
Beyond a White Australia?

Race, Multiculturalism, Indigenous Sovereignty and Australian Identities

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Table of contents

Abstract	1
Declaration	3
Acknowledgements	4
1. Introduction	8
1.1 Thesis approach: the question of race, Australian identities and Indigenous sovereignty	9
1.1.1 Scope and limitations of the study	14
1.2 Australia's colonial history	16
1.2.1 Aboriginal policy	19
1.2.2 Immigration policy	23
1.2.3 Ideology	26
1.3 Thesis structure	37
2. Debating the nation: dealing with difference and incommensurability	42
2.1 Introduction	42
2.2 Constructing and re-producing the nation	44
2.3 The nation as a racialised entity	53
2.4 'We are one, but we are many': The narrative of the multicultural nation	58
2.5 Indigenous nations and western political theory	67
2.6 Conclusion	80

3. The (white) elephant in the room: cultural identities and Indigenous sovereignty	83
3.1 Introduction	83
3.2 Identity and racialised subjectivity	91
3.3 Which way Australian identities?	99
3.3.1 Connecting subjectivities to relations of ruling	99
3.4 Conclusion	109
4. Methodology	111
4.1 Introduction	111
4.2 Paradigm and methods of inquiry	112
4.3 Researching racialised identities	116
4.4 In the field: Interview method	120
4.5 Conclusion	125
5. “We’re multicultural mate!” Australian identities, multiculturalism and refugees	127
5.1 Introduction	127
5.2 The meaning of multiculturalism	130
5.3 Contemporary Orientalism in Australia	158
5.4 Conclusion	173
6. Australian identities and Indigenous sovereignty	178
6.1 Introduction	178
6.2 Being Australian	182
6.3 Awareness of Australian history	200
6.4 Land rights	213
6.5 Conclusion	235

7. Indigenous sovereignty, multiculturalism and Australian identity: The great divide	238
7.1 Introduction	238
7.2 Is Australia a white country?	242
7.3 In relationship with Indigenous sovereignty	265
7.4 Conclusion	287
8. Conclusion: The social construction of whiteness in Australian identities and its relationship with Indigenous sovereignty	291
Appendices	301
1. Respondents' profile	301
2. Introduction letter to respondents	309
3. Consent form for participants	311
4. Interview schedule	313
Bibliography	320

Abstract

The social construction of race has been central in the debates about Australian identities since colonial violence founded the nation. The relationship between sovereignty, nationhood and whiteness is of central concern to this thesis. There are two underlying premises to this thesis. The first is that Indigenous people conducted their sovereignty prior to the arrival of Europeans in the 1770's. The second is that Indigenous people did not cede sovereignty, which continues to this day. This thesis is an empirical critical and discursive analysis of the narratives of Australia, as a settler society, and its colonial legacy as a 'white Australia'. This thesis argues that Australia has protected its white sovereignty through four key points. First, that the Australian nation has been produced as a racialised entity with whiteness as the hegemonic norm which shapes white power and privilege in Australia; second that multiculturalism in Australia has been used as a framework to deal with difference within which race is obscured; third that white Australian discourses of nation and identity are limited in their ability to be located in Indigenous sovereignty; and finally, that discourses of multiculturalism and Indigenous sovereignty are rarely addressed in a coherent and simultaneous manner resulting in what I call the 'great divide'. This thesis seeks to understand how whiteness, as the hegemonic norm, prevents non-colonial Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations in the everyday lives of white Australians. The literature in the area of critical race and whiteness studies predominantly focuses on discourse analysis and only a small group of researchers apply the theories to empirical research. Further, the literature on multiculturalism and the literature on the area of Indigenous sovereignty have

historically been separate areas of research that are based in metropolitan areas. The researcher conducted in-depth guided interviews with 29 adults who self-identified as 'white Australian' in order to analyse the key discourses of race and to understand the complexities of how whiteness and race is socially produced and lived in rural Australia. This research makes a contribution toward meeting these gaps in the critical literature on race and the construction of everyday whiteness in Australia.

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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Koerner', with a large, stylized initial 'C'.

Catherine M Koerner
5th August 2010

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This thesis was written on Kaurna (South Australia) and Larrakia (Northern Territory) Country and I acknowledge the living language, culture, ontologies and epistemologies of the Kaurna and Larrakia people.

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Peter Allen's song... "I still call Australia home"... is a song that has wide appeal among many non-Indigenous white Australians because it captures the experience of 'awayness' and 'belonging'. It points to the current of movement and migrancy, which runs through conceptions of belonging among non-Indigenous white Australians and is at the heart of Australian colonial history. This sense of belonging is often expressed as a profound feeling of attachment. It is derived from ownership and achievement and is inextricably tied to a racialized social status that confers certain privileges: a social status that is enhanced by a version of Australian history that privileges the exploits of white Australians by representing them as the people who made this country what it is today... The non-Indigenous sense of belonging is inextricably tied to this original theft: through the fiction of Terra Nullius the migrant has been able to claim the right to live in our land. This right is one of the fundamental benefits white British migrants derived from dispossession (Moreton-Robinson 2003, pp. 24-25).

1. Introduction

*I belong to this earth.
Soon my bones become earth...all the same.
My spirit has gone back to my country...my mother.
Now my children got to hang on to this story...
I hang onto this story all my life.
My children can't lose it.*

*This law,
This country,
This people,
All the same...
Gagadju.¹*

(Neidjie 2007, p.13, italics in original).

The inspiration for this thesis arises from the unsettling position of calling oneself Australian and living on stolen country whose peoples still live here and will always be here: “*This law, this country, this people, all the same. Gagadju*”. The researcher’s non-Indigenous understanding of Gagadju Elder, Bill Neidjie, is that Gagadju lore, land and people are the same entity and are not lived separately. Elsewhere Neidjie states to the reader, whether Gagadju, Indigenous or non-Indigenous, that he is the same as ‘you’: ‘All the same’. In the context of this thesis, Neidjie’s words are a statement of Indigenous sovereignty and are a way of constructing being in this place. He instructs the readers not to remove our subjectivity from the country on which we live, or from its people and its laws. His knowledge and his way of being in the world are not exclusive. Neidjie provides us, the readers, both a process and terms of engagement for living and being in Australia. This study is an attempt to contextualise the debates about Australian

¹ Gagadju country is located in what is known as Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory of Australia. Indigenous Australians often refer to specific tracts of land as their ‘Country’.

identities in relationship with Indigenous sovereignty. It argues that the Australian context remains colonial rather than being post-colonial. The way forward is not to construct a “better Australian identity”, but rather to participate in the hard treaty work – where there is still no treaty – to respectfully engage with Indigenous sovereignty (Haggis 2007, p.319).

1.1 Thesis approach: the question of race, Australian identities and Indigenous sovereignty

This thesis locates itself within critical race and whiteness studies from the United Kingdom, Canada, United States of America, New Zealand and Australia. It seeks to deconstruct the racial formation of white Australian identities and cultural relations and draws upon the traditions of Western sociology and Cultural Studies to do so. The title, “Beyond a white Australia?” is in response to public discourse that Australia has moved or needs to move beyond its colonial past. The original intent of this study was to ask ‘What would it take to move beyond a white Australia?’ The researcher aimed to investigate whether white Australian values are ‘a thing of the past’, or if whiteness remains the hegemonic identity. After reviewing the literature, however, it seems as though this question also seeks to move beyond whiteness or beyond race. Is such an approach problematic in the context of Australia, where the invader/settler population remains the hegemonic identity that, in its self-definition, denies Indigenous sovereignty? This contention raises several questions in order to understand the relations of power that are enabled by the status of ‘white Australian’. How does race shape those who identify as white Australian and how they relate to the nation, multiculturalism, to difference and to Indigenous Sovereignties?

Empirically, how do white Australians experience their own racialised subject position and the privilege it extends to them?

The main objective of this thesis is to do with the continuing construction of whiteness in Australian identities vis-à-vis Indigenous sovereignty and particularly concerning everyday vocabularies and ways of talking about white selves and Australian identities and Indigeneity. To achieve this the research uses a case study of rural people who self-identify as white Australian to understand how they think about race and Australian identity in the context of Indigenous sovereignty in their everyday lives. The subsidiary objectives follow. First, to analyse whether discourses of multiculturalism used to deal with difference obscure the social construction of race. Second, to analyse what the researcher has termed ‘the great divide’ between discourses of multiculturalism and discourses of Indigenous sovereignty in debates about Australian identity. The hypothesis is that white Australians are ambivalent about their own racialised position and Indigenous sovereignty. This is because the discourse of multiculturalism has been the central story of how to understand difference under the umbrella of Australian identity. The story of migrancy and cultural difference built a national identity focused on tolerance of diverse-but-equal groups. This approach replaced race with culture. There is a lack of everyday critical vocabulary about the social construction of race to address the racial oppression and inequity. The national story of tolerance and acceptance does not include Australia’s colonial beginnings and ongoing hegemonic relationships with Indigenous people. As such, the white Australian discourses about identity and the nation continue to disavow Indigenous sovereignty and maintain white privilege.

To meet the objectives, specific understandings of race, nation and identity as social constructions underpin the thesis. The term ‘settler society’, which is often used, is a white discourse that protects hegemonic white privilege that relies on the initial lie of terra nullius and resultant dispossession of Indigenous peoples. This thesis applies the theories of critical race and whiteness studies. This body of literature understands whiteness as a system of power that privileges white norms, values and systems of knowledge. These are kept protected through white discourses and practices that tell the story of how Australia was formed as a nation, who belongs to the nation and finally who is imagined to be sovereign. The thesis is also premised on the illegality of the assumption that Australia was terra nullius upon the arrival of Europeans in 1770. This means that British claims to sovereignty of what is now called Australia constitute an invasion and subjugation of Indigenous sovereignty that was not ceded, and continues not to be ceded. Thus, this thesis uses the term ‘invader colonial society’ to refer to the society built upon colonial violence. Chapter two will examine in depth the concepts of nation including the concept of nations imagining themselves as sovereign (even though it is the state that holds illegitimate sovereignty in Australia) and Chapter three will investigate the literature on cultural identity.

The thesis identifies the nation as a socially constructed object. It explores the key critical work to date on the nation as an imagined community (Anderson 1991; Chatterjee 1993; James 1996; Poole 1999) and the subsequent process of building and maintaining a nation (Butler and Spivak 2007; Goldberg 2001). A key question for building modern nations is how to manage the diversity within it. Debates within multicultural literature argue that the management of diversity within this approach

to nations is racialised (Goldberg 1994; Vasta 1993; Vasta 1996). This study applies the literature on critical race theory to multiculturalism to examine the ongoing racialisation that occurs due to the lack of a critical vocabulary around race in Australia. Further, in Australia, unlike Canada (Fleras and Elliott 1993; Kymlicka 1998) and New Zealand (Maaka and Fleras 2000), the discourses of multiculturalism as a pathway to nationhood have not engaged with Indigenous sovereignty (Moreton-Robinson 2003b). Additionally Canada and the USA have examples of attempts to conceive of sovereignties differently (Kymlicka 2000b; Simpson 2000; Tully 2000). These approaches are informative for debates in Australia because they present a treaty approach to Indigenous peoples that has never occurred in Australia. The approaches in Canada, the USA and New Zealand are not immune from overriding Indigenous sovereignty to the benefit of the hegemonic state however; the debates in these countries begin with the premise that there are treaties with Indigenous nations unlike Australia.

The thesis places the process of building the Australian nation in its colonial historical context in order to understand the contemporary implications of that history, as fore-grounded in section 1.2 of the introduction. Separate approaches to multiculturalism and Indigenous rights are problematic because multiculturalism disguises the privilege and oppression created by race that disavows Indigenous sovereignty. Rather, public discourse in Australia, expects Indigenous First Nations to join the multicultural nation as one of many equal-but-different cultural groups. This approach repeats a colonising practice of sameness in the narrative of equal rights rather than the discourse of Indigenous rights that engages with First Nation people's status as the first occupants who are sovereign subjects.

Indigenous sovereignty must be the starting point for discourse about the nation and cultural identity in Australia (Watson 2007a). Colonial violence founded Australia (Watson 2007b). These beginnings have ongoing and contemporary implications for Indigenous peoples. It structures and racialises the lives of all peoples who reside in such societies (Frankenberg 1993; Nicoll 2002; Sandoval 1997; Schech and Haggis 2000). The thesis argues that Australia was founded as a white nation (Hage 1998). Thus, the normative assumptions of whiteness have made white identities neutral (Dyer 1997; Riggs 2003a; Riggs 2003b). In turn, the neutrality of white identities leads to many white Australians' ambivalence to their complicity and ongoing relations of dispossession (Moreton-Robinson 2003b). Thus, the thesis places the analysis of Australian identities in the context of Australia as an invader society using critical race theory (Riggs 2004b). Finally, the study locates subject positions in Australia as raced and places them in relation to different histories and positions of power in relation to each other and with Indigenous sovereignty. It is argued that non-colonial ways of relating (Simpson 2000; Tully 2000) can create new spaces that do not deny Indigenous sovereignty or privilege white epistemologies and do not evade white privilege (Haggis 2004b; Haggis 2007; Moreton-Robinson 2005).

The study aims to contribute to the body of empirical social research on rural Australians' understanding of race and identity *in* the context of Indigenous sovereignty. It is prudent to clarify at this point that the rural Australians in this research are representative of configurations of rurality in South Australia. These configurations of rurality are specific to South Australia, and not representative of rural people in other parts of Australia such as North Queensland or the Kimberley in

Western Australia, however. Also, this thesis applies the term ‘ordinary’ and ‘everyday’ in the sense that Stratton (1998) coined the term ‘everyday multiculturalism’ to explain the inter-cultural exchanges that Australian people experience in their everyday life. The thesis applies critical race and whiteness studies in order to analyse the complexity of the social construction of race and identity in Australia. Conceptually, the thesis incorporates broader discussions of nation, multiculturalism, Indigenous sovereignty and cultural identity. It brings an emphasis on racialisation to these debates. This is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the possibilities and constraints of critical race theory as applied to how everyday people who identify as white Australian understand race, multiculturalism and Australian identities in the context of Indigenous sovereignty. The scope of the study, as an empirical project with white Australians from three rural locations of the same state is therefore limited to its parameters.

1.1.1 Scope and limitations of the study

People who self-identify as white Australian and are Australian-born volunteered to participate in the research interviews to meet the research objectives. It is an empirical study of how ordinary rural people, who identify as white Australian, understand race and identity, achieved through interviewing individuals from that subject position. The aim is to see if there are configurations of Australian identity that are specific to white Australians born in Australia. The respondents grew up with the national discourses of identity, race and Indigenous presence/invisibility.

The limitations of this study include that it focuses on the Australian nation. While the discussion draws on international debates, the interviews and analysis are specific to white Australian conceptions of nation. Additionally, the research is reinforced by Indigenous conceptualisation (Simpson 2000) and contestation of nation (Watson 2002a) but does not include Indigenous interview subjects. This is in order to not conduct yet further studies of the 'Aboriginal other' (Fredericks 2007). This means, however, that Indigenous narratives are not analysed alongside white Australian narratives as a counterpoint. Second, the discussions and analysis of cultural identity are from within critical race theory that is cross-disciplinary including sociology, social geography, critical cultural studies and critical writing from psychology. The discussion and analysis of cultural identities is not a psychological one, and therefore does not include how the participants understand their personal identity as an individual. Third, to limit the size of the thesis this study does not include a comprehensive analysis of social policy and political history that influences national narratives, but only a scaffold of history and social policy to provide the context of the research at hand. Similarly, the focus is not a detailed analysis of public institutions (such as Elder 2007; Nicoll 2001) nor of public discourse such as the media, talk back radio or new media sources (Hage 1998; Imtoul 2007a). Fourth, the participants are all adults over the age of 18 years, therefore the insights of young people, as evidenced in the work of Chilla Bulbeck amongst others are not included and require further research (Bulbeck 2004; Mansouri, et al. 2009).

The study focuses on the experience of white Australian-born and does not include interviews with migrants or refugees living in Australia. Studies that focus on, or include, migrant configurations of cultural identity in Australia such as Ghassan

Hage (2002), Susanne Schech and Jane Haggis (2000; 2004) and Alia Imtoul (2007b) require further empirical research.

1.2 Australia's colonial history

This thesis focuses on the social construction of race in Australian identities in the context of Australia's status as an invader society that has formed out of colonialism. Prior to WWI the key narrative of Australian-ness was concerned with the convicts, with mateship, the pioneer, explorers, pastoralists and squatters (Schaffer 1988; Ward 1958). For decades, the range of Australian identities has contested the Post WWI homogenous representation of the 'white, male, Aussie digger' of Anglo Celtic heritage (Nicoll 2001). The old digger (a word that originally referred to Australian soldiers in WWI), though still fiercely protected in some quarters, became one image amongst many. Under public pressure, the Government dismantled the *Racial Restriction Act 1901* in 1974 and allowed a greater diversity of people to migrate to Australia. Feminism, multiculturalism and Aboriginal reconciliation contest the mythical figure of the pioneer and digger. Some present the images of difference as the evolution to a more sophisticated, civilised nation. The adaptation would lead to a post-colonial status for Australia as a settler society that has wisely put its white colonial history behind it. However, the configuration and re-configuration of identity in Australia is fraught with tension and complexity from the beginnings of the colonial force that founded the nation upon stolen lands.

There is a large collection of literature on the colonial history of Australia that places the contemporary configurations of Australian identity in its socio-political context

(see especially Altman and Hinkson 2007; Curthoys, et al. 2008; Elder 2007; Elder, et al. 2004; Hollinsworth 2003; Lake and Reynolds 2008; Manne 2004a; Riggs 2004a). Since the 1990s, critical theorists have waged heated debates in the field of history that engage with these questions of the nation, in the 'history wars'. Henry Reynolds (for example 2001) and Keith Windschuttle (for example 2000), are among the leading contenders in this argument for the 'correct historical record'. The debate has been criticised by some as a battle about the number of Aboriginal Australians killed during the early frontier history and consequent settlement of Australia. The terms 'frontier' and 'settlement' are contested terms in much of the critical literature, particularly Indigenous epistemologies, uses the terms invasion and colonisation and they are also used in this thesis. The thesis will apply the term 'invader society' to locate Australian contemporary society in its context of colonialism. The thesis will use the term 'white settler identities' and 'white Australian identities' to refer to the dominant cultural identity that is constructed upon the narratives of settlement, which deny Indigenous peoples everyday reality of invasion (see Pratt 2003). The use of this term is to bring attention to the privilege associated with whiteness in Australia at the expense of Indigenous people.

Aboriginal and immigration policy have been part of the methods used to protect white interests in Australia. The historical developments of policy approaches are indicative of the social construction of race in Australia as an invader society (Gale 2005). Prior (1788-1900) to the federation of Australia in 1901 the general approach was to 'disperse' Indigenous peoples in order to seize their land. Colonists committed murder and large scale massacres across the colonies. The Constitution left Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs in State hands, and the

Commonwealth had no legal powers in the matter except in the two remaining Territories (Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory). The result was that power over Aboriginal people was handed to the former colonies now formed as states. The protectionist era occurred from 1901 to approximately the late 1930s. Protectionist policy placed a white government employee, often called 'The Protector' or 'Superintendent' as the legal guardian of Indigenous peoples in their state, and controlled all aspects of Indigenous people's lives. Policy approaches included segregation where Aboriginal people were not allowed in white town areas after dark, could not enter shops (there was often a window at the back of shops where Indigenous people were served), were forbidden to consume the same food or drinks at white establishments, and were prohibited from consuming liquor amongst other restrictions. These policies (discussed in more detail in the next section) impact significantly on the narratives that inform everyday Australian understanding of race, nation and identities.

The historical and policy literature underpins the small field of empirical inquiry that employs in-depth interviews with Australians to investigate the social construction of race and white settler identities in Australia (Dewhirst 2008; Hage 2002; Imtoul 2007b; James 2004; Mansouri, et al. 2009; Moran 2009; Moreton-Robinson 2000b; Riggs and Augoustinos 2004; Schech and Haggis 2004; Tascon 2008; Wadham 2004). This section will now discuss Aboriginal policy and immigration policy in Australia.

1.2.1 Aboriginal policy

State governments adopted Assimilation as official policy in 1937 at a conference convened by the federal government (Lippmann 1994, p.22). The goal was for the Government and white Australian population to prepare the Indigenous people to become white. Additionally, a system of miscegenation to breed out any Indigenous ‘blood’ was also practiced in Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America (Armitage 1995). White property owners used Aboriginal people for labour, such as domestic servants, childcare, stock work and station work. The policy was further clarified in 1951, where Aboriginal people became wards of the State with the expectation to attain the same manner of living as all other Australians at the expense of any association with Aboriginal people including their family (Lippmann 1994, pp.25-6). Government officials removed Aboriginal children who had one Indigenous and one European parent. These children are ‘The Stolen Generation’ and have been the subject of inquiries such as the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody 1987-91 (Commission, et al. 1991), Stolen Generations Inquiry 1995-7 (Wilson 1997) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women’s Task Force on Violence (Robertson and DATSIPD 2000). The Protection period and the Assimilation era disenfranchised Indigenous people from their land, economy, language, culture, spirituality and family connections. Both the protectionist and assimilationist policies were colonising policies.

In brief, the eventual dismantling of the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* occurred during the 1970s, with the establishment of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*² and

² In 2007 this act was altered by the Howard Liberal Government, with support of the opposition, to allow the federal government to enact the ‘NT intervention’. This has continued under the new Rudd Labor Government see **Altman, J. and Hinkson, M.** (eds) 2007 *Coercive reconciliation: Stabilise,*

the commencement of multiculturalism as the official state policy (see Jupp 2003). The 1967 Referendum to legislate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to including them in the Australian census, the cessation of removing Aboriginal children of mixed-race parentage through the assimilation policies and the *Northern Territory Land Rights Act 1971* are also key political milestones in re-shaping Australia's nationhood. After the 1967 referendum, the assimilation policy was formally abolished in 1971 (Lippmann 1994). After decades of campaigning and resistance by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, the political movement for rights for Indigenous peoples in Australia gained more support (Hollinsworth 2003, p.165). An era of integration with the mainstream population commenced followed by policies of self-determination. The Government introduced corresponding changes to discriminatory laws on migration, which emerged into State multiculturalism (discussed in more detail in 1.2.2).

Reconciliation

The Australian Parliament set the nation upon a 10 year dialogue between Indigenous peoples and nominal mainstream society in 1991 through a bipartisan Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation that aimed to address the colonial wounds of the nation though never to the point of Treaty (Dodson 2007). During this decade, there were a number of land rights cases of national significance including 'The Mabo Decision', the 'Hindmarsh Island' case and the 'Wik' decision. Each case gave the opportunity for meaningful gains in Indigenous relations. Government decisions also thwarted each case to block or alter court findings, and to put limitations upon Indigenous peoples being able to actualise the ruling. The following discussion will

outline the limitations placed on each case. Firstly, The Mabo Decision consists of two judgements (1988 and 1992) in the High Court of Australia concerning the Meriam people of the Murray Islands in the Torres Strait. This case finally overturned the doctrine of *terra nullius* (or land belonging to no one) by ruling that Native Title is not automatically extinguished by the Crown unless specified in legislation. The Queensland Government, then led by Premier Bjelke-Petersen (1968-1987) subsequently attempted to legislate the abolishment of native title retrospectively but was overruled by the High Court of Australia (Hollinsworth 2003, pp.208-9). For the first time in Australia, Common law recognised Aboriginal customary rights to land rather than having to be legislated through parliament. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land rights claims and/or claims for compensation became legal rights (Hollinsworth 2003, p.208).

The Hindmarsh Island (or Kumarangk) case followed the landmark judgement of the Mabo case. It consisted of court cases and a Royal Commission. The Ngarrindjeri people call the Hindmarsh Island Kumarangk, which is located on Ngarrindjeri country in the South East of South Australia to the west of the Coorong Lakes. Like the Mabo cases, the Kumarangk affair spans over a decade (Simons 2003). In brief, developers wished to replace a ferry with a bridge that a group of Ngarrindjeri women said would desecrate a women's sacred site. The developers, media, barristers, some staff of the Adelaide Museum, some archaeologists and other Ngarrinjderi women, accused the group of Ngarrindjeri women of fabricating 'secret women's business'. Their allegation was based upon the Ngarrindjeri women's refusal to provide evidence in an open court and because their knowledge was not recorded in the extensive documentation of Ngarrindjeri culture (Bell 1998, p.168).

The accusations cast against the women were primarily about them not being authentic, and of not holding cultural knowledge because they did not speak their language fluently and the district had been ‘settled’ for more than a hundred years (Curthoys, et al. 2008, p.168). Two out of three court cases found in favour of the Ngarrindjeri claimants, but the developers built the bridge in the meantime.

During this time, there was a strong opposition to Indigenous native title in the popular media. Miners, pastoral lease holders and those residing in rural towns demanded ‘certainty’ about the future, even claiming that freehold properties in rural towns were at risk of native title claims, which was not the case (Hollinsworth 2003, p.221). The Wik and Thayorre people from the Cape York Peninsula, north Queensland, took their case to the High Court of Australia. Three of the four Justices found that pastoral leases do not grant exclusive possession to the leaseholder. They found that pastoral leases in Queensland did not intend to extinguish native title, which is part of the common law and that native title rights can co-exist with pastoral leases and finally that where there is a conflict of interests then the interest of the pastoralist will prevail (Hollinsworth 2003, p.221). After the High Court ruling, the federal Liberal Government, under Prime Minister John Howard, passed the ‘10 Point Plan’ legislation to further limit Indigenous peoples’ right to negotiate on matters concerning their Country (Behrendt 2008, p.x). Pauline Hanson espoused common myths about Indigenous Australians receiving special treatment and linked these myths to the Howard Government rhetoric. She articulated a concern that Australia will be ‘swamped by Asians’ in her maiden speech in Australian federal

parliament (Hanson 10 September 1996, paragraph 19)³. Her views received extensive media coverage. This section will now turn to consider immigration policy.

1.2.2 Immigration policy

Similarly, the then Federal Government placed limitations on the rights of asylum seekers in Australia. In August 2001, a Norwegian freighter, the *MV Tampa*, responded to a vessel in distress carrying 433 asylum seekers within Australian waters. The Australian government refused the *Tampa's* request to land the asylum seekers on Christmas Island and the term “*Tampa* incident” refers to this event. After eight days of political wrestling, the asylum seekers (predominantly Afghan) were transferred to Nauru via an Australian navy vessel, along with another 200 (mainly Iraqi) asylum seekers from another boat (Hatton and Lim 2005). This became a part of the “Pacific Solution”. Over the following four weeks there were a further six boats, some of which the government ordered the Australian navy to push back out to sea. One of these vessels, the *Siev X* sank, killing 353 people (Perera 2004; Taylor and Forbes 2002). The then Prime Minister, John Howard, claimed that the asylum seekers had thrown their children overboard in an attempt to pressure the government to allow them onto Australian shores. For some time the government did not inform the Australian public that the boat was sinking, and the asylum seekers were trying to safely pass children and babies from the doomed vessel to people already in the water. The media called this event “the children overboard” incident. These incidents and the narratives about terrorists and national security were intimately tied to the

³ This thesis applies the Author-date system for citation and referencing. Where the citation is from a web page or online source that does not have identifiable page numbers, the paragraph number that the citation refers to will be noted to make it more accessible to the reader.

Howard government's election campaign to be returned to office in the federal election of 2001 (Osuri and Banerjee 2004) .

“Mandatory detention” was legislated in May 1992 by the Keating Labor government in order to secure the national borders against so-called “illegal immigrants”. The government altered the legislation in 1994 to allow detention for an unspecified time for those deemed to have arrived in Australia without prior authorisation. One person was detained for seven years (Amnesty International 2009). Key events that shaped the Australian national imagery about asylum seekers included the much-publicised incidents of violence and self-harm by asylum seekers held in mandatory detention centres including acts of protest like “lip sewing”. There were several incidents in detention centres from 2000-2002 (Hoenig 2009). Two of the detention centres were located in South Australia. The government closed one of the detention centres, Woomera Detention Centre, in April 2003 due to public pressure regarding the inhumane conditions. The Centre detained 400 “unauthorised arrivals” when it was built originally. At the time of its closure, the centre imprisoned 1500 people, including children. The refugee tribunal found eighty percent of detained asylum seekers were genuine refugees. The centre was closed just four weeks prior to the interviews in this thesis (Whitmont 2003). The Baxter Detention Centre was opened in 2002, and closed in 2007 (Harmsen 2007). Chapter 5 will discuss the practice of detention in more detail. There was a public backlash to both Indigenous rights and asylum seekers in the 1990's in Australia. Ms Pauline Hanson's maiden speech to the federal parliament encapsulates the key narratives of the opposition to Indigenous people and other minority groups (see Hanson 10 September 1996), and is an example of the way that minority non-white groups and

Indigenous Australians are simultaneously racialised. As argued in section 1.1 the simultaneous racialisation has different implications for non-Indigenous minority groups and Indigenous people in Australia due to Indigenous people's status as First Nations Peoples with an incommensurable connection to land (see especially Haggis 2004b; Moreton-Robinson 2003b).

The decade under the Howard Liberal Government (1996-2007) witnessed a move to 'mainstream' Indigenous and multicultural affairs. Government policy re-branded the expression 'reconciliation' as 'practical reconciliation', which re-focused public attention away from land and treaty to health and housing and became part of a suite of 'Aboriginal problems'. The effect was to shift public debate from Indigenous rights, based on land, to advocating for social improvements in areas such as health, housing and education. Health and housing were always Federal Government responsibilities and not within the terms of reference for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). Yet, the former Liberal Government used the issues of health and housing as the rationale to dismantle Indigenous structures such as ATSIC that advised Government or provided services to Indigenous peoples and was indicative of the 'self-determination' policy era.

This necessarily brief historical overview of Aboriginal and refugee policy contextualises the following analysis of the development of race theories that underpinned the policies hereunto discussed. The next section will review the literature on the development of theories of racial hierarchy and superiority that underpin the social construction of race. This will provide the conceptual foundation for the four key points that this thesis argues. First, the thesis argues that the

Australian nation is a racialised entity. Second, that multiculturalism is a framework to deal with the difference that obscures race. Third, that white Australian discourse of the nation and identity are limited in their ability to be located in Indigenous sovereignty. Fourth, that discourses rarely address multiculturalism and Indigenous sovereignty in a coherent and simultaneous manner resulted in what the researcher terms 'the great divide', after the expansive ranges that run north south in Australia called 'The Great Dividing Range'.

1.2.3 Ideology

The first phase of analysis is to distinguish between cultural superiority and racial superiority. Many people believe that their own cultural way of doing things is better, or preferable to that of others. The critical literature calls this prejudice ethnocentrism, or cultural superiority. At the start of the invasion of Australia, the notion of some early settlers who were humanitarians or philanthropists in Australia was often one of cultural superiority. This group believed that Aboriginal people would be equal to the British if given the same education (Broome 1994, p.87). It is different to racial superiority, or racism, in that racial superiority is a prejudice where a people believe that they are physically and racially different from another group and where they claim that the inferiority of that group is caused by nature of that group. This more extreme form of prejudice results in dominance of one group over another and has been closely linked with European colonial projects (Broome 1994, p.87) despite the British Government request for fair dealings with any inhabitants of the new lands (Bourke 1994, p.39).

In Western settings, the meaning of the term 'race' has changed significantly throughout its relatively short history. In the 1500-1700's the term was often used in a general sense to cluster groups of people with a similar trait whether that be class or religion, but it was not used to segregate or divide humanity. During the 1600s, the term began to be used to classify people into different groups according to biological or cultural differences that were then placed in a hierarchy (McConnochie, et al. 1988, p.10). Simultaneously European nationalism emerged, where political leaders used group affiliation, like Anglo-Saxons in Britain, to convince people that they had a common ancestry and common destiny (McConnochie, et al. 1988, p.9). Scientists and politicians eventually developed racial typologies into scientific theories. This approach divided humanity into four types: Europeans, Africans, Asiatics and American Indians in a hierarchy with Europeans placed at the top (Hollinsworth 2003, p.36).

Academics and social commentators developed the discourse of racism and various hypotheses to explain and organise difference in the hierarchy called "the great chain of being" (Goldberg 1990b, p.300). There were two main hypotheses to explain the existence of the racial groups. The first was monogenesis that linked all of existence in a chain from the lesser animals, through the races of humanity with Caucasians the closest to the angels and to god. The other dominant ideology was of polygenesis. It argued the racial groups were of different origins, that Caucasians were human, and the other groups belonged to different species altogether (Anderson and Perrin 2008; Hollinsworth 2003, p.36). The concepts of racial hierarchy consolidated to transform policy in Australia (Reynolds 1987, pp.10-11). The view of many settlers and squatters was that Aboriginal Australians were an inferior race closer to animal

(Reynolds 1987, pp.104,106). Thus, the settlers justified the dispossession of Aboriginal peoples from their land with the doctrine of scientific racism.

In response to these racial theories a literature (discussed below) emerged that commented on these theories by arguing that discourses socially construct race rather than being a natural phenomenon. Throughout the history of European imperialism and colonialism, the colonised 'Other' has had a critique of the coloniser. In the French colony of Algeria, Frantz Fanon (1967) wrote *Black Skin White Masks* to disentangle the web of internalised colonialism, referred to by contemporary Indigenous Australian academic Irabinna Rigney as 'maggots in the mind' (2008). Throughout colonial histories, Indigenous peoples have both challenged and observed the assumption of supremacy (Minh-ha 1992) and demand to sovereignty by European invaders. Likewise, 'native' peoples throughout the colonies in Africa, India, South Americas, South East and Eastern Asia as well as Black Africans taken as slaves to the Americas, observed the behaviour, mannerisms and assumption of power by their white owners (Bay 1993). People positioned as the 'Black Other', such as W.E.B. Du Bois from 1898 (see especially 1969 originally printed 1920) and James Baldwin (1955) observed and critiqued white people's behaviour (Morrison 1993) and societies. This also means that people who are socially, politically and geographically located in the invader/settler population learn and develop ways of thinking, behaving and enacting their racialised position.

hooks⁴ argues that the presumption of racial superiority meant that many white people did not see that they were being observed (hooks 1992). It was argued that

⁴ bell hooks uses lower case for her publishing name. This is not a grammatical error.

the assumption of centrality and white supremacy was so central to white people that they thought they were the only ones to develop epistemologies and that their ontology was the only means of being in the world (Moreton-Robinson 2004b). The result is colonial relationships based on white supremacy and an inability to see or know their self except in dominant relation to the Native Other (Mohanty 1988). These were broad generalisations to critique the process of racialisation from the subject position of colonised 'other', for the status of dominance and white supremacy was also challenged by those within that class, however.

At the same time that Fanon (1967, first published in French in 1952) was deconstructing the colonial thinking of the Black African from the position of the colonised, Barthes (1957) developed an argument from the status of coloniser/settler that their thinking also required 'de-colonising' because the position of coloniser had also been internalised. Contributions such as Ruth Frankenberg's (1993) *White Women, Race Matters* discussed in more detail in the final component of this section are pivotal to the burgeoning field of enquiry into the social construction of whiteness. Feminist debates and gender studies produced a large amount of work in critical race and whiteness studies (Bonnett 1993; Bulbeck 1998; Burton 1994; Haggis and Schech 2000; hooks 1981; Huggins 1998; Lorde 1984; Moreton-Robinson 2000a; Morrison 1993; Narayan 1997; Nicoll 2000; Riggs 2006). In Australia, Pat O'Shane, an Indigenous feminist and academic, wrote a landmark article that has been under-rated in critical race and whiteness studies (Lake 2005). In this article, O'Shane (1976) outlines the racism that she argues is inherent within white, middle class Western feminist theory and debates in Australia, drawing

attention to the hegemonic relationships between white Western women (including feminists) and Indigenous women in building the white invader nation of Australia.

The notion of race as biological fact has been disproved for several decades (Gilroy 2000). While there are Australian physical scientists (Andrew Fraser, 2005), social scientists (Michael Duffy, 2005) and historians (Geoffrey Blainey and Keith Windshuttle) who continue to use the term as if it were a natural phenomenon with biological substance, their position is a widely disputed minority. Public discourses that link noticeable difference such as skin, hair and eye colour as racial characteristics with specific moral, cultural or behavioural characteristics do, however, remain (Hollinsworth 1998, 30). As argued in Chapter 2, these discourses often link racialised identity to the nation.

The theoretical underpinning of this thesis understands the social construction of race in the manner explained by David Goldberg:

...race is not a static concept with a single sedimented meaning. Its power has consisted in its adaptive capacity to define population groups and, by extension, social agents as self and other at various historical moments...Race serves to naturalize the groupings it identifies in its own name. In articulating as natural ways of being in the world and the institutional structures through and in which such ways of being are expressed, race both established and rationalizes the order of difference as a law of nature (1990a, p.30).

Goldberg's concept of race as an organising concept, or discourse, provides a valuable premise for this thesis. It explains how the meaning of race can change over time. Therefore, the power afforded to differently racialised groups may increase or decrease, and access to the power associated with the hegemonic group can also change in different settings and periods. The central problem is that institutions and national narratives use race to explain the social order it dictates as a normal

occurrence. Goldberg's critique of race as an organising concept enables a critical examination of the power or oppression ascribed to differently raced groups of people. It also allows an investigation to the power and oppression within the same racial group, such as the ethnographic investigation of poor whites in Detroit, by John Hartigan Jnr (2005; 1997b).

This thesis will refer to two dominant positions within the field of critical race theory. The literature agrees that race is socially constructed. The primary difference is how best to approach 'race' if 'race' does not exist. The critical race literature agrees that on the one hand race does not exist in a biological sense and on the other hand that it does exist in the way that Goldberg describes it. One approach is to move beyond race (examples include Gilroy 2000; Ware 1992; Ware and Back 2002). These critics argue that the best direction from here is to move beyond race, while others hold that the term should be abandoned (such as Green & Carter, 1988 and Miles, 1989). Other approaches include being a 'race traitor' (Ignatiev and John 1996), or to refute the embodiment of race in favour of drawing attention to Western suprematism, such as Alistair Bonnett (2005). While I support the argument that race is manufactured, I agree with Fuss (1989), Frankenberg (1993), Hollinsworth (2003), Moreton-Robinson (1999), Nicoll (2000) and Haggis (2007) that the social construction of race needs to be named in order to address the very real and lived consequences for those who are oppressed and privileged through its markers.

In her landmark feminist research on white women and matters of race, Ruth Frankenberg argues that whiteness is socially constructed and a part of white women's everyday life experiences, albeit often unseen and unrecognised:

...“the social construction of whiteness” asserts that there are locations, discourses, and material relations to which the term “whiteness” applies... whiteness refers to a set of locations that are historically, socially, politically, and culturally produced and, moreover, are intrinsically linked to unfolding relations of domination. Naming “whiteness” displaces it from the unmarked, unnamed status that is itself an effect of its dominance. Among the effects on white people both of race privilege and of the dominance of whiteness are their seeming normativity, their structured invisibility. This normativity, however, is unevenly effective...To speak of whiteness is, I think, to assign *everyone* a place in the relations of racism. It is to emphasize that dealing with racism is not merely an option for white people – that, rather, racism shapes white people’s lives and identities in a way that is inseparable from other facets of daily life (Frankenberg 1993, p.6).

Frankenberg argues that race shapes white people’s lives, and she applies “the cumulative name” of that shape “as whiteness” (1993, p.1). Frankenberg provides a framework through which to identify and analyse whiteness. She argues that whiteness is “a location of structural advantage” that plays out as racial privilege. By bringing the spotlight to whiteness as a structural location, that grants racial privilege the hunt for the ‘evil racist’ is undone to focus on white privilege as an institutional advantage. Secondly, she proposes that whiteness is a position or standpoint from which white people understand them, other people and society. This enables a critique of white identity and worldview, as the lens through which white people understand their world. Proponents of this view present it as ‘common sense’ or the normal view of the world, thus prioritising white view points as the correct, or civilised or normal viewpoint. Finally, she argues that whiteness “refers to a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed” (Frankenberg 1993, p.1). The set of cultural practices includes white knowledge, white ways of being in the world and white ways of relating to each other. This thesis argues that these cultural practices are unmarked and unnamed by white people. At the same time, these practices are visible to and contested by those positioned as ‘other’. White people

may claim to not be racist, but it is harder to claim that you are not white (Austin 2001).

Therefore, this thesis applies the term 'white' and 'whiteness' to refer to its social construction and not any biological or genetic 'reality'. In relation to Austin's point above, the liberal tendency to make racism pathological equally means that white people can deny being racist if they use non-discriminatory language. The focus on whiteness allows a critique of the privilege that its structural location brings all white people at the expense of non-white people. Frankenberg's (Frankenberg 1993) critique of whiteness underpins this thesis. It will be used in conjunction with John Hartigan Jr's (Hartigan 2005) research that *locates* social constructions of whiteness in Detroit, thus extending Frankenberg's observation above that the normativity of whiteness is unevenly experienced by white people (i.e. depending on class, gender, culture, religion, age, abilities, education, geographical location et cetera). In particular, by locating whiteness, Hartigan argues that the social constructions of whiteness vary depending on one's subject position. That is, the social construction of whiteness in Detroit differs to that experienced in New York or Los Angeles or London, or indeed the three rural locations in Australia where the empirical research for this study took place. This is because the specificities of whiteness are socially, historically, culturally and politically produced and therefore its inclusion/exclusion and meaning change over time and is different depending on each locality's social, cultural and political history. Whiteness also contains a hierarchy within it that mediates through gender, class, sexuality, ability, culture and citizenship to name a few.

The main body of critical literature on nation and nationalism in Australia focuses on cultural representations of nation and national identity in cultural artefacts such as literature, film and the media (see Ang 2001; Nicoll 2001; Perera 2005; Riggs 2006). There is also a growing body of critical writing in the field of law, especially with regards to Indigenous sovereignty, native title and land rights and the sovereignty of the Australian nation state (Giannacopoulos 2006b; Watson 1997). Recent literature has begun to address the gap in the critique of the links between race, nation (and nationalism) and national identity in empirical research.

The following discussion will outline the key empirical research in Australia. Ghassan Hage (1998) interviewed ordinary people who identified as white Australian in addition to his analysis of public discourse through media, talk back radio, letters to the editor in Australian newspapers, graffiti, novels and autobiographies. His main contribution is to examine the way that white Australians take on a role of governance as the 'white worriers' of the good of the nation. They imagine themselves to be in charge of the white nation and as responsible for its protection. This means that white Australians express anxiety in a form of nationalism that plays out in their concern about [white] Australia. Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2000b) examined construction of whiteness in the subjectivities of white feminists in Australia through in-depth interviews and observation. She found that her white academic feminist participants lived racially structured lives with limited connections with women from minority groups. Further, her participants generally had limited awareness of their structural location of whiteness and the privilege that it grants them. The result was one of complicity with whiteness and thus the ongoing colonisation of Indigenous women, men and children.

Martha Augustinos and Damien Riggs (2003; 2004) critiqued the narratives of race with focus group discussions on contemporary social issues. They found that their participants were generally unaware of the privileges granted to them by whiteness. They saw their experience as normal and not racialised. This work is useful to examine the hegemonic position of white narratives held by many white Australians. Susanne Schech and Jane Haggis (2004) have investigated the way that British migrants chart their belonging in Australia as an extension of Britain. This study found that the core cultural values within white Australia are British-based to the extent that British citizens living in Australia do not feel the need to become naturalised in order to belong in Australia. These participants see the hegemonic Australian culture as an extension of British values. This study highlights the ongoing centrality of British values as the core values of Australian white identity. Their earlier work (Schech and Haggis 2000; 2001) found that their respondents struggled to bring their awareness of difference in their everyday life to a picture of a national community. They argue that this is because “the national community is constructed in terms of whiteness” while at the same time “claiming to be non-racial” (Schech and Haggis 2000, p.143). This work presents the issue of the nation as a racialised construct guised in terms of whiteness where everyday Australians lack a critical vocabulary of race.

Ben Wadham (2004) used ethnographic interviews to find out what white men wanted in their articulation of Aboriginal Reconciliation in Australia. This study provides a useful example of white Australian masculinity in articulations of Aboriginal Reconciliation in Australia. Chilla Bulbeck (2004) explored the meaning

of whiteness with young people in South Australia through in-depth interviews. She found that the occupation of their parents and the class position of the suburb that young people lived in influenced their views toward refugees and asylum seekers. Interestingly, young people with one parent with a higher education were the most likely to oppose refugee access to Australia. Alia Imtoul (2007b) demonstrated that Australian identities are constructed as white in public discourse through the inclusion/exclusion experienced by young Muslim Australian women in South Australia. She found that the Christian-focus of the hegemonic white Australian identity meant that other people do not see Australian young Muslim women as Australians. Yet, within their own identity construction, her participants prioritised their Muslim identity and did not express confusion about seeing themselves as Australian. Tascon (2008) analysed the narratives of whiteness and national identity through in-depth interviews with 'ordinary' Australians who volunteered to assist asylum seekers, and those granted refugee status, in Australia. She found that the volunteers were predominantly white Australian middle class women who had been unaware of their privileged location. Her participants were shocked to discover their location of privilege at the expense of others. Their blindness to race gave them complicity with whiteness and the privileges it bestows. Anthony Moran (2009) conducted in-depth interviews to examine what Australians talk about when they discuss Aboriginal people and what is commonly called 'Indigenous issues'. He argues that whiteness is limited as an analytical lens because it does not allow for inclusiveness within Australian nationalism while at the same time he found that his participants maintained a denial of Indigenous sovereignty and land rights. This thesis agrees with Moran's findings of denial, but contends that whiteness is the reason for denial.

Critical cultural research and sociological literatures tend to focus on a textual analysis of representations of public discourses in the media and in Government policy. Empirical studies that seek to understand the national discourses as experienced, lived by Australians are smaller in number, and are an area of inquiry that is gathering interest as outlined on pp.26-28 of this introduction. The critical literature agrees that whiteness remains the hegemonic identity in Australia. Within the hegemonic identity, there is a continuation of British cultural values, often presented as ‘Anglo-Saxon’, that permeates white Australian core identities. The hegemonic Australian identity grants a location of structural privilege, which is invisible and unbeknown to most white Australians. While the structural location of whiteness is not fixed, and is therefore contestable, it is not so easy to “side step the privilege that it brings” (Schech and Haggis 2000). Thus, this thesis draws upon an empirical study to contribute a critical reading of race in white Australian identities in the context of Australia’s colonial history.

1.3 Thesis structure

The introductory chapter has contextualised the ground from which the objectives and fundamental questions for this study have germinated. That is, how everyday people who identify as white Australian understand race and identity. The next two chapters will provide the background key literature on firstly ‘nation’ and second ‘cultural identity’ that is required to respond to the key questions and thesis objectives. The chapter on nation provides a general discussion of the debates on nation building and the social construction of nations as abstract communities. The vision of a unified modern nation is problematic for the sheer reason that

contemporary nations in a globalised world are created out of diversity, and in Australia, on the territory, seas and skies of prior occupants who claim sovereignty. As such, the thesis applies a critical lens to multiculturalism and its practice to deal with difference when debating the nation. This context provides the background against which to discuss current theories of critical race. It examines the role of racialisation in nation-building to contextualise Australia in its social and political history as an invader society (Pratt 2003, pp.11-12).

Chapter three reviews the critical race literature on cultural identity formation. This chapter will provide the theoretical foundation upon which to racialise cultural identities in Australia. This will reveal the way that race operates to privilege and oppress its subjects. It will also enable the analysis of whiteness as a system of power that provides the white Australian subject position its location of privilege. As a system of power, whiteness was built upon Australia's colonial beginnings, and thus raced cultural identities place the post-colonial Australian subject into a relationship with Indigenous people that maintains everyday relations-of-ruling. White Australian stories about Australia place whiteness as normative and place this subject position as normal, not as a position of privilege. The white Australian subject position is in context when analysed in relation to Indigenous sovereignty.

Chapter four provides a description of the applied methods for collecting and analysing the data for the research and their use in the study. It also outlines the methodology and framework that the study applies. The methodology predominantly draws upon grounded theory to enable the research and corresponding analysis to

respond to issues and themes that emerge from the interviews. Thus, the interview material shapes the discussion in the analysis chapters.

The thesis uses the interviews to drive the discussion and analysis in chapter five to seven. Chapter five seeks to empiricise the complexities of everyday white Australian discourses about ‘multiculturalism’, ‘refugees’ and ‘national identity’. It lays out how the discourses of multiculturalism obscure race and protect white possession in everyday speech. It is difficult for everyday white Australians to negotiate racialised difference and positions of racialised privilege because of the lack of a critical vocabulary on race.

Similarly, Chapter six turns to consider Australian identities in the context of Indigenous sovereignty. It does this through discussing Australian history, to determine whether white Australians gain their knowledge of Indigenous people through white Australian and hegemonic narratives that tell the story of Australia’s discovery through British exploration and the subsequent settlement. Alternatively, do participants draw upon Indigenous knowledge regarding Australia’s history? The chapter is interested in the knowledge system that participants draw upon and their values on Indigenous land rights. The analysis finds that most of the participants relied on white Australian history and public discourses for their knowledge about Australia’s past. Further, most participants did not think that Indigenous land rights, or Mabo in particular, had any impact on white Australian identities. The chapter argues that white patriarchal sovereignty limits the ability of white Australians to locate their Australian identity in-relationship-with Indigenous sovereignty (Moreton-Robinson 2004a).

Chapter seven also draws upon the interviews to extend the concepts that were developed in chapter five and chapter six into an examination of what the researcher has termed ‘the great divide’ between discourses of multiculturalism and discourses of Indigenous sovereignty in configurations of Australian identity. It analyses the participants’ understanding of their own racialised identity, to explore the connections between race and nation in white Australian identities. In order to comment on the ongoing relations-of-ruling as well as counter-narratives, it examines the discourses that the interviewees draw upon to understand Indigenous land rights. The chapter then turns to the future to see if interviewees have a vision of what future relationships between Australia and Indigenous people might be like.

To synthesise the main findings in the study, chapter eight concludes that most attempts to negotiate difference based on multicultural discourses of tolerance do not address the relations-of-ruling in racialised subjectivities. This study does not seek to stimulate debates to move ‘beyond a white Australia’, which side-steps relations of ruling. The concept of relations of ruling enables a critique of power relationships between subjectivities in everyday life. In this study, ‘relations-of-ruling’ applies to the multiple subject positions (i.e. race, gender, class, education levels, abilities, age, religion, culture, nationality etc) and brings a focus to the ways that race both privileges and oppresses in Australia within a context of colonialism. Rather, this study aims to contribute to the dialogue about the social construction of multiple configurations of Australian identity as together-in-difference (Haggis 2004b) in the context of Indigenous sovereignty. The concept of ‘together-in-difference’ is premised on diversity. It includes the diverse histories of migrancy and concepts of

sovereignty and belonging to Australia that may be incommensurable, in pursuit of a non-colonial present and future. More studies that are empirical are required to test these concepts with the lived experiences of people in other towns, states and cities from diverse subjectivities in Australia.

2. Debating the nation: dealing with difference and incommensurability

...Indigenous sovereignty is never positioned as central to shaping the terms and conditions of the very making of the nation, nor is its continuing refusal understood as shaping a politics based on white anxiety of dispossession...white colonial paranoia, injury and worrying are inextricably tied to an anxiety about dispossession which is harnessed to instil hope through possessive investments in patriarchal white sovereignty. This is how the unfinished business of Indigenous sovereignty continues to shape and disturb the security of patriarchal white sovereignty (Moreton-Robinson 2007, pp.101-2).

2.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is going to outline the literature on the social construction of the contemporary nation in order to comment on the racialised discourses that produce a white Australia. It will expand upon and further contextualise the research question outlined in Chapter one, p.8: How do rural people who identify as white Australian think about race and Australian identity in the context of Indigenous sovereignty in their everyday lives? Part of the answer to this question requires an exploration of the social construction of the nation. Until the past few decades the modern nation has remained “the one most untheorized [sic] concept of the modern world” (Chatterjee 1993, p.xi), and is therefore the centre of this chapter. The Australian nation imagines itself to be sovereign and remains invested in the narrative and material power of colonisation. The key point is to consider how the nation may stop imagining itself as sovereign and hence divest itself of the power of ‘patriarchal white sovereignty’ (Moreton-Robinson 2004a, paragraph 5). First, this

section reviews the concept of the nation as an abstract community in order to theorise the nation as a social construction that has a social and political history, and imagines itself as sovereign. Then, the chapter sets out three key areas for addressing the issue of racialisation in the process of creating a nation out of a federation of invader colonies in order to meet the research objectives. The first objective poses the problem of the Australian nation as a racialised entity. The second objective considers whether the framework of multiculturalism obscures race in its attempt to deal with diversity. Third, in response to the quote above by Moreton-Robinson (2007, pp101-102), modern Western nations are conceived as invader societies in the context of Indigenous sovereignty. Subsequent chapters discuss these issues in detail and therefore build the conceptual framework for the thesis.

This thesis argues that it is not understood that white sovereignty overwrite of Indigenous sovereignty fails to deal with the continuing existence of Indigenous sovereignty. As Chapter one discussed, three key public debates in Australia drew attention to race throughout the 1990s and early 2000s (see p.22). They highlighted the disparity in contemporary relationships between the racialised subject positions of people living in Australia. Firstly, native title and land rights cases, particularly Mabo, Wik, Yorta Yorta and the Hindmarsh Island Bridge drew a large amount of national media coverage. Second, Pauline Hanson and a backlash against diversity and minority lobby groups, labelled 'interest groups', particularly those marked by race (discussed on p. 24). Third, Aboriginal reconciliation, including whether there should be a national apology to the stolen generations. Because of these debates, it is unlikely that people in Australia are unaware of white spaces as juxtaposed against Black spaces and this is analysed in detail in Chapter 7.2, from p.249. Further, these

debates grew out of multiple histories of migration and colonisation and had a prominent impact on the ongoing public narration of the nation. Thus, this chapter argues four key points: First, section 2.2 argues that the social construction of the nation occurs through discourses and narratives of itself. Second, section 2.3 reviews the discourses that construct the nation as a racialised entity. Third, section 2.4 contends that the discourse of multiculturalism obscures racialised difference. Finally, section 2.5 argues that the nation should be constructed in-relation-with Indigenous sovereignty.

2.2 Constructing and re-producing the nation

This section discusses the key literature about the nation as an abstract community that is socially constructed with a social and political history and that imagines it is sovereign (Anderson 1991; Breuilly 1985; Gellner 1983; James 1996; Moran 2005; Poole 1999; Smith 1991). Of course, the State holds sovereignty. Of interest to this thesis is that the literature often situates the liberal position as *a priori* of a political order that is based on the nation (Poole 1999, pp.3-4). Liberalism and nationalism are two distinct political projects of equal importance. A critique of liberalism is a thread throughout this chapter. The doctrines of both liberalism and nationalism germinated from Western Europe, the European colonies and the Americas in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to make sense of and to organise Western social and political life. Both inform institutional and social structures. Further, liberalism and nationalism have historical circumstances that are practiced from social contexts.

Nations are abstract communities because there is membership to an idea of a national entity. One way is to gain citizenship of the nation state. To formally gain citizenship in Australia people must be either born in Australia, or become naturalised (Immigration 2010). However, there are nations of people without a state, and there are states with many nationalities that reside within them. Thus diversity, particularly in the case of invader societies such as Australia, is constantly present. If a nation is defined by citizenship to a state, which is one element of belonging to the Australian nation, do those citizens have to share, for example, the same culture, language and religion. Because Australia is diverse, it is not conducive to produce a nation that requires its subjects to be the same as Australians. Nor does a model of the nation that requires sameness in order to function represent the experience of its diverse members. What does this mean if there is a majority cultural group that has fashioned the nation in its own likeness?

While the nation and state have emerged as separate entities, the sentiment of nationalism attempts to link them together. Gellner's landmark work on the nation as constructed out of nationalist ideals has received little critical engagement in the past. He argues, "nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent." He goes on to say that:

Nationalism as a sentiment, or as a movement, can best be defined in terms of this principle. Nationalist *sentiment* is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment. A nationalist *movement* is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind (Gellner 1983, p.1).

Thus, according to Gellner's argument, where there is no state, there can be no nationalism because it is not possible for there to be congruence between the political unit and the nation. Further, not all societies have a state, and thus these stateless

societies cannot have nationalisms either, except where there is a conflict with a state. This principle leads to the condition that not all states have nationalism either, if there is congruency between the nation and the state boundaries (Gellner 1983, pp.4-5). Thus, Gellner's interpretation of the nation and the state suggests that the nation is not universal despite widespread assumption that a nation is necessary for social and political order. While the sentiment of nationalism, in Gellner's argument, holds that the nation and the state are destined partners, they have emerged as separate contingencies.

Gellner offers a definition for the modern concepts of nation:

1. Two men [sic] are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turn means a system of ideas and signs and association and ways of behaving and communicating.
2. Two men [sic] are of the same nation if and only if they *recognize* each other as belonging to the same nation. In other words, *nations maketh the man*; nations are the artefacts of men's convictions and loyalties and solidarities. A mere category of persons (say, occupants of a given territory, or speakers of a given language, for example) becomes a nation when the members of the category firmly recognize certain mutual rights and duties to each other in virtue of their shared membership of it. It is the recognition of each other as fellows of this kind which turns them into a nation, and not the other shared attributes, whatever they might be, which separate that category from non-members (Gellner 1983, p.7).

This model is useful as guide, yet it is problematic for defining the experiences of many minority groups in the Australian nation. This definition requires that nationals must share the same culture and recognise each other as belonging to the same nation. Events such as the Cronulla Riots reveal the complexity experienced for cultural minorities in Australia who are also raced as 'Other' (Poynting 2006; Unknown 2006). As Poynting and others have argued, Anglo Australian participants represent a hegemonic understanding of who is Australian to exclude groups

categorised as 'Middle Eastern Other' (discussed further in section 2.4 and chapter five).

The nation is an abstract community that is constructed and reproduced through particular discourses. In this process, nationalism invents nations (Gellner 1964, p.168). Gellner's work paves the way for critical studies of the nation and nationalism as a social entity and highlights the importance of the relationship between groups of people and the nation with which they identify. Critics such as Poole (1999) and Conversi (2007) argue that Gellner's concept of narrating the nation is a limitation to his argument. They contend that it places the lived experience of minority groups oppressed by the sheer fabric of the state into the realm of the unreal. Gellner's approach has been used by some authors to distinguish between 'good' forms of nationalism, which support or are at least conducive to liberal democratic principals, and 'bad' forms of 'ethnic' nationalism, which were located as distinct from the good and civic nationalism (Poole 1999, p.3).

Another criticism is that Gellner focuses on the role of industrialisation and modernity in forming nationalism and completely neglects the role of militarisation and the mass army in state-sanctioned violence to homogenise with intent, rather than homogeneity naturally occurring due to industrialisation without any state direction (Conversi 2007). The importance of Gellner's work, however, is his analysis of the nation, national identity and nationalism as social constructions rather than something that is a natural phenomenon. This study applies Gellner's theorisation of the nation to illustrate the deliberated and contested process of nation making in the context of Australia as a settler society. Also of significance for the

theoretical framework of this research is Gellner's attention to what culture *does*, rather than to what culture *is* due to the difficulty in an anthropological sense of arriving at a coherent definition of culture (Gellner 1983, p.7). This thesis is concerned with the impact of white Australian cultural practices rather than being interested in what white Australian culture is. Chapter 3 will examine in detail issue of 'what culture does' as a social practice.

In his work, John Breuilly (1985, p.72) assessed the establishment of the modern nation states in Europe and identified what he called the ⁵thorny problem of the lack of congruency between "cultural" and "political" nationalism in the quest of the nation state to achieve unification'. Thus, similarly to Gellner, Breuilly is concerned with the relationship between nation and state and the role that culture plays in cultural nationalism as opposed to political nationalism. His model also identifies incongruence as the trigger for conflict. Meanwhile, Gellner states that nationalism does not exist except where there are incongruent boundaries between the nation (cultural) and the state (political).

Different nationalisms develop for minority and dominant groups. For example, an invader society privileges specific components of its collective language, symbols and culture over those of minority groups. Anthony Smith (1991) also argues that nations and nationalism must be understood as cultural phenomena in addition to being ideology or political. Smith argues that nationalism is 'closely related to *national identity*, a multidimensional concept, and extended to include a specific

⁵ This thesis will use single quotation marks to mark the start of a quote, and double quotation marks to denote quotations within the quote, or where there are double quotations used within a quote as with this quote from John Breuilly 1985, p.72.

language, sentiments and symbolism’ and notes that ‘national identity [is] treated as a collective cultural phenomenon’ (1991, p.vii). Gellner and Smith therefore both recognise that nations commission language, symbols, and culture, which becomes problematic for minority language and/or cultural groups.

Smith’s (1991) book *National Identity* forms a vital contribution in the sociological historical analysis of the development of nations and cultural identities. It includes a discussion of stateless national minorities such as Basques, Armenians, Kurds and Tamils. Smith’s analysis of stateless minorities is of interest to this study as it provides a critical understanding of minority nationals. Some Indigenous Australians argue that their language group is similar to a nation, such as the Ngarrindjeri people of South East South Australia (Bell 1998, p.137) while others from the same language group contend that the concept of nationhood is a colonial one, though still use the term Indigenous nations (Watson 2002c). Other First Nations, such as the Mohawk in Canada, had a confederacy of nations prior to Western colonial impact (Simpson 2000).

Benedict Anderson’s notion of the nation as a form of ‘imagined community’ is the cornerstone of a collection of work that seeks to understand the nation (and nationalisms) as a social and creative process, rather than merely fictional. He argues a restriction of Gellner’s work on nation is its production of the nation as fiction because it does not allow for the continual “re-production” of the nation. He argues that this conception of the nation as fabricated also indicates that some communities are the ‘true’ as opposed to the ‘fictional’ national community. Anderson argues that ‘[c]ommunities are to be distinguished, not by their

falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined' (Anderson 1991, p.6). Anderson's theory of the manner of imagining the nation highlights the role of the cultural roots that underpin these national imaginings. He signifies the nation as nation-ness, or nationality, as well as nationalism being cultural artefacts that have historical origins that change the meaning of nation over time. This understanding of the nation allows us to recognise the modern nation and its relationship with the state in its social and political historical context.

Anderson's often-used definition of nation is that:

...it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.

It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (Anderson 1991, pp.5-6).

There are three key points in Anderson's definition of the nation as an 'imagined' community to study at this point. The first is that nations have boundaries, even if variable, that differentiate one nation from another. Secondly, he argues that the nation is imagined to be sovereign because the concept of the nation developed simultaneously as modern states that were the symbol of freedom from religious determinism and territories: '...nations dream of being free' (Anderson 1991, p.7). This chapter applies Anderson's argument that the nation is imagined to be sovereign as a key concept in the structure of this thesis. In legal terms, it is the state, as the political entity, that holds sovereignty and not the nation, as the social body. However, like Anderson, this study argues that the nation *imagines* itself as sovereign. What happens when the colony that imagines nationhood and dreams of being free of its colonial power, is made up of an invader population as in the case

of, for example, Australia, USA, Canada and New Zealand? The invader population constructed itself as a settler population, and did not leave. The invader population remained to set about the business of creating a new nation on the lands of the colonised, the First peoples.

The third point in Anderson's proposal is the 'image of their communion', which signifies the imagined relationship between those of the same nationality as 'an image of each other' that makes a community. Anderson, like Gellner and Smith, argues that homogeneity is not a requirement for the nation, and that the cultural roots of nationalism work to bind nationals together. Of interest to this study is who is included and excluded from the nation and by what criteria, if homogeneity is not required to create a nation? Thus Australia has boundaries and there are 'other nations' beyond its social and political borders, and if the nation is imagined as sovereign, those who belong to the nation are imagined to be sovereign subjects, and those who are deemed to not belong to the nation would not be imagined to be sovereign subjects. Finally, the imagined community holds an image of both self, and each other within that national community, thus leaving the possibility of the notion of 'Other'.

Many authors, such as Ross Poole (1999), Paul James (1996) and Anthony Moran (2005), have extended the work of Benedict Anderson to understand the nation as an abstract concept. Anderson himself does not examine the subjectivity of those within the nation. How does the literature that draws on Anderson's work understand subjects and subjectivities in the context of settler national identities?

Paul James argues that:

...the nation is a particular kind of abstract community, abstract in the dominant level of its integration, in the mode of its subjectivities as well as in the symbolic representation of that relationship. It is an abstract community but one which always, subjectively and ideologically, reaches back to more concrete ways of living and representation. This makes it the best and worst kind of human associations, beset by contradictions, open to self-conscious cultural management, yet embedded deeply within our taken-for-granted histories (James 1996, pp.1-2)

James's concept of the nation as an abstract community builds upon the creative process of 'imagination' generated in Anderson's work and extends it to include the relationship between the subjectivities, or people, and the nation as a part of that creative process. James argues that the 'modern association [with the nation] only becomes possible within a social formation constituted in the dominance of a level of integration', which he refers to as 'disembodied integration' (James 1996, p.5). James argues that the integration requires an abstraction from people's particularistic or specific relations with others, while also emphasising that the 'concreteness' and 'abstraction' are descriptive terms and not polarised (1996, p.33). One example of how this works is the search for national values.

Also drawing on the work of Benedict Anderson, Ross Poole contends that while Anderson's conceptualisation of the nation as an imagined object enables the creative process required conceiving the nation, it does not explain how those located within this concept become its subjects (Poole 1999, p.12). How does one become the subject of the object one has created? According to Poole, when the nation is conceived as an object, there is also the process of conceiving "*ourselves as existing in relation to that object*" (Poole 1999, p.12. Italics in original). Therefore, Poole argues that:

The nation is not just a form of consciousness, it is also a form of *self-consciousness*. As members of the nation recognise each other through the nation, they also recognise themselves. If the nation is an imagined community, it is also a form of *identity*. As an imagined community, it exists as an object of consciousness. It is the public embodiment of the nation's conception of itself. As a form of identity, it exists as a mode of individual self-and other-awareness. In order to understand this dual form of existence, we need to go beyond the concept of imagination to that of *culture* (Poole 1999, pp.12-3. Italics in original).

As Poole acknowledges, the concept of culture is a complex term to define. It includes the symbols and representations that those with the specified cultural knowledge can interpret. This sense culture operates in the public domain. Poole argues that an additional meaning of culture is the procedure of creating the representations and symbols. This understanding of culture, originating from the work of Stuart Hall (1992) discussed next, points to a process that is continuous rather than being a established effect. According to Poole, culture is the method through which a person is 'inscribed within a particular form of life', and a dynamic practice of self-formation leading to the addition of different social identities (Poole 1999, p.13). Social identities include one's identification with a nation.

2.3 The nation as a racialised entity

As discussed in section 2.2, the nation constructs and reproduces itself through particular discourses. This has implications when there is a nation with dominant and minority cultural groups. It is further complicated when the nation is constructed with racialised discourses. Stuart Hall (1992) makes a pivotal contribution to understanding the nation as discourse and the role of culture in this active process. He argues that symbols and representations as well as cultural institutions comprise national cultures. As a dialogue, he argues that national culture provides:

...a way of constructing meanings, which influences and organizes both our actions and our conception of ourselves. National cultures construct identities by producing meanings about 'the nation' with which we can *identify*; these are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and images which are constructed of it (Hall 1992, p.293, emphasis in original).

Hall contends that national culture attempts to consolidate its subjects across axes of difference such as age, gender, class or race. This point is similar to Anderson's argument that homogeneity is not required because the cultural roots of nationalism work to bind nationals together. However, Hall differs from Anderson in his suggestion that national culture attempts to erase difference, but is unable to because of it is more than 'a point of allegiance...it is also a structure of cultural power' (Hall 1992, p.296). Thus, difference remains within a national culture, and there are differences in power afforded to the cultural groups that meet within a given nation. He gives three examples to illustrate this. First, the majority of modern nations consist of diverse cultural groups who unite under one state through violent conquest that includes 'forcible suppression of cultural difference'. Second, nations are composed of different social groupings of class, gender and ethnicity and the nation attempts to provide an alternative point for identification through the 'national family'. Third, modern Western nations are the effect of former empires that exercise cultural hegemony over colonised peoples and their cultures. Thus, Hall's argument is that rather than thinking of national cultures as being united, we should consider them as a "*discursive device* which represents difference as unity or identity" (Hall 1992, p.297). In Australia, this notion of difference-as-unity is often presented through the song lyric: 'We are one, but we are many, and from all the lands on earth we come, we share a dream and sing with one voice – I am, you are, we are Australian' (Woodley and Newton 1987).

Race profoundly influences the discourses about the nation and identity. Theo Goldberg (2001) argues that whiteness is a regime of power that is embedded in the liberal nation state and that the state is a racialised entity.

In the modern but not in the ancient or medieval worlds, there no doubt is an explicit sense of racial distinction, and racial nomination throughout modernity, has underpinned a range of individual and socially organized discriminations, exclusions and oppressions. The crucial point, however, is that the significance of race and the racist exclusions and oppressions that racial distinction is taken to license are modern state projects...Once cemented silently into the fabric of state definition and pursuits, however, racist effects are sustained by their routinization in social and state practice, and by state silence and omission (Goldberg 2001, p.161).

This problem is also evident in Australia. As outlined in chapter 1, the first piece of legislation was racially defined in the newly federated nation state of Australia. The concepts were of inclusion, exclusion and oppression. The Australian government used *The Immigration Restriction Act, 1901* to determine who could enter the country as a migrant settler. This legislation did not mention Indigenous Australians, because at this time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were not considered to be civilised people with social, cultural and intellectual capacities or practices (Anderson and Perrin 2008). The failure to identify Indigenous Australians even in legislation of exclusion had the effect of rendering Aboriginal peoples hidden and not human. Goldberg argues that the racial underpinnings of nation states such as Australia were:

...state mediated and managed, fabricated and fictioned, displayed and displaced. Racially conceived states are invariably moulded in the image of whiteness, to reflect the interests of whites (Goldberg 2001, p.162).

This thesis applies Goldberg's to Anderson's concept of the nation as an imagined community that generates an 'image of their communion'. Is the notion of the Australian nation an image of whiteness that also reflects, as Goldberg argues, white interests? Race is a fundamental concept in the establishment of the Australian nation

and this occurred in a global context, as argued by Goldberg above (see also Lake and Reynolds 2008). Thus, for the purpose of this thesis, whiteness is a problem within the context of the project of the modern nation. White Australians invested in protecting their interests by forming Australia.

One example of the way that whiteness embeds itself within the project of modern nations is the way that law protects whiteness. Harris (1993) examines the role of the legal system in upholding and protecting whiteness, originally as racial identity and later as a form of property in the USA. She argues that whiteness as property emerged through what she calls the 'parallel systems of domination', namely the slavery of African peoples and the colonisation of Native American peoples' culture and land (Harris 1993, p.1714). The two systems of power produced forms of property and property rights that were reliant upon one's race and whiteness became a form of racialised entitlement. Harris' approach enables an analysis of the differently raced positions of minority migrant groups to that of Indigenous Australians.

It explains how whiteness became a type of status in the USA that was the basis for the distribution of public and private social benefits. The main contribution that Harris offers is that the arrangements of benefit became both justified and protected in law in the form of ownership through the social construction of whiteness as an exclusive status, in which those who could access whiteness are heavily invested. Thus, Harris argues, whiteness as property has continued to be a barrier to meaningful change due to the system of racial classification that operates as a protection of entrenched power.

Additionally, Harris highlights the misperceptions held about the status of group identity in legislation. This is useful to analyse the role that ‘whiteness as a property’ plays in preventing multiculturalism from engaging with Indigenous Sovereignty. She argues that Native American Indians have had their rights denied, particularly in relation to land, through the legally protected white cultural practices. She persuasively outlines how the concept of ownership, a white cultural practice, is legislated as necessary to hold property rights, thus rendering Native American rights to land hidden and justifying seizure (Harris 1993, p.1721). The courts therefore upheld the laws of the conqueror as the sovereign state, and disavowed Native American Indian sovereignty. Further, Harris argues, the law stipulates that land must have clear boundaries and a clear ‘owner’ or individual who holds title. Those Native American people who did portion out their reservation land to individual clan members were often tricked out of their property rights, or debt collectors acquired their land (Harris 1993, pp.1721-3).

There were policies similar to the USA developed in Australia, as outlined in chapter 1 that deny Indigenous sovereignty *and* restrict immigration based on race. After the overturning of these policies⁶, the Australian government commenced a new era of Aboriginal Land Rights, and Self-Determination. At the same time, the government initiated new immigration policies such as ‘integration’ followed by ‘multiculturalism’ to deal with/manage difference. The language of race all but disappeared and was replaced by innocuous terms such as ‘ethnicity’, ‘nationality’

⁶ For example, the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* was overturned in the 1970s at the same time that the assimilation policy for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children of so-called mixed race from their families also was overturned.

and ‘culture’. Unlike Native American people, the colonisers did not seek to make a treaty with Indigenous people in Australia. The issue of Indigenous sovereignty in the context of the modern nation is discussed in detail in section 2.5 of this chapter. The following section will focus on how coloniser nations deal with difference.

2.4 “We are one, but we are many”: The narrative of the multicultural nation

In immigrant colonial societies such as Canada, New Zealand and Australia a particular political and social history of multiculturalism is usually present, which distinguishes itself from discourses of multiculturalism in Britain and other European countries that have different histories of colonialism and immigration. This section will outline the development of the literature on multiculturalism from the introduction of State multiculturalism in 1971 in Canada, and 1973 in Australia up to the current debates. This section will use the debates in Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America (USA) to initiate useful points of reference (though not as a comparative study), for a discussion on the Australian case. Finally, this section will address the issue of how refugees and asylum seekers are racialised in Australia to illustrate how some subjects are constructed as external to the nation.

Over the past three decades, State multiculturalism has been the field within which international debates about immigration have taken place. Critical multiculturalism, such as David Goldberg’s (1994) edited collection, among others (May 1999; May and Sleeter 2010), has developed a critique of liberal forms of multiculturalism that identifies the racialisation that continues to occur within liberal multiculturalism in practice. The critique provided in Goldberg’s work in the mid-1990’s and Castles

and Vasta's work (1996) in Australia indicates the belated endeavour to deal with race within the literature on multiculturalism. This results in a 'great divide' between discourses of multiculturalism and discourses of Indigenous sovereignty and is a gap in the critical literature (Curthoys 2000).

In the 1970s and 1980s in Canada, as in New Zealand and Australia, governments introduced multiculturalism in response to international and local movements about equal rights for women and minority groups. Multiculturalism was introduced in order to address the analysis of these movements that the nation was discriminatory and not inclusive. In addition to the identified global trends, there were internal pressures that were unique to Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

The debates about multiculturalism in Canada conceptualise multiple sovereignties including French Quebec and Aboriginal nations. One approach is to conceptualise multiple sovereignties as 'nations within' Canada (Fraser FCA 22 April 2009; Kymlicka 1998; 2000a). Some critics argue that Canadian multiculturalism circulates as liberal pluralism and prioritises post-WWII migrants at the expense of new groups who are harder to assimilate. They argue that multicultural discourses do not deal with race (Bannerji 2000; Brand 1990; Fleras and Elliott 1993; Onufrijchuk 1988). Therefore, multiculturalism can obscure forms of racial supremacy because the post-WWII migrant groups are lumped together as 'European' in a way that does not recognise the raced spectrum of difference within and between different European migrant groups. The generic 'European' category is then cast against other minority migrant groups. Moreover, without a critical approach to race, multiculturalism does not deal with Aboriginal groups who maintain a political presence through their

Treaties while continuing to be colonised and raced at the same time (Fleras and Elliott 1993). This chapter argues that contemporary social relations must deal with racialised difference. Further, inter-cultural relations need to include an analysis of the different colonial force that continues to oppress Aboriginal nations. The Canadian situation offers this thesis the concept of having multiple sovereignties over the same territory. In particular, the concept of Aboriginal nations holding sovereignty that is recognised by Treaty in addition to that of self-governance.

A different anti-multicultural position is represented in Bibby's, (1990) controversial book titled *Mosaic Madness*, which denounces multiculturalism as counter-productive and unworkable, arguing that multiculturalism is anti-egalitarian and puts Canadian national coherence and identity at risk. He argues multiculturalism gives preferential treatment to minority groups. Bibby claims that all people living in Canada should have the same rules because they already have the same opportunities. Bibby's issue with multiculturalism reflects similar objections raised by conservatives such as Geoffrey Blainey (1984) in Australia.

Whereas in Canada, ongoing debates negotiate the terms of multiculturalism concerning minority ethnic groups, Aboriginal groups and the two English and French colonising powers, New Zealand's demography has experienced a different progression. Richard Mulgan (1993, p.77) writing in the field of political theory, identify the debates in New Zealand as being between biculturalism and multiculturalism. In Canada biculturalism describes two nations within the colonising powers (English and French speaking), which excludes Aboriginal cultures, whereas in New Zealand, biculturalism is applied to Maori (Indigenous

peoples from New Zealand) and to those who identify as Pakeha (white, typically British settler people from New Zealand), which excludes non-Pakeha.

Wendy Larner and Paul Spoonley (1995) argue that biculturalism recognises Maori sovereignty, and that Pakeha identity is claimed by those of European descent whose politics support Maori rights and sovereignty and recognise the institutional racism within New Zealand society. There is disagreement about whether Pakeha identity is actually an ethnicity ranging from the ambivalent, (Pearson 2001), to the dismissive (Nash 1990). Larner and Spoonley state that multiculturalism is seen by some as a 'soft' option that does not recognise Maori sovereignty. They argue that biculturalism symbolises a partnership between Pakeha and Maori that 'is identified with the issues of social justice, cultural integrity and the redistribution of resources' (Larner and Spoonley 1995, p.52). The emphasis that biculturalism places upon Maori sovereignty is significant to this thesis. However, like the criticism of Canadian multiculturalism, New Zealand biculturalism is polarised in a 'Maori and Pakeha' dialogue that excludes migrant groups raced outside the 'Maori' or 'Pakeha' categories.

In Australia, a key area of criticism, particularly within critical race and whiteness studies argues that multiculturalism has not dealt with difference (Ahmed 2000b; Ang and Stratton 2001; Schech and Haggis 2001; Stratton 1999). State multiculturalism was introduced to address the implications of former immigration policy that was administered through the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, which was in operation up until 1973 (Vasta and Castles 1996, p.5). Both Indigenous people and immigrants were subjected to processes of racialisation, an issue that Ann

Curthoys (2000; 2003) also addressed, as will be discussed in more detail from page 63. A hegemonic national identity is retained within multiculturalism that positions those categorised as Other as “add-ons”. Crucially, in Australia multiculturalism does not include the Indigenous. Indigeneity is structured within colonised power relations. Adding to this analysis, is Hage’s (1998) concept of the white nation and his argument is that it is not race per se that is important but the way in which the claim to certain race or ethnicity, eg white, also assumes a certain kind of relationship to territory and the national space. This special relationship grants an assumed right to ‘govern’ the national space.

Chilla Bulbeck (2004) researches fear and loathing in a study of young South Australians, whom she interviewed about multiculturalism. She uses Hage’s concept of paranoid nationalism and argues that her findings offer hope that a change in public paranoia, presented as fear and loathing of the ‘other’, can occur if government will address the issues of concern including poverty, unemployment and job security (Bulbeck 2004). I am not convinced, however, that these findings indicate that the centrality of white governance is shifting. Rather, it seems that the assumed rights are readily shared on the condition that white race privilege is maintained.

Gunew (2004) critiques the colonial beginnings of state multiculturalism as a form of nationalism. Gunew states that Australian multiculturalism engages debates about minorities, which, by its very nature, assumes a majority or homogenous core. She argues that minorities in multiculturalism are usually represented through the categories of ‘race’, ‘ethnicity’ and ‘indigeneity’. Like other critics of

multiculturalism, Gunew considers the category of race describes the social processes that 'race' groups of people differently, as opposed to being an unproblematic natural biological phenomenon. She argues that the term 'ethnicity' was connected with European migrants. Further, the term was deployed to evade the biological essentialism and racism connected to the term 'race'.

Addressing the colonial linkages between Indigenous and 'multicultural' Australian subjects, Gunew argues that the Australian State fails both in that the nation invoked in the name 'Australia' is exclusively Anglo-Celtic. In this invocation, to be 'European' is to be 'English' is to be 'white' (Gunew 2004, p.45). Aligning her argument with that of Ghassan Hage, Gunew further claims that the "invocation of multiculturalism is a version of Australian nationalism". She argues that multicultural and Indigenous 'others' are structurally aligned and have "an unacknowledged and mutual history" that is "hidden in Australian accounts of citizenship and nation" (2004, pp.46-7). Gunew concludes:

the legacies of British colonialism structure contemporary Australian debates around the nation, citizenship and multiculturalism so that who owns modernity (and inherits European civilization) instigates a process of racialization in which the descendants of European post-war immigrants continue to be aligned with indigenous and 'Asian' settlers...racialization is always an arbitrary process and that charged term belonging to the rhetoric of nationalism are always part of a discursive chain of difference rather than being rooted in any 'natural' referential system (Gunew 2004, p.50).

Gunew's work brings a critical multiculturalism that identifies State multiculturalism as a form of Australian nationalism with colonial beginnings. It requires an ongoing critical engagement with multiculturalism that includes anti-racist strategies.

The weakness in Hage's work is his inability to locate his assessment of the white nation vis-à-vis Indigenous sovereignty. Whereas Gunew attempts to address Indigeneity, but only to argue that there is structural equivalence that does not actually deal with Indigenous sovereignty at all. The history of British invasion and colonisation structures the debates about nation, citizenship and multiculturalism. Indigenous Australians have myriad internal differences and multicultural connections as well as the connections with settler Australians. However, Indigenous Australians live within the legacy of colonisation of the dominant culture on their own country. Migrants 'come from somewhere else' to make their home in Australia, which is on Indigenous lands. It is problematic for Gunew to attempt to place the Indigenous other and the migrant other in the same structural position. A broader analysis of the notion of whiteness provides powerful tools to suggest that the colonial origins of multiculturalism are more complicated than a structural equivalence between the Indigenous and migrant other.

So far, neither Hage or Gunew address the issue of the position of Asylum Seeker or that there are many migrants situated as marginal to dominant hegemonic forms of whiteness (within the spectrum of whiteness) who appear to oppose Asylum Seekers who arrive informally by boats. In this scenario, marginalised 'Others' align with the hegemonic position to exclude the Asylum Seeker as Other. This raises a question of how much of the possessive nation the category of 'Other' is allowed to possess. A number of scholars in Australia have critiqued the link between governmental violence on refugee bodies and the disavowal of Indigenous sovereignty (Giannacopoulos 2006a; 2006a; Perera 2006b; Pugliese 2006; Watson 2007a) and the link between paranoia and colonialism (Hage 2003). The remainder of section 2.4

will examine how white governance is reinforced in everyday speech about asylum seekers. The declaration of white patriarchal sovereignty (Moreton-Robinson 2004a) is summed up most succinctly in the words of former Australian Prime Minister John Howard: “We decide who comes into this country and the circumstances in which they come here” (Clarke 2001). Howard made this comment to justify the violent measures of border control used to protect the Australian way of life in several key events that involved often-unseaworthy vessels used by some groups of people to seek asylum on Australian shores. Section 1.2.2 (pp.23-5) briefly outlined some key events including the *Tampa* incident, “mandatory detention centres” and “lip sewing” in order to provide a background to the events discussed by the respondents in this study.

The critical literature that has emerged in response to dominant discourses about asylum seekers converges upon a number of key points. One of these is to locate contemporary Australian responses to migration laws and national borders in the socio-political history of the modern liberal-democratic nation state and its relation to histories of colonisation (Churchill 1997; Davis and Watson 2006; Giannacopoulos 2006a; Harris 1993; Lui 2002; Moreton-Robinson 2004a). The second two points refer to Edward Said’s theory of Orientalism which argues that ‘the Orient’ is constructed through narratives and representations deployed by the West to achieve cultural superiority (the West, as a dominant discourse also constructs itself). These constructions therefore, are also linked to the political realities of imperialism for the colonised and coloniser (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 1999; Said 1978). This thesis will apply the term ‘Orientalism’ to show how discourses play out in the participants everyday experiences and speech and how Orientalist discourses structure the way

people speak about difference with regards to asylum seekers and refugees. Chapter 5 will draw out the Orientalist discourses which underpin discussions about asylum seekers and how Australian narratives about border control conflate refugee issues with national security issues. Following the first point of convergence above, a second and related critique unpacks how Orientalist discourse underpins popular culture and news media representation of asylum seekers and refugees (Gale 1996; Hoenig 2009; Imtoul 2007b; Osuri and Banerjee 2004). This important critique outlines how the process of reinforcing Australian border security is a racialised one that leaves “Third world” and “Middle Eastern” asylum seekers stateless, non-citizens and non-people (Perera 2007) and thus maintains white possession of Australian national space (Hage 2003). A third area of criticism is the criminalisation of the “Oriental” as refugee, and the technologies of surveillance and control, including racial profiling by the government (Pugliese 2006).

Some critics argue that the violence of white sovereignty exercised through technologies of racial profiling and hyper-surveillance have always been strategies of terror used by local, state and federal Australian governments and related institutions, against Indigenous peoples (Davis and Watson 2006). Further, Irene Watson (2000) strongly contests the Australian state’s claim to sovereignty by demonstrating that sovereignty has never been ceded by Indigenous peoples. Thus, the state’s race-based policies and practices are acts of terror against Indigenous people. This body of literature informs the interview analysis in Chapter 5 because it outlines the race-based national narratives and practices that have historically reinforced white governance, enacted through white possession of the nation as discourse in everyday speech in Australia.

There is Australian empirical research that examines the social construction of Australian race, identities and nation. The studies vary in their focus and include an examination of whiteness in dominant Australian identities (Schech and Haggis 2000; 2001) and the identities of British migrants who live in Australia (Schech and Haggis 2004). Other research explores the impact of race and racism in national discourses for young Muslim Australian women's identities (Imtoul 2007b). Another body examines how white Australians construct their identities and maintain racialised privilege (Moreton-Robinson 2000b), how white Australians conceptualise Aboriginal people (Moran 2009) and how Australians who volunteered to work in support of refugees in Australia understood their racialised position and national identity (Tascon 2009). While Moran dissents from the above literature, claiming that critical race and whiteness studies is limited in its capacity to analyse settler/Indigenous relations, this thesis concurs with the general findings of the literature cited above. The final section of this chapter will now turn to discuss the problems of Indigenous nations and western political theory.

2.5 Indigenous nations and western political theory

A cornerstone of liberalism is that sovereignty is held by people, independent of state sovereignty. This section is concerned with the issue of Indigenous sovereignty in the context of colonial and post-colonial western nations. It will explore the difficulties and possibilities of Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations in invader societies. Kymlicka's (1998) model for the 'nations within' supports the demands of many Indigenous groups for recognition of prior occupation, self-determination,

interlocking jurisdictions of self-governance and autonomy. These demands could be negotiated according to the rights and responsibilities demanded and the particular specificities of each location. He argues that there can be multiple nations within a nation such as Canada. Each nation practices its sovereignty through self-governance without breaking away from the nation within which each is located. While Kymlicka has generated groundbreaking work in this field through his conception of the 'nations within', other intellectuals, like James Tully (2000) and Audra Simpson (2000, discussed in more detail below), take the position that indigenous peoples (in particular) with multiple sovereignties do not necessarily perceive themselves as 'within' what they call the hegemonic sovereign state. Rather, they present Indigenous sovereignty as inter-related and overlapping the same territories as the state, but not 'within' the state. Other theorists, such as Iris Marion Young (2000 also discussed below) question whether sovereignty is an appropriate goal at all for contemporary forms of democracy, especially given the legacies of colonialism. The common argument is that nations do not require a singular, homogenous group identity for peaceful civic relations in what could be a non-colonial set of relations.

Tully's (2000, p.50) primary interest is whether Western political theory hinders or assists liberation struggles of indigenous peoples. He maintains that there is a different location available within Western political theory. He argues that the practical problem for Western political theorists is "the relation between the establishment and development of Western societies and the pre-existence and continuing resistance of indigenous societies on the same territory" (Tully 2000, p.37). Tully calls this relation 'internal colonisation' and examines its features and practices of resistance by Indigenous peoples in Canada. He argues that internal

colonisation is an historical process whereby structures of power are placed over indigenous peoples, culture and political structures without their consent.

This thesis concurs with Tully's argument that the issue of consent is the cornerstone of liberal democracy and the peoples within a democracy must agree to the governance that is put in place. Tully states that the structures of Canada either incorporate or domesticate the indigenous peoples who live as minorities within the dominant society (Tully 2000, p.37). Therefore, since permission was never given by the Indigenous peoples of Canada, Tully argues that they neither relinquished their sovereignty as a peoples nor as a nation. By extension then, under this circumstance, Canada could not call itself a post-colonial state. Tully's argument differs from that of Kymlicka. Where Kymlicka promotes the concept of 'nations within', Tully argues that this maintains the legitimacy of Canada's sovereignty. He argues that Canada illegitimately imposed its sovereignty through conquest without consent or cessation of Indigenous sovereignties.

Tully does not comment on the role of race or whiteness in the colonial and neo-colonial relations between Canada as a federated nation state and Indigenous peoples living in the same territory. In terms of this thesis, Tully does recognise the discourse of European superiority and the discourses of 'discovery' and 'progressive development'. Additionally he criticises the 'difference-blindness' of liberalism, and the limitations of the politics-of-difference for Indigenous people. His argument lacks an appreciation of the role of race and whiteness in those discourses, which Harris (1993) provided in her analysis discussed on pp.56-8. It is because whiteness

is legislated as property in invader societies that a critical approach to race is foundational to becoming post-colonial societies.

The contribution Tully makes is that in order for non-colonial relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to be possible, non-Indigenous activists and academics must engage in critical intercultural dialogue that allows Western political theory (in particular) to see the horizon of its conventional thinking as a limitation. Moreover, this edge marks the genuine ground for future non-colonial relationships between free and equal peoples (Tully 2000, p.21). This term, 'non-colonial', is of paramount importance to explore in the context of invader nation states such as Canada and Australia, where the nation states cannot become 'post-colonial' because of internal colonisation and the existence of the state upon Indigenous lands, knowledge and ways of being.

Marion Young's definition of post-coloniality captures the goal of non-colonial relations:

Understood as a project, postcoloniality does not name an epoch at which we have arrived, one where colonialism is in the past. On the contrary, precisely because the legacies of colonialism persist, progressive intellectuals and activists should take on the task of undoing their effects. The postcolonial project has an interpretive and institutional aspect. Institutionally, postcoloniality entails creating systems of global democratic governance that can meet the demands of the world's indigenous peoples for self-determination. Because the existing international system of nation-states cannot meet those demands, commitment to justice for indigenous peoples entails calling those state-systems into question (Young 2000).

This study will adopt the term 'non-colonial' generated by Tully, and apply the definition of 'post-coloniality' offered by Marion Young as the goal of the term

‘non-colonial’. Thus, invader nations first have to become non-colonial in order to become post-colonial.

Writing about the journey towards a Mohawk Nation, Audra Simpson (2000) identifies Jackson’s (1988) ‘paths toward a clearing’ as an alternative route to Kymlicka’s proposal for minority nationalist relations within ‘a broader framework of the state by listening in substantive ways to the voices and experiences within’ (Simpson 2000, p.125). She argues for the conversations of nationhood and ongoing dialogue between sovereign peoples to be located in a ‘clear space’. Her proposal resonates with that of Tully and Marion Young, who seek to negotiate ongoing dialogue and relationships with free and sovereign peoples.

Simpson explores the narrative practices enacted by *Kahnawakero:non* (People of Kanawake) to ‘maintain a strong sense of themselves as a distinct people with rights and obligations that flow from their distinctiveness’ (2000, p.127). The discursive practices of nationhood involve the central tropes of “being Indian” and having “rights” that are contingent on “being Indian”. She argues that the construction and maintenance of Mohawk identities for individuals tie the tropes to ‘social and cultural praxis’. This, Simpson argues, embeds ‘everyday life with a sense of nationhood’ that stems from pre-colonial contact political experience as well as contemporary interactions with settler societies (2000, p.128). Through her attention on Kahnawake narratives about nation, Simpson examines Kahanawake nationalism as the ‘web of meanings that comprise culture – the plenum of experience, rather than ethnicity’ (2000, p.128). Her contribution to thinking about indigenous nationhood and sovereignty is that indigenous nationalism and nation are intimately

linked to people's every-day lived experiences embedded in culture, rather than ethnicity.

Pocock (2000, p.29) applies a similar argument about sovereignty in New Zealand as held and enacted by people. He argues that Maori had to be legislated as the owners of the land so that it could be bought. The Crown and Maori people understood the Treaty decidedly differently. Congruent with Cheryl Harris' analysis discussed previously, Pocock theorises that by assigning the Maori with a 'capacity to hold property', the Crown, and subsequent Pakeha, were also establishing a capacity to alienate property. The concept of land as alienable commodity was not familiar to Maori and would not have been in their understanding of the Treaty. It was white Western definitions and understandings of sovereignty and land ownership that determined how to interpret the Treaty of Waitangi.

In their chapter about engaging with the politics of Indigeneity in the context of Treaty in New Zealand, Roger Maaka and Augie Fleras reason for 'models of constructive engagement that foster innovative patterns of relative yet non-coercive autonomy without necessarily falling into the trap of secession or confrontation'(2000, p.89). They see the politics of Indigeneity as having a close relationship with sovereignty and self-determination because it focuses on the autonomy of Indigenous groups of peoples as political communities that are sovereign in their own right. This, they argue, shares 'in the sovereignty of society through multiple, yet interlocking jurisdictions' (Maaka and Fleras 2000, p.92). Like Tully, Kymlicka and Young, though unlike Simpson, Maaka and Fleras note that Indigenous claims for sovereignty rarely entail withdrawal from formal membership

with a state such as New Zealand. Rather, they perceive that Indigenous calls for sovereignty require re-negotiating (often through the constitution) the principles that govern Indigenous peoples and state relation.

While Tully argues for re-distributive justice in terms of land, access and equity and other resources, Maaka and Fleras (2000) believe that this simply focuses on conflict and outcomes rather than addressing processes and working through differences, as follows. They identify discursive frameworks that are endorsed by Maori as being 'rights-driven', rather than what they call 'needs-driven'. Maaka and Fleras advocate for a 'rights-driven' approach. They argue that the 'needs' driven discourse has traditionally been determined by the state, approaching Indigenous issues with a focus on what is 'lacking' as a problem to be solved, rather than an ongoing relationship that is integral to the State's functioning (Maaka and Fleras 2000, p.95). An example from Australia is that under the former Howard Liberal Government, the discourse shifted from Indigenous rights and Aboriginal Reconciliation to 'practical reconciliation' which focused on specific 'needs-based' issues such as housing, health and education (for example Altman and Hinkson 2007; Dodson 2007). Thus, Maaka and Fleras want to focus on the discrimination that remains within state institutions.

Further, Maaka and Fleras argue that 'the politics of indigeneity...transcends a commitment to official multiculturalism' due to its 'focus on the removal of discriminatory cultural and structural barriers within the existing institutional framework'. This approach deals with the colonial mechanisms that remain within institutions. However, it remains limited because it does not address the problem that

stolen land remains in the hands of the invader society. In contrast, unlike Maaka and Fleras, and like Tully, this thesis contends that because invader societies are built out of colonial conquest that illegally seized land from Indigenous people, re-distributive justice *is* about rights. Re-distributive justice is conducive to addressing the rights of Indigenous peoples and is one process toward non-colonial relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

In contrast to the literature on migration and multiculturalism, Australian Indigenous cultural knowledge does not know Indigenous people to be migrants at any point in time. Despite the large difference amongst Indigenous groups in Australia, a common feature reflected in critical literature on race relations is that Aboriginal people are of this land (Watson 2003). It needs to be noted here that this is from an Indigenous knowledge base that is in contestation with theories of migration that are developed in the academy, particularly in anthropology, archaeology and geography. In the literature from Indigenous knowledges, such as Watson and Moreton-Robinson (who draw upon a variety of knowledge including Indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge), Australian Indigeneity does not share a history of migration. Indigenous peoples' relation to land situates them differently in two ways. First, in their resistance to invasion and contestation of ownership the country. Second, in their relation to the institutions that enacted colonisation on behalf of the nation state. In the words of Aileen Moreton-Robinson:

In post-colonizing settler societies Indigenous people cannot forget the nature of migrancy and we position all non-Indigenous people as migrants and diasporic. Our ontological relation to land, the ways that country is constitutive of us, and therefore the inalienable nature of our relation to land, marks a radical, indeed incommensurable, difference between us and the non-Indigenous (Moreton-Robinson 2003b).

Moreton-Robinson and Irene Watson review the claim to property rights perpetrated by colonial sovereignties. Irene Watson asks the following questions:

Am I free to roam across my country and to sing and to live with the land of my ancestors outside the body of my Aboriginal being/community? Or will I live the life of the sovereign self only within the mind, body and spirit, and in isolation from country and community? Left to the illusionary spaces of recognition within the settled colony. The sovereignty of the Aboriginal being forever a challenge to the settled spaces of the colony (Watson 2007b, p.78).

The answers, Watson argues, are to be discussed amongst the myriad positions within Aboriginal communities in Australia (Watson 2007b, p.78). The question hangs painfully in the colonised spaces of what is called Australia. The answer requires for a transformative understanding of Indigenous sovereignty to shift the hegemony of colonial relationships in this country. That is, the answer lies on the ground of Indigenous sovereignty. It requires the whites 'in the closet' of Australian race relations to recognise the violence of relocating Indigenous sovereignty as a 'mere perspective' (Nicoll 2000). Stepping out of the closet of Australian race relations necessitates that embodied non-Indigenous Australians focus on their relationship with Indigenous sovereignty. If the State refuses to engage in what Webber (Webber 2000) refers to as 'conversations' between Indigenous people, non-Indigenous people and the State, then Watson's observation that the white nation expects Aboriginal people to dissolve into 'the collective spirit of the nation state' remains (Watson 2007a, p.16).

Watson's contribution to this argument is that Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies contain a jurisdiction that is site specific but not exclusive through its inter-relatedness with all other sites. The exclusive, closed, bounded and dominating sovereignty of the colonising Australian State does not, by its nature, allow space for

multiple and inter-connected sovereignties. The presence of Indigenous sovereignties calls into question the very legitimacy of the colonising sovereignty claimed by the State and claimed by those who embody that hegemonic sovereignty (Watson 2002b).

Jeremy Webber (2000) considers the implications of the High Court Mabo decision of 1992 to have a wide reaching impact on Australian constitutionalism. He argues that the courts not only overturned the incorrect legacy of *terra nullius* in Australia, but also left general principles for acknowledging Indigenous title. Webber points out that the High Court did not limit the decisions to detailed definitions of Indigenous title or processes (which, he states, as a non-Indigenous institution of the colonising government would be highly inappropriate). Rather, the High Court decision acknowledges that there is Indigenous title and, therefore, Indigenous title requires knowledge of norms that originate outside of the common law (Webber 2000, p.60) . Further, Webber argues, the source of those norms “is not confined to the period before contact, but is a parallel social structure with its own bodies of law, which continues post-contact” (2000, p.77). Herein lies the problem with Webber’s argument, however. Firstly, there has been limited application of the possibilities opened up by the Mabo decision. As argued in the introduction, the governments (in Queensland) acted swiftly to contain any possibility of Indigenous sovereignty except through Native Title as dictated by the State (see pp.20-2).

While this thesis agrees that the inference of this finding is that Indigenous title requires ongoing negotiations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous parties (Webber 2000, p.77), this is not what has occurred (Dodson 2007). Further, in light

of the discussion about white sovereign law on p.56, why should Indigenous people accept a decision by a colonial legislation system? These factors make Indigenous title about more than property rights. This assessment meets a gap left in the work by Cheryl Harris (1993) on whiteness as property because Indigenous people and non-white migrant 'Others' are raced simultaneously with very different outcomes and consequences. The work of Audra Simpson (2000) can assist this chapter's analysis of the nation to involve a discussion about the racialised nature of property rights into a space where both are understood to be cultural artefact. As Simpson conceives it, this will be a more just space for discussion for Indigenous peoples and other minority groups. Further, it would root out the investment in maintaining white colonial practices of nation and land as property. It is a space for truly equal power relationships where the discursive practices of nationhood stem from interaction with Indigenous sovereignty rather than Indigenous peoples being outsiders. Simpson invites participation in narrating nations that are embedded in everyday lived culture.

The metaphor of a national conversation could provide a framework for non-colonial relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. After all, as Webber argues, many nations are known by their internal differences as much as by any other fundamental matters (2000, p.77). Public conversations about Indigenous sovereignty in Australia have historically located Indigenous dispossession as a problem for Indigenous people. This discourse maintains its focus on the Indigenous Other, and does not include the racialised nature of white sovereignty. Fiona Nicoll problematises the practice of 'racialized epistemology which makes sovereignty an "Aboriginal problem"' (2002, paragraph 4). She argues that this can only happen if Aboriginal Sovereignty is seen as something that Indigenous people want, but cannot

have. Like Tully and others, Nicoll maintains that Indigenous calls for sovereignty are not seeking European institutions and values, but rather are 'a refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the sovereignty in the name of which their invasion was and continues to be justified' (2002, paragraph 4). That is, Indigenous calls for sovereignty refuse to recognise the sovereignty of the colonising state, and assert Indigenous sovereignty in its own right. Nicoll's argument is unlike Webber, who contends that Indigenous sovereignty can be recognised from within cases such as the Mabo High Court decisions discussed on p.76-7. She also differs from Harris in that, congruent with Moreton-Robinson, Watson and Simpson, Nicoll re-frames Indigenous calls for sovereignty as a challenge to the legitimacy of non-Indigenous habitation and governance. Therefore, contemporary colonial relations with Indigenous sovereignty is an issue that extends beyond the domestic sphere because it has international relevance for the experiences of Indigenous peoples in settler societies such as Canada, New Zealand and USA.

Nicoll states that Indigenous sovereignty claims emanate from Indigenous epistemology and discursive frameworks (2002, paragraph 27). She upturns Eurocentric attempts to 'translate' Indigenous knowledge of sovereignty into academic discourse by asking what it is about Indigenous sovereignty that white people find so hard to understand (Nicoll 2002, paragraph 27). Further, Nicoll deftly refutes the fears of writers such as Windschuttle, who allege that an Indigenous secessionist movement would gain international support. She argues that these 'racialised fears' are, in fact, based on a belief that Indigenous sovereignty will be exactly the same as white hegemony, which would see the forced displacement and exclusion of non-Indigenous inhabitants (Nicoll 2002, paragraph 37). She maintains that such fears

were prevalent post Mabo and Wik, exacerbated by the dispossession of white Zimbabwean farmers that occurred at the same time. Tully, Kymlicka, Maaka and Fleras and Young, as discussed earlier in this chapter, all concurred that most Indigenous calls for nationhood and recognition of sovereignty do not include secession. Nicoll's contribution to this debate is that it is the fear that Indigenous sovereignty will be the same as white sovereignty that actively prevents white Australians from understanding what Indigenous sovereignty might actually be (2002, paragraph 37). Indeed, her challenge to herself and other non-Indigenous people is to write about their relationship to Indigenous sovereignty rather than taking on the role of "interpreter".

Perera's (2006a) approach is to recognise the dialogue and relations between minority migrant groups and Indigenous peoples by beginning with Indigenous sovereignty. She argues that dialogue between minority migrant groups, including those from other settler societies and those colonised in their country of origin has occurred throughout the history of migration and settlement to Australia. Perera points out that this dialogue can unsettle the Settler Australian-Indigenous binary in relation to Indigenous sovereignty. A fundamental difference between Perera and Gunew is that recognising Indigenous sovereignty is the starting point of Perera's approach. This requires minority migrants, who are also raced within Australia, to have a politics of acknowledging that they have signed on to what she calls the 'colonisers contract' through the act of migrating to Australian soil. This approach locates minority migrants differently to Indigenous people in Australia's history of colonisation. Additionally, it brings a new image of national identity to both

multiculturalism and Indigenous sovereignty in Australia that can contribute to these debates at an international level.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has contextualised the research questions regarding Australian identities and the social construction of the nation as an abstract community that imagines it is sovereign (Anderson 1991; Hage 1998; Poole 1999). It places this imagining in its colonial social and political history. The colonial legacy infused the nation as a structure of cultural power for white Australians. This chapter argued that nation is a discourse in which culture plays an active role through representing itself in national symbols, identities and meanings (Hall 1992, p.296). In Australia there are two parallel public and academic debates that focus on ‘descent, belonging and culture’ (Curthoys 2000, p.21). One debate is concerned with migrants, cultural diversity and immigration policy. The other debate centres on the difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the context of colonisation. There is an historic great divide between these two debates that has also been referred to as an ‘uneasy conversation’ (Curthoys 2000, p.21).

Policies of exclusion occurred in both debates. Colonial racism feeds racial superiority and is a common element in the debates about multiculturalism and Indigenous occupation. The exclusion of the non-white Other reserved land for Europeans and the disavowal of Indigenous sovereignty justified the taking of land in Australia as it had in other British colonial nations (Curthoys 2000; Harris 1993). The early practice of multiculturalism excluded migrants from Asia through its focus

on migrants from continental Europe due to the belief that the latter were assimilable (Curthoys 2000, p.23). A common debate promulgated by Blainey in 1984, was that the immigration rate from Asia is too high for Australia [read white Australia]. Multicultural debates shifted to focus on a concern with controlling the numbers of Asian immigrants or to a view that racial, ethnic or cultural distinctions should not be present in immigration debates.

This chapter argues that there is a simultaneous history of the oppression of Indigenous Australians and Oriental others through racialisation. Rather than the structural alignment of the Oriental and Indigenous “others” leading to the inclusion of Indigenous people in multicultural discourses (Gunew 2004, pp.46-7), these debates must acknowledge the land has been stolen from Indigenous people in the process of colonisation and the subsequent invader society (Perera 2005). Popular discourse represents the story of descent, belonging and culture through the imagery of the settler society as a multicultural society that obscures the continuing occupation of Indigenous lands and waters, protects white governmentality and prevents non-colonial Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations.

To return to the opening quote by Moreton-Robinson, Australian dialogue of culture and belonging needs to centre on the migrant relationship with Indigenous sovereignty as the ‘terms and conditions of the very making of the nation’ (Moreton-Robinson 2007, p.101). Hall’s contribution of understanding the role of culture as active in the production of the nation as discourse presents an opportunity for the creation of non-colonial symbols, representations and cultural institutions that comprise Australian national cultures. Further, to apply Simpson’s (2000) concept of

Indigenous nationhood as intimately linked to everyday life means that Indigenous sovereignty can be fundamental to cultural narratives of the nation as a non-colonial cultural artefact. The discursive practice of nationhood becomes non-colonial when negotiated in everyday dialogue that is in relationship with Indigenous sovereignty.

Chapter 3 will pick up racialised cultural identities as the means through which subjects imagine themselves as belonging to a nation in order to analyse whiteness in Australian identities.

3. The (white) elephant in the room: cultural identities and Indigenous Sovereignty in Australia

Poor fellas who cannot know any better, trapped in their whiteness that does not allow them to be any other way...these manifestations of whiteness suddenly appear on our landscapes in vast numbers, demanding to be read (Bunda 2007, p.83)

...race shapes white women's lives. In the same way that both men's and women's lives are shaped by their gender, and that both heterosexual and lesbian women's experiences in the world are marked by their sexuality, white people *and* people of color live racially structured lives...any system of differentiation shapes those on whom it bestows privilege as well as those it oppresses...in a social context where white people have too often viewed themselves as nonracial or racially neutral, it is crucial to look at the "racialness" of white experience (Frankenberg 1993, p.1)

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have placed Australia in its political and social historical context as an invader society with a colonial history. Chapter 2 outlined the social construction of a nation as an abstract community that imagines itself as sovereign, and the problem of Australia as a racialised entity. Culture is broadly accepted to encompass a shared set of knowledge, values, language and behaviours. Culture shapes the worldview of those who subscribe to it and provides a cultural identity for its members. White cultural identities are the raced standpoint from which white people view the world and are often presented as 'common sense' or the 'normal view' of the world. The white knowledge and ways of being in the world and white ways of relating to each other are privileged over other epistemology and ontology

(see pp. 28-9). This chapter will address four key issues. First, cultural identities are socially constructed. Second, the national discourses racialise cultural identities. This discussion includes an examination of the debates in the literature about moving 'beyond race'. The third argument is that liberal multicultural discourse on sameness and difference is the historical backdrop to the construction of identity in liberal democratic societies. Fourthly, cultural identity is constructed on the ground of Indigenous sovereignty in the context of Australian invader society.

The two quotes at the start of this chapter capture the two principal arguments that this chapter will address. Firstly, as Tracey Bunda (2007) argues in the first quote, whiteness is a learned form of normality for many people located in this subject position, to the extent that they deny their racialised existence and are unable to develop cultural practices outside of this site. The 'manifestations of whiteness' are present on Indigenous landscapes and the hegemony of that presence demands an analytical approach to their deconstruction. This chapter argues that white subjects learn to enact a set of cultural practices in Australia (and internationally). The chapter will show that an approach based on the acknowledgement of Indigenous sovereignty enables the manifestations of whiteness to be seen, read and unsettled. The second quote, by Ruth Frankenberg (1993) speaks to the process of racially structured lives. She argues that not only are subject positions racially structured, but that the location gives privilege as well as oppression. The focus of this chapter is on the social construction of race in Australian cultural identities. The emphasis is on the social construction of whiteness as a racially structured position. This subject position is made to be evident in its location of power in the context of settler-Indigenous relationships, rather than being a neutral site.

This chapter will discuss the literature on the proverbial (white) elephant in the room of white Australian identities. The phrase ‘the elephant in the room’ is sometimes used to refer to a prohibited or unmentionable issue. Often the ‘elephant in the room’ is unmentioned in the context of trauma because the issue is too painful to name. On the other hand, it may be taboo, avoided through silence. As Michael Foucault theorises about silence:

Silence itself – the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name, the discretion that is required between different speakers – is less the absolute limit of discourse, the other side from which it is separated by a strict boundary, than an element that functions alongside the things said, with them and in relation to them (Foucault 1990, p.27).

Sometimes the ‘elephant’ is an issue that is so obvious and yet, so disturbing that it becomes invisible. The elephant is actively hidden by the combined effect of what is not spoken interplayed with what is spoken instead.

Another saying involving elephants is the ‘white elephant’. In Australia, this saying can refer to large government projects that cost a lot of money but do not amount to anything, or are a failure, or a smoke screen: the project was a ‘white elephant’. The colonial project in Australia is a ‘white elephant’ that did not completely succeed. The failed project of colonialism is evident in rural Australia in the ruins of early ‘settler’ sandstone buildings on cattle, sheep and agricultural properties long abandoned along with the ‘ghost’ (or abandoned) mining towns dotted around the continent. The title of this chapter applies both meanings of the term. The elephant in the room of white Australian identities is the fact of Indigenous sovereignty. Non-Indigenous Australians call stolen land home. Further, that colonial violence

established white belonging to the nation (Watson 2009). A possessive investment in what Moreton-Robinson has named the logic of white patriarchal sovereignty (2004a) unsettles white Australians who are resistant to dealing with whiteness. They are invested in the maintenance of race privilege that generated from white acts of genocide and Indigenous dispossession.

The majority of literature that comments on whiteness occurred from the late 1980s to the present day. However, there is foundational work by leading theorists of post-colonial theory: Fanon⁷ (1963; 1967) and Derrida⁸ (1972) in particular; also Foucault (for example see Gordon 1980) and Bourdieu⁹ (1993), who wrote his original works at the time of the Algerian revolution. Throughout the history of colonialism, there have been intellectuals who observed and contested whiteness, such as those above. Robert Young (2001) reminds us that colonialism symbolically has its origins over 500 years ago and includes slavery, enforced migration, oppression, appropriation of land, institutionalisation of racism, destruction of cultures and the imposition of other cultures.

Chela Sandoval (1997) uses five interwoven technologies (discussed below) to combine the work in Barthes's (1957) *Mythologies* and Franz Fanon's (1967, first published in French in 1951) *Black Skin White Masks* that responds to the decolonising activity occurring at the time of their writing. She does so in order to develop a decolonising methodology as a transformative process to address ongoing colonial relations between the colonised and colonisers. Sandoval argues that

⁷ *writing from the position of Black colonised category*

⁸ *Writing from the position of white Jewish French intellectual*

⁹ *who wrote from the position of white French intellectuals*

Barthes's work is the first comprehensive effort to critique whiteness as consciousness by a member of the colonising class (1997, p.95). The colonising peoples' (white middle class in particular) unconscious use of language and identity that enacted racist colonialism is Barthes's foremost concern. The values and language of the colonial society were invisible because the white performer saw them as 'natural', and therefore Barthes argues that it is necessary to decolonise the colonisers, as well as the colonised.

Interestingly, Barthes's writing came just six years after Franz Fanon first published *Black Skin, White Masks* in 1951, which argues for the decolonising of the colonised and coloniser. Sandoval combines both works to inform a decolonising methodology she terms 'the methodology of the oppressed' that can attend the transformative movement theorised by Fanon. Sandoval's framework includes five interwoven technologies. First, reading signs of power. Second, deconstructing them when necessary. Third, remaking signs in the interests of renegotiating power. Fourth, a commitment to an ethical position to structure all signs and their meanings to establish egalitarian power relations. Finally, the focused mobilisation of the four previous technologies in differential movement through mind, body, social body, sign and meaning (Sandoval 1997, pp.96-7). Her work provides a constructive framework for this chapter, and thesis as a whole, in that both coloniser and colonised are marked in their racialised subjectivity in terms of power relationships. The white elephant that takes up the whole room comes into focus as the object to be deconstructed. With its deconstruction, the room becomes available for the new and principled negotiations of egalitarian power relations.

The previous chapter explored the concept of the nation and nation-building and the ways in which race and whiteness define the narratives of the nation. There are many stories that establish the nation now referred to as 'Australia'. Some of these are from the dominant culture and the people in power support those stories to 'narrate the nation' (Bhabha 1990; see also Elder 2007). Other stories are 'counter-narratives' that seek to challenge, undermine or disrupt the dominant narratives. As Stuart Hall argues:

National identities do not subsume all other forms of difference into themselves and are not free of the play of power, internal divisions and contradictions, cross-cutting allegiances and difference. So when we come to consider whether national identities are being dislocated, we must bear in mind the way national cultures help to 'stitch up' differences into one identity (Hall 1992, p.299).

As discussed in the previous chapter on pp.44-5, nations are formed as a discursive process. This understanding of the nation as a cultural artefact loosens the grip of white Australian culture's possession of the nation and the position of governmentality that white privilege brings. Additionally, it enables the national discursive practice to shift from a hegemonic set of relations to a non-colonial relationship with Indigenous sovereignty as argued in the conclusion of Chapter 2, p.81. Thus, the discourses that narrate Australian identities are the focus of this chapter, and are of importance to chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Cultural identities are shaped by racialised discourses in a similar way that nations are. There are significant consequences for the way in which Australia deals with the tensions of race relations in a society that adheres to a multicultural agenda as a framework for national identity (Ang and Stratton 2001) (Ang). Ang claims that the 'historical tensions within these "race relations" are not solved by the rhetoric of multiculturalism, but, instead, made more complex and complicated' (Ang and

Stratton 2001, p.140). As discussed in section 1.2, multiculturalism represses the issue of 'race' rather than providing a compelling account for Australian national identity (Ang and Stratton 2001, p.100). Suddenly 'race' as a narrative disappeared, repressed, and a discourse of cultural diversity replaces it. The notion of the multicultural nation has also allowed those settler Australians often referred to as Anglo-Celtic to imagine that they are outside of multicultural Australia, and that the discourse of multi-cultural is only for the ethnics (Ang and Stratton 2001; May and Sleeter 2010). The following discussion will use the lens of critical race and whiteness studies to understand how cultural identities are raced. This is in order to disrupt the performative function of whiteness in the dominant narratives of Australian national identities and their relationship to Indigenous sovereignties.

The Introduction to this thesis established that the culmination of ways that race impacts on white people's lives could be referred to as 'whiteness' (see discussion on pp.32-4). Ruth Frankenberg argues that the variability of how whiteness is seen is anything but random – rather, it can be accounted for, analysed and challenged. Whiteness is not stabilised in hegemony, it is very unstable and easily contestable (Frankenberg 1997b, p.6). This means that as a discursive practice, whiteness requires constant reinforcement, protection and enactment in order to retain its position of power. Whiteness is expressed in three frameworks: structure, ideology and identity. Critical race and whiteness studies argue that race and whiteness are ideologies that inform structures and locate individuals and collectives in particular raced, gendered and classed (and other practices of oppression, for example discriminations based on ability) categories against a hegemonic white standard (Dyer 1997). The effect of the hegemonic formula for white people is that they do

not see themselves as raced, although they ascribe to white values and cultural practices informed by the racialised ideology. Dominant discourses present the categories of race, gender and class as being established and natural and thus, determined. This thesis critically examines the discourses based on ideologies of whiteness that inform white Australian identities and will refer to critical race and whiteness studies to argue that these categories are not fixed or natural, but fluid, and therefore contestable social constructions, that change in the course of history and politics.

Sara Ahmed states that:

Feeling better, whatever form it might take, is not about the overcoming of bad feeling, which are effects of histories of violence, but of finding a different relationship to them. It is in the face of all that endures of the past in the present, the pain, the suffering and the rage, that we can open ourselves up, and keep alive the hope that things can be different (Ahmed 2005).

Thus, Ahmed invites her reader to join her to confront oppressive social constructions, such as the violent history of oppression based on race, by holding up and looking at the mirror of the past. Then, by looking at the contemporary repercussions of the historical images, and seeing the pain and suffering that it caused, her reader, as an agent, can produce a different relationship with that past rather than reinforcing the violence through its suppression and denial. A different future can be reached through a relationship that does not deny the injustice and privileges that it has bestowed.

This thesis is thus concerned with the system and power relations rather than attempting to create a 'white Australian identity' that is 'OK'. The move to establish 'white identities that are OK' is also challenged in the critical literature about 'good

anti-racists’, which will also be discussed later in this chapter. There are four reasons for taking this route to Australian identities. First, Indigenous sovereignty must be the starting location because it is the proper protocol to acknowledge the First Peoples. Second, as discussed in the last chapter, the violence of colonialism founded the Australian nation. Now, it continues to shape the lives of all subjects in Australia. Third, the normative assumption of whiteness makes white identities neutral and ambivalent to their complicity in the ongoing relations of dispossession, and therefore maintains colonial relationships and protects white privilege. Finally, all subject positions that are situated in Australia are raced and placed in relation to different histories and positions of power in relation to each other and with Indigenous sovereignty. Therefore, the mirror that each agent holds up will reveal a different construction of power-relations at the same time as showing the elephant in the room in full view as a discourse to be deconstructed, rather than remaining unmentionable. Different ways of relating can create new spaces that acknowledge Indigenous sovereignty. Such a space requires equitable relations between epistemologies that do not evade white privilege.

The following discussion will look at social constructionist concepts of identity with racialised subjectivities as one theoretical approach to shifting the power relations between racialised subjectivities.

3.2 Identity and racialised subjectivity

The deconstructionist critique of identity allows Western debates to place essentialist concepts under erasure rather than attempting to replace the concept at hand (identity) with a ‘truer form’. Stuart Hall (1996b, p.1) argues that the form has not

been reconstructed after deconstruction. The form does not have new concepts with which to replace them, and therefore they continue to be used in their 'detotalised' form. The detotalised form "no longer operates within the paradigm in which they were originally generated" in order to speak of them (Hall 1996b, p.1). Hall draws on Foucault's argument that what is required is "not a theory of the knowing subject, but rather a theory of discursive practice" (Foucault 1970 cited in Hall 1996b, p.2). In an extension of Foucault's work, Hall does not abandon 'the subject' through a project of dissolution. Rather, he proposes that the subject needs to be reconceived within 'its new, displaced or decentred position within the paradigm' (Hall 1996b, p.2). One of the many useful insights offered by Hall is to shift attention to the need, in his words, 'to re-articulate the relationship between subjects and discursive practices'. Hall claims that it is here that the question of identification occurs as the 'subjectification to discursive practices, and the politics of exclusion which all such subjectification seems to entail' (Hall 1996b, p.2). This means that an individual as the subject creates a sense of identity through applying discourses about nation, culture, gender etc. to themselves. In the process of identifying with a particular discourse about race, or culture, other racial discourses are not applied. These are discourses of the 'other'. Therefore, discourses about the other are essential to building a discourse of the self. There are always discourses that are excluded in the process of identification. Hall's theorisation of the relationship between a subject and discursive practices is used in the analysis of this thesis to help to understand the process through which a white Australian subject identifies with discursive practices that exclude other subject positions.

The recognition of commonality in shared heritage and the values or ideals that give cohesion and loyalty are foundational to Hall's concept of identification. This process is, therefore, not 'natural' or 'fundamental', but a discursive strategy that means identification is always 'in process'. Hall argues that the provisional status of identification means "once secured, it does not obliterate difference". The position of identification operates across difference and it requires what is left outside of the subject's identity. The main point here is that identities are fragmented, not unified. Identities are not singular but diverse and often contradictory, placed in the social and historical context of their making. It means that identity is 'constructed through difference and is constantly destabilised by what it leaves out' (Hall 1996a, p.5). This concept is foundational for Frankenberg's point, discussed on pp. 32-4, that whiteness is unstable. Such an understanding of whiteness enables a transformative approach to the relationship between the subject and discourse.

The understanding of identity as constructed through difference and within discourse, rather than outside of discourse, brings another set of fundamental questions around how its meaning can be understood and how its inception can be theorised (e.g. Avtar Brah 1992 cited in Hall 1996b, p.5). In this context, Hall uses the term 'identity' to:

...refer to the meeting point, the point of *suture*, between on the one hand the discourses and practices which attempt to 'interpolate', speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be 'spoken'. Identities are thus points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us (Hall 1996b, pp.5-6).

Thus using Hall's position on identity, white Australian identities are the point of temporary attachment to the subject position that the discursive practices of

whiteness construct. The point of attachment requires continual reproduction. It is an active and creative process. Further, the subject position “white Australian” is called into a position of power with “Australian identities”. It is this location of privilege accorded by the subject position “white Australian” that critical race and whiteness studies seek to displace.

Avtar Brah is exemplary of the literature that de-centres whiteness through the task of bringing the ethereal, white Cartesian body into view:

Yet I know now and knew then that ‘looks’ mattered a great deal within the colonial regimes of power. Looks mattered because of the history of the racialisation of ‘looks’; they mattered because discourses about the body were crucial to the constitution of racism (Brah 1996, p.3)

Further to the social construction of race as a subject position, Brah’s assessment about the discourses that ontologically ascribe race membership, culture, ethnicity and nationality to the body is constructive for this study. The nation ascribed discourses of race, including whiteness, onto bodies. The discourse of race includes and excludes racial difference into the subject position of “Australian”. Race was used from the nineteenth century (see for example Voegelin 1940 cited in Gilroy 2000, p.57) onwards to ascribe such membership through colour and, later, through the genes one carries, as discussed in the Introduction on pp.26-30. Challenging this line of thought, authors such as Gilroy oppose all forms of determinism. Gilroy traces the production of race and raciology within modern constructions of “territorial sovereignty” that ‘promoted a new definition of the relationship between place, community and what we are now able to call “identity”’ (2000, p.55). This means that the subject draws upon discourses of belonging to places that are linked to membership to ‘community’.

Hall's concept of the relationship as a point of suture between the subject and discursive practices, discussed on p.89, can thus be extended to examine the multiple discourses that narrate the relationship between place, community and identity. While disrupting the hegemonic grip of white identity to place that is inherited from colonialism, complications arise if the same 'anti-essentialism' argument is applied to Indigenous sets of knowledge and ways of being in the world. For example, let us look at Gilroy's argument alongside the theorisation of Indigenous ontological connection to land by Watson (2007a) and Moreton-Robinson (Moreton-Robinson 2003a) as discussed in the previous chapter. To apply Gilroy's argument in a non-Indigenous context, race has been ascribed to a territorial sovereignty and to the relationship between identity, place and community. When the point of suture is occupied by discourses of Indigenous sovereignty as well as western epistemology then Moreton-Robinson argues that Indigenous ontology is incommensurable with white Australian ways of being in the world. This is also where, as argued by Haggis (2004b), those non-Indigenous people involved in knowledge production 'must take seriously...[that] Indigenous ways of knowing and being are not encompassed by the concept of "essentialism"' (Haggis 2004b, p.57). Rather than Indigenous epistemology and ontology being essentialist, Haggis states:

...I see that the challenge for how whiteness operates as an essentialism of the (white) self and settler possessiveness is to engage with the claim of incommensurability and its consequences while continuing to reveal, analyse and challenge the multiple ways in which whiteness is internally incoherent, differentiated, hyphenated...Like it or not, my aspirations to avoid a colonizing move are caught out by the lack of a 'post' in the Australian colonial (Haggis 2004b, p.57).

Congruent with Haggis, this thesis contends that the colonising practices cannot be avoided by stepping out of whiteness. Rather, in the Australian context, the problem is to destabilise the social construction of whiteness in Australian identities through

forming processes of social relations with Indigenous sovereignty that takes seriously the incommensurability of that ontology that belongs to a separate body of knowledge.

Colonisation 'reformulates' the white European self as well as creating the colonised self. Intellectuals such as Franz Fanon (1963; 1967) and Edward Said (1978) revealed that the concept of the colonised Other is essential to colonial discourses that spring from the standpoint of a white self (cited in Frankenberg 1993, p.16). Colonial discourses on culture and race generate the white self. The white 'Western self is itself produced *as an effect* of the Western discursive construction of its Others and, therefore, the self and its Others are co-constructed' (Frankenberg 1993, p.17). Nakayama and Martin argue that '[as] a social construction, whiteness gains meaning from its encounters with non-whiteness'(1999, p.vii). Frankenberg elaborates that '[t]his co-construction is however, asymmetrical for the term "whiteness" signals the production and reproduction of dominance rather than subordination, normativity rather than marginality, and privilege rather than disadvantage' (1993, pp.236-7).

The political contexts of white cultural practices are another site, along with racial privilege, that carves out "a normative space and set of identities" (Frankenberg 1993, p.192). Because the white cultural practices are constructed as normal, again, like racial privilege, they are usually invisible to those located within such practices (Austin 2001, p.1). White cultural practices are not homogenous and do not constitute a uniform belief system or worldview. Therefore, white cultural practices are just that, something that is enacted, or performed. They are cultural practices that are developed in relation to and through involvement with others (Frankenberg 1993,

p.194). The argument can be extended, then, to see white cultural practice as acts that are reinforced, learned and changed through interactions within that cultural sphere and are influenced by other cultural practices. Frankenberg concludes that:

Ultimately, the process of altering present and future meanings of whiteness is inextricably connected to that of altering the meanings of other, coconstructed [sic] racial and cultural identities. That process is in turn linked to the effort to transform the racial order in both material and discursive terms and to alter...the distribution of power. Clearly, that project is not individual but collective. Nor does it rest with white activists alone, so much as with collective actions by people from a range of locations in the racial order (Frankenberg 1993, p.243).

The literature discussed above offer a means of analysing white Australian identities as a set of cultural practices. These practices are enacted and are accompanied by a set of power relations that structure subjectivities with both oppression and privilege. Studying white Australian identities makes it is possible to unsettle hegemonic power relations that are grounded in historical contexts of colonisation, and, as discussed on p.75, aim towards Sandoval's (1997) proposed ethical relations. When unsettling power relations their relationship with difference needs to be placed in their context within liberalism as a discourse.

In order to learn how liberalism shapes the way that liberal democratic societies practice multiculturalism this section will now turn to consider the representation of sameness and difference in relation to national identity. When the political nature of the relationship between 'identity and difference, sameness and otherness' (Gilroy 2000, p.99) is analysed, the 'interplay of consciousness, territory, and place' are revealed as themes" (Gilroy 2000, p.100). Identity has a history and that the establishment of sameness and difference through identity is a foundation of the modern political culture (Gilroy 2000, p.100). The political action of repressing internal variation in order to maximize external difference created groups that could

position themselves against 'others' in order to protect and maintain that collective identity (Gilroy 2000, p.102). The problem of sameness is that external relationships of 'conflict and exclusion' form 'selves – and their identities' (Gilroy 2000, p.109). While Gilroy focuses on multiculturalism in the UK and USA, his thesis that identity constructs sameness and difference and that a part of that meaning is to repress internal variation and 'maximise external difference' is useful in the Australian context in an analysis of how cultural groups of others are created.

The politics of difference has been explored as a way out of the oppression of the Other. This strategy claims that valuing difference can develop a truly democratic society where all the range of cultures can be celebrated as a part of the national identity (Weeks 1990). However, some argue that tolerance and acceptance of diversity, as practiced in multiculturalism, is also problematic in that it merely reinforces the privileged position of whiteness, as white Australians are in a position to tolerate (for example, Bhabha 1994; Hage 1998; King 1976). The problems identified with multiculturalism and the politics of difference suggest a quandary in the search for a politics that contribute to challenging the unearned privileging of white Australians as beneficiaries of colonisation in Australia and end racism.

The approach of tolerance and acceptance of diversity through multiculturalism, therefore, does not address racialised difference in Australia. Multiculturalism does not operate in relationship with Indigenous sovereignty in Australia due to the issue of sameness and difference placing western limitations of what is tolerable upon Indigenous conceptions of land and belonging in a post-colonising society. Indigenous sovereignty and racialised privilege/oppression limits the future of

multiculturalism to address these very limitations. The following section will focus on the future of Australian identities.

3.3 Which way Australian identities?

The phrase “which way?” comes from its use in Aboriginal English in Australia. The phrase is used to ask, “which way are you/they going?” This question includes the direction and mode of transport, as well as a measure of intent, or situated politics. The questioner may want to know “which way” a person’s intention lies (for one example see Fredericks 2007). In the context of this thesis, the expression is able to highlight the uncertainty of “which way white Australian identities going?” in relation to Indigenous sovereignty. Further, it refers to the protocol that there are many ways to go rather than one way. It is a process of mutual respect and recognition of the different ways and of taking responsibility for one’s own responsibilities. The final section of this chapter will use critical race and whiteness studies to unpack the effect of whiteness on ways of relating in Australia. The section will attend to ways of relating, rather than belonging. Critical whiteness studies must continue to be attentive to ‘the ongoing histories of racialisation, and the ways in which “white” is a raced subject position, regardless of whether it is recognized as such by white people’ (Riggs 2004b, paragraph 2).

3.3.1 Connecting subjectivities to relations of ruling

Whiteness is intimately linked with national identity and nationhood in Australia (Elder, et al. 2004). What does it mean for white Australian subjectivities to claim the location of ‘being Australian’? The concept of ‘relations of ruling’ (Smith 1990b)

is particularly useful for examining the power relations that play out in everyday interactions. This thesis will examine whether ruling relations are enacted between differently raced cultural identities and between Australian identities and Indigenous sovereignty. It will inform the analysis of what is known about racialised identities and how they appear to be linked to Indigenous dispossession and claims to sovereignty.

Moreton-Robinson (2000b) draws upon Smith (1987; 1990a; 1990b) to challenge white Australians to connect their subjectivities with what she calls the 'relations-of-ruling'. Similar to Frankenberg's analysis (as discussed on pp.32-5), this requires white Australians to see their whiteness as a racialised social position and to recognise the unearned privilege that it brings. A refusal, denial or inability to do this leads to the ongoing post-colonising condition that the relations-of-ruling maintain. This prevents entry into the impossible space proposed by Watson (2007a discussed in more detail in Chapter 6), and the framework proposed by Sandoval (see pp.88-9). There is a growing body of literature in Australia that critiques whiteness and seeks to engage with Aboriginal Sovereignty (such as Haggis 2004b; Nicoll 2004; Riggs 2006), rather than seeking to 'solve racism' or to 'give up power' or to be 'good' or 'better' white people (Riggs 2006, p. 110). Fiona Nicoll places the status of whiteness as the problem and argues that white Australians must relate with Indigenous sovereignty from 'within in their skin' (Nicoll 2004, p.30). This means having a fundamental understanding of one's racialised position as white in order to relate in a manner that is not colonial, but rather stands on the ground or the fact of Indigenous sovereignty.

The failure to “connect subjectivity to relations of ruling” (Moreton-Robinson 2000b, p.xxi) is evident in the work of some academics, such as Peter Read in his text *Belonging* (Read 2000). His methodology combines textual analysis of poetry and lyrics as well as interviews, which he employs in an attempt to break the incapacity of white settler guilt about the invasion and subsequent colonisation that was prevalent in various left wing ‘Aboriginal Reconciliation’ debates in the 1990s. Rather than focusing on guilt, Read searches to legitimately connect with and belong to land in this country. Read seeks to belong to country through personal relationships with Indigenous friends, as well as through exploring multiple relationships of belonging and loving of landscapes, including multi-generational settler Australians and new migrants, in his quest to find the ‘proper country’. Read problematically uses the term ‘we’ and ‘us’ to address white settler Australians throughout the text, at the same time as attempting to include the multicultural other. Read does not critique his own location of unearned race privilege, and thus fails to shift the relations of ruling despite his appreciation of the invasion, colonisation and dispossession of Indigenous peoples. His desire is to get out of the space of impossibility as quickly as possible (Haggis 2007) and, as a result, he maintains a paternalistic approach to relations with Indigenous sovereignty.

Peter Read seeks Indigenous ways of connecting to country to inform his own connections, like multilayered maps of belonging. This approach may seem desirable to those seeking coexistence. However, it masks the incommensurability of Indigenous ontology as being in and of the land (Moreton-Robinson 2003b, p.32) and demonstrates the complexity required of an analytical approach to embodied white Australian identities. That is, if Indigenous ways of connecting to land are

incommensurable to western ways of living in the world, then western subjects cannot seek to emulate Indigenous ontology. Using connection to land through the Indigene in order to belong is in danger of a cannibalisation of Indigenous ontology, as argued by Irene Watson (2003). The desire to belong (at any cost) is a determination that emerges from white patriarchal sovereignty and white privilege that seeks to circumvent the impossible space. The desire is for the different kinds of belonging to be reconcilable and knowable. This aspiration does not transform the post-colonising relations of power between, firstly, the nation and Indigenous Australians, and secondly, those privileged by whiteness and Indigenous Australians. While Read also seeks to recognise Indigenous ontology to land, the sheer act of seeking legitimacy requires the disavowal of Indigenous epistemology and ontology, because white belonging is enacted through patriarchal white sovereignty. He does not envision the possibility that Indigenous people may not want to receive non-Indigenous belonging. The assumption is that Indigenous Australians would be willing to 'welcome' white invader belonging should a real choice ever be a reality.

Germaine Greer (2003) runs into similar problems in her essay *Whitefella Jump Up*. She argues that colonisation is not legitimate because the land already belonged to sovereign people, whose laws did not recognise the annexation of their Country (Countries) by the British Crown. With good intentions, Greer's approach is to do this through settler Australians accepting their Aboriginality (p. 73). In Greer's final section, titled *Our Place*, she argues that Australians need to accept their Aboriginality in order to make Australia post-colonial and, indeed, for Australia to be an Aboriginal Republic. In her argument, all Australians become Aboriginal. Where Read was arguing for Australians to identify with Aboriginal people in the

process of belonging and to search for the ‘proper Country’, Greer presents the possibility of becoming Aboriginal and, through that Aboriginality, to relate to the land and nation.

The problem with Greer’s perception of claiming Aboriginality is that this is the final post-modern consumption of Indigenous people. Greer does not remain in the impossible space of Indigenous Sovereignty to hold the difficult dialogue, as proposed by Irene Watson (Watson 2007a). Rather, she argues for the ‘shortest way to nationhood’, where migrants and settler Australians come to the table to consume the Indigenous persona. The narrative of the ‘stew pot’ moves to another level of consumption, with whiteness being the consumer to become Indigenous.

Greer’s argument assumes that non-Indigenous people have the ‘right to know’. She does not allow for the possibility that Aboriginal sovereignty is incommensurable with white sovereignty and with Western epistemology and ontology. While she argues for non-Indigenous Australians to ‘become Aboriginal’ through Aboriginal processes (such as adoption into kinship systems and so forth), Greer acknowledges that “[m]ore vexing is the question of whether blackfellas would let us become Aboriginal, whether they would adopt us” (2003, p.41). Indeed, Indigenous historian, Tony Birch (2007) argued that Indigenous people act from sovereignty and may not necessarily welcome new (or old) migrants onto their Country.

Read (2000) interviewed nonwhite migrants who tied their sense of belonging to their ‘choice’ to move here and their hard work and hence offering to the society. However, in Read’s research, nonwhite migrants reflected that other Australians

often question their right to belong. Referring to Read, Moreton-Robinson (2003b, p.26) argues that non-white migrants' sense of belonging is also tied to *terra nullius*, to Indigenous dispossession, but that whiteness delineates who has the right to possess. Migrant belonging, while limited by the constraints of Australian forms of whiteness that structurally privileges white settler Australians and British migrants, is still based on the 'logic of capital' that relies on the dispossession of Indigenous Australians.

Indigeneity disrupts the belonging of nonwhite migrant Australians and settler Australians by what Moreton-Robinson (2003b, p.24) terms as the 'ontological belonging' of Indigenous Australians to the land. She argues that:

Our ontological relationship to land, the ways that country is constitutive of us, and therefore the inalienable nature of our relation to land, marks a radical, indeed incommensurable, difference between us and the non-Indigenous. This ontological relation to land constitutes a subject position that we do not share, and which cannot be shared, with the post-colonial subject whose sense of belonging in this place is tied to migrancy...[F]or Indigenous subjects [t]here is always a subject position that can be thought of as fixed in its inalienable relation to land (Moreton-Robinson 2003b, p.31).

While both Read and Greer clearly have an understanding of marginalisation and power, it is undermined by their inability to see the limitations as embodied white subjects who benefit from racialised privilege. Both Read and Greer assume they have the right to know, and indeed, the capacity to experience Indigenous ontological relationship to country. While it is essential for white Australians to know of Indigenous ontological connection to land, it is a colonising move to appropriate it (Probyn 2005, p.5). Further, the subject positions that arrive from elsewhere (whether recent migrants or multi-generational migrants) mean that they derive belonging to the nation from belonging to white patriarchal sovereignty and the

subsequent dispossession of Indigenous people. Jane Haggis (2007, p.319) argues, any attempt to 'slip into Indigeneity' does not recognise the limitations of the white subject position. It is limited by its refusal to acknowledge the incommensurability of Indigenous ontology with non-Indigenous ways of being.

Indigenous academics, such as Ian Anderson (1995) and Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2004b), bring the incommensurability of Indigenous and white settler Australian ontology and epistemology into sight. Moreton-Robinson (2004b) argues that Indigenous Australians live in the land and are located in the land, while white settler Australians, from the colonising past to the post-colonising present, live on the land based on possession. Indigenous sovereignty, knowledge (epistemology) and ways of being (ontology) come from the land that I conceptualise as a fluid livingness of people within the Country. White settler Australian sovereignty and knowledge of land is based on white patriarchal and capitalist ownership of land as private property or public property belonging to the Crown. With no standard of measure for comparison, the claim to 'be Australian' is the declaration of white settler Australians to prioritise their sovereignty as legitimised through the nation, while disavowing Indigenous sovereignty because it is incommensurable. By implication white subjectivities maintain the centre of power through whiteness and replicates the social inequities and poverty that Indigenous Australians experienced and the internment/deportation of the illegitimated refugee 'Other'.

Fiona Nicoll analyses the experience of 'falling out of perspective' as a white academic in race relations in Australia. Rather than seeking the 'right' perspective or the 'correct' way of seeing race relations, Nicoll takes heed from Moreton-

Robinson's critique of the white academic's location as 'knower' and uses the analogy that white academics need to fall off their perches into the ground of Indigenous sovereignty. She argues that this requires an awareness of the embodied experiences of whiteness. That is, 'to understand Australian race relations *within my skin*, rather than presuming to know them from some point outside it' (Nicoll 2004, p.30, italics in original). In contrast to Greer's approach of 'becoming Aboriginal', Nicoll's account delineates the white race privilege that white individuals (as members of a hegemonic collective) not only embody, but exercise on a daily basis. For Nicoll, "[t]his brings Indigenous and non-Indigenous understandings into relationship and is...the only ground on which the negotiation of sovereignty in Australia can be justly conducted" (2004, p.30). She argues that all relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in this country occur in the context of the struggle for sovereignty and are thus power relationships (Nicoll 2004, p.30).

What Nicoll adds to the literature on race relations in Australia is an appreciation of the incorporeal and universalised white subject, who hovers above the battlefield of Indigenous sovereignty and 'knows all'. She argues that the racialised trope of 'perspective' is imperative for white Australians and it is tied to national identity. The trope of perspective places different knowledges as 'mere perspectives' and allows white Australians to discount Indigenous sovereignty as just a perspective. According to Nicoll, whiteness and white race privilege allows non-Indigenous Australians to refuse to walk on the ground of Indigenous sovereignty by remaining disembodied white subjects.

Nicoll seeks to be on the ground of Indigenous sovereignty and to walk the war zone of race relations as an embodied subject. This requires a consciousness of white race privilege. It requires a critique of that racialised privilege and, in Nicoll's words, "the whiteness of the claim to know" (2004, p.30). Nicoll's work is located within critical, cultural studies and applies a textual analysis of popular culture and the media. In order for both non-Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous academics to do this, we must be prepared firstly, to notice the performance of white race privilege and secondly, to acknowledge that as the white subject, we will not always notice when the performance occurs. The Indigenous subject does, because it is at the cost of Indigenous subjectivity. From the position of the embodied critical white subject, it is more likely that a genuine engagement with the power relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people will occur if it is located on Indigenous sovereign terms.

Like Nicoll, Haggis refuses to avoid the collaboration with whiteness (discussed on pp.79-80). Haggis identifies that being positioned outside of the matrix of power and privilege is the restriction to transgressive agency because, as Frankenberg (1993) also notes, whiteness is not merely an identity, but also structure, location and discourse. For this reason, Haggis names the 'doubleness of whiteness: as we contest, we are also complicit' (2007, p.317). It is the complicity that both Read (2000) and Greer (2003) attempt to circumvent in their thoughts of future relationships between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people in this country. Referring to Bhabha (1990) Haggis argues that Australia is not a hybrid cultural 'third space' because the space of Indigenous sovereignty cannot be entangled with settler colony possessiveness (2007, p.318). The normative assumptions of

whiteness and the collusion of continuing dispossession mean that ‘happy hybridity’ (Haggis 2007, 318) is a problematic goal for future identities and relations as an attempt to ‘slip into indigeneity’ to avoid the discomforts of whiteness.

Instead of finding a ‘third space’ of hybridity, the whiteness that imbues Australian identities must be located in its complicity in ongoing post-colonising relationships that dispossess Indigenous people. Rather than locating oneself as a ‘good white person’ or a ‘good anti-racist’, Australians who wish to be subversive must critically acknowledge their racialised location in whiteness and begin the ‘hard treaty work’ (Haggis 2004b). In the words of Irene Watson:

It is in thinking through how to engage with Aboriginal sovereignties that Australian society in the main becomes ‘stuck’ where the ground of ‘impossibility’ lies, but it is this ground ‘exactly’ where our thinking should begin (Watson 2007a, p.25).

Thus, the social construction of Australian identities occurs in the context of a colonial history that has contemporary implications for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The lived experiences of all subjects in Australia are racialised in ways that privilege as well as oppress, and this is the ‘white elephant’ in the ‘room of cultural identities’ in Australia. Therefore, by talking about how to be in relationship with Aboriginal sovereignties, the racialness of white experience is brought into focus on the ground of Aboriginal sovereignty rather than maintaining an ambivalent discourse that such a relationship is too difficult to achieve.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a critical literature review on the racialisation of cultural identities. The chapter considered the critical race and whiteness literature to examine what is known about racialised identities. Identities are shaped by many discourses including discourses about race that privilege as well as oppress. All people's lives are structured by race. Whiteness is a learned set of social practices that white people experience as normal. The normativity of whiteness as a structural location, as a set of values and cultural practices, has cumulated to the point of being invisible to those who benefit from the privileged status it brings. The 'elephant in the room' of cultural identities grants power that is too large to address. This chapter examined the suggestion of one body of literature to move beyond race as a way to move transgressive agency forward. This approach maintains a complicity in whiteness that cannot be evaded by leaving the ground of racialised experiences.

The chapter argued that Indigenous sovereignty is the (white) elephant in the room of Australian identities. Non-Indigenous belonging in Australia emerges out of a history of migrancy and Indigenous dispossession. The discourses that shape Australian identities occur in the context of a colonial history as relations of power between racialised identities. White Australian concepts of belonging draw upon white patriarchal sovereignty that is based on possession and are incommensurable with Indigenous sovereignty. Approaches to the concept of belonging in Australia that appropriate Indigenous knowledge and ways of being in the world maintain a hegemonic set of relations. Therefore, transformative approaches must address the decolonisation of the colonisers as well as the colonised, both of whom inhabit racialised subjectivity in terms of power relationships enacted in everyday

experiences. Australian identities must be constructed through social relations that enable a relationship with Indigenous sovereignty in Australia as the foundation of non-colonial ways of relating.

There is a gap in empirical research about everyday white Australian lives. This thesis adds to the knowledge of white Australian lived experiences of racialised difference. Additionally, it extends the understanding of the way that white discourses shape white Australian ways of relating with Indigenous sovereignty. Further empirical studies are necessary to examine the centrality of the racial experiences of white Australians in the context of Indigenous sovereignty.

The next chapter will discuss the methods used to gather and analyse the empirical material that will be discussed in chapters 5-7. It will draw upon the premise of the social construction of race in white Australian identities. The empirical data is necessary to examine identity as a dynamic network of relations that are localised in social, political and geographical history within the hegemonic white Australian culture.

4. Methodology

I will end my keynote address with a quote from my mother directed to white anthropologists: “Don’t think you know my family or myself better than I do: fuck off!” (Moreton-Robinson 2006a)

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapters showed how race shapes the social constructions of both nation and cultural identity. This analysis applies descriptions of race and cultural difference in the establishment of Australian born white Australian identities, in the context of social and political moments in the localised Australian history of race in Australian identities. It explores identity as a dynamic web of relations that are localised in social, political and geographical history within the hegemonic white Australian society. This chapter introduces the methods used to gather and analyse the empirical material that will be discussed in chapters 5-7.

Angela McRobbie calls for a new methodology within cultural studies that views identity within its cultural context as it is experienced in people’s everyday lives:

[It] is necessary to move away from the binary opposition...[of] the distinction between text and lived experience, between media and reality, between culture and society. What is now required is a methodology, a new paradigm for conceptualising identity-in-culture, an ethnographic approach which takes as its starting point the relational interactive quality of everyday life and which brings a renewed rigor to this kind of work by integrating into it a dense sense of history and contingency (McRobbie 1992, p.730).

Therefore, this thesis focuses on how local rural white identities form within their historical, geographical, economic and political contexts, influenced by national and

global forces. As discussed on p.14, the rural configurations of identity are representative of South Australian rurality but not other rural locations. The primary research question is ‘how do white Australians, in a particular time and place, construct their identities?’ The question draws upon the traditions of Western Sociology and Cultural Studies to examine how race shapes the social construction of Australian identities. This research is heavily influenced by the work of Ruth Frankenberg (1993) discussed in Chapter 3. The research question requires an investigation of the way that power is lived out daily in social relationships. One way of seeing power in social relationships in the context of Australia as an invader society is to consider how subjectivities connect to relations-of-ruling in Australia. Three subsidiary objectives were developed to do this. First, how do rural white Australians understand multiculturalism? Second, how do rural white Australians construct their identities in the context of Indigenous sovereignty? Finally, which discourses do the participants use to understand difference in the context of their relationship with Indigenous people? These questions arise from social constructionist epistemologies.

4.2 Paradigm and methods of inquiry

For Indigenous people, white research about them is just another aspect of imperialism and colonialism. As suggested in Moreton-Robinson’s quote on p.113, white researchers in Australia are actively located in a social-political history of the ‘white expert’, claiming to know “the Indigene” as an object of study. Social research, with its links to anthropology, has traditionally been a part of the experience of colonisation (Said 1978; Smith 1999). Indigenous academics, such as

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2006c), Bronwyn Fredericks (2007) and Irabinna Rigney (2008), among others, have explicitly challenged the research community about racist practices, ideology, ethnocentric assumptions and exploitative research. In response to this challenge, this thesis contends that any criticism of whiteness or racialised privilege, in Australia, is incomplete unless placed in the context of Indigenous sovereignty and the racialised relations of power that result from enacting white cultural practices of power between racialised subjectivities. The analysis aims to allow the multiple formations of whiteness to be viewed and critiqued as social constructions of cultural practice while at the same time addressing the issue of whiteness for Indigenous sovereignty.

The following discussion will elaborate on the framework for the research strategy, and explains the qualitative interview-based methods that the researcher used to collect and understand the primary data to satisfy the research questions. The researcher conducted the fieldwork over a period of one month in July 2003; with ten days spent at Rivertown, ten days in Rolling Hills and ten days in Red Ocean. The town names used are pseudonyms to protect the anonymity of the participants. The three towns are located in rural South Australia. The next section will also address some of the problems inherent in data analysis.

This thesis implements qualitative methods and follows the Foucauldian tradition of discourse analysis including in-depth guided interviews with 29 respondents (see especially Kendall and Wickham 1999; Moreton-Robinson 2006b). Qualitative interviews allow key themes or differences to emerge that will reveal the public discourses that participants draw upon to understand the issues discussed in the

interviews. For the purpose of this study, the technique of discourse analysis is best applied to life stories and personal narratives about race, whiteness and belonging that are collected through in-depth interviews. The research project does not seek to provide an exhaustive study, as that would require a much larger sample and quantitative surveys. Using a reflexive and grounded theory approach is suitable for studies that seek to explore the complexities of social and cultural artefacts (Charmaz 2006; Gray 2003, p.5) such as identity.

Cultural theory and a sociological understanding of race, whiteness and settler Australian identities are used to interrogate the source and location of whiteness with which the participants identify. There will be no claim that the interviews are representative of the total population of Australia, or that the identities are representative of 'the Australian identity'. It does identify common themes as well as counter-narratives emerging from the empirical experiences of the 29 respondents to see how they relate public discourses in their daily lives. The researcher strategically directed the interviews to draw out "lived experiences" of race and they establish the basis of the thesis. In the tradition of grounded theory, the narratives that come out of their responses direct the themes for the thesis discussion and produce more questions.

For the interviews, male and female white Australian-born people in three rural towns were invited to participate. The respondents self-identify to meet the criteria of 'white Australian'. The life histories of the participants is used as a resource for analysing white Australian society in a localised context, similar to the ways that Frankenberg used everyday narratives for discourse analysis. Frankenberg argues

that in order to understand these narratives, the life experiences need reviewing in the context of broader social processes in which their daily lives take place. As in Frankenberg's study the interviews in this research project are localised and their stories and individual understandings of their identity as Australians and how they see race occur within their social, geographical and political history. Furthermore, in order to examine the social processes that manufacture whiteness, Frankenberg draws on a theoretical analysis of race, racism and colonialism in both localised and international contexts, to implement a substantive analysis of these processes in the daily life experiences of the women she interviews (Frankenberg 1993, p.7). A similar approach was applied by Hartigan (1997b) in Detroit to examine local fractals of whiteness. A part of Frankenberg's concern, which this research project echoes, is to explore how white identities describe race and cultural difference and how their descriptions reflect different moments in the history of race (Frankenberg 1993, p.12).

Unlike Frankenberg, however, this study does not categorise the participants into groups according to their views on race. Frankenberg develops three categories, Essentialist Racism, Colour-evasiveness/Power-evasiveness and Race-cognisance. Frankenberg concedes that the women's responses in her study sometimes shift from one category to another through statements that contradict each other. Her analysis of the internal incoherence is a part of the innovation of her research. It inspires a similar approach in this study, although efforts to generate categories became problematic in this study. A second point of difference is that unlike this study, Frankenberg's research does not directly address the issue of Indigenous sovereignty in the context of the U.S. as a settler society. While colonisation is an issue, the

interviews, research questions and analysis in Frankenberg and Hartigan were not located in the context of an Indigenous presence, and thus provided an opening for this thesis.

As outlined in the literature multiculturalism is often promoted as a means for national identity and a method for dealing with difference. The interviewer asked the respondents about their understanding of multiculturalism, their reflections about asylum seekers, and their relationship with Indigenous peoples and their views/experiences with Indigenous land rights and any effect that these issues may have on their identity. In the light of Frankenberg's research, the analysis is concerned with how the respondents' narratives reflect different moments in the history of race in Australian identity.

4.3 Researching racialised identities

In a similar manner to Frankenberg's research, this project is concerned with how the interviewees perceived and experienced their sense of place and belonging and how their 'social geographical' space was (in childhood) and is divided and who, being the racially and ethnically 'who', inhabits it. In order to understand interviewees' sense of place and to see how that social space is racially constructed, there will be questions about 'who' (as in racially and ethnically defined identities) was a part of their childhood setting and who is a part of their current locale. What are the racialised relations of power that may define them? Is this sense of place threatened by the perceived Other, especially if one of the Other has a prior claim?

Frankenberg's understanding of the racialisation of 'social geography' and Hartigan's extension of the 'patterned irregularities' of different domains of whiteness will inform the analysis of white discourses that the respondents use to understand their white 'Australian self' in relation to place. The researcher expects that there will be 'patterned irregularities' in the expressions of whiteness and how interviewees relate to place. The researcher hopes to identify some key themes of how white Australian identities understand themselves as raced or not raced, rather than what the racialised identity should look like. Furthermore, it is hoped that the research will identify how these identities engage with, disrupt or reinforce relations of power that are based on race.

In the past, the topic of race in interviews has been a taboo subject in several 'white on white' pieces of research (e.g. Frankenberg 1993, p.23). This study comes from counter narratives to the social and political 'white' history of nation-making in Australia. Unlike 1993, when Frankenberg undertook her groundbreaking research into whiteness in the United States, a decade later (at the time of the interviews) there have been substantial debates throughout Australia about race in the media, politically and historically (for example Read 1998; 2000; Reynolds 1987; 1996b). These events (see introduction) are relevant to the interviews because they create the broader social and political underpinnings that contextualise the identity formation of the participants. They also influence the relations between the researcher and participants as white on white research (see Best 2003; Dunier 1999; Fine 1992; Twine and Warren 2000; Van Maanen 1988).

There are multiple positions within any given group (e.g. Beoku-Betts 1994) and research is always raced, gendered (e.g. Brown 1998) and classed, including when it is white on white (Frankenberg 1993; 1997a). The insider/outsider positions are not fixed and race is not the only key social signifier in researcher-researched relations of power (Aguilar 1981, see especially p.25; Twine and Warren 2000, p.8; Wilson 1974). Since the 'exposure' of whiteness in an increasing number of critical inquiries throughout the 1980s and 1990s, many white researchers have turned their research questions toward whiteness rather than toward the 'racial other'. Such analysis offers the opportunity to create a critically reflective and counter-hegemonic location to whiteness, without attempting to evade whiteness altogether. Depending on the position of the respondent, a white researcher can be located simultaneously as a racial insider, by virtue of skin colour and racial background, and as racial outsider, due to multiple locations in whiteness.

The empirical research into women's involvement in racist movements conducted by Blee (2000) explores a movement away from the binaries of either insider or outsider by acknowledging the complexities of white identity formations. Complex issues of race continued to affect the quality and dynamics of the study. Race dynamics sometimes inhibited the study "but more often issues of race between myself and the respondents shed new light on the racial meanings and racial identities of these women" (Blee 2000, p.97). That is, because Blee shared a perceived racial background with the respondents, but had an oppositional position philosophically and ideologically, the gaps in understanding about racial meaning between Blee as a researcher and the women she interviewed allowed Blee to excavate new understandings. The presence of racial dynamics in 'white on white' interviews

allows the researcher to examine the instability of whiteness. For example, similar to the researcher the interviewees in this thesis are Australian-born and self-identifying as a white Australian. The researcher also shared the status of living most of her life in remote and rural towns in the Northern Territory and regional towns in Queensland as opposed to being perceived as a city person. The majority of participants identified as country people and a small number saw themselves as cosmopolitan in a global context. The presence of racial dynamics allows the examination of how the white researcher and white research subject may be raced differently and thus be both insider and outsider. Some of the interviewees found my questions about their relationship with Indigenous people as strange. Participants who are the children of migrants from Greece and Italy have a different experience of Australian whiteness than the researcher who is fourth generation German and Anglo/Celtic. The contrast in white location allows the complexity of whiteness to be explored, while at the same time equivalent locations in whiteness could provide the possibility of collusion.

This thesis differs from Frankenberg's, Hartigan's and Blee's research on whiteness in that it is provided in the context of Indigenous Sovereignty. It is in this gap that this research has its innovation, and where it can contribute to Australian empirically based works that seek to interrogate the establishment of Australian white identities (Bulbeck 2004; Schech and Haggis 2000; 2001; Schech and Haggis 2004; Tascon 2008; Wadham 2004). The innovation of the research above is the implementation of recent theoretical developments in the critique of race and whiteness in the discourse analysis of qualitative in-depth interviews and life-stories of participants.

4.4 In the field: Interview method

So how do white Australians understand race in Australia in the context of Australian identities? The interviews were conducted at a time of several important events that affected national debates about being Australian. These events included issues concerning Indigenous sovereignty and asylum seekers (see Introduction pp.15-20). The popular discourse of Native Title claims brought to the forefront of public debate the links between privileging one understanding of space and land use over another. The other main perceived threat to national safety was the arrival of asylum seekers by boat to Australian shores. Most of the asylum seekers (often referred to as ‘boat people’) began their journey in Afghanistan, Pakistan or Iraq. Asylum seekers, including women and children, were placed in mandatory detention upon their arrival for seven years (Amnesty_International 2009). These events influenced identity construction through unsettling the assumed sense of place and belonging for white Australian identities.

Most interviews were conducted in a single session in July 2003. Of these fourteen were conducted in Rivertown and the surrounding district, nine took place in Rolling Hills and its surrounding area, six were in Red Ocean. One pair was interviewed together (Phyllis and Louis) and three friends (Patch, Tyrone and Joan: Joan arrived toward the end of the interview) were interviewed together. These group interviews were about three hours in length. In each location, a purposeful sampling strategy was applied and the researcher extended the pool of respondents through the snowball method. The interviewees were each asked to supply a ‘code name’ to provide anonymity for the purpose of the thesis and any future publications arising out of the research. Likewise, any information that may reveal an interviewee’s

identity has been altered and the names of towns and regions where the interviews occurred have been changed. Age was not a criterion in the recruitment of the participants. At the time of the interviews, the age groups ranged from two young men in their early twenties to a man of seventy-eight years of age. Women's age ranged from their early forties to early seventies. There were thirteen male and sixteen female white Australian participants in the research.

The twenty-nine participants in the study at hand are Australian born. Some are located as multi-generational settler Australians and others describe themselves as the first generation descendants of migrants. At the time of the interview, they all lived in one of three rural towns in the same state (given the pseudonyms Rivertown, Rolling Hills and Red Ocean). This research project targeted Australian-born participants to focus on the social construction of Australian identities by those born in Australia. The three rural locations were selected to give a commonality amongst participants, and also to contribute to the literature of non-metropolitan studies conducted by researchers with a rural background rather than 'country folk' as the subjects of a 'city researcher'. Race and whiteness studies in Australia tend to focus on metropolitan areas. Further, as became apparent in the interviews, some rural people tend to identify as being 'country' in contrast to their city-based compatriots. Many also feel isolated from other Australians in that the policy and decision makers are located in the capital cities a long distance from rural areas. This has meant that the political power is perceived to come out of the capital cities. The cities are relatively protected from day-to-day difficulties experienced in the rural areas including droughts and water restriction. The following section will outline the methods that were used.

Like Frankenberg, Hartigan and Schech & Haggis, the approach used to interview had a framework and was purposeful, rather than just hearing life stories. The interviewer used semi-structured discussions that include life histories from childhood to the time of the two-hour interview. The questions also seek to elicit the raced, gendered and classed nature of the dominant narratives upon which the participants base their knowledge. The final section of the interview invites responses to political events that involved settler and Indigenous Australian histories, federation, the republic, migration, multiculturalism, refugees, Native Title and Indigenous Rights. The participant's response to past and current social and political history (at the time of the interviews in June-July 2003) is important. It draws out hegemonic and counter narratives that participants draw upon to understand their own identities (see Appendix for the interview schedule). The researcher asked specific questions about the respondent's knowledge of Australia's colonial history, discriminatory policies against Indigenous people and non-Anglo migrants, the stolen generations, Indigenous land rights, Native Title cases and their connections with Indigenous people. These questions incorporated a focus on Indigenous sovereignty through everyday white Australian experiences.

The researcher taped the interviews with permission. Each participant received a letter that explained the research project, the topics to be discussed and how the information would be used. There was a confidentiality clause with the consent form signed by participants and the researcher. Participants could withdraw at any time during or after the interview and had the option of seeing the transcript.

This study is not proposed to be an exhaustive representation of white Australian identities in these towns, due to this serendipitous selection process. Nor is it sought to extrapolate to all white Australian identities and localities in Australia. As such, the study is limited in its direct application to being a contribution to a larger field of critical whiteness and critical cultural and sociological studies into white Australian identities and relations of dominance. However, the interviews do provide some insights into the ways race and the nation are imagined from rural Australian locations, and indicate some of the predominant hegemonic or counter narratives that inform the construction of white identities.

The researcher brings more than a decade of community development and advocacy work experience as a community worker in rural settings to this study. This enabled her to develop quick rapport with open communication to create an environment in which participants will speak and share their thoughts and experiences. As the interviewer, however, one is always the outsider looking in at the participants' world through the glimpses that they wish to provide. These glimpses are also interpreted by the researcher's own experiences, which are also shaped by race as a white Australian.

Many of the interviewees had lived in varying degrees of poverty in their childhoods due to the Depression, restrictions during World War II, the costs of migrating and after the time taken to re-build the Australian economy and individual economic positions within that economy. These interviewees all identified as middle class by virtue of their own and their parents' hard work. They had gained this position

through owning their farm and house and all the hard labour that came with that on an irrigation farm.

There were a range of occupations and education levels. Josh held a postgraduate degree and, identifies as middle class and Louise, Liza, Alex and David all had tertiary degrees and were schoolteachers and all identified as middle class, with David being a retired principal. Dominique is tertiary educated and is a community worker and TAFE teacher and saw herself as middle class. Johnny is tertiary educated and is semi-retired undertaking writing consultancy as a local historian. Austin is tertiary educated and an overseas aid worker. Allan and Citrus are both tertiary educated and run their own agricultural businesses on an international scale. Mary runs the family business and she holds a university degree. She is heavily involved in volunteer work as a local historian and in the school and sporting activities of her 5 children. Waterwitch has a high school education and is a business partner with her husband, Citrus. Poppy has a high school education and is currently raising her children. Prior to raising her children Poppy was a community worker. Her husband is involved in local politics and they are both 'growers' living on an orchard. Louis described himself as a 'jack of all trades' having previous employment as a TAFE teacher, and a variety of public service jobs. He is intensely involved in his children's school, along with his wife Phyllis who is also high school educated and raising their children. Tony completed year 10 level, joined the RAAF, and is recently retired. Shamus holds a year 10 certificate and is currently on an army pension. Patch has high school level education, Tyrone, Joan, Ronbow, Optus, Julizard, Gabrielle, all have year 10 certificates and all have held employment in working class positions. Bryan has a year 10 certificate and works in the hospitality

industry, races drag cars and identifies as middle class and gay as does Josh. Collin held primary school level education and was a stockman and jack of all trades, now retired. Likewise, Len had primary school level education and worked in the ship-building industry, he is retired. Dan is on a disability pension due to his learning disabilities, and is very involved in volunteer community work through the Salvation Army. Louise, Poppy, Citrus, Waterwitch, Phyllis, Louis and Alan all lived and worked on agricultural properties. Additionally, many of the respondents grew up on agricultural properties including Liza, Tony, Ronbow, Julizard, Shamus, Dan, Dominique and Johnny. Some respondents grew up in a city and moved to country as adults including Mary, Josh, David, Alex, Gabrielle. The remaining respondents grew up in rural towns.

4.5 Conclusion

The methodology seeks to analyse the racial formation of white Australian identities and draws upon a social constructionist approach to do so. The research is placed in the context of hegemonic narratives that shape white Australian identities. The methodology does this as an empirical study of how white Australians construct their identities in their every day lives, in a specific time and locality. The ethnographic method is best suited to collect qualitative data on and from the subjects to gain insight into their daily cultural practices and social relations. Frankenberg's use of a theoretical analysis of race, racism and colonialism to apply a substantive analysis of these processes in the daily life experiences of the women she interviews are used to explore how white identities describe race and cultural difference and how their descriptions reflect different moments in the history of race. Hartigan's insight into

the dilemma of the irregularities in the replication of whiteness allows for an exploration of the significance of the gaps that emerge between them. These empirical works form a foundation for the researcher who seeks to unsettle the way that white Australians construct their identity in a specific time and location. The negotiations of identity can be seen as shaped by social power relations that are in turn shaped by race in the context of Indigenous sovereignty in Australia. Through the application of the methodological approach outlined in this chapter, the researcher seeks to unsettle the binaries and chasms in the racial formation of white Australian identities and find in them hope for ever-increasing webs of social relations that contest and shift hegemonic narratives in ethical relationship with Indigenous sovereignty.

5. “We’re multicultural mate!” Australian identities, multiculturalism and refugees.

Alien

**I stand on this land
that does not belong to me
that does not belong to them either
alone like the land itself
alone like on a planet**

**I often tell myself to ignore those
unwelcoming eyes
unsmiling noses
murderous cars
resentful phones
houses, secretive houses**

**I don’t care
being alien
I stand alone
impervious to questions like
when are you going home?
how do you like it here?
etc. etc. irrelevancies.
can you ask the land, the planet the same questions?**

**To swap a question:
do you know why a Chinese
deleted of any smile
stands alone behind a window
and ignoring things passing by
gazes into the distant future/past?**

**your answer is simple:
the bloody inscrutable Chinese has no friends.**

(Yu 2002, p.47)

...Aboriginal Peoples have never been accepted in this land, even though it is OUR land. We have never been treated as equals. I will finish by reminding everyone that this is not John Howard's country, it has been stolen. It was taken over by the first fleet of illegal boat people (Wadjularbinna 2002, p.2, emphasis in original).

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, respondents who identify as 'white Australians' and are Australian-born, talk about multiculturalism, refugees and national identity. The two poems above capture the effects of marginalisation and dispossession experienced by, as an example, the Chinese other, in the first poem by Yu (2002, p.47), and the Indigenous other, as expressed in the second quote by Wadjularbinna (2002), originally delivered as a conference speech. Why does the Chinese person depicted in Yu's poem stand, alone, with no friends in Australia? What maintains the dispossession identified by Wadjularbinna in the second poem? Both poems speak from a position of difference. Both also speak to the land, and to the presence of the cultural hegemony that maintains both privilege and marginalisation that creates the social setting for those who are included and those who are excluded from the nation. Critical to this research project, Yu's poem acknowledges Indigenous sovereignty in his commentary that the land neither belongs to him as a Chinese Australian nor does it belong to the cultural majority. Wadjularbinna's quote is also crucial to this project. It speaks of Indigenous sovereignty in resistance to the white patriarchal claim to sovereignty. He refers to the former Prime Minister John Howard's statement that "we will decide who comes into this country and the manner in which they come" (Clarke 2001, p.1) discussed on p. 23. This statement was announced on

public media and claims to speak for the nation. It responded to the Tampa incident (discussed from p.161). Each poem speaks from a simultaneously racialised structural site and contests the hegemonic discourses of whiteness that maintains privilege.

In their research on whiteness in Australia, Susanne Schech and Jane Haggis found that some of their respondents had difficulty with bringing their awareness of difference to having a “vision of national community” (2001, p.143). Schech and Haggis argue that this is due to the way in which the national community is “constructed in terms of whiteness” while “claiming to be non-racial”. In Australia, race is a distinct discourse with a history of violence connected to it and further, it has been replaced with discourses of culture, which limit the critical use of race “as a lens for analysis in the everyday” (Tascon 2008, p.255). As discussed on p.66, this thesis uses the term ‘everyday’ in the sense that Jon Stratton coined the term ‘everyday multiculturalism’ to describe the every day encounters with difference in streets, between colleagues at workplaces and in family and friendship networks at home. The point of this chapter is to analyse the complexities of ‘everyday understandings’ of the key discourses surrounding the issues of ‘white Australia’, ‘multiculturalism’, as a discourse to understand difference, including migrants and refugees and ‘national identity’, as a discourse of belonging to the country and how these discourses speak to each other. The central argument is that the social and political history of a ‘white Australia’ continues to inform the terms of multiculturalism. It will argue that state multiculturalism manages diversity and, as a result the narrative of culture, obscures the language of race. Cultural identity frames

identity and links it to the nation. The raced nature of white national identity remains in position without the words to deal with it in conventional white Australian lives.

5.2 The meaning of multiculturalism

This section will analyse the key discourses about multiculturalism that participants draw upon. The interview questions seek to draw out how participants understand whiteness, difference and multiculturalism, as well as to explore their lived experiences and awareness of difference. What are the national tropes of multiculturalism and do they reveal how white Australians live with difference? What are the inconsistencies? The interviewer enquires whether the participant sees Australia as a white country. The intent is to unpack the tension, contradiction and complexity in the discourses that the participant draws upon to talk about race, national identity and multiculturalism. This section will draw upon the excerpts from *Dominico*¹⁰, Alex, Citrus, Jewlizard, Louise, Optus, Austin, Bryan, Tyrone, Patch, Mary and Liza. Some of this pool are the children of migrants, including *Dominico*, Alex and Liza, and Austin had one migrant parent and one multi-generation Australian parent. The remainder of the participants discussed in this chapter are multi-generation Anglo Australian (Citrus, Jewlizard, Louise, Optus, Bryan, Tyrone, Patch and Mary). The age varies with Bryan and Austin in their 20s, *Dominico*, Alex, Mary and Liza in their 30/40s; Louise, Tryone, Patch in their 40/50s and Optus, Jewlizard and Citrus in their 60/70s.

¹⁰ This participant is female, and she nominated the synonym 'Dominico' as the word in Italian for Sunday

The following conversation with Dominico shows her understanding of multiculturalism. Several of the participants talked about multiculturalism in terms of difference. Dominico is from Rivertown.

Interviewer: We hear a lot about the term multiculturalism. What does it mean to you?

Dominico: It means becoming aware of what makes each of us who we are, becoming aware that we all have different practices, different foods et cetera, different ways of dressing, different ways of thinking and different ways of music and to me multiculturalism is becoming aware of why, you know, Joe Blogs down the street is different to me. What are our differences? What makes him who he is and how are we different? To appreciate something, you must understand it... It's about understanding differences and respecting differences. It's not to be like each other. Just understanding the differences and being tolerant and respectful of these differences and not judging other people because of their differences, instead, understanding that the differences can actually be complementary. I think of it usually as a soup. Can you imagine if we make a soup and just put carrots in that soup? But if we put a whole range of different vegetables it becomes an exciting flavour and although each vegetable is unique, it adds to the overall flavour of the whole soup and I think multiculturalism enhances the humanity of a certain region, like our people here. With different ideas, different fashions, different words, different religions, philosophies, even in mental interaction. There is just so much

strength there to offer than – new ways of doing things, technologies from each other and other countries, the whole lot. So it's about understanding that these differences can complement and we need not feel threatened by them just because they are different to us (Dominico).

Interestingly, Dominico draws upon the discourse of the stew pot (Hage 1998) in her metaphor of the soup. She uses this metaphor in a different way to the dominant trope identified by Hage, in his analysis of the discourse of the stew pot in Australian multiculturalism. While Dominico does talk about the vegetables adding to the soup, she does not make any comment about the 'right mix', identified by Hage, or that there may need to be control maintained over what ingredients, and how many, should be added. Rather, Dominico strongly draws upon the discourse of difference in her understanding of multiculturalism. The word 'difference' is her key word that links to the unity-in-difference. She also draws upon the discourses of awareness, understanding and being respectful of differences rather than 'to be like each other'. Here Dominico speaks against assimilative expectations from the British-based core identity and the discourse of sameness. In Dominica's experience, the dominant trope of sameness threads through what she identifies as Anglo practices of multiculturalism. This leads to a practice of looking for what is similar.

To focus on what is the same, renders difference invisible. For Dominico, difference can be complementary; it does not need to be oppositional or threatening. She refers to the analogy of a soup, which is a familiar concept for multiculturalism in settler societies. In her analogy, the focus is on the different flavours rather than a blended

sameness. She does not use the term 'blend' or 'blended', instead she focuses on the individual distinctive flavours that give a sense of Ang's (2001) 'coming together in difference'. Dominico draws upon the narratives of unity-in-diversity for her understanding of multiculturalism as the road to nationhood. Their lived experience of multiculturalism begins with difference, not sameness. In their view, the need for a singular nation is present, though not undermined by difference. The narratives of unity-in-diversity do not seem to require an overarching Australian identity, but rather many cultural identities that can be Australian.

To extend the discussion on the way that Dominico thinks about sameness and difference, the next question in the interview sought to explore her understanding of sameness and equality.

Interviewer: You hear people saying that we are all the same and we are all equal.

Dominico: But we are not. Our basic needs are all the same... I think we should respect that we aren't all exactly the same and that different cultures are different and to me multiculturalism is about keeping that identity. It's about not discriminating against these differences just because they are not what we are accustomed to. My son's godparents are Greek and their customs are completely different to mine and yet it's been interesting seeing another culture completely different to ours, regardless of our similarities, and I think if people can focus on the basic essential similarities that we have within each other, they can be like the foundation, but everything else that we build on that is from our differences. So it is okay to understand that some needs are

fundamentally the same, but appreciate the differences that are there (Dominico).

Dominico expands upon her understanding of difference and sameness in this passage. She may also be referring to the humanism present in liberal multiculturalism (Gilroy 2000), discussed in chapter 3, p.100. Dominico states that acknowledging that some human needs are fundamentally the same, and in doing so draws upon humanist discourse. Her emphasis, though, is upon the differences between cultural groups, and within cultural groups, so that the differences are centred rather than similarities. She gives the case of her son's Greek godparents, who possibly follow the Greek Orthodox faith (although Dominico did not specify which religious practices they follow). Dominico and her family are Roman Catholic. While both faiths are Christian-based, and therefore would share some fundamental philosophies, Dominico opts to acknowledge and build upon their differences as the material for constructing committed relationships rather than making the differences hidden by focusing only on the similarities.

Thus, for Dominico, her lived experiences include applying difference as the building blocks of relationships and community rather than focusing only on a foundation of similarities which is the discourse taken by liberalism. In a liberalist approach, the difference is tolerated by focusing on the similarities in order to override the differences. Difference is something that must be 'overcome' or ignored in the quest for sameness in the liberalist multiculturalism discourse.

Alex is the daughter of Greek migrants and is in her 40s. She and her husband have teenage children and she teaches Greek language, cooking and dance at the local Greek school in Rivertown. Like other participants who are the children of post-war migrants, Alex spoke only Greek and learnt English when she started school, even though she was born in Australia. Alex does not have the physical signifiers that are stereotypical of a Greek person. She said that she has been challenged about her Greek identity by other Greek Australians. Alex gave an example of being confronted by another Greek Australian when she attended the Greek Orthodox Church: “You’re not Greek. What are you doing here?” (Alex). Alex’s experience of having to prove her ‘Greek-ness’ to both Greek and other Australians is evidence of the racial construction of cultural identity.

Alex was the only interviewee to speak directly against the narrative of tolerance in multiculturalism. She stated emphatically: “I do not want to be tolerated by anyone”. The experience of ‘being tolerated’ is a distasteful and humiliating experience, for Alex. Underneath the narrative of tolerance is the ever-present threat of intolerance. Further, it places ‘the tolerant one’ in a position of power as to whether they will be tolerant or not.

Citrus identified as having an Anglo Australian background. He is in his 70s and is married to Waterwitch. They have adult children. He identifies as being cosmopolitan because his work is on an international scale. He spends as much time overseas as he does on his farm. When asked what the term ‘multiculturalism’ meant to him he responded:

Interviewer: What does the term ‘multiculturalism’ mean to you?

Citrus: That offers to me a cornucopia, a plethora of riches, which I can barely get to grips with. Cultural influences, food influences, totally tummy orientated, interesting – I can’t eat most of it in some cultures. I can eat all of it in other cultures. So I have an incredible diverse opportunity to share in food issues, which as Australians, we simply don’t – have not ever got to grips with. We’ve not had that opportunity (Citrus).

Citrus did not have much more to say about what multiculturalism meant to him. This may be because he was ‘outward looking’ throughout most of his interview, with his attention on the international and global level. His attention to ‘food issues’ relates to his role in irrigation and technological advancements to generate environmentally sustainable methods of growing. He has continuous contact with people from very diverse backgrounds to his own. Within his business and service activities such as tutoring adults in English as well as when he is overseas or hosting overseas visitors, his position of privilege shapes his contact with diversity. His family is socially, politically and economically powerful in the Rivertown district. While it seemed that he had contact with diversity, it is predominantly from a position of power as head of committees, in teaching positions or consultancy positions. For example Collin¹¹, a couple of years older than Citrus, grew up in the same small town. Collin knows exactly who Citrus is, including Citrus’ relatives, who they were married too, their children’s names and what they were doing et cetera. Citrus had not heard of Collin. Collin’s life was mapped out in a social

¹¹ Collin is another interviewee from the same town, discussed later in this chapter.

geography sense, as theorised in Ruth Frankenberg's (1993) work. While being the son of a German migrant allowed Collin to be absorbed, to some extent, into the dominant cultural group, his work as a labourer and his marriage to an Aboriginal woman and connection with the Aboriginal community made him invisible to Citrus and their paths did not cross. Citrus lived a separate life to that of labourers, despite having positive relationships with employees on his property and in his business.

Jewlizard is a 73 year old multigenerational Australian woman, who lives in Red Ocean. She has a large and diverse family. She has travelled overseas and spent three months in Africa.

Jewlizard's understanding of the term multiculturalism is expressed in the following excerpt:

Interviewer: What does the term multiculturalism mean to you?

Jewlizard: Different food that I eat now to what I did when I was a child. Accepting people's different cultures, like the Dutch, you know: Christmas Eve is their big thing whereas Christmas Day is our big thing. There's different crafts, different looks, we're not all – we don't all look the same now. And we have mixed marriages... We say we have the League of Nations in our family (Jewlizard).

To Jewlizard, the term multiculturalism reflects her everyday life of living with varying degrees of difference within her family context. She shares her own experiences of living with difference within her own family, and being able to

articulate a complex understanding of power relations, Jewlizard's language centres on food and custom and mixed marriages and sexual relations when she is asked directly about what multiculturalism means to her. Her reference to her family as the league of nations is due to her children's inter-racial and inter-cultural marriages. Like Citrus, she does not talk about multiculturalism as an identity, or as a means to nationhood. Is this because for her multiculturalism is about different food and different customs, or is it because, as discussed in Chapter 2, p.59, the language of multiculturalism provides an inadequate vocabulary from which to articulate her understandings of race, power and privilege, which she and Citrus could give words to when directly asked about race? The dominant trope of sameness that permeates State-based multiculturalism lacks a critique of difference through race, class and gender with its focus on 'accepting and tolerating difference' and focusing on sameness that does not reflect Jewlizard's lived experiences of difference. Jewlizard has developed a critique of race and racialised difference that is not present in national tropes of multiculturalism.

Louise is an Anglo Australian in her mid-50s who grew up on a fruit farm, completed teaching college, returned to the Rivertown district and married a fruit grower. They have young adult children who attend university in the capital city. They lease the land for their orchard, and Louise teaches in the local primary school.

Interviewer: There's lots of talk about the word 'multiculturalism'. I'm wondering what the term means to you when you hear the term 'multiculturalism'?

Louise: I think, well, it means to me that there are people who have come from other countries who have brought, you know, their culture from where they've come from – like their sort of origins. So they bring their traditions and their religions and their food and their clothing and their – anything else that goes with being a culture and they continue to sort of you know... introduce that to the people who are already in Australia so that you can sort of share it. If we want to, I guess. I don't see it as being forced upon us really. I know that's one thing my mum talks about. She talks about Australians, you know, should want to be Australians first rather than if they choose to come to Australia, they need to accept that they are Australians first and the other things that they value become part of Australia, not that they bring their other country – they don't need to stay being, like, Chinese, say, in Australia. They need to be Australian in Australia but they can bring their Chinese culture and still be identifying with it, but still want to be Australians first. I guess I sort of believe that but perhaps not as strongly as she does. I don't think that they should want it to be China in Australia, but it can be – the Chinese things can still be valued in Australia (Louise).

Louise talks about 'sharing difference' as a multicultural practice. The trope of 'bringing what you have to offer to Australia' is a strong theme in Australian multiculturalism (Hage 1998, p.200). Louise names many different aspects of culture including traditions, religion, food and clothing that can be brought and introduced to people living in Australia so that it can be shared. The condition is that

these cultural practices should not be forced upon 'us', as Australians, which Louise herself, unlike her mother, did not feel is occurring. This trope links multiculturalism to national identity. This discourse shapes the expectation that Louise and her mother express for the cultural Chinese Other to 'be Australian first, and then Chinese'. There is no mention of white Australian identities having a 'multicultural identity' because they are Australian already and outside of multiculturalism, confirming Ang and Stratton's (2001, p.100) point that multiculturalism represses race rather than providing an account for Australian national identity. Multicultural identity is for the migrant Other, in order for 'them' to be an Australian first, and secondly retain some of 'their' cultural heritage.

Optus identifies herself as an Anglo Australian and is in her late 60s. She grew up on a farm in New South Wales. At the time of the interview, Optus worked full time in the library at Red Ocean.

The next segment focuses on how Optus understands the term multiculturalism.

Interviewer: We hear a lot about the term multiculturalism. What does this term mean to you?

Optus: Well it has always meant to me that we are surrounded by a mix of people and we are living side by side or certainly close to them. We are not segregated from them anymore, so it's very much in our faces. Rightly. That is multiculturalism, and it has been good for us, what's more. It won't be a bad thing (Optus)

To differentiate herself (and possibly the researcher) as a white Australian from the ‘other Australians’ who are referred to as the ‘mix of people’, Optus uses the language of ‘them’ and ‘us’. The segregation that Optus refers to may be the racial social geography of the town, as discussed earlier, with the closer proximity to the migrant other being right in front of Anglo Australians faces after the effects of integration and assimilation policy approaches to migration settlement. She is saying that ‘we are’ surrounded by a mix of people, and the ‘we’ centralised the white Australian subject position, which is her experience. An intriguing trope that is evident in Optus’s final comment is about multiculturalism ‘being good for us’ (Ang 2001; Hage 1998). She may be drawing upon the discourse that promotes multiculturalism as being ‘good for Australia’. This discourse promotes the benefits of Multiculturalism or that it adds value to the dominant group, as indicated by the word ‘us’ and Optus also may be positioning herself against the critics of multiculturalism who say that multiculturalism is bad for Australia through her comment that it ‘won’t be a bad thing’.

And when asked about migration laws, Optus offers the following:

Optus: Well migrants are good for the country...I cannot see why there can’t be some conditions on their living in this country...why can’t we have conditions along the lines of if people choose to come here...for whatever reason they come here...that they not necessarily forget their homelands, but they have to – they should adopt our laws and ways of living and please don’t bring your ethnic problems with you...I still don’t see why we should have people come here and cause

problems...I don't like it. I think it is unfair. We didn't have it, we don't want it and if you choose to come here, you leave it behind...we should have conditions.... not conditions of how you look or any of that sort of thing (Optus).

Optus extends the trope of multiculturalism being 'good for us' to migrants also being 'good for the country'. Her words "I cannot see why there can't be conditions" imply that there are no conditions attached for migrant entry to Australia, which is incorrect (Ahmed 2000a, p.96). Further, she emphasises that migrants choose to be in Australia, and should therefore abide by Australian law. The narrative that 'there are groups of migrants for whom Australian law does not apply' shapes Optus statement that there are no conditions attached for migrant entry to Australia. In the same sentence, she states that migrants should abide by 'our' laws and 'our' ways of life. This conflates white Australian cultural 'ways' with the Australian legislation. White Australian cultural values are at the centre of Australian ways and law in Australia. Like Louise, Optus is basing her understanding of migration, and what she terms 'ethnic problems' which, in her view should not be brought with migrants to Australia, on popular media representations and talk back radio that also imply the lack of conditions for entry to Australia. At the end of the quote, Optus qualifies that decisions about migrant entry to Australia should not be based on 'looks', possibly meaning that migration criteria should not be based on race or cultural dress. The question remains, how much difference, and what manner of difference is OK?

Optus speaks from Anglo-centric version of multiculturalism that Dominico identified, where the 'Anglo Saxon/Celtic', or British, core values that form the dominant values of Australian whiteness in turn inform an Anglo/Celtic-centric

practice of multiculturalism in Australia. This is consistent with Castles and Vasta (1996), Ang (1999) and Ahmed (2000a), discussed on p.62 and who argue that the praxis of racialised power continues to exist in discourses of multiculturalism. This places Anglo/Celtic whiteness as the cultural norm. Like Optus, another respondent, Gabrielle, said that she believed in tolerance and acceptance while at the same time saying “don’t stay separate, and leave your cultural problems at home” (Gabrielle). Dissimilar to white Australians, migrants are not referred to as Australian, and are not part of the larger ‘we’.

Optus concludes her interview by saying that she wants Australia to remain a ‘free thinking country’ that was ‘not adverse to other religions’ because ‘we don’t want to be tagged as intolerant’ (Optus). Three elements to this statement are worth exploring further, because they are themes raised by other respondents in this study. Firstly, she qualifies the statement that Australia is a ‘free thinking country’. The wish to be free thinking has links with liberalist discourse of ‘debating difference’, or having ‘dialogue across difference’ (Nursoo 2007). Perhaps Optus does not want to be seen as denying the rights of others to free thinking. However, the free thinking of some ‘others’ may threaten the dominant Anglo British and Christian values that are at the core of Australian whiteness (Randall-Moon 2006). Thus, consistent with Hage’s argument that the notion of an unbiased white nation protects white privilege (discussed on p.62), the freedom being protected ends up being the freedom of white core values.

The trope of being a ‘free country’ is repeated in several of the respondents’ (including Optus, Austin, Bryan, Mary) thoughts when they are talking about

difference. The theme of 'freedom' is presented in a couple of ways. Firstly, in the context of tolerance and acceptance, Optus voices that she wants Australia to remain a free country in the presence of other religions. She says that she does not want Australia to 'be adverse to other religions'. The phrase 'other' religions places the Christian-based core values at the centre of Australian values (Hussein and Imtoul 2009). In Australia, Anglicism and Roman Catholicism are separated by a social and political history of oppression that results in class division. Anglican parishes are historically middle and upper class, including their schools, and Roman Catholic parishes are historically working class, with a strong Irish history. While differently located in terms of whiteness in Australia, their binary formed the core Anglo-Celtic Christian-based values of Australian society. German Lutheran values are absorbed into the dominant tropes because of the privileged position given to protestant Christian-based values. The Orthodox Christian faiths, such as the Greek Orthodox Church and the Serbian Orthodox Church remained as 'Other'. Now, with a more visible presence of Muslims (despite being present in Australia from the time of invasion) and Sikh populations being more prominent, the focus is on the 'other' to Christian values. When the 'other' is embraced in the arms of tolerance and acceptance, it is to embrace the sameness and to attempt to ignore, overlook, tolerate and overcome the differences in an effort 'not to be adverse to other religions'. The embrace occurs in order not to be 'tagged as intolerant', while remaining in a position of power.

The following excerpts are from an interview with Austin, a young middle class male in his early 20s, who has British and German parents, private schooling and works with a development agency in the Asia-Pacific region.

The interview moves on to consider what the term ‘multiculturalism’ means to Austin.

Interviewer: What does the term multiculturalism mean to you?

Austin: Multiculturalist [sic] – I guess Australia. It’s a tag that we use to make us feel more comfortable with the fact – or make us feel good about ourselves for having the people from different cultures here and it’s a bit of a scapegoat, I think, for a lot of people’s consciousness. But, taken at a pretty neutral sort of level, I think it’s about being exposed to the different cultures here in Australia. From my travels overseas in under-developed countries or less divided countries, it’s not really the case, which gets me back to Australia’s multiculturalism. Australia doesn’t really have its own culture as such, that it is just a mixture of ones from everywhere else. Whereas other countries in Europe have become culturally established over hundreds, thousands, of years and ours has just been put together in the last couple of hundred from all those other ones. So, I guess we are multicultural (Austin).

Austin argues that multiculturalism is something that the dominant culture ‘we’ use to be comfortable with difference. Then, in order to be neutral, Austin thinks that multiculturalism is about the exposure – of the dominant ‘we’ – to different cultures that are in Australia. For Austin, however, multiculturalism is divisive. He talks about under-developed countries that, in his view, are not ‘divided’. He may believe

that they are not divided because they are more mono-cultural than Australia. In contrast, he could be arguing that there are not multicultural policies in place that make 'difference special' as a way to manage difference, as it is in Australia. Austin also thinks that Australia does not have a culture of its own, and that culture is brought by 'other' groups. This could be the result of a perception that Australia is a young nation built on, as Austin identifies, a history of migration. The continuing presence of Indigenous culture is not mentioned as the 'yard stick' by which to measure the maturity of cultural development, nor are African or Asian cultures referred to, rather it is European cultures that have been established, apparently in isolation from each other, over hundreds or thousands of years.

The interview then moves on to explore whether Austin thinks that there are groups who are included or excluded from the dominant cultural imagery of Australia. The question leading in to this asks if 'the face' of Australia has changed in his lifetime:

Interviewer: How has the face of Australia changed in your lifetime?

Austin: I was growing up in the 1980s. I wouldn't go so far as to say bronzed Aussies, you know, simply because my family didn't fit that image whatsoever. My parents didn't like the beach. I know that's what it would've been then, but now it's more diverse and we try to put on the image of diversification and multiculturalism. I guess that's all it is really now.

Interviewer: Do you think some people are more easily included and maybe some people are excluded from those images?

Austin: I guess the whole point of it [multiculturalism] is just you try and make it appear that more people are included. I don't know whether that's really the case or not...I guess what I would like to have happen is for Australia to become more ethnically mixed or multicultural for want of a better word. Just become a whole homogenous – you know, one colour sludge across everything rather than some bright colours all over the place. Then again, I don't want little enclaves of ethnic groups or cultures or religions or whatever to... I just want balance. I want Australia to be free to do whatever you want but free to become part of the mass, if you want, as well. No pressure to perform, no pressure to be different kind of thing. Just total freedom (Austin).

Austin draws upon the narratives of liberal democratic nationhood to understand multiculturalism. The result is a 'creolisation' of difference as 'a smudge of colour', through which the nation can be imagined. Yet in the process, difference becomes both 'othered' and reduced to the concept of 'cultural diversity' through the narrative of the 'ethnic mix' that makes up Australia. The 'ethnic mix' is both strange to (by virtue of its difference) and integral (because the mix is required) to imagining the nation. An Anglo-centric practice of multiculturalism aims to blend all difference into a homogenous whole. Finally, as with Optus, Austin just wants freedom to be protected in his vision of the nation's future. He is against enclaves; rather he seeks balance with no pressure to perform or to be different. It sounds like Austin feels that the 'other' may feel pressure to remain 'different' or a part of 'enclaves', rather than having the liberal freedom to be an individual. Again, the freedom that is sought protects the Anglo British values that are at the core of Australian whiteness,

articulated in terms of the discourse of ‘freedom’ of the individual in the face of difference.

Similarly, Bryan, a middle class homosexual man in his early 20s from Rolling Hills states:

Bryan: ...wherever you are from, whatever you did over there, sure take it, put it in your suitcase and bring it to Australia. But when you get here, share that experience but do not encompass yourself with it. Be Australian, mix. Like, add it to the pot, don't just keep your own little separate pot on the side burner (Bryan).

Whiteness is maintained in its position of power through the tropes about the ‘numbers of migrant others’ that can be assimilated into Australian society. The discourse of ‘sharing’ requires the visitor to ‘share’ their difference for the benefit of the host. The hegemonic position places white Australians with a stake in who, and how many, can come into the country. It is the assumed right to govern the national space, as theorized by Ghasson Hage (1998). Hage’s concept of governance, as discussed on pp.51-2 of Chapter 2, is useful to this chapter because it adds a level of sophistication and complexity to a critical race reading of this projects’ interviewees’ lived experiences as white Australians. Importantly, it adds an analysis of power that extends a critique of biological racism, to focus on the relationship of privilege that is gained through whiteness. Indeed, the issue for many of the interviewees here is about their perceived right to govern their national space, to ponder on the numbers or proportions of ‘others’ present in that national space and to think about, or not think about, how much difference is tolerable.

Tyrone and Patch are two of three women (the third being Joan) who were interviewed together at Rolling Hills. They are close friends, in their late 40s /early 50s and are from working class families. All three are married with adult children. Patch's husband's family migrated to Australia from an Eastern European Country after WWII.

When asked what multiculturalism meant to them, they responded:

Interviewer: Moving on to multiculturalism, what does that mean to you?

Tyrone: We've got a lot of people coming from other countries to live here. We are not predominantly of British background anymore. We haven't been since post World War II. I think it's been good, because there has been a lot more, you know skills and foods and you know we've grown up a lot. Not so narrow minded. We are a lot more broad minded, and they've all retained their heritage, a lot of the groups. Not so much here, but in capital cities and that, and they all celebrate their own heritage, but still be proud to be Australian without losing their heritage. I think maybe in another 50 years, that might not even be as strong as the generations and the different races inter-marry and things like that, as they become more relaxed. I don't think it's been a bad thing. I think it's been a good thing to make us grow up. We are a young country. We've got no history, hardly at all, compared to countries that have been there for hundreds and hundreds of years. When you go overseas, and this was built in the

year 800, you know; what's that? We wouldn't know. A thousand years ago, we we've got no idea. So we have become more broad minded in the past 50 years (Tyrone in Patch, Tyrone and Joan).

Like many of the respondents, Tyrone thinks multiculturalism has been beneficial for Australia. Tyrone draws upon the discourse that multiculturalism adds value to Australia and that it assisted Australia to 'grow up' and maintain its own in relation to European countries. She observes that 'we' are more broadminded and that 'they' have retained their cultural heritage. This language situates Tyrone with the dominant 'we' as Australian and constructs the 'multicultural other' with culture and difference. This discourse structures the centrality of white Australian cultural practice and values in Tyrone's lived experience of multiculturalism. Tyrone also places the 'multicultural other' in the cities rather than 'here' in her rural town, which is consistent with Birrell and Rapson's (2002) finding that rural towns remain largely monocultural and that the diversity of population remains in the larger cities. Tyrone's statement that Australia has 'no history' renders the Indigenous presence of being the oldest continuously practised culture on the earth, of over 60,000 years, hidden and peripheral. The narrative that 'Australia has no history' is based on Western concepts of civilisation as evidenced through buildings. The lack of an Indigenous presence in this narrative includes a continuation of racial discrimination. Both Patch and Tyrone seem oblivious to the implications of the statement 'no history' which reflects the empericised 'everyday whiteness' in Australia found in the research by Tascón (2008). She found that as a national narrative, multiculturalism produced blindness to racial oppression in white Australians everyday experiences. Statements that Australia has 'no history' in comparison to

European civilisation are an example of racial oppression in white Australian everyday vocabularies.

Interviewer: What do you think multiculturalism means for Australian identity?

Tyrone: I just think Australia is now made up of lots of nationalities; it's not just the British backgrounds. Lots of nationalities all working together whereas they couldn't work together in other countries, they can work together here a lot more.

Patch: Like you might get a Vietnamese person talking but they were born in Australia and have an Australian accent so you've got an idea, you know, of being Australian. I don't think, for their parents, you hear them talking and you think they are Vietnamese. Really, who is that child with? Are they Vietnamese or Australian?

Tyrone: Depends on their passport.

Interviewer: So what would make somebody Australian then?

Patch: Someone who was born here. I don't care whether you are or whether you are not, but if someone asked me: what's an Australian? That's someone who was born here.

Tyrone: Naturalisation. It depends on their citizenship (Tyrone, Patch in Patch, Tyrone and Joan).

Tyrone and Patch draw upon two different discourses of being Australian in the context of multiculturalism. Tyrone (and for many of the respondents), bases her Australian identity on citizenship. One's citizenship is a formalised and legislated process for national belonging. There is a formal link made between citizenship and

nationality through the legal process of 'naturalisation'. At a sociological level, the way in which people experience their national belonging cannot be granted by citizenship alone. In fact, the gap between the cultural groups who hold citizenship and the groups who the dominant cultural group (read white Australia) include into the nation has changed since WWII (Hage 1998, p.50). For Patch, being Australian-born is what makes her Australian. Despite this marker of belonging, it is difficult for Patch to reconcile an Australian-born Vietnamese child with an Australian accent. While Patch firstly states that a Vietnamese person who speaks with an Australian accent gives you an idea that they are Australian, she becomes unsure if their parents are migrants who speak with a Vietnamese accent. Perhaps when she asks who the child is with, she wants to know whether the child is Vietnamese or Australian? Similar to the response from students who attend an Australian university that Laforteza (2009) experiences as an 'Asian looking' lecturer with Australian accent and vernacular, Patch is unsure of where a hypothetical Australian-born child with Vietnamese parents belongs. Tyrone is clear that in her opinion it depends on the child's passport, and their citizenship, however.

Mary, a female Anglo Australian in her 40s is married with four children. She grew up in the capital city in a working class family. The working class suburb meant that Mary grew up with lots of post-war migrant families who were labourers. Mary has a university education in Art History, has travelled extensively and lived overseas for six years in her early 20s, including in a kibbutz in Israel. Now she is a local historian in her town. When the researcher asks if Australia is a white country, she responds:

Mary: No. Not any more. I may have done when I was 10 years old, but certainly not any more and I haven't felt that way for 25-30 years.

Interviewer: So what does the term multiculturalism mean to you?

Mary: I don't know if I can give you an airy fairy answer. It's just many – multi-cultures. Just a big stew pot of many different people (Mary).

Mary draws upon a discourse of tolerance, which puts her in the role of governance, according to Hage (1998), through her reference to the stew pot. Mary simultaneously uses the narrative of the 'yellow peril' that she believes waits on the northern borders to 'swarm' into Australia and take it over by sheer numbers:

Interviewer: So what do you think the future of Australia will be, if you have a vision of Australia in the future, and whereabouts would you see yourself in that vision?

Mary: I don't see myself fitting into that global vision at all. I'm just a little person in a little rural town. I don't have a place in the great vision, but I would hope for my children's sake that Australia continues to do the right thing. Personally, I wouldn't want to see us become a lackey of America...some people say 'why give all this money to Asia in aid and different things when our own people are hurting. But I mean, looking in the long term, unless you help these people out and maintain a certain level of cooperation, you're safeguarding the fact that these people may not overrun you. I don't know what guarantee there is for that.

Interviewer: With the overrunning, in what form do you worry about that?

Mary: As in millions of people landing on the shores and where people are being used to living in one room per family suddenly finding people with house that could fill up with several families. I see that I live on a half acre block with a five bed-roomed house with a big gallery of empty space out the front...maybe in their eyes its enough to support a hundred people on this little block...we all know that it's a great big empty country but I mean, there's not enough water here and there's not enough sustenance to feed much more than what we have already got. I mean, I'm all for migrants coming here if they come through the right channels (Mary).

Mary seems to connect the 'right channels' with the 'millions of people' living in the countries to the north just waiting to land on the shores of Australia (Jupp 2003, p.197). Her concern is that if the numbers are not controlled, and migration does not occur through the proper channels, alluding to illegal 'boat people' then the population of Australia would increase until it is unsustainable because of the potential scarcity of water and food due to excess population. The narrative of 'sustainability' shapes her view that this scarcity will lead to the levels of poverty experienced in the countries to the north of Australia. Is concern about the 'swarm' of 'millions of people' (Schlunke 2002) about sustainability or to keep a check on how much difference is too much to maintain her position of privilege as a white Australian at the expense of forced migrants (Matthews and Chung 2008)? The privileged relationship of whiteness to a perceived entitlement to govern the national space is evident in her use of words and the main themes of her concerns. Mary worries about the three aspects of white national fantasy (Hage 1998, p.28,

discussed on p.62 of Chapter 2). Mary's excerpt exemplifies the way that white national fantasy plays out in three ways. First, she imagines that there is a national space called Australia. Second, Mary imagines that she has the privileged position to govern that public space evidenced through her 'concerns' about the country and how many migrants are too many. Finally, she creates the subject status of the 'other' as an object through her fear that there are millions of people located to the north of Australia. The white national fantasy enables Mary to imagine that she can move the object because she is in a position of governance. This discourse establishes the 'them' and 'us' binary that maintains white privilege in opposition to Asian or Black poverty. This concern could be about who can be inside or outside the nation.

The interviewees who are children of Italian or Greek migrants (Dominico, Alex, Poppy, Louis, Phyllis and Liza) did not draw on discourses of numbers when discussing multiculturalism or migration. In contrast, some of those with Australian-born parents want migrants to fit in to the Australian culture. They use language to express a desire for limitations (Mary, Bryan, Johnny, Optus, Patch, Dan and Shamus).

If the interviewees are concerned about the numbers of potential migrants, are there cultural groups and/or language groups to which the limitations apply? This discussion will now move away from the anxiety about numbers to focus on whether there are specific groups of people who are cast in the role of other inside and outside of the national space. The researcher asked the respondents if there are groups of people who are either included or excluded from Australian Identity. Dominico, the daughter of Italian migrant growers, responded:

Interviewer: We hear many terms to describe different groups of people in Australia. Is there anyone you think is included or excluded?

Dominico: I think everyone who feels that they are part of Australia should be allowed to feel included...I guess one of the things I don't agree with is people that choose to come here and live here for certain benefits but then bitch about the country all the time... like my father...this has been a great country to him and yet at the same time, he just loves Italy so much that there is nothing he can appreciate here (Dominico).

Dominico believes that anyone who wants to be should be included. Further, that they should feel included. Her phrasing also offers choice, so that people should not have to be a part of Australia if that is not their desire. Dominico's observation of her father, an immigrant from Italy, complicates her interpretations of inclusion and exclusion. While Dominico strongly felt that her own identity is Italian (discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, p.189), she also believes that migrants need to appreciate what Australia has to offer. Perhaps her father's experience is that even with 400 family members living in Australia, Italy remains his home.

Liza, in her mid 40s, is a secondary school 'Studies of Societies' teacher. Her husband is an Anglo Australian, or a 'Skip', as Liza's family refers to anyone from Anglo Australian background and culture. Liza's parents migrated from Greece after the war, and she and her sister (Poppy a respondent in this study) were born in Australia. When they commenced primary school, both sisters spoke Greek and did not speak English. Liza had the following thoughts about multiculturalism:

Interviewer: What does the term ‘multiculturalism’ mean to you?

Liza: To me it means living in a society where all cultures are accepted and people are allowed to live with their background and their cultures. Does it work? It is not working...Because...anywhere you go, if you talk to them [Anglo Australians] they still believe that...people should be blended in within the Anglo Saxon background (Liza).

Sara Ahmed’s (2000a, p.96), notion of the discourse of ‘acceptance’, discussed in more detail in p.91, can be applied to Liza’s experience of inclusion/exclusion. In Liza’s experience, her husband’s Anglo Australian family and her Anglo Australian friends enact an acceptance of her cultural difference, including language, as a ‘lifestyle choice’ based on her ‘Greek heritage’. Thus the difference experienced at a structural level, such as gender, race, religion among others, becomes erased. Liza’s understanding of multiculturalism is that it ‘means living in a society where all cultures are accepted’. The discourse of multiculturalism celebrates Liza’s difference, but in the daily encounters with her husband’s family, her friends and colleagues who are from the dominant cultural group, their sheer act of ‘accepting’ her for ‘who she is’ as an individual erases her difference. In that erasure, Liza has engaged with those of the dominant cultural group ‘in spite of’ her difference. With her difference ‘accepted’, she is expected to behave as an Australian, with the occasional quaint trait that is Greek. The country is imagined as having accepted everyone’s difference. In practice, that means where difference remains, it is erased.

The following excerpt is from Johnny (female) who is in her early 70s, is a former journalist and local historian.

Interviewer: Do you see Australia as white country?

Johnny: I just see Australia as a multicultural country because of the immigration that has gone on since World War II. There was a little bit before. A little bit (Johnny).

Ahmed's analysis above can also be applied to understand Johnny's passage. Johnny claims that Australia is different now because she can 'see' that it incorporates those who 'appear to be different', since the immigration policy changed after World War II. Anglo-centric practices of multiculturalism repress race (and thus any critique of race as a social category with lived consequences) and replace it with 'cultural diversity' (Ang and Stratton 2001). The power of whiteness allows Johnny to draw on her subject position as being normal and she experiences whiteness as normalised for the nation. She has seen the country become multicultural since the immigration of non-English-speaking migrants after World War II. Thus, the cultural differentiation that was present before is now homogenised and multiculturalism is seen as 'for the ethnics', and more specifically those who have migrated to Australia since WWII (Hage 1998, p.50).

5.3 Contemporary orientalism in Australia

This section will examine how everyday speech about asylum seekers reinforces white possession. As mentioned in Chapter 2.4 (p.60), this thesis applies the term

Orientalism (Said 1978) to refer to how particular discourses about refugees and asylum seekers structure the way that the participants speak about difference. As will become clear in the discussion, there is a discursive conflation of refugees as a security threat to the nation and as potential terrorists. The key argument underpinning this discursive conflation is that it is the government's responsibility to do what is necessary to protect its citizens from risks to national security, such as keeping perceived threats out of Australia. This discourse constructs the category of "citizen" in particular ways (Imtoul 2007b). The above argument is followed up by another popular sentiment (at the time) which states that on the off chance that any refugees make it to Australian waters or beaches, they should be sent back to their homeland or sent elsewhere (see Manne 2004b, for an excellent political history of the management of refugees in Australian politics).

A discourse often presented in Australian political and media culture refers to the notion that there are too many refugees for Australia to absorb. Some of the interviewees presented this idea through words such as "swamped". This is an extension of the myth about being swamped by "Asians" promulgated by Pauline Hanson in her maiden speech in Australian federal parliament (Hanson 10 September 1996, paragraph 19). The paranoia that built up around this myth is in stark contrast to those who drowned when the *SIEV X* sank with delayed assistance from the Australian government in 2001 (Stratton 2007, pp.184-5). The Australian national imaginary view of vulnerable borders creates a fear and anxiety about who may or may not cross them (Hage 2003; Stratton 2004). Supporters of the argument of "being swamped" expressed anger and indignation that refugees have "jumped the

queue”, an accusation first made by former Labor Prime Minister Bob Hawke (Manne 2004b, p.5).

Two core aspects of Said’s cultural theory of Orientalism are of interest to this chapter. First is that ‘the Orient’ is constructed through narratives and representations from the West (which, as a dominant discourse also constructs itself). Second these constructions have worldly implications for the colonised and the coloniser because the political realities of imperialism are within the narratives (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 1999; Said 1978). This section will draw out how Australian narratives about borders conflate the category of refugee with national security issues. The discussion about this conflation will turn now to focus on refugees and national security in Australia.

Two powerful themes of Orientalism can be seen in the following two excerpts from the semi-structured interviews of Johnny and Mary. The first hour of these interviews covered the personal histories of the interviewees (including Johnny, Mary, Optus, Shamus, Louis, Phyllis, Louise, Patch, Tyrone and Joan whose excerpts appear in this chapter) to map the complex relations of class, race, gender and colonialism from childhood narratives. The second hour covered contemporary issues, including the respondents’ view (at that time) on refugees, migration and their relationship with Indigenous sovereignty. The following conversations about refugees occurred after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the bombing of the Sari club in Kuta Beach, Bali on 12 October 2002, which killed a significant number of Australians and Balinese civilians. These events form a backdrop to the Orientalist construction of people of “Middle Eastern appearance” by the interviewees.

Johnny is divorced, in her 70's and was interviewed in July 2003. During her interview, she was asked how she felt about the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Interviewer: What about the twin towers in New York, September 11, how did that impact on you as an Australian?

Johnny: I look twice at anybody that looks Middle Eastern. I still firmly believe that these refugees – so-called refugees – many of them are infiltrators – Muslim infiltrators...they are weapons of mass destruction (Johnny).

In this comment, Johnny demonstrates the result of biological racism in the form of racial profiling as it is problematically applied to anyone of “Middle Eastern appearance”. Moreover, as Hage (1998) argues, Johnny enacts a white nationalist practice of placing herself in a position of governance over the national space, which she feels needs to be protected from the Middle Eastern or Muslim other. The white national fantasy allows Johnny to conflate people who look Middle Eastern or Muslim with being Muslim infiltrators and terrorists, naming Muslim people as “weapons of mass destruction”. Farid (2006) argues that the embodied result of these discursive confluences for people of “Middle Eastern appearance” is a clear message of non-belonging, regardless of their citizenship status. Whiteness maintains the cultural power of Western civilisation to which the Middle Eastern subject position does not belong (Hoh 2002). For Farid, the Australian government’s policies and practices have been underpinned by “a broadly Orientalist ideology that assumes an essential difference between Arab and Muslim Australians from other Australian citizens and frames such a difference as a distance from and a lack of whiteness”

(Farid 2006, p.1). The discourse of Orientalism enables the practice of essentialising Arab and Muslim people (or Middle Eastern “looking” people) that is documented in the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC 2004) report as the following two quotes illustrate:

Before September 11th I have lived here and had a normal life...now...[t]hey will not just tell you that you sound differently, they will not look at you like you are a human. They look at you like all the Muslims are involved with it [i.e. terrorism] (HREOC 2004, p.44, italics in original).

After September 11, Bali and the Iraq war we are treated like terrorists...Even Muslims who have been part of this country for many years all of a sudden were no longer treated as part of this country....(HREOC 2004, p.45, italics in original)

The Orientalist representations of Muslims and Arabs in popular media and by Australian governments are implicated in the framing of refugees as potential terrorists in Jenny’s statement and result in experiences like those of the two interviewees quoted above in the HREOC report. These representations are constructed on the history of Australia’s Immigration Restriction Act 1901, commonly referred to as the ‘white Australia policy’, that is replicated in contemporary policy such as mandatory detention that focuses on the method of arrival, such as boats (Jupp 2003).

Mary, also interviewed in July 2003, is in her late 40s. She is married with five school-aged children. She is tertiary educated in Art History. During a semi-structured discussion about Australia's relationship with its northern neighbours, Mary made the following observation about migration and refugees:

Interviewer: How do you see Australia's position in the world now?

Mary It's all shifting and changing, thanks to Bali bombings and all this sort of thing...It's very good politics to keep friendly with all our nearest neighbours because, let's face it, they out-wipe us in population and it's just a matter of time if we're ever going to be taken over...It really disturbs me, the fact that there's all these billions spilling out into the sea in China and all these Asian countries, and India, and we're supposedly this little pink blot empty, waiting for all these people to fill us up. (Mary).

Mary's excerpt shows the Orientalist white anxiety that is represented in discourses about being "swamped" with Asians and in the concern about who has the right to be in Australia. These two discourses are repeated in many of the interviews. Interestingly, her last comment is about the international communities perceiving Australia as an empty pink blot on the colonial map (pink referring to the colour of the British Empire in early 20th century colonial maps), waiting to be filled. Perhaps this fear is generated from the unsettling knowledge that there were (and still are) people in Australian territories who have a prior claim to the land before the invasion and subsequent settlement of Australia. In this discourse of being swamped, the settler society re-invents itself as being the "native born" rather than invaders or

migrants. Those who were “born and bred” in Australia, with Anglo roots, claim the status of native. This does not apply to people who are multi-generation Chinese (see Ang 2001), Afghan or other non-white families born in Australia. This discourse privileges and protects white possession by excluding the Oriental or not-white person from the narrative of being “born and bred Australian” and asserts white western supremacy in terms of Said’s theory of Orientalism (see p.66 and pp160-161). This discourse of belonging works to reinforce the claims of white people to the status of “first Australian”. This status masks their history of migrancy (Moreton-Robinson 2003b, pp.24-5), which in turn disavows the Indigenous presence and reinforces white possession in everyday narratives.

Orientalism as a discourse enables white Australian narratives to cast the Asian and Middle Eastern in the subject position of “Other”, against whom the “native born” must protect their imagined sovereign claim and maintain a position of superiority. The Middle Eastern and Asian other are represented in the terms “billions”, “masses” and “hords” with the associated imagery of “spilling out into the sea” because of a fear of over-population in “their” own homelands. Mary fears that the “billions” as represented by Asian people, will see Australia as an empty landscape, in comparison to their country of origin. She expresses anxiety that the “pink” blot of the former British Empire, represented on the world map as far away from other “white” countries, is in danger of being over run by the Asian invasion from the north.

Similarly, Optus, in her early 60s said:

Optus: we should have conditions ... if they choose to come here ... they don't have to forget their homelands, but they should adopt our laws and ways of living and please don't bring your ethnic problems with you ... they should be screened rigorously, why isn't there a restriction on these people? I don't like it. I think it is unfair. We didn't have it, we don't want it and if you choose to come here, you leave it behind. If you can't abide by the conditions well go home really (Optus).

Johnny, Mary and Optus draw upon an Orientalist discourse that, as stated by Farid (2006), creates the belief that there is an essential difference between white Australians and the "Oriental" refugees in the detention centres; be they from China, India or Afghanistan.

Shamus is on an army pension and is aged in his early 30s. His father was a labourer and he grew up in poverty. Shamus thought that Australia used to be a white country, but that it is now multicultural. He believes that being multicultural means keeping one's heritage but that Australia:

Interviewer: What does Multiculturalism mean to you?

Shamus: ...has the ability to absorb every other nationality and become an identity as an Australian. When I say white Australian, I mean, we also have like our black Australians and our Chinese Australians but we're all Australians. You've got to abide by the rules of Australia. You can't say "I'm Asian so I can go around doing whatever I want".

I've lived through all these race wars in Sydney [prior to the Cronulla race riots in 2005]. We used to see lots of fighting and people wouldn't change their heritage. They'll say, "we're Arabs" and that was it. Women have their place. I mean in Australia women are allowed to drive...they should have the ability to get out and do these things. I hate that people don't have a chance. In Australia everyone can learn, but in Sydney they're very racist [sic], (Shamus).

The next part of the interview moved to ask Shamus what his position was on refugees.

Interviewer: What are your thoughts on refugees?

Shamus: I was talking about this the other day, about the detention centre and how you have to hold them somewhere so you can sort out who's who, because people that come over to Australia aren't necessarily going to want to benefit Australia. They're actually here to harm. So they should go back. But they should sort them out a lot quicker than they do. Twelve months is too long. I don't agree with detention centres at all. They shouldn't be here. We've got to have some place where you can put them reasonably comfortable until it's sorted out and then the ones that should be sent back, send them back. They're here for three or four years. A lot of them are talented, there are doctors and we need doctors, we should exploit their abilities while they're here. And kids, well if you've got the parents in detention

centres you can't take the kids from the parents so you've got to have some place to put them. But most of them have been there for five years and that really stinks. That's like prison but it's even worse than prison (Shamus).

The excerpt from Shamus is shaped by the discourse of sameness through the idea that Australia absorbs different cultural heritages and that regardless of a person's background everyone shares an underlying Australian identity. He holds contradictory ideas about multiculturalism. On the one hand, he says that multiculturalism means people can keep their cultural heritage. On the other hand, he has an expectation that migrants ought to align with white Australian values and cultural practices. Interestingly, Shamus talks about the category of white Australian being more than merely white, in that there are black Australians and Chinese Australians. There is a slippery slope in the category of Australian-ness however, depending on how people abide by "Australian rules". For Shamus, "Arabs" refuse to change their cultural heritage and therefore refuse the possibility of being "Australian". Shamus also represents Arabs as refusing the values of Western modernity such as equality and freedom, which are exercised through specific cultural practices (e.g. women driving a car). It is his belief that Arab communities cause racial tensions because they refuse to be absorbed by the wider Australian culture, which is coded as "white".

Like Shamus, not all of the interviewees agreed with incarceration of asylum seekers. While the dominant discourses used by the interviewees did conflate refugees with breaking the law, many were not comfortable with the conditions of incarceration in

the detention centres. Louis is married to Phyllis with three teenage children and they are both the children of Greek migrants. They live in a house just outside Rivertown that they built adjacent to Louis' parents, who still live in the house he grew up in on the leased family orchard. Louis now works in the orchard as well as being the town undertaker. Phyllis also works in the orchard and is involved at her children's primary school in an unpaid capacity. Louis is 41 years old, and Phyllis is 40. The researcher spoke with Louis and Phyllis together at their kitchen table.

Phyllis and Louis commented:

Louis: Surely there has got to be a better way of handling this process. I would hate – okay they have done the dirty, they have jumped on ships that could sink two kilometres out of their shores or whatever, but surely there has got to be a better way than locking up people and having them sitting there and all these atrocities that do take place in these places. What is the answer? Don't ask me because it is sad.

Phyllis: It is sad that they are prisoners where they thought they had come somewhere to be free.

Louis: Because it is not only happening here. Phyllis' paternal grandmother came from a part of Turkey. A lot of Turkey was Greek back at the turn of the century and they had the big push and got rid of all of them out of Turkey in the early '20s. So they went to Greece, okay. They were still Greeks and so forth. Now you have the Albanians that are jumping the border and going over there. It happens in a lot of countries but there has got to be a better way. The Albanians that

jump the country and go to Greece don't get put in pens. It's really sad turning on the telly and watching people behind cages (Louis and Phyllis).

Phyllis and Louis opposed any form of incarceration as government policy for processing asylum seekers. The other interviewees who support mandatory detention rely on public media and government statements to understand the issues. A recurring theme was a strong discomfort about the length of imprisonment for refugees in detention centres. One alternative offered by the interviewees was to send refugees back to their country of origin as quickly as possible (Manne 2004b). The other key argument was a reasoned, though still uncomfortable answer, that it must be necessary to imprison refugees whilst their applications for asylum are processed. There was so little public debate about processing asylum seeker applications in comparison to European and other non-settler societies that the interviewees' knowledge of alternative entry practices was limited.

For example, Louise is a primary school teacher in her 50s. She grew up on fruit farms and her husband runs a fruit farm. She thought:

Louise: the issue with refugees is a difficult one. I still don't know what to think. I can feel sympathy for the people who want to find a better life. I can feel concerned for a country that can't just accept unlimited numbers of people, it would be nice to be able to offer refuge to whoever needs it, but in reality can you do that? I don't think you probably can. It is awful that they are locked up in places where they

are so unhappy when they get here even. But then there must be channels that they could go through and do it the right way. It doesn't seem fair that some try and do it the right way and don't get accepted and then the others choose to do it the wrong way and then they expect to have the things that they want out of it. I don't know (Louise).

Louise was genuinely concerned about the welfare of the refugees living in the detention centres whilst their applications for asylum are processed. The issue is that their arrival to Australia in predominantly unseaworthy vessels, as discussed on pp.18-9, was construed by the government and the media as illegal (Manne 2003), and promoted the narrative of boat people as illegal immigrants. The focus on the method of arrival is used to argue that refugees have no right to be on Australian soil, and places Louise in the un-settling liberalist position of wanting Australia to be a refuge for those who flee for their lives, whilst believing that their act of seeking refuge on Australian soil via uncertified boats makes their actions criminal. Louise said that she did not follow the events in detail, and only drew on the Howard government's version of events, talk back radio, mainstream newspapers and commercial television news programs and current affairs programs for her information (Manne 2004a). This illustrates the complex relationships between the dominant discourses as represented by the government and media, the refugee "crisis" in Australia, and the lived experience of refugees, white Australians and Indigenous Australians. The security of the nation is cast against and at the cost of asylum seekers' lives, as it has been at the cost of the lives of Indigenous Australians since invasion.

Likewise, Patch and Joan are two women who were interviewed together. They are close friends, in their late 40s /early 50s and are from working class families. They were asked how the Tampa crisis and the subsequent events surrounding refugees made them feel as Australians:

Interviewer: Did that have any impact on how you saw yourself as an Australian?

Patch: I think it's the Australian thing that you give people a fair go, but you wait your turn. These people are queue jumping and that's what we don't like. It's not that they were from any particular background or anything like that, but stand in line and wait your turn. It does amuse me a little when they go on about the conditions of living there [in the detention centres]. They are awful and fenced in and that but the actual conditions are not bad compared to what some of them – a true refugee – would have come from. It shouldn't happen – being locked up like that but you know what I'm trying to say? (Patch in Patch, Tyrone and Joan).

Joan: Yes I do. But we've signed an agreement with Britain or something to say that we will take refugees. That's where we have got ourselves in trouble, we shouldn't have signed it in the first place. I don't think we should let them stay here, just send them home (Joan in Patch, Tyrone and Joan).

The discourse of an Australian “fair go” versus “waiting your turn” is present in the interviews with Mary, Louise, Joan, Patch, and Johnny. This discourse is used to construct refugees as “illegal immigrants” who take advantage of the Australian public’s goodwill by gaining access to something that can be “applied for” through the “correct channels” in their country of origin (Manne 2004b). However, in a war-torn country such as Afghanistan or Iraq, there may not be an Australian embassy at which to line up to apply for asylum or to emigrate. Such information was lacking in public debates about the methods of arrival of asylum seekers (Docker 2002), particularly in the rural towns near the location of the detention centres.

The following excerpt is from the interview segment with Jenny that focuses on migration:

Interviewer: How do you see the current migration laws?

Johnny: Well, I feel very strongly about the illegal immigrants who come here – the boat people. Because there is a way for them to get into Australia and if they can’t abide by those rules I don’t want to see them here. It has shown up in the way that they reacted in those detention camps, let’s face it, they’re not the sort of people that Australia needs or wants. We need workers, people who are prepared to put in their sixpence worth of work to make it a better country... I reckon many of them that come from the Middle Eastern countries are Saddam Hussein’s and Osama Bin Laden’s weapons of mass destruction. They are infiltrating this country and trying to do

damage...If they were the right sort of people they would have been model citizens and have waited patiently (Johnny).

Johnny's argument draws on the former Howard government's promotion of refugees as being "illegal immigrants" (Manne 2004a). The excerpt also indicates the limited space that oppositional voices, concerning asylum seeker issues, had in the mainstream media and the restriction of any information about the way that other non-settler nations approach refugees (Manne 2003; Stratton 2007).

Johnny's excerpt essentialises the refugees as being incapable of being good citizens. The discourse of the "deserving citizen" against the "non-deserving non-citizen" is linked tightly to discourses of white possession. Johnny conflates the refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran as "weapons of mass destruction" in opposition to an implicitly civilised West (in this case Australia). In another statement, she refers to the refugees as terrorists and as spies for Osama Bin Laden. The crime is that of appearing to be Middle Eastern (see Pugliese 2006).

5.4 Conclusion

The focus of this chapter was to analyse the complexities of 'everyday understandings' of the key discourses surrounding the issues of 'white Australia', 'multiculturalism', as a discourse to understand difference, including migrants and refugees and 'national identity', as a discourse of belonging to the nation and how these discourses speak to each other. The key argument was that the social and political history of a 'white Australia' informed the terms of multiculturalism. It

argued that state multiculturalism was created to manage diversity and, as a result the narrative of culture, obscured the language of race, while the racist underpinning remains. Identity is framed in the terms of ‘cultural identity’ that is linked to the nation. Thus, the raced nature of white national identity remains in position. The discourse of race has been suppressed in the narrative of multiculturalism thus, the findings in this chapter concur with Tascon (Tascon 2008), in that many of the interviewees did not speak of the way that race organises both oppression and privilege in everyday white Australian lives.

Some of the interviewees have difficulty in reconciling their desire for a multicultural country with the notion of a singular liberal nation. In Australia, these two visions are lived through the multicultural nation as a model for national identity. They maintain the presence of white race privilege through an Anglo-centric practice of multiculturalism being the dominant narrative of multiculturalism. This demonstrates the link between culture and race and supports Schech and Haggis’s (Schech and Haggis 2000) argument that the national community is “constructed in terms of whiteness” while “claiming to be non-racial”, referred to at the beginning of this chapter. The result is an underlying centrality of whiteness to the dominant Australian national identity, despite the discourses of multiculturalism as a road to nationhood. This is played out in the interviewees’ everyday lives through Hage’s notion of governance.

One of the backdrops to the narratives that inform white Australian identity is the thread of Orientalism. Section 5.3 showed how Australian national narratives constructed asylum seekers as illegal immigrants. The chapter traced the way that

national narratives about the *Tampa* incident, the “children overboard” and the subsequent sinking of the *SIEV X*, and the previous Howard Liberal Australian government’s “Pacific Solution” re-constructed asylum seekers as “illegal immigrants”. The chapter argued that the Australian government used the narrative of the “illegal immigrant” to justify mandatory detention and the “Pacific Solution” which placed asylum seekers in detention centres. One result was that the subject position of “asylum seeker” or “refugee” became synonymous with being a criminal. The analysis identified three key themes in the national narratives that the interviewees either drew upon or countered in their everyday speech about asylum seekers.

First, the chapter found contemporary expressions of Orientalism in the participants’ descriptions of asylum seekers. Examples include the Orientalist construction of people with “Middle Eastern” appearance that essentialised people who “look” Middle Eastern as terrorists or potential terrorists. This practice constructed the “Middle Eastern Other” as a threat to the security of the white nation, Australia. The national narratives about Australian borders are drawn to exclude the security threat thus maintaining white privilege to manage the national space (Hage 1998). One sentiment held by some of the interviewees was that asylum seekers should be sent back to their country of origin.

The second theme evident in the interviews was the Orientalist fantasy of Australia being “swamped” by Asians and refugees. The Australian national imaginary fears that the territory connected to the Australian nation has vulnerable borders that need to be

protected from the ‘billions’ to the north. This discourse is wielded to argue that “real” asylum seekers would apply for asylum through the “proper” channels. This narrative positions anyone arriving by boat as “jumping the queue” and they therefore should be sent back to wait their turn. These discourses deny the migratory history of the speakers based on the normative construction of white or Anglo Australians as “native” and are therefore linked to Indigenous dispossession.

Thus, the narrative of the “illegal immigrant” enabled a discursive conflation of the subject position “asylum seeker” and “refugee” with that of “potential terrorist”. Furthermore, the chapter showed that the Orientalist national narratives about asylum seekers, border security and the war on terror reinforce white privilege through the raced exclusion of Middle Eastern and/or Muslim peoples who are located within and outside of the national discourses of borders as “illegal immigrants”. The discourses assert the fantasy of white Australian sovereignty at the expense of Indigenous sovereignty. Thus, the Orientalist national narratives reinforce white possession of the nation, Australia, in everyday speech about asylum seekers.

A multiculturalism based on difference, as Dominico proposes, as the point from which to build relationships and identity, rather than sameness could provide a space to be together-in-difference (Haggis 2007). Rather than focusing on a unified national identity, or seeking a national identity at all, a commitment to engaging with relationships with difference in the context of Indigenous sovereignty will attend to a non-colonial present. This point leads to the central question for consideration in the following chapter. If multiculturalism is the key discourse that Australians use to

understand difference, how does it influence, at an empirical level, how white
Australians think about their identity and Indigenous sovereignty?

6. Australian identities and Indigenous sovereignty

MY COUNTRY

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of rugged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains;
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror –
The wide brown land for me (Mackellar 1908).

So who should take responsibility? Should non-Aboriginal Australia take responsibility for its inherited history of colonialism? They are quick to take benefits from the inherited wealth of colonialism...Is a future itself dependent upon Aboriginal ways, but an impossibility when an Aboriginal presence is being disappeared before our eyes? Without Aboriginal living connections is the future of humanity impossible? Are these impossible spaces where we should begin, rather than avoid? In the event of turning away, where is there even to turn? (Watson 2007a, p.42).

6.1 Introduction

The analytical chapters of this thesis hang upon Sandoval's (1997, p.97) decolonising 'methodology of the oppressed' as discussed in Chapter 3, pp.87-8 . The chapter will draw upon the work outlined next to read and deconstruct signs of power in white Australian identities. In extending the study of how the interview cohort, as white Australians, construct their identities in a specific time and place, this chapter examines that construction in the context of Indigenous sovereignty. It does this by applying Frankenberg's (1993) conceptual framework of analysing the racialised lives lived through white subjectivities. As Frankenberg does not speak directly

about Indigenous sovereignty, this chapter circles back to the questions raised by Irene Watson in the quote on the previous page, and draws upon Moreton-Robinson's (2004a) thesis of patriarchal white sovereignty. Further, the chapter uses the work of Riggs (2004b) and Nicoll (2007) to complicate the racialised position of privilege lived by white Australians. Finally, it applies Hage's (1998) concept of white subjectivity as enacting a position of governance to assist with a critique of everyday lived ongoing relations of power between racialised subjectivities. The chapter then seeks to structure the signs and their meanings to establish egalitarian power relations (Sandoval 1997, p.97). To do so this chapter contextualises the establishment of white Australian identities in-relation-to Indigenous sovereignty. This approach meets the second objective of the thesis. That is, to understand the ways that Australian identity can relate to Indigenous sovereignty as outlined in the Thesis Approach 1.1 p.9.

The quote by Irene Watson on p.183 refers to Derrida's thinking through the crucible of impossibilities. Watson uses Derrida's proposal that, rather than remaining in paralysis, the impossible space could lead one to make a decision and to take responsibility. Hence, Watson suggests that this should be the starting place. Indeed, Indigenous academics, activists, politicians and elders have to continue to keep race, land, sovereignty and social justice on a national agenda that has turned away from these issues. The decision by the majority of embodied settler Australians has been to remain invisible through whiteness and to avoid the impossible space of inherited privilege gained from colonialism and Indigenous dispossession. At every turn, however, is the continuing Indigenous presence that summons the disembodied white subject who enacts a white abstract relationship

with Indigenous people. Australian subjects are called to be present in the impossible spaces of inherited colonialism. As discussed in chapter 3.3.1, p.101, this is because contemporary Australian relations of power play out in the space of inherited colonialism in the form of 'relations of ruling' (Moreton-Robinson 2000b, xxi).

To apply Watson's work requires non-Indigenous Australians, who thus benefit from the wealth that colonialism brought, to take responsibility. It is to stand on the difficult terrain and maintain the impossible dialogue to make the seemingly impossible decisions possible. In Watson's argument, the way forward, the very future of Australia, is in its very impossibility if only all those who call Australia home will stand in that space. Hence, the space of extreme discomfort turns into the site of decisions and possibilities. What does this dialogue look like at present for those who identify as white Australians? Who will stand in a space that causes such distress for long enough for a non-colonial dialogue to emerge?

Migrant and settler Australians find themselves in the impossible space that is the space of Indigenous sovereignty. Thus, non-Indigenous Australian identity is shaped by race and the colonial history. Drawing upon Sandoval, this chapter attempts to comment on the position of power that white Australian subjectivity grants those who migrate to Australian shores. It will deconstruct the privilege that white Australian subjectivity bestows and at the same time, the analysis will seek to understand the complexities and incongruences within white Australian identities. In order to renegotiate power relations in Australia, it is argued that to construct a non-colonial present, white Australians must deconstruct their position of power by acknowledging the relations-of-ruling in the context of Indigenous sovereignty

(Moreton-Robinson 2000b). The chapter seeks to understand how non-Indigenous Australians locate their identity 'in our skin', on the ground of Indigenous sovereignty (Nicoll 2004, p.30). Whiteness allows (some) migrant (with limitations) and settler Australians to act as a disembodied white subject, the ultimate Cartesian mind-body separation, which is required for white patriarchal sovereignty to enact its ownership of this space (Moreton-Robinson 2004b, p.81). Australia, then, becomes the impossible space. It is not possible for racialisation, and the consequent power relations of race, to be anything but 'invisibilising', as Jackie Huggins (1998) describes it. Is this impossibility the ground upon which the future of Australia must be negotiated? Is this the space of which Irene Watson speaks?

As discussed on pp.32-3 and p.116, Frankenberg's work is of importance for a study of white subjectivity in Australia. While Frankenberg focused on the racialised lives of women in the United States, this project seeks to ground the analysis of white Australian identities in relation to Indigenous sovereignty in Australia. This chapter argues that taking responsibility for the inheritance of colonialism could produce an understanding of the relations of ruling between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians. Some respondents, such as Waterwitch, Jewlizard, Louise and Alex, speak of being confused about their knowledge that Indigenous peoples were historically dispossessed from their lands and about how they feel about Aboriginal land rights. This chapter argues that the liberal capitalist view of land ownership and possession makes it difficult for some interviewees to reconcile it with the knowledge of Aboriginal dispossession. This leads to some of the respondents expressing ambiguity and reveals the complex relationship that non-Indigenous Australians have with Indigenous sovereignty.

The chapter argues that for most of the interviewees there is a reluctance or inability to situate themselves in relation to Indigenous sovereignty, that is a manifestation of 'relations-of-ruling' (Moreton-Robinson 2000b), discussed in Chapter 3.3.1 on p.84, which leads to ambiguity about Indigenous land rights. One realm where this becomes glaringly evident is on the topic of land use. Some respondents feel confused about Native Title claims either in areas where they perceive that the Native Title claimants no longer have a connection or where there is urban development, such as within city or town boundaries. The same interviewees express concern that Native Title claimants do not know how to use their land properly and will need training on land management and agricultural practices.

6.2 Being Australian

This section will focus on how the respondents describe their Australian identity. The focus will then shift to how the respondents understand themselves as Australian. Do the respondents see themselves as Australian? When do they see themselves as Australian and what aspects of Australian identity are vital to them? The analysis will then shift to whether the respondents see themselves to be raced as white or non-white. This is followed by a discussion about the interviewees' awareness of Australian history. The final section will examine how the respondents see Aboriginal land rights and whether they think land rights affect non-Indigenous Australian identities. The next section will analyse these questions in order to examine the social construction of the white experience of being Australian in relationship with Indigenous sovereignties.

Bryan is in his early 20s and works in hospitality at Rolling Hills.

Interviewer: How do you describe your identity?

Bryan: My identity. As an Australian... I would classify my identity by my interests and my occupation more than any particular structure. I have my own view. I am also defined by my sexuality. The social life of the gay community here is pretty cool. The war [in Afghanistan] has not made me any more patriotic. I'm middle class. I'm South Australian (Bryan).

Bryan names interests and occupation first when describing his identity. He names his subject position through his sexuality as a gay person, and the social networks that he has developed with the gay community. Bryan also identifies himself as middle class and South Australian. Thus, regionally, he located his state identity as being more salient than his particular town, location as rural, or his national identity.

While Bryan liked the nationalism exhibited by Americans, he did not want Australia to be overly Americanised. Likewise, Optus was not pleased about what she terms 'Americanism':

Interviewer: How do you describe your identity?

Optus: I would describe myself as being a pretty true blue Australian and very fond of my country and proud to be Australian and probably if

the truth be known, I would favour the English background that is in my family as opposed to the Americanism that is creeping in (Optus).

Optus bases her identity on being Australian. She prioritises an English background as the core cultural influence as opposed to the cultural impact that she perceives the USA to have in Australia. Most of the respondents were not comfortable with what they called the 'Americanism' that is dominating the popular culture in Australian media, with the exception of Tony who works in the RAAF.

Shamus's identity changed to adapt to where he lives at the time. Shamus says: "I'm country when I live in a country region and I'm city when I live in the city. I adapt". He did not have any particular feelings about being Australian despite being on an army pension. Meanwhile Johnny focused on her family being born in Australia: "[My family] are Australian born and bred" (Johnny). Apart from Shamus and his brother Dan, the dominant theme about identity throughout the interviews was that respondents identified as being 'country' versus fellow Australians who live in the capital cities or on the East Coast of Australia. For example, Patch describes herself as "a country bumpkin and you had the city cousins" (Patch in Patch, Tyrone and Joan); and Tyrone says "yes, we're country folk" (Tyrone in Patch, Tyrone and Joan); likewise Mary states "I'm just a country mouse really" (Mary). Collin sees himself as Australian and country based on his life as a drover: "I'm Australian and I'm more country. I've been in the bush all my life, droving, station hand, labouring, fencing, and driving trucks. I drove cattle [on horseback] right across Australia from Queensland to South Australia" (Collin). Likewise, David responded to the question how he described his identity:

Interviewer: How do you describe your identity?

David: Well my national identity is Australian.

Interviewer: Is that important to you?

David: Yes. I've always regarded myself as Australian and I've always regarded my Australian identity as being important. My image of what it meant to be an Australian as a child came mainly from reading Ion Idress's books, which I got out of the local library.¹² My image of being Australian came more from memory than anything else. And hence my ideal Australian was a very independent person, country person (David).

David identifies the national story of 'being an Australian' that he gained through reading his favourite childhood authors. Later in the interview, David stated that he did not have a particular picture of "an Australian", as there are so many different Australian identities. National identities are created from shared characteristics often embedded in national narratives that are developed in history as well as in fiction. As Catriona Elder (2007, p.26) argues, while it is impossible that the notion of a particular set of characteristics could ever define a nation of people, national identity is somehow difficult to give up.

Other interviewees identified most strongly with local and rural, rather than national, identities. This is evident in Louise's response: "I guess I consider myself Australian.

¹² Ion Idriess was a very popular Australian author in the late 1930s and 1940s and throughout World War II. His narratives centre on bush mythology and national character. Thus, as David identifies, if these narratives are drawn upon to fashion a national identity it would inform a particular kind of Australian identity that David identifies – the white skilled bush man or pioneer who is very independent.

I consider myself as proudly South Australian. Actually my identity was more based at the little country town I grew up in” (Louise),

For other of the interviewees, their state identity was more influential than their national identity. As Jewlizard points out:

Interviewer: How do you describe your identity?

Jewlizard: I’m an Australian. I really identify as a South Australian, even though I was born in Victoria. I think I’m South Australian before I’m Australian. I think some of it too is because we were free settlers, whereas, you know, in Western Australia and the Eastern States they were convicts and I think that has influenced me a little bit (Jewlizard).

Jewlizard’s interview quote suggests that she can select the components of her lived experience that can then be used to construct her identity. This process is also evident in Shamus’s interview where he adapts his identity to adjust according to whether he is living in the city or living in the country. David’s excerpt also suggests the process of constructing his identity where he fashions himself in the image of fictional characters of what it is to be an Australian.

Some respondents shared that they held their cultural identity that is not British-based as well as an Australian identity. This occurred for Louis and Phyllis, who were interviewed together:

Interviewer: How do you describe your identity?

Louis: I classify myself as an Australian and nothing against my roots or my heritage, I'm an Australian that has Greek background and I do take great pride in where I am now and also don't forget where we did come from. With the Olympics and sport I always feel like I can't lose.

Phyllis: Same. Although we are Australians of Greek background and we are still trying to encourage our traditions with our kids.

Interviewer: And what aspects are important to you?

Louis: I look back and I read a couple of history books on the first Greeks that came to Australia and the difficulties they encountered and how they changed their names and whatever. There were a lot of name changes because some of the Greek names were difficult to translate or to put pen to paper. But identifying ourselves basically with our names we have stuck to traditional names as have our kids and we speak Greek (Louis and Phyllis).

Phyllis and Louis construct their identities to reflect both Greek and Australian cultural identities. Louis and Phyllis use strategies such as giving their children traditional Greek names and speak Greek at home as signifiers of their Greek cultural background. Further, they state that their national identity is Australian. Thus, for Phyllis and Louis, the cultivation of Greek cultural practices, including language, does not supersede their Australian identity.

One interviewee, Dominico, stated that her cultural identity is Italian and not Australian:

Interviewer: How do you describe your identity?

Dominico: I describe myself as Italian. Although I was born here and raised here, and I've gone back there to live and study for 2 years, I feel very much that my identity is Italian. I feel very much Italian. The best proof of that was – a high note, especially when we were watching the Olympic Games or other sports, where Italy and Australia were competing, I just couldn't go for Australia. I barracked for the Italian teams, so that in itself is a very strong statement to make because I spent most of my time in Australia in Rivertown and my loyalty is obviously to – I love this country but I feel as if I'm brought up Italian. I don't feel Australian. I think that is because a lot of the cultural upbringing we had, our traditions, values, all that. There are 400 in my family here. Every weekend there is two or three events – communion, baptisms, a wedding, funerals and birthdays (Dominico).

Dominico's identity as Italian complicates the dominant tropes of being Australian. She feels no obligation to be a hyphenated identity for example, Italian-Australian. Dominico is culturally Italian and would identify as such wherever she is located. Dominico states that she does not 'feel' Australian, even though she was born in Australia and has Australian citizenship. Thus unlike Louis and Phyllis, who are culturally Greek, and identify as Australian, Dominico is culturally Italian and does not call herself Australian. The similarity is the suggestion of choice and the process of constructing cultural and national identity.

Citrus, Waterwitch and Alan, saw themselves as cosmopolitan rather than identifying as either 'country' or 'city'. Interviewed individually, Citrus sees himself as "very much cosmopolitan, though Rivertown will always be home" (Citrus). Likewise, Waterwitch states that "I've always seen myself as being international, I guess you'd call it cosmopolitan, and at the same time I belong to the Murray River" (Waterwitch) and Alan: "I'm Australian of course, but it's more global now" (Alan). Further, all three had remained at Rivertown where Citrus and Alan grew up. Waterwitch grew up in another small town on the same river interstate. The quotes from Citrus, Waterwitch and Alan place the locality of the town in an international context. Citrus identifies with the town in particular, Waterwitch identifies the river as where she belongs and Alan identifies with Australia at a national level, believing that being Australian is 'more global now' than it was.

For other interviewees, the question was not so straightforward, such as Liza below. Whereas children of migrants, Louis and Phyllis, felt passionately Australian with Greek heritage, and Dominico felt Italian rather than Australian, Liza feels comfortable in diverse settings and does not feel compelled to identify as Australian or as Greek:

Interviewer: How do you describe your identity?

Liza: That's a really difficult question, talking about your identity. Because it is influenced by so many things. I see myself carrying the Greek values that my parents brought here very definitely. But I also, because my professional experience and my personal life – I left home when I was 17 years old – I also see that I carry the values that I

learned in that environment as well. If I was going to talk about where I sit, I see myself sitting in the middle. Greek with also that – all those influences that I've picked up along the way through my tertiary education, my professional life and my personal life. I feel comfortable wherever I am. If I'm at a Greek function I feel comfortable there, if I'm with people from other backgrounds, I feel comfortable there. So I don't really see myself as Greek and I don't really see myself as Australian, I really see myself as me, do you understand what I'm talking about? (Liza).

Liza's response to the question about identity allows the complexity of her lived experiences to sit next to one another without anxiety. Her Greek values, perhaps, mean that she does not hold an image of herself as Australian per se; in another part of the interview, she identifies Anglo Australians as the dominant cultural group, like her husband and his family. While Liza feels comfortable with her Greek values, she is not compelled to identify as Greek, or to hyphenate her identity as Greek-Australian or vice versa. She is able to move between different settings in her multiple subject positions.

The common theme amongst all of the interview responses is the absence of Indigenous sovereignties in their conceptualisation of their own identity. The interviews demonstrate the fragmentation, multiple subjectivity and different constructions of white identities, some of which are more marginal than others are. The constructions of difference within whiteness, such as Greek Australian identities, are established within a multicultural framework. It is intriguing to note that there is

no language of hybridity that is often used within postcolonial diasporic contexts (Bhabha 1990). The next section analyses what aspects of Australian identity, if any, are important to them in order to focus the interviewees on narratives about national identity and whether they identify with the discourses about the nation.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself as Australian?

Louis: My hair stands on end when I hear the national anthem.

Phyllis: Yes, mine too.

Louis: Being called Australian, and we see that we have come from a big and wide and varied group, it is ever changing, but to be able to say that I came – my parents came from Greece and we have come thus far and to associate firstly with being Australian and secondly I do get a lot of pride. I always put myself Australian before I put myself anything else.

Phyllis: Yes. I'm proud to be an Australian and when Australia does well at the Olympics, for example, it gives me a real buzz (Louis and Phyllis).

Louis and Phyllis give examples of situations, events and cultural practices that make them feel Australian. They both agree that the national anthem makes their 'hair stand on end'. The national anthem is closely associated with sport, and Louis and Phyllis give the example of feeling pride when Australia does well in the Olympics. Louis emphasises that he is proud to be Australian and puts his Australian identity before 'anything else'. Several of the participants draw upon international sporting events to give examples of when they think about being Australian. Similar to interviewees feeling Australian when they are overseas, international sports events

provide an international context for expressions of national identity. Most of the participants do not think about 'being Australian' or 'feeling Australian' when they are at home. For example:

Interviewer: Do you see yourself as Australian and in what ways and when do you feel Australian?

Mary: Something typical like: I feel Australian during the Olympics? I don't think about it. Of course, I'm Australian. I'm born and bred Australian. I can be nothing else. So you know, I don't consciously think about it and I suppose when the Olympics are on, then I'm more aware of it (Mary).

Mary is not made aware of being Australian because national identity is irrelevant in her everyday life, as such; she does not have to think about it and takes it for granted. For Mary, her national identity is only raised in international sporting contexts. She has no doubt or ambiguity about her Australian identity. Mary says with clarity: "I was born and bred Australian. I can be nothing else". This statement reveals the privileged link to birth-place in Australia to Australian parents, giving her the seeming security of multi-generational belonging. Mary's predominant identity, however, is in being a country person, as discussed earlier.

Interviewer: What aspects of Australian identity are important to you?

Mary: Australian Identity. I cringe at the stereotype Australian that used to be around. I think they still are around but that national image of the beer swilling, singlet-type men, red-neck and their impressions of

immigrants makes me cringe. You still run up against these people in the community. I also can't help cringing at Dame Edna Everage. I think she's not a good example to put on the world market for anything to do with Australia. But for national identity, you can't go wrong promoting sports. It's a great thing for breaking down barriers and promoting the whole team spirit thing and fellowship between people (Mary).

Perhaps because Australia is a nation on a continent and an island, without close borders, Mary does not 'feel Australian' except when there is an event, such as the Olympic Games, that brings focus to one's nationality. This is a common theme throughout the interviews. Mary also sees sport as an internal unifier. Most of the time, Mary experiences herself through her interest as a local historian and her connection to place that is articulated through her regional identity: "I'm a Rivertowner really. The Rivertown region is where I call home". She has what can be referred to as a 'cultural cringe' toward former stereotypes of a 'typical Aussie'. Yet at the same time as being critical of the "beer swilling singlet type" bloke, Mary is also caused to cringe by an alternative national image presented through the character of Dame Edna Everage. The character of Dame Edna Everage is created by a heterosexual white male cross-dressed as a woman who is a monarchist, while being exceedingly patriotic about being Australian. While this character represents the historic ties to Britain that Mary would want to maintain 'because it's our history', Mary considers Dame Edna Everage as 'embarrassing' and an 'inappropriate ambassador' for Australia, which is precisely the intent of the character.

The following two interviewees are the children of migrants. Mary, a multi-generational settler Australian, feels Australian when there is an external trigger such as watching international sport, whereas Dominico and Liza find it more difficult to feel Australian naturally.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself as Australian?

Dominico: No, I'm Italian. I do love this country, but I'm Italian as I said earlier. But in my work role as a community development worker, I'm there for everybody, and I guess I feel Australian then, I'm still Italian, but I am working for more than myself (Dominico).

Liza was born in Australia and is the daughter of Greek migrants, and spoke only Greek when she commenced school in rural Australia. Her subject position as an Australian-born non-English speaker shows the limitations set by white Australian values:

Interviewer: In what ways do you consider yourself Australian?

Liza: It is what people I suppose I identify with. I don't identify with the digger image and I don't identify with that bronze Australian image and I don't identify with the bush image, you know, that is all part of our history and our past samples of identity but not really relevant today. The only time I ever felt Australian is when I went overseas. Because they made me Australian. I was the Australian girl (Liza).

Liza states that she does not identify with the stereotypical images of national identity in Australia. She gave the image of Australian bush as an example. Further, she does not think that these images are still relevant in her lived experience of being Australian-born to Greek migrant parents. In an international context, however, Liza is aware of being Australian, because she would be identified by others as “the Australian girl”.

Also in an international context, Johnny is aware of being Australian, and she speaks about being grateful that she is Australian when compared to the living conditions and social/political environments of people who live overseas. Johnny did not name any country as her point of comparison:

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself Australian?

Johnny: I tell you what, when I see the problems overseas and when I do travel overseas and see how those people live, I thank God I’m Australian (Johnny).

Several other interviewees share Johnny’s relief at being Australian compared to the living conditions they witnessed in other countries. In their response, Patch and Tyrone state: “We’ve travelled overseas in poor countries, and I am so lucky to be an Australian, I would not want to live like that” (Patch, Tyrone and Joan). Likewise, Mary also reflects on her overseas travels and says: “we are just so lucky to be Australian I could not live in the conditions over there [Asian countries she had travelled through]” (Mary). This phrasing relates to the statement: "lucky to be Australian", and reproduces the discourse of being ‘the lucky country’. This suggests

that the interviewees have not had exposure to similar levels of poverty in an Australian context. Their statement that they are lucky to be Australian in the face of ‘problems overseas’ (Johnny) is juxtaposed against the average living conditions and 20 year gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and white Australians.

The majority of the interviewees identified themselves as Australian, with the exception of Dominico who felt that her cultural identity is Italian while holding Australian nationality and citizenship. All of the respondents talked about the concept of multicultural identities for Australia, and see Australia as a multicultural country.

The following discussion seeks to understand whether the participants experience themselves as being white or not white. As race and whiteness are not fixed subject positions, under what circumstances do the respondents become aware that they have racialised social subjectivity? What is their perception about themselves?

Interviewer: Do you see yourself as being white or not-white?

Mary: I’m not aware that I’m classed as an Anglo or anything like that.

Interviewer: Do you see yourself that way?

Mary: No. I don’t affiliate with any other cultural groups in a physical sense. I don’t but I’m quite tolerant of everybody and I get very burned up when I read the past history and even the newspapers. You know, I can show you newspapers of the 1920s and the way they talk about people makes me really cringe. I mean, in the 1920s, in this area, in this local newspaper, we still have people referring to Aborigines as

niggers and you know, I look at this and I – but no, I don't know what people think of me. I'm Australian in and out, through and through, obviously of Anglo background, because I don't look or sound like anybody else. So you know, I'm a 'Riverlander' really (Mary).

In locating herself as 'Australian in and out' with an 'Anglo background because I do not look or sound like anybody else', Mary normalises whiteness as the absence of any other marker. Her response in another section of the interview: 'Well, I'm not Black' (Mary) to the question 'Do you see yourself as a white Australian?' reveals the normality of being white and not needing to see herself in a racialised social location except in relation to the Black Other. She is Anglo Australian because she is not 'anything else', thus qualifying that there are different categories of whiteness, and by implication, and she identifies with the dominant form of whiteness in Australia. Mary reasserts her localised rural identity, raising the importance of her local identity to her.

When asked what ethnic groups lived in her district when she was growing up, Johnny replied that there were not any 'ethnics', but rather 'my people were Australian born and bred' (Johnny). Johnny experiences herself and her family as being 'normal' and placed 'ethnicity' (which was not a word that was commonly used at that time) as belonging to the 'other' who is not Australian. Her paternal grandfather was a Finnish Shipwright, whose 'accent was 'the family joke' (Johnny). The family saw him as 'different' in comparison to them. Her declaration that her family is Australian 'born and bred' is an intriguing denial of her Finnish grandfather's story of migration and difference. Johnny's response is:

Interviewer: Are you ever aware of being white or not white?

Johnny: Not so much white. I think I'm Australian when I'm amongst the Greeks. They make you feel I'm not one of them and yet they have got on by a lot of hard work (Johnny).

Johnny's response exemplifies the fluidity and complexity of race in Australian identities. Johnny is not aware of herself as being white. Johnny evades her racialised subjectivity and the position of privilege granted by it. She adds that she is aware of being Australian when she is amongst the Greeks, and thus conflates the question about being white with being Australian. Johnny casts 'the Greeks' outside her understanding of who is white and thus who is Australian. She is possibly talking about the Greek Australian local residents in her town. Johnny did not qualify herself as a particular cultural group, just Australian, while distinguishing the Greeks – who may also be Australian. Thus, she evades the possibility of her racialised privilege granted to her as a white Australian by not being aware of her own racialised social construction. This normalises the subject position of white Australian. Meanwhile, the fluidity of whiteness in Australia means that cultural groups consist of internal diversity but can locate themselves as whites in Australia.

Dominico identifies her culture as Italian rather than Australian. She is Australian-born, grew up in Australia. Dominico perceives herself to be white:

Interviewer: Do you experience yourself, within this community [Rivertown] to be white or not white?

Dominico: Yes, white (Dominico).

Dominico is clear about her racialised subjectivity. She is a community development worker and is active in multicultural activities, in addition to identifying strongly with, her Italian culture. All of this means that she has had to think about communities and her own location, including race.

Likewise, Liza has come to see herself as a white Australian. Liza's parents are Greek migrants:

Interviewer: Do you see yourself as being white in Australia?

Liza: I do now.

Interviewer: Can you tell me more about that?

Liza: It depends on who you are with. If you are with Aboriginal people as well it is a very negative thing to be white. I don't feel like I have to come up with a meaning about being white within the white community, but when I'm with people from other different racial backgrounds – I spent quite some time with Aboriginal people and it was a really negative thing to be white. Not personally, but I became very aware of the issues that they had that related to their treatment by white people in the past. I became very aware of the fact that their issues with their identity is because of their treatment in the past. My understanding is that a lot of the problems they experience come from that. And they made me aware, really make you focus like, that you are white. And you can't escape it (Liza).

Liza's professional and personal relationships with Indigenous Australians made her aware of her racialised subjectivity, and privileges granted by it. Like the other interviewees, in her own social environment, whiteness was normal, and not something about which she had to think. Differently raced environments expose her to be aware of her own location in whiteness. Further, while Liza states that being white can be negative, she does not take this as a personalised negative trait and thus is not evading her position as it cannot be escaped. Liza links her white subjectivity in an acknowledgement of Indigenous subjectivity and the contemporary circumstances for Indigenous Australians through the treatment of Indigenous Australians in the past. This places her among a minority of the interviewees who share an awareness of Australian history from an Indigenous standpoint. The interviewees with exposure to Indigenous history, whether through formal education or personal relationships or both, were mostly sympathetic toward Indigenous people's current political struggles and their own position within that political struggle, with a few exceptions. Thus, the following section will focus on the interviewees' level of awareness about Australian history.

6.3 Awareness of Australian history

This section will discuss the interviewees' awareness of Australian history, including what that awareness consists of and from where they obtained their knowledge. The respondents hold a varied level of formal and informal education about Australian history. It indicates their view on Indigenous people's position in Australia. Gender and age seemed not to have any impact. For example, David, Collin, Citrus, Waterwitch and Johnny were all of a similar age group (within 8 years of each other). Of these interviewees, Collin left school at 14 years of age, and so did not

have exposure to a secondary level of formal education. However, he sustained both personal and working relationships with Indigenous people. Collin learnt informally through observing the impact of racist policy and practice around him on cattle stations and in rural towns. Additionally, Indigenous friends and colleagues impart to him the impacts of racist practice. Later, Collin witnessed the impacts of racist practice through a 48-year relationship with an Indigenous woman, until her death. David also did not learn about Australian history at school, which focused on British history, but returned to do a degree at university where he completed a major in Australian history in the late 1960s. Citrus and Waterwitch only studied British history in their schooling.

The interviewees share a limited knowledge of the first settlers, the formation of the colonies and the federation of the colonies into a nation state. Most of the interviewees had limited (if any) knowledge of the history of their local district, regardless of their level of education. Bryan, Patch, Tyrone, Louise and Optus had limited memories of the history they had learned at school. Mary, Johnny, Collin, David, Dominico, Poppy, Liza had a sound knowledge of both local and national history. Mary, David, Dominico and Liza hold university degrees that included subjects on Australian history and formed the basis of their knowledge of Australian history. Johnny had completed secondary school. David, Collin, Dominico, Poppy and Liza held significant knowledge of Indigenous people's history in the formation of the colonies, the State and the local areas in which they lived.

Bryan, in his 20's, stated that he was not particularly interested in school:

Interviewer: Where did your understanding of Australian history come from?

Bryan: Society and environment. Year 10, 11. Our teacher was a fruit loop. Basically he gave us a book and we studied very, very lightly skimming the surface of Aboriginal culture and the fact that they drew hand paintings and that we conquered them. That's about it. We sailed here in a boat and it took us eight months or something like that and we brought rabbits and foxes (Bryan).

Bryan's school-education was the most recent, within the past five years. He says that he gained his understanding of Australian history through the secondary school subject of 'Society and the Environment', which he studied in year 10 and 11, with year 12 being the final year, which Bryan did not complete. While Bryan has a diverse network of friends, from varied cultural backgrounds, he has had no exposure to Australian history through an Indigenous standpoint – whether that be through reading, watching films (such as *Rabbit Proof Fence*) or through personal communication. He was flippant about not only this subject but also all of his schooling. He states that his education was superficial, thus suggesting that there is much more depth to Aboriginal culture. Further, he locates himself with the dominant 'we' in his statement about 'we conquered them' and 'we sailed here', which could be an indication that he is aware of different levels of power relations and the history of migration.

Patch and Tyrone were interviewed together with Joan. They state that travelling in Australia has provided them with learning experiences about history:

Interviewer: What's your awareness of Australian history?

Patch: Probably through travelling, when you travel in Australia, especially to Tasmania, you learn a lot there and there is more to read there I think it's more important too.

Tyrone: You're more interested.

Patch: You are not just 'God Save The Queen'. I mean, that's how you were brought up but I'd have to say I'm not a monarchist now.

Tyrone: If you went to Tasmania as a child and went to Port Arthur and you went to the Island and all those other places you just think you are on holiday. But to go there as an adult, as an Australian, you read it and you think "oh God"... I think we are more interested in our past now.

Patch: Well, we want to have a past don't we?

Tyrone: We don't want someone else's history (Patch, Tyrone in Patch, Tyrone and Joan).

Patch and Tyrone refer to their schooling in the statement about 'God Save The Queen'. When they travel around Australia, they visit places such as Port Arthur in Tasmania and read about the history at that site. Patch and Tyrone do not elaborate on where they access information about history from at each site, however, many Australians attend institutions such as museums, ANZAC memorials, and Information Centres, which are often staffed by volunteers (Elder 2007). For many, this has been their introduction to Australian history. At school, many respondents learned about British history, which they view as someone else's history.

The majority of interviewees completed their formal schooling prior to the introduction of Australian history into the curriculum in the late 1950s. Some of the interviewees have done further self-education in order to increase their knowledge about Australian history. For example, Louise is a primary school teacher:

Interviewer: What is your awareness of Australian history?

Louise: Well, I learnt a little at school...a broad outline of what the 'first settlers', who came where, South Australia were 'free settlers'. I read a few books but I read more fiction than anything. Even as a school teacher I find that I have to study up myself even to teach junior primary children because when we did a whole lot on Federation, I knew very little about the origin of the States and how they came together and so I did a little bit of study for that specific purpose (Louise).

According to Louise, she did not gain enough information on her teacher training to cover teaching components of Australian history curriculum, such as federation, and she had to brief herself about the history in order to teach the children the subject. Thus, Louise had to do her own reading to increase her understanding of how Australia became federated. She does not mention reading any literature from an Indigenous standpoint, which will then impact on whether Louise represents an Indigenous standpoint on federation or just presents the narrative of the 'free settlers' forming a new nation. Like Louise, Optus has read up about the settlers' experiences to learn more about that part of Australian history. She had learned about British history at school: 'My awareness of Australian history would be governed by the few books that I've read' (Optus).

Like Louise, Johnny did her own reading about the federation of Australia. She was motivated to do so in 1988 for the Australian bicentenary:

Johnny: 1988 that is when people started to realise, hey, we've got history. You know, you talk about history in Australia to the Poms for instance and they say what history? Theirs goes back century upon century. But Australians are starting to realise that genealogy has come into it and they're starting to now find out how their great, great, great grandparents lived and what conditions were like. They're doing the research and history has taken a big learning curve among the general public (Johnny).

Johnny's understanding of Australian history is in the context of the history of the British Empire. She views Australian history as independent of British history, despite her focus on the 'discovery' of Australia by Captain Cook, through her reference to 1988 being the bicentenary. Apart from Bryan, (who attended school in the 1990s well after the introduction of Australian history into the curriculum), the interviewees do not have knowledge of the Indigenous experiences in Australian History. Thus, as an initial response, the interviewees above think about Australian history as the national narrative about settlers and the process of settling and building Australia. This maintains the dominant tropes of whiteness at the core of the interviewees understanding of Australia's past. Further, Johnny's comment that British history 'goes back century upon century' disconnects Indigenous history from her understanding of Australian history. Indigenous history is the oldest continuing

cultural history on earth. If Johnny were to consider Indigenous history as a part of her story as an Australian her comment could be reversed because Indigenous history has been calculated back to 60,000 years.

Mary recalls a rare event for her that complicated her understanding of Australian history that includes Indigenous peoples:

Interviewer: What's your awareness of Australia's history?

Mary: Well I love local history, I'm a local historian. When I was a child we learnt about the past, including Aboriginal people. I remember when I was a little girl we camped at a place by the river and there were little goat paths that went down the cliffs and across the river and a little corrugated iron tin – not even a humpy just some tin over a sapling and there was a party of Aboriginal living, probably only temporary for the weekend or whatever. I'm sure they didn't live there permanently. But I've always been fascinated by pictures of the Aborigines on the river in canoes. So to see them actually first hand across the river from where we were, it was a bit frightening because – I'm not talking about a family group. I'm talking about a few scrubby old men. I mean, as far as I could tell. I was on the other side of the river but they were living in what was a native or almost a native state and I wasn't prepared for that. I didn't know much about missions and I certainly didn't think any of them still lived in the bush. That always stayed with me and I think I was about 10. It was the early 1960s (Mary).

Mary's childhood encounter with Aboriginal men camped by a river raises many complexities and contradictions in her understanding of Australian history. First, she was camping with her family by a river. Her family lived in a house, in the city, and would go camping in the holidays. Yet, the sight of Aboriginal men camping across the river surprises her so much that she is sure they stay there temporarily. Thus, it is perfectly natural for herself and her family to camp on the river, but surprising those Aboriginal men could camp on the other side of the river. Mary states that the men were scrubby, and in a 'near Native state', though it is not clear what she means by this. The sight of the Aboriginal men placed an undeniable Indigenous presence before her eyes that she was not expecting. This response does two things. First, that the narratives of Australian history put Aboriginal peoples in the past, and not in the present. Second, these narratives, therefore, made an Aboriginal presence out of place.

Dominico's understanding of Australian history also included the history of race relations between convicts, settlers/invasers, migrants and Aboriginal people. Her understanding includes the complexities of the many situations with which Australia as a country came to be occupied and also reveals the contradiction and tension in her own family history of migration:

Interviewer: What is your awareness of Australia's history and where did that understanding come from?

Dominico: History is tied back to how Australia was first discovered, how the convicts came, mutineers, the rough treatment of our Indigenous

population, the Stolen Generations and some of those things there just absolutely make me cringe. So I'm not overly proud of Australian history. I know they have done some great things. I guess it is sad that always the more negative stands out in our minds compared to the better things, so at times when I think of things like the Stolen Generations – and I don't know enough about it, so I'm sure it all has two sides, but you know, at times like that, I'm kind of proud that my ancestors weren't here at that time. We were in a completely another country and I can, in a way wash my hands of it and say: well we weren't here. You know, I'd like to be responsible in any way we can now, but we weren't there, thank goodness for that (Dominico).

In relation to Indigenous sovereignty Dominica's response considers the different position that many post-war migrants see themselves in compared to the earlier first settler migration (Schech and Haggis 2001). She introduces a variation on the narrative of responsibility with Indigenous Australians. Dominico is aware of the Stolen Generations and refers to the earlier history of invasion as 'rough treatment' that makes her cringe, and she is not proud of that history. Dominica's response is complicated. On one hand, she claims to be able to 'wash her hands' of the history of violence between the State/ first settlers and Indigenous peoples. She argues that this is because her parents migrated to Australia after the invasion. However, the invasion continues in the present, and the stolen generation policy was still enacted at the time of her parents' migration and her own birth in Australia, which undermines her logic to 'wash her hands' of the responsibility due to her family not being present at the time.

The interview then continued to explore her idea of personal responsibility:

Interviewer: So that gets you out of personal responsibility.

Dominico: Well, our future responsibility – I think we are here and we should all be responsible in doing whatever we can to kind of bridge, and create a lot of peace, and bridge any of the hurt that's been done because all the people that were there at the time aren't necessarily here today. So someone has got to take responsibility for that. But not responsibility for what has happened. That responsibility for the future. We can't change the past that we had no part in, especially when my parents immigrated here in 1966 and I was born in 1968 (Dominico).

Dominico then introduces her thoughts of taking responsibility for future relations with Indigenous peoples. What does this mean? Is it possible to take responsibility for the future and to acknowledge the past without taking personal responsibility? Perhaps Dominico is speaking of collective responsibility into the future, though she does not use these words. How does this answer the question that Irene Watson asks of who will take responsibility? On the one hand, Dominico 'washes her hands' of the past. On the other hand, she acknowledges responsibility for the future.

Collin, a widower of four years, was born in 1926 and lived in his small house, in Rivertown. His deceased wife was a Yorta Yorta woman. They had been together for 20 years before it was legal for a white Australian man to marry an Aboriginal woman. After the consorting laws had changed, they were then married for 28 years.

He had spent his working life as a ‘jack of all trades’ as a stockman, cook, labourer and general worker:

Collin: It was pretty terrible. They weren’t allowed – the Aborigines – they weren’t allowed to touch the food. I had to cut his food off and hand it to him [one of his Aboriginal work mates on a cattle property]. They never got their pay either in Queensland. The station owners had to give it to the Government for them and they never saw it so they were really working for rations. It was meant to go into a trust account for them or something but the Governments spent it all. The whites there were a mob of drunks more or less, you know, that’s why they were out there [on the remote cattle routes that ran from Queensland through to New South Wales to South Australia]...but on this other place where I liked working there was no racism with him [the boss], we were all treated the same with food and accommodation. That’s why I liked him. Most of the blokes I worked with were partly coloured anyway, it just depended how dark they were as to how some people treated them. My family, I wasn’t the flavour of the month when [my wife] and I first got together. But in the end everyone loved her and she was accepted by my family because she was such a lovely person. And her family absolutely treated me marvellous. There is still four of them ring me up. She had her first heart attack in April and then died in August and I waited on her hand and foot. I’ve had to bite my tongue a bit living here you know because some – especially the older people – are pretty racist if

it comes to it – not very tolerant either. It's not going to be any different as long as the Howard government stays in but everyone here votes for the National or Liberal Party (Collin).

Collin can clearly articulate the racism that he witnessed while he was growing up and throughout his adult life. He also spoke about the ability for some people to live and work without enacting relations of dominance. Collin places Indigenous people's experience of Australian history as the narrative from which to understand it. This has occurred through his work life, through his personal and familial relationships and through observing the actions of those around him. He has developed a counter-narrative to the Australian politics of race. As discussed in Chapter 3, pp.107-8, Nicoll (2004) argues that the practice of the white subject relegating the Indigenous subject to a mere perspective enables them to maintain their position of white privilege as a disembodied white subject. Thus, refusing to walk on the ground of Indigenous sovereignty and maintain their distance from the ground of race relations. This practice is evident in the observation made by Collin, that the white settlers' descendants involved in massacres did not know about their family's involvement and can separate themselves from that history because they disconnect from their racialised location. The result is a disconnection from the colonial history. Further, it enables the continuation of relationships that are built upon a colonial legacy. Collin refuses the invitation to deny the colonial past in a way that suggests non-colonial relationship with Indigenous people.

Like Collin, David identified Indigenous people's experiences of Australian history. Whereas Collin gained his understanding of Aboriginal history through witnessing

segregation and racism occur to his work mates, wife and extended family. David gained his through study of Indigenous history at university. Later he was a secondary school teacher in rural and remote locations in Western Australia and the Northern Territory in the 1960s to late 1980s.

Interviewer: What is your awareness of Australian history?

David: The thing that struck me very strongly was the huge contrast between the politically correct¹³ attitude towards the indigenes in all the official English documents, like the Queen's Instructions to Governors and the way the Indigenous people were actually treated. Totally different (David).

David raises his concern about the different approach that was taken to early contact between the Governors of the early colonies in what became Australia. The Queen's Instructions were to leave any people found on the land and where possible to negotiate (Reynolds 1996a). David observes that had this occurred, 'Australia could be a very different place today' (David). David's response shows the way that the relations of ruling were embedded into the early Governors' world view and actions. Collin, David, Citrus, Liza, Poppy and Dominico were exposed to Australian history from an Indigenous standpoint. They have used that information to develop their understanding of the different power relations held between white Australians and Indigenous Australians.

¹³ David is using the term 'politically correct' in its grammatical sense of being the correct thing to do both legally and morally, rather than the debates about 'political correctness' that emerged in Western societies during the 1990s.

The interviewees' attempt to reconcile their understanding of Aboriginal land rights within their understanding of white patriarchal sovereignty and land ownership. To examine the complexity of everyday practices of whiteness within Australian identities the interview included a discussion on several issues. The issues included what they think about Native Title, what their vision for the future of Australia is and whether they think that the future relationship between settler and migrant Australians and Indigenous people is important for Australia's future. Many of the interviewees' future vision of Australia do not refer to an Indigenous presence. The exception is when they are specifically asked (for example, about land rights or if they think the future relationship with Indigenous Australians is important for the future of Australia). The following section will focus on how the interviewees perceive Indigenous land rights, their vision for the future of Australia and the future relationship between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians.

6.4 Land rights

Jewlizard, a grandmother in her 60s from Red Ocean has a white Australian son and South Sea Islander daughter-in-law with children. Thus her daughter-in-law and grandchildren are sovereign subjects to a Pacific Island. In the Australian context, Jewlizard struggles to see how land rights can operate on land that settler and migrant people own. The backlash to Mabo and Wik and Pauline Hanson's (discussed in the Introduction on p.18-9) inaccurate and misleading claim that soon Aboriginal people will be claiming 'her' backyard (Goot 1999), affect her understanding of Aboriginal land claims. The landmark Native Title case of Mabo in the Torres Strait Islands is argued to have overturned the doctrine of terra nullius through acknowledging the continuing connection to land by Eddie Mabo [now

deceased] and his family, which resulted in simultaneous land tenure of the traditional owners and the presence of a pastoral lease. This meant that the presence of a pastoral lease could not be assumed to extinguish native title

Interviewer: How do you see Aboriginal land rights with regards to Australian identity?

Jewlizard: I don't know enough about it. Certainly their tribal lands where people are living now, yes they should have a say over their lands. But when you read in the paper that they are claiming the city of Perth or something like that, you know? I don't know the ins and outs of it, but if it was Red Ocean, well, this is my home. I paid for this land. If you believe the media, they're claiming the whole city or half the state.

Interviewer: Do you think this means anything for Australian identity and how Australians see themselves?

Jewlizard: Well, I guess Australia took the land and they need to recognise that these people have been living there and are a nation and we need to respect that and try and work together so that we can come to some agreement on what is theirs. I mean, they can come into Red Ocean and buy homes and all sorts. But certainly with Mabo – that was the islands up there that really were their homelands. Have always been their homelands. They've owned it and it's just a sort of token thing that Australia owned it really. So I was glad that they were able to get their grants and certainly on cattle stations and things like that (Jewlizard).

The above excerpt from Jewlizard's interview shows a complex interplay in her understanding of land ownership. She uses an interesting turn of phrase that suggests the Australia, the nation, took the land from Indigenous people. It is not clear whether Jewlizard is referring to Australia the nation, or Australia the nation-state. British sovereignty claimed the Australian land as a colonial acquisition and enabled the subsequent invasion and settlement. For her understanding of Indigenous land rights, Jewlizard relies on the information that politicians and the media present, although, she seems to be aware that their claims may be misleading. She struggles to reconcile her understanding that Australian land was taken from Indigenous peoples with the concept of white patriarchal capitalist ownership, evident in her recommendation to work out what is 'theirs', and that she owns her land because she paid for it. Jewlizard uses the term 'nation' to refer to Indigenous peoples in Australia. Talking about an Indigenous nation enables Jewlizard to conceive that Aboriginal peoples have languages, identity, knowledge and prior ownership of land that are not those of the hegemonic Australian nation. White patriarchal ownership excludes any other epistemology of ownership and sovereignty. Indigenous epistemology and ontology of land, of sovereignty, is not necessarily exclusive, though incommensurable with white patriarchal concepts of sovereignty and land. The above excerpt reveals the impossible ground if viewed only through a Western lens of sovereignty and ownership. That is, Indigenous sovereignty is specific to particular sites that are often called homelands or Country. Thus, Indigenous sovereignty does not automatically exclude other forms of sovereignty, but rather, is excluded by them.

Moreton-Robinson's (2000b, p.xxi) critique can be used to understand the assumptions of equality that are also present in Jewlizard's earlier comment, that, if they want to, Indigenous people can buy property in Red Ocean. Moreton-Robinson argues that " [i]t fails to connect subjectivity to relations of ruling whereby white racial difference shapes those on whom it confers privilege as well as those it oppresses" (Moreton-Robinson 2000b, p.xxi). To extend this line of thinking, then, the subjectivities of the multiple locations of white identities and Indigenous peoples are not on equal footing when it comes to purchasing property and land under a white patriarchal capitalist system. Indigenous people's social, historical and racialised location means that the accumulation of capital is only beginning in the last decade or so and, conversely, that white middle-class Australians have accumulated property and wealth at the expense of Indigenous Australians.

Mary feels ambivalent about her knowledge that all of Australia belonged to Aboriginal people prior to the local farmers holding their pastoral lease from the Government. Mary locates herself as an outside observer and claims to know but not know about the issues of land rights:

Interviewer: So what about Aboriginal land rights?

Mary: I followed that with interest because, okay, the whole country belonged to the Aborigines and certain parts of the Rivertown region were designated Aboriginal tribal areas and, of course, I just followed the debate in the papers because obviously all these areas are now owned by farmers and horticulturalists and how it was going to affect them. So I just – as a third person – I just stood aside and just read

about these things. It didn't affect me in any way because I had no stake in any land myself, but I could feel for both sides definitely and I understand now how most of the judgements have gone, the people, Indigenous people have a right to perhaps go on those areas. I don't know if they even have to have prior consent but you know they can re-visit or they probably never visited there in the first place but they can go there now to those visits connected to their heritage with the consent of the land owners. In fact, I don't even think they need their consent but I can see that they have a right to be able to do that and I'm really for Aborigines today learning about their heritage. I'm so sure that so many of them knew nothing about it when they were growing up, say, in my generation. They have learnt, they've had to learn their own culture and their own background in the last ten years. It's been an education process for them because they weren't brought up to it. So yeah, I don't know about land rights (Mary).

On the one hand, Mary struggles to reconcile her knowledge as a local historian that the country did belong to Aboriginal people. On the other hand, she is unable to name what occurred in the time between Indigenous occupation and the current occupation by farmers and horticulturalists. She does not use any term to talk about settlement, farmers taking up land. She does not consider the implications of such activities for Indigenous peoples. She certainly does not mention the terms 'dispersal' that was often used as a code word for shooting or massacre, or the term 'invasion' or 'stolen land'. Similar to Dominico, Mary sees herself as being an outside observer - a third person – in land rights, because she owns a domestic house

and town block rather than being a farmer. While saying that she ‘does not know’, Mary continues to comment on the rights of access that she thinks Aboriginal people have to what she calls ‘their tribal lands’. She alludes that Aboriginal people are not even required to gain consent to enter the lands, while at the same time, does not unpack who the Indigenous people are that she is referring to or from whom the consent would be gained. Would consent be gained by Indigenous people who can ‘prove’ where their ‘tribal lands’ are? Would that consent be gained from the current leaseholders?

Mary stated that she followed the debate in the papers, and thus only gains her information from the rural newspapers that are notorious for supporting the lease holders and for printing incorrect information about Indigenous land rights (Goot 1999). But instead of being worried about white people’s knowledge about Indigenous land rights, Mary speaks about how much Indigenous people have learned about themselves and their apparently lost culture in the past decade. There is no indication of her need to learn. Mary, while claiming to follow the debate with interest, has not visited any of the Indigenous organisations in the town, apart from the art and craft centre, nor accessed the Indigenous land council for information. So while claiming to be a third person, an outsider, Mary is enmeshed in narratives represented by the local media. In claiming not to have a stake in any land herself, Mary attempts to absolve her own complicity, as a local historian, in the past and for contemporary implications of past actions for Indigenous peoples in her own area. She maintains the silence, the active covering up of history and thus protects her own position despite having no land or lease hold to lose.

Louise expresses the conflict she feels about Indigenous land rights in the excerpt below, stating several times that she does not understand Indigenous people's position:

Interviewer: What about Indigenous rights in the future?

Louise: You hear Indigenous people are saying that this is their land and you can't do this and you can't do that and I sort of respect it in a way, but not totally because I think that maybe they are using the system to get something they are not entitled to. But then again maybe they really are. It's become a bit of joke really because anybody that has a bit of land that is good in some way it has a land right put on it because they will say that it is theirs and that seems unfair. Can't they just share it like it always has been? But I guess I can't see their point of view. I mean I've travelled into the outback to places where you can't do something and I think, well why can't you still do it? It's not taking it away from them. But I guess they have their ways of dealing with it which are different and that is why I don't understand. I mean, you can't even walk on Ayer's Rock. It is so different from what I've known – a normal sort of Australian practical upbringing. Even their stories. I can't understand them or come to terms with them. I guess I'm Christian and other people may look at us and wonder how we can believe it... We had an issue here with land rights. This area came under a land claim title and we were worrying a bit about how it would affect us, because maybe our land would be taken away. I guess that is why a lot of people think the claims are petty. They are

claiming things that don't make any difference. Like, what is the point of them saying it is theirs? If you can't use it but they don't want to as well, why do it? (Louise).

The first half of the excerpt refers to how Louise views Indigenous claims to land and Indigenous land use. Unlike Mary (pp.222-4), Louise speaks about her views without claiming to be on the outside of the debate. Louise is differently located than Mary because her husband runs an orchard on leased land upon which they built the family home. Further, Louise and her husband both grew up on fruit farms themselves. She objects to Indigenous people placing limitations on what the non-Indigenous 'you' can and cannot do on the land. Apart from two lines that allow the possibility that Indigenous people may have rights to determine what activities can take place: e.g. 'I can sort of respect it in a way', and 'maybe they really are [entitled to the land claim]', the rest of her response speaks against this possibility. She uses tropes such as 'using the system'; 'not entitled'; 'a bit of a joke'; 'anybody' who has put the land to good use has a claim put against them; 'unfair' and 'they should share it like its always been'.

These statements do several things. First, they maintain a position of privilege for lease-holders. The statements of 'using the system'; 'not entitled' and 'a bit of a joke' all serve to maintain the possession of land by leaseholders as the rightful owners. The problem is that, the South Australian government seized the land. The government removed Indigenous peoples from their land by force. State troopers were notorious for murdering Indigenous people. Prior to federation, the free hold settlers of the colony seized land. In Louise's experience, the same land is now

leased from the State Government to non-Indigenous farmers at the rate of \$6.00 per annum (Louise). Thus, the claim that Indigenous peoples might by 'using the system'; 'not entitled' or 'a bit of a joke' can only be believed if these narratives serve the purpose of maintaining white capitalist patriarchal ownership at the ongoing expense of Indigenous peoples, as discussed on p.181-2.

Interviewees who supported the return of land to its first owners also struggle with the complexity of trying to vision land use and Indigenous ownership. Alex is a school teacher at Rivertown and is the child of Greek migrants, as is her husband. Together they have three teenage children, who are all fluent in English and Greek, and they have just finished building a large new house. Alex is a proud custodian of Greek culture, cooking and attends the Greek Orthodox Church. She thought that:

Alex: I think that land should only be given to Aboriginal people if they are taught how to use it properly. They need to be trained about how to manage a property and how to grow things to make a living. They need lots of training so it [giving land back] can be done properly (Alex).

Waterwitch had similar views:

Waterwitch: Of course they should have their land back but it's not that easy. My husband went out to put a fruit block in to the community up the road and it all just went to ruin. Nobody knew what they were doing with it. (Waterwitch).

There is a national discourse that Indigenous people do not know how to manage land properly and require training in Western methods of land management, and

agriculture. The comments made by Louise, Alex and Waterwitch reflect this belief. Their excerpts suggest that Indigenous people need to be trained to work from white Australian values about land management. This discourse places the interviewees into a position of governance of the national space (Hage 1998) . As white subjects, they take on the governing role of discerning what is best for Indigenous people. It places Louise, Alex and Waterwitch in an imagined position of sovereignty over the national space with the power to determine the entitlements and location of Indigenous ‘others’. They imagine themselves to be in charge of ‘Australia’ as sovereign white subjects, through giving instructions on what the Indigenous ‘other’ should do.

While Citrus (Waterwitch’s husband) remembered putting in the fruit block at the Aboriginal reserve located several kilometres outside of Rivertown, he has since been involved in similar developmental roles, in Thailand. He learned about international development methodologies of working in a culturally appropriate manner with people: “In Thailand, we sat down with people to find out what they needed and then helped the community to do it”. Citrus now thinks:

Citrus: I would never just put a fruit block in again. It was totally inappropriate. You have to sit with people, until you can hear it from how they see it and how they live it to find out what they really want, and what is going to work for them within their own culture (Citrus).

Thus, Citrus had to leave Australia to understand power relationships of dominance. In an international setting of cultural difference, Citrus did not assume to know what people required. As a good communicator, he went through processes of sitting with people, hearing about what they needed, observed how people live and what their

daily lives required. What he is talking about, is learning about Thai knowledge and worldview, and not assuming that he holds all the knowledge or all the answers. Yet, Citrus did not have this realisation in an Australian context. He had to be ‘overseas’ to become detached enough to step outside the relations of dominance that he enacts through identifying with white Australian world views (Wadham 2002). Through exposure to international development methodologies, Citrus’s reformed approach now reflects Sandoval’s (1997) goal, discussed on pp.87-8, to re-negotiate power with a commitment to an ethical position that can establish non-colonial relationships.

The predominant theme that comes out of the interviews is that the discourse of land ownership, as understood under a liberal capitalist system, complicates the interviewees’ understanding of co-existence (in the sense outlined by the Wik decision that pastoral leases and Native Title can co-exist). Additionally, the liberal capitalist understanding of land ownerships marks the parameters of the respondents vision of what Indigenous land rights might look like outside of the Australian system of Native Title, as defined by the courts (for example, the Mabo decision). As argued on pp.216-7 it is the incommensurability of Indigenous sovereignty with white patriarchal capitalist sovereignty at play here.

The following section will focus on whether the Mabo decision affected the interviewees’ Australian identity. How do the respondents in this study understand the landmark case of Mabo in the Torres Strait Islands? Did the Mabo judgement have any impact on how the interviewees saw themselves as Australians? Did it impact on their cultural identities?

A final part of Louis' interview reflects a discourse about relationship to land. Louis remembers when "they started going on about land rights and that was our land and we are going to reclaim it" (Louis). This popular discourse of Indigenous land rights represents Indigenous people as suddenly wanting to reclaim land. It is not represented as a continuing history of Indigenous struggle for recognition of prior and continuing sovereignty. As Fiona Nicoll (2007) argues, beneath this representation is the fear that Indigenous sovereignty may be the same as white sovereignty, which would result in exclusive land ownership, this time at the expense of migrant growers. The continuation of Indigenous people living in their sovereignty is dismissed in the words of Louis father: "If it's theirs they can have it" (Louis). This phrase firstly sets Indigenous land rights up as debatable, and even as hypothetical, through the word 'if'. The reason that 'they can have it' is that Louis father has worked the land hard at the expense of his own body. This is the migrant story, the 'battlers', the builders, the pioneers, making farming land where there they perceived that there was nothing, having themselves arrived with nothing. The post World War II migrants escaped the terrors of war with only their precious lives to bring. The myth of *terra nullius* lives on through the folklore of the migrant/pioneer.

Likewise, in her interview, Alex commented that: "If they are given their land back, they have to be trained on how to use it" (Alex). This narrative of land use connects the migrant story of non-British migrants to the British colonial history through European whiteness and the patriarchal logic of Western capital. As discussed on p.178, European forms of knowledge and land-use are considered superior and Alex

believes that Indigenous people need to learn how to apply these forms of land use as a condition of being granted Native Title.

There were several positions about Mabo as it relates to Australian identities that are identifiable amongst the interviews conducted for this thesis. The predominant position was of those who claimed that they were not politically inclined and did not follow the decision. The Mabo native title case was concerned with land in the Torres Strait Islands north of Queensland, many thousands of kilometres to the north at the other end of Australia. The other two positions were the minority of those who avidly opposed Indigenous land rights or those who strongly supported Indigenous land rights.

Bryan is from Rolling Hills, has a secondary education and has a British-origin family who have been in Australia for several generations. He is in his early 20s and works in the hospitality industry. He has not heard of Mabo or Wik. He asked the interviewer what they were. Dominico, a community development worker at Rivertown in her early 40s, with tertiary education and the daughter of Italian migrants, said that she had not followed Mabo closely enough to make an informed comment. Even those who are passionate about multiculturalism and social justice in other areas express disinterest.

Interviewer: What did the Mabo judgement mean for you?

Louise: That is one of those things that I obviously didn't take a real lot of interest in. It is difficult and confrontational and I don't like those sorts of things. My husband took more interest and if anybody asked

us what we thought I just let him say. I think it is just so hard because there is no right and wrong and there are too many issues and it is too hard from me to try and work out what I think. Because I listen to one lot of opinions and I think: that sounds fair enough. Then I listen to the opposite side and I think: 'Oh, well that sounds fair enough'. How do you decide? So I don't make a decision. I'm a fence sitter (Louise).

For Louise, avoidance of disputes and conflict is her preferred strategy to deal with what may be impossible questions. Thus, she remains a fence sitter, unable to make any decisions. Likewise, Austin expresses a degree of disinterest stating he had not 'kept in touch with domestic affairs a whole lot' and so could not 'really say how much of an impact' the Mabo decision had.

Patch, Tyrone and Joan, friends who were interviewed together in Rolling Hills, are all in their fifties with small trades-based family businesses and high school level educations. They were ambivalent, thinking that Mabo did, but did not have an impact on Australian identity:

Interviewer: Do you remember the Mabo judgment that was up in Queensland?

Patch: Yes. But probably not so much at the time, but more when you hear people who it affects talking. Like, we've met a few people in the Kimberleys that was – they thought it literally affected them, and you sort of – because it didn't affect you and your ordered little life, didn't

really think that much about it but once you spoke to people who it was going to affect...

Interviewer: Do you think it has meant anything for Australian identity?

Joan: I don't think so. Because it hasn't affected a great majority of Australians really. I don't think, anyway. I mean, it's very important to the people that it has affected. It's changed their whole lifestyle.

Patch: Well, it's – yes, that's it – life changing isn't it?

Joan: It's a very small number of people though. I've read about it, that's all I know about it.

Patch: It wouldn't affect anyone down here I don't think.

Joan: No. Like I said, I've only encountered people up north.

Interviewer: What about Aboriginal land rights generally?

Joan: Land rights are a funny [strange] issue.

Patch: It is isn't it?

Joan: Extreme difficulties – complex - and there has been right and wrong on both sides. But as far as affecting our country, Australian identity, I don't think it's had any effect. I can't see that it will (Patch, Tyrone and Joan).

The common theme amongst these responses is that the Mabo decision and Indigenous land rights generally, only affect those who run property that is leased from the Crown, which is a minority of the Australian population (but the majority of agricultural industry including cattle runs, sheep stations and growers). There is also a belief from those who live in the rural towns that the decision has dramatically changed the lifestyle of the leaseholders, though Joan and Patch did not say what

they thought the changes were. Later in the interview, Patch states that leaseholders now have to get permission from the Native Title holders to use and go onto their pastoral lease. This is not accurate, as Native Title rights were legislated without the power to veto or interfere with the interests of the pastoralist. This discourse is based on white patriarchal capitalist assumptions about ownership and sovereignty of the state. In this framework, Indigenous land rights and sovereignty is only about ownership in the form of white sovereignty, as discussed by Fiona Nicoll (2004).

There is also an assumption that land rights will only affect those non-Indigenous Australians who live in more remote areas, such as the Kimberleys in northern Western Australia. At the time of the interviews, there was, in fact, a Native Title claim that extended along the coast to the West of Rolling Hills and up the River, including areas around Rivertown in the North West.

Interviewer: Did the Mabo decision affect how you see yourself as an Australian?

Waterwitch: It was long overdue. But you have got to have the backing to pursue these things. Not just the courage – you are defeated by the weight of the world – to go through it and be obstructed for so long. That's what is wrong. I know there are checks and balances but it's been used the wrong way in my opinion. I mean, we've got these people and the minute they hear something has happened, like up at Lake Victoria, they say: no, we want some of that too now. But nobody is up there – maybe it is still in a deep consciousness. I suppose they feel they have to but it seems so obstructive in some ways. And of course, then you get to think: well, of course, the cities are built where

their tribal lands were, you know, how do you compensate for the whole of Perth or Melbourne or Sydney? Certainly the ones in Central Australia, like where they did those atomic tests that are poor, because they are deep in the psyche. I think these others are more a remembered history, not so much a current living psyche. No, I can't come to a clear conclusion. Just confused. I have sympathy to a degree, yes (Waterwitch).

A position of difficulty, and 'unsettling' for Waterwitch is the extent of Native Title and Indigenous connection to the land. Like Jewlizard, her understanding of legitimate connection to land reflects the hegemonic criteria of current occupation and ongoing presence on the land in question. Waterwitch considers that the atomic tests where Indigenous people were still present (for example, at Maralinga) are poor practice on the part of the Australian authorities. However, other examples that she can think of, like Lake Victoria, are, in her mind, confusing because there is (to her knowledge) no-one there. She attempts to apply her knowledge that Indigenous people whose previous generations come from a locality may wish to petition it. Waterwitch wants to acknowledge Indigenous connection to land and at the same time, this is confusing for her where, to her understanding, there is no continuing Aboriginal occupation of that land.

Waterwitch uses the terms 'deep in the consciousnesses' or in the 'psyche' of the people for those who have a continued presence on their Country (like in Central Australia). However, she considers it obstructive for Native Title claims to be made by Indigenous people who are not presently located on their ancestral lands.

Waterwitch uses the imagery of a ‘remembered history’ to articulate what that connection might look like, but has difficulty accepting it because, in her words, ‘it is not a current living psyche’. Like Jewlizard, Waterwitch struggles with her knowledge that all land on the continent now known as Australia was Aboriginal land prior to settlement, but cannot see how a claim to areas that to her knowledge are unoccupied by the Indigenous claimants’ could be legitimate. It is possible that such claims are in conflict with her interests as an invader/settler Australian (Grenville 2006). She also raises the question of compensation to Indigenous peoples from urban areas like the cities of ‘Perth, or Melbourne or Sydney’. She is the only interviewee to raise the issue of compensation. Thus, white patriarchal Australian discourses of land ownership limits Waterwitch, Louise and Alex’s ability to relate to Indigenous sovereignty .

For Citrus, the husband of Waterwitch and an international businessman in his mid-70s from Rivertown, the response of settler Australians to the Mabo decision is an indicator of how far settler-Australians need to shift in their politics toward Aboriginal people and land. He refers to his generation being in the seats of power at the time of the Mabo decision and speaks here to the reaction of his contemporaries to the Mabo decision:

Citrus: It is my generation who were in seats of power and there was consternation and shock. How did this get through? We appointed these bright people into the judiciary and they’ve got the gall to pass a judgment like that? Who do they think they are? Who do these Aboriginal people think they are that they’re trying through our legal processes to challenge us when we own the place? The attitudes of

that era were so entrenched and so aggravated that it was like a lightning bomb at any time. You didn't raise Mabo in polite white Anglo circles because it would be explosive. I think it is transitional and we've got a long way to go to get a footing which might be more acceptable, or workable, but that won't happen until my generation drops off their perch. If we can get Aboriginal studies, to use a white Anglo term, which can be offensive in the wrong text, into the primary schools, and then into secondary schools, that will be a part of the process of generating change, it's also a generational change (Citrus).

This excerpt from Citrus shows the complexity and the impossibilities that can become possible spaces for dialogue about Aboriginal land. In the first instance, Citrus observes that the Mabo decision has 'unsettled' the trope that Australia belongs to 'everybody'. The 'Everybody' refers not to Indigenous people, but to Anglo Australians who 'own Australia' and take on a position of governance. Citrus states polite white Anglo circles do not discuss the issue of Mabo and Aboriginal land rights because it is too explosive'. These circles were the power brokers in their local district. It is noteworthy that Collin, who, through class and his marriage to an Aboriginal woman, is in a different structural location of the same town, also says that he has to 'bite his tongue' and keep quiet because of racism in the towns' social networks. This could be a politeness of whiteness, where people with counter narratives stay silent in the face of national discourses that protect unearned racialised privilege. The concept of 'ownership' is repeated in different forms throughout the interviews through the interviewees' statements or observations about whether they think Aboriginal people have a legitimate claim to land or not, as outlined in the confusion of Jewlizard and Waterwitch discussed earlier.

Liza developed her understanding of Aboriginal people and history from a combination of her university studies and then her early teaching posts. Her first teaching posts were in a rural South Australian town that has a high Indigenous population. She said that her Indigenous friends and colleagues constantly kept her aware of her position as non-Indigenous Australian. Like Citrus and David, she thought that, the future of the nation relies on teaching children in Australia how to think critically about the media, stereotypes and issues in the context of what is happening at both local and global levels:

Liza: I've done a lot of work with developing their [year 12 students] ideas about us as a nation, how we need to work – especially towards reconciliation. Have you heard of the film *One Night the Moon*? I used that with my Year 12s in their English class. We looked at the universal messages within it and one of the messages that we came up with in class is that we need to work as a nation. We need to take all parts in each cultural group, especially Aboriginal people, and we must reconcile the past to move on as a nation in the future because Aboriginal people are a part of our future. We can't marginalise them as we have in the past. Like Mabo, it made people hysterical didn't it? I think for Aboriginal people it was represented very negatively in the media. The media's representation didn't present to the people the whole cultural outlook that Aboriginal people have towards the land. If they [the Australian public] had, some sense of that I don't think it would have been such a hysterical moment in Australia's history. As for Australian identity, I don't think it had any impact (Liza).

The reason that Liza believed Mabo did not impact on National Identity is that, to use Moreton-Robinson's (2003b, p.24) wording, Indigenous ontology as connection to land was not adequately represented in public representations of the case. In the excerpt above, Liza believes that if the media had more accurately presented Indigenous peoples' 'cultural outlook' towards land, then the reaction from the Australian public may have been different. Instead, the general response has remained invested in white discourses of land ownership. This in turn protects the white position of governance of the nation (Hage 1998).

Like Collin and Citrus, Liza does not express any expectations of how Indigenous people should be acting, or how they should be using land. Rather, she places a continuing Indigenous presence as a focal point for reflection, because of past marginalisation of Aboriginal people, and because Indigenous people are a part of 'our' future. The 'our' refers to an Australian future. Akin to interviews with Collin and Citrus, Liza talks about how the history of Australia's relationship with Indigenous peoples impacts on the present and future relationships. Her vision of the future of Australia is that Aboriginal people cannot be marginal and, at the same time, that Aboriginal connection and relationship with land needs to be taken from an Indigenous stand point. The Indigenous voice was missing in the non-Indigenous media and, therefore, those protecting their possessive investment in whiteness dominated public debated. In this context, Liza believed that the Mabo decision had little or no impact on the social construction of white Australian Identity.

The common theme in the interviews with Collin, Citrus and Liza, is a reflexive and critical understanding of their subject positions as white Australians and the power

relationships associated with that position. The clarity of their location seemed to assist them in negotiating the terrain of their relationships with Indigenous sovereignty. These three respondents sustained professional and/or personal relationships with Indigenous people. Such relationships placed them in a position of learning in the context of Indigenous people's world view. It seems that Collin, Citrus and Liza are able not to have a possessive interest in their own cultural knowledge and ways of relating to land. Thus, their cultural knowledge becomes just that, cultural knowledge, rather than their epistemology being the hegemonic norm. They seem to recognise their sense of identity as a social practice rather than 'natural', as theorised by Nicoll (2004) and Riggs (2002).

To this point in time, the only public discourse for talking about race is either multiculturalism or reconciliation. There is Australian literature that analyses whiteness and seeks to engage with Aboriginal sovereignty rather than seeking to 'solve racism' or to 'give up power' and to be 'good' or 'better' white people. It seems that this is the approach taken by Collin, Citrus, David and Liza. The assumption of superior cultural knowledge does not seem to be present in their interviews. There is no expectation of Indigenous Australians having to 'change their ways' or to manage their land according to white norms. They do not seem to be confused about the tensions between Indigenous prior ownership, land rights or future relations with Indigenous peoples. At the same time, they envisioned how Indigenous peoples would participate in those future relations at a national, state or local level.

6.5 Conclusion

So how do white Australians, in a rural location at a particular time, construct their identity in the context of Indigenous sovereignty? This chapter showed that most of the participants hold a primary identification with rural versus city, with attachment to their local area. Most of the participants thought about their Australian identity only in an international context such as during the Olympic Games, or at times of national significance. Likewise, most participants did not discuss their racialised position unless directly asked about it, or when they were in a situation where white Australian subjectivity was not the majority. This shows that the subject position of 'white Australian' remains the dominant identity in rural areas partially because it remains the majority of the population. This chapter argues that, unless asked directly, many of the respondents do not see Indigenous people involved in the future of Australia. Further, non-Indigenous interviewees pay little attention to whose epistemology and ontology informs their understanding of connection to land when they discuss future relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. It is also argued that the space of inherited colonialism is the space from which we should not turn away. It is the place where non-Indigenous Australians can take responsibility for a non-colonial future.

The norm of white Australian identity means that some interviewees such as Johnny, Mary, Bryan, Dan and Shamus do not experience themselves or Australia as racialised, just normal, while placing the non-white other as 'stranger' on the margins. However the hegemony of whiteness is never complete, is always unstable and therefore contestable, as demonstrated by other interviewees such as Dominico, Liza, Collin and David who developed counter-narratives to the dominant discourse.

The normative discourse of white settler Australians to be 'Australian' is invested in the denial of Indigenous sovereignty to protect their white settler Australian claims to sovereignty and national space and reasserts white settler hegemonic power relations.

In this chapter, I applied the work of Irene Watson as the ground upon which the interview material is analysed. This is a response to Watson's question: should non-Indigenous Australians take responsibility for the inherited history of colonialism? She asks if a future itself is depended upon Aboriginal ways and if there can be a future Australia without living Aboriginal connections. Watson contends that these impossible spaces are the spaces from which responsibility can be taken and within which decisions can be made, as there is nowhere else to turn. Moreton-Robinson complicates the claim to be 'Australian' through her notion of the 'post-colonising' relations between white settler Australians, Indigeneity and non-white migrant others in the context of a history of British imperialism and colonialism. In Australia, ideologies of whiteness and white identities have a privileged relationship with the nation-state and national identity is raced white and Anglo as a social category.

Taking responsibility for the inheritance of colonialism in response to Irene Watson's quote at the start of this chapter will produce an understanding of the relations of ruling between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians. Waterwitch, Jewlizard, Louise and Alex all spoke about their confusion about the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their lands and of Aboriginal land rights. Their understanding of land ownership and possession makes it difficult to reconcile this knowledge and reveals a complexity in non-Indigenous Australians' ambiguous relationship with Indigenous sovereignty. Thus, white Australian discourses of nation

and identity limit most of the interviewees' ability to construct their identity in-relation-to Indigenous sovereignty. Chapter 7 will bring the discourses of multiculturalism and Indigenous sovereignty together. It is important to analyse these two narratives alongside one another because Australian subjectivities are formed out of migrancy in the context of Indigenous sovereignty.

7. Indigenous sovereignty, multiculturalism and Australian identity: The great divide

My parents are not responsible for the colonisation of Aboriginal peoples in this country. They migrated here 40 years ago. As Muslims, there is no division of the earth. The ground is the same whether we are here or any other country. It does not matter what ground we are on, it is all unified under our practice of Islam (Seyit 2006, Executive Director of the Forum on Australia's Islamic Relations).

We pray five times a day. And every time we pray, we place our foreheads on stolen ground. Our struggles have to start with that fact (Imtoul, 2006, conference participant in response to Seyit).

Migrancy and dispossession indelibly mark configurations of belonging, home and place in the postcolonizing nation-state. In the Australian context, the sense of belonging, home and place enjoyed by the non-Indigenous subject – colonizer/migrant – is based on the dispossession of the original owners of the land and the denial of our rights under international customary law. It is a sense of belonging derived from ownership as understood within the logic of capital; and it mobilizes the legend of the pioneer, ‘the battler’, in its self-legitimization. Against this stands the Indigenous sense of belonging, home and place in its incommensurable difference (Moreton-Robinson 2003b, p.23)

7.1 Introduction

The three quotes above give insight into one aspect of the contemporary workings of colonialism in Australia. In the first quote, Seyit (2006) denies his relationship with Indigenous dispossession through his parents’ position as recent migrants (in the past 40 years). Similar to Dominico’s attempt to distance herself from past colonial acts, this rationalisation is limited for a number of reasons (see analysis of Dominico pp 209-10). Firstly, as outlined in Chapter 1, there have been countless colonising

policies enacted by the Australian government against Indigenous peoples in the name of its citizens over the past 40 years that directly link Seyit (2006) to contemporary Indigenous dispossession, including the continuation of the stolen generations. Second, Seyit's claim that 'the ground is the same whether we are here or any other country', does not acknowledge Indigenous sovereignty which is not the same. Imtoul's (2006a) response opens up the possibility of transformative practice through grounding Islamic struggles for justice in Australia in relationship-with Indigenous sovereignty through acknowledging Indigenous dispossession. The third quote outlines the connection between migrancy and dispossession for Indigenous people in Australia. Moreton-Robinson (2003b, p.37) argues that 'white and non-white postcolonial subjects [are] positioned in relation to [Indigenous people] not through migrancy but possession' and thus a denial of Indigenous sovereignty. Thus, non-Indigenous subjectivities are required, by Indigenous cultural protocol, to be negotiated in relationship with Indigenous sovereignty in the everyday cultural practices.

The analysis in Chapter five found that multiculturalism, as a framework for understanding diversity, obscures racialised difference, making it difficult for many of the interviewees to think about their own racialised subjectivity and the privilege bestowed by whiteness. The major metropolitan centres of Melbourne and Sydney project the images of multiculturalism (Birrell and Rapson 2002). The analysis in Chapter five found that the interviewees see Australia as a multicultural nation. That is, Australian identity is seen to be multicultural. Yet the analysis found that everyday speech about asylum seekers is underpinned by contemporary expressions of Orientalism through the conflation of refugees with national security threat and

terrorism thus protecting white Australian possession of the nation. The analysis in chapter six found that white Australian discourses of nation and identity are limited in their ability to be located in relation with Indigenous sovereignty. One of the key themes in the debates about Indigenous sovereignty in the area of critical race and whiteness studies is that the racialised oppression of minority migrant groups and Indigenous peoples in invader societies was simultaneous, but not the same and it did not have the same results.

Material from the interviews will be used in this chapter to draw out and examine the everyday experiences of white Australians' embodied subjectivity. This chapter will analyse the following: First, is Australia framed as a white nation? Second, how do the interviewees negotiate everyday experiences of racialised difference? Third, what relationship do the interviewees have with Indigenous sovereignty (including the impact Mabo had on Australian identities), and fourth, what are their visions about the place of Indigenous sovereignty in Australia's future? The analysis draws upon Sandoval's model discussed in chapter 3, p.88-9. The chapter argues that white and non-white Australian identities and sense of belonging are built on different histories of migration that are reliant on Indigenous dispossession. As such, white Australian identities' are formed as relations-of-ruling in everyday narratives (see Chapter three, p.101).

Aileen Moreton-Robinson contends that Australia is not post-colonial in the sense that a nation such as India is post-colonial, because of the continuing presence of the white settler dominant majority: 'In Australia, the colonials did not go home and 'post-colonial' remains based on whiteness' (Moreton-Robinson 2003b, p.23). She

argues that this places Indigenous people in Australia in an incommensurable location within a colonising settler society to all those who migrate (see discussion in Chapter 3 from p.105). One result is the racialisation of everyday relations and the narratives that inform them.

Due to their ontological belonging to land, Indigenous people are not out of place or disconnected from their country, regardless of where they are located in Australia or the myriad Government policies that have caused Indigenous diaspora. Moreton-Robinson (2003b) states that Indigenous people are always connected to their country through cultural protocol and the ontological relationship to land. Such an understanding of Indigenous belonging – or in as far as non-Indigenous people can accept that it is so – disrupts both white patriarchal sovereignty and concepts of belonging, as well as discourses that place Aboriginal people as being out of place in, and even absent from, white settled spaces, such as the townships that the interviewees call home. Further, Moreton-Robinson argues, there is no place of equality or equal relationship while non-Indigenous belonging is predicated on Indigenous dispossession. It is for this reason that Sandoval's (1997) 'methodology of the oppressed' is useful in the Australian context (see discussion on pp.88-9). It places Australian studies of whiteness in the context of colonialism. Likewise, Irene Watson (2002a) argues that the denials of the sovereignty of Indigenous laws, which emanate from the land itself, breach international laws of human rights. Watson argues that any agreements, such as a treaty, will need to come from different epistemologies than those of the West, because of the different reality of Indigenous peoples (2002a, paragraph 7).

The following section will now focus on the problem of the Australian nation as a raced entity, as discussed in Chapter 2. Do the interviewees think that Australia is a white country?

7.2 Is Australia a white country?

This section will analyse the discourses that the interviewees draw upon to talk about race and the nation. The first interviewees to be discussed are Louis and Phyllis who are both the children of migrants, are married with children and in their early 40s. They live on an orchard that Louis' family have leased from the South Australian Government since his parents migrated to Australia.

Interviewer: Do you think Australia is a white country?

Louis: The big push lately is that Australia is a multicultural country and the sad part about it is that I don't think we have embraced all the cultures, because there is still racism out there and, like Phyllis was saying before, the kids don't have a bar of it, because at school, bullying is the biggest thing, but racism isn't an issue. At our school it isn't. It might be different at other schools but we talk about it and the big push is multiculturalism.

Phyllis: It is.

Louis: But even so there are certain cultures that haven't been embraced and there are still stigmas and so forth attached with these... we are supposed to be a country of how many cultures? We still seem to have problems you know. Religion is the big part because we don't

understand certain religions, we don't have the same sort of beliefs, then we start to suggest so and so and it becomes a big thing... The first thing that comes to mind if someone asks me: what is Australia? It is multicultural. Yes, but when you go a little bit further on, it might be multicultural but are problems. The other day I was talking with my friend and I said, maybe not in our lifetime but our kids' lifetime, I don't want us to go the American path and racial violence because of the many cultures that have been introduced... Aboriginals are part of this gathering... but we still haven't come to terms with accepting them as part of our own. And they are our own. We are the same nation. They don't walk under a different – they prefer their own flag but that is beside the point (Louis and Phyllis).

In his response to the question as to whether Australia is a white country, Louis makes a link between race, culture and the mediating approach of multiculturalism to deal with racism. He cites the presence of racism as evidence that some cultures are excluded. The word 'embraced' can be linked to the discourses of acceptance in multiculturalism. The discourse of acceptance embraces all Others to the host or hegemonic group. A frequently used image to represent the concept of acceptance by embracing difference presents different people from different 'cultures' holding hands around the world or around Australia. In this particular image, culture is visually represented through 'traditional forms' of folk ensemble. The presentation of different racial phenotypes with a corresponding folk costume conjures difference.

State multiculturalism advertising campaigns throughout the 1990s and after 2000, use images of cultural difference via clothing to embody differently raced faces (in the guise of different cultures) flashed by to the lyrics: “I am, you are, we are Australian”. One example of this approach is critiqued by Alia Imtoul (2007b). Imtoul analyses an anti-racism campaign by Australians Against Racism that uses a similar approach by having a postcard of two possibly ‘Anglo’ phenotype women, both wearing a hijab, thus constructing them as Muslim Other, while simultaneously branding the women as ‘Australian’ at the bottom of the image. The image, while attempting to raise awareness that there are Australians who are Muslim, undoes itself in the juxtaposition of the marginal and non-Australian image of the Muslim woman (identified through the hijab). Imtoul argues that the dominant Australian identity is non-Muslim and therefore ‘makes it difficult to be identified as both Australian and Muslim’ (Imtoul 2006b, p.192). The main point that Imtoul’s empirical research, with young Muslim women in Australia, offers this study is the relationship between being Australian and religion that is raced. Being Muslim is racialised in the sense of Said’s (Said 1978) *Orientalism*, in that the subject position of ‘Muslim’ is conflated with the subject status of ‘Other’. The result is that the word ‘Australian’ branded two young women wearing their hijab to signify Australians who are Muslim and not foreign (see also Randall-Moon 2006).

Louis identifies religious difference, such that the link between religion, culture and race is highlighted. The cultures that have not been embraced, in Louis’s observation, are also the cultures with racial and religious difference. Rivertown is a place that has drawn migrant and seasonal labour. The town attracted many post-war migrants, who held variants of Christian-based religions. The newer migrant and

asylum seeker presence includes people who are Sikh and Muslim as well as a small Middle Eastern population of refugees from the Gulf War, the war in Afghanistan and the Iraq war. In making his point, Louis does not take a position on whether he supports this belief, and he concluded by saying that he thinks Australia *is* ‘multiculturalism’.

Louis qualifies his statement that ‘Australia *is* multiculturalism’, however, when he proposes that where multiculturalism is not working, racial violence could result. This could indicate his view of multiculturalism as a method to ‘manage difference’ that could escalate into racial violence if not managed effectively. He notes that Australia used to be a white country and that ‘now the push is multiculturalism’. Louis may be referring to the Los Angeles race riots (April 29 – May 4, 1992). In Louis’ view, racial violence is evidence that the model of multiculturalism practiced in the United States does not work.¹⁴ In stating his concern about racial violence, Louis makes the link between race, culture and national community. In this logic, if multiculturalism is working, then peace is maintained, and if it is not working, there is violence based on race. Thus, Louis identifies race as an issue in America. He believes that racial violence may occur if Australia adopts the USA practice of multiculturalism. If national discourses link racial identity to the nation, and the racial identities are coded as ‘cultural identity’, and are exclusive, then racial violence is an inevitable outcome of white subjectivity (Singh 2007).

Louis is concerned that there is the potential for violence ‘underneath’ multiculturalism. This statement contradicts his previous comment that there is no

¹⁴ This interview was conducted in 2003 prior to the widely reported race-based riots at Cronulla beach in Sydney, NSW. Thus Louis does not comment on race-based riots in Australia.

racism at his children's primary school. This tension stems from a view that the terms of whiteness construct the national community while claiming to be non-racial (Schech and Haggis 2001, p.143). If multiculturalism is the unifying path to nationhood, and if, for Louis, racial violence indicates where multiculturalism is not working then the diversity managed by multiculturalism is racial diversity. However, the discourse of multiculturalism does not include enough vocabulary that identifies race as a social group because it focuses on culture as diversity. Talking about race would be seen as politically incorrect or as racist itself, as indeed it is, if it is not done with a critical lens that views race as social not biological and, as a problem. The lack of a vocabulary to name racialised groups allows the dominant culture of whiteness to remain invisible, non-racial, unchallenged and dominant. Thus the national community, as Schech and Haggis (2001) argue, remains 'constructed in terms of whiteness'.

Finally, Louis comments that 'Aboriginal people' are a part of multicultural Australia, and that the rest of Australia has not come to terms with this. His account raises several narratives of interest. Firstly, in a multicultural framework represents Indigenous people as one of the various cultures that are a part of the same unified nation. This is also reflected in the quote by Seyit (2006) cited on p. 240. This discourse is problematic in that it does not recognise Indigenous sovereignty, which locates the first peoples differently in a nation of many cultures, as argued by Imtoul (2006a) in response to Seyit (2006) and contested in the quote from Moreton-Robinson (2003b) cited on p.240. Further, this narrative collapses the vast diversity of Indigenous cultures into a 'pan Aboriginal' cultural group, which does not exist. Third, the observation that Australians have not come to terms with Aboriginal

people as part of the nation, makes the issue of acceptance of Aboriginal people within a multicultural Australia as a national problem, in that it is the problem of non-Aboriginal Australians to do this rather than it being an ‘Aboriginal problem’. Fourth, Louis was possibly going to say that Aboriginal people do not march under a separate flag and then corrected himself by saying that that they do. His argument is that to assert a cultural difference (i.e. through having an Aboriginal flag) is within the discourse of multiculturalism in the context of being the same country with many different cultural groups. As stated on page 182 in the previous chapter, Louis identifies himself, as Australian and states that he is proud of being Australian with Greek heritage and that he is always an Australian first.

Phyllis’ response to the issue of whether she and Louis saw Australia as a white country was:

Interviewer: Do you see Australia as a white Australia?

Phyllis: I don’t think that Australia is a white Australia. To me, it is of all different nationalities. That is Australia, whether they are black, Japanese, whatever (Phyllis in Louis and Phyllis).

Phyllis does not think that Australia is a white country. She agrees with Louis that Australia is a multicultural country. For her, the presence of different nationalities whether or not they are “black or Japanese or whatever” is evidence of this. Phyllis applies a vocabulary of race to nationalities by referring to ‘black’ prior to saying ‘Japanese’. Here, Phyllis draws upon discourses of the country of origin as at once both nationality and race, which links ones cultural identity to both country of origin

and race. Older texts often refer to nations as ‘races’, and Phyllis is perhaps drawing on this terminology. This sentence reveals the connection between the two narratives of nationality and race in a contemporary context.

Dominico¹⁵ is the daughter of Italian migrants. She also lives in Rivertown and is a community worker. She is in her early 30s and is married with children. Like Phyllis and Louis, Dominico sees Australia as a multicultural country rather than a white country. However, she specifies the different formations of whiteness through naming Anglo Saxons as the former majority. She also draws upon discourses and language that connect culture and race.

Interviewer: Do you see Australia as a white country?

Dominico: Not any more actually. It is a white country, but also it was the Anglo Saxons. Now, we have Spanish, Italians, Indians, and Iranians, Middle Eastern – quite a few white Africans have come out here. So yes, predominantly the city [Rivertown] is white, but I see as an Anglo Saxon partnership but I just see the other cultures expanding. But I almost see them, can almost visualise the segregation myself. Strange, but yes (Dominico).

In her response, Dominico identifies that there are different kinds of whiteness. Her observations and her lived experience as a descendent of Italian migrants concur with Schech and Haggis (2001) she names the Anglo Saxon, or British, centre of Australian whiteness and Australian identities. She includes Europeans such as

.15 Dominico is a woman and chose the Italian word for ‘Sunday’ as her code name.

Spanish and Italians and Indians, Iranians and Middle Eastern peoples along with white Africans have different experiences of whiteness and are included in the category of white. White Africans are specifically named and Black Africans are not included, nor are Asians¹⁶. She is specific in her application of racial categories for the different groups of people. This may reflect the different groups of people who live in her neighbourhood.

Dominico identifies Anglo-Saxon-ness as the dominant construction of whiteness that has historically maintained the British core values of Australian whiteness. She thinks that a diversity of cultural groups shifts the core of Anglo Saxon whiteness. Her response is consistent with the findings of Schech and Haggis (2004). They found that British citizens living in Australia envision Australia as a part of Britain's domain. Their participants felt so at home in Australia that they did not take out Australian citizenship because they already felt that they belong. Dominico can picture the segregation despite the expansion of the diversity of cultures now present. Similar to Hartigan's (1997a) findings of the construction of whiteness in Detroit, this indicates her impression of local social geography in Rivertown along lines that are differently raced within whiteness, although Dominico does not say who is segregated from whom.

When asked if she thinks if Australia is a white country, Jewlizard responded:

Interviewer: Do you think Australia is a white country?

¹⁶ In Australian dominant discourses, generally speaking people from the South Asian sub-continent are referred to as 'Indians' (not Asians) and the term 'Asian' is usually applied to people from China, Japan and South-East Asia.

Jewlizard: I think it is – I think Australia is more tolerant now, but I think deep down it still is.

Interviewer: What do you think that means?

Jewlizard: Well, you would class a majority as white, even though there is difference with some of the European countries and South Africa. I think the things would be a bit easier for white people here and the others, I guess, would be a minority and so then they have to struggle more for things (Jewlizard).

Jewlizard says that Australia is still a white country underneath the tolerance of multiculturalism, albeit more tolerant than in the past. It is not clear whether she refers to white peoples experience in other European countries or South Africa, or, whether she talks about white migrants from those countries living in Australia. In the first instance, Jewlizard may refer to the difference with some of the European countries and South Africa, and that there are still benefits that white people experience that are not accessible to those who are not white. In the second instance, Jewlizard may be identifying the different levels of power and benefit to which differently categorised groups have access in Australia. She recognises that the way that groups of people are racialised will privilege some and oppress others. Thus, race has been used to rationalise the social arrangements of power and exploitation (Goldberg 2009, p.4).

Louise is a schoolteacher in her 50's. She is unsure whether Australia is a white country or not.

Interviewer: Do you see Australia as a white country? For example, do you think people overseas would, if they looked at Australia, they would see it as being a white country?

Louise: Possibly...I think they would see it as being fairly multicultural as well though because you hear and see so many things now which involves Australian people who are definitely not, you know, white European looking...I see Australia as being multicultural more through from what I see on TV and you know, which is where it does seem to be very multi-cultural. I don't even know what the percentages are, of different races or cultures, but I think that there are a large number (Louise).

The proportionally homogenous population in the rural location of the state where the interviews occurred influences Louise's response (Birrell and Rapson 2002). The homogenous dominant population is contrary to Hage's argument that Australia is no longer populated by predominantly white Australians (Hage 1998, p.229). This is one reason why empirical studies that are conducted in large metropolitan areas are not representative of what occurs outside these areas. For Louise, the images of difference on the television are the evidence of multiculturalism. She sees non-European-looking people in the media and believes that this indicates that there are a large number of different races and cultures presented, although she does not know the percentages. One line of debate about migration in Australia centres upon a concern for the proportion of the population that can be allowed to be 'other' without disrupting the white centre. An overwhelming proportion of the interviewees drew

upon the tropes about ‘numbers’ of non-European migrants that are appropriate for Australia.

One effect of the narrative about ‘numbers’ is that some Australians who identify with the dominant identity of whiteness in Australia believe that they are being overrun by the ‘other’, or that ‘otherness’ is being forced upon them, as they believe that their own values and presence as the centre is threatened (Hage 1998, p.187). Louise does not indicate that she is threatened by the presence of non-European Australians. Rather, she refers to the physical indicators of race to represent diversity as markers for ‘non-European’ Australians and she imagines that there is a ‘large number’. This is an example of how race continues to underpin multiculturalism in Australia (Vasta and Castles 1996). Perhaps Louise contemplates how much difference is OK to maintain the Australia that Louise knows.

Optus, a woman in her late 60s felt that:

Interviewer: Do you see Australia as being a white country now?

Optus: Yes, well, you didn’t think of it as being anything else because you weren’t questioned about it or you didn’t question it yourself and you know Aboriginal people existed and you knew they were there, and that’s fine it was perfectly acceptable they were there, but I think the over-riding feeling was that white people had a right to be there and that wasn’t questioned... I probably do still think of Australia as being basically a country of white people despite knowing – and I don’t know the figures – despite knowing that there are a huge number of people from other countries and other colours here now (Optus).

Optus has drawn on the social category of Anglo Australian to inform her cultural identity as a white Australian. She makes the point that it is something that she never has to think about, which suggests that whiteness has been invisible to her, including her own whiteness (Dyer 1997). It is of interest that Optus speaks in the past tense. This may indicate that, despite the present-tense of the question, she bases her response on the past. She talks about not having to question that Australia is a white country, which would be the case where whiteness is the norm in her regional setting. This is possibly one of the implications of Regionalism, where the majority of the population can identify with the dominant Australian narratives, because there is more of a monoculture than in the larger metropolitan areas, where diversity is harder to ignore (Birrell and Rapson 2002). It is also an example of how race maps the social geography of the town. Ruth Frankenberg coined the term “racial social geography” to ‘refer to the racial and ethnic mapping of environments in physical and social terms and enable also the beginning of an understanding of the conceptual mappings of self and other operating in white women’s [people’s] lives’ (1993, p.44).

Congruent with the discussion about the normativity of whiteness on p.75, not only has whiteness been the norm in Optus’ experience, she also identifies that white people felt ‘they had the right to be there and that wasn’t questioned’ (Optus, see also Dyer 1997). Her use of the phrase “you didn’t think about it” in the past tense indicates that she may think the unquestioned right to be there is in the past, despite Australia still being a predominantly white country in regional areas. She does not use the term “we” so it is ambiguous whether she includes herself in that view. It

may indicate the way that she maintains whiteness as the norm. Interestingly, Optus places the unquestioned location of white people despite knowing “that Aboriginal people existed”. The presence of Aboriginal people indicates that perhaps it is not a white country at all, as the Indigenous presence continues to unsettle the white nation. Or, perhaps more than unsettlement, Optus places Indigenous people outside of the ‘white nation’, as observed by Schech and Haggis (2001) in their research on core identities in Australia. They argue that “whiteness helps to explain the difficulty of bringing an everyday awareness of difference – multicultural or Indigenous – into a vision of national community” (Schech and Haggis 2001, p.145). If Optus relates to the core Australian identities, which are then reflected around her in the mono-culturalism of her own social networks in the rural region where she lives, then ‘white people’s right to be here’ remains unquestioned and protected by regionalism. Similar to Louise’s observation (see pp.143-4), the only images contrary to Optus’s mono-cultural experiences are through the media, which are city-based, and government-sponsored campaigns about multiculturalism, which showed faces of the ‘ethnic’ or ‘migrant other’ presented as being Australians.

Optus continued her statement by wondering what the number of non-white people living in Australia is:

Optus: But I think if all the people were put together in some form of kaleidoscope, it would still be a pale colour...I think that the white and pale skin element would nearly lessen the impact of the darker skins and that’s about the only way I can say it. I’m probably wrong, because I haven’t thought about it – haven’t thought about what our numbers are and how they stack up and how many dark skin and

white people there are and how we all look in the mix. I haven't thought about it (Optus).

Mirrors that reflect pieces of coloured glass or paper produce the ever-changing images of a kaleidoscope when rotated in a tube through which the holder views. The metaphor of the kaleidoscope could be linked to the concept of the mosaic that is used in Canada (Moodley 1992) and at times in Australia (FECCA 2009). Optus uses the analogy of the kaleidoscope to imagine what the numbers of dark skin and white people may look like in Australia overall. In her lived experience, the dominant colour in the kaleidoscope would still be pale. This may refer to her social networks and the dominant monoculture of her region. The other key point in her response is that, unlike the concern of other interviewees about the numbers of migrants (such as Mary, Johnny, Tyrone and Patch, discussed later in the chapter) Optus has not thought about the dominance of one colour, being white, or the proportion of other colours that may be present. The majority of people living in her rural district reflect the image of white Australia, which means that Optus does not have to think about numbers or percentages of those with dark skins to white Australians and thus in Optus' area, Australia remains predominantly white.

When asked about what it means to be white in Australia, Austin responded:

Austin: Well, I guess since colonisation Australia is being designed by white people for white people and I can see if you were different, life isn't quite as facilitated. But mainly in recent years, it has. They try to make an effort to reverse that. In my opinion it seems like it's more pronounced by making special cases for people who aren't white,

whereas I think that goes against my principle of natural justice where everybody's equal rather than people are different. But to do that, people's attitudes have to change and that's the hardest thing – you can't deal with the government's policies.

Interviewer: Do you think Australia is a white country?

Austin: Yeah, I guess I do but not a whole lot. If you look at its history, it's in the context really. I still hope Australia is bigger than that – the people. The country itself (Austin).

The liberal democratic trope of equality is strong in Austin's understanding of natural justice. He acknowledges the history of colonisation in Australia and concedes that Australia was designed by white people for white people (see Goldberg 2009), which, in his view, may have made life less facilitated for anyone who was different from the white norm. He goes on to say that, he does not agree with making exceptional cases for people due to difference. Rather, Austin believes that it goes against his 'natural justice principles' to start with difference, or even to address difference. His preference is to work from an assumption that everyone is equal rather than seeing everyone as different. The aim could be to appease difference (Nursoo 2007), or to reduce difference with the aim of equality. He sees that people's attitudes block equality. The attitudes have to change, which he considers is the most difficult facet, claiming that the public cannot do anything about the government policies. It is not clear whether the changes he believes must be made to government policies would be to take out equal affirmative action policies with an expectation that 'everybody' will then have equality. Or, whether the changes in attitudes are among those people with discriminatory attitudes, who

are the reason for which affirmative action policies exist. What is clear is the liberal democratic view that government should not intervene into people's lives and that any intervention, such as exceptional cases for people due to difference, contravenes his understanding of equality (Joppke 2004).

As Hage (1998) argues, the assumed right to 'govern', (discussed on pp. 51-2 of chapter two), can be seen in the following segment from Tyrone and Patch's interview, where they are considering the implications if suddenly white Australians are, in reality, the minority in Australia:

Interviewer: Do you think that Australia is a white country?

Tyrone: Any other groups coming in there is still not going to be a majority, I mean, even with all the Asians and all of that, we are still the most, in most places. I'm not saying all places. Along the Gold Coast is a bit of a joke, it's more Japanese...I think we will always be the majority because even people who come out here and settle, most of them become Australian. They still retain their heritage but then they still become a part of the bit mix that's Australians, whether they be white or off-white, they are still the majority. Do you agree with that? We are.

Patch: But what if we aren't?

Tyrone: Be scary.

Patch: I don't think I'd like that.

Tyrone: We are not used to that – being in that position... (Patch, Tyrone in Patch, Tyrone and Joan).

If the Asian 'other' became the majority that would mean that 'they' have the majority say in governing the country, a position that Patch and Tyrone feel would threaten their claim to the national space, though they are differently positioned in their feelings about that. Patch says that she would not want that to occur. Tyrone talks about it as 'being scary'. Hage argues that white Australians *are* already a minority in cosmopolitan Australia where there is no "ethnically defined group, Anglo or other, to police the borders of national belonging for them" (Hage 1998, p.229). As argued earlier, this is not always the case in regional and rural areas in Australia (Birrell and Rapson 2002). Thus, Tyrone refers to areas of the Gold Coast where there is a larger 'Asian' population. The possibility of white Australia not being the majority elicits fear from Patch and reflects the relationship of power provided by the privilege of whiteness.

The privilege of whiteness in the form of the right to govern the national space also affects how the respondents relate with Indigenous people. The privilege of whiteness is maintained in part because the use of race as a critical lens for analysis does not exist in everyday narratives. Patch and Tyrone are unable to link their privilege to imagine the social order of the nation to ongoing relations of power. Their whiteness blinds them to their racialised subjectivity. As such Patch and Tyrone do not see the manifestations of power granted to them by whiteness and then to deconstruct these signs of power.

Aileen Moreton-Robinson argues that "whiteness is constitutive of the epistemology of the West; it is an invisible regime of power that secures hegemony through

discourse and has material effects in everyday life” (2004b, p.75). This section will refer to the interview excerpts to explore the complexities and contradictions of multiculturalism and whiteness as experienced in the everyday lives of the participants in this study. How do the respondents understand racialised difference? What are their lived experiences of racialised difference?

Interviewer: Do you think it means different things to be white in Australia or black in Australia?

Louis: I don't think so...I don't think there are many Aboriginals sitting in detention centres are there? So the way I look at it is, where you come from has got a bit of stigma attached to it so it depends...I don't think it is just Aboriginal. I think, for a little bit...it is where your background is and we had that problem when we grew up because our background wasn't Australian and the shift has gone from us now because we have become Australian, well I'd say so because we have been calling ourselves Australian for the past hour [during the interview], but we have gone from that and we have accepted the new life-style here and the new way of life and you get the feeling that if you don't join the clan, you seem to be left behind and I think the Aboriginals are coming to the party for certain elements in this lovely country of ours and they seem to be left on the outside.

Phyllis: We don't think of it, but I wonder whether the Aborigines have this thing inside them where they think that they are dark against the whites too. We don't think of it...we don't see a lot of them. Do we really?... Whereas if we lived close to [an Aboriginal community on

the outskirts of the town] and we saw them all the time, it might be a bit different...I wonder whether they do.

Louis: They must still think of us as white man, intruders and so forth and they have probably been taught all their life what a few of our ancestors have done to them. I don't know. We can't speak for them...I remember going back a few years when they started going on about land rights and that was our land and we are going to reclaim it and I remember there was a few people who came over one night and Dad was still alive and they said to the old man, what happens if your farm is going to get taken up by the Aboriginals? The old man goes, "I'll be glad to get off it. I'll save my back. I'll save my knees. I'll save everything. If it is theirs they can have it", you know...that was sort of "Oh my God we are going to have to get off our land...We could debate a topic all night and at the end of the day we go home with a migraine and it could be meaningless and maybe the Aboriginals do too. Maybe we are not seeing them in the light that we should see them and vice versa, so... (Louis and Phyllis)

Louis' first comment above, about there not being any difference between being white or black in Australia is full of the everyday tensions that result from multiculturalism as a model for understanding migrant relationships with Indigenous people. In the first instance, in the discourse of sameness that is promoted through multiculturalism (Ahmed 2000a), he believes that there is no difference in being white or black in Australian. The example that he gives is there are no Indigenous people 'sitting in detention centres'. Here black and white Australians are together

in their freedom as opposed to the binary of the caged refugee (at that point predominantly from Afghanistan and Iraq) at the Woomera and Baxter detention centres in South Australia, discussed in the introduction on p234.

Louis' focus on the refugees who are placed in detention centres is in stark contrast to the incarceration rates of Indigenous people in Australia's prison system, whom he does not mention (see for example: Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody 1991; National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families "Bringing Them Home Report" 1997). The over representation of Indigenous people in the Australian prison system turns caged insiders (as in those imprisoned under domestic laws as citizens) into outsiders, through their status as 'outlaws'.

Louis also highlights the fluidity of whiteness by referring to a time earlier in their lives when Greek migrants were not a part of the white nation. His social commentary that 'if you don't join the clan you seem to be left behind' raises the issues debated in Chapter five regarding the white limits to multiculturalism and the expectation of an homogenous white centre that is now more easily accessible for Louis and Phyllis than it is, for example, the un-identified Middle Eastern, Sikh or Sudanese migrant/refugee. The assumption is that this is also accessible for Indigenous Australians, but Louis sees there are some parts of the nation where Aboriginal people remain outsiders (Wadjularbinna 2002).

Phyllis also has difficulty applying multicultural concepts to Indigenous experiences of 'being Black'. She says that she does not think of 'it' (of herself as white and

Aboriginal people as black), but she wonders if Aboriginal people do. Phyllis' question leaves the possibility that Indigenous people may have a different set of knowledge, lived experience and social critique than she does. She gives her own lack of proximity to the blackness of an Aboriginal township on the outskirts of Rivertown as one reason for which it might be that she does not think of blackness. That is, surrounded by whiteness, Phyllis is not confronted by blackness and, thus, not confronted by whiteness. Further, the local social mapping creates whiteness and blackness as binaries. Blackness is 'over there' in the Aboriginal community outside of town, where the white town is the centre from which 'over there' is measured. As argued in Chapter Two, 2.4, whiteness has become the norm, through a multiculturalist discourse that has maintained British based values (though contested by non-British European migrants such as Louis and Phyllis, who identify as Greek Australians) at the centre of Australian identities. That norm is challenged by Phyllis, who is not of Anglo cultural background, and simultaneously her own proximity to the white norm is confronted when her whiteness and Indigenous people's presence are both made visible to her.

Some of the Anglo Australian respondents, like Alan and Mary, thought that the Greeks and Italians used to be segregated from Anglo Australians. They think Australian-born Greek and Italian people integrate more with mainstream Australia. Such respondents think that the new migrant groups are keeping to themselves and that the Indigenous people in their area keep to themselves. Alan is of Anglo Australian background, never married and is in his 70s. He has a homogenous network of friends and family who are all of Anglo background. Like Mary, when pressed he can think of people from diverse backgrounds of whom he knows, but

does not have personal relationships outside of employer relations (his cleaners, gardeners and pruners include migrant families). He attends a Christian Church, which is predominantly attended by people of Anglo middle class background, and has connections with the local 'aristocracy'. The discourse of integration relies on a foundation of Anglo Australian whiteness as the centre.

Alan: The Greeks and Italians used to keep separate. The first daughters who married Australians were outcast, it was a big deal, and now they are all inter-marrying and mixing more. The new groups, like the Sikhs keep to themselves. They need to integrate like the Greeks and Italians have (Alan).

In Alan's account, firstly, Anglo Australians are not marrying into Greek and Italian families; it is the other way around. Then, the expectation to integrate into the white Australian norm of sameness is clearly extended to the Sikh migrant community in the town. Alan also says that "the Greeks and Italians always say 'hello', but the Sikhs, they just walk straight past you with no acknowledgement" (Alan).

Mary makes a similar observation to Alan: "...the Turks are still a separate cultural group with their religion, their dress and their sport... I can only assume that's their own choice to make that sort of ethnic separation, not to become totally Australian". Here, Mary has touched upon the impact of social and political relations between Turkey and Greece as they are played out in an Australian context. Mary attributes the formation of a Turkish soccer association as a refusal to be Australian. Mary compares her observation of Turkish people to Greek and Italian families who she claims are more integrated into Australian communities, including the local football team. Mary's assumption of 'self-separation' is of interest to this chapter, and is

challenged by the work of Caryl Phillips in an international context. Phillips explores post-colonial belonging, identity and the issues of separation and home (see Fokkema 2005; Phillips 2002). Mary sees the separation as one of choice on the part of the Turkish or Sikh communities, rather than an example of belonging and identity being created on their terms.

Interviewer: Do you have any family or social networks with people who are from Greek, Italian or Turkish families?

Mary: My children do through sport. There are no Aboriginals in my son's particular team but there are Greeks and Italians playing football. And my daughters play netball and there are Greeks and Italians in her team as well. So there is a lot of diversity through the sports networks, but that all occurs at the games. We don't go to each other's houses, but our children do. But my husband grew up here and most of his schoolboy mates are Greek and Italian and they are fruit growers and they all socialise and I do to by association. They're his boyhood friends from school days and he worked as a builder's labourer for a long time (Mary).

Mary promotes tolerance and acceptance. She lived overseas for six years in Europe and the Middle East. The complexity is that Mary attributes the relations of ruling that are reflected in the towns' social geography to coincidence. There are no migrant or Indigenous families living in the area of the small town where she lives, though when pressed to think about her networks, Mary does have the opportunity to develop friendships with people from diverse backgrounds through her children's

sport and friends of her husband, yet these people remain acquaintances for her. She does experience diversity, but holds diversity at a distance.

For tolerance and acceptance to work, in Mary's example of Greek and Italian families 'integrating more', migrants are expected to take on the British white values as core Australian whiteness. Through the white Anglo-Australian lens, any difference that is maintained by Greek or Italian Australians is erased by the observation "the Greeks have integrated now" (Alan, Mary) until only sameness remains.

The following section will explore the interviewee's awareness of racialised privilege and oppression. This will assist to analyse the decolonisation of non-Indigenous connection to contemporary expressions of colonialism in Australia. The interviewees awareness of racialised difference leads to the possibility of re-making the social subject positions in order to establish everyday relations that are non-colonial (see the discussion on Sandoval pp.88-9).

7.3 In relationship with Indigenous sovereignty

Fiona Nicoll (2007) argues that all Australians have a relationship with Indigenous Australians, whether or not they have personally met any, and that a focus on the quality of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships can assist to avoid paternalistic visions of a future of harmonious relationships. She proposes that looking at the quality of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations means that Indigenous people would genuinely have a choice as to whether to be involved in

that relationship or not, a position that she contends is “beyond the scope of political imagination” given that there is still no sign of a treaty, despite *Terra Nullius* being overturned in the High Court’s Mabo decision in 1992 (Nicoll 2007, p.27).

Indigenous sovereignty has not been ceded in Australia and neither are there any Treaties that acknowledge Indigenous sovereignty. The claim of Australia as a nation, and therefore claims of belonging by any non-Indigenous peoples living in Australia, is predicated on the disavowal of Indigenous sovereignty; Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations are, therefore, relations of power. In her grapple with Moreton-Robinson’s theory of Indigenous ontological belonging to land, Jane Haggis raises the difficult location of complicity in whiteness. She contends that as Indigenous ontology is in the land, then it is whiteness that contains an ‘ontological fixity’:

...my point is that, from the Indigenous standpoint, whiteness is a foundational claim to identity, belonging and ownership that at no point connects with Indigenous ways of being in the land. Whereas the [Indigenous] ontology of country is predicated on protocols to establish belonging or being in place, the white settler claim is to exclusive possession over place. Hence it is essentialist in ways the ontology of country is not, as well as incommensurable to it, thus precluding any possibility of hybrid entanglement (Haggis 2004b, p.58).

If, as Haggis argues above, “white settler ontology” is predicated on “exclusive possession over place” as juxtaposed against the “ontology of country” as a process for belonging, how can non-Indigenous people “fall into Indigenous Sovereignty” as proposed by Nicoll (discussed in Chapter 3 p.107)? Perhaps the process is to walk the circular path of negotiation and protocol to establish relationships that recognise the incommensurability of Indigenous and non-Indigenous ontology of country. Rather than assuming a place of “hybrid entanglement” a process of negotiation based on protocols is the means through which to “fall into Indigenous Sovereignty”,

as, according to Nicoll this requires white Australians to be knocked off their perch. This location is premised on every person who calls 'Australia' home being in a relationship with Indigenous Sovereignty whether they personally know any Indigenous people and could therefore create just relationships as per Sandoval's framework (discussed on pp.88-9).

So where does this leave multicultural non-Indigenous Australians and the future of Australia? The work discussed in this thesis by Moreton-Robinson, Watson, Frankenberg, Haggis and Nicoll provides a critical lens through which to look at the landscape of relations that make up living on this land "now called Australia" and demands a radically different approach than that taken by non-Indigenous peoples up to this point. It means that Indigenous peoples hold and live in a unique relationship with specific tracts of country that cannot be compared to or replicated by non-Indigenous attachment. This relationship is one of inclusivity and diversity, with a long history of thousands of years of living in multicultural societies based on Indigenous epistemologies. It means non-Indigenous Australians can engage in an ongoing dialogue from within their own skin by walking on the ground of race relations. Such an approach acknowledges the multiplicity of Indigenous sovereign subjects, as well as the multiplicity of non-Indigenous (both white and non-white) tracts of migrancy and subject positions. It would mean that the exclusivity of white ontological belonging that is maintained by white patriarchal sovereignty that results in everyday relations-of-ruling is radically challenged on a daily basis of living in Indigenous sovereignty until it is overturned.

When asked about their relations with Aboriginal people, the interviewees' responses include a variety of discourses about indigeneity, whiteness, migrancy and relations with difference. Most of the interviewees have no experience of relating with Indigenous peoples at a personal level (Nicoll 2007, p.26). The following extracts from the interview with Louis and Phyllis reflect similar discourses present in Alex, Poppy, Liza and Dominico's interviews. Liza had a different position in relating to Indigenous sovereignty, however. This will be expanded on later in this section.

Interviewer: We talked a little bit before [when talking about their childhood friendships] about whether you knew Aboriginal people who live in the area. Do you have any connections with Aboriginal people now?

Louis: Look at it, and jokes aside, we don't get any Aboriginal people coming to Greek Church, but no.

Phyllis: No, we don't really.

Louis: They don't – the Aboriginal community, the only place you would see them in Rivertown alone would be in the pub on pension day, for example.

Phyllis: At the footy.

Louis: You would see them at the local footy if they are involved.

Phyllis: I see some at school, but to have any interaction with them – we don't really.

Louis: In Rivertown, our Indigenous ones are mainly from Thursday Island and from out Queensland way...they came with the picking and they loved the place so much...When the cane became more mechanised...they lost a bit of work out there and...they settled here.

And they are different again and they are more approachable...Completely different to the Aboriginals. Nothing wrong with the Aboriginals, but we don't have any comings and goings with them. But these T.I's, they get involved with school. The kids are different. They have inter-married, the majority of them in a sense that they have got a family who has married a Greek (Louis and Phyllis).

Several power relations interplay in Louis and Phyllis' reflection about their lack of connection with Indigenous people from their local area. Louis' first observation is that Indigenous people do not attend the local Greek Church. Here the Greek Australian cultural and religious practices are at the centre. 'Jokes aside', an Aboriginal presence would not be expected. The place where Louis does expect to see Aboriginal people from the local area (as opposed to Torres Strait Islander people, which I will expand upon in the next paragraph) is at the pub on pension day. Phyllis sees local Aboriginal people at the footy, in a separate team, and at the school that Phyllis' children attend, but has no connection with Indigenous people in either setting. Louis and Phyllis' do not identify any connection with Aboriginal people in their everyday life. There is an invisible Aboriginal presence because Louis does not expect to see Aboriginal people in many of his social contexts. Yet the presence is expected in the pub, at the footy and at the school. Even in these settings, Aboriginal people are made to be out of place, even while being 'in their place' as far as stereotypes of the drinking and lazy Aboriginal, or that Aboriginal people are 'naturally good at sport' (especially football with the hand/eye coordination and speed required as a stereotype for Indigenous Australians) and can therefore be

expected in these two locations. All of these are oppressive narratives, signs of power that maintain Indigenous oppression within the white nation.

Watson (2007b, p.15) argues that Aboriginal sovereignty will always undermine settled spaces and therefore penetrates multicultural spaces in Australia. Louis argues that in Rivertown, Thursday Islander peoples are not seen as a disruption to the migrant presence. Rather, Thursday Islander families are viewed as another cultural group of 'settlers', who have worked on the migrant families' farms and have married in to the Greek Australian centre (as opposed to Greek families marrying into Thursday Islander families). This could be because Thursday Island is 'away' or 'over there' and Greek Australians are 'here' or at home. In this setting, the Torres Strait Islander families are engaged with as 'fellow migrants' in the approach of multiculturalism and not as Indigenous peoples. Although, as Moreton-Robinson (2003b) argues, Indigenous peoples maintain their sovereignty and connection to country even when 'away from home', the Aboriginal people on whose land Rivertown is situated are seen 'to be different' from, and therefore on the outside of, the migrant centre. Ironically, Louis' comments about Thursday Islander people mixing in better is a mirror of Alans' earlier comments on p.217, regarding Greek and Italian families marrying into Anglo Australian families and his criticism of Sikh families not having mixed with white Australians. Paradoxically, some interviewees (such as Mary discussed on p.218) continue to expect migrant Greek and Italian families to 'integrate more' and this is also expected of Indigenous families by both Anglo and the first generation descendents of Greek and Italian migrant families, as exposed in the discussion with Louis about Thursday Islander families being friendlier than Aboriginal families.

The predominant theme amongst the interview material is that the lack of contact with Rivertown Aboriginal people was not noticed, unless there was a direct query that brought attention to the lack of connection mirrored by raced social geographies. In the racial mapping of the area, Indigenous people are seen as set apart in a way that is more segregated than migrant cultural groups. Likewise, Tony (discussed further below following the excerpt from Jewlizard) only has contact with Indigenous people through football, where he identifies trouble with Aboriginal spectators who were fighting and drinking.

Jewlizard, from Red Ocean was asked the same question:

Interviewer: Do you know who the Indigenous people from your area are and do you have any connections with them?

Jewlizard: ... There's lots of Aboriginal children at school now. I'm friends with an Aboriginal woman from my church... my daughter-in-law is Kanaka, from the South Sea Islands. My husband is a boomerang thrower so we have made Aboriginal friends. We knew Jimmy James, a famous tracker, we've been to his house. I also have friends who are Chinese. It's not as segregated as it used to be. (Jewlizard).

Jewlizard articulates the changes in social mapping in the town of Red Ocean. The segregation she experienced during childhood would reflect the policies of segregation and then assimilation in place throughout her childhood and early

adulthood (Moran 2009). Her experiences of connection across differently raced groups are still unusual in the context of the rural locality and her age group. Collin is the only other interviewee with similar connections across racial boundaries.

Those without personal relations with Indigenous people see the separation between white Australians and Indigenous peoples when they are asked what their relations are with Indigenous people in the local area. The respondents with this experience identify the Aboriginal townships that are located outside of their town. For example, Tony grew up in the Rivertown area in a different town. He went into the armed services and lived all over the world with his wife and children. He is retired to another small town on the river in the same region and is in his 50s:

Interviewer: Do you know who the Indigenous people from this area are and how do you relate?

Tony: Oh, there aren't any. Except for Blacktown [the name has been changed. Blacktown is the Aboriginal community in the region]. They only come into town to play football. I coach our local team. They all get drunk and cause fights. They are anti-social and aggressive, it's a big problem. They will get banned from the football competition if they keep it up (Tony).

It is unclear from Tony's response whether there are any Indigenous members of his local football team. He only identifies the Indigenous community team who are known as drunks, anti-social and aggressive. Tony's comment does not identify these behaviours in any of the other football teams.

Like Tony, Mary only has contact with Aboriginal families through the children who play football. She firstly comments that there are no Aboriginal people living in the local area, despite the presence of a number of large and well-known (amongst Aboriginal people) families in the town who belong to that country. As she talks, she realises that there are Aboriginal people living in the town, which has a population under 10,000 people, but not in her part of the town and not at her five children's Catholic school. The following is a long excerpt that is of interest because it shows the inconsistencies in how Mary (and many of the respondents) think about what they see as, firstly, the non-presence of Indigenous people and secondly, the self-imposed segregation of Indigenous people.

Interviewer: Do you know who the Indigenous people from this area are and how do you relate?

Mary: I know the history of the Indigenous people in this area, those that still seem to be around – World War I, there were still camps... I don't think you'll find any continuous groups have been here for a hundred years... We've got 'Blacktown'. Well, it's not a mission any more but a community and it's got a workshop-gallery. It's their face to the community where they sell their work and themselves and their culture... I know the people by name who are in charge of these things but I honestly do not have a single Indigenous person as a friend. I think that's just location... Also my children, two go to high school and two go to primary school [and the youngest is under school-age], they go to a Catholic school and there are no Aborigines

in the school. Had my children gone to Rivertown Primary School, the town school, I know there are quite a few Aboriginal families that go there and unfortunately they all live in the same area, which is in one part of Rivertown which is stigmatised, being lower socio-economic sort of group... Their houses look like bombs and the outside is just the sort of thing that puts their neighbours backs up... I don't think it's a colour thing, but it's an ethnic thing (Mary).

When Mary is asked about whether she knows any Indigenous people in the area, her reply is couched in terms of history, probably because Mary sees herself as a local historian. Mary has also previously stated that she sees Indigenous history as 'being in a separate pocket' to the local history that she researches. Her language places Indigenous people in the past, with no contemporary presence. She states that she 'can't find any actual groups' and that she does not think that the researcher could find any either (Mary). An interesting omission is the local 'Indigenous genealogy'. It seems the local history that Mary has researched excludes the local Indigenous history.

Mary understands an Indigenous presence only through continuous occupation in terms of a continuing physical presence. Yet Mary contradicts herself. On the one hand, she says there are no Aboriginal people in town. On the other hand, she remembers that Aboriginal people live in a particular part of town in low-socio economic conditions. It is possible that Mary is drawing upon white narratives that place Indigenous people only as those living off the land in a so-called traditional

way, like Waterwitch. Yet, Mary talks about the Indigenous community, 'Blacktown', outside of Rivertown that used to be the old mission. She sees the workshop-gallery as a place from which the community can sell "themselves and their culture" as a commodity and while Mary knows the names of the people (though did not say who they were), who run the gallery, she does not have a relationship with them herself, despite the fact that she also ran an art gallery in Rivertown that exhibits the work of local [non-Indigenous] artists. Mary states that the visibility of Aboriginal people is much higher at Blacktown than it is on the streets of Rivertown. Mary's excerpt outlines the white boundaries of her everyday life, demarcating the contact points that she has with Indigenous people and Indigenous organisations as outside of her networks.

Mary then shifts her geographical attention from Blacktown to thinking about the children who attend her children's school. Mary thinks there are no Aboriginal children at her children's Catholic primary school. She is aware, however, that there are Aboriginal children who attend the public primary school. She remembers that there is Aboriginal families who live in a particular area and who she has seen walking their children to the public primary school. Mary describes the housing conditions in this section of town as being stigmatised because it is a lower socio-economic area and she thinks it is unfortunate that the Aboriginal families all live in the same part of town. She says that the houses "look like bombs and that the outside is just the sort of thing that puts their neighbours' backs up". Mary does not say if this is her view, or if she is repeating the kinds of things that the Aboriginal families' non-Indigenous neighbours might be saying. Mary concludes this part of

the interview by clarifying that she does not believe the stereotypes or stigmatisation is due to skin colour. She believes that it is ‘an ethnic thing’.

Dominico and Poppy (interviewed separately) are both women in their mid forties and work in various community-oriented roles in Rivertown. In their work as community workers, they have both developed relationships with Indigenous people, predominantly Indigenous women, who are in community worker roles in the town.

Poppy: Yes I have made many friends with Aboriginal women. Especially in community art projects that I have been involved with.

Interviewer: Are you still in touch now?

Poppy: Yes, we catch up for lunch every couple of weeks. My closest circle of friends and family are Greek and then the next circle of friends extending out is very diverse, including being Aboriginal (Poppy).

Poppy’s relationship with Indigenous women in Rivertown directly challenges the position that Mary initially declared when she says that there are no Aboriginal people still living in Rivertown. Likewise, Liza, who is Poppy’s sister, has made lasting friendships in the Indigenous community through her role as a teacher in Red Ocean. She has continued her connection with Indigenous peoples now that she lives and works in Rolling Hills, which is more than a 10-hour drive away (Poppy lives in Rivertown with her husband and children). Liza’s experience and ‘education’ received from her Aboriginal friends and colleagues also meant that she purposefully connected with Aboriginal people when she moved to Rolling Hills and has therefore intentionally developed new friendships in that town also. Dominico, Poppy and

Liza are in the minority, together with Collin and Jewlizard as respondents with current friendships and/or family who are Indigenous.

Meanwhile Waterwitch, in her 70s from Rivertown, is the daughter of a French migrant mother and multi-generation Anglo Australian father. She supports a national apology by the former Liberal Prime Minister, John Howard, and believes that the past atrocities caused by colonisation and government policy are wrong, yet expressed her confusion about Indigenous sovereignty where there is not continuous connection in an excerpt presented in Chapter 6 (p.230). Her confusion centres on the disavowal of Indigenous sovereignty that whiteness produces, due to her lack of comprehension about what Indigenous sovereignty may look like. Because the dominant debates about land rights have not included Indigenous cultural connection to land in any detail (Moreton-Robinson 2003b), as observed by Liza, Waterwitch is unable to comprehend that Indigenous people can 'legitimately' claim land even if they are allegedly not current occupants of it, such as Lake Victoria, or that sovereignty could continue after a city has been built over the top of Indigenous connection to land.

This understanding of Indigenous connection to land is reflected in the interviewees who did think that Mabo affected Australian identity. Collin and David, both in their mid to late 70s, share German heritage. Collin lived his life based in and out of Rivertown. A widower, Collin's deceased wife was a Yorta Yorta woman. He left school at the age of 14 years and had one son from a short previous marriage in his late teens. Unlike Citrus and David with university-level education, Collin was from

a labouring background, living most of his working life as a stockman and, like David, Collin's grandfather was a German migrant in the mid 1800s.

When asked about Mabo, Collin said:

No one here thinks the way I do about land rights, I just keep quiet because even if they get the Title, it does not entitle them to the land or anything, even after all they've done to them. They didn't all die of the measles you know (Collin).

Here Collin acknowledges the massacres and removal of Indigenous people that occurred in order to claim Indigenous peoples' land. He links the past injustice against Indigenous people with the continued denial of their contemporary connection to land through a title that allows negotiated access only, which can be vetoed by the federal Government in the 'name of the national interest'. Collin keeps quiet about his views on Native Title. This may be because Native Title is such an emotionally charged topic in rural areas, and one that is not widely supported by non-Indigenous people in his town. This, combined with the fact that Native Title does not amount to much in the form of returning title to Indigenous people and Collins classed position (working class pensioner) and marginal position through his association with an Indigenous family, may mean that for Collin it is better to avoid unnecessary conflict.

David is a retired secondary school teacher and held a similar position to Collin and Liza about Indigenous connection to land.

Interviewer: Did the Mabo judgement have an impact on Australian identity?

David: I thought that was a real watershed, as it was the first time that the original occupation of Australia by the Aborigines was given any legal recognition.

Interviewer: What about the longer history of Indigenous land rights?

David: Yeah, I think the long history of misunderstanding between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people is a misconception of what the two groups understand by land ownership. An awful lot of Australians, particularly country people, still haven't got it into their heads that Aborigines don't own land; it's more that the land owns Aborigines. I've just been reading recently a book that's got some accounts of Batman's purchase of land from Aborigines in Melbourne. They wouldn't have known what on earth he was talking about. I mean, he had an interpreter but asking an Aboriginal to sell you his land would make about as much sense as asking me to sell you my daughter. Aborigines don't – land is not a negotiable commodity. Whereas for Europeans it is. That misunderstanding is the very core of the tragedy between the two nations. Cook thought the Aborigines had no claim on the land because they didn't have any fences. They certainly had demarcation points but Cook couldn't see them, and that's where the tragedy started.

Interviewer: So has the Indigenous fight for land rights ever impacted on your sense of being Australian?

David: I never felt threatened. I mean, my understanding of what land rights mean to Aboriginal people has evolved gradually throughout my life. I certainly didn't understand it as a young person. I only had the

British idea of land ownership. The idea that a cattle station and an Aboriginal group could both own the same section of land, with owning having two totally different meanings never occurred to me. Just as it's never occurred I think to most station people (David).

David's excerpt is an example of a changing relationship with Indigenous sovereignty. A Foucauldian reading of power/knowledge reveals the effect that a hierarchy of knowledge has had both on justice for Indigenous people and on white Australian legislation and concepts of land ownership (see Gordon 1980; Moreton-Robinson 2006b). It is possible that David 'never felt threatened' by Indigenous land rights in Australia because he has always lived in urban areas or rural/remote town setting. Thus, his own personal investment in land through home ownership has not been directly questioned. However, he also states that he had never thought about the possibility of two different meanings about land ownership. Once this possibility was presented to him via the Mabo decision and other land rights cases (as discussed in the introduction pp.20-2), he made a conceptual shift to realise that there are different systems of knowledge. Like most of the interviewees, David held a white patriarchal capitalist view of land ownership. Along with Collin, Liza, Poppy, and possibly Phyllis and Louis, he made the change required to develop a just relationship with Indigenous sovereignty in the context of his emerging awareness of the implications of contemporary expressions of colonialism.

Citrus is a multi-generation settler Australian who is a horticulturalist in his mid 70s. He commented that:

Citrus: Until we understand the philosophy, until we understand that land is an integral part of their thinking, their life, their whole being, whereas we

look upon land as having a title and we buy it and it's part of what we do, but it's not part of what we are, we will never succeed [to address the social disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal people] (Citrus).

All of these excerpts contain similar themes that recognise that Indigenous epistemology and ontology is very different to Western concepts of land and ownership, and that they may even be incommensurable with Western concepts. Citrus, David and Collin indicate that Western understanding of Indigenous connection to land and sovereignty is inadequate and has been the cause of difficulty in relationships between settler Australians, and later migrant groups, and Indigenous peoples in Australia. Many of the interviewees are simply not prepared to conceive different forms of sovereignty that are not the same because it would require them to feel the discomfort of being 'together-in-difference' (Haggis 2004a)

The impossibility of the disembodied white subject is sharply felt when many of the interviewees talk of their confusion about Aboriginal land rights. How do the interviewees see the future of Australia and where do they see Indigenous Australians in their vision of Australia?

Waterwitch thinks that the future of Australia is for people of different backgrounds to mix more:

Interviewer: What do you think the future of Australia will be and how do you fit into that vision?

Waterwitch: We are all Australians. You see, another three generations, we will be totally melded, to use that phrase...it's really coming now, inter-marriage, Greeks and Australians, Italians and Australians. The families are mixing...the first Greek lasses [who] wanted to marry an Australian boy were ostracised by the Greeks. They are just accepted by the Australian family, but that's all gone now...Well, I think the people will have to recognise that they will have to mix more... We went into a restaurant and there were some footy types, and I thought: 'what will they choose?' And they ordered Asian dishes, not steak, so I think we've changed (Waterwitch).

As an upper middle class woman with an international business (with her husband), Waterwitch identifies herself as cosmopolitan with liberal and humanitarian politics. The above excerpt shows the complexity of everyday practices of whiteness that are made invisible through several discourses. For example, the discourse 'we are all Australians' draws on the liberal discourse of sameness with the expectation for both minority migrant groups and settler Australians to mix, particularly through marriage. Her example of the stereotypical Australian male 'footy types' ordering Asian food at a restaurant is, for Waterwitch, evidence of white Australians also mixing more. It is part of the liberal discourse of a tolerant Australia where everyone has to change and 'meld'. Waterwitch thinks that the 'mixing' will occur more in future generations.

Interviewer: What future do you see for Aboriginal people in your vision of Australia?

Waterwitch: Well, they are beginning [to mix]... there are some fine ones who have come on through the education system and they all look up to them and they are holding high offices and doing well. I mean, look at Mandela, who is a magnificent man, why can't our people do it? And they are beginning... it's a numbers game. When we were in South Africa, they all kept asking: what about your blacks? There aren't any really near us because they [Black South Africans] are everywhere [in South Africa] (Waterwitch).

On the future of Australia, Waterwitch spoke of more Indigenous Australians coming through the education system and being in positions of responsibility in the public service. Is the desire for more Indigenous people to be educated in the Western education system so that Indigenous people become more like 'us'? Western education has long been a tool of assimilation to achieve sameness. Waterwitch can only put the lack of an Indigenous equivalent to Nelson Mandela and his contemporaries who now hold high offices as Statesmen in South Africa as a lack of numbers of Indigenous people who have received a full Western education. This shows an interesting paradox in her wish for a 'Nelson Mandela' equivalent, which would require a resistance revolutionary fighter to overthrow the 'post-colonial' government, by force if necessary, in opposition to the assimilation achieved through education. Waterwitch does not mention systemic racism, colonisation or past policies that simultaneously restricted Indigenous access to a complete education, used education as a means for colonising Indigenous epistemologies and removed Aboriginal children of mixed descent as possible reasons for there not being a 'Nelson Mandela' elected into Parliament. She is also unaware of who the

Indigenous activists are. Her focus is on Aboriginal people doing the mixing and gaining an education, which stems from the liberalist discourse of sameness.

A possible reason for Waterwitch's inability to see relation of ruling is that the discourse of settlement and 'the development of Australia' remove the connection of specific subjectivities to relations of ruling that result in the ongoing 'never-quite-post-colonial' space. It results in being 'just confused' and having sympathy 'to a degree' (to refer to the excerpt from Louise in the previous chapter), which maintains racialised privilege and denies Indigenous sovereignty. Like a smoke screen, liberal discourses omit settler Australians from connecting their subject position with the relations of ruling in Australia. Perhaps the space of confusion, however, is the impossible space from which Waterwitch has not turned away, to use Watson's image of the impossibilities being the starting point (Watson 2007a, p.42).

Collin did not seem conflicted about Indigenous people's place in the future.

Interviewer: How do you see the future of Australia?

Collin: Well they could have said they were sorry¹⁷ and saved this whole business, but I think they are frightened they are going to sue them or something, aren't they? After all they [the Australian Government] have done it, goodness me, what they done to them in the early days. They didn't all die of the measles you know. There was a massacre just up here that got covered over. There are three families that live around here that are descendents from that massacre. The people

¹⁷ Here Collin is referring to the former Prime Minister, John Howard, who refused to give an apology on behalf of the federal Government to the Indigenous people who were removed from their families and communities under Federal and State Government policies.

remember that, but the white folk don't even though they are descendents of some of them that did it (Collin).

Collin has developed a counter-narrative to the Government policies toward Aboriginal Australians, to national discourses and, as Citrus stated earlier, the prevailing attitudes of his generation. Most of the interviewees had difficulty with how to understand Indigenous connection to land and Indigenous knowledge about land ownership. Apart from Johnny and Mary, the interviewees did not express overt biological racism. Rather, they were struggling to express concepts without the language to name that which has been the social norm to make invisible (Schech and Haggis 2001, p.143).

Interviewer: How do you see Australia's relationship with Indigenous people?

David: I think our relationship to Indigenous people is still very much what we inherited from the British. The general public are changing their views very slowly. But I think still comes very much from that of the early settlers who had the 'them' or 'us' attitude and that's still pretty strong here in Australia.

Interviewer: What is the 'them or us'?

David: Well, for the early settlers, particularly the ex-convicts and the assisted settlers brought out from England, there was no alternative but to remain in Australia. They couldn't get back to England. The ex-convicts weren't allowed back, the free settlers didn't have the money to get back. So whether they liked it or not, and a lot of them didn't after they got here, they were stuck in Australia and they

regarded the fact that they were stuck here as putting them in opposition with the Aborigines and they were quite determined that they were going to win. And they did (David).

David again refers to the early history in Australia where the British administrators ignored the instructions from the Crown to negotiate with any peoples who may be found to populate the new lands. He sees the connection with how Australian Indigenous peoples were treated from the first days of British arrival. The narratives that David notes concur with Moreton-Robinson's (2003b) argument that the colonials did not go home (discussed on p.186). The narratives place the British convicts and British settlers as having no option to return to Britain, or at least to depart Australia, and so placing themselves in competition against the Aboriginal people whose land they usurped, thus being responsible for Aboriginal dispossession.

The interview with David continued:

Interviewer: What place do you think Indigenous people have in your vision of Australia's future?

David: Well, they should have a special place. They are one of the many ethnic groups but they are the original owners of this land and that should be recognised. First, it should be recognised in the constitution. It should be recognised in the general life of Australia. There's a tendency on the part of an awful lot of Australians to regard Indigenous people as being unproductive, worthless and a burden on the nation. And people who say that need to remember that every cent

of every dollar generated in the Australian economy comes from the use of land or other resources that were taken, in my opinion immorally and illegally, from the Indigenous people (David).

Thus David, like Collin, Poppy and Josh, differentiates between multiculturalism as an approach to deal with difference and Indigenous peoples unique position as the original owners of the land and other resources were taken immorally and illegally from them. It is of interest to this chapter that David differentiates between an acknowledgement of what he calls 'ethnic diversity' and the special position that Indigenous Australians have as the first custodians of the land. As the first owners of the land, Indigenous Australians require a different approach than one merely of being 'another cultural group'. In David's view, the Australian constitution should recognise Indigenous people as the first owners of the land, and that this special location should be a part of Australia's future. Further, he states that this needs to be enacted in the 'general life of Australia'. So beyond legislation, such a vision requires a different approach to relations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter is the final analysis chapter in the thesis. It drew upon the empirical material from interviews the researcher conducted in rural Australia with people who identified as white Australian. Consistent with the thesis, the analysis in all three chapters is placed in the context of Australia's history of colonialism. Two key themes emerged from four areas of query in the analysis of this chapter.

The first two areas of query related to whether the interviewees' think that Australia is a white country, and secondly what circumstances are necessary for them to be aware of their white subjectivity. The first theme is the whiteness of Australia as a nation, and the interviewees' closeness/distance to that centre. The majority of interviewees' viewed Australia as a multicultural country. Dominico thought that Australia is a multicultural country with Anglo Saxon (or British) values still held at the centre of Australian culture. Some interviewees', such as Patch and Tyrone, expressed concern that Australia may no longer be a white country and felt that Australia's white centre, and their position in it, may be threatened. Jewlizard and Collin thought that Australia is a white country in terms of power. The analysis showed that everyday experiences of white Australians' embodied subjectivity ranged from being aware that they are white in some circumstances, through to never thinking about it. The variation in the responses indicates the fluidity of whiteness at the level of the nation and the respondents' relationship to the white centre. The comfort which interviewees from non-British cultural backgrounds felt about multicultural Australian identities could support the argument that Australian multiculturalism is a reflection of the post WWII migrants, with many of the current generation (including the interviewees in this study) identifying with white Australian identities (though not necessarily British). Their European-ness has enabled their acceptance into white Australia, producing multiple manifestations of whiteness rather than a 'monolithic' one.

The third and fourth area of query focused on whether significant native title cases, such as Mabo, had any impact on Australian identity, and finally whether the

respondents had a vision of the future of Australia and Indigenous peoples position in that future. A minority of the respondents felt that landmark native title cases such as Mabo had any impact on Australian identities. The second theme is the ambivalence of the majority of interviewees' in terms of Indigenous sovereignty and the future vision they have for Indigenous people and Australia. A minority of the interviewees had thought about the future involvement of Indigenous people in Australia's future. These responses indicate that Indigenous people's position in Australia is a low concern to the majority of participants. Most of the interviewees felt ambiguous toward their relationship with Indigenous issues. This means that the 'everyday' white Australians in this study may not contribute to the transformation of relations between coloniser and colonised in terms of Sandoval's model. In everyday narratives and interactions, the dominant theme continues to be relations of ruling between white Australians and Indigenous sovereignty. A minority of the respondents could present an understanding of Indigenous concepts of land and their relationship to Indigenous people as white Australians. These counter-narratives are also examples of the fluidity of whiteness, and the possibility for future relations to be different.

The chapter argues that white and non-white Australian identities and sense of belonging are built on different histories of migration that are reliant on Indigenous dispossession. As such, white Australian identities' are formed as relations-of-ruling in everyday narratives (see Chapter three, p.79). Moreton-Robinson argues that Australia has always been "a multicultural society long before migrants arrived" with "over 500 language groups [holding] title to land prior to colonization" (2003b, p.31). Thus, all relationships in Australia can be grounded in relation with

Indigenous sovereignty. This means that the way in which the Australian nation, and the multitude of non-Indigenous people who live upon the land now called Australia, conceptualises itself can start in relation with Indigenous sovereignty. To do this means turning the focus, as Moreton-Robinson and Watson eloquently write, to the problem of colonialism, the problem of white patriarchal sovereignty and the problem of whiteness that, this chapter argues, prevents non-Indigenous Australians from ‘falling into Indigenous sovereignty’ (Nicoll 2004, p.30). A focus on non-Indigenous relationships with Indigenous sovereignty could enable non-colonial relations in Australia and this will be the centre of chapter 8 as the conclusion of this thesis.

8. Conclusion: Australian identities in relation with Indigenous sovereignty

...I hope...we will be looking back from a time which gives recognition to all Aboriginal people's sovereignty of laws, and coming to know that the limit placed upon us in this time now, that of impossibility was itself an illusion, a trauma brought upon us by an age of violence. So yes, I am hopeful and a believer in future cycles of humanity relating to each other as well as the natural world, but there is much work to do and many shifts and changes that need to emerge. We have to begin here, right now! (Watson 2007a, p.43).

In the Australian context of failed colonial modernity, singularity necessarily gets caught in continuing colonisation, either by extinguishing the indigenous claim to ontology of country or in appropriating and conflating indigeneity to 'fit' the 'settler' and 'disappear' the white. Instead of sameness, I think a vision of 'together in difference' might be more productive, a together-ness based on the recognition of incommensurability (Haggis 2007, p.319)

8.1 Introduction

The original motivation for this thesis grew from the unsettling position of white Australian identity and living on stolen land whose peoples have lived here since their beginning and is premised on an assumption that Indigenous sovereignty has not been ceded (Pratt 2003; Tully 2000). Starting with the words of Gagadju Elder, Neidjie (see Introduction p.8) a dialogue about the colonising nature of white Australia, as nation, culture and identity ensued around the counterpoint of Australian Indigenous sovereignty. Rather than seeking to move 'beyond a white Australia', Neidje's teaching provides one of many Indigenous sovereign contexts from which to reflect the research question: how do people who identify as white Australian construct their identity vis-à-vis Indigenous sovereignty? Australia's colonial history provided the historical context for the question and the research

approach examined the way that Australian identities and nation are discursively constructed and raced. The discussion included contemporary scholarship on critical race and whiteness studies to provide the theoretical framework for the analysis of empirical data that is rooted in its context.

Grounded in Australia's colonial context, this thesis set out to comment on a number of subsidiary questions. Do people who self-identify as white Australian experience themselves as raced? What does the term multiculturalism mean to white Australians and how do white Australians deal with difference? How do white Australians relate to Indigenous sovereignty? What do all of these discussions tell us about contemporary Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations and what is the future of those relationships? This thesis has addressed the questions through critical race theoretical approaches that define whiteness as site specific, yet pervasive in many of its assumptions (Ang 2001; Frankenberg 1993; Hage 1998; Hartigan Jr 1997b; Sandoval 1997; Schech and Haggis 2004). The discussion occurred through analysing the empirical data gathered from interviews with rural people who self-identify as white Australians.

The original contribution that this thesis offers is threefold. First, it is an empirically based study of how rural people construct their national identity through whiteness in a particular time and place. This thesis adds to the established body of empirically based research on the social construction of raced Australian identities. Of primary importance is the way that this thesis enables a new understanding of the complexity and contradictions in the social construction of white Australian identities. Second, the analysis of the construction of white Australian identities complicates the

ambivalence of white Australian subjectivity toward their raced position of privilege. Third, the discussion about Indigenous land rights and the incarceration and deportation of asylum seekers reveals the ambivalence of white Australian respondents toward their position of racialised privilege and the dispossession of others. Ambivalence, difficulty and refusal to connect with Indigenous sovereignty displayed by many of the interviewees demonstrate the contributions of this empirical research to the field of critical race and whiteness studies.

White Australia deals with difference through the discourses of tolerance and acceptance promulgated by state multiculturalism. Colonial social and political history informed the terms of multiculturalism in Australia and the raced nature of white national identity maintains its position of privilege. Australian narratives of multiculturalism focus on culture and did not develop a critical vocabulary to comment on the disadvantage and privilege bestowed by whiteness. The respondents' everyday lives display the privileged position of white Australian identities through enacting Hage's notion of governance, as discussed in chapter 5. The position of governance was further enacted using Orientalist discourse in the respondents' views about 'middle eastern' or Asian asylum seekers where narratives conflated asylum seekers with illegal immigrants and potential terrorists. The Orientalist national narratives reinforce white possession of the nation and remain invested in white patriarchal sovereignty.

Debates about multiculturalism and Indigenous sovereignty have been predominantly separate from each other until attempts were finally made to change this at the turn of the century (Pratt, et al. 2001). The discourses of multiculturalism are, by nature,

discourses of migration. The story of non-Indigenous migration counters Indigenous sovereignty through the teaching of Gagadju Elder, Neidjie. The first stanza (see p.7 of the Introduction), in relation to this thesis, speaks of connection to land and to country. Neidjie speaks of his sovereignty as an Indigenous person and as a Gagadju Elder. His words instruct the reader that his children inherit his ontology of specific tracts of land through Gagadju epistemology that is site specific. Thus, Indigenous ontology and epistemology is inalienable to Neidjie and his descendents. On the one hand, he does not exclude non-Indigenous people from sharing the public knowledge of his connection to land. Neidjie published his words to share his ontology and epistemology with those who will heed it. They are words of hope, like Watson's hope in the quote on p.294, for future relationships that are just. On the other hand, his words are congruent with Moreton-Robinson (as discussed on p.75) who contends that the belonging of the post-colonial subject ties to migrancy, thus is not of this land, and is incommensurable with Indigenous sovereignty.

The post-colonial subject has ontological and epistemological limitations to what they can share with Indigenous knowledge and ways of connecting to land. The concept of 'ontological belonging' that Moreton-Robinson writes of is reflected in Neidjie's teaching. In the second quote at the start of this chapter p.294, Haggis invites non-Indigenous respectful engagement with Indigenous sovereignty through being 'together in difference' to acknowledge the incommensurability that limits the white subject and invites the white subject to resist the temptation to avoid the discomforts of whiteness or to try to become indigenous (Haggis 2007, p.319). It means to remain uncomfortable and un-settled. The implication of this thesis for critical whiteness studies is that the empirical data demonstrates the gap for many of

the respondents' engagement with Indigenous sovereignty. Further, this research data reveals the ambivalence that the many of the respondents express about future relations with Indigenous people.

Neidjie tells the reader to understand their subjectivity in relation to the country on which they are living and its people (Gagadju) and its laws. This empirical study sought to contextualise the debates about white Australian identities in relationship with Indigenous sovereignty. The interview material showed that white Australians construct their identities in ways that are complex, contradictory and dislocated. The analysis in chapters 5, 6 and 7 showed that many narratives that shape peoples lives in ways that benefit and oppress in shifting power relations construct Australian identities. In the context of race, the analysis showed that whiteness is variable in its formation and invested in patriarchal sovereignty. This complicates the formation of equitable relationships between differently raced subjectivities because of the power derived from relations of ruling enacted in the everyday through to national narratives through to state legislation. On the one hand, multiculturalism does not disrupt the privilege gained from whiteness, which obscures race. On the other hand, the way forward is not through appropriating Indigenous ontology and epistemology nor is it from a claim to be 'post-race'. Rather, it starts with diversity in relationship with Indigenous sovereign subjects. A genuine relationship of equality that consists of a dialogue that knows its own limitations can become an everyday experience. This is evident through the counter-narratives in some of the interviews including Collin, David, Lisa, Poppy, Josh and Citrus.

The counter-narratives, and glimpses of connection with the idea of Indigenous sovereignty, that some of the interviewees reveal also indicate present non-colonial terms of relating with Indigenous sovereignty in the every day. A non-colonial present in Australia is reliant upon an ongoing decolonisation of white Australia in relation to Indigenous Australia. Sandoval's 'methodology of the oppressed' (discussed in Chapter 3, pp.88-9 and Chapter 6) includes the interwoven technologies of Fanon and Barthes, includes "(1) reading signs of power; (2) deconstructing them when necessary; (3) remaking these signs in the interests of renegotiating power; (4) commitment to an ethical position through which all signs and their meanings are organized in order to bring about egalitarian power relations; and (5) the focused mobilization of the four previous technologies in differential movement though mind, body, social body, sign, and meaning" (Sandoval 1997, p.101). Through the 'methodology of the oppressed', white Australians are marked in their racialised subjectivity in terms of power relationships that stem from Australia's colonial history that is reliant on Indigenous dispossession. When the framework is applied, it marks the signs of power granted through whiteness that is not natural or normal. This will address the ambivalence and denial demonstrated by some of the interviewees. This process means that the deconstruction of supremacy and colonising relations is in public view. The signs, including the negotiation of sovereignty and identity are on ethical, non-colonial terms. All of these technologies manifest 'differentially' in epistemology, ontology, social body and everyday interactions. A critical analysis of racialisation in Australian identities *and* a focus on non-Indigenous relations with Indigenous sovereignty is fundamental to creating a non-colonial present and future.

Since the interviews took place, the Rudd Labor Australian Government made a formal apology to the Stolen Generation (refer to p.19). The then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd¹⁸ extended the ‘Sorry Statement’ to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people forcibly removed from their families under Government legislation. Media televised the apology live across the nation. There were a large gathering of Indigenous people, their friends and families, to hear and witness a moment in Australian history that many people thought would never come. Overall, the then PM Kevin Rudd eloquently delivered a deeply moving apology. Australia, as a democratic society, had come to stand, for a moment, in the impossible space invoked by Watson. In terms of this study, the apology addresses the points raised by some opposing respondents who were concerned about legal liability incurred by the Australian Government if they made the apology. Many participants believed that previous Governments had not made the apology because they were not personally responsible for the removals and because they did not want compensation paid out of taxpayers’ money. Future research could investigate whether Australians who did not support an apology have had their concerns allayed. What underpinned those concerns? Further research could also explore whether the apology has achieved the desired outcome for those who supported it and if it had any effect on how they construct their identity in Australia. Did the apology have any impact on the way that non-Indigenous Australians think about their relationship with Indigenous people as sovereign subjects?

¹⁸ In a leadership challenge, Kevin Rudd was replaced in June 2010 as the Labor Prime Minister by the Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard. Prime Minister Julia Gillard is Australia’s first female Prime Minister.

Many of the interviewees held limited knowledge of Australian history informed by Indigenous experience. The exceptions were interviewees who had relationships with Indigenous people (such as Collin, Liza and Poppy) and those who studied colonial history at university since the 1960s (such as David, Josh, and Liza). Even younger participants (such as Bryan and Austin) who attended school after the introduction of Australian history into the curriculum held limited knowledge of Australia's colonial history and they did not address this gap through university studies. The deficit in non-Indigenous Australians understanding of the colonial history and its role in contemporary relations evident in Chapter 6 and 7 limits their ability to participate in a non-colonial present. It limits their ability to deconstruct colonising narratives that inform their everyday interactions with Indigenous sovereignty, creating a great divide in Australian relations. It feeds ambivalence and denial of supremacist narratives. Furthermore, it limits the vocabulary available to critique race in everyday speech. The findings refute any claims that there is or has been a "black arm band approach" in teaching history with "too much" focus placed on Indigenous experiences of Australian colonial history. Rather, the findings support the argument for a national standard of primary and secondary school curriculum that incorporates Indigenous history in particular and an Indigenous presence more broadly and would support the development of a critical vocabulary of the social construction of race. These two strategies are vital to equip non-Indigenous Australians with the tools necessary to construct a non-colonial present and future.

Furthermore, the deficit in knowledge about Australia's colonial history seems to impact upon the participants comprehension of sovereignty and their vision of future Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations in Australia. Participants, such as Patch and

Tyrone, did not support Indigenous people exercising their sovereignty if it restricted non-Indigenous movements or access to land in Australia. For example, they were not happy that the traditional owners of Uluru do not want people to climb the rock because it is a sacred area. Patch and Tyrone believed that “it belongs to all of us and they shouldn’t keep us out”. Thus, most participants maintain white patriarchal views of sovereignty that exhibit white possession. Indigenous sovereignty threatens the privileged access to all land in Australia granted to them through white sovereignty. White possession is guised in their objection to “being kept out”. In another example, David’s understanding changed of Indigenous people’s connection to land from his university studies in Australian history in the 1960’s. His understanding changed again after the Wik decision when he realised for the first time that there could be different kinds of sovereignty exercised over the same land, such as the limited co-existence of Native Title and pastoral leases. It had simply never occurred to him that co-existence is possible in these terms. There is a pathway to equitable Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations for participants who accept the possibility of Indigenous sovereignty and its incommensurability with white sovereignty.

Few interviewees thought about the role of Indigenous people in their understanding of the nation. One contemporary impact is that the Australian Government can offer the Apology to Stolen Generations in isolation with no expectation of placing Australia’s relationship with Indigenous sovereignty on the national agenda. There is no ensuing discussion of a Treaty on the national agenda, nor of Indigenous land rights or compensation. Thus, the analysis of white Australian identities reveals that a focus on identity, self-formation and belonging maintains patriarchal white sovereignty. There is no impetus to engage with Indigenous people as sovereign

peoples. There is no pressure for the Anglo British core of white Australian identities to deconstruct and emerge anew with equitable power relations. The way forward is to attend to equitable relationships divested of white sovereignty. This will enable a critical approach to building non-colonial and equitable relationships that engage with Indigenous sovereignty. A national discussion about Treaty and open dialogue about Indigenous land rights will indicate the commitment of everyday Australians to be in relationship with Indigenous sovereignty in a non-colonial present.

Appendices

1. The respondents' profile

Alan

Alan was born in the 1930s to a family of wealthy Anglo Australian landowners. His parents moved in the elite social circles of the local area. Alan also runs an internationally successful agricultural business and holds president and chairperson positions on international representative bodies related to his business. He is single and lives in the house where he grew up in Rivertown.

Alex

Alex is a woman in her early 40s. She is a teacher at the primary school and is married with two teenage children also at local schools in Rivertown. Alex grew up and completed her studies in the capital city. Her parents are both Greek migrants. Like Dominico, Poppy, Liza, Louis and Phyllis, Alex did not speak any English on her first day at school, and there were not English classes so she taught herself English.

Austin

Austin's father was Australian born to British migrants and his mother migrated from West Germany with her family as a teenager. They had Austin in 1978, in the capital city, and he grew up within a five-minute car drive's distance from where he was born. Both of Austin's parents are professionals. Austin is an overseas aid worker and has a graduate degree. Austin was interviewed in Rolling Hills.

Bryan

Bryan, born in Rolling Hills in 1982, identified himself as middle class by virtue of his mother's profession and their location in the upper socio-economic grouping. His father was a courier when he met Bryan's mother. Bryan grew up in Rolling Hills attending the local public schools and now works in hospitality. He has year 10 level education.

Citrus and Waterwitch

Citrus and Waterwitch are married and had three children, one deceased. They were interviewed separately, and live in Rivertown, where they run an internationally successful agricultural business and also do a large amount of consultancy work both nationally and internationally. Citrus was born in Rivertown in 1929. His parents were both Australian-born of Anglo descent and his father held one of the most powerful positions in the area, moving in similar circles to Alan. Waterwitch is married to Citrus and was also born in 1929. Her mother was a migrant from France, her Australian-born father having met her when fighting in World War I in France. Her mother moved to Australia to be married and they started out as growers with a fruit block on land granted by the government to returned soldiers. After a disastrous three years, as with most of these blocks, her father obtained work with the Department of Agriculture as a fruit inspector. Citrus has a tertiary degree and Waterwitch has year 10 level education.

Collin

Collin was born in 1929 to German migrants in Rivertown and left school at the age of 14 years to be a labourer and, later, to do stock work. He drove cattle from Rivertown to Queensland and back again. Collin continued to do various labouring jobs, worked as a stockman and later, upon living with an Aboriginal woman (when their marriage was still not legal), bought a farm that they both worked on. At the time of the interview Collin lived as a widower in his home in Rivertown and relies on the senior pension for his income. Collin was very involved in the historical society and local museum and ongoing family relationships with his family in-law. He has one son from a short marriage when he was nineteen years old, who is living in the same area and is married with children. Collin said his son has difficulty relating to him because of their very different political and social frameworks. Collin described his son as right wing and not comfortable with Collin's Aboriginal in-law family.

David

David was born in the early 1930s in the capital city of a different state than where the interviews took place. His grandfather migrated from Germany in the late 1800's and his mother's family were multi-generation Australian Scottish descendents. His

father was an engineer and lecturer and his mother came from the upper social circles in the capital city of the state the interviews were conducted in. David's family lived in a working class area in his early childhood, but moved to a middle class suburb due to his mothers 'distaste' for the working class area. They lived in a house that had servant quarters (where he slept as a child), although there were no servants due to the Depression and then WWII. His mother had grown up having servants working for her family. He was a teacher for 45 years and worked all over Australia, in regional, remote and isolated areas. He has two graduate degrees and a graduate degree in management. Now retired, he is full time carer for his wife who has a degenerative disease. He has two adult children, one overseas and one in Australia. He was interviewed in Rivertown.

Dan and Shamus

Dan and Shamus are self described Anglo Australians and are brothers who grew up on small, poor farms in rural towns in New South Wales and South Australia. Their mother did not undertake paid work after marriage. Their father did not have any particular qualifications and worked in many blue collar and labouring positions. Dan has a learning disability and was constantly ostracised and involved in lots of fights throughout his childhood. They were born in the early to mid 1960s.

Dan and Shamus share a house together that Shamus purchased from government housing. They both rely on pensions for income. Dan receives a disability pension due to his learning disabilities and Shamus is on a pension from the Australian armed forces. Dan is very involved in volunteering with many different charity groups and plays many musical instruments.

Len

Len's family was perhaps the poorest out of the interviewees, living for ten years in a tent in the workers' campsite on the outskirts of Red Ocean during his childhood. His family were re-located to Red Ocean by the Government as a part of the war-effort to work in the steel mill and as labour for building the warships during World War II. Len left school at the age of eleven to work in the steel mill where his father worked, building the steel Navy warships. Len continued labouring jobs until he

received the pension and continues to live with his British wife in the caravan park at Red Ocean. They are both on a senior pension and are very proud of their permanent spot in the caravan park, surrounded by potted bulbs and ferns.

Dominico

Dominico (translates to Sunday in Italian) is the daughter of migrants from Southern Italy, who were also growers. The family's networks were Italian and mostly growers but also teachers, secretaries, lawyers and doctors. Dominica's father migrated in 1966, returning to Italy to meet his wife as arranged by his family before returning to Australia.

Jewlizard

Jewlizard was born to a wood machinist and a store assistant who were both multi-generational Anglo Celtic Australians. Her mother also stopped her paid work in the general store upon being married. Her father did his training as a wood machinist during the depression and never received his papers, so he then became a butcher and was out of work for most of the Depression. Jewlizard's father would ride his bike from one town to another to work on his brother's farm during harvest. The family moved to Red Ocean when Jewlizard was ten years old, in 1947, where she has lived ever since. Jewlizard married and had a large extended multi-cultural family.

Joan

Joan was interviewed with Patch and Tyrone. She joined the interview towards the end of the session after the background information had been given. She is aged in her 50s and lived in Rolling Hills.

Johnny

Johnny's grandfather was Finnish, and the rest of her forebears were multi-generational Anglo Australian. Her family was cash-poor and she was born on a small block of land outside the capital city in the 1930s. Her father and mother could not afford the loan repayments on their house, so were given a block of land to live on. All those born during the Depression years and who lived through the subsequent rations of World War II remember rations and restrictions on food and the lack of access to petrol and even requiring food coupons. However, there is a

clear class distinction made by those who identified as middle class and who had parents with professions. Johnny currently lives on her own in Rivertown.

Josh

Josh was born in 1975 in the capital city, both his parents were professionals and his grandparents also owned property in the capital city in addition to their own homes. Josh remembers a comfortable life economically, but experienced ostracism throughout his schooling due, as he realized in his teenage years, to his sexuality. Josh is a doctoral student in social sciences. He was interviewed in Rolling Hills.

Liza and Poppy

Liza and Poppy are sisters and the daughters of Greek migrants who were also employed by the timber mill and lived at the Bluff outside Rolling Hills. The family later moved to Rolling Hills. Liza, Poppy, Alex, Louis and Phyllis are all children of Greek migrants and spoke only Greek when they started school. There were no English classes conducted for children who spoke languages other than English at that time and they all had to pick English up themselves while they were at school. Louis and Phyllis' parents were growers in the Riverland. Both Liza and Poppy hold graduate degrees. Liza is a teacher and Poppy a community worker. Liza was interviewed in Rolling Hills and Poppy was interviewed in Rivertown.

Mary

Mary, born in 1953, identified as middle class and grew up in the capital city in a working-class area. Her family owned and privately built their own home, as did all the families on her side of the street. Across the road were government provided homes, with a definite barrier between families: 'my mother always felt, you know, we're better than all those people, don't play with them. But you did anyway...at school you were all just jumbled in together'. Mary's father was an artisan in the glass industry in the 1950s and 1960s and was on a low income. The family was quite poor with the mother, who was an office worker until she married, making all of the family's clothes to save money. Her father had come from a farming background and all of her extended family farmed in the Rivertown area. Class distinction is made by Mary's family to distinguish themselves as workers (even if living with limited surplus funds), compared to those who relied on welfare. Mary

holds a graduate degree and funds the family business and has five children. Mary did a lot of travelling and lived overseas prior to being married. Although extremely involved in her children's life and activities, Mary does not define herself through her family (i.e. as married and a mother of five children), but through her interest in local history. She was interviewed in Rivertown.

Optus

Optus came from a small family farm near Wellington, New South Wales, where she was born in 1936. When she was ten, Optus was sent to hospital for some time with an illness. During this time her father died, the farm was sold and her family all moved into town. She remembers her father's social network being the Editor of the local newspaper and the School Inspector. Both of her parents were multi-generational Australian from Cornwall on her paternal side and Wales on her maternal line. Optus remembers her primary school years on the farm and then in the town with her three siblings as being very happy and content. Her mother did have to trade farm goods and use coupons for essentials due to war restrictions, but Optus does not have any negative memories of these times. Optus works in a public service position. Her children all live in the capital city and, while she does not want to leave Red Ocean, she is contemplating moving to the capital city as she gets older to be closer to her children and her grandchildren.

Patch

Patch was born in Rolling Hills in the early 1950s and has a brother. Patch's brother was very ill as a child and Patch had a lot of responsibility placed on her as the older sister to care for her brother and to help with family tasks, such as grocery shopping and house-work. Her father was a baker and her parents opened one of the first bakeries in the area. Patch's father was a well known local working at the local sawmill, at the bookmakers on the weekend for local horse races and later at the paper mill. Her mother worked (as a nurse) until she was married. Patch has high school education, is married with children.

Phyllis and Louis

Phyllis and Louis are married and both their parents were 'growers' in the Rivertown area. They both work the farm that belonged to Louis' parents and have external

jobs to supplement the farming income. Louis' parents still live in the original house on the same property, and Louis and Phyllis live in the house built for them across the paddock. Phyllis works part-time at their children's primary school and Louis works part-time at the funeral parlour. They have three children who attend the local primary school, which teaches Greek as a large component of its studies.

Ronbow

Ronbow was born at the Bluff outside Rolling Hills. The timber workers all lived in the area where she grew up and her parents were both British migrants. She identifies as British rather than Australian, even though she was Australian-born. She is high school educated and works in an administrative position in a public service job. She is married with children.

Tony and Louise

Tony grew up on a fruit farm in Rivertown and left home to join the Air Force when he was sixteen years old. He lived all over Australia and also had international postings. He retired from the Air Force in his 50s, moving back to the Rivertown area with his second wife at the time of the interview. Louise is his younger sister. She and her other siblings remained on the fruit farm as farmers while completing their schooling. Their parents were both multi-generational Anglo Celtic Australians. As with all of the small family-owned farms, it was very hard work and they survived on low incomes. Louise moved to the capital city to attend teachers' college and was also married at this time. She moved back to the same area with her husband where they are currently growers on farmland leased from the State Government. Louise continues to teach full time at the local school. They identified as middle-class by virtue of their own education and employment.

Tyrone

Tyrone was born in Perth, Western Australia, in 1953. Her mother undertook unpaid domestic duties in her role as wife and mother. Her father was a banker. They lived in a low-socio-economic area in the capital city, then her father was transferred to Rolling Hills and then into the capital city with various jobs. Tyrone's mother then took up work part time for a telephone answering service. She was living in Rolling

Hills at the time of the interview. Tyrone married a man from the capital city who worked in the same bank as her father, having two children. They were transferred to Rivertown and then down to Rolling Hills. That marriage ended and Tyrone remarried, having two more children. At the time of the interview, Tyrone had lived in Rolling Hills for 25 years, during which she worked part-time in the family business and in a bank, also part-time. Her relationship to the economy has not really changed since childhood, still predominantly defined through her relationship to her husband's and her own part-time work.

Gabrielle

Gabrielle is female and in her 50s with secondary school-level education. She is employed by the local council.

Appendix 2: Introduction Letter to respondents



FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

ADELAIDE • AUSTRALIA

Faculty of Social Sciences

Centre for Development Studies

Dr Jane Haggis

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Australia

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Fax: (61 8) 8201 3521

Email: jane.haggis@flinders.edu.au

Date

Dear

This letter is to introduce Catherine Koerner who is a postgraduate student from the Centre for Development Studies in the School of Social Sciences at Flinders University. She will produce her student card, which has a photograph, as proof of identity.

Catherine Koerner is undertaking research leading to a thesis and the production of a book or other publications on the subject of how Australians express their sense of belonging or exclusion in Australia, and their sense of identity in everyday life. She is interested to find out how people identify as being Australian and how they make sense of ongoing debates, about migration, multiculturalism, identity and reconciliation.

Thank you very much for volunteering your time to assist in this project, by granting an interview which touches upon certain aspects of this topic. No more than three hours would be required: two hours for the interview, and on another occasion a further hour for reading and amending the transcript of this interview, if you wish to do so.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting report or other publications. You are, of course, entirely free to discontinue your participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

Since Catherine intends to make a tape recording of the interview, she will seek your consent, on the attached form, to record the interview. The transcription of this recording will be used in preparing Catherine's PhD thesis, and other publications, on condition that your name or identity

is not revealed, and will be made available to other researchers working in the same topic area on the same condition. It may be necessary to make the recording available to secretarial assistants for transcription, in which case you may be assured that such persons will be advised of the requirement that your name or identity not be revealed and that the confidentiality of the material is respected and maintained. In order to ensure confidentiality, you will be asked to choose a code name, which will be used throughout the interview and the research process. At all times in the research process the code name will be used by secretaries.

Any enquires you may have concerning this project should be directed to us at the above address, or by telephone: Jane Haggis on (08) 8201 2623, fax (08) 8201 3521 or e-mail jane.haggis@flinders.edu.au or to Susanne Schech on (08) 8201 2489 or e-mail susanne.schech@flinders.edu.au

Catherine Koerner can be contacted by phone (08)8201 5115 or e-mail catherine.koerner@flinders.edu.au

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee. The Secretary of this Committee can be contacted on (08) 8201-3513, fax (08) 8201-3756, e-mail Lesley.Wyndram@flinders.edu.au

Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Jane Haggis, Associate Director and Dr Susanne Schech, Director, Centre for Development Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Flinders University of South Australia

Appendix 3: Consent form for participants:

CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEW

I

being over the age of 18 years hereby consent to participate as requested in the interview for the research project on **Australian Identities**

1. I have read the information provided.
2. Details of procedures and any risks have been explained to my satisfaction.
3. I agree to my information and participation being recorded on tape.
4. I am aware that I should retain a copy of the Information Sheet and Consent Form for future reference.
5. I understand that:
 - I may not directly benefit from taking part in this research.
 - I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and am free to decline to answer particular questions.
 - While the information gained in this study will be published as explained, I will not be identified, and individual information will remain confidential.
 - I may ask that the recording be stopped at any time, and that I may withdraw at any time from the session or the research without disadvantage.
6. I agree/do not agree* to the tape/transcript* being made available to other researchers who are not members of this research team, but who are judged by the research team to be doing related research, on condition that my identity is not revealed.

**Delete as appropriate*

Participant's signature.....Date.....

I certify that I have explained the study to the volunteer and consider that she/he understands what is involved and freely consents to participation.

Researcher's signature.....Date.....

NB. Two signed copies should be obtained. The copy retained by the researcher may then be used for authorisation of Items 7 and 8, as appropriate.

7. I, the participant whose signature appears below, have read a transcript of my participation and agree to its use by the researcher as explained.

Participant's signature.....Date.....

8. I, the participant whose signature appears below, have read the researcher's report and agree to the publication of my information as reported.

Participant's signature.....Date.....

Appendix 4: Interview schedule:

Australian Identities: Interview Questions

Part One – Bibliographical Details

1. Start by talking a bit about yourself – name, age, where born, job you do
2. Talk about your family background – where parents born, where do immediate family live now, where were grandparents born, where live now.
3. Languages spoken in family – how often, fluency
4. How would you describe your identity? What aspects of your identity are important to you? Why?

Part Two –Roots

Move on now to reflect on life when you were growing up and your memories of it

1. What memories do you have of life there?

Where did you grow up?

Where did you go to school?

What kinds of people did you mix with?

Culture - How would you describe the area you lived in? What kinds of things did you do in your area when you went out to socialise or relax? Did you feel part of a community?

Class – What kind of work did you, your family, the people in your neighbourhood do?

Ethnicity – Did people from different cultures or backgrounds live in your area? Are members of your immediate and extended family from different cultures or backgrounds?

Religion – Did religion play a part in your life or your community?

Gender – What was it like being a girl/boy when you were growing up? What messages/images did you receive about gender roles? How did you relate to these messages/images? Did this affect your identity? How do the images relate to identity in Australia today?

Local – Did you travel eg: go on holidays much? Did you travel in Australia/Overseas? Whereabouts? Did you live in other places? Australia/Overseas?

Did you feel like you belonged/ were excluded from belonging to the place where you grew up? What things made you feel like you belonged/did not belong to this place?

Did you see yourself belonging to your region/state/the nation? When and in what ways?

2. When you were growing up, were you aware of yourself and/or your community as belonging to a 'race eg did you see yourself as 'black', 'white'.

When did you become aware of this? How?

Did you see Australia as a country with a distinctive racial identity?

How would you have described Australia's position in the world?

Did you know much about Australia's history in relation to European colonialism? When did you become aware of this?

3. Where are you from? How do you answer that question when people ask you 'where are you from?' Do you get asked that question? What does this question mean to you?

4. Do you know whom the Indigenous people are from the area/s where you grew up? What kind of relationship did you have with the Indigenous people from that area when you were growing up? Did you

know any Indigenous people who were from that place? (ie was it their 'country?').

5. Have you moved from the place/s where you grew up?

Do you still have family there?

Do you visit? Do they visit?

Would you say you have kept any traits that may be distinctive of the place/area where you grew up?

6. Why did you leave? Do you see yourself ever going back? For what types of reasons? Do you feel connected to this place/area? In what ways? Is it a part of how you see your identity? In what ways/how?

Part Three – Current Life

1. Where do you feel at home? How?

What kinds of people do you mix with?

What kinds of things do you do to socialise?

How do you describe the area you live in?

What work do the people in your area do?

Do people from different cultures or backgrounds live in your area?

Do you spend most of your time in your local community, where you live? Do you travel around much? Live in different places?

2. Do you consider yourself Australian? In what ways? When? How? What aspects of Australian identity are important to you? In what ways?
3. Do you know whom the Indigenous people are where you live now? Do you have any connection/relationship with them?
4. Do you see yourself as white or non-white?

What do you think it means to be white/non-white in Australia?

Do you think it differs from being white/non-white in other places overseas? Does it differ in other places in Australia?

5. Do you see Australia as a white country?

Do you see it as a country that could mainly be described as white in ethnic or racial terms?

We hear a lot about multiculturalism, what does that term mean to you?
How do you think people from different backgrounds relate to each other in Australia?

6. How do you see Australia's position in the world?

Australia's role in the region, relationship to neighbours, old allies?

7. What is your awareness of Australia's history? Where did this understanding come from?

8. We hear a lot of terms now to describe the different groups of people in Australia. What terms do you use for yourself?

Do you see yourself as a local? As ethnic? As multicultural?

What terms do you hear? Who is included in those categories do you think? Who is excluded?

9. How has the 'face' of Australia changed in your lifetime? What did it mean to be an Australian when you were a child? What were the key images for Australian identity? Has this changed? Who is included/excluded in these images? How did you relate to them? What are they now? How do you relate to them?

10. What do you think the future of Australia will be? How do you fit into this vision?

11. Over the past fifty years there have been changes that relate to how Australia sees itself as a nation - What changes in Australian society have most influenced you/affected you?

Referendum giving Aboriginal people voting rights

Arrival of the boat people

1988 Bicentenary

Mabo judgement

Indigenous land rights

Pauline Hanson's election and One Nation

Migration laws

Border control

Asylum seekers generally

Explore views on republic, reconciliation, border control, asylum seekers and migration law

11. Have these changes affected your sense of belonging/exclusion? In what ways? Have they changed or affected your identity? In what ways? Do you think they have affected aspects of Australian identity? Which aspects and in what ways?

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