## Matt Campbell

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

I work at the Tangentyere Council Research Hub. Tangentyere council is the Aboriginal council for the Alice Springs town camps. It has existed since the 1970s, initially gaining aboriginal people rights to the land they were living on around Alice Springs. It now provides a range of services for people living in the Town Camps.

The Research Hub has been going for over ten years. Its role is to provide a place for Town Camp residents to take control of and be involved in doing research on issues of concern for them. It was deliberately set up to recognise and strengthen Aboriginal knowledge making practices.

As a result all of the work we do at TCRH relates to governance, where governance is understood as a process by which the right people do the right work in the right way, such that it strengthens people, families and communities. The critical thing about this in terms of the work we do is that we see governance as having institutional forms as well as emergent forms, and that there is an ongoing iterative dance between the two.

As do our work, whether it be research into Income Management, chronic disease or climate change, we are always aware that we must pay attention to the political aspects of the projects, not just the instrumental aspects. We do this because we are charged with making a difference- that is we are not doing our work to find things out, but to make a tangible difference in people’s lives. As such governance- who decides, why, how etc become central rather than peripheral questions.

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

Paying attention to governance allows us to focus on the work that people do together that makes the world unfold. As a result we can see that although governance has institutional forms (e.g. Tangentyere is governed by an Executive which is made up of the presidents of all the Town Camp Housing Associations) these forms are, both in themselves and more generally, part of the ongoing unfolding of collective life. There are no static forms (even though they might appear to be that way), they are always changing, morphing and moving. Understanding this and being able to organise our work so that we are active and contributing participants in this process is something that we are exploring and will continue with

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

We are not so much engaging with any specific problem, as much as we are trying to make sense of how we do our instrumental work, while playing our role as participants in the collective life of Tangentyere directed toward strengthening Aboriginal knowledge making practice and making it more visible both internally and externally. This process exists at a number of levels:

* Within the team- the role of each of the team members, professional development, team structure and how we work together
* Within the Social Services Division- what role does the TCRH have in relation to other parts of the division?
* Tangentyere as a whole. How does the work of the TCRH contribute the growth and development of the organisation as a whole? How does thinking about our work in this way enable us to see things that we wouldn’t otherwise see, and what does it close us off from.?
* Accountability to Town Campers generally. How do we understand our work in relation to the changing of the material circumstances of people’s lives. How do we understand and conceptualise the outcomes of our work? How does thinking in this way allow us to change the ways we do our work.