In the wake of the release of Anderson/Wild *Little Children Are Sacred* report, the Howard government has declared a national emergency and mobilised a coalition of police, army and others in what they suggest will be the ‘first phase’ of a program to tackle child sexual abuse in remote Aboriginal Australia. Using both the language and strategic force of a military campaign, the Minister for Indigenous Affairs has described his government’s new approach towards Aboriginal communities in the terms: ‘stabilise, normalise, exit’.

Edited by Jon Altman, Director of the ANU Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, and Melinda Hinkson, Lecturer in Anthropology at the ANU, this book is an urgent critical response to the government’s actions. A wide range of authors contextualise the crisis facing remote Aboriginal communities and the government’s most recent response in light of the history of and wider policy towards Aboriginal Australia. The book considers how the rhetoric of emergency excludes such questions as whether the government itself is complicit in the state of remote Aboriginal communities; how the approach to tackling child sexual abuse dovetails with the government’s broader goals in Indigenous affairs; the long-term effects of the government’s actions; and alternative responses to the Anderson/Wild report.


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