

ALL IN MEMORY

Lynne Kelly



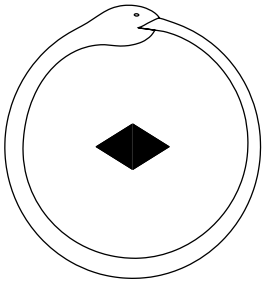
notebooks  
SELVAGEM

## EDITORIAL NOTE

Orality and memory are leading strands in Selvagem studies, from work which precedes and underlies our cycle, like for instance *O Gabinete de Curiosidades de Domenico Vandelli* [Domenico Vandelli's Cabinet of Curiosities] to *Una Isi Kayawa — Livro de Cura Huni Kuin* [Una Isi Kayawa — The Huni Kuin Book of Cure], research embracing diverse knowledge systems about plants like the Linnaean taxonomy and the **Yube** chants, the sacred anaconda.

When Gerrie Schrik presented Lynne Kelly's work in the **Ways of Knowing** group we felt great enthusiasm. After all Lynne presents, with great clarity, the ancestral practices of strengthening individual and collective memory.

This marvellous text contributes to all layers of learning, wayfinding and practices of the Selvagem sphere. Our heartfelt thanks to Lynne Kelly for her generosity of sharing her research and granting permission to publish this text as a Selvagem Notebook, to our guide in the jungle of knowledge, Gerrie Schrik, who presented Lynne and her text in such a special way, and to our dear Mary Hatakeyama for translating it to Brazilian.



## ALL IN MEMORY

Lynne Kelly

*This text is an adapted version of Lynne Kelly's presentation 'Improve your Memory using Indigenous Methods', given at Moreland Library, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.*

*She also made some of her photos available.*

*“the only way to store data long term, like proper long term, is in intergenerational relationships, where data is stored in narratives, intergenerational narratives. That can last for forty, fifty, sixty thousand years. That can last as long as relations are continued — that data will last. It's the only safe way to store data in the long term”*

*Tyson Junkaporta<sup>1</sup>*

We need to learn *from* Indigenous cultures, not just *about* them, because they have so much to teach us about memory. So that is what I am going to be talking about. I would also like to acknowledge the **Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung** people on which Moreland City Libraries is located and acknowledge their Elders past, present and future and emerging. I would like to acknowledge **Djadja Wurrung** whose land, whose Country<sup>2</sup> I am sitting on, and worked on, and who have helped me enormously with this research. But I would like to extend that welcome to every Indigenous culture in the whole wide world, because my research includes commonalities from all Indigenous cultures, on how they memorise vast amounts of information, because we are all

---

1. <https://emergencemagazine.org/interview/deep-time-diligence/>

2. There is a distinction between 'the country' and 'Country' in Australia. 'The country' refers to geography. But 'Country' is living land, animated with Songlines, rituals, histories and knowledge, and continues to develop. It refers to specific places and people, to ancestral territories.

using the same brain. They haven't outsourced to writing, technology and Google, and store everything in memory, and by 'everything' I mean massive amounts.

## INTRODUCING MYSELF

I am Dr. Lynne Kelly, I started with a PhD twelve years ago, on animal behaviour and Indigenous stories, which was all nice and simple, until I realised that they were memorising vast amounts of information. I couldn't work out how: I can't memorise the day of the week, or couldn't back then, because my natural memory is pathetically bad. I was only ever good at maths and physics, because I didn't have to memorise anything. And they were memorising the animals, not only the mammals and big things we think about, but hundreds of invertebrates and fish and birds and all the rest. Hundreds, if not thousands of plants, all their properties and everything. Add in navigation, and we are talking hundreds of kilometres of navigation - we will get to Songlines and other methods in a moment. Their genealogy, complex relationships, geology, science, weather, climate, land management... the list just goes on and on and on. And so I derailed my whole PhD and the planned book, by asking how the hell are they doing this. And that is what happened and what I started researching.

So what I found were a suite of methods that they put together. And what I am going to talk about is how they can be used by you, now, rather than just how Indigenous cultures use these. Because they had to memorise all that stuff and were dependent on it, not only for survival physically, but survival culturally. And here in Australia we have cultures that we know date back 65.000 years at least, but we have stories that we know date back 17.000 years at least. They have been verified by science, not that the indigenous people needed them verified but... stories of coastal changes. But we have stories of research, like [Patrick Nunn's](#), that go back, and we have ways of knowing that those stories are valid recollections of events 17.000 years ago. I've vaguely mentioned Stonehenge, now, that's a mere 5.000 years ago: yesterday.



So we think that they will get stories going much further back as the research continues.

## NEUROSCIENCE

But how do they do this? They use a suite of methods: one is story, because story<sup>3</sup> is much easier to remember than a list of facts. Secondly, stories can have novelty - now I'm going to be talking about the neuroscience of the brain. It is as if Indigenous cultures knew all the recent neuroscience and were applying it in their methods. So in the hippocampus, which is where it takes short-term memory to long-term memory, there are cells called place cells. And the [2014 Nobel Prize for Medicine](#) talked about the way these place cells, location cells, aid memory: your brain is mapping things. And what is astounding to me, is that every time you think of something, your brain is putting a physical neural network down. It will disappear or get lost if you don't reinforce it by talking about it – more memorising, checking, repeating – but those physical networks are there. And we know that people can put down new neural pathways up until... we've got evidence of people at a hundred years old. The idea that the brain's plasticity necessarily decays with age, has now been shown to not be true. The trouble is we don't keep using it.

The things I am saying match the neuroscience of Indigenous brains, our brains, everyone's brains. So stories are much easier to memorise, because the brain likes novelty, and stories can be wildly

---

3. There is an array of material elaborated by Selvagem, cycle of studies and by Dantes Editora, englobing registers of stories of indigenous cosmogonies on Brazilian territory. The exposition Long Live the Living Schools was a celebration of the five living schools (Guarani, Maxakali, Tukano-Desana-Tuyuka, Baniwa and Huni Kuin) and saw [the publication of a catalogue](#) with diverse records. Furthermore, at the Selvagem site there are many registered examples of Indigenous stories, like the notebook by Carlos Papá and Verá Kanguá, *The life of the Sun on Earth*, or even the book, *Umbigo do mundo* [The world's navel], by Francly Baniwa, edited by Dantes Editora. The Sun cycle, published from September until December 2024, presents several videos with Indigenous narratives about the Sun, told in their native languages, accompanied by bilingual notebooks.

novel. That is why Indigenous stories, fairy tales which arose from those, have vivid characters: they are all either very ugly, very beautiful, they are very good, they are very bad, they do horrendous, grotesque things. Because, it is an unfortunate fact, which is useful for that, when we start talking about how to apply these methods: your brain is much better at remembering things that are grotesque, or vulgar, or sexual, then with nice, sweet facts.

#### MUSIC, DANCE AND MOVEMENT

Indigenous cultures use song because song works wonderfully for memory. And we know this is true: now there's a lot of studies on people with quite advanced dementia, who play music that they have known from when they were young, who are unresponsive, and they will respond to the music and know every word of the songs. Now Indigenous cultures sing their information, sing their knowledge right through life. What we do is sing our alphabet when we are little and then we stop singing knowledge and we go on to "I love you, I love you, I can't live without you" and all that sort of stuff. So why aren't we singing information?

There's an example that I've been testing this research, over the last 12 years, as an example at Malmsbury Primary School. The kids ranging from prep to grade six, so up to 12-year-olds. Seventy kids would have done 'force', because 'force' is fundamental part of the science curriculum. And a week later I asked every student, the same words exactly: "do you remember doing 'force' in science?" And they answered: "yes." So I put in context what is a 'force'. Three told me it was a "push or a pull". The rest told me either that it was "when your parents or friends make you do stuff", or "may the force be with you", which might be great for Star Wars - it is lousy physics. So the music teacher Joseph Bromley took the Imperial March from Star Wars and put a little song together. "A force is a push or a pull, push or pull" - I can't not do the actions. The kids sang the song in music, nothing for a week, I did exactly the same wording of the question. Seventy

out of seventy told me it was a “push or a pull”, they did the actions and they laughed. They added emotion and fun to it. And the brain science, neuroscience, will tell you if you have an emotional content in what you are thinking about, it is much more memorable. So I am not saying sing everything, I am saying sing fundamentals. Because that meant, originally, when the teachers were saying the word ‘force’ the kids were thinking of all sorts of things. Now they always had ‘force push-pull’. So music is one great way.

Dance or movement are other ways. If you have ever seen Indigenous cultures acting out the behaviour of animals, you will see that they can do it in a way, using dance and movement, that we never could use in writing. So dance, narrative, song.

## ORALITY

And now we are going to get on to landscape and physical devices. So the academic research I was doing was on orality. We have literacy, but what Indigenous cultures have, as well as they have got literacy now, but before they had literacy it was orality, an oral culture. They had this suite of methods including song, narrative, dance and so on, but also the landscape.

So when I started working out how the hell they did it, I very soon came across Songlines. Now, Aboriginal Songlines are replicated all over the world by Indigenous cultures. The Native Americans call them ‘Pilgrimage Paths’, the Inca called them ‘Ceques’, the ‘Ceremonial Roads’ of the Polynesians, and there are other examples, like from some African cultures, they all use these same techniques. And basically what they do is, as they move around the landscape, which is just the geography, they do some form of ritual at each location. And that location becomes a sacred site, becomes somewhere that is a cue to information. Now if you go back to what I said about the 2014 Nobel Prize for Medicine about place cells, the brain automatically does this, it makes a temporal snapshot. So if you think of something while you are at a location, you will associate the two together. We do that naturally - what Indigenous

cultures do, is do it deliberately. And that is something that has been introduced into schools too.

#### MY RESEARCH ON MEMORY

But the other thing they do, that I didn't emphasise enough in my earlier books on this topic, was the use of characters. So let me go through how I went about this. I did a PhD, which became memory systems. And then I realised that Indigenous cultures building ancient monuments must have used these systems. If you just make one assumption about the people who built Stonehenge, and Easter Island, and all the rest of oral cultures, is that they had vast amounts of knowledge, and they wouldn't have survived if they didn't. And that they were totally dependent on their memories, which we know they were. Add that in, and suddenly there is a completely different way of looking at these monuments, like Stonehenge, the Stone Circles all over the world, Easter Island, Chaco Canyon – there's lots of them. And so that became my PhD which then was published by Cambridge University Press as *Knowledge and Power in Prehistoric Societies*. Don't buy it, it is horrendously expensive and got lots of brackets and names and things in it, making it unreadable. But that was then published as *The Memory Code*, published by Allen & Unwin here in Australia, and other publishers over the world, and been translated and stuff. I thought the big reaction would be "hey, new ideas about Stonehenge and all these monuments around the world". What shocked me was, probably ninety percent of the e-mails I got resulting from the *Memory Code* was: "how can we use this information about memory today?". So that led to the next book *Memory Craft*, which is what tonight's talk is mostly about, and what I've been on about so far. But just come out is *Songlines, the Power and Promise* done with Margo Neale, the Indigenous head of Indigenous Knowledges at the National Museum of Australia. So it is Thames & Hudson and National Museum. So that is wonderful because it shows that Indigenous people are very happy about what I am saying.

But let's get back to you and your memory. So we have talked about characters, I was bringing in characters, I didn't emphasise that enough in Memory Code. I even don't know that I did in Memory Craft. But let's look at some examples, I am just getting some of my friends from over here. So I use characters for everything I learn, because stories with characters in them make a lot of sense, like are easy to remember. And what was amazing to me, and a bit distressing at the beginning, was that a lot of those questions were about how to memorize language, foreign languages. Now given my memory is so naturally bad - at school foreign languages were nigh on impossible for me. So I decided eventually I had to take it on, and test these methods for French, which I did. So these are my characters: this is Fleur, and Petit Prof.



Characters Fleur and Petit Prof, with objects according to their grammatical gender in French.

Photo by Lynne Kelly.

You stop feeling stupid talking to bears and dolls very quickly. So Fleur is female, she has got a flower on her dress, Petit Prof is male. So for French where the big problem is what is masculine and what is feminine, anything I think about, that is like *la robe* is feminine, I associate with Fleur, in my stories and imagination. So in the mornings when I get dressed, when I was learning all the clothes, I would put the dresses on Fleur and the bra on Petit Prof. Now Petit Prof wasn't terribly pleased about that, but the *soutien-gorge* is masculine. So now you are never going to forget that 'bra' is masculine in French. 'Vagina' is as well, but Petit Prof is not terribly happy about me mentioning that. Because I started to cope with French, I decided let's go the full hog. And you can probably work out what language I also took on, which was Chinese, Mandarin dialect. There are two other characters who helped me with this language. Having characters that I talk to, and I talk to them all day in French or Chinese, makes a massive difference in the way you think, because it brings it to life, it adds character.

#### SONGLINES AND TERRITORY

The other big one is Songlines, memory palaces, method of loci, you can call it anything you like. The ancient Greeks, if you read anywhere about memory palaces and the ancient Greeks, and method of loci, you will find that the ancient Greeks invented it, or discovered it, or whatever. This is the method by associating information with locations in the landscape. Once you have associated information with the landscape, it becomes Country – that is what Country is, it is not just the geography, it is this landscape that is alive with knowledge and characters. The ancient Greeks didn't invent it. Every Indigenous culture used this method, the later Greeks were the first to write it down, and therefore get all the credit.

So if you want to set up, let's give an example: I have every country in the world, 242 of them, memorised in order, population order. What a songline does, is put the basic information down, and then you can layer more and more and more complexity on top of it. So over there is the

front door [pointing], biggest country in the world is China, so at the front door I imagine a Chinese meal being delivered. Not just imagination, I actually go over and act it out, you only have to do it once: you feel so stupid, you don't forget it. That has associated the front door with China. Everything I want to add to it, Beijing, everything else I add to the story I have got at the front door, which has already started because there is a meal being delivered. The second, at the bookcase, is India. I got down on the floor and watched a Bollywood production underneath. The third, which is rather upsetting, is the USA, because I put Donald Trump at the table — so he is there permanently now, even when he disappears from politics, which is a bit sad. I go right around the house, the garden, down the street, get my shopping and come back and I have covered every country in the world. I now have a hook for every single country, so for something on the news, something I read, I can add it in, and layer it higher and higher. And that is what Indigenous cultures do.

And the way they stop that information being corrupted, you know the telephone game, where you tell people and by the end of five minutes it is corrupted completely, and yet I just said that Indigenous cultures, Aboriginal Australians have stories dating back 17.000 years. How do they not get corrupted? And that is what secret business<sup>4</sup> is all about, because by having initiation into the higher and higher levels, that is only ever repeated by people who have been initiated, and have the permission, and it is constantly checked that it is accurate. And so the higher levels you get, the more restricted it is, and that is one of the main reasons they can keep it going so long. The other is that these methods are so reliable. I have got ten kilometres of memory palaces now, set out around Castlemaine, where I live, I have got memory palaces for French verbs, for Chinese radicals, a thousand digits of Pi are out there, I cannot believe how effective this is. And it works an absolute treat, and so my morning walks, this morning I did the French -er verb palace, on my

---

4. Specific restricted knowledge (for example of youth or women) about ceremonies, songs, and ancient and traditional knowledge, passed on from generation to generation, in specific initiations, on several levels. The higher the level, the more restricted the knowledge is, and therefore the less properly initiated people there are. The practices and habits around restricted knowledge are strict, and breaking the rules is severely punished.

morning walks I am playing around with information the whole time and it is fantastic fun. I have got history starting at the front gate, at four and a half thousand million years ago.

I walk right around through prehistory. I used to walk with my dog, she died of old age, but she used to get to the Cretaceous, and for some reason, I think it was the dinosaurs or something, she would not go through the Cretaceous, I had to pick her up and carry her around, until we got past the Cretaceous and almost to the Holocene, before she was happy to keep going, then she trot on forever, no idea why. I get back to the front gate, at 1000 BC, I then go right round the other block and get back here at 1900, and I have got every year mapped out, here at home. Which means no event can happen, nothing in any country or any date in time, that I haven't got a hook for. My love of history has gone from zilch to can't get enough of the stuff, because I can now hook it on. If you say 1200 AD, my brain goes to the corner of Randall's Road, and I know that King John is on the English throne, I don't have to remember the dates. I can look around and see there is a tree with King John on it, Great Zimbabwe in Africa is flourishing up the road, the Song dynasty just finished in China, check what's going on in Chaco Canyon, I can see what is coming and what has been, it is amazingly effective.

We know from the research that *Yanyuwa* people have 800 kilometres of Songlines. My ten kilometres is nothing. John Bradley from Monash University in his research with the *Yanyuwa* people, they mapped 800 kilometres of these memory palaces, all in memory of the elders. There are not many elders left that still have these skills, which is why I really emphasise we need to learn *from* Indigenous cultures, not just *about*, because they have skills and abilities we just don't have and are incredibly useful to us.

So that is making what is called a temporal snapshot. Your brain, if you think about two things at once, a location and information, it says temporal, the same time, snapshot, it links them, it makes a photograph of them, sort of, a link. There's all sorts of methods for using in Indigenous cultures, way beyond just using your local environment. I am not moving from here, ever, nothing will make me move, because my landscape is absolutely alive. It's now Country. I have glimpsed



what Songlines are. Obviously I haven't got that full experience, I can't have. Can you imagine if you had spent your whole life learning these Songlines, and you knew they came from your parents and your grandparents and back in all of time and then someone invaded your country and put a fence across and shot you if you went there? What was done was not only physical abuse and cruelty, it was intellectual cruelty. The Native Americans moved off their land called it the Walk of Tears, when they were moved on to reservations. Most of my work is with the Pueblo People because they got to stay there.

#### MEMORY DEVICES

But let's keep going, because one of the big things from *The Memory Code* was, I had mentioned this device called a *Lukasa*, an African one. Let's look at one of the Australian equivalents.



A Coolamon, an Australian non-restricted, sacred object, from the Central Desert.

Most of them, like the *Churinga*, are restricted items, but this is a *Coolamon*, a food carrying dish. It's over a hundred years old, from the Central Desert. I was given guardianship of it by *Warlpiri*, but it's not their culture, so the knowledge associated with it is lost. But it would have been a girl's *Coolamon*, and on the back are all these markings: it is a memory device, and I am using this for habitats, so the girls would learn a song associated with each of the marks, and they would practise them, and learn them and sing them, and dance them, and slowly build up the knowledge, and then layer more and more on top of it.

The best researched one, that is thoroughly researched, unfortunately there are none of the elders left, the last one expert on this *Lukasa*, from the Luba people in Africa, Western Central Africa, the Congo area, there's none left, although there were, a couple of decades ago, and the researchers did a lot of research on it. And I also paid Luba, through the researchers, for intellectual property: and this is the one [showing the device on page 15] I copy most. So basically it is a bit of wood with shells and beads put on.

When I read that they said they have been encoded, the entire knowledge system, masses and masses and masses of information to these devices, that hold beautifully and you touch each thing and sing the song, tell the stories. I'm a foundation member of the Australian Skeptics: there was no way I was going to believe, despite all the research, that you could put a stack of information to a bit of wood with beads and shells on it. So I did some really sloppy science experiment: I grabbed a bit of wood from our veranda, randomly shoved on beads and shells and decided after I designed it [showing the device on page 13], to encode a field guide to the Victorian birds, because I'm married to a fanatical birder.



Lynne Kelly's experimental *Lukasa*.

There are 412 native, give or take a few, depending on how they are classifying this day of the week. 82 families, so I encoded first the families onto this. So what I did start with, the first one, it is prickly because I am really bad at craft and the little bead fell off, but I left it off because the first one is *Dromaidae*, which is the Emu, and emus have very sharp bills, so it worked well anyway. And my songs start with drum roll, I'm starting emu. The second, I promise you I'm not doing the lot, the second shell is *Anatidae*, which is the ducks, and I don't know if you can see the little speck on that, but if you look hard enough it looks just like a wagging duck tail. You've got to have a bit of imagination, you get more relaxed about this the more you do it.

So now I've got to encode sixteen ducks to that. They include the Magpie Goose and the Swan. So I decided on a footy match between the magpies and the swans. There is the Australasian Shoveller, so I figured it got very violent, the Hardhead and the Blue-billed Duck, so it got very violent: the Shoveller buries them. The Musk Ducks off in the bush, having yes, off in the bush, wearing his musk cologne, and so on, to the two Teals of the two ladies, so I have a story that gives me the sixteen ducks in order, in taxonomic order. So I know that the Black Duck and the Mallard are similar, and things like that. And so I go on, for every bird around. Things happen, when you are doing this, that makes it work easily. For example I had to put *Menuridae* there, at that little tiny one, *Menuridae* is our Lyrebird. And I told you I was crap at craft, no, let's say very bad at craft, so you can see it dribbled, the glue. I decided that looked like a man had urinated down my *Lukasa*, which gave me *Menuridae* and he lied about it, which gives me Lyrebird, so that one was really easy. You will come up with something easily the way you let your memory relax. These are unbelievably effective, I have been doing this with kids as young as three, with little *Lukasas*, doing only *Acacias*, the Wattles for the area. I get more emails now about this, from people who have done it and cannot believe how well it works, than anything else.





Lynne Kelly's experimental Lukasa, visually inspired by the traditional Lukasas of the Luba people.



Historical Lukasa of the Luba people from the Congo Basin. Today it is part of the [Brooklyn Museum's collection](#).





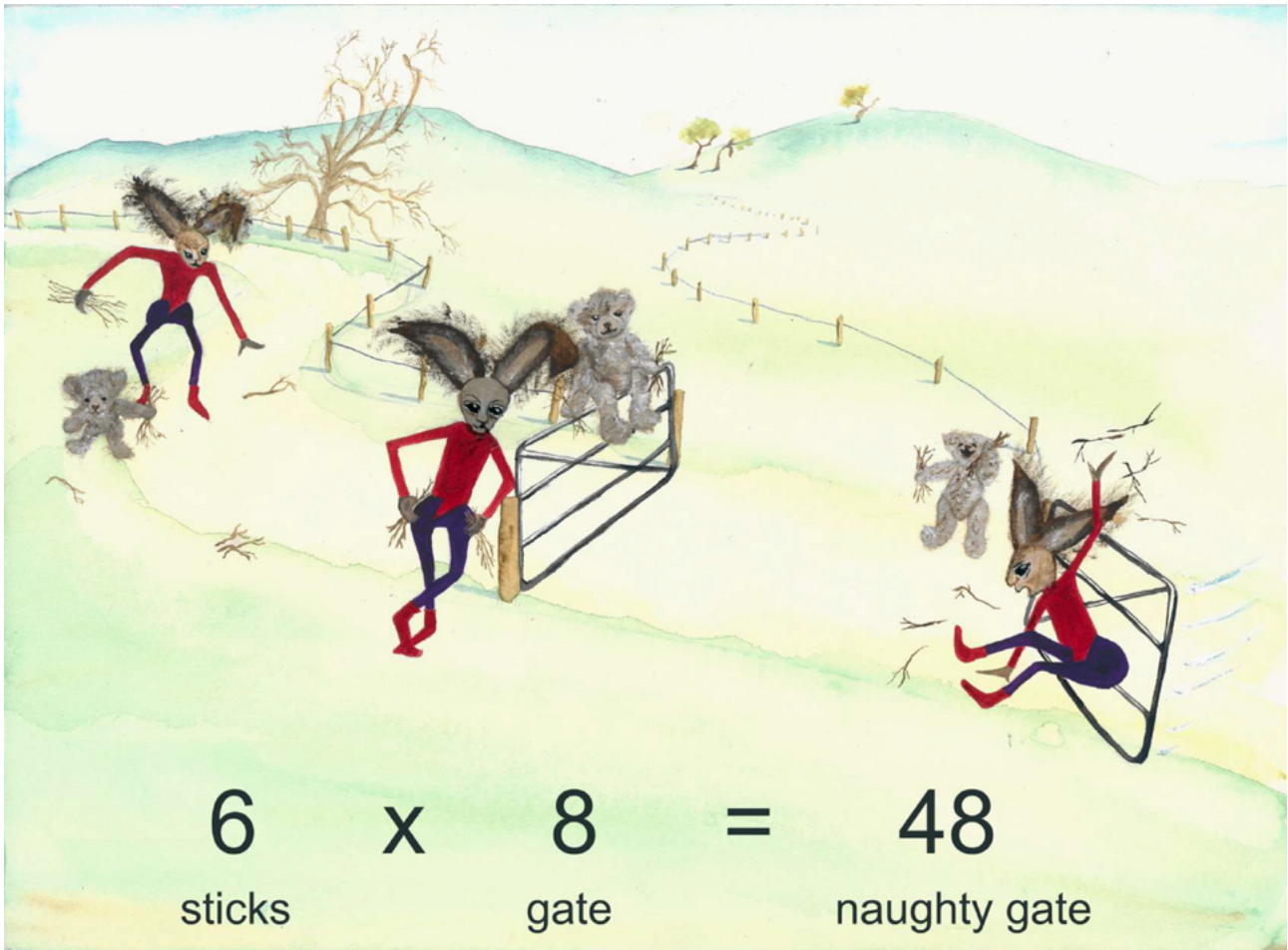
Historical Lukasa of the Luba people from the Congo Basin. Today it is part of the [Brooklin Museum's collection](#).



Lynne Kelly's Memory Board codified with Australian spiders

Now there is a whole stack of other methods that I haven't got time to go into now. Memory boards like this ... [showing the device above], since I am into spiders, I made a board with all the spider families. That end is Lycosidae, that's the wolf spiders, and there's their eyes. That works, but it doesn't have the tactile nature of the *Lukasa*, so it doesn't work quite as well. You can use jewellery. These are all methods from Indigenous cultures: jewellery, objects on a stage and move them around. I am doing Graeco-Roman gods that way. It is unbelievable, just stones, pretty coloured stones that I have found. The *Inca Khipu*: they ran an entire... so the Aztec and the Maya, at the same time, were literate, they had their scripts. The Inca didn't, they ran their entire huge empire using the Songlines around Cusco, their capital, and a knotted cord device, called the *Khipu*. Narrative scrolls of the Asian countries. You can use your body and hands, all sorts of things that I am not going into in depth, because we haven't got time. Art is another big one. So my thing in education now is: let's get art, music, into the heart of the curriculum, serving the whole curriculum, as Indigenous cultures do, not on the side.





An example of Rapskali's mathematical tables.

One thing I have got is a suite of artworks [pointing at the Rapskali illustration] six, eight, 48, for the tables, on how to do that using art. But this was very common in mediaeval times. There's a lot of lessons to learn from mediaeval times, if you want to make sure you can remember what you are doing. Number one: do not type notes, every page looks the same, it is not memorable. That is why mediaeval manuscripts were so elaborate and every, you know, capital letter was different and they left stuff at the side, to write notes, and people added on to these gorgeous manuscripts, so every page looked completely different. But two of the devices used in the mediaeval times that really rang true with me, were a visual alphabet and bestiary.



Lynne  
 Kelly's visual  
 alphabet:  
 V-vulture,  
 W-wombat,  
 X-Xena,  
 Y-Yak,  
 Z-Zeus.

This is a little book I've produced where each letter of the alphabet is associated with something. So you are probably used to one sun, two shoe, three tree, to give you a list. It is much more effective if you have them as something a little more active than apples and trees. So I have got the Vulture who is going to attack the Wombat, who is also being attacked by Xena, who is standing on a Yak, being attacked by Zeus. So that is my last few letters. And that continuous means that you can see the story going through and when I am giving talks, like I am now, I am actually going through each of these, I am actually up to Xena. So I have associated each part of the speech with a different letter and go through.



Another page from Lynne Kelly's visual alphabet, with Earwigs.



But my big problem is with memorising names, so for every pair of letters that comes up often in names, I have got an animal. So Earwigs over here, so if I meet an Earl, not a dukey one, somebody called Earl... let's say Ebony, Ebony I met at the local coffee shop, and I have to associate her with a piano – ebony and ivory – and so when she went off to get the coffee, in my imagination she was going off to have a quick tinkle on the piano at the back. Every time I see Ebony I know her name is Ebony, that is the only -eb. Sometimes you need to do more, like -el for Elephant is going to give you Elizabeth and Eliza, and a whole lot, so you need to do other bits too mainly. But it works really well, and that is a mediaeval method, called a bestiary, so their bestiaries were actually used, books of beasts. I ran out of beasts, there's some that you can't get beasts for, but I still manage to use things, and that works a trick.

What I didn't realise when I made it, was how valuable that would be for learning French and Chinese. I have now created one in French, which I can use very similarly for any French vocabulary. If I want to add something to something starting with *-la*, I will associate it with a rabbit *Lapin*. In Chinese it has to be implemented quite differently, because of the structure of the language, but it works a treat. I don't know how I would be managing Chinese without my bestiary.

So there's lots of things you can do, there's ways of memorising numbers and dates. I entered the memory competitions, anyone who has read *The Memory Code*, I said at the end that I couldn't enter the memory competitions, shuffling decks of cards and great strings of numbers, because I wouldn't handle the stress. But I decided I had to, so I entered the memory competitions in 2018 and 2019, no 2017-18, there hasn't been any since in Australia. So I am the reigning senior champion, I even beat the Japanese senior champion once, although he is higher ranked than I am. So I can memorise, shuffle decks of cards and lists of numbers and things, those techniques around. They are not much use – use it for more important things! But the thing is, that no matter what your age, nor what your ability with memory is, you can always keep learning and you should never stop learning.

**LYNNE KELLY** is an awarded writer, researcher and science educator from Australia, working as an honorary research fellow at the La Trobe University in Melbourne. Her recent publications are on orality and memory. They include *Knowledge and Power in Prehistoric Societies: Orality, Memory and the transmission of Culture* (2015), *The Memory Code* (2016), *Memory Craft* (2019), *Songlines: the Power and Promise* (2020, with Margo Neale) and *The Knowledge Gene* (2024). Her current research focusses on the application of mnemonic technologies in four areas: education, ageing, memory techniques for learning foreign languages and understanding ancient knowledge systems of oral cultures. She maintains a site: <https://www.lynnekelly.com.au/>.

## **GERRIE SCHRIK**

Educator and translator; hiker, birder, beekeeper and storyteller, who loves reading and art – living in a small food forest close to a stream in the Piracicaba River Watershed. Honouring and acknowledging the *Guarani* and *Kaingang*, the traditional custodians of these lands and waters.

## **MARY HATAKEYAMA**

Mother, gardener, teacher, translator. Graduated in languages and pedagogy. Born in São Paulo, Brazil. Since 2022 participates in the Comunidade Selvagem, collaborating in the Spanish and English text translation groups, reading, translating, and revising texts collectively and artisanally.

The editorial production work of the Selvagem Notebooks is carried out collectively with the Selvagem community. The editorial direction is by Anna Dantes, and the coordination is by Alice Alberti Faria. The design is by Tania Grillo and Érico Peretta. We thank Gerrie Schrik for the presentation, transcription and preparation of this notebook and Mary Hatakeyama for the translation from English to Brazilian.

More information at [selvagemciclo.com.br](http://selvagemciclo.com.br)

All Selvagem activities and materials are shared free of charge. For those who wish to give something back, we invite you to financially support the Living Schools, a network of five educational centres for the transmission of Indigenous culture and knowledge.

Find out more at: [selvagemciclo.com.br/colabore](http://selvagemciclo.com.br/colabore)

SELVAGEM Notebooks  
digital publication by  
Dantes Editora  
Biosphere, 2024

