



## Celebrating our book *Weaving lives together at Bawaka, North East Arnhem Land*

Lak Lak Burarrwanga, Djawundil Maymuru, Ritjilili Ganambarr, Banbapuy Ganambarr, Merrkiyawuy Ganambarr,  
Sarah Wright, Kate Lloyd and Sandie Suchet-Pearson

Our jointly authored book, *Weaving lives together at Bawaka, North East Arnhem Land*, was published in March 2008. To celebrate the book and help publicise and promote it three book launches, and associated workshops and exhibitions, were held:

Garma Festival ~ Saturday 9th August 2008  
Macquarie University ~ Wednesday 3rd September 2008  
The University of Newcastle ~ Friday 5th September 2008

**Launches and workshops**

Garma Festival book launch was programmed into the activities and held at the Healing Centre (approx. 85 people attended).

The book launch at Macquarie University was accompanied by an exhibition of baskets and photographs at the University Art Gallery as well as two workshops attended by members of the university community, friends of the Gallery and the general public (approx. 140 people attended the book launch and a total of 60 participated in the workshops). The exhibition and book launch were opened by Jennifer Byrne, John Morse and Emma Donovan.

The book launch at The University of Newcastle was held at Wollotuka: School of Aboriginal Studies. Following a workshop attended by 45 students, staff and other members of the University Community the book was launched by the Director of CURS, Pauline McGuirk (approx. 45 people participated in the workshop and 60 attended the launch).

**Sales and income**

- Garma book launch – 42 books sold.
- Sydney and Newcastle Book Launches and Workshops – 72 books sold (total book sales of \$1865).
- The University of Newcastle, Deputy Vice – Chancellor (Academic) - 5 books sold (\$125).
- Sales of baskets in Sydney and Newcastle – \$3050 (kindly facilitated by Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre).
- Payment for running the workshops at Newcastle and Macquarie Universities – \$1500.

**Funding**

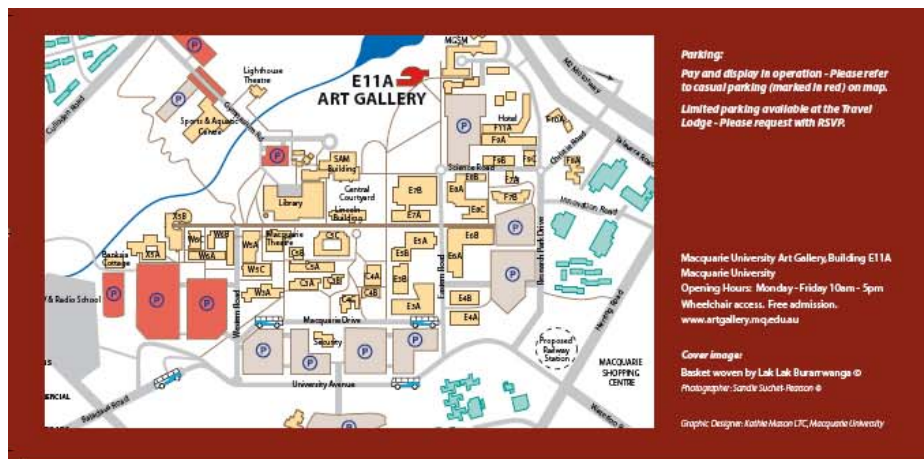
- Tourism NT – Printing of 1000 copies of the book (\$7000).
- ARTS NT – Graphic design for the book and airfares (3) to attend book launches in Sydney and Newcastle (\$7000).
- ARTS NT (Quick response scheme – Professional Development) – Funding for three people to attend the book launches and run weaving workshops in Sydney and Newcastle – airfare and associated expenses (\$3900).
- Tourism Hub, Yirrkala – Accommodation (\$435).
- Newcastle University Centre for Urban and Regional Studies – Accommodation and catering (\$2000).
- Newcastle University Wollotuka – Catering (\$400).

- Macquarie University Art Gallery – Exhibition costs (transport and materials) and catering (\$11900).
- Macquarie University Centre for Research on Social Inclusion – Accommodation (\$360).
- Macquarie University Department of Human Geography – Food, transport, gifts (\$1300).

**Contacts, links and networks**

Existing networks were consolidated with Jennifer Byrne, John Morse, the Gerringong Weavers, Tourism Australia, the Mawul Rom project and Reconciliation Australia. New networks were made with people from the Dharug community interested in re-learning weaving, APRA, Boss Magazine, Readings Books & Music. The Art Curator from The University of Newcastle has also expressed interest in hosting a similar exhibition.

## Invitations



## Weaving Lives Together at Bawaka

Wednesday 3 September 2008 · 6pm - 8pm  
Macquarie University Art Gallery

The exhibition will be opened by

**Jennifer Byrne**

Journalist

with

**John Morse**

Former Managing Director - Australian Tourist Commission, Board member - Indigenous Tourism Leadership Group

and

**Emma Donovan**

Indigenous Singer/Songwriter

**RSVP is essential: Monday 1 September 2008**  
Tel: (02) 9850 4271 or Email: artgallery@mq.edu.au

Invitation to the book launch of

# Weaving Lives Together at Bawaka

Lak Lak Burarrwanga - Djawundil Maymuru - Ritjilili Ganambarr - Banbapuy Ganambarr  
Sarah Wright - Sandie Suchet-Pearson - Kate Lloyd

The University of Newcastle, Macquarie University, Bawaka Cultural Experiences, Gay'wu Women's Program



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NEWCASTLE  
AUSTRALIA

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September**

**11am-1pm Workshop 1pm-2.30pm Book Launch**

**Wollotuka, The University of Newcastle**

For more information or to RSVP for the workshop please contact Sarah Wright

Centre for Urban and Regional Studies The University of Newcastle Ph: +61 2 4921 7157 Email: [sarah.wright@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:sarah.wright@newcastle.edu.au)



## **Macquarie University Media Release**

Thursday, 21 August

### **Macquarie University Art Gallery exhibition weaves together art, research and culture**

A research collaboration involving Macquarie University, The University of Newcastle and indigenous women of North East Arnhem Land has produced a unique art exhibition focusing on weaving and culture.

The Macquarie University Art Gallery's latest exhibition, *Weaving Lives Together at Bawaka*, will be officially launched on September 3 by journalist, Jennifer Byrne, and will coincide with the launch of the publication of the same name.

Both the publication and the exhibition tell the stories of weaving, with a difference – the stories are told by the women themselves, bringing together the practical elements with the cultural and spiritual.

Yolngu Elder, director of tourism business Bawaka Cultural Experiences and artist Lak Lak Burarrwanga said the skills and knowledge of weaving had been passed down to the women from the powerful spirits, the Djan'kawu Sisters.

"This is a story about weaving, but it's about more than that too. It's a story about culture, coming together and taking care of the land," she said.

"I want to share this story with non-indigenous people, and with those indigenous people who don't know about weaving, who haven't heard these stories. We pass it on to our children and to you."

Kate Lloyd and Sandie Suchet-Pearson, from Macquarie University's Department of Human Geography, and Sarah Wright, from The University of Newcastle, are supporting indigenous tourism initiatives with the women from Bawaka homeland and have produced the book and subsequent exhibition.

Dr Lloyd said the process of writing the book was similar to that of weaving a basket.

"We've made a connection with each other that's like a thread linking us together," Lloyd said.

"In the same way the baskets are connected, we are all connected now. We all have a desire to work together to build understanding between cultures and to help others learn about, and learn from, Yolngu culture."

The exhibition, which will be open to the public from Thursday, 28 August until Tuesday, 9 September, features woven creations by Lak Lak Burarrwanga, Djawundil Maymuru, Ritjilili Ganambarr, Merrkiyawuy Ganambarr and Banbapuy Ganambarr.

Art Gallery curator, Rhonda Davis, said the exhibition would also include photographs taken by the researchers and included in the publication.

“The photos help to illustrate the weaving process – this exhibition is an expression of what the process means culturally, it’s an acknowledgement that we can only get the full picture once we understand the context of production,” she said.

“Weaving for these women is about telling stories – it’s not just aesthetics, it’s about teaching the children about their culture.”

The artists will run weaving workshops on Wednesday, September 3 (10am to 12pm) and Thursday, 4 September (10am to 12pm). The cost of materials is \$10 per person and bookings are essential.

The Macquarie University Art Gallery is open Monday to Friday, from 10am to 5pm daily.

For more information about the exhibition, contact the gallery on (02) 9850 7437. To register for one of the workshops, email [artgallery@mq.edu.au](mailto:artgallery@mq.edu.au) or call (02) 9850 4271.

*Note: The baskets included in the exhibition will also be available for purchase. Photos will be provided to the media upon request.*

**Publisher's Speech – Pauline McGuirk, Director of CURS, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Newcastle**

I'm going to be very brief because I'd like to give the authors of this beautiful book as much time to speak for themselves as possible.

I'm the Director of CURS—the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies—and I'm very proud today to be representing CURS as the publisher of *Weaving Lives Together at Bawaka*. I'd also like to thank Wollotuka for hosting us today.

This is CURS first significant undertaking in publishing and I'm thrilled we've been able to help facilitate the book's production.

I know the book's come out of a genuinely collaborative research process and I know this in part by virtue of having watched Sarah Wright's involvement in the project unfold over the last few years. But I know it also because of the responses of the academic reviewers we had comment on the text prior to its publication. One reviewer found the book to be, and I'm quoting here, 'a testament to a research collaboration that reflects years of developing trust, credibility and mutual respect'. Another found it to be 'a piece of exemplary participatory research', 'an exceptional collaboration'.

And that collaborative process I think is really evident in the words, the stories, and the beautiful pictures brought together here.

The book tells its stories about weaving, about women, about caring for culture and caring for country and, perhaps most important, about connection. And it does so in a way that's incredibly gentle yet really powerful.

I know I'm not alone in finding it a really moving book: when I first read it made me cry.

And I think that was because, for me, the book embodies an approach to creating and sharing knowledge across cultures that makes us hopeful about coming together and about co-existence. As Lak Lak says in the opening pages: "I want you to take this knowledge so that you and me can come together".

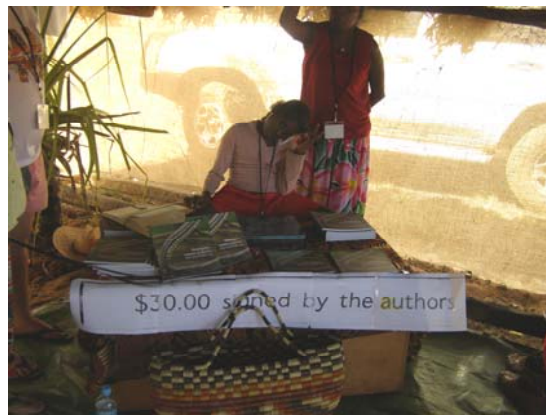
So before I tear up again, I'd like to congratulate all the authors on what they've achieved here and to thank them for giving CURS the opportunity to publish *Weaving Lives Together at Bawaka*. I wish it every success. Congratulations. Thank you.



**Garma Festival Book Launch ~ Saturday 9th August 2008**



*The signing ...*



*Appreciation by Jimmy Little ...*



## Macquarie University Workshop & Book Launch - *September 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>*

### Feedback

*Thank you for this invitation. It is lovely to know that the women are being so well promoted. I found it a great privilege to work with the Bawaka women to assist them to develop Gay'wu Women's Program at the beginning. These invitations are not to be missed but unfortunately I am based in Canberra and cannot make it. Best wishes Meg*

*Thanks for the invitation; it would have been lovely to come - if only I wasn't in Melbourne! I hope it goes really well. It was such an amazingly lovely experience at Garma.*



*I just wanted to let you know I popped into the art gallery at uni this afternoon and had a look at the exhibition. I thought the photographs were beautiful and your book looked fabulous!! I was really taken by the fact that the story-telling whether it was through material or spiritual means, was utterly simple, yet was bound by such deep ancestral ties (something you would think could get very complex and confused!)*

### **Macquarie University Book Launch - September 3<sup>rd</sup>**

*Just wanted to thank you for the invitation. I handed them out in anthropology and a student I met at a Divisional HDR activity. He even came up to me near the end and thanked me for bringing him along. It was a great event. Really moving. Heartfelt. And the photographs and dilly bags were great. I wish I had even more time that evening, and the place had been a bit emptier, so I could have checked out the photos and weaving even more closely. See you soon.*

*Just wanted to congratulate you all - and say thanks for a great evening yesterday. We had a great time and really enjoyed the exhibition. It did make me wonder why I do my research in Sydney though!*

*Firstly, thanks so much for the invite to last night. I found it very moving and came away changed. It was very special to be a part of such an evening of sharing and reconciling.*

*Congratulations on the book, and thanks for the invite to the launch. It was very special ... I felt a very proud human geographer tonight!*

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Excerpt by the Dean, Associate Professor Kevin McCracken, from Macquarie University's Division of Environmental and Life Science's weekly newsletter *Science News*:

*Last Wednesday evening saw the launch of a book ( Weaving Lives Together at Bawaka, North East Arnhem Land ) produced by Sandie Suchet-Pearson (Human Geography), Kate Lloyd (Human Geography) and Sarah Wright (University of Newcastle) in collaboration with Yolngu women from Bawaka in Arnhem Land. The launch was held in the Macquarie Art Gallery in conjunction with an exhibition of photographs and intricate baskets, with the women who produced the baskets present for the occasion. The atmosphere at the event was very special and made one feel proud of the Division's involvement in the project. Well done Sandie and Kate for your work and your exceptional engagement with the Bawaka community. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the book can do so by emailing [tourismhub@bigpond.com](mailto:tourismhub@bigpond.com).*

For more images see <http://www.artgallery.mq.edu.au/pastexhibit.htm>



*The speeches...*



*The music...*





**The University of Newcastle Workshop & Book launch - *Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> September***



*Congratulations on everything! ... It was such a special & amazing workshop, thank you!*





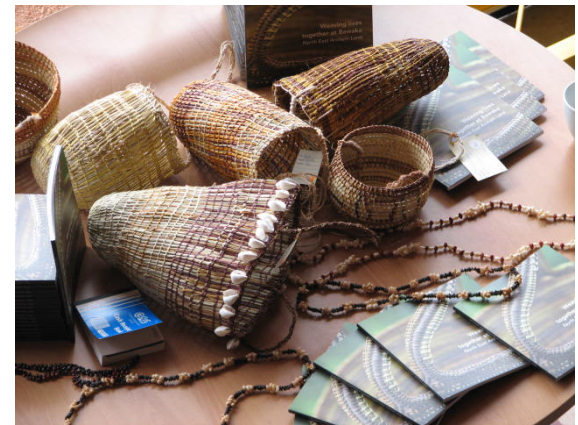
*Group weaving...*



*Gurrutu Kinship...*







*Preparing and dyeing...*



## Book Reviews

### # 1

Divya P. Tolia-Kelly, Durham University, U.K.

**'Weaving lives together at Bawaka, North East Arnhem Land.'**

Lak Lak Burarrwanga, Djawundil Maymuru, Ritjilili Ganambarr, Banbapuy Ganambarr, Sarah Wright, Kate Lloyd and Sandie Suchet-Pearson

*Publisher:* Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Newcastle NSW

**ABSTRACT:** The book tells the stories associated with the basket weaving process. This includes the technical details of collecting, stripping, dyeing and weaving pandanus leaves, the fundamental role basket-making plays as women's work situating women within a broader relationship to the cosmos, and the critical way weaving baskets weaves lives as the spiraling of the weaving is the spiraling of women-ness from within the womb throughout the generations. The women from Bawaka wish to sell the book to tourists and through other outlets to interested people, but more importantly they want to write the book as a form of sharing their knowledge with all women: "Remember, this basket we have made, it holds stories and knowledge to share. I hope that as we wove this story together you gained knowledge and stories that you can pass on to your daughters, your granddaughters and to the world" (Lak Lak Burarrwanga).

### **Valuable Knowledges**

This book is a testament to a research collaboration that reflects years of developing trust, credibility and mutual respect between the Gay'wu women of Bawaka and researchers who have articulated through their field practice, the ethics and responsibilities necessary to fulfill a truly participatory research agenda. The most significant evidence for this ethical practice is that the voices of the Gay'wu women are the book. There has been no compromise made here to interpolate or frame the very rich Gay'wu narratives with a research framing or priorities, other than those of the Bawaka women's desire to set up a means of transposition of weaving culture to other women of the world. The generosity of the process of encounter and engagement between the Bawaka and researchers is reflected in the intimacy of the text; Bawaka relate the ecological, botanical and practical weaving knowledges in their own words, and terms. A holistic understanding of embodiment of cultural values, ecology, nurturing cultures, heritage narratives and indigenous knowledges about land, nature and weaving are threaded through an embodied narrative of walking the land and weaving its natures through cultural texts such as the basket and the book itself. Both these texts articulate a modesty and humility; firstly towards the relationships between man and nature, and secondly between economies of knowledge and relationships in fieldwork.

*“ I give this story of weaving and of culture to you I want you to take this knowledge so that you and me can come together like a basket woven from many colours”* (Barbara Lak Lak 2 Burarrwanga)

### **Politics**

In particular the book treats the ‘weaving’ metaphor as a valuable way of seeing relations between weavers and environmental histories of the land, as well as keeping ‘live’ the potential to extending this to readers from non-indigenous or non-weaving indigenous Australian cultures. Within this framing the settler and earlier Bawaka settler are repositioned on a spectrum of ‘the human’ working with nature on one single time-line in one single time-space. This is the first time that Bawaka and European settler are mapped on the same cultural continuum, through the cultural vision of Bawaka women. In this narration, the Aboriginal and European settler are attuned to the earth through weaving practice as a hopeful conjoining cultural act which through sharing may reconcile cultures of difference, ecologies of being between ‘other’ and ‘settler’ and produce a vision of a sustainable future; culturally and ecologically. This is also followed through in the practice of writing the text of the book – this is published in both the language of the Bawaka and English. The reader is invited to also reconcile their cultural systems of language with Bawaka. The reader is enabled to embrace the *different* strategies of situated knowledges of the Bawaka, through being intimately guided through the Yolngu language that signifies its ecology and weaving praxis. This positions the reader as synthesized into the political vision to produce exchange and a sharing of views of the land and its reproduction.

### **Reproducing Memory, Heritage and Ecology**

The histories of Bawaka land are shared through the process of sharing the skills of weaving which are critically linked to gendered practices of being woman, as well as the responsibilities afforded Yolngu women in the community. The baskets made here become symbolic of women’s work and their autonomy in the cultural landscape. The weaving allows them to reproduce cultures of woman in the society, but also to weave heritage narratives into the very matter of the baskets, mats and dilly bags produced. Matter, memory and ecology are consolidated in the form of these, but do not remain as singular materials of living. These materials are texts of culture, ecology and biological relations between land, people and Bawaka citizenship *in situ*. The materials, through the book, become an historical resource for Bawaka unable to reconnect with their weaving knowledge. Therefore this book is a manual, history book and a research essay about ethical research and knowledge production, which is extremely respectful. The work is part of an ongoing collaborative research agenda between the co-authors, this agenda is exemplary in the means through which knowledge and experience are valued and communicated. The art of weaving is detailed and in response the audience has the privilege to continue the practices. The audience is

invited to engage with this art from seeing timeless notions of weaving in this society's past, through to the potential of weaving as a bridge building art between Bawaka and *other*. Stewardship and citizenship are at stake in contemporary times, this book offers a language of togetherness and cultural exchange which disrupts the separation between Bawaka and *settler*, and history and text. The earth is text, the *gunga* is the matter through which understanding and a conjoined citizenry can be made possible.

### **Academic contribution**

Overall the academic contribution of this book is important as a piece of exemplary participatory research with indigenous groups in Australia. The respect, credibility and trust that has been reflected in the book cannot be easily replicated by other researchers.

To enhance the books impact to academic audiences I would recommend adding the following

- (i) Map of Bawak land (European)
- (ii) Map of spiritual stories transposed onto this.
- (iii) Biography / notes on authors
- (iv) Add a section on context – maybe an appendix or endnote
- (v) Add some botanical drawings and European narratives to show difference between these two systems of knowledge.

All of these would add depth to the research for an academic audience. Also a list of other relevant publications may be valuable.

### **Relevancy for publication**

As a European geographer, I find this difficult to judge. However, I would say that this book is pioneering in that it does not provide a reductive stereotypical cultural narration of the Bawaka people. The book is produced by them and offers interesting facets to the life of this landscape in North East Arnhem Land. There is insight reflected in the form and content of the book – it is not patronizing and is respectful to the research collaboration. The book promotes stewardship and citizenship that is positively seeking to powerfully entwine two visions of the land through cultural practice. The voice of women is the catalyst for this entwining; this is a political project that should be supported, both for cultural autonomy of the Yolngu, and the empowerment of voices of women and their land.

Best Regards,  
Divya P. Tolia-Kelly

## # 2

Richie Howitt, Macquarie University, NSW

**‘Weaving lives together at Bawaka, North East Arnhem Land’**

Lak Lak Burarrwanga, Djawundil Maymuru, Ritjilili Ganambarr, Banbapuy Ganambarr, Sarah Wright, Sandie Suchet-Pearson and Kate Lloyd

*Publisher:* Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Newcastle NSW

This unassuming manuscript has a significant contribution to make and I think I need to comment on several elements of the work before making an assessment of its academic value in this review. In passing, I note that the boxed text in the manuscript that I received for comment had not been finalised and I therefore have not included any comments on that material here.

1. It is unusual for an academic outlet to collaborate in the publication of a community-based representation of local economic, cultural and environmental relations of this sort. Yet the partnership between CURS, the Newcastle and Macquarie based researchers and the community at Bawaka is actually exemplary of the sort of ethical engagement that is meant to be fostered by the current NHMRC guidelines for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I strongly and sincerely commend CURS for engaging in this innovative and impressive publication as part of its ongoing community collaboration and Bawaka and wish it well in the commercial elements of the process of publishing for the community.
2. It is unusual for a group of academic authors to so effectively write themselves out of a community-based publication as Sarah, Sandie and Kate have done. This is both a strength and a weakness. The voice of the main text, the text which links the Bawaka women to their readers – many of whom will have the book as a memento of their time at Bawaka – is strongly and appropriately emplaced and embodied as a Yolngu voice (predominantly as Lak Lak). There is, however, an appropriate communicative space to extend remembering into the sort of collaborative future that Lak Lak anticipates in weaving the readers into a shared knowledge, connection and activity. It seems to me that there is room for a more academic engagement which perhaps takes David Malouf’s image of re-membering (in the sense of reconnecting and as the opposite of dis-membering) from *Remembering Babylon* to provide readers with a different sort of engagement with the challenges of the Gay-wu experience at Bawaka. It would, of course, be necessary to ensure that this brief academic commentary not frame the existing text in order to somehow authorise, authenticate or patronise the current work.

3. It is unusual for a text to allow metaphor to speak for itself across cultures rather than seeking to explain the metaphor for those who haven't shared the context from which it is borne. I think this is the great strength and very significant achievement of the current text. It is a beautifully crafted piece of writing that carries its complex messages very effectively.

Clearly, this is a very special manuscript. The combination of words and images is, to put it simply, beautiful. Its weakness as a research manuscript, however, is that in its present form, it does not link the representation of the weaving and tourism activities at Bawaka into a wider intellectual context. It does not point readers, many of whom will be unaware of the critiques of eco-tourism and economic development from frameworks such as postdevelopment, postcolonial and political ecology frameworks. Nor does it point to any wider academic literature on Yolngu cultures, language and history. That leaves the manuscript as a very moving, but rather unassuming stand-alone document of weaving as an activity. I would recommend that a brief essay providing readers with a more critically contextualised account of the Gay-wu experience be included as an invitation for readers to take away from their reading not only an appreciation of the significance of the weaving experience, but also an understanding of the encounter between this Yolngu-framed experience and the longer colonial and postcolonial experience of Yolngu peoples in the region.

The text in the present manuscript demonstrates an exceptional collaboration between the academic and community-based writing team. The text is eminently readable and works at a level that makes it accessible for a wide range of literacy levels in English language. This makes the book well-suited to the potential audience of international tourists in the Northern Territory as well as a popular Australian audience. Indeed, one of my recommendations would be that the book should be marketed more widely than just to customers of the Gay-wu program and it should be set up also to recruit participants into the Bawaka experience. That would suggest that contact details, website information and marketing information should be included and that sufficient copies should be produced to allow distribution through the Gove Newsagency (which carries a range of local volumes) and perhaps outlets in tourism precincts elsewhere in the Northern Territory.

The next level of intervention would be to provide a listing of further information sources with an introductory paragraph that points to a wider academic and political context for the Bawaka story. This list could include information on Yolngu language and culture programs, key texts regarding history, politics and environment of the region, and would perhaps be appropriately placed on a reformatted glossary page.

A higher level of intervention would be to add to the manuscript a short essay that is more conventionally academic, which reflects on the way that the research activity has underpinned the publication. This would, I think, allow the text to be better recognised as an academic output and to be taken up as the exemplar of good research practice that it actually is, and to be used as reading in discussion of cross-cultural research practice (ethics, methods, meaning) in undergraduate training in geography, development studies and Indigenous studies. In the mock-up layout that I received, there seems to be some space available at the end of the book that could be used for text (I think the designer would be unhappy with the loss of the visual space). Certainly, the text need only be brief, in the order of 500-800 words I think. I am unsure of the printing requirements in terms of the cost-size ratios and just how many pages a printer would need to increase the book by to add more text. If it is limited to say four pages, and the cost is reasonable, I think that such an essay could be a very powerful and effective addition to the text. If the production costs are raised too high by the addition of pages to the glossy text, it might also be possible to produce the essay in a less expensive and separate format (eg single A3 sheet folded and inserted into the book). In fact, such a strategy may be desirable as a way of not overwhelming the current text with a patronizing academic commentary that undermines the metaphor of weaving the everyday lives of Bawaka into the everyday consciousness of a wide audience as an accessible and continuing presence in the cultural landscapes of northeast Arnhem Land.

So, my overall assessment is that this is an exemplary piece of collaborative, research-based writing that warrants publication and wide circulation. It should certainly be listed as a research output. Its value as a research output would be increased, however, by addition of a brief essay that explicitly addresses the research component of the project, and opens the intellectual context of that work to readers' engagement.

I hope these brief comments are helpful in supporting publication of a beautiful and highly creditable little book. My sincere thanks for the opportunity to review the manuscript.

Associate Professor Richie Howitt  
Head, Department of Human Geography  
Macquarie University NSW 2109



# 3

Deborah Rose, Australian National University, ACT

**‘Weaving lives together at Bawaka, North East Arnhem Land’**

Lak Lak Burarrwanga, Djawundil Maymuru, Ritjilili Ganambarr, Banbapuy Ganambarr, Sarah Wright, Sandie Suchet-Pearson and Kate Lloyd

*Publisher:* Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Newcastle NSW

I've now had a chance to review the book 'Weaving Lives'. Seeing it with the photos really makes a difference; it is a beautiful book. The photography and layout is excellent. The ideas behind the book are terrific, and the presentation is excellent. The integration of text and images works well. The text is fascinating to read. My one main suggestion is that the book needs a little section on how it came into being - the methods, the friendships, the intellectual impetus. And, I think some words on the generosity of the women would be appropriate. Anyone who spends a lot of time with Aboriginal people will readily understand the generosity behind this book, but this book is quite likely to be picked up by people who don't have a lot of background in these matters. I would really like them to be told, in a gentle but straightforward way, what an achievement this book is.

Sincerely,

Deborah Rose