Despite some contradictions existing between the design practice guidelines or methods advocated by the proponents of the cultural design paradigm and the environmental health paradigm, these two approaches can and should be complementary. They lead into a third architectural paradigm: the housing-as-process philosophy, which aims to firmly situate housing design and provision within the broader framework of an Aboriginal community’s planning goals and cultural practices, as well as its socio-economic structure and development. One fundamental aspect of this approach involves design attention being given to the community’s housing management capacities to ensure that all technology is locally sustainable. This subject is introduced in Simon Scally’s essay on outstation architecture in the Top End. A second grass-roots proponent of this philosophy is the architect and builder Paul Haar, who has extensive experience in self help housing projects involving Indigenous Australians and whose essay draws on his experiences at Mt Catt, another Top End outstation, and St Pauls in the Torres Strait. (Thus, four contributions in Take 2— Groome, Fantin, Scally and Haar—focus on northern Australia.) The housing-as-process philosophy is considered more systematically as a design methodology in the essay by Geoff Barker. Finally, the integration of social planning and architectural design in the context of a metropolitan setting that has been rife with drug abuse, violence and police conflict is examined in the paper on Redfern by Col James, Angela Pitts and Dillon Kombumerr.

Despite the specialist nature of Aboriginal housing design, there has not been a book produced that deals with this subject from a broadly architectural perspective, that encompasses general principles and contrasting paradigms and that offers examples from around the continent. However, there have been other important books on Aboriginal housing published. The first, A Black Reality, collected a series of essays written mainly by anthropologists, which were headed by an overview of housing policy completed by the editor. It contributed to the ‘cultural design paradigm’ that was emerging in the 1970s through its anthropological documentation of domiciliary behaviour in traditionally oriented camps but, as architects did not write it, it failed to translate its findings into design strategies. Three successive books, written by architecturally trained authors, did engage in design issues but were largely case studies of single settlements. These were: Black Out in Alice that considered the Mount Nancy Town Camp in Alice Springs; Humpy House and Tin Shed that dealt with Wilcannia in western New South Wales; and Housing for Health that examined the Pipalytjara people living in the north-west corner of South Australia. Helen Ross’s 1987 book
Just for Living is a further example of the case study type, centring on the Aboriginal community at Halls Creek in Western Australia. It was written by a social scientist whose perspective was essentially one drawn from environmental psychology, and like Heppell’s first book, while it offered important insights into cultural values and behaviour in relation to housing, it did not translate these into design strategies that could be readily implemented by architects. A fifth book, Housing Design Assessment for Bush Communities, again provides case study material on seven Central Australian communities, but also contains useful housing design guidelines for that region. Another relevant housing book, recently published, is Settlement: A History of Australian Indigenous Housing edited by the historian Peter Read. Its themes are strongly focused on history and government policy but not design, even though some contributors were architects. In selecting contributors for Take 2, we have assembled some general papers that provide an overview of housing design principles and strategies being used across the Australian continent. Our apologies to those colleagues whose housing designs and case studies we have had to unfortunately refrain from including due to a lack of space. It is within their important work that one will discover a further range of design solutions that emphasise in different ways, the three contemporary paradigms sketched out within the pages of this monograph.

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