



traditional ritual and ceremony at places of power (Stanner 1984; Barak art work).

Aboriginal people regard land in exactly the same way as they regard kin (Laudine 2009) and care for it in the same way. This 'caring for country' is done in a number of contexts. At a spiritual level, it is a religious commitment, a way of ensuring that the world remains as it was created, a sustaining home for humans and other animals. At a day-to-day practical level, caring for one's country, particularly through the use of fire, makes for easier travelling (Rose 1996). But above all, caring for country is an expression of the deep bonds of kinship.

The landscapes of the Port Phillip District that were so attractive to European pastoralists were in large part an artefact of the sustaining practices of the Indigenous people. In the words of Deborah Bird Rose (1996: 72), before the arrival of European settlers

Aboriginal people had created these nourishing terrains through their knowledge of the country, their firestick farming, their organisation of sanctuaries, and their rituals of well-being.