

Carl Kuddell ([00:00](#)):

We kind of do a quick session of three, 10, roughly 10 minute talks. I will start then followed by Clyde Rigney Jr. Non-Jury man. And Veronica Pardo, the foremost executive director from Arts Access Victoria, and followed by a Q and A for about 15 minutes. 10 minute break was a bit of video from our current exhibition called the colony. If you want to stay around and then 50 minute game workshop, where you get a chance to play with our latest game, we see what privileged cards. Alrighty, thanks for coming everybody. What privilege is a critical literacy game to notice disrupt and reframe supremacy thinking it's a work in progress that we have designed and developed with a range of national partners over the last couple of years, and currently in a very lucky position to receive funding from the Australia council for the art and art to say.

Carl Kuddell ([00:59](#)):

And two of our partners are, we're lucky to have them here today. We created about 50 colonizing characters as playful, cheeky, garish cartoons to unpack daily experiences of power and privilege. And this is meant as a personal reflection tool, not as a thing I point into because it's always very tempting to point out other people's privileges and lack of awareness and not start with yourself. The carton games are really an exploration of our shared values and the underlying beliefs and stories that we often even hide from ourselves. And that's where we're going right into the concept of supremacy thinking the Ms and ideas that really, really give us a lot of difficulty. Yeah. When we looked at our practice and the what's going on in the world currently, we felt like we really live in deeply immoral times. And there are only a few individuals who seem to be determining our collective future and this threat that's coming for us, it's also the threat that separates us.

Carl Kuddell ([02:08](#)):

So really this work is for us a chance to learn and relearn how to talk to together, talk to each other. We define and share our values and we need to do this while the house literally is burning down. So there's a sense of urgency that we find what I mean, the supremacy thinking is that it informs it is informed by privileged stories. And we see them as wicked interconnected, unavoidable stories and narratives that fuel in constant global crisis. And really it's potentially unfashionable. But this work and a talk about morality, we feel like we left that field to the neo-cons, to the right wings for the last couple of decades. And we want it to look at what kind of polemic could we have to explore this further? How can we reclaim this field? How can we share concepts around value and power and lift together equitably? How can we do the fun? The privilege can ignore and maintain their power.

Carl Kuddell ([03:15](#)):

And one of the things that we found over the years was that a lot of futuring work jumps straight to the wishful thinking, wants to go straight to the reframing and wants to skip the noticing disrupting. And we have a sense that if we want to come to terms with our own colonial behaviors, we can't do that. We cannot transcend our own ignorances. We need to actually do the painful work of noticing our privilege. And for that we thought maybe we start with some really simple definitions. What is power for us? Power is the capacity to dominate and exclude. That means the contested space in which everything is negotiated. And that happens if we're at the table or not. And from there flows and 90 of privilege as the capacity to disguise the injustice and its brutality. And we're doing that with our normalized everyday supremacy, sinking the mythologies and the excuses that we tell ourselves why it's okay, that we are a little bit better than others.

Carl Kuddell ([04:15](#)):

And we then wonder, what is the role of the artists in this? I would like to see artists as more or less that hold a mirror to society because otherwise we might as well make commodified wallpaper and we could actually be messengers. And we are always messenger regardless that speak back to the injustices. And also be aware that our good intentions still will be fraught with privilege. So the cards really are tools to support us, to find courage, to notice how our good intentions could be or can be colonial practice and to disrupt the assumptions that we know better. And then why us, we had this weed career across art TV, CCD community and cultural development. We had a lot of glorious failures won lots of awards, literally millions of texts per dollar spend on us. And we look at what actually has changed.

Carl Kuddell ([05:14](#)):

What is the impact that we actually had. So we were a part of an Australian research council linkage project to look at the typology of harm. So where is actually harm in community art and the work during the fellowship that followed on from there. Got us to look into the concept of success as a competitive narrative that we constantly are pulled into only positive reports, only success, success stories count. And for us, that competition is actually one of the basis of the supremacy narratives. It feels like there's some social Darwinism deeply rooted in our culture. And the question that came, why does everything have to be competitive? And then we try dig deeper and looked into in a culture of fear, takes a great effort to maintain power, privilege and control. We need a lot of repetition. We need a lot of mythologies and social sanctions to constantly remind us that this is, needs to be, we need to have lack.

Carl Kuddell ([06:15](#)):

We need to have objectivity. We need difference. We need to risk adversity. And wouldn't it be great if the best would actually be the best and if meritocracy would work. So all of these terms and ideas I think are really just there to ring fence our collective imagination to stop us from imagining that there could be alternatives. And we found the deeper, we dug that a lot of these values actually has a root in enlightenment culture that, I mean has given us a language and a system of saw that is built on fact democracy in slavery and it's mired in drama, like fear and competition. So really we were looking for ways to support us, to speak up to retrain courage, to find ways to actually train us, enact a solidarity again, and decide, we mean intersectional solidarity, because we felt like more and more.

Carl Kuddell ([07:13](#)):

There's no need anymore to burn the books if we can scare or co-op authors and writers and singers. It's a may not even come up as a dangerous ideas. So far supremacy thinking is not just a local white racist down at the pub. It is a social structure in which we all daily participate in as a shared competitive system of sword and language. It is really talk about morality and values. What are the values that we actually share and what is underpinning this? So what we want to do with the work is in a way, a daily practice to notice, disrupt and reframe culture, and not as a linear tick boxing approach, where we can learn something trained and implemented and done, but something that gets us to really move beyond blame and shame that we move away from a culture of targeting. And that's really, it's a, it's a messy situation.

Carl Kuddell ([08:04](#)):

I think we're in a very wicked mess and the work sort of mirror is mirroring that we don't really have answers. We have lots more questions and we want to find ways to reframe these in a new conversation together. So in a way we're looking really for new poetic and new language to communicate accurately

together and not just shout across the silos to each other, but how do we feel are actually our values? How could we review them with something that has actual real impact for us that we mean not just still hollowed out husks, it feels it has become. And one of the scariest thing we found over the the work was that the idea of play could actually be a way a means to engage in this in a, not so serious way. But as part of a research dancing muscle in the U S from Boston university a researcher found that more and more children, especially in CUNY level and preschool are opting for task-based activities and don't want to do free play anymore.

Carl Kuddell ([09:18](#)):

And that really concerned us because in free play is where we learned to negotiate and where we get an understanding that everything in life is actually Gaucher bubble. And it's getting constantly negotiated. It's just the question if we try and up or not. So really the on invitation to start a playful conversation, their child is garish. Cheeky cartoons are on the table, says you can have a look the impolite. And we really would like to see what conversations could come. And it is a story generator. We the cartoons that is seeing behind me have come out of a collaboration recently, it was Clyde Jr. Regner Rigney and a couple of other national partners. And I hand over to client, he may be telling you a bit more about the collaboration.

Clyde Rigney Jr. ([10:07](#)):

Thanks, Carl. So first of all, I'd like to start by acknowledging that we are on Ghana, Yoda, traditional lands of the garner people. And as a, as a non-injury not small people from the Lamar long likes to the coral and the south coast of south Australia. That's, that's the most important thing for me to say straight up because I think at time we all, I, I definitely see that that probably gets forgotten or that either gets tacked on. And that, and that is a reflection of a privilege or the privilege to be able to, to be able to influence that and shape that and, and really design. What point do you make that acknowledgement? And at what point does that acknowledgement stop when we get on with the real business of doing business. And so what I want, what I want to start with, I want everyone to close their eyes and just listen to my voice.

Clyde Rigney Jr. ([11:27](#)):

And I want you to forget that. I just told you that I'm not on duty. I want you to forget that. I just told you where, where people are from. And then that's my connection to today's lands and waters here. And on this, on this country, I want you to forget how I just mentioned that me acknowledging the gown of people is the most important thing to me at this point in this conversation. If didn't tell you those things about me and I was just a guy sitting up here talking about something on a Saturday afternoon, would you know that I'm Aboriginal or do you know that my connection to these lands and waters is different pills?

Clyde Rigney Jr. ([12:17](#)):

So at this point, I want to, to hear these next words, because for me, they're quite challenging to say, but they're true is that I can argue that a simulation didn't work. I can't argue that I haven't been assimilated because I have been absorbed into the way that this country has been governed since 78 98. That's the reality of who I am sitting up here right now. So I'd like you to open your eyes, what I can argue and what I'll continue to argue to the day I die is that, although I know I have been assimilated, I know my family has been assimilated and know my ancestors have been simulated. What they've also taught me is who I am and where I'm from and have more unique connection to country. To most

stories to my Nazis with titles are uniquely more. And that will always be more pointed in the point of difference in this country.

Clyde Rigney Jr. ([13:40](#)):

So we're talking about privilege. And the question is what privilege white privilege has influenced my life is that the privilege that my family, my ancestors have been exposed to has named them. No one asked us what we should be called. They decided that we were natives. I decided that we were Aboriginal. I decided that then we will become Aboriginal. And then they decided that, well, we will become indigenous, but no one asked us if you ask me, I'll say, I'm not on duty. Isn't that far more interesting. Doesn't it make you want to ask? What does that mean? Where are they from? And my response to that was, do you have a \$50 note? Cause there's another.

Clyde Rigney Jr. ([14:52](#)):

So you're privileged, namely, the privilege that exists in this country named me. I'm mindful not to target you individually, but let's talk about the privilege privilege in this country. Shamed me. It made it wrong, mad, illegal to be me for a period for a long period, we made it illegal to talk the way that I'm supposed to talk, especially to young anatomy, especially the younger Nevadan one, not in the Reno, but may walking in this world. I'm meant to be able to young in that way. I'm meant to be able to talk that way.

Clyde Rigney Jr. ([15:44](#)):

I can't do that fluently because my language was shamed. The privilege that exists in this country, shamed my language, shamed my culture shamed my traditions. Now that shame reflects itself represents itself in us being significantly overpopulated in the prison system. With 3% of the population, we've got 30, nearly 30% of the prison system shame creates that. The other thing that privileged in this country that is very different to anyone else that has ever set foot in this country is that privileged. Didn't give my people rights, privileged. Didn't give my people freedom. It wasn't until 1967 referendum. When the Australian people said, we need to count Aboriginal people in 1967 that's 51 years ago, my parents were born there. So if they weren't counted in the census as human beings, where were they being counted?

Clyde Rigney Jr. ([17:12](#)):

So this conversation about privilege is not trying to make you guilty, is trying to open your arms to the reality of the first people of this country. That's my role in this is to talk about that and not to blame, but to share because the shared history of this country is not just a story about the poor, all black color. It's about all of us. And we can, we can carry that. We can explore that. We can look at that. We can look at the cards, have a bit of fun with it. There's also some acknowledgement of where we're going to differ. We're going to differ on what we consider it is what reality is. And that's okay. That's one of the great things about this country, but we should do, we should explore what privileges.

Clyde Rigney Jr. ([18:28](#)):

And so my people, my ancestors didn't experience the privilege of rights and freedom close to 200 years in this country. So from 79, 88 to 1967, it's 179 years, 179 years of having laws and policies and management practices written for you, but not with you. That's what that's also what privileged does. So now we have a term in this country where we now have a voice. There is now a bit of an appetite for discussion, and that discussion is around treaty and the recommendation [inaudible] labeled by a prime

minister as ambitious, or if we aren't ambitious, then what are we, if we're going to seriously affect change, we need to be an issue. Not just me, not just my people, all of us, our ambition needs to drive what we want this country to look like. So we need to search ourselves, take the opportunity to have a bit of fun with it. Look at the cards, look at each other, look at each other, colon Narcan, Yunnan, colon, and non-injury means to listen. Nothing means to say young and means to speak. Was I calling a Narcan first because we have two eyes and two years for a reason. And one mouth LSE is those multiples first and the math last.

Veronica Pardo ([20:20](#)):

Okay. So much there to think about and reflect on as, as we go through today and through our lives. I also want to pay my respect to the traditional owners of the land elders past and present. I also want to acknowledge my wonderful colleague and friend Gail Melisse who's with us in the audience today. Gail is probably one of the most important artists, Cyprus artists working in Australia today. And it's wonderful to have a part of this conversation. So my name is Veronica Pardo. I run an organization called arts access Victoria tomorrow will be my last day as its executive director on, on, on Monday. We have a new executive director starting. Her name is Carolyn voltage. She hails from Australia, but has spent the last 20 years working in the UK because she couldn't get work as a disabled artist in this country.

Veronica Pardo ([21:17](#)):

And she returns, I think, triumphal to take her place at the head of one of its most important cultural organizations are Texas Victoria who works with approximately 1,940 artists every year. It's a, it's an incredibly vibrant sector of the arts and disability sector. If you don't know of it, make it your business to find out. But also I think I'd like to reflect today on, on this transformation that is happening at this very moment in this country where people who have been at the margins and now taking their places at the, at the head of these organizations. And we're about to embark on a period. I think of enormous change and challenge for many, many individuals who've been in those roles. And that's what, that's what our partnership with change media has been very much about. So we, we work with cultural organizations in Victoria about how to increase access participation, employment, and reduce exploitation of artists with disabilities in the creative industries. And we work with hundreds of organizations

Veronica Pardo ([22:23](#)):

Still though

Veronica Pardo ([22:25](#)):

It's 2018 and participation rates are woefully low in every way that you can imagine it on our stages and screens in the employment, employment and arts organizations in audiences. How can that be the case that in, you know, in our society that we like to consider to be a very progressive, smaller liberal society, we still have 20% of the population that doesn't have equal access to all the things that you enjoy. And in fact are enjoying here today, which brings us to the what privilege cards and the work with change media. So for us, we started to ask ourselves some really hard questions. Like why, why don't we have equality Australia signed the convention on the rights of persons with disability 22 years ago, it passed the disability discrimination act to 25 years ago, but still we have rampant inequality experienced by almost 20% of our population.

Veronica Pardo ([23:27](#)):

Why does Australia rank 21 out of 29 OECD countries for the employment of people with disabilities? Why are we keeping people with disabilities in poverty, 45% of people with disabilities live at, or below the poverty? Why is that happening? What are we missing out on in the creative when we exclude 20% of the population? And are we part of the problem despite our very good intentions? So these were our kind of challenging questions to ourselves. Of course the answer comes right back to power and privilege, which is why we began to play with these cards. We wanted to find a way that we could have the conversation in our organization, but also with our partners that would enable a free flowing conversation and a consideration of particularly that last question, a way part of the problem. And that's a hard one. People don't want to ask themselves that question. They don't like to sit with the discomfort that maybe their good intentions are actually not particularly useful in this context. So the cards are a great way to enable a really fun conversation into a topic that can be really uncomfortable.

Veronica Pardo ([24:44](#)):

So

Veronica Pardo ([24:46](#)):

I think, but we can all agree that the issue of equality in this country is a hard question is one of the hard questions, how to how to achieve it. And, and we're really conscious of the fact that billions of dollars are being spent by governments across the country to try and address the issue of participation or equality for people with disabilities. If you can sit up for example that all just patient rates in employment, a woefully low. So 54% compared to 83% in the mainstream population, we spend \$15 billion a year on disability support pension. That's 800,000 Australians who potentially would want to work, but simply can't not for any limitation that they bring to the situation, but because we lock our doors to them as employers, that's why people with disabilities are not in employment because we don't create employment options that it were accessible for them. So it's a perverse situation. We spend billions of dollars keeping people in poverty and then remediate it through welfare.

Veronica Pardo ([25:59](#)):

How can a card game possibly help? Well, it actually does because what we find is that the cards help to affect a personal transformation. People play the cards and begin to ask themselves the question, how does power and privilege manifest in my organization? And within me we start playing the cards out with an invitation to people to think about when they've come across these characters. So you'll see them on your table. You'll see that each card contains a particular character, a personality that is, is usually quite prevalent in the arts. I won't name names, but there's a few artistic directors I can think of who can probably tick off quite a few of those, those cards. So we invite people to start thinking about when they've encountered that person and, and to cut, you know, and to be, to tell us a bit of a story or a bit of a role play about when they've encountered that person, people are incredibly keen to pin the blame on others.

Veronica Pardo ([27:06](#)):

So it, I think it responds to something really fundamentally in all of us to say, oh, you know, I, yes, I used to work with such and such a person, and this is what they did. And so we begin that conversation in this way and people love it. They are very generous about sharing stories about others who they've worked with. And then of course, we ask them to hold the card to themselves and say, is, is this ever you do you ever exhibit these characteristics, silence, it's much harder to hold the card to oneself and ask the question is this me, do I, you know, do I manifest my privilege in this way, but slowly there's, there's

always one brave soul in a group who, who puts their hand up and says, yes, you know, at least ease me. I'm, I'm the director.

Veronica Pardo ([27:59](#)):

I, I do think I know best what is best for everybody else. And slowly we begin to explore that. Actually, it's not such a dangerous conversation that we can actually confront these aspects of our behavior without the whole world falling apart, without us losing the respect of our colleagues. In fact, the opposite happens. We gain the respect of our colleagues because we can demonstrate some capacity for insight and recognize that our behaviors can change. And so, and there is such a multiplicity of roles there that you know, you can get caught by surprise. So that's what I love about the cards is that you just never know what you're going to get and the insight that it's going to bring. So we've had these. So we've been playing these with our partner organizations. Sometimes people resist the notion that they are that, that they exhibit these behaviors.

Veronica Pardo ([28:54](#)):

I think that we all like to believe that we're on the right side of history. I think particularly in the arts, we all consider ourselves pretty progressive. And so sometimes, you know, people who you are, who you least suspect will be resistant, can be the ones who will say no. You know, I I'm, I'm a good person. I'm here for good reasons. I have good intentions, but we keep reminding people that, that good intentions doesn't negate privilege and that good intentions also sometimes does not mean that you don't do harm. So what's happened as a result. Well, we've had amazing conversations with people. We've had conversations about things like, you know, how to have conversations about power and privilege. We've talked about how to validate people's experiences and listen deeply when people who experienced marginalization, tell you their stories and how, you know, how, how to confront that, how to confront the discomfort of those stories when they involve experiences that they've had with you and your organization.

Veronica Pardo ([29:52](#)):

We've talked about how to empower others, how to use your privilege for good and not evil. And you know, that that's the name of our talk. In fact, you know, how do you use your power for good and not able and recognizing that in community arts practice very often that the harm that we perpetuate in those communities is as a result of our blindness to our own privilege. We talk about how to give up your job, not when to go. Everyone wants to talk about when is the time to go, should I stay five years? Isn't that the maximum it's about how you go, what you leave behind, what is your legacy? What is the opportunity to actually create space, move forward in out backwards to enable people to come in, who would normally not have that opportunity? How do we as leaders create that change so that when we leave, we don't leave our you know, doppelganger in the role.

Veronica Pardo ([30:45](#)):

We talk about representation on boards, on staff, on screens, on stages and the sorts of things that exclude the practices that exclude in the practices that can actually enable new opportunities for representation. We challenge who gets to lead creative processes. And what is the need for an artistic director? Are there other roles? Are there other structures that can enable a multiplicity of voices? I'm much more Democrat, democratic opportunity for people to be heard to lead. And, and we talk about, you know, story mining, something that happens very often with marginalized groups, arts organizations, increasingly are wanting to work with Oregon with communities. But why, what is the risk

of cannibalization where we take in mind those stories for our own benefit, but leave nothing behind, but sometimes harm. So how do you work with communities? How do you make sure that you're empowering those communities and leaving behind a legacy of agency and control over their own stories and their own representations?

Veronica Pardo ([31:53](#)):

We've had conversations about how to devolve decision-making, who needs committees, why not actually employ people in key roles and stop relying on volunteer efforts to tick boxes and say that you've consulted. So we've had conversations that we've never, ever been able to have before with our artists, with disabilities, leading those conversations. I think that I have a suspicion that the billions of dollars are not going to deliver change, but activities like the one you're about to play this afternoon just might. So on the Eve of my departure, I'm really keen to talk with other leaders and encourage you to speak with the leaders of organizations about what they are doing to create change, and make sure that organizations actually have opportunities to be led by a diverse range of people. It's wonderful to hear about gender and the conversation about gender, but diversity is much larger than that. And, and I think we really encourage you to play the game today with all of your generosity. And I hope that you get a lot out of it. Thank you.