

Rights and freedoms of aboriginal people over the past century

[Parts of the World](#), [Australia](#)



Rights and Freedoms of Aboriginal people over the past Century The rights and freedoms of Aboriginal Australians have changed tremendously over the past decade. The treatment given to the indigenous population of Australia has been an aggravating issue, ever since the white settlement in Australia. As a matter of protection, the Australian governments have implemented, rules, and policies such as, ' the policy of protection', assimilation, integration, paternalism, and self-determination, gradually taking away, and disempowering the Aboriginals, and their rights, and freedoms. Paternalism greatly affected individual Aboriginals. During the years of 1901 to 1914, many states and governments maintained similar attitudes and perspectives of the indigenous Australians. Predominantly, this perspective/attitude was based on the belief , that the Aboriginal population, were savages, uncivilised, and were regarded as much inferior or hold less mental capacity to determine what is best for them. This lead to paternalism. Paternalism is the meaning for ' Fatherly'. This attitude led governments to take control over the Aboriginals, who are depicted to be unable to act for themselves. This act forced aboriginal people out of their traditional lands, the white Australians considered the need for agriculture land is much important for them rather than the Aboriginals. By extracting the Aboriginals from their lands and placing them on reserves, and providing them with adequate supplies of food, and other supplies, was thought as humane. The policy of Assimilation changed the freedom and rights of individual Aboriginal Australian. This policy fostered aboriginal people to change their, way of life, and adapt to the culture of 'white people' the individual aboriginals were expected to absorb and adapt to the white culture. This policy was depicted

to be 'good' for the indigenous population. The policy of Assimilation was difficult to enforce, as aboriginal people retaliated, and fought for the rights, and for the preservation of their culture and identity. This led to the 'Stolen-generation' which involved the forceful removal of aboriginal children from their lands, and family. The children were then dispatched into institutions, or were adopted by white families. As a result the policy of Assimilation continued. The policy of protection was linked to the act of paternalism, which had two intentions that is to preserve and protect the aboriginals, and to educate the existing population, on western culture. From the intention of protecting the indigenous population, the aboriginals faced racism, discrimination, and the deterioration of their way of life. For example under the policy aboriginals could be moved onto reserves at any time, they required permission from the government to marry a white person, they could not vote. During the past century, Aboriginal people were forced to accept protectionism. Practicing and following their culture and way of life was strictly prohibited, therefore this policy had a great negative impact upon the aboriginals. For many decades, The Aboriginal organisations have made amendments for the removal of discriminatory references to aboriginal people individuals in Australia. The federal council for the aboriginals launched a campaign for a referendum. These campaigns were established in all states of Australia. In 1967 (45years ago) a referendum was held. During the referendum, one of the two questions asked was whether the derogatory statements and references to aboriginal people should be removed. The referendum has regularly been seen as providing full citizenship to aboriginals. The referendum and the constitutional changes

were not quickly enforced however, over time this referendum changed the lives of aboriginals and their participation to the nation. This referendum changed the lives of aboriginal Australians as they are able to participate in mainstream events, and were able to sustain their way of life, and gained freedom. The rights and freedoms of the indigenous people continued to change as the policy of assimilation was changed into integration. Aboriginal people fought for the individual rights to participate and engage in activities in the mainstream society. Integration allowed aboriginal individuals, for the first time to, keep their way of life, culture, and customs. They were able to make personal decisions on how their life was meant to be. At the year 1965, the commonwealth conference on the aboriginal policy, changed the policy of assimilation to integration. Self-Determination is the fundamental right for a nation or a specific group of people to regulate all aspects of their lives such as, culture. This policy involved the indigenous people, to have complete right to navigate their basic needs and collective wants. This includes secure and private ownership of land, local community control of land, local community control of services, and community affairs. For Aboriginal communities, the ownership of a segment of land is vital approach for the achievement of self-determination. Self-determination is linked to many issues, such as the return of human remains and sacred material by museums, the recognition of customary law, access to culture and appropriate education, and culturally of appropriate housing communities. The establishment of Aboriginal owned organisations is an important step towards self-determination. In conclusion, it is evident that the Australian government practiced policies which restricted and controlled the rights and

freedoms of the Aboriginal people. From the 1900's, Policies such as, the policy of protection', and, assimilation, had negative impact to the aboriginal way of life, and culture. However over the 1960's policies such as, Integration, self-determination, and the constitutional referendum have brought aboriginals freedom, and rights. They are able to participate in mainstream events, regardless of their race, and were able to practice their way of live, and were able to preserve their cultural heritage.

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