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**How does the work you are doing relate to *governance*?**

I have just started work on a project through the Bushfire Natural Hazards CRC (with RIEL/NAILSMA/ARPNet) entitled ‘*Scoping remote north Australian community resilience and developing governance models through action research’*. The project will map out how several remote northern communities understand and respond to natural hazards, looking at the differing expectations and approaches of community stakeholders and the government emergency services agencies which support them. It will then move on to developing ‘governance protocols’ to better inform the ways in which those agencies engage with community residents.

**What interesting or different insight have you gained about *governance* in your recent research?**

The above project is in its infant stages. My previous engagement with governance approaches is now somewhat outdated, and stems from my PhD research which used governance and participatory development models to explore how/why Indigenous Territorians seek to develop their own commercial enterprises. I turned to the governance literature because there was relatively little participatory development literature dealing with the structural and discursive relationships which come into play in the context of ‘community development’ in remote northern Australia. The value of governance was for me its focus on drawing out the various relationships which impact on people’s ability to achieve self-defined development goals. While governance can suffer from being a buzz word which loses specific meaning, overall I find the body of work done under this banner to identify and explore many of the key themes relevant to the ‘hows’ and ‘whys’ of remote disadvantage. Having an anthropological background, I find governance theory a good bridge between perspectives which focus on ‘local’ practice, and those which focus on the wider societal structures (both practical and ideological) which create and reinforce (and occasionally challenge) the status quo. I also find that it assists with taking ethnographic insights into a domain where one can identify ways to enhance communication and accountability between stakeholders in a given context. While not resolving incommensurable practices or views, it allows different interests and approaches to be articulated and positioned so that positive outcomes (or as near to them as possible) can be achieved for the various parties involved in a specific partnership.

**What theoretical or practical problem to do with *governance* are you engaging with at the moment?**

I am looking forward to exploring what work has been done in the governance domain in the 5 years since undertaking my PhD, and combining this with the insights I have gained from working in an applied field since that time. I am also looking forward to hearing what other researchers at CDU are doing and engaging with you all in some rigorous debate about the pros and cons of the governance approach!