governing the good teacher

a white governmentality lens on the 'white' teacher in South Australia's APY Lands

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a qualitative examination of race relations in contemporary Australia. It specifies these dynamics by exploring the dispositions of 'white' teachers – meaning those of predominantly Anglo heritage – to their work in South Australia's Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands. The APY is a remote site where contests over cultural authority, ownership of land and governance of education have historically played out. Anangu is the name the Indigenous people of the region use in self-reference, and Anangu Education is a system that is regulated by Anangu and whites. It is within this context of dual educational governance that this thesis asks, what does it mean to be a good 'white' teacher?

The 'white' teacher of Anangu students is positioned at the nexus between the desires and worldview of Anangu, and the dictates and dominant epistemology of the state. The central research question locates the teacher within these relations, and is considered through life history interviews with white teachers who were living in the APY at the time of interview. By asking what it means to be a good white teacher the thesis creates a context for considering: the 'cultural baggage' of white teachers; how growing up 'white' in White Australia has shaped them; and how the teacher subsequently draws upon racialised discursive resources in order to construct, and reconstruct, a good white teacherly identity. The research is therefore situated in a number of key contexts that together provide a space for analysis. The broadest of these is the White Nation, which influences the more specific sites of Indigenous and Anangu Education, as well as the individual white teacher's life.

White governmentality is the conceptual frame for considering these relations. This framework brings together the concepts of whiteness and governmentality to create a lens for tracing racialised power. This includes the more patent ways in which we are governed, as well as governance in covert forms as vested in a range of naturalised beliefs and practices. The latter are mostly invisible to white people and therefore not experienced as acts of racialised domination. As a lens for interpreting the full range of research materials, white governmentality is therefore useful for bringing these hidden processes to light.

The first half of the thesis establishes the social, political and historical context of Anangu Education, while the second half utilises this framework to locate the white teacher in contemporary relations. I establish the subject position of the 'white' teacher and argue that s/he may adopt a range of stances that work to reproduce, or resist, racialised domination. I argue that previous research into Anangu Education has insufficiently critiqued the historical record, failing to inform our pedagogical efforts today. I also argue that colonial continuities often characterise the dispositions of today's white teachers, unintentionally buttressing the foundations of white race privilege. This thesis therefore provides a critical contribution to the field by highlighting the everyday means by which white domination is reproduced.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Samantha Schulz

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AES   Anangu Education Services (AES) provides services for all Aboriginal Lands District schools "in management of policy, personnel matters and finances, public relations, liaison with other Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) services, recruitment and induction, and curriculum development including materials development and publication" (Anangu Education Services, 2008).

AEW   AEW stands for Aboriginal Education Worker, or in the context of Anangu Education, Anangu Education Worker. MacGill notes that in 2008 AEWs in South Australia were renamed Aboriginal Community Education Officers (2008, p. 17). I retain the term 'AEW' given its use in this study at the time of interviews.

AnTEP   The Anangu Tertiary Education Program (AnTEP) is a course of study carried out in the APY for Anangu adults wishing to gain tertiary qualifications.

APY   APY is shorthand for Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands; an area of land spanning 103,000 square kilometres across the South Australian, Northern Territory and Western Australian cross-border region. The APY is sometimes referred to, colloquially, as 'The Lands'; this term is also used sporadically throughout.

PYEC   The Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Education Committee (PYEC) is a centralised body of local Anangu decision makers who have policy and operational control over schooling across the vast APY. The PYEC are supported by AES.

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Anangu	Anangu is the name the closely related groups of Indigenous people of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands (in the cross-border region of South Australia, Northern Territory and Western Australia) use in self-reference. These groups include the Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara, Ngaatjatjarra, Ngaanyatjarra and Antikirinya people.
Aboriginal/ Indigenous	These terms are located within contested power relations. As Carey points out, 'Aborigine' and 'Aboriginal' are colonial constructions "that homogenise the multiculturalism and multilingualism of Aboriginal people" (2008, p. 8). She asserts the possibility of resisting the colonialist connotations associated with these terms by investing them with new meanings that subvert white supremacy. Similar disputes surround the term 'Indigenous', for instance when it is used to homogenise all first nations peoples. In the context of these contested relations I use the terms Aboriginal and Indigenous in this thesis to describe First Nations Australians, however I do so with a view to resisting the processes of racialised domination inherent in such terms.
'White'	'White' is used in this thesis to describe the paramount group in Australia, a race structured society. Inverted commas are applied to highlight the socially constructed nature of this subject position, which is always constituted at the nexus of the relations of race, class, gender and sexuality. Given its historical constitution in Australia, 'white' is also used to signify Australians of predominantly Anglo lineage. For readability, inverted commas are not used tirelessly throughout.
White Governmentality	White governmentality brings together the theoretical concepts of whiteness and governmentality to denote a critical orientation to research that turns the analytical gaze back upon the white subject of colonial heritage. White governmentality is used in this thesis as a lens for tracing racialised power – or *governance* – in its obvious and covert manifestations. The latter are often invisible to 'white' people and as a lens for research, white governmentality is therefore useful for bringing these invisible reproductions of racialised domination to light.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses on the dispositions of 'white' teachers to their work in a remote Australian context; the term 'white' denotes the entwinement of gender, class and race in the making of white identity. The aim and significance of the research is to expose the invisible and unintentional ways that 'race' is reproduced via white people's everyday thoughts and actions. It is also to explore how these processes may filter through into white teachers' professional dispositions. At a general level, the research is about cultural reproductions of race in contemporary Australia and therefore could be applied to a number of contexts. However, South Australia's Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands[1] provides a unique context for research, and not least owing to the complex location of 'white' teachers inside this space. Anangu Education, a system that is regulated by Anangu and whites, grows out of the legacy of the first Western school to be established in the region – the Ernabella Mission School where the progressive approach of committed white missionaries is still upheld as an exemplar of 'good' schooling. With few exceptions,[2] the Ernabella Mission School is rarely critiqued; however, this thesis questions the historical record, as well as the dispositions of today's white teachers, in order to develop a robust examination concerning the ways in which racial hierarchy is covertly reproduced. This chapter describes the catalyst for research and unfolds the central research question. It highlights the theoretical and methodological tools used to explore what it means to be a 'good white teacher', and concludes by overviewing the organisation of the thesis.

Catalyst for Research: 'Am I making things worse?'

I completed a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in sociology in the mid-1990s. Although upon finishing I remained unsure which career path to pursue, one aspect of the degree remained firmly in mind. This was Edward Said's (1979) concept of *Orientalism* and his theories concerning the power and dominance of Western representation and its effects. Said asserted that the West – the 'Occident' of Western[3] or European heritage – comes to know and understand itself through the generation of knowledge of the East – the 'Orient'. From this standpoint the Western subject is shaped through an impulse for colonisation and unity in the making of 'white' subjectivity. I was interested in the power relations involved in these dynamics and how my position as an Australian woman of Anglo heritage continued to be informed by them.

After completing the Bachelor of Arts I undertook a voluntary teaching role in rural Kenya. The decision to do so was at least partially the result of Said's work and my desire to get closer to the relations about which he wrote. At that time I was only vaguely cognisant that my capacity to travel to Kenya was underwritten by my privileged position as a Western subject of colonial heritage. Travelling

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[1] An area spanning roughly 100,000 square kilometres; see Appendix 4 for site maps.
[2] Highlighted in chapter three.
[3] West is capitalised to highlight White Australia's discursive position as part of the 'West' rather than the 'East', part of the centre rather than the margins. Hodge & O'Carroll (2006, p. 201) suggest that to see Australia as part of the West is geographically illogical, and doing so begins to dismantle the imperialism inherent in the term.

to rural Kenya to help 'disadvantaged' children – while overlooking the privileges that brought me there – was arguably an act of unconscious or covert racialisation. But at that point those relations remained largely hidden to me as I struggled with everyday challenges and sought to make sense of my place on 'third world', non-white lands. Slowly I found myself reflecting upon the implications of my colonial heritage in post-colonial Kenya. To borrow a phrase from Schlunke (2005, pp. 43-44); Said's ideas bobbed uneasily around the edges of my thoughts, provoking me to question why I was there and if my presence was potentially making things worse.

Three years later I undertook further study in Australia and it was through the Bachelor of Education that I started to view Australia itself in terms of being 'non-white lands'. The degree was critical in that it asked students to contemplate their position in relation to questions of class, gender and race, and with regard to education's embedment in privilege and disadvantage. Consequently, I started to contemplate the implications of my cultural identity as a white teacher not only 'over there', but inside White Australia – this to me was a critical turning point that many of the predominantly white cohort of pre-service teachers had yet to make.

During the penultimate year of study, an opportunity then arose that drew those questions to light. A compulsory component of the degree was a course on preparation for teaching. The course coordinator often invited guest speakers and on one occasion called upon a recruitment officer for A<u>n</u>angu Education in the state's far northwest – A<u>n</u>angu being the name the Indigenous people of the region use in self-reference. The officer began:

> With the end of your teaching degrees approaching you'll need to consider where you want to teach. Many of you will choose a mainstream school but if you're one of those people interested in something a little more *off the beaten track*, this could be the opportunity for you.

The officer was recruiting students to undertake their final placement in one of several remote A<u>n</u>angu communities with a view to potential employment. He explained; A<u>n</u>angu Education provides education services for Aboriginal communities located across the vast APY, Maralinga Tjarutja and Yalata Lands. Historically, A<u>n</u>angu people remained isolated from Europeans for much longer than most Aboriginal groups. Explorers and dingo scalpers did not enter the region until the early 1870s and Western education was not established there until 1940. At this time, the Mission School at Ernabella[4] was run only in the morning to make way for the rhythms of traditional life. The white staff of the Mission spoke the local vernacular fluently and A<u>n</u>angu played significant leadership and teaching roles inside the School. As indicated, this was a time when white missionaries and A<u>n</u>angu people are purported to have lived together harmoniously. The 'mission days' therefore tend to be depicted in the historical record as a time of cross-cultural inclusion and respect.

A second mission school was eventually opened at Fregon in the APY and later, a Lutheran mission school was established at Yalata – the community established following forced removal of A<u>n</u>angu

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[4] Ernabella (*Pukatja*) is one of nine main APY communities. The Ernabella Mission, and then school, was established by Presbyterian lay minister and local Adelaide surgeon Dr Charles Duguid in 1937.

groups from their traditional lands in the 1950s owing to nuclear weapons testing by the British and Australian Governments. The Department of Education eventually assumed responsibility for the school at Yalata in 1964, for the mission schools at Ernabella and Fregon in 1971, and then quickly extended Western education such that nowadays there are twelve Anangu schools in operation that are co-governed between Anangu and the state: nine in the APY, one at Yalata, one at Oak Valley and a further incorporated into the Woodville High School Wiltja Program in metropolitan South Australia.[5]

As the recruitment officer spoke, the wide-screen filled with images of rugged desert landscapes, barefooted, dark-skinned children and cracked red earth. The officer explained; since establishment of government-run schooling, many changes had swept through the APY and associated regions. Anangu had become a people undergoing swift social and cultural change with contemporary conditions including high welfare dependency, acute social unrest, substance abuse, pervasive health problems and comparatively low levels of Western literacy and numeracy – a stark contrast to the Ernabella Mission days when students are claimed to have thrived academically.[6] The APY of today started to emerge in the recruitment officer's speech as a disordered space, not unlike images I had seen on television depicting remote Aboriginal communities countless times.

Key moments in recent history included passing of the historic Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act of 1981, the return of native title to the southern Anangu people of the Yalata and Maralinga Tjarutja Lands in 1985, and the granting of policy and operational control over education by the Minister for Education in 1992 to a centralised body of local Anangu decision makers incorporated under the Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Education Committee (PYEC)[7] – the same year as the historic 'Mabo' land rights case in which the High Court of Australia recognised Aboriginal people's sovereign rights to native title. The granting of policy and operational control to Anangu people was carried out, not dissimilarly, in a spirit of self-determination and designed to embed Western education more deeply within Anangu communities. The idea was to establish a system of dual educational governance thus ensuring that decisions affecting Anangu would be made by the people themselves.

The significance of these moves for white teachers at that time was that they were now positioned at the juncture between the desires and worldview of Anangu, and the dictates and dominant epistemology of the state. For Anangu, the significance of operational control was that it granted them the autonomy they had long demanded and desired. However, paradoxically, operational control also tied Anangu more firmly to the state. Now in the difficult position of being accountable to external, non-Anangu bureaucracies, Anangu were also responsible for endorsing community wishes and protecting their cultural heritage lest have Western schooling rejected by their own people.

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[5] See Appendix 4.
[6] Edwards and Underwood (2006, pp. 108, 111) make the argument that children at the Ernabella Mission learned to read and write 'fluently and correctly' in contrast to the ensuing period of government run schooling. These arguments and their significance are explored in chapter three.
[7] There is some confusion in the written record. Iversen (1999, p. 1) states that the PYEC were granted policy and operational control in 1992. Edwards and Underwood state 1987 (2006, p. 114).

The recruitment officer stressed;

> We want the best teachers to work in this remarkable region … 'The Lands' are part of Central Australia's red desert. They are restricted to outsiders but if your application is successful you will be granted special entry … Once inside, the stars at night are like nothing you've ever seen … The children, so open and friendly …

As the talk drew to a close I found myself pulled between the romance of a 'life changing experience' (his words), and concern over the position of white teachers of Indigenous students more generally. I wondered if working in the APY could constitute a positive manoeuvre – reparation for ongoing acts of colonisation and a chance to work toward a state of decolonisation. Or, I questioned, could my presence on Anangu lands somehow prove detrimental? I wanted to do the right thing as a white teacher, yet questioned what the right thing was.

What does it mean to be a good white teacher?

Since that time I have taken several trips to the APY as a student, teacher and researcher and throughout this period I have turned the original questions over: Why am I here? What makes this destination, like Kenya, desirable? In my efforts to do good how is my thinking unintentionally shaped by discourses of race? Moreover, what am I gaining as a white person from the experience of working in a remote Aboriginal context?

This thesis emerges in response to these unresolved concerns and poses the figurative question of what it means to be a good 'white' teacher in the APY today. As the previous section detailed, the APY constitutes a contact zone; in other words, a place of contact and cross-cultural interaction where the relations of race are both challenged and reproduced, and where conflicts inside Anangu communities and classrooms continue to play out the problems brought about by the first waves of colonisation. Consequently, the APY is an ideal site for considering how wider dimensions of black white relations in Australia manifest in struggles at the local level, and how the white teacher negotiates these relations. Indeed the APY is a space to which 'white' teachers have long travelled for various reasons and lengths of time, in order to live and work. The great majority of teachers working in the region draw from the Anglo-dominated mainstream. Thus the significance of asking what it means to be a good 'white' teacher in this particular context is that doing so highlights the processes of privilege and domination in which white people may be unintentionally caught.

Within the scope of this research, and as elaborated in chapter two, 'white' is understood as a raced, classed and gendered location, and the paramount location in a race structured society.[8] 'Race' is understood as a social construction bearing material effects. And 'the teacher' is understood as a

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[8] Inverted commas are used to highlight the constitution of 'white' at the nexus of gender, class and race. For readability, inverted commas are not used tirelessly throughout.

discursive identity; 'a professional identity-in-motion' (Green & Reid, 2008, p. 20). Thus while the white teacher of this study is not viewed as being accountable for the full range of ways that racial hierarchy may be challenged or reproduced, 'the teacher' is nevertheless conceived as having agency to adopt different orientations to his/her role, dependent upon the discursive resources available to him/her at any given time.

To ask what it means to be a good white teacher is therefore to situate the teacher within the historical relations that shape them. It is to consider how growing up 'white' in White Australia influences the teacher's worldview and their consequent impulse to work in a remote Aboriginal context. It is to explore how the teacher draws upon racialised discursive resources in order to construct a good white teacherly identity. And finally, to ask what it means to be a good white teacher is to explore the significance of the APY as a framing context with its own particular histories, narratives and legacies. And while, as chapter three will illustrate, a small amount of previous research into Anangu Education has grappled with questions concerning the dispositions of non-Aboriginal teachers in the region, none have done so from the standpoint taken here.

Orientalism, Aboriginalism & White Governmentality

To explore the central research question this study examines life history interviews with fifteen 'white' teachers, the majority of whom were living and working in the APY at the time of interview.[9] The interviews are considered against the fields of Indigenous and Anangu Education in White Australia – fields that shape the teacher's possibilities for acting. However, to analyse the interviews and the fields that frame them, when planning this research I first required a theoretical approach that would illuminate the everyday privileging of whiteness. In this section I touch on the work of Edward Said as a starting point for that approach. I then turn briefly to 'white governmentality' as the study's primary analytical lens, before addressing questions of methodology.

As stated, Said describes the Orient (the East) as being vital in defining European (the West's) self-definition, and as such Western representations of the East have had much "less to do with the Orient than [they have] with 'our' world" (Said, 1979, p. 12). For Said, Orientalism is the West's way of coming to terms with the Orient and he describes Orientalism as the historically and materially situated corporate institution by which the West has governed the Orient

> […] by making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient. (Said, 1979, p. 3)

Said's ideas establish the ontological grounds of this study, which put forward that Western identity is constructed through the establishment of difference. In this sense, what it means to be a good 'white'

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[9] As outlined in chapter five, two participants had recently left.

teacher is contingent upon a number of factors, including the historical organisation of white subjectivity where subjectivity refers, in this thesis, to the poststructuralist conception of the 'self' as an effect of discourse, as outlined in the following chapter. Drawing from Said, a key theoretical idea that runs through the thesis is thus the understanding that the distinction between Self and Other forms the bedrock epistemology of the West. Western identity is characterised by an impulse for integration, and this constitutes the hegemonic basis of Western consciousness. This dialectical relation between Self and Other is illustrative of imperial relations whereby the white Self/ Nation establishes its authority by subsuming the identity of the Other. In this sense, the hegemonic white Self of colonial heritage comes to rely upon the Other as a basis for colonial rule.

In Australia, the concept of Aboriginalism has been developed to similar effect as Orientalism whereby the 'Aboriginal' emerges as the most enduring 'Other' in the re-making of the 'white' Australian (see for example Barney, 2006; Langton, 1993b; McConaghy, 2000). This process continues to play out at both the national and individual levels in Australia such that concerns about the settlement of the White Nation are refracted through concerns about the settlement of white identity. At the level of the nation the shifting governance of Aboriginality in Australia has reflected endeavours to secure white cultural and political power through resolving the 'Aboriginal problem' (the problem that Aboriginality presents to the project of white settler nationalism). The different phases of white governance of Aboriginality in Australia illustrate dominant ways of attending to this task – for instance, from extermination and protection to Christianisation, assimilation, self-determination, reconciliation and neo-assimilation.

These ideas provide a basis in this thesis for considering how the fields of Indigenous and Anangu Education are governed within the historical context of Australia, and consequently, how the white teacher may position him/herself in relation to different educational models. Drawing from Said, Indigenous Education can be viewed as an expression of Aboriginalism, or a system of governance for authorising views of, describing, teaching, settling and having authority over the 'Other'. The following chapter will explore in detail how the field of Indigenous Education in Australia has thus sought to deal with the 'Aboriginal problem' in a range of contested ways; for example, from exclusion to segregation and inclusion, on a number of different terms. The dominant discourses associated with each of these phases overlap providing standpoints for today's white teachers to approach their work with Indigenous students. And while Said's work is thus useful as a starting point for broadly conceptualising these relations, as I progressed with the research I required a lens that would simultaneously highlight the macro and micro processes of 'race' that structure white teachers' routine, everyday experiences.

Foucault's (1991) concept of governmentality builds on the work of Said by theorising 'governance' at the macro and micro levels in terms of social 'power'. Whereas Said's ideas are useful for understanding the historical constitution of the West, Foucault's work illuminates the micro processes of governance that subjects engage in routinely. In this sense, governmentality connotes a lens for examining power in its mundane, everyday forms. This includes the more patent ways in which we

are governed as well as governance in its covert forms, as vested in subtle expressions of power. Applying a whiteness lens to these relations, the latter may include routine expressions such as 'rhetorical silence' (Crenshaw, 1997; Rowe, 2000) or 'strategic rhetoric' (Dolber, 2008; Fassett & Warren, 2004; Nakayama & Krizek, 1995) – terms that reflect modes of knowledge production that tend to be naturalised for white people and are therefore not experienced as instances of racialised domination.

In brief, white governmentality is understood in this thesis as a lens for tracing racialised power. And while Said and Foucault have both been critiqued for being overly deterministic in their theorisations,[10] in this thesis I argue that their frameworks provide a basis for highlighting the productive aspects of discourses in which all people routinely engage. For instance, the white teacher who engages a discourse of 'strategic rhetoric' might embrace the helpful assumption that the Aboriginal students in their care simply need to 'try harder' in order to participate in mainstream life. Likewise, the white teacher who exercises 'rhetorical silence' may defend the belief that one's ability to gain employment or scholastic accolades has everything to do with hard work, talent and intellect, but nothing to do with race. In each situation the white teacher establishes a 'good' identity by including the Aboriginal students in their care in a seemingly 'non-racialised' way. However, by avoiding speaking 'race', they also obscure the everyday privileging of whiteness that inadvertently discriminates against non-whites.

This thesis therefore addresses issues related to 'race' on a micro level by examining the narratives of its white teacher research participants. It addresses issues related to race on a macro level by contemplating the discursive regimes that differentiate between white and Aboriginal people, and which shape people's everyday options for acting. It undertakes these analyses in order to critically view how whiteness invisibly discriminates against non-whites in a range of discursive settings. A white governmentality lens is applied to each of these settings, and is thus developed throughout the thesis.

Research Methodology: Speaking Race

To approach the research in an anti-discriminatory way, I also required a standpoint which would highlight the biases that I may unintentionally bring to the research act. In this study I adopt a reflexive orientation in which the analytical gaze is therefore turned back upon whites and whiteness. In this sense 'whiteness' is used as a standpoint to disrupt the invisible reproductions of 'race' that tend to emerge in more traditional, or objectivist, frameworks. To resist these dynamics, I started this chapter with a window onto 'my' story as a young white teacher in non-white contexts. Doing so illustrates that I remain implicated in the critiques of whiteness that are applied throughout the thesis. To this end I

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[10] Said, for overemphasising the role of the West in making the Orient, and Foucault for reducing subjects to the effects of discourse. For critiques of Said see for example Ahmad (1992) and McConaghy (2000). For Foucault see Butler (1993, 1997), Hall (1996), Hartsock (1990), Lane (1997) and Zipin (2004).

sometimes utilise collective terms such as 'us' and 'our' rather than 'they' or 'their'. Rather than presume that all people reading the study will identify as 'white', by intermittently deploying first-person and collective pronouns I aim to establish the research within the critical tradition where to acknowledge oneself in the writing serves to recognise one's place in the relations of 'race'.[11] As Dyer has said of his own work:

> The position of speaking as a white person is one that white people now almost never acknowledge and this is part of the condition and power of whiteness. […] The impulse behind [my work] is to come to see that position of white authority in order to help undermine it. (1997, p. xiv)

Despite the fact that Dyer's work is over a decade old, the impetus to avoid speaking 'race' or acknowledging whiteness remains pertinent in white people's everyday talk and practices. Riggs and Selby describe this evasive behaviour in terms of the 'masking of whiteness' (2003, p. 190), a phenomenon which fuels critical efforts to avert the gaze 'from the racial object to the racial subject' (Morrison, 1992, p. 90). For Back and Solomos (2000, pp. 21-22), this shift in critical writing serves the important task of reorienting the sociological focus from the 'victims' of racism and common sense assumptions of 'race' as synonymous with non-white people, to the prioritisation of whiteness as an area of critical endeavour. This thesis examines interviews with 'white' teachers for the same strategic reasons. Yet, I also acknowledge that in turning the analytical gaze onto the white subject of colonial heritage a number of problems may arise. For instance, there is the danger of recentring the white subject and of "reifying whiteness and reinforcing a unitary idea of race" (p. 22). Garner (2007, p. 10) and Hesse (2000, p. 25) concur that in exposing the entanglement of white-centred knowledge with the race privilege of whiteness the focus of research can shift problematically to the details of white identities.

To avoid this problem, the narratives in this thesis are not examined from a standpoint which valorises individualism. Rather, they are presented as vehicles for exploring cultural reproductions of 'race' in which white people collectively engage. To adopt a position such as this is to decentre the individual by giving attention to the racialised fields that shape us. But a further problem that the decision to focus solely on white subjects may generate is the inadvertent silencing of Anangu.[12] One possible resolution is to acknowledge the micro-practices of social power in which *all* social agents engage. As Blood (2005, p. 48) explains, power courses throughout society and all subjects partake in power, 'hence the strength of power is precisely in this fact'. This view of power also reflects my conceptualisation of the APY region as a space of "cross-cultural interaction and agency rather than a static picture of domination" (Haggis, Schech & Rainbird, 2007, p. 237). I adopt this stance and view all social actors as agentic, and yet it must be acknowledged that the problem of avoiding indirect

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[11] Heron (2007), Riggs (2004a) and Schulz (2007) make similar attempts to move from the margins to a more accountable position within their writing.

[12] For Spivak (1990), the challenge for privileged groups is knowing the limits of all representations and acknowledging the issue of what the work cannot say. While I acknowledge I am in no position to speak on behalf of Anangu, I also acknowledge that the danger of silencing them remains problematic. Chapter five deals with issues of voice and researcher standpoint.

discrimination remains a challenge throughout – this is viewed in this thesis as part of the process of 'becoming' a reflexive white researcher.

Writers such as Heron (2007) have adopted stances that mesh with the one delineated here. Heron views whiteness in terms of racialised power, and uses this stance to explore the dispositions of 'white' Canadian women undertaking development work in sub-Saharan Africa. Heron argues that these women's stories are not unique. Rather, the story of the 'white' subject who seeks adventure (or enlightenment) by virtue of travelling to where 'our' services are presumably most needed is in fact reflective of a wider story "that continues to be reiterated across time and location" (p. 2). Thus Heron's work provides a standpoint for seeing 'white' people's stories in collective terms. And while she too concedes that focusing solely on 'white' identities is problematic; Heron also argues that this is the risk of deconstructing dominance:

> […] for in the moment it is challenged, it reclaims centre stage […] yet if not challenged, the relations of domination will continue. (P. 20)

I concur with Heron and use a critical stance in this thesis, firstly to understand 'my' story, and secondly to critically deconstruct the research participants' narratives. According to Heron, the desire of 'white' subjects to do good in 'third world' spaces is really about the making of Self via racialised discourses. In 'my' story, tropes of 'adventure' and 'life changing experiences' for white teachers who desire to work 'off the beaten track' can therefore be theorised as effects of discourses that circulate about remote Aboriginal communities and what 'we' white people are doing to help *them over there* (cf. Heron, 2007, p. 2). Inside these discourses white people are depicted in benevolent terms – for instance, as saviours or saints – while Aboriginal people are viewed as requiring white interventions. Similarly, in 'my' story, the APY is depicted as a disorderly space, and stereotypes emerge that circumscribe Aboriginality. The latter take form in rugged desert landscapes and cracked red earth; representations that resonate with 'authentic' or 'savage' visions of Aboriginality that turn the Aboriginal into a happy object of assimilation; a spectacle, exhibit or source of entertainment (Pickering, 2001, p. 49).

Thus the critical standpoint delimited here is used as a platform for deconstructing whiteness. I have briefly deconstructed the whiteness of my own story in this chapter to illustrate that voyages to the spaces of the Other,[13] while often genuine if problematic attempts by white people to engage with and help others, can also be about the making of Self via processes which sustain racialised domination. This understanding underpins the analyses that are taken throughout.

Organisation of the Thesis

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[13] Throughout the thesis I use terms such as 'Other' problematically, and primarily to highlight the ways in which marginalised identities are often depicted in the teachers' narratives.

The first half of this thesis establishes a number of key fields for analysis, while the second half utilises this framework to locate today's 'white' teacher within social relations. This chapter has introduced the study and its aim to reveal the inadvertent ways that white teachers may reproduce racial domination. The significance of the study has therefore been defined as the attempt to unveil processes of discrimination that continue to resonate with colonisation. The chapter introduced the catalyst for research which, based upon my own experiences, reflects a critical methodology. The chapter also introduced 'white governmentality' as a lens for examining race in its obvious and covert forms, a lens that is used throughout.

Chapter two utilises white governmentality as a lens to analyse the broad field of Indigenous Education in White Australia. Indigenous Education has shifted from a patently racialised model in which Indigenous children were mostly excluded, to more progressive models in which Aboriginal children have been included, though on the terms of the dominant culture. The 1990s saw the turn to a conservative government and the repositioning of Aboriginal students and communities as requiring strict monitoring and control. But resistance models have challenged this conservative vision while appealing to the need for a reflexive stance in which Aboriginal people are positioned as powerful agents in their own right. Chapter two thus illustrates that while whiteness originally operated overtly inside the field of Indigenous Education, it has continued to operate through discourses of inclusion that are purportedly 'non-raced'. This elision of race beneath a veneer of inclusion reflects the conflation of discourses from the colonial period with the emergence of discourses relating to equality, sovereignty and mutual obligation in Australia. Chapter two demonstrates how these discourses provide a range of standpoints for white teachers of Indigenous students to adopt, and it concludes by examining literature concerning the 'white' teacher.

Chapters three and four taper the research by examining the more discrete site of Anangu Education in South Australia's APY.[14] Chapter three starts by utilising a white governmentality lens to undertake a detailed examination of life during the Ernabella Mission days; the celebrated period between 1937 and 1971 when Presbyterian missionaries are believed to have provided Anangu with a safe environment in which they were 'free' to take or leave the gift of Western education. Chapter three challenges this benign vision by developing a view of the Mission that is cognisant of 'race'. Chapter four then reviews previous research in Anangu Education, while chapter five outlines the study's research design. The latter includes a deconstructive approach to the life history interview as the study's primary research vehicle. The first four chapters of the thesis therefore establish an historical framework for considering the subject positions of white teachers in the APY today.

In the second half of the thesis, chapters six through nine unpack the 'white' teachers' life history interviews. Chapter six begins by exploring what it means to grow up 'white' in White Australia and how the teachers' shared subjectivity as 'white' people endows them with cultural lenses that incorporate particular blind spots. Chapters seven and eight explore the interviewees' decisions to

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[14] For pragmatic reasons, the study is limited to this region rather than include the Maralinga Tjarutja and Yalata Lands as well.

pursue teaching as a career path, and their experiences of *becoming* teachers. These chapters develop a picture of the standpoints the teachers' occupy, and they indicate what this may mean for their work as white teachers on remote Aboriginal lands. Chapter eight also highlights the teachers' eventual desires to work in a remote Aboriginal context, while conceptualising desire in Foucauldian terms, as a discursive construct in which subjects choose to invest.

Chapter nine then considers what the life history interviews revealed about the teachers' experiences of living and working in a remote Aboriginal community. The chapter highlights that for some of the teachers 'living' and 'working' in the region are quite separate phenomena. For these white teachers their white lives are separated from their 'job', which is seen in limited terms. For others, their role in the region is viewed differently, and together these standpoints generate a range of visions of the 'good white teacher' today. Finally, chapter ten comprises a discussion and evaluation of the research findings, and brings the thesis together. I argue that colonial continuities tend to characterise the dispositions of white teachers in the region, and I conclude by commenting on the implications of these findings for future research and practice.

SUMMARY

'White' people in Australia occupy a historically and materially privileged position that is often taken-for-granted. When white teachers of Aboriginal students take their 'white privilege' for granted, an indirect form of discrimination takes place that marginalises non-whites. This chapter has mapped the scope of the thesis, which plays out across a number of key sites. These include the broad fields of Indigenous and Anangu Education in White Australia, and the context of individual white teachers' lives. The chapter drew together the concepts of whiteness and governmentality to develop a critical approach to research. This theoretical and methodological standpoint is necessary in order to locate the white teacher in the discursive fields that shape them, and to deconstruct their life histories in a manner that resists reproducing 'race'. The aim and significance of the study is to reveal the unintentional processes of privilege and discrimination that continue to resonate with the broadest structures of domination in Australia – processes that constitute covert modes of social governance. The following chapter develops 'white governmentality' as a conceptual lens by undertaking a discursive analysis of the broad field of Indigenous Education in the context of White Australia.