



# NOT JUST NUMBERS

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© ATOM 2019 ISBN: 978-1-76061-336-5

  
AUSTRALIAN TEACHERS OF MEDIA

A STUDY GUIDE BY  
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1: CANBERRA, PARLIAMENT HOUSE. 2: LADIES AT THE MECURE ALICE SPRINGS. All photos are by Anna Cadden

## SYNOPSIS

*Not Just Numbers* is a one-hour documentary about the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group. They believe in talking straight about the violence in their communities and are working on the front line in prevention, an area that receives very little funding or support. So often reduced to statistics, these heroes have banded together to fight for their lives and the lives of their families. They want to be seen, not just counted.

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# CURRICULUM LINKS

This study guide is mainly aimed at mid to senior secondary school levels, with relevance within the class activities to the Cross-Curriculum Priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, within the Australian Curriculum. Drawing from this Cross-Curriculum there are interconnections between English; the Arts (Media Arts); Health, Family and Community; Society and Culture; Civics.

Key general topics arising from the film are: community well-being, building self-esteem, reaching out to the wider community, overcoming entrenched adversity; accepting and taking responsibility.

*Not Just Numbers* can be linked to the following subject areas within the Australian National Curriculum:

- English
- The Arts: Media Arts
- Civics

*Not Just Numbers* is also recommended as a supplementary text for studying the following Senior School subjects:

- Media
- Health and Human Development
- English

*Not Just Numbers* may also be linked to the Australian National Curriculum General Capability of: Personal and Social Capability; Intercultural Understanding.

Year 10 English curriculum content descriptions relevant to *Not Just Numbers*

- Create literary texts with a sustained 'voice', selecting and adapting appropriate text structures, literary

devices, language, auditory and visual structures and features for a specific purpose and intended audience ([ACELT1815](#))

- Analyse and evaluate how people, cultures, places, events, objects and concepts are represented in texts, including media texts, through language, structural and/or visual choices ([ACELY1749](#))

Year 9 and 10 Media Arts curriculum content descriptions relevant to *Not Just Numbers*:

- Manipulate media representations to identify and examine social and cultural values and beliefs, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples ([ACAMAM074](#))

Year 9 and 10 Civics curriculum content descriptions relevant to *Not Just Numbers*:

- The challenges to and ways of sustaining a resilient democracy and cohesive society ([ACHCK094](#))
- Recognise and consider multiple perspectives and ambiguities, and use strategies to negotiate and resolve contentious issues ([ACHCS099](#))

Year 9 and 10 Health and Physical Education curriculum content descriptions relevant to *Not Just Numbers*:

- Plan and evaluate new and creative interventions that promote their own and others' connection to community and natural and built environments
- Critique behaviours and contextual factors that influence health and wellbeing of diverse communities ([ACPPS098](#))



## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

BEFORE WE EXAMINE THE CENTRAL ISSUES AND THEMES OF THIS DOCUMENTARY FILM, LET US FIRST FIND OUT MORE ABOUT INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN SETTLEMENT AND GOVERNANCE IN ALICE SPRINGS (NORTHERN TERRITORY), FROM WHICH THE EVENTS PORTRAYED IN THE FILM DERIVE. AS WELL, WE WILL LOOK AT THE BROADER SITUATION IN ALICE SPRINGS WHICH HAD LED DIRECTLY TO THOSE EVENTS, AND TO THE MAKING OF THE FILM BY THE CENTRAL PARTICIPANTS. (SEE “ALICE SPRINGS TOWN CAMPS”, “NOT JUST NUMBERS”, AND “TANGENTYERE COUNCIL” IN WEBSITE REFERENCES.)

- First, the Alice Springs town camps for the Indigenous populace are known more correctly by a more official name. What is that name? From the film and from further research, explain what these town camps are. How many are there in Alice Springs? Who resides in them, and who funds, manages and owns them? Are the town camps each of equal status and functionality, or is there inequality amongst them? How many people – men, women and children – permanently live in them? How, why and when did these camps come into existence, and what is their purpose? Which camps are named and shown during *Not*

1: CERMONEY AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA 2: CHRIS FORBES WITH DAUGHTER 3: DETAIL OF A DOT PAINTING 4: XXX 5: SADIE RICHARDS

*Just Numbers?* Shirleen Campbell, one of the central participants in, and the director of, *Not Just Numbers*, is a resident of one of the town camps. Which camp does she and her family live in, and what is the local Aboriginal language name for that camp, as referred to during the film?

- What is the tribal Indigenous language group of the local Alice Springs region, from which the Indigenous camp names are drawn? What, in fact, is the local Aboriginal name for Alice Springs? You may wish to carry out some background research on the history and culture of this tribal language group.

- Draw or print out a map of Alice Springs, and label the names and locations of the town camps onto the map.
- In general, what are living conditions like in the town camps? Are some better or worse than others? Are all basic human facilities and amenities intact, such as adequate housing and shelter, running hot and cold water, sewerage, electricity, roads, public transport? What are the employment and unemployed rates for adults and school leavers residing in the town camps? What is the extent of formal school education for children who live in the town camps, and what is the extent of school-attending retention, and of “wagging” or refusal to attend? Find out if domestic and violent crime in the camps is the same on average as elsewhere, or whether it is less, or more, than elsewhere. Look particularly at statistics on severe injury and hospitalisation, rape and murder. Discuss in class what you think might be the direct and indirect factors or causes behind the prevalence of these extreme crime statistics in Alice Springs and the town camps in particular. Are any of the issues raised above, such as schooling and unemployment, relevant to this situation? (To help with your research, see the website references in this study guide, listed under “Not Just Numbers – domestic violence in Alice Springs”.)
- The film begins with an animated graphics segment involving lettering engraved on tombstones. Make a note of what is engraved. One of the tombstone engravings is, “11 [eleven] times more likely to die”. Who is this statistic referring to, and who might it be compared to without actually saying so? Note that this statistic is either implying something unstated, or we, the viewing audience, are being led to infer something that isn’t obviously



1: LOUISE ABBOTT 2: HELEN GILLEN 3: XXX

stated. You might try to complete this sentence, in order for it to be fully and clearly stated: “They are eleven times more likely to die than... [who?]”

Are you able to verify whether the statistics quoted on the tombstone graphics are accurate and factual? Where might you find the source of these figures? We will return to this opening sequence of the film later, in the Media Studies section.

- The Alice Springs Indigenous town camps are serviced by the Tangentyere Council (of which the Tangentyere Women’s Family Safety Group, featured during the film, is one of its sub-groups). Carry out appropriate research about the overall purposes, objectives and widespread work of the Council. What powers does it have? How is it funded, and by whom? When was it formed, and why? What does “Tangentyere” mean in the local Arrernte language? Note that this meaning is mentioned in the film. (See “Tangentyere Council” in website references.)





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To help you in putting your newspaper report together, consider three quotations from early in the film.

Shirleen Campbell's partner, Chris Forbes, says, "They're so open. The violence from indigenous people, it's just out there in the streets, and we grew up seeing it, and a lot of the kids they grow up thinking it's normal to do that."

Shirleen, speaking of the violence done to her own mother and aunts, says, "It was hard back then because no one would speak up. They thought violence was a shameful thing..."

To this we might add another quote, from Barbara Shaw, "A lot of our women, you know, and also myself, we've been victims of family



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1: CHRIS FORBES WITH DAUGHTER 2: SHIRLEEN CAMPBELL 3: LORRAINE PEPPERILL 4: GLORIANNA MOKETARINJA 5: BARBARA SHAW

## BREAKING THE CYCLE

CARRY OUT THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ABOUT THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE IN THE ALICE SPRINGS TOWN CAMPS, AND THE MEANS AND UNDERSTANDING REQUIRED TO BREAK THAT CYCLE.

- First, imagine that you are writing a report for a local newspaper about the violence in the town camps in the years previous to the setting up of the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group (TWFSG). Drawing from what is expressed during the film, and from any other sources you have researched, plan and write the newspaper report in about 400-500 words. You might, for example, write about a typical day and night, or a week, of camp life for the men, women and children who live there. Try to build into your report any possible causes for the various situations that you are observing and writing about.

"The violence from indigenous people, it's just out there in the streets, and we grew up seeing it, and a lot of the kids they grow up thinking it's normal to do that."

Chris Forbes



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and domestic violence, and we're subjected to other people's family violence. Even though its real-life experience to us, we've never put them into any context..."

Discuss any connections and intersections between the three quotes. For example, who are implied by the first two speakers as being the perpetrators of the violence? In what ways are both males and females, here, caught in a never-ending cycle where the violence keeps on happening? How could this happen? How could violence be taken for granted as a natural and normal occurrence? Why was silence and shame experienced by the women victims of violence? What does Barbara mean by saying that her experiences, and those of other women, were not understood in any context? What kind of "context" of understanding is she referring to? How do her reactions and memories, and lack of "context" tally with Chris's comments about violence being "normal"?

- In the previous backgrounding section of this study guide, we raised the question as to what kinds of factors might contribute to a high crime rate in places such as Alice Springs. The film also briefly raises important, deeply institutionalised, historical perspectives on the lives of Aboriginal peoples now living in town camps such as those in Alice Springs. Carmel Simpson, for example, discusses the relevance of colonialisation: "Anthropologists look at what Aboriginal communities and cultures and society was like pre-colonisation, and they were very much men's and women's roles, but it was for an equal relationship. So, I think the impacts of colonisation are important when we are looking



"The situation was aggravated by issues related to the Intervention. The repression of people leads to frustration and anger, and hitting out"

Marlene Hodder

at why family violence is higher in Aboriginal communities."

Discuss what you think Carmel sees as the distinct differences between pre-colonisation and colonisation eras, and how this has impacted on Aboriginal lives, and men's and women's roles, even today. In what ways has colonisation been a contributing factor to high family violence in Aboriginal communities?

- Following from the previous discussion point, Marlene Hodder adds, "And I think over the years, too, the situation was aggravated by issues related to the Intervention. You know, the repression of people leads to frustration and anger, and hitting out ."

Discuss what Marlene means by "the Intervention". Find out what it was, when it happened, who instituted it, and why, what it was supposed to achieve, and what its consequences and results were, either positive or negative. Why does she say the Intervention was a "repression of people"? Is it still a daily reality for Indigenous people living in Alice Springs town camps and elsewhere? You might also want to look into the associated issue surrounding the introduction of cashless cards for Aboriginal people receiving government welfare payments. (See "The Intervention" in website references".)

- As an exercise in appreciating and understanding the above issues on both an intellectual and emotional level, and of being able to play them

1: BARBARA SHAW  
2: MARLENE HAYES  
AND GLORIANNA  
MOKETARINJA





“You’ve got to be the one that stand up and ring the police when you see people fighting next door to you, or you hear the woman screaming out, or the bloke’s screaming or the kid’s screaming out or whatever. You’re the one that should be standing up and saying, look, it’s not a part of our culture, it’s not our way.”

Shirleen

just within the family unit, but for a man who is part of a wider community and network of friends, neighbours, other relatives and work colleagues? Put simply, what might be the ramifications of interfering in someone else’s domestic and private problems and disputes?

- Turn the following quotation, expressed by Chris, into a poster display of text and image. You do not have to use the entire quotation on the poster, because it is quite long. You should, though, draw out the essence, the feeling and meaning of it, and convey it somehow in the overall impression your poster conveys to an audience. One alternative to this exercise is to work in a small group of about four to create a scripted drama scene, or a sequences of connected scenes, which can be rehearsed, refined and enacted to an audience, or presented as a stage play reading. Another alternative is to work in pairs or individually to recreate and adapt the scenes quoted below as an instructive comic strip narrative of panel illustrations and text. Do not worry if you don’t think you can draw. You may use stick figures and simply-drawn lines for settings and locations.

“You’ve got to be the one that stand up and ring the police when you see people fighting next door to you, or you hear the woman screaming out, or the bloke’s screaming or the kid’s screaming out or whatever. You’re the one that should be standing up and saying, look, it’s not a part of our culture, it’s not our way.”

- As a result of the changes in Shirleen and Chris’s own relationship and family life, Shirleen comments that she and Chris are now like “hard rock”. Note that this is virtually and ironically the opposite of suggesting a “rocky” marriage, or that the relationship is “on the rocks”! Explain the combination of simile and metaphor employed by Shirleen to describe her present-day life with Chris. In class try to conjure up more suitable similes and metaphors that might be equally applicable. (Note that in the next section we will also look a little more deeply at Shirleen’s reference to “pirate” women sailing the “high seas”.)

out in a dramatised way, plan and write a short fiction story about the cycle of daily life as experienced by the individuals within a family and a wider community living in a town camp. Your story will be a contemporary drama, but you may use humour where relevant. Consider how you will present the story – whether it is told in the first or third person, and from whose viewpoint. You may also draw on the past, and on the historical effects of pre-colonisation and colonialism, in order to bring your narrative themes, plot points, characters and character relationships to life.

- In the previous activities in this section, drawing from the film’s contents, we have looked at the possible contributors to a never-ending cycle of violence in the town camps. Now we will look at what it takes to break that cycle. We first see a specific example of this in action when Shirleen Campbell, early in the film, speaks of the first 15 years of her own relationship with partner, Chris. Describe the trigger point at which they realised things had to change between them, if their relationship and parenthood was to survive. Shirleen says they went to a support worker for help. Discuss in class what you think was the conversation between them and the support worker, and the steps taken or advised to remedy the situation. Explain why Chris says that, after this call for help occurred, he was “one of the lucky ones”. In what way was he “lucky”, perhaps in contrast to the other men of his age he was surrounded by, within his own community?
- Chris refers to his own sense of responsibility in action, his own personal behaviour towards breaking the cycle of domestic violence. Describe the details of placing his responsibilities into action wherever needed, and living up to his ideals. What might be both the positive and negative outcomes of this form of intervention and cycle-breaking, not

1: SHIRLEEN CAMPBELL  
2: STAND WITH US PAINTING





# TANGENTYERE WOMEN'S FAMILY SAFETY GROUP

CARRY OUT THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ABOUT THE FORMATION AND WORK OF THE GRASSROOTS TANGENTYERE WOMEN'S FAMILY SAFETY GROUP (TWFSG), IN ITS AIMS TO BREAK DOWN THE CYCLES OF VIOLENCE IN THE ALICE SPRINGS TOWN CAMPS. (SEE "NOT JUST NUMBERS – DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN ALICE SPRINGS" IN WEBSITE REFERENCES.)



- In what way is the TWFSG a grassroots organisation, and what does it mean to be regarded as "grassroots"? Who formed the group, what were the reasons compelling the first members of the group into action, and what was their agenda, or their aims? Comment on the personal experiences of these women, that make them eminently qualified to rise up as a group, and to call for action? What particular



1: TANGENTYERE  
WOMEN'S FAMILY SAFETY  
GROUP 2: SHIRLEEN  
CAMPBELL 3: NANETTA  
KENNY 4: MARIENE HAYES

difficulties and obstacles would these women have experienced and come up against, in the formation and expansion of such a group? (See "Grassroots groups and organisations" in website references.)

- We will briefly bring this discussion to your own personal level of interest and engagement. What would compel you, personally, to join a grassroots group or organisation? Might it be, for example, a construction project which would affect the local natural environment, or perhaps a move to create a safer neighbourhood at night? Do have any personal experience of, or knowledge of, local community grassroots activism? Have you followed and taken an interest in any grassroots community activity that has gained attention in the news media? There are many examples from around the world. You may wish to talk to your class about it.
- Drawing from the many examples throughout the film, describe Shirleen Campbell's participation, role and her activities within the TWFSG, both locally, in and around Alice Springs, and on a broader, national scale. In responding to this topic you may include her role as a filmmaker. For example, what do you think the purpose and impact of her film is, as an extension of the overall work of the TWFSG, and in reaching audiences from much further away from her own community?



“We’ve been rocking the boat and making noises. Now, we want to sail the ship to high seas, making new, and longer-lasting waves, for our future generations”

Shirleen

- Discuss in class why Shirleen, at the beginning of the film, says, “We are not numbers”, and, “We do not want to be invisible anymore”? What does she mean by being “invisible”? In what sense might the women of her community have been regarded by others merely as numbers? How does being regarded as a number, or a statistic, remove your sense of yourself, and your sense of anyone else, as a thinking, feeling, human being? What do you think is the ultimate purpose and intention of the street march which opens the film’s first sequence, at which the issue of not being a number is raised? What is this street march saying visually, and in voice, to the wider Alice Springs community? Paradoxically, how may the concept and prevalence of *numbers* also be of direct relevance as a source of strength to a grassroots group such as the TWFSG?
- Explain Shirleen’s metaphorical concept, at the beginning of the film, of the women in the TWFSG being “pirates” who are sailing the “high seas”. This is what she also says later during the film, in the sequence immediately before the group visits Canberra, Australia’s capital city:  
“We’ve been rocking the boat and making noises. Now, we want to sail the ship to high

seas, making new, and longer-lasting waves, for our future generations”

In class, as an exercise, you may want to construct other metaphors for the same actions and intentions.

- Plan and write a short story drawing directly from Shirleen’s pirate metaphor, about the women of the TWFSG. In other words, use your imagination to reinvent the real life narrative of the TWFSG as a force for change in the town camps of Alice Springs, writing the story entirely as an allegory, about women pirates! Your story will likely read as a fable. You may also want, if necessary, to look up the meanings of “allegory” and “fable”. Note that as a famous example of such a story, if you look at the title of George Orwell’s short novel, *Animal Farm*, you will see that it is subtitled, “A Fairy Story”. In fact it is only about talking animals on a superficial level, and really about something much deeper in human society and politics, and behaviour.
- From what you have seen throughout the film, put together a list of all the various activities, research, group meetings and discussions, and events in which members of the TWFSG are involved, and then re-create them as a news feature item about the daily life and the of the TWFSG and the women who belong to

ABOVE: TANGENTYERE  
WOMEN’S FAMILY SAFETY  
GROUP

it. Write the newspaper or magazine feature in 500-1000 words. Include columns, headlines and, if necessary, photographic or illustrated images with caption text, and format it all using desktop publishing software to look like a newspaper or magazine feature. An alternative to a printed text and image feature is to present it as a scripted 15-minute radio or audio podcast report for a listening audience wider than the local community.

- Part of the training that participants in the TWFSG program receive is to recognise the signs that might lead to family violence – signs that hadn't been noticed. Carmel Simpson, a co-coordinator of the group, says, "Family violence training is looking at the indicators for family violence, and looking at some of those more subtle experiences of violence that other might not identify, other than physical violence". Discuss what Carmel means by not only "indicators" of family violence, but also the "subtle experiences of violence" which are more difficult to identify. Can you suggest some subtle and hard-to-identify indicators that might lead to family violence – the indicators that the women in the TWFSG program are being trained? (To help you, see "Indicators for family violence" in website references. Note that the first of the references draws attention to Australian Indigenous communities – see Chapter 5.7)
- After tackling the discussions and looking at

“Family violence training is looking at the indicators for family violence, and looking at some of those more subtle experiences of violence that other might not identify, other than physical violence”

Carmel Simpson

the reference material in the previous activity, you may want to work in small groups to prepare a role play scene, or a script, where certain indicators of family violence are exhibited in subtle ways between two or more characters in a family unit. The aim of the exercise is to take those signs and indicators from textbook observation into a dramatised, reality-based situation.

- Discuss how the group is tackling entrenched attitudes towards gender roles and stereotypes leading towards gender inequality. What are some of these attitudes, and how do they impact negatively either on males or females, or both? From watching the film, do you think these attitudes are also general and widespread throughout Australian society, or are they specifically applicable to Australian Indigenous communities in locations such as the town camps of Alice Springs? If the latter, then why? (You may want to revisit the historical issues and reasons behind “breaking the cycle” of entrenched violence, which we looked at in the previous section of this study guide.) Comment, for example, on the methods and purposes of the “Mums Can, Dads Can” workshops which we see portrayed during the film, the types of posters that are produced from the workshops, and the messages and meanings of those posters. Consider creating one of your display posters, aimed at breaking down an entrenched and negative gender attitude leading to a sense of inequality. It may be either your own version of a “Mums Can, Dads Can” poster, or perhaps it might be aimed at teenage girls and boys – young women and young men who are not themselves parents.
- As stated during the film, there are in fact three interconnected behavioural programs aimed at improving the lives of everyone in the town camps. Historically the first to be set up related to men’s behaviour change; the second was the women’s group, while the third was a youth specialist team.

Carmel Simpson (at the 19:12 minute mark of the film) refers to each of these, respectively, in a very simple way: primary response (men); primary prevention (women); early intervention (children and youth). In discussion, flesh out the purposes of, and the differences in, each of these three cornerstones of a community working together to improve a very bad, institutionalised, social problem. For example, does “early intervention” mean dealing with teenagers who have already come to the attention of the police, or does it mean attempting to ensure that teenagers won’t be tempted to break the law, or to commit acts of violence?





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## ROAD TO CANBERRA

AT ABOUT THE MID-POINT OF THE FILM, THE TWFGS VISIT THE AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT IN CANBERRA. CARRY OUT THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ABOUT THIS EXPERIENCE.

- The sequence in which the women visit Canberra is immediately preceded, in the film, by Shirleen Campbell's concept of being pirates on the high seas. Discuss any possible connections between these comments and the visit to Canberra. In other words, why does one immediately follow the other in screening sequence? Why are they juxtaposed?
- Discuss the reasons for the visit: what were the women's intentions, their aims?
- Describe the activities the group were involved in, at Parliament House. Comment particularly on the purpose of the exercise involving the juggling of handfuls of badminton balls. In what way was this demonstration symbolic of the daily existence of the women present, and of the other women in the town camps of Alice Springs? What do you think they were able to teach or impart to those parliamentarians they met, and what do you think they might have learnt or realised or discovered themselves? How would you measure the worth and success of their experiences in Canberra?
- There is a profound scene in which the women visit the National Art Gallery of Australia, and view an art display titled, *If I was White*. What is their reaction to it, and



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1-2: CANBERRA, PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
3: GLORIANNA MOKETARINJA AND NANETTA KENNY  
4-5: TALKING AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA



5

what was your own reaction to what you were able to see of it on-screen? In what way was this scene relevant to the central themes of the film, and to the daily lives these women, and their families, have endured? (For more on the art work and the artist, see "*If I was White* (art display)" in website references.)

- Carry out more research about *If I was White*, and the artist who created it, Vernon Ah Kee. Find out more about his family and ethnic background, and comment on their relevance, and his own life experience, to the creation of this art display. Discuss what the art work is about, and its intended or likely impact on the viewing audience, and their possible response to it.



## ROAD TO ALICE

**AFTER HEARING TV PERSONALITY KERRI-ANNE KENNERLEY SPEAK ABOUT ABORIGINAL LIVING CONDITIONS AND STANDARDS, THE TWFG AND THE TOWN CAMPS MEN'S GROUP – THE FOUR CORNER'S MEN'S COUNCIL – INVITE HER TO VISIT ALICE SPRINGS AND TO MEET THEM. CARRY OUT THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.**

- View the sequence beginning approximately at the 44-minute mark of the film, and listen carefully to the words spoken by Shirleen Campbell, in drafting an invitation for Kerri-Anne Kennerley to visit Alice Springs. Describe and explain why the women's and men's groups found it necessary to invite Kerri-Anne. What was it that she said or did during a TV program that provoked or upset them? What did they hope to achieve by bringing her to visit the town camps and to watch and participate in their activities?
- When Kerri-Anne arrives, Shirleen explains in person why the invitation was extended to her. Compare what Shirleen says at this face-to-face meeting to her initial invitation (referred to in the previous activity). Here, she elaborates in more, extended detail, particularly referring to the role of the mass media, as does Barbara Shaw, in the same extended sequence of film. Comment on this.
- Discuss the way the meeting is set up and presented for television viewing consumption, looking, for example, at the extent of stage management, rehearsal and even artifice. Why do you think this was necessary?
- Listen carefully to the sequence of conversation in which Shirleen, Kerri-Anne and Carmel Simpson discuss "deep listening". Explain what deep listening entails, how it is practised, and what its objectives or outcomes are. Why is

the concept raised by Shirleen, and how does it relate to Kerri-Anne's visit, and to what the women's group is attempting to achieve in the town camp community, and in the wider community? (See "Deep listening" in website references.)

- Plan and write a short fiction story in which deep listening is an essential part of the story, and of the experience of one or more characters in the story. For a story such as this, which may be dealing with the subject of memory, personal trauma, grief and loss, you will need to consider carefully the denouement and resolution, and how the story will conclude.
- Comment on the aftermath of Kerri-Anne's visit. Discuss whether it has had a positive outcome for all involved.
- View the closing scenes of the film, after the sequence of Kerri-Anne's TV report. Explain why Shirleen takes a child with her when she has to communicate with police or government officials. How might the presence of a child at these meetings relate not to what is happening in the Aboriginal town communities now, but to well into the future? What does she want the child to learn, retain, and ultimately draw upon and use?
- Comment overall on how the project the TWFG has embarked upon is bearing fruit. Is there a sense of hope and optimism that many problems will be overcome? What, for example, do the closing screen captions, prior to the end credits, tell us about the situation the women and their children have been confronting, and continue to confront on a daily basis?
- Plan and write a discursive, personalised commentary about the main participants you have met during this film, and your response to them, their strength, commitment, knowledge, character, vision, integrity, resilience, hope and suffering.

1: BARBARA SHAW  
2: NANETTA KENNY AND  
GLORIANNA MOKETARINJA



## MEDIA STUDIES

CARRY OUT THE FOLLOWING MEDIA STUDIES ACTIVITIES THAT ARISE FROM A VIEWING OF *NOT JUST NUMBERS*.



- Why do you think the filmmakers chose “Not Just Numbers” as the title? Give the film an alternative title of your own, and explain your choice.
- Examine the opening sequence in its entirety, which is an animated graphic combining illustration and “live” image, finishing at the point where the film’s title appears on the screen. Look carefully at the visuals and listen to the various elements on the soundtrack. Discuss in class the shifting meanings of the sequence – the initial movement through mist and cloud, the tombstones, the changing images, the style of music and the choice of musical instruments, the gradual build-up of sound and image, all setting the scene. What do you think the sequence imparts to us, or represents to us, about the rest of the film?



1: ANNA CADDEN AND SHIRLEEN CAMPBELL 2-3: FILMING AFL WOMENS TEAM  
4: ANNA CADDEN 5: HILARY BALMOND

- The film director, Shirleen Campbell, is also an important on-camera participant throughout *Not Just Numbers*. First, comment on what you think are her purposes for making this film. Why do you think she has decided to make the choice to appear in the film as well as to stand behind the camera? What do you think this decision to participate in the film brings to our understanding and appreciation of the film?
- Working in pairs plan and construct a scripted storyboard for a 30-second promotional video about *Not Just Numbers*, designed for television screening. In groups you may then wish to produce, record and edit your promo. Consider your use of text captions, sound and film “grabs” of visual content, music, sound effects and dialogue to tie it all together into a cohesive, effective advertising message.
- Plan and write two reviews in 250-300 words each, of *Not Just Numbers*. One will be for the general arts review pages of a daily or weekly national newspaper. The other will be for a weekly newspaper aimed mainly at an Australian Indigenous audience. Note that you will probably have to tailor your style, approach and content to the different audiences you are aiming to reach.

# REFERENCES AND FURTHER RESOURCES

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**This study guide was produced by ATOM.**

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ISBN: 978-1-76061-336-5

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Study guide designed by Pascale van Breugel.

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