batchelor as Indigenous adults with their own language, own culture, and family and community life. They come as complete people, with much to share and an intention to learn (Lanhupuy 2002; Murphy and Rickard 2007). Students follow their own cultural protocols when they come to Batchelor, as well as learning those of Batchelor Institute. For some students, this means thinking carefully about what information or knowledge they are permitted to share in such a place. For other students it means learning about other people's cultural protocols and how to respect them.

The impact on teaching and learning at Batchelor is that the principles of adult education are interwoven with the principles of Indigenous

education to create a rich and powerful practice that is student-centred, is based on a tradition of real-life and problem-solving approaches to learning and makes use of an action research approach (Batchelor College 1985; Batchelor College 1991; Byrnes 1993; Henry and McTaggart 1987; McClay 1988; Morgan 1988; Stage 1 students and staff 1991; Stewart 1989; White 2005).

> 'For a lot of Indigenous students whether mainstream or Batchelor, there is innate inner feeling to belong and to feel comfortable with your surroundings. At Batchelor there is an awareness of a uniqueness that you would not find anywhere else' (Peter Whingfield, Student Forum Report, 2007, p.2).

Principle 3: Both-ways strengthens Indigenous identity

Indigenous knowledge systems and western knowledge systems

Students at Batchelor will come with experiences, learning and language from both from their Indigenous knowledge systems and Western knowledge systems. Both of these strands will continue throughout the students' time at Batchelor, sometimes making connections, the one with the other and sometimes not. Some students will come to Batchelor with lots of Western knowledge and have come to Batchelor to learn about the Indigenous side to strengthen their identity. Some students come with strong Indigenous knowledge and have come to Batchelor to gain skills and knowledge in the Western academic sphere.

> 'More culturally orientated than any other Indigenous learning Institute that I am acquainted with. Batchelor is awesome in that I can study both-ways and still have that Aboriginal connection that I'd otherwise not have the chance to' (Student Forum Report 2007, p.4).

> '2 way education to me is being able to learn mainstream education, while at the same time being able to retain our culture' (Student Forum Report 2007, p.5).

As the students continue their learning journey, the strands become closer together, signifying a strengthening of skills and an increase in knowledge. Students become more 'bi-cultural'. After graduation, students continue this learning journey, using their new skills and knowledge in their workplaces and weaving a stronger identity across the worlds.

> 'Both ways ensures that Aboriginal language and culture are maintained for the future. It means being strong in Western ways and being strong in Aboriginal Culture and being recognised by both

> worlds. It gives them pride as an Aboriginal in their community and the outside world. It gets them ready for the future so that they can teach their own children their knowledge that was given to them and they will have a fair idea on what sort of education awaits for their children' (Wilson 1996, p.45).

Indigenous graduates

By graduation, students have gained a stronger identity as an Indigenous person and have learnt to take from both knowledge systems in order to gain their professional knowledge and practice.

> 'So that's why I go to Batchelor to learn about equipment so I can talk to the people and keep the culture strong. My heart when I am talking is strong inside' (Nooley Preston in Batchelor College 1994, p.13).

The next steps

These principles of practice can be further expanded into approaches and methodologies of teaching and learning and this will be the basis of our next paper, 'Both-ways: theory to practice'. This paper will also be used by a group of past and present Batchelor educators collaborating on an action research project, walking the talking to generate a more comprehensive resource for best practice teaching and learning at Batchelor Institute.

There is also the opportunity to further expand these principles into practice within other areas of the Institute and such a reflection on the three principles, would itself, be an appropriate both-ways activity.

Conclusion

We have written this paper with an aim of generating discussion and reflection. There are two main points that we would like to leave you with.

The first is that we feel strongly that the time has come for the revitalisation and repositioning of both-ways.

The second is that we need to ask ourselves the continuous question that is both-ways, to reflect on our practice and our ways of working and to ensure that are implementing the three principles of practice in our work. We finish this paper with some questions for you to talk about, perhaps over your next kapati.

Principle 1: Both-ways is a shared learning journey

Are we working and learning in a team?

What do we need to learn?

How can we improve our work practice?

Principle 2: Both-ways is student-centred

How will what we do help the students?

What can we change to strengthen/improve students' experiences at Batchelor?

How do we know what the students need/want?

Principle 3: Both-ways strengthens Indigenous identity

How do we incorporate Indigenous knowledge in our work?

How can we ensure that the work we do makes a positive contribution to strengthening self-determination for Indigenous people?

Endnotes

1 Our thanks to Lon Garrick for turning our very rough sketches into this diagram for us.

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