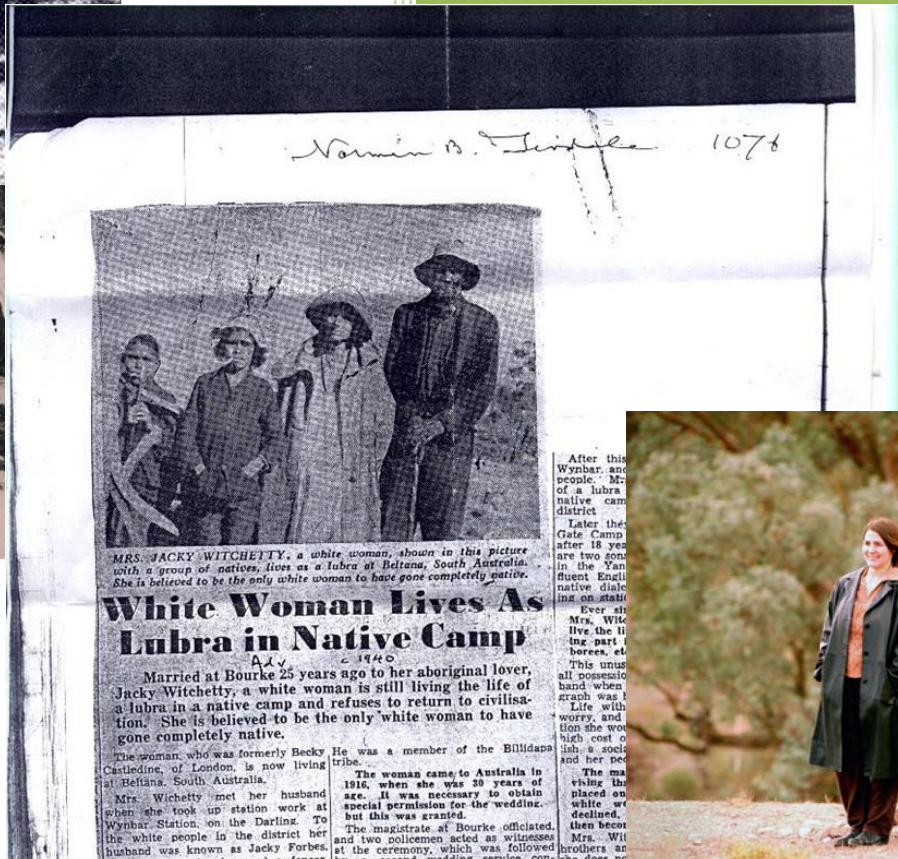


2011



Mount Saddle Station, c1910. Standing at back from left: Winnie Coulthard with daughter Eileen, Jessie McKenzie, Kitty Elliott holding baby son Tom; front girl standing in front of them is probably daughter Lorna; Anne Pheen, Susy Wilson holding white Emily Gernert; Daisy James and Fieveling Judy. Men in front from left: Peter Frying Pan, Cranky Jack and Milky Billy. Children in front from left after men: Walter Coulthard, Richard Coulthard, May Wilson and Claude Demelt.



After this Wynbar, and people. Mrs. of a lubra native camp district. Later the Gate Camp after 18 years are two sons in the Yan fluent English native dialect on station. Ever since Mrs. Witchetty live the life of a lubra, etc. This unusual possession band when grass was 1. Life with worry, and tion the work high cost of fish a social and her people. The man visits the placed on white and declared, then become Mrs. Witchetty's brothers and she does not.

Thesis Title: *White Lives in a Black Community: The lives of Jim Page and Rebecca Forbes in the Adnyamathanha community*

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Summary

The lives of Jim Page and Rebecca Forbes in the Adnyamathanha community anchor this hybrid life-writing text which identifies not only the author, but all white settler Australians, with two English settlers who found belonging with Adnyamathanha people, on Adnyamathanha land, in the Flinders Ranges of South Australia. These lives, and the author/reader's identification with them, become metaphors for decolonized relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. They become the parable through which a contextual theology of Decolonisation can be imagined, and therefore lived.

The Thesis is presented in five parts:

- The Title Page and Summary
- Volume One Creative Life Writing Excerpts
- Volume Two Exegetical Essays
- Volume Three Appendices Creative Life Writing Sections A – F
- Volume Four Other Appendices

Volume One comprises Chapters 1, 2, 5, 9, 11, 17, 20 of the entire Creative Life Writing narrative, and represents 60% of the Thesis content. Examiners are invited to read intervening chapters found in Volume 3 if they wish, but this is not required. The Creative Life Writing chapters have been developed through extensive field and archival research and collection of oral histories, as well as literature reviews, and ethics clearances and consent forms were obtained for the use of material in this way (See Volume Four). The narrative is presented in a hybrid life writing genre, utilising several temporalities to progress the four 'voices' of the

text: oral history, historical biography, speculative fiction and autobiography. Date and place headings for each section feature as textual markers.

The setting of the narrative moves west from Australia's settled east coast into central Australia and the eidetic Flinders Ranges of South Australia, Adnyamathanha *yarta*.¹ Jim and Rebecca as primary characters also migrate from colonial centres into the hospitality of Indigenous communities, and finally into the Adnyamathanha community, although Rebecca arrives with her Indigenous husband and children, while Jim arrives as a missionary of the United Aborigines Mission. The Adnyamathanha community itself is being dispossessed of traditional camping places and seeking to establish a permanent settlement for the community. The narrative tracks these migrations of place and identity, punctuated by deaths and losses and decisive moments where loyalties are tested and changed. Jim's death by suicide before Christmas, 1930, is a climax to the tensions of establishing Nepabunna mission; Rebecca's death, nearly thirty years later, concludes the narrative with a reflection on the hybrid nature of white settler belonging in Australia. Both are buried in Adnyamathanha *yarta*.

Volume Two is a series of Exegetical Essays which reflect on the six themes of colonial journeying, migrating identities, contact zones, meetings of hosts and strangers, transculturation and belonging which are reflected sequentially in the chapters chosen for inclusion in Volume One. Each essay in Volume Two is designed to be read in conjunction with its corresponding section and chapter in Volume One. The first essay in Volume Two describes the methodology of the project, and the choice of genre as a vehicle for postcolonial

parabolic contextual theology arising from the lives and history portrayed in the life writing narrative. The final essay suggests a 'Theology of Decolonisation' arising from the sense of belonging each of Jim and Rebecca achieved through their personal decolonised relationship with Adnyamathanha. All of these essays were developed from papers presented at peer reviewed conferences, and some have also been published as articles. These essays represent 40% of the thesis content.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge first and foremost the friendship and encouragement of the Shannon family, Rebecca Forbes descendants. Without them, and their desire to see their grandmother and great grandmothers story told, this work could not have been started, nor completed. I also acknowledge the support of Nepabunna Community Council, Copley Community Council and the Iga Warta Community who taught me so much. All the storytellers – oral history participants, those who gave quick anecdotes, wise advice, and opinions: my heartfelt thanks. You made my universe a richer place. My patient supervisors, Dr Rick Hosking and Rev Dr Andrew Dutney, stayed with me through the long years of part time study, edited my grammar, believed in me and the story, and gave me freedom to find my voices. Flinders University supported me to attend and present at conferences, provided library service second to none, and found creative ways to support a distance student in the various far flung locations I lived during this time. The Adelaide College of Divinity Postgraduate program always showed interest in each stage of my research I presented to them. Rick Hoskings Post-

graduate writing group members challenged me to become a writer, and to put myself on the page.

The South Australian State Archives deserve special mention for being such an efficient repository of the most amazing artefacts and documents, as do the South Australian Museum, and the Mortlock Library of South Australia. The State Library of South Australia JB Somerville Oral History Collection unit trained me as an Oral Historian and made equipment available for me to use in the field for that purpose.

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Final acknowledgement goes to all those who read my drafts, when they didn't have to: Brian Matthews, a most encouraging mentor; Kristy Schubert, who helped me edit; Shirley Lock, my best critic and best friend; and my parents Rosemary and David Spencer, who cried in all the right parts.

But the very final acknowledgement goes to my children, Mady, Gus and Clancy who have lived with Jim and Rebecca and *yuras* most of their lives. May you find a place to call home, and a community to call family, wherever your journeys take you.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to all those who are co-authors with me through their sharing of oral histories, and friendship, during and beyond this project. I wish to state that the intellectual

and cultural knowledge shared by Adnyamathanha participants and non-Adnyamathanha participants remains their property and this thesis in no way infringes on that right.

Dedicated to all those who have passed on before the conclusion of this project, including

Daisy Shannon, buried in Quorn

Granny Gertie Johnson, buried at Nepabunna

Leo and Shirley Coulthard, buried beside one another in Nepabunna general cemetery

Rosie Brady, buried at Copley

Keith Nicholls, buried at Beltana

Reg Williams, buried in Toowoomba, Queensland

Granny Dolly Coulthard, buried at Nepabunna

Evelyn Coulthard, buried at Port Augusta

Darryl Forbes, buried at Stirling North

Hector Harrison, buried in Broken Hill

Frank Warwick, buried at Holowilena Station

Bob McRae, buried at Hawker

and Reverend Derek Evans, my minister in my late teens, who first supported me to meet and understand Indigenous people, and who died by suicide at Monash University where he had ministered as chaplain.

May they live on in the people we have become by knowing them.

This work is also dedicated to those storytellers, mentors and friends still living:

Margaret Brown

Aunty Clara Brady

Cliff Coulthard

Elsie Jackson

Eileen Lewis

Enis Marsh

Ken McKenzie

Philip Shannon

Rodger Shannon

Bill Snell

Frank and Mus Warwick

John Wiley

Mary Woods

Lena Coulthard

Pauline McKenzie

Sylvia Brady

Terry Coulthard

Josie Coulthard

Grace Denison

Aunty Lorna DeMell

Aunty Rita Coulthard

Sharon Cruse

Jillian Marsh

Luise Hercus

Charlie Jackson

Mona Jackson

Roger Johnson

Buck McKenzie

Irene Mohammed

Gina Richardson

Eddie Nicholls

Aunty Gladys Wilton

Aunty Norah Wilton

Julia Henderson

The stories of our lives cannot be told without one another.

Student Declaration

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text and endnotes. I give consent for this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying.

Signed:



Tracy Louise Spencer

Date: 1/3/11

¹ 'Yarta' means 'country' in *yura ngarwala*, the language of the Adnyamathanha people.