

Sarah Tucker

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8/06/2024

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP  
Prime Minister  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher  
Minister for Finance, Minister for Women, Minister for the Public Service  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

The Hon Amanda Rishworth MP  
Minister for Social Services  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Cc:

[REDACTED]

Dear Prime Minister Albanese, Minister Gallagher, Minister Rishworth, and Distinguished Panel Members,

I am writing to express my profound disappointment and disgust at the recent decision to exclude Indigenous women from the Domestic Violence panel. This decision is not only a disservice to the First Nations communities but also a glaring oversight in addressing the multifaceted nature of domestic violence in Australia.

The absence of Indigenous representation on this panel highlights a significant disconnect between the policy-making bodies and the lived experiences of First Nations women. Indigenous women face unique challenges that are deeply rooted in cultural, colonial, and patriarchal oppression, which cannot be adequately addressed without their voices and perspectives at the table.

Your decision to assemble a panel composed predominantly of representatives from white society, despite their commendable credentials, reveals a superficial approach to a deeply entrenched issue. By not including First Nations voices, the panel fails to address the systemic issues that perpetuate violence against Indigenous women. This exclusion is not

only a continuation of historical silencing but also a failure to recognize the resilient matriarchal structures within Indigenous cultures that have endured and resisted patriarchal abuse for generations.

As Pennebaker's Psychoimmunology Theory of Disclosure suggests, the inhibition of emotional expression and the prolonged silencing of survivors adversely affect their psychological and physical health, as well as the broader social collective's ability to recover and heal. The lack of Indigenous representation on the panel is a clear example of this systemic silencing, which further marginalizes and disenfranchises an already vulnerable population.

Furthermore, by focusing solely on the perspectives of individuals from southeastern states, the panel disregards the pervasive systemic racism experienced by Indigenous communities in Queensland, the Northern Territory, and Western Australia. This regional bias further undermines the panel's ability to develop comprehensive and effective strategies to combat domestic violence across all of Australia.

The mission to strengthen prevention efforts and stop violence against women and children in Australia must include the voices and experiences of Indigenous women. It is only through an inclusive and culturally integrative approach that we can hope to identify gaps, strengthen our current strategies, and develop effective solutions that address the root causes of gender-based violence.

I urge you to reconsider your decision and ensure that First Nations women are given a rightful place on the Domestic Violence panel. Their insights and experiences are invaluable in shaping policies that are truly representative and effective. This is not only a matter of moral and ethical obligation but a necessary step towards achieving genuine equity and justice for all women in Australia.

Sincerely,

Sarah Tucker

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[Art Therapy in Australian Prisons: A Research Agenda - Sarah Tucker, Johannes M. Luetz, 2023 \(sagepub.com\)](#)

[Art Therapy and Prison Chaplaincy: A Review of Contemporary Practices Considering New Testament Teachings | SpringerLink](#)