Using Indigenous film and literature to engage registrars emotionally and reflectively around Indigenous Health Issues.

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Why?

- Aboriginal health days- engagement at intellectual level
- Anecdotally I had noted when they watched a movie they had been quite moved....
- We wanted a follow up task that engaged in a different way that was more personal and emotional.
- We were hoping to find out what registrars really felt and thought
Keep it simple

Learning objective:
To gain a deeper understanding about the lives and history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders following the Aboriginal Health Day.

Task:
View or read one (or more) from the following list of resources. Then write a personal reflection or response to this resource. (minimum of 500 words) This written task is an opportunity for you to reflect on your engagement with the material you chose. You will not be assessed specifically on the writing or the content but on the personal response you have to the resource and what you have learnt from this. The task is mandatory and must be handed in by the due date for satisfactory completion of the Aboriginal Health Module. The Aboriginal Health Module consists of the Aboriginal Health Day and the Post Reflective Task.
Resource Material

Films by Indigenous filmmakers

- *Beneath Clouds*  Ivan Sen,
- *Radiance*  Rachel Perkins,
- *Jindalee Lady*  Bryan Syron,
- *Crocodile Dreaming*  Darlene Johnson,
- *Tent Embassy*  Frances Peters-Little,

Movies

- *Samson and Delilah*
- *Bran Nu day*
- *One Night the Moon*
- *The Tracker*
- *Rabbit Proof Fence*
- *Ten Canoes*
- *The Fringe Dwellers*
Resource Material

Television Series

• SBS Television Series: The First Australians

• Traditional Aboriginal Healers – Ngangkari
  ABC.net.au

• Women of the Sun. SBS series

Indigenous Writers

• Long list of writers and poets
Assessment??

• There was no grading or marking of the task in any way. The purpose was to show that the viewing or reading had taken place.

• We wanted to know what the registrars thought without them having to be politically correct.

• Some were superficial and some were profound

• Only one person did literature- Poetry- Kath Walker
• I had been aware for many years that I was deeply ignorant of Aboriginal history and the impacts of European settlement on Aboriginal culture. Watching this series has reinforced that awareness and deepened my disappointment of my own education of Australian history and lack of education in Aboriginal history… ….
The overriding impression that I had developed from my own disjointed, self-directed education in the area was that the great majority of government policies relating to Aboriginal affairs, although often misguided, were at least founded with good intent and I, as a white Australian, took some comfort in that fact. Watching this series has dispelled that notion, and has given me a far greater insight into just how profoundly racist and inhumane so much of Australian Government policy was towards the Australian Aborigines.
The First Australians

- By the time I started watching the fifth episode, I found myself discussing certain issues raised in the program with colleagues at work, my friends and my boyfriend. I could not stop thinking about it. The fifth episode made me feel so sick inside... It made me so angry that they were allowed to take children away from mothers and were allowed to treat children like slaves. I cried throughout the sixth episode.
The First Australians

• One person said to me that if it weren’t the British then it could have been the Chinese or the Japanese who would have invaded Australia. That may be true, but the issue is not about invasion, but about mistreatment, displacement of people, their belief, culture and maybe even genocide. How can we expect things to get better for the Aboriginal people after so much injustice? I hope we will never repeat past mistakes and move forward towards improving Aboriginal health, social and economic conditions.
Bran Nue Day

• I was enchanted by the setting of the film as well. Having just migrated to Australia not so long ago, I have never really travelled outside New South Wales as yet. But this film made me want to pack my suitcase and explore the various sights and adventures that Australia has to offer. Broome, Western Australia may just be my first destination (Sea World will just have to wait)! The red earth intrigues me, and even more so, the original inhabitants of that sacred dust. It made me develop an interest in Aboriginal culture, beliefs and traditions and I’m definitely not closing my doors to a possible extended skills training in Aboriginal Health if my situation allows.
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture

• It is first and foremost my job to educate myself and my child about the Aboriginal Australian history and culture, keeping in mind that this culture is not homogenous. I am after all, taking refuge on their ancient land from war and persecution. Their generosity has saved my life and provided me with a second chance. With great admiration I now understand the proud history of this old civilisation, which is much older than my Persian one.
Respect and Trust

• I need to treat my Aboriginal patients with respect and understanding and above all I need to give them the time and patience that they need, when they seek my expertise ...

• I cannot expect to be trusted straight away. I have to earn that trust with my patients. I am not to judge or point fingers. It is not my duty to burden someone with my own principles and ideals. I need to have an open mind and the ability to see things from all ends and not just my own version of what is right or the norm.
Registrar feedback

• Majority thought it was great
• For some writing a personal response was difficult
• They agreed if it wasn’t mandatory they might not have got around to it
• They enjoyed involving their families in the task and reflection.
• 2 out of 23 – waste of time because they had no aboriginal patients
Outcomes

• The task helps to engage most of the registrars in a more emotional space around Indigenous health.

• The task shows that registrars are all at very different places in their understanding of Aboriginal issues. The range in understanding by IMGs is very broad. Interestingly the knowledge by recent Aussie grads is very variable.

• It is good to see personal reflections that show how registrars are thinking and it is important that they can be honest in their thinking and not censored.
Outcomes

• Any task that empowers registrars to have more empathy and compassion for Aboriginal people is worth doing.
• Involving registrars in personal reflection engages them more fully
• Families and friends became involved
• Enjoyable homework....

Duncan Smith