NOTIONS OF MIXED HERITAGE IDENTITY CRISIS: AN INDIGENOUS NARRATIVE STUDY OF SALLY MORGAN'S *MY PLACE*

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DEDICATION

To Phil Fitzsimmons,
For believing in me.

ABSTRACT

Aboriginal Australians of mixed descent is an increasing phenomenon within the twenty-first century. At the same time, a review of literature reveals that mainstream Australian society tends to view Aboriginality in terms of a "fixed" set of cultural practices and physical attributes. These stereotypes can create a major identity crisis for mixed heritage Aboriginal Australians, who may not outwardly appear Aboriginal, but who wish to declare their Aboriginality. In order to explore the nature of this particular Indigenous identity crisis, this study utilizes a narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010) approach by gathering and analyzing data from Sally Morgan's autobiographical text, *My Place* (1987). A secondary focus is placed on narrative self-analysis (Loughran Hamilton, & Lobesky, 2004) through the process of personal reflection. By way of emergent design (Creswell & Clark, 2010), this study also filters the narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2009) and self-narrative analysis (Louhran et al., 2004) through Gee's (2000) theory of identity. This study finds that Aboriginals have a "Nature-Identity" that has the potential to be "Othered" through the function of the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities outlined by Gee (2000). However, by way of emergent design (Creswell & Clark, 2010), this study also finds that Aboriginals who are experiencing an identity crisis may be able to articulate their Nature-Identities through a process I term "Self-Awareness Identity". This form of identity opens up a new way of examining "place" within the context of Aboriginal identity. In addition, this study suggests that the education system can play a pertinent role in alleviating the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis by implementing a series of key recommendations outlined in the conclusion of this study.

How deprived we would have been
if we had been willing
to let things stay as they were.
We would have survived,
But not as a whole people.
We would never have known our place.
- *Sally Morgan (1987).*

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CHAPTER ONE:
MOREE
(Rising Sun)

CHAPTER ONE: MOREE (RISING SUN)

Prologue

An education researcher once wrote, "For true understanding, and powerful learning, experience is needed" (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007, p. 36). In light of this statement, this study aims to challenge current understandings of race and culture to facilitate Australia's reconciliation process through the re-conceptualisation of conventional definitions of Aboriginal identity.

While focusing on mixed heritage Aboriginality, this study is not an attempt to define Australian Aboriginal identity; nor is it an attempt to provide a conclusive solution to the current Aboriginal identity crisis that has arisen as a result of the emerging mixed heritage Indigenous population within Australia (Cosic, 2005; Watson, 2006; Winch, 2006; Morgan, 1988; Stanton, 1997; Korff; 2009, Werner, 2010, Yamanouchi, 2010). Instead, through an examination of the notions of identity associated with multiracial Aboriginal Australians in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity formation, this study is an attempt to gain an insight into the nature of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis.

It is hoped that the knowledge and understanding gained from this study aims to act as a stepping-stone for Australians to gain a more inclusive understanding of what it means to be Aboriginal. As a result, the overarching aim of this study is to enable more mixed heritage Aboriginal Australians, who may be currently masking their

Aboriginality, to comfortably identify with their Aboriginal heritage without being questioned or criticized.

Prior to undertaking this journey, several points must be addressed. Firstly, while I understand that it is the current practice to place the terms "Aboriginal" in conjunction with "Torres Strait Islander" in referring to the "First Australians" (Kunnie & Goduka, 2006, p. 32), because this study focuses on the experience of an Aboriginal Australian, I will use the terms "Aboriginal" and "Indigenous" interchangeably. Likewise, the terms "belonging", "place" and "identity" will be used interchangeably because these concepts are "interrelated, nurturing and reinforcing one another" (Goktan, 2011, p. 6; Bryson, 2005, p. 39).

Secondly, while Australian society is more multicultural than it was several decades ago, "white" individuals still form the main population and as such the term "mainstream" will be used when referring to "white" Australians (Eckermann, Dowd, Chong, 2010, p. 190).

Thirdly, because of the nature of this inquiry, it is necessary to use the terms "mixed race", "mixed heritage" and "multiracial" (Linnekin & Poyer, 1990, p. 207) interchangeably to explore the context of the current Indigenous identity crisis.

Fourthly, for the purpose of describing the content within the chapters, each chapter will be entitled by an Aboriginal term that serves as a metaphor to transfer the "meaning from one domain to another" (Bousquet, 2010, p. 25). The terms will also reflect an Australian "place" name to highlight the major theme of finding "place".

To illustrate, this chapter's title, Moree ("Rising Sun") is a metaphor for the content of this chapter, which, like the sun's rays, sheds light upon the purpose of this study.

Furthermore, since there is a major gap in relation to scholarly research on the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis (as will discussed shortly), this study will make numerous references to personal narratives such as newspaper and features articles, which may be found on webpages, as well as personal accounts that deal with this particular Indigenous identity crisis.

In addition, because of the nature of this study, which focuses not only on narrative analysis (Kings & Horrocks, 2010) but also on self-narrative analysis (Louhran et al., 2004) through the medium of my personal journal, the first person pronoun "I" will be frequently used throughout this thesis (Lichtman, 2011, p. 216).

Purpose of the Study

Following on from the aims outlined in the preceding prologue, the overarching purpose of this study is to examine the nature of the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis that currently exists within Australian society today by addressing the following question:

> **How is the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place* in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity?**

As will be detailed in Chapter Two, the identity crisis of Indigenous Australians who have mixed heritage is an increasing and ongoing concern and presents itself in narratives, rather than in academic research (Watson, 2006; Winch, 2006; Morgan, 1988; Stanton, 1997; Werner, 2010, Yamanouchi, 2010). Erikson (as cited in Rathus,

2010, p. 12) defines an identity crisis as "a period of inner conflict during which one examines one's values and makes decisions about one's life roles." It is this type of "inner conflict" (Rathus, 2010, p. 12) mixed heritage Indigenous Australians often experience when they cannot articulate their Aboriginal identity.

While several researchers such as Finn (1997) and Becket (1958) touch upon the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis, their research was conducted over a decade ago and there is still a major gap when it comes to primarily examining this particular issue from the viewpoint of the insider, the mixed heritage Indigenous Australian (Rodan, 2004). As Carrington (2008, p. 425) states, although "there has been much written in recent years on the question of race, sport, and identity" Vyran (2007) points out that research on multiracial identity has been made only recently.

Within this context, the majority of research conducted on mixed heritage identity tends to focus on cases within the United States, rather than on the experience of Indigenous Australians (Xu, 2004; Brown, 2009; Nagai, 2010; Rockquemore, Brunsma & Feagin, 2008; Khana, 2011). In order to address this gap, Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Mark Warner (2010, para. 1, see Appendix 1), suggests that "research needs to go into the issue of Indigenous identity and resources made available to assist people affected by this issue" because he believes that "school aged children will benefit greatly from [this] research."

As a response to the current gap described above, this study will explore the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis by investigating the experience of a multiracial Indigenous Australian, Sally Morgan. As will be detailed in Chapter Two, Sally's

award winning autobiographical text, *My Place* (1987), conveys the struggle that the she faces in finding her place within the Australian society based on factors such as skin colour. Although this text was written over a decade ago, it provides a valuable platform for studying the nature of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis. Indeed, its inclusion "in most secondary and tertiary school syllabi" (Boynton & Malin, 2005, p. 406) throughout Australia today testifies to the value of exploring *My Place* (1987) as a valuable means of education. As such, this study will use *My Place* (1987) for the aim of investigating the nature of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis from the viewpoint of the insider.

In light of this purpose and the thought processes of emergent design (Creswell, 2003), Gee's (2000) theory of identity became the means of exploring the objective of this study. As will be detailed shortly, Gee's (2000) theory of identity links identity formation to four processes, which he terms Nature-Identity, Institution-Identity, Discourse-Identity and Affinity-Identity. According to Gee, (2000), these four "ways of looking at identity" are interrelated and as such are not separate from one another, suggesting that if an imbalance occurs a crisis of identity may ensue.

In order to explore this topic of mixed heritage Indigenous identity, the following focus questions were formulated:

1. How do the components of Gee's (2000) theory illuminate the current crisis of mixed heritage Indigenous identity in Australia?
2. How does Gee's (2000) theory relate to the literature base dealing with the current identity crisis?
3. How can the findings made in this study inform the teaching practice?

By answering these questions, the findings made in this study aim to contribute to the re-conceptualization of Indigenous identity to include a more universal and inclusive definition of Aboriginality that is not dictated by racial characteristics such as skin colour.

Methodology

Unlike quantitative research, which "explains phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods" (Muijis, 2004, p. 2), this study will focus on a qualitative inquiry method (Mariampolksi, 2001, p. 7). According to Mariampolski (2001, p. 7), the purpose of qualitative research is to discover "meanings and motivations behind behaviour as well as a thorough account of behavioural facts and implications via a researcher's encounter with people's own actions, words and ideas." Thus, rather than focusing on statistical figures, this study is interested in examining personal experiences through a narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2009) of Sally Morgan's *My Place* within the framework of qualitative research. A secondary focus will also be placed on "narrative self-analysis" (Pole, 2004, p. 68). This entails the use of "researcher-as-instrument" (Padgett, 1998, p. 18) and the tool of reflection. These processes will be expanded upon in the appropriate chapter.

Background

The unique crisis of mixed-heritage Indigenous identity has arisen not only as a result of inter-cultural marriages during post-colonialism, but also particularly as a direct consequence of colonization during the eighteenth to twentieth centuries (Stanton, 1997). One major cause of this identity confusion was as a result of assimilation,

whereby the "Australian Government removed 30 per cent of Indigenous children from their families from the early 1900s to the 1970s in an effort to destroy the Indigenous population" (Department of Indigenous Affairs, 2010, para. 1). Once removed, children were placed in churches, State-run missions or institutions or in some cases to European foster or adopted families. Within these institutions, Indigenous children were forbidden from seeing their families, speaking their language and even from marrying other Aboriginals (Department of Indigenous Affairs, 2010).

As a result, a mixed heritage Indigenous population has arisen, which has contributed to the identity crisis that currently exists within Australia. As Stanton (1997, para. 6) states, "The initial debilitating effects of colonialism [are] far-reaching […] The mixed-heritage groups to emerge have been caught between both worlds." This suggests that the effects of colonisation relate directly to Indigenous identity, causing Aboriginal peoples to be caught between the new mainstream Australian world and their Indigenous heritage.

While numerous mixed heritage Indigenous Australians claim their Indigenous identity, they often do so with opposition and stigma from the "mainstream" Australian society (Stanton, 1997). Since mainstream Australian society tends to identify different peoples from different global regions, by physical attributes, or by distinct cultural practices, mixed heritage Indigenous Australians often have trouble justifying their Indigeneity because they may not outwardly appear Indigenous or participate in distinct cultural practices (Korff, 2009; Rodan, 2004, Stanton, 1997). This notion is confirmed by Renes (2010), who argues that mixed heritage Indigenous

Australians may be left in a "no-man's land" because of their lack of "Aboriginal" physical attributes or connections to land and kinship.

Within this context, Reynolds (2008, pp. 238-9) criticizes the Australia's stereotypical notions of race and culture as pertaining to physical appearance by referring to his book *Nowhere People* in his statement,

> What [my family's] story suggests is the need to accept that many Australians are of mixed ancestry and that elsewhere in the world today we would simply be known and accepted as mestizo. That would seem to be obvious enough, but in Australia the intellectual, political and moral pressure has been to preserve a clear distinction between black and white and to rigorously police the no-man's land between the two camps.

The identity crisis that this problem generates can be summarised in Eagle's (2010, p. 166) statement that the mixed heritage Indigenous Australian is caught in between cultures because he is "partially - perhaps almost entirely – cut off from the sources of Aboriginal life, without being put in contact with the sources of whitefella life. He's a problem created by a problem which hasn't been solved…" Hence this study is important as it aims to provide an insight into the nature of mixed heritage Indigenous, which can contribute to a positive change in thinking about race and culture.

Rationale

Addressing the Needs of the Indigenous Community

This study addresses the need to benefit Indigenous Australians and, as such, is in keeping with the Australian Institution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Studies (AIATSIS, 2010). As the AIATSIS (2010, para. 11) states, "a researched community should benefit from, and not be disadvantaged by, the research project". Within this context, this study is significant to Indigenous Australians, as they will accrue several benefits from this study:

1. Giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples a voice to explore perceptions of self and community and representations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity.
2. Provide reflection on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues in relation to identity crisis.
3. Benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by enabling a reconfiguration/re-writing of self and community that reflects openness and a celebration of difference.

Addressing the Needs of Australian Society as a Whole

The significance of this study lies in the benefits it provides to the needs of Australian society as a whole. This thesis is in keeping with the National Research Priorities Fact Sheet and promotes point 4 of "Strengthening Australia's Social and Economic Fabric" (Australian Government Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research [AGDIISR], 2010). By examining aspects of the mixed Indigenous identity crisis, the audience is encouraged to better understand key elements of "Australia's social and economic fabric to help families and individuals live healthy, productive and fulfilling lives" [AGDIISR, 2010, para. 5).

This thesis also promotes point 2 of "Safeguarding Australia" by promoting an understanding of our region and the world. It seeks to enhance "Australia's capacity to interpret and engage with its regional and global environment through a greater

understanding of languages, societies, politics and cultures" (AGDIISR, 2010, para. 4) In this context, this research will address the need to challenge fixed notions of Indigenous identity; it will encourage new ways of thinking about groups, culture and community, all of which will contribute to a safer Australia, strengthen Australia's social fabric and promote an understanding of our region of the world.

Addressing the Needs of the Christian Community

In regards to the Christian community, this study is important as it promotes particular Christian principles. By exploring the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity, this study contributes to Christian principles of equality and acceptance of individuals, groups and culture. These principles are found in numerous bible verses, such as Luke 6:37 (NIV) and Matthew 7:15 (NIV).

The Needs of the Educational Community

This study is of particular significance to the educational community. This study supports the proposed aims of the National Australian Curriculum, which seeks to form an appreciation of a variety of cultural, social and ethical interests, including the "inscriptional and oral narrative traditions of Indigenous Australians as well as contemporary Indigenous literature" (National Curriculum Board, 2009, p. 4). Moreover, the conclusions found in this study can be applied to any Indigenous text and can assist Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers with the learning and understanding needed to tackle issues in texts as they teach them to their students. In addition, this study might act as a platform for future study in this area of Indigenous identity crisis.

Scope and Sequence of Succeeding Study

This study is broken up into five chapters. Chapter Two provides a literature review concerning the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis and highlights examples of when and where this crisis has presented itself. Within this chapter, a secondary focus will also be placed on Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987) and Gee's (2000) theory of identity formation. Chapter Three outlines the choice of methodology employed in this study. Chapter Four discusses the findings made as a result of the methodology that was used in this study, including a discussion of the role of the literature review in relation to the findings. In addition, Chapter Five makes recommendations with regards to the implications the findings have for the educational setting.


CHAPTER TWO:
BEROWRA
(Place of Many Winds)

CHAPTER TWO: BEROWRA (Place of Many Winds)

Introduction

Chapter One outlined the main purpose of this study, to examine the following question:

How is the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place* in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity?

In response to the identity crisis detailed in Chapter One and the preceding question, the purpose of this chapter is to examine how and why the current mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2003; Cosic, 2005; Topsfield, 2009) has arisen within Australian society today. A secondary focus will also be placed on Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987) and Gee's (2000) theory of identity formation. As such, the title, Berowra (Place of Many Winds), has been assigned as an overarching metaphor for the content of this chapter because it includes many scholarly works and narratives that voice their opinions surrounding the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis, similarly to a "Place of Many Winds" (Metze, 2002, p. 118).

In order to enable an easy, chronological read, this chapter consists of five main sections. The first section traces the history of Indigenous identity within Australia by focusing on Indigenous life prior to 1788, the initial invasion in 1788 to 1890, protection and segregation from 1890s to 1960s and integration, self-determination, self-management and reconciliation from 1967 to the present day.

Next, the current government definition and notions of Indigenous identity, including the controversy that has arisen within Australian society surrounding what it means to

be Indigenous, will be addressed. By an examination of personal comments, debates and discussions regarding Indigenous identity, this section will reveal that the definition of Indigenous identity appears to be complex, particularly when related to a mixed heritage Indigenous perspective.

The third section explores the current Indigenous identity crisis that has arisen as a result of colonization and inter-cultural marriages by attending to several narratives, with a specific reference to *My Place* (Morgan, 1987). While the primary focus will take place on published autobiographical accounts within this section, a secondary focus will also be placed on references to a limited number of newspaper and feature articles because this is where the mixed heritage Indigenous identity also reveals itself.

The fourth section explores the role of Australian popular culture in creating, reinforcing and perpetuating the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis. A primary focus will take place on the role that the media has in shaping the definition of Indigenous identity. In this context, this section will explore how mixed heritage Indigenous Australians are often left in a "no man's land" (Renes, 2010) because they are constantly being forced to identify with their "whiter" or "darker" half based on stereotypes created and reinforced through the media.

In addition, the theories and arguments surrounding the formation of identity will be examined in the fifth section, with a specific focus on Gee's (2000) theory of identity. This section will suggest that Indigenous identity can be critiqued in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity to better understand the nature of the current identity crisis.

In summary, this chapter will reveal that the term, Indigenous, is highly debated when applied to a mixed heritage perspective. As such, this chapter shows that while colonisation and inter-cultural marriages have created a mixed heritage population, popular culture, the media and even the government contribute to the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis and warrants attention. This understanding acts as a platform for the purpose of this study.

The Historical Background behind the Crisis

Indigenous Life Prior to 1788

Diversity of Aboriginality

Aboriginal identity prior to 1788 was never "fixed" in terms of language or even way of life (Swaffer, O'Brien & Donald, 2002; Rodan, 2004). As European researchers estimate, prior to colonization there were about 500 000 Aboriginal people who spoke between 200 to 250 different languages (Marshall, 2004; Crawford & Tantiprasut, 2003). During this time, "Aboriginals expressed individual and group identity in terms of gender, age, clan and territorial affiliation, linguistic groups, and placement within the kinship system" (Rolls, Johnson & Reynolds, p. 93). This suggests that the "First Australians" (Davis, 1997, p. 10) were a culture whose lifestyles and cultural practices were diverse rather than static (David & Barker, 2006, p. 94). In referring to Aboriginals throughout history, Watson (as cited in Rawlings-Way, Worby. 2009, p. 30) foregrounds this notion in her statement, "We are not one large homogenous group but hundreds of different sovereign First Nation peoples. The land is different and so are we, the first peoples of the land." Hence it appears that the term "Indigenous" is not necessarily associated with a "fixed" language or lifestyle

(Bennett, 2005), but rather a rich culture that is defined through difference rather than sameness.

Although the preceding discussion highlights the diversity that existed within the Aboriginal culture, and thus the complexities that can arise when attempting to define what it was that constituted being "Aboriginal" during this time, some researchers appear to provide generalisations about the Aboriginal culture. For instance, Mis (2005, p. 26) states that the Aboriginal "men hunted birds and small animals with boomerangs", yet Broome (2002, p. 15) argues that only "some groups had boomerangs". Broome (2002, p. 15) also argues that all Aboriginals were "hunters and gathers" who used "the same basic tools of stone core hammers, knives, scrapers and axe-heads…spears, digging sticks and vessels." However, while Broome's statement points to a way of identifying Aboriginals as primarily "hunters" and "gatherers", not all Aboriginals were hunters and gatherers, as this task was largely undertaken by the men rather than the women. As Attenbrow (2002, p. 88) points out, "hunting land animals was principally the task of men, though smaller animals were often 'collected' by women and children." In light of this discussion, it could be suggested that generalized statements surrounding the notion of the Aboriginal culture could serve to suppress the diversity of their identities and, in turn, reduce Aboriginal identity to a mere ownership of objects such as boomerangs.

Following on from this discussion, Broome (2002) also testifies to the diversity of the Aboriginal lifestyle prior to colonization. As he states, because Aboriginal people lived in "diverse ecologies, ranging from the seashore to woodland, river banks and desert" (Broome, 2002, p. 16), their way of life and methods of hunting differed to their other tribal counterparts. For example, while the "coastal people used fish bone"

as their weapons, the "desert people relied on stone edged weapons" (Broome, 2002, p. 16). In this context, Broome's (2002, p. 16) discussion further consolidates the danger of reducing Aboriginality to a fixed notion of cultural practices. In other words, given the diversity of Aboriginal lifestyles during this time, their identities should not be considered in relation to a "fixed" set of cultural practices as this could lead to a suppression of their identities.

Connection with the Land

While it has been established that the term "Aboriginal" may not necessarily refer to a "fixed" set of practices, it is important to note that Aboriginals found a sense of belonging in the land (Baumann, 2006, p. 6). As Broome (2002) and Baumann (2011) argue, Indigenous people, despite their varying groups, knew that they all belonged to the continent and their groups and families, which contributed to a solid sense of identity. Davis (1997, p. 12) further consolidates this notion in his statement that the land was a "necessity of existence, cultural integrity and identity" that "not only gave life, it was life" (Broome, 2002, p. 18). In this context, it appears that identity and "life" are inter-related for Indigenous Australians through the medium of land. As such, it is can be suggested that "the tie that binds the black man [Aboriginal] to his [their] land is almost tangible" (Gare & Crawford, 1987) as it is their *place*.

Aboriginals also had a spiritual connection with the land. In referring to Aboriginal Australians across history and to the present day, Baumann (2006, p. 6) argues, "Aborigines feel a deep spiritual connection to their land and often call it their 'mother' because "every clan has its own creation story and believes that they are linked to their territory through their dreaming ancestor who had created them and after that became a part of the land." This notion is foregrounded by Wadjulurbinna, an Aboriginal elder, who states that "our connection to the land…is a spiritual

connection and at a high level" (Korff, 2007, para. 1). Wadjularbinna's (as cited in Korff, 2007) comment reinforces the intrinsic link that Indigenous peoples have to the land as a part of their Indigenous identity, regardless of the difference in traditions, beliefs, laws, ceremonies and even language. In this way, it could be suggested that the land was the one medium that remained constant during this time, which bound the Aboriginals together despite their varying lifestyles and languages (Swaffer, O'Brien & Donald, 2002, p. 893).

Connection to Kinship

Another medium that provided Indigenous Australians with a solid sense of identity was their kinship groups (Broome, 2002, p. 17). Since "the individual's loyalty was to his family," Leitner and Malcolm (2007, p. 183) state, "kinship and family relationship are at the core of Aboriginal cultures and many norms of thought and behaviour in Aboriginal Australia revolve around the notions of family relationships." This notion if further consolidated by Keen (1988, p. 98) who states:

> When people talk about being Aboriginal, they invariably talk about Aboriginal family relationship. Place of residence, travel, social networks, leisure activities, and personal loyalties all revolve in some way around one's kinship.

Hence it appears that Indigenous kinship ties provided Aboriginals with a sense of place and consequently identity prior to colonization.

Initial Contact and Colonisation (1788 to 1890)

Silencing Aboriginal Identity

When the British settlers arrived in the continent in 1788, Aboriginal life and consequently identity was dramatically affected. The varying experiences and traditions of Indigenous people, as outlined previously, contradicted European

thoughts on race and culture, which sought to define racial and cultural identity in terms of a "fixed" body of characteristics rather than in diverse terms (Stanton, 1997). According to Geoffrey Davis (1997, p. 11), "the British neither saw nor understood the strong and religious relationship between the First Australians and the land, their system of communal ownership and their obligation towards the preservation of and care for Mother Earth." As such, many British convicts and settlers "saw Aboriginal nakedness, the absence of agriculture, and the Indigenous 'hunter and gatherer' lifestyle as a sign of savagery, all of which was the antithesis of a civilized society with clear ranks and orders" (Smithers, 2009, p. 37). Hence it appears that during this time Indigenous identity was re-orientated by the colonisers who termed them "savages" (Smithers, 2009, p. 37).

This notion is expanded upon by Smithers (2009), who refers to several comments made by settlers during the early years of colonization. As Smithers (2009, p. 37) argues, one commentator, John Hawkesworth, "spoke for many colonists when he described the Aborigines as 'stark naked; they do not appear to be numerous, nor to live in societies, but like other animals were scattered along the coast, and in the woods" (Smithers, 2009, p. 37). Hawkesworth's comment not only voided Indigenous peoples of their diverse and rich culture, but also reduced Indigenous identity to mere fauna.

However, David Collins, the Secretary and Judge-Advocate of the colony during colonization (Smithers, 2009, p. 37), expands upon Hawkesworth's comment by stating,

> The savage inhabitants of the country, instead of losing any part of their native ferocity of manner by an intercourse with the Europeans among whom they dwelt, seemed rather to delight in exhibiting themselves as monsters of the greatest cruelty, devoid of reason, and guided solely by the impulse of the worst passions (Smithers, 2009, p. 37).

Hawkesworth's comment suggests that the Aboriginals were not merely seen as "savages" (Smithers, 2009, p. 37); moreover, they were considered "beasts" that were far-removed from western standards of living. In this context, it appears that in order to remain "superior", the European colonisers had to distance themselves from the Aboriginals by prescribing identities of "savagery" and "beastly" to them. Yet, in so doing, they not only dehumanized them, but they also undermined their cultural identity.

Terra Nullius

Since many of the British did not recognise the Aboriginals as anything greater than "savages", the British termed the land "Terra Nullius" (Gilbert, 2006, p. 26) – an empty continent void of any Indigenous identity and belonging. Moreover, as British law assumed that the continent was "empty", British colonists were also lawfully able to claim any part of the Australian soil (Kercher, 1995, p. 5). Hence while the land, as outlined previously, played a significant role in forming the Aboriginals' sense of location and belonging, it was, at the same time linked to concepts of power which worked to contradict the richness of the Aboriginal culture through the British declaration of "Terra Nullius" (Gilbert, 2006, p. 26).

As a result, the British claimed the land as theirs, developed farms, built houses and introduced foreign animals (R.I.C. Publications**,** 2004). These practices contradicted

the fact that the land was the basis of Aboriginal life and culture and, as previously mentioned, a major part of their identity (Anderson, 2009). Hence, not only were Aboriginals reduced to "savages", but their identities were silenced through the declaration of "Terra Nullius" (Gilbert, 2006, p. 26).

The declaration of "Terra Nullius" (Gilbert, 2006, p. 26) and the colonization process that ensued thereafter disrupted the connection between Aboriginal peoples and their land. Overgrazing caused the devastation of grasslands and forests, which in turn destroyed eatable foods and fauna (Eckermann, Dowd, & Chong, 2010). As such, Indigenous peoples were unable to utilize natural resources and, in some cases, death ensued as a result of starvation (R.I.C. Publications, 2004). Moreover, since the land was a necessity of Indigenous existence, cultural integrity and identity, the process of land dispossession caused an erosion of their identity as they no longer owned territories and identified each group and individual (Eckermann et al., 2010), There were also instances where British settlers "coerced Aboriginal men and women to labour for them, and raped Aboriginal women" (Smithers, 2009, p. 37), which led to a mixed heritage generation of Australian Aboriginals. Hence, by rendering Aboriginal Australians invisible through the declaration of "Terra Nullius" (Gilbert, 2006, p. 26) it appears that the Aboriginals' personal identities were dramatically affected.

Understanding Colonization Through the Othering Process

The way in which the colonists treated and viewed the Indigenous Australians during the initial contact period can be explained in terms of "Othering" (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2004, pp. 172-172). As Jackson (2010, p. 521) states, "Othering, or the process of identifying an individual or group of people as the Other, marks them [Aboriginals] as strange, foreign, exotic, or heathen. Usually, these descriptions of

otherness are negative or unfavourable." In this way, "Othering processes are integral aspect of identity formation" (Dominelli, 2004, p. 76) and as such involves the "negotiation of identity" (Jackson, 2010, p. 521) because it is a process of recognizing individual attitudes and actions within a group as similar, or Othered (Jackson, 2010, p. 521). This suggests that the "Othering" process has the potential to re-orientate one's original sense of identity, which is similar to the way in which the colonizers termed the Aboriginals "savages". In so doing, it could be suggested that the colonizers created a "barrier" to keep the "excluded people away from those who [were] included" through a process of separating the "deserving" from the "undeserving" (Dominelli, 2004, p. 76).

In referring the "Othering" process, Wehner (2010) suggests that there are three ways to "Other" an individual or group. The first way involves representing the "Other" as a threat, suggesting that "it" is dangerous and untrustworthy. The second way of Othering involves representing "the other as inferior in order to enhance the perception of [ones] own superiority" (Wehner, 2010, p. 8). The third process involves representing the other as "different" (Wehner, 2010, p. 8), through discourse, images and other forms of communication. All three of these processes can be seen in the preceding discussion on the treatment of Aboriginal Australians as "savages", which denotes connotations of danger, inferiority and difference as asserted by Wehner (2010).

There are other researchers who expand upon Wehner's (2010) notion of otheriing. For Jackson (2010, p. 520), "the Other may be ignored or rendered invisible by the self." Jackson points to Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, which he suggests, "the Black man is rendered invisible and disempowered because of his Othering by White

society, which refuses to acknowledge him as a person or his contributions to society" (Jackson, 2010 p. 520). This notion resonates with the declaration of Australia as "Terra Nullius" (Gilbert, 2006, p. 26), which could be read as a metaphor for silencing the Aboriginal culture and identity.

In addition, the process of "Othering" can be linked to the assumed superiority of the colonizer. As Mushtaq states, "Creation of the Others and initiating the process of Othering, therefore, is essential for the imperial and colonizing powers to assert their own power, will, and value" (Mushtaq, 2010, p. 26). Jackson (2010, p. 521) agrees with this view in his statement that the purpose of Othering is to "identify what power a person or group has." In this way, it could be suggested that "The colonizers consider themselves to be the centre, and deal with the colonized as if they are the marginalized other" (Mushtaq, 2010, p. 26). Hence, when related to the prior discussion on the treatment of Aboriginals by the colonists, it can be suggested that the colonists saw themselves as superior to the Aboriginals and hence "Othered" them by prescribing the term "savage" to their identity in order to maintain their supremacy.

Protection and Segregation (1890s to the 1950s)

Biological Absorption

The "Othering" process was continued into the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, whereby Australian policy makers planned the re-orientation of Aboriginal identity through a process called "biological absorption" (Miller, 2011, p. 11). According to Muller (2011, p. 11), biological absorption was an attempt to, "integrate Aborigines into white society by segregating full-blooded individuals with the hope that they would eventually die out and by encouraging mixed race individuals to

marry low class white individuals, thereby reducing the Aboriginality of subsequent offspring." This view reflected the "doomed race" theory which "posited that people of full descent would soon die out" through biological absorption (Ellinghaus, 2006, p. 190). However, these notions of "absorption" suggest that "white" Australians believed that identity could be re-oriented based on physical appearance (skin colour) and that Aboriginals would lose their identity as their skin colour became white. In doing so, these notions reduced the richness and diversity of the Aboriginal identity to mere skin colour.

In order to achieve the goal of "biological absorption" (Muller, 2011, p. 11), Indigenous Australians became subject to "protection" policies under the Aborigines Protections Acts. According to Attwood (As cited in Sonoda, 2009, p. 160), "Victoria passed the first protection act in 1886, followed by Queensland in 1897, and these two acts became models for those subsequently enacted in other states." While the name suggests "protection", the Act actually deprived Indigenous Australians of freedom and caused them great suffering (Aoyama, 2008, pp. 112-113). In the name of protection, the Aborigines Protection Acts permitted officials (Protectors) to control the every day lives of Aboriginal peoples, including where they and their children lived, who they could marry, where they could work, what funds they could have and who was and who was not classified as an Aboriginal person based on the "degree of blood" (Armitage, 1995, p. 18; Tatz, 2001, p. 12). As such, Aboriginals were "locked into pervasive and entrenched relations of power through which racial, sexual, economic, political and cultural oppressions were part of public discourse sanctioned by the state" (Moreton-Robinson, 2000, pp. 28-29). Hence, rather than the land and

relationships being markers for identity, Aboriginal identity was sanctioned by government institutions.

A major factor that contributed to a mixed race population within Australia was the "decision to include a clause in the Western Australian *Aborigines Act Amendment Act 1936* which dictated that no marriage of *any* Aboriginal person could be celebrated without the permission of the Chief Protector" (Ellinghaus, 2003, p. 190). Since biological absorption depended on "those of mixed Aboriginal and white descent having children with those who had fewer Aboriginal ancestors than themselves" (Ellinghaus, 2003, p. 186), the underlying purpose of this clause was to absorb Aboriginals into the "white" by separating mixed descent form those of full descent. As Craig (as cited in Ellinghaus, 2003, p. 191) argued in 1936, '[t]he colour must not be allowed to drift back to black. If we can only segregate the half-castes from the full- bloods we shall go a long way towards breeding the dark blood out of these people'. Chief Protector August O Neville also agreed with Craig in his statement that "It is to the benefit of our own race that the full-blood should not any longer be encouraged to mate with other than full-blood; on the contrary, he should be rigidly excluded from any association likely to lead to any other union" (Bartrop, 2001, p. 75-87). O Neville provided a visual support for his biological absorptionist theory, as highlighted in Figure 1, suggesting that the half-blooded Aboriginal was an "Other" and could become the "same" as British Australians within two generations (Neville, 1947, p. 74). As such, it appears that this clause was based on the premise that Aboriginal identity could be re-oriented through skin colour.

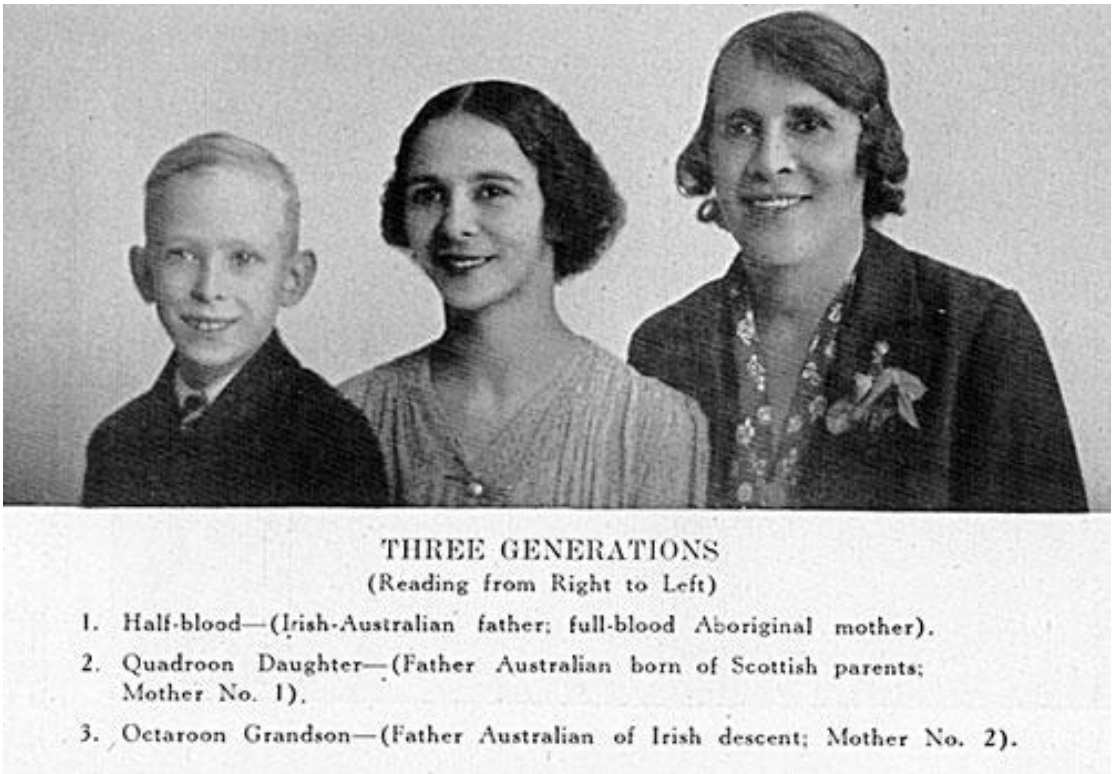


Figure 1: A visual support highlighting the result of 'biological absorption' as outlined by Neville (1957, p. 74).

Not only were Aboriginal identities "absorbed", in the eye of the European, through physical re-orientation, but government officials re-named the Aboriginals terms such as "full-blooded", "half-caste", "quarter-blooded" and "octaroon" based on their proportion of Aboriginal blood (Spencer, 2006, p. 33). Hence, rather than being defined as Aboriginals or First Peoples, they became a sum of their parts based on the definitions prescribed to them by government institutions.

Assimilation (1940s to the 1960s)

Cultural Absorption

While the Protection policies had achieved their purpose of absorbing many Aboriginals into "white" society in terms of skin colour, Behrendt (1995, p. 24) argues that the Indigenous culture was still strong enough to survive the continual onslaughts of the policies and their continual attempts at "silent" genocide. This

suggests that Aboriginal identity could not be completely re-orientated based on physical appearance, as was the goal of the previous policies surrounding the notion of absorption.

As a result, an official policy of assimilation was initiated with the purpose of absorbing the remaining Indigenous peoples, particularly those of "light caste", into the white population, both in terms of biological and cultural re-orientation (Ellinghaus, 2003). The thinking underlying assimilation can be found in a comment made by the Chief Protector of Western Australia, A O Neville (as cited in Ellinghaus, 2003, p. 179):

> […] this conference believes that the destiny of the natives of aboriginal origin, but not of the full blood, lies in their ultimate absorption by the people of the Commonwealth and it therefore recommends that all efforts be directed to that end….efforts of all State authorities should be directed towards the education of children of mixed aboriginal blood at white standards, and their subsequent employment under the same conditions as whites with a view to their taking their place in the white community on an equal footing with the whites.

These comments suggest that remaining Indigenous Australians of mixed descent were expected to be culturally "absorbed" into the mainstream community. In this context it appears the colonizers believed that Aboriginals could become like the whites by leaving behind their "Other" Aboriginal culture and removing from them all they knew. Thus, rather than co-existing, the policy of assimilation meant that Indigenous people were expected to become extinct.

Other researchers expand on the thinking behind the assimilation policy. For Sonoda (2009, p. 162), the assimilation policy "was connected with the White Australian Policy where white people were considered superior to any other coloured race." Sonoda points to a statement made by the Queensland Government:

> Assimilation should be achieved through a period of identity reorientation, [following which] the Aboriginal population would be effortlessly absorbed into the larger European population, leaving scarcely a trace behind it (Sonoda, 2009, p. 162).

This statement reinforces the notion of extermination in regards to the Aboriginal culture. In other words, due to the assumed and reinforced superiority of the colonizer, it appears that "the colonized could be literally molded into whatever best served the economic and political purposes of the colonizer" (Griffiths, 1986, p. 165), and in this case it was to "even out any historical, racial or linguistic differences in the colonies" (Stanton, 1997, para. 4).

The assimilation policy meant that many children were taken from their families and denied the right to receive an Indigenous education, love from their family, a connection to their land and spirituality (Ellinghaus, 2003). At the heart of these policies, Stanton (1997) argues that there "lies a vision of Aboriginal identity that relies primarily on skin colour, or racial (im)purity, rather than familial and cultural ties and the acceptance by members of an Aboriginal community." As a result of this policy, many mixed heritage Indigenous Australians have emerged within Australia, many of who have little or no relation to their Aboriginal kinship and land (Senzani, 2008).

Integration, Self-determination and Self-management and Reconciliation

Integration (1965-1971)

During the mid-late twentieth century, mainstream "white" Australians started to realize the mistreatment towards Indigenous Australians by "white" Australians (Webb, 2003, p. 96). This realisation was reflected in the increasing number of activisists and protestors who started campaiging for equality between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (Webb, 2003, p. 96). As a result, an official policy of integration came into play in 1965, which was established to encourage Aboriginals to "maintain their traditional cultures while still becoming part of the Australian community" (Webb, 2003, p. 95). This notion was characterised by the 1967 Referendum, whereby 90.77% of Australians voted "Yes" for Indigenous peoples to be counted in the national census of population (Prentis, 2008, p. 180). This was an important step in Australia's move towards equality as it allowed Indigenous peoples for the first time to be classified as citizens of Australia (Reconcilation Australia, 2008). Hence, whereas Indigenous Australians had previously being recognised as "savages" during the initial contact period, they were finally recognised as human beings in the 1967 Referendum. This gave Indigenous Australians a humane identity rather than one likened to animals.

Self-Determination (1972 - 1996)

Although the policy of integration provided Indigenous Australians with some equality, the years following the 1967 Referendum were characterized by an even greater increasing awareness of the wrong-doing conducted towards Indigenous peoples during and after colonization (Brady, 2004). As a result, "the notion of self-determination was introduced to Australia in the 1970s by the Whitlam government" which gave the "right to cultural and linguistic maintence and management of natural

resources on Aboriginal land" (Webb, 2006, p. 95). According to Webb (2006, p. 95), the funamdental basis of self-determination for Aboriginal Australians inovolved three key aspects:

1. Aboriginal Australians receive the same rights and freedoms under the law as non-Aboriginal Australians.
2. They should be allowed to choose how to live their lives.
3. They should be allowed a say in the policies that affect them

Hence, instead of trying to destroy Aboriginality through biological and cultural absorption, the government now appeared to recognise the importance of equality, regardless of cultural or physical difference. As such, the "Australian states began to repeal anti-Aboriginal laws…[and] there was a growing acceptance of Aboriginal culture. [Moreover,] schools began to teach Aboriginal children to have pride in their hertage" (Webb, 2006, p. 95). The notion of self-determination also gave mixed heritage Aboriginals the right to identify with their Aboriginality over their "Whiteness", rather than being called terms such as "quadroon" or "half-caste". Hence, it could be suggested that this enabled allowed Aboriginals to maintain a connection with their Aboriginal culture and identity, and to assert their "Aboriginality".

An important change that occurred during the period of self-determination involved the issue of Aboriginal alnd rights. During the late 1970s, a Torres Strait Islander man, Eddie Mabo, took the government to court to claim back land on Murray (Mer) Island in the Torres Strait (Brady, 2004). According to Brady (2004, p. 103), "While they lost, they appealed to the High Court. In June 1992, the High Court found in favour of Mer islanders (Eddie was by then deceased)" by recognising "the principle of 'native title'". This case led to the establishment of the 1993 Native Title Act,

which accepted the notion of native title and also recognised the land rights of owners of frehoold properties (Bardy, 2004). In doing this, the High Court overturned the idea that Aboriginal identity as indicated in the conception of "Terra Nullius" (Gilbert, 2006, p. 26). Hence, whereas Aboriginals had once been disregarded during colonisation as the rightful owners of the continent, this act encouraged all Australians to re-conceptualise the place of Aboriginals within Australia.

Reconciliation (1997 – Present Day)

While self-determination provided Indigenous Australians with greater equality, there was still a need for "mutual respect for each other's culture" (Webb, 2006, p. 107). Hence the government established initiatives for the purpose of reconciliation, which involves a "recognition that Indigenous people have suffered injustices at the hands of white people" (Webb, 2006, p. 107). Throughout the years, reconciliation has been characterised by initiatives such as the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, the "Bringing Them Home" report, ABSTUDY, and Kevin Rudd's Sorry Speech, to name a few (Australian Government, 2010). All of these factors were aimed to develop unity and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous Australians.

As a part of Australia's reconciliation process, during the past several decades there has also been various efforts and policies implemented to ensure that schools are addressing individual student needs (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 1999 [MCEETYA]). One particular declaration, the Adelaide Declaration (1999), formed "national goals for schooling in the twenty-first century" (McKinerny & Liem, 2003, p. 166), which had a particular focus on the "educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians" (MCEETYA, 1999, para. 10).

Within this framework, the declaration established a number of key standards that suggested schooling should be socially just, so that:

> 3.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have equitable access to, and opportunities in, schooling so that their learning outcomes improve and, over time, match those of other students.
>
> 3.4 All students understand and acknowledge the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to Australian society and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (MCEETYA, 1999, para. 12)

While these goals aim to "provide a framework for accelerating the achievement of equitable and appropriate educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians" (MCEETYA, 1999), recent research suggests that these goals are not being met in some areas. As educator and researcher Thomas (2008, p. 142) argues, many educators, readers and students "assume little or no knowledge of Indigenous literature and knowledge of Aboriginal experience, history or culture" (p. 142), perhaps due to the fact that "there are few Indigenous people teaching Australian literature and history courses" (Thomas, 2008, p. 142). This is despite the fact that Thomas (2008, p. 143) argues, "both the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal teacher must possess a sound knowledge of Indigenous history, experiences, critique and theory to guide the students on their own journeys towards understanding." Thus, while education policies such as the Adelaide Declaration have been formed as part of Australia's reconciliation process, "research needs to go into the issue of Indigenous identity and resources made available to assist people affected by this issue" (Werner, 2010, see Appendix 1). This will enable a solid understanding of Indigenous identity,

which will, in turn, preserve and protect the diversity and richness of Indigenous identity.

Indigenous Identity Today

Notions Surrounding the Definition of Indigenous

While it has been established that Indigenous Australians have undergone a process of identity re-orientation throughout the decades as a result of colonial and post-colonial laws and practices, it is now important to examine what it is that actually constitutes Indigenous identity in the twenty-first century. The definition of "Indigenous" and who can claim "belonging" to such a culture has been the subject of global research over the past several centuries in various countries such as Canada and the United States of America. Many authors, writers and researchers tend to focus on one's country of birth, bloodline or culture as the definitive decider for who one is and where one belongs (Eimke, 2010, p. 9). For Bracey (2005, p. 83), "all Australia's indigenes are a dark-skinned people". Others simply state that Indigenous people are those who were the first people to inhabit a country (Dahl, 2009, p. 148). Simpson, on the other hand, examined the potential dangers in seeking to formulate a universal definition of "Indigenous" (1997, p. 22). For Simpson, "no single definition can capture the breadth and experience of Indigenous peoples" (1997, p. 22). These researchers highlight that definitions must take into account the diversity of Indigenous peoples, in both their culture and their way of life.

The Government Definition

For legal purposes, the Government formulated a three-phase definition of Indigeneity in 1973. As such, up until the present day the Government identifies Indigenous Australians as those who are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, identify as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent and are identified

by the community as being a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent (Bourke, 1993). However, critics have argued that the current definition of Indigeneity may not recognise those who are of mixed heritage because they might not be recognised by the Aboriginal community for two reasons: 1) They may have never lived or even spoken to Indigenous people, thereby the Indigenous community cannot contact them to accept them as Indigenous, and 2) the mixed heritage Indigenous person may not appear Indigenous or have family connections to prove their identity (Yamanouchi, 2010; Bourke, 1993). Bourke (1993, para. 17) addresses this issue in his statement, "Aboriginal people who cannot identify their genealogy do not meet the government definition and may experience some insecurity about their own identity." An example of this issue has been outlined by Korff (2007, para. 13), who mentions a story of an Aboriginal woman, Rosie Gillman, who "has always identified as Aboriginals, has paperwork signed by a government department that she is Aboriginal and a researched family tree to prove that she is Aboriginal" but "in 2010 'two major organisations' she approached did not confirm her Aboriginality." Furthermore, she also "knows of another woman whose application for confirmation was successful, but her brother's was not." It is in this context that the issue of Indigenous identity crisis needs attention, because not all Indigenous or mixed race people may know the location of their ancestral lands as well as the history of their people, despite the fact that they claim they are Aboriginal (Yamanouchi, 2010).

Varying Interpretations of Aboriginal Identity

In a recent study on Aboriginal identity in South-western Sydney, Yamanouchi (2010, p. 216) examines the "ambiguous and dynamic nature of Aboriginal identity in south-western Sydney." In her study she found that there are a variety of Aboriginal cultures and lifestyles that exist in Sydney, ranging from full-blooded to mixed heritage

Indigenous Australians, each with their own way of defining themselves as Indigenous. Some of these Indigenous Australians had never met their family and did not believe they needed to do so to be defined as Indigenous. Others were affected by the Stolen Generation and did not have any family ties, while others believed that Indigenous Australians must meet and be identified with their family to be Indigenous. As a result, while Yamanouchi acknowledges that "the primacy of identity based on kinship ties associated with a place of origin has been emphasized in anthropological research" (2010, p. 216), she warns against classifying Indigenous identity solely on the terms of family identification. Instead, she examines alternatives such as Indigenous organisations in the process of defining one as Indigenous. Thus, her study reveals the complexities of being identified as Indigenous, particularly in today's society (Yamanouchi, 2010).

Historical and Ancient Connection with Lands

Other critics and Indigenous Australians see that there must be a narrower scope for self-identification as an individual as such by the group as well as primary importance given to ancestral roots and connectivity to the land. As Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commissioner, Mr M. Dobson, states, "above all and of crucial importance is the historical and ancient connection with lands and territories" (as cited in Simpson, 1997, p. 23). However, this definition leaves a major gap when Dobson's statement is related to a mixed heritage Indigenous person because, as detailed in the preceding paragraphs, the Australian colonial practices stripped many Indigenous people of their land by assimilating them into Western practices. Thus, if Dobson's definition constitutes a conclusive definition of "Indigenous", this leads to the possibility that only Indigenous peoples such as Eddie Mabo, whose stolen land was finally reclaimed (as outlined previously), can be classified as Aboriginal simply on

the basis of their connection with their lands and territories. Moreover, connection to the land could also be indirect and may not necessarily refer to physically or legally "owning" land, given that Aboriginal connection to land has been considered as spiritual (Korff, 2007).

Aboriginal' Consciousness

There are many Aboriginal Australians who argue that the "essence" of Aboriginal identity lies in self-consciousness. According to Bennett (as cited in Bennett, 2005, p. 133), "there is no fixed set of characteristics that define or determine Aboriginality; rather, it is something that must be known through experience…Aboriginality is in the heart." This suggests that Aboriginality is a "feeling" that lies in a type of self-consciousness that transcends physical attributes or cultural practices. Unlike other forms of identity, such as physical attributes, possession of certain cultural hunting weapons or other items, this type of identity seems to be intangible. Given this context, it could be suggested that a lack of this "Aboriginal consciousness" (Morgan, 1987, p. 233) can lead to rejection from Aboriginal groups and consequently, a sense of identity crisis. This notion is exemplified by Yamanhouchi (2010, p. 223), who mentions a story of an Aboriginal boy whose claim to be Aboriginal was rejected by Aboriginal peoples "not only because he was not related but also because he could not understand the subtle essence of Aboriginal cultural styles." Hence, since it appears that an "Aboriginal consciousness" (Morgan, 1987, p. 233) needs to be articulated in order to be a "true" Aboriginal, it could be suggested that mixed heritage Indigenous Australians may experience an identity crisis if they are unaware of their culture and the "essence" of Aboriginality.

Aboriginal Spirituality

Various researchers also argue that Aboriginal identity is linked to a certain sense of "spirituality" (Fleming, 2001; Douaire-Marsaudon, 2005). In reciting key "recommendations made by a delegation of Aboriginal women to a conference on the theme of 'Safe keeping: women's business'", Douaire-Marsaudon (2005, p. 145) writes:

> Aboriginal spirituality is the core part of being Aboriginal. There is a need to push for Aboriginal Spirituality (capital S) being recognised as an established philosophy by educational authorities, religious groups […]. Aboriginal spirituality gives everyone, from infancy to old age, a sense of "who I am." It is Aboriginal Identity (capital I).

This passage suggests that spirituality is the key to being defined as an Aboriginal. In this way, it appears that Aboriginal identity is linked directly to "a feeling of Oneness" (Mudrooroo, as cited in Korff, 2009, para. 7) that derives from spirituality. This spirituality is also "part and parcel of a relation to the land" (Duaire-Marsaudon, 2005, p. 145). As Gungalidda Elder Wadjularbinna (as cited in Korff, 2009, para. 1) states, "The tide of history can never take away our connection to the land, because it is a spiritual connection and at a high level." Hence, it appears that some Aboriginals do not necessarily see their identity in terms of tangible goods such as an ownership of boomerangs, certain hunting weapons or physical attributes; rather, spirituality is seen to be key to Aboriginal identity.

Although some may argue that the notion of "spirituality" is "ancient" when related to an urban or mixed heritage Indigenous Australian, Fleming (2001, p. 35) provides an insight into the notion of Aboriginal spirituality in the twenty-first century. As Fleming (2001, p. 35) states, "in some cases people say that although they have been

deprived of a traditional religious education, their spiritualism is an essential part of their being" which enables them to "attune to an intuitive understanding of it in themselves and n nature." Hence, even though Fleming (2001, p. 35) acknowledges that "it is true that houses, cars, guns, supermarkets and TV have become part of their everyday existence", she argues that "to a large extent these things have been taken in and made part of the Aboriginal world, but not vice versa". In other words, "rather than undermining Aboriginal spirituality and religion," new technologies such as planes and cars now enable the quicker and more efficient organization of ceremonies, where "great numbers of people" can travel "from distant locations" (Fleming, 2001, p. 35). Fleming's (2001) discussion suggests that Aboriginal spirituality is still viewed upon by some as a key component of Aboriginal identification. However, as Yamanouchi's (2010) study revealed, not all Aboriginal Australians seem to have a spiritual connection; instead, some were identified through government organizations, while others were identified as Aboriginal Australians through "family identification". Hence, if Aboriginal spirituality is a "fixed" identifier for Aboriginal Australians, then those Aboriginals who have a "self-conscious" identity, or an identity sanctioned by the government, may be rendered un-Aboriginal based on their lack of Aboriginal spirituality.

The Current Indigenous Identity Crisis

The Role of Narrative in Light of the Crisis

As evidenced in an array of narratives (Cosic, 2005; Topsfield, 2009; Morgan, 1987), an identity crisis has arisen among mixed descent Indigenous Australians, particularly as a result of colonization, inter-cultural marriages and the variety of notions surrounding the definition of Indigenous identity as discussed previously (Australian

Human Rights Commission, 2003). Researchers such as Finn (1997) and Becket (1958) touch upon this identity crisis by suggesting that mixed heritage Indigenous Australians can experience an identity problem based on factors such as physical attributes and a lack of connection to the land, which many people believe are key signifiers for Aboriginal identity. Since their research was conducted over a decade ago, it could be suggested that the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis has been present within Australia for a significant length of time. However, the majority of recent research conducted on mixed heritage identity tends to focus on cases within the United States, rather than on the experience of Indigenous Australians (Xu, 2004; Brown, 2009; Nagai, 2010; Rockquemore et al., 2005; Khana, 2011). This suggests that recent research needs to go into the Indigenous identity crisis and resources made available to society in order to ascertain the nature of this crisis.

While there appears to be a current gap when it comes to research on this particular identity crisis, through narrative we are able to find evidence of the nature of this crisis and the effects it has on the victim. Within this context, it is important to note that narrative plays a major role in allowing the audience to explore the "phenomena of human experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, as cited in Short, 1991, p. 121) as it provides an understanding of people and their experiences. The valuable role that narrative plays in addressing the issue of Aboriginal identity crisis can be found in Goktan's (2006, p. 1) statement,

> In order to gain an insight into the effects of colonialism on the colonizing and colonized cultures, studying literature becomes important as one of the most enlightening methods because literature is essentially focused on the human condition.

In light of this statement, it can be concluded that it is extremely important to attend to the narratives of individuals who are experiencing an identity crisis in order to gain an insight and understanding of the "phenomena" (Short, 1990, p. 121).

Physical Attributes

There are numerous narratives that depict this particular identity crisis, suggesting that it is on the rise within Australian society today. One example can be found in Marshal Watson's (2006) personal story "A Journey of Indigenous Identity". Within his story, Watson describes the identity crisis he experienced in being a mixed-heritage Indigenous Australian who originally did not know who his Aboriginal family members were. As he states, "Occasionally I was called a "coconut" (black on the outside and white on the inside) because I hadn't found my family" (p. 150). This comment suggests that Australian society viewed Watson's identity in terms of his skin colour; rather than being "Aboriginal" or "Caucasian", he is termed as both "black" and "white". In his story, Watson refers to the "pain" he experienced in not knowing who his family was, as he "always knew [he] was different, but couldn't define how" because "trying to find your identity as an Indigenous Australian is hard" (p. 152). While Watson was able to find his family, and in turn feel a sense of "wellbeing", other mixed heritage Indigenous Australians may not be as fortunate. As such, Watson stresses the need to "recognise the effects of 'missing' or 'lost' identity, and understand how the smallest amount of knowing can heal" (p. 152).

Tara Winch's award winning *Swallow the Air* (2006) is another narrative that explores the issue of mixed-heritage Indigenous identity crisis. According to Moses (2006, para. 4), while the story is not considered an autobiography, Winch "drew on her own life for the book", suggesting that there are some elements of truth to her story.

Within her story, Winch explores the way in which the protagonist, May, "seeks to understand her identity and, especially, to find her family once her mother has die" (Spurr & Cameron, 2009, p. 25). May's journey is described in words that are often quite confronting and harrowing. In referring to a comment made by a "white" Australian, Winch writes, "You got family in the city too girl, gunna show ya where ya don't belong dumb black bitch, you don't look like an Abo" (Winch, 2006, p. 66) In this context May's identity is negated due to "racialised cultural myths that fixate on identity as surface – as skin" (Nolan & Dawson, 2004, p. 103), despite the fact that she "felt Aboriginal."

The results of such a comment posed by the mainstream society cause May to reflect on her disassociation with her Indigenous family. As she states in her narrative, "I felt Aboriginal, I felt like I belonged, but when mum left, I stopped being Aboriginal. I stopped feeling like I belong. Anywhere" (Winch, 2006, p. 66). In this situation, it could be suggested that May's identity is affected because society does not identify her as an Aboriginal, and it is only through her connection with her mother that she is made to feel Aboriginal. Hence, May's story of Indigenous identity crisis describes "the problems of belonging to the wider community, particularly with regards to the challenges that poses in contemporary white Australia" (Cameron & Spurr, 2009, p. 25). It is by reading this story that the reader is able to understand that mixed heritage Indigenous Australians may experience an identity crisis, particularly due to the fact that mainstream society often views Indigenous identity in terms of skin colour rather than experience.

Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer, Mark Werner (2010), also provides an

account of the difficulties Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders of mixed heritage face having their identify verified by Land Councils. As Werner states,

> I have been told horror stories of Aboriginal people having to attend Land Council meetings and present themselves physically where facial structures and side profiles where examined as if carrying out anthropological field studies to determining their Aboriginality. I have also spoken to many people who were unable to have their identity confirmed from a Land Council as they are uncertain of their home lands. I can see a day in the not too distant future where the offending Land Councils are brought before the Anti Discrimination Board or Human Rights Commission.

Werner's narrative highlights the identity crisis that can occur when Indigenous identity is reduced to mere skin colour. Werner also points to the fact that his mixed heritage children get called "Salt" and "Pepper" because of their difference in physical appearance, which, he reinforces, is just one example where "kids on a daily basis struggle with their identity, skin colour and appearance."

There are numerous other narratives that depict the identity crisis that can arise due to a lack of "prescribed" Aboriginal physical attributes. For instance, McMillan (as cited in Korff, 2007) outlines his struggle being a "blonde-haired, blue-eyed, fair-skinned Aboriginal Australian" in the twenty-first century. As he states,

> Impeding my growth from that young person into the adult I wanted to become was the profound issue of identity. I was a 'white' black man… How do you begin to explain to someone that you have started to question everything you ever believed about yourself because you are required to defend it so often..?

This statement highlights the identity crisis that may arise when Australian society does not recognize an individual as Aboriginal. As a result, it has taken McMillan "a long time to realize that I am Aboriginal because of my family, my community and who I am in general." Green (as cited in Korff, 2007) also states, "if you are like me with paler skin, because of an Irish mother and my later father was Aboriginal, I find myself having to explain my Aboriginality over and over [again]." These narratives suggest that an identity crisis can arise when Aboriginals are required to prove their Aboriginality simply on the premise of their "fairer" skin.

Understanding the Essence of Aboriginality

Although Aboriginal Australians may have trouble being identified as Aboriginal by the mainstream society, their identity can also suffer as a result of the Aboriginal community. To illustrate, researcher Yamanouchi (2001) examines the narrative of Henry, a full-blooded Indigenous man who is "torn between the need to include those who were not raised in an Aboriginal family environment and the feeling of discordance" (p. 224). In his narrative, Henry expresses that newly identified Indigenous Australians are increasingly becoming involved in political affairs but they have not lived "being black". In other words, while Henry stresses that he is not disrespecting them, he strongly feels "at odds with the Aboriginal people who have not been raised in an Aboriginal environment" (Yamanouchi, 2010, p. 224), possibly due to the fact that they do not understand the "essence" of Aboriginality (Yamanouchi, 2010, p. 223). This narrative reveals that mixed heritage Indigenous Australians can face oppression not only from the mainstream Australian society, but also by their own Indigenous community, suggesting that they do not have a place in society; instead, they are caught in a space between cultures.

The Role of Sally Morgan's "My Place" in Light of the Current Issue

An important text that deals with the nature of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis is Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987). As mentioned in Chapter One, *My Place* (Morgan, 1987) is an autobiography that deals with the conflict between being both Aboriginal and "White" simultaneously. Sally, who grew up believing she was white or East Indian, was raised in Western Australia (Morgan, 1987). After discovering that her paternal mother was "black" Aboriginal, Sally goes on an "inner search" (Morgan, 1987, p. 106) to determine her Aboriginality and to understand why her mother and grandmother have kept their "history" such a big "secret" (Brown-Guillory, 1996, p. 57). As Sally tries to discover more about her Aboriginality, she is faced with numerous obstacles such as racial prejudices and a lack of family records (Morgan, 1987). As a result of Sally's quest, researchers such as Healy (as cited in Brown-Guillory, 1996, p. 57) state that *My Place* is the "finest example of the reconnecting of the broken tissue of Aboriginal identity to date." Moreover, Brown-Guillory (1996, p. 57) claims "*My Place* articulates and celebrates a spiritual maternity that overcomes patriarchal and racist violence to heal the wounds of separation and to recreate a community in which people "belong" to one another despite difference." Hence, it appears that Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987) can be read as a metaphor for the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis that currently exists within Australia.

Researchers have also identified how the nature of mixed heritage identity is discussed within the text. As researcher's McGowan and Kitson (1995, p. 350) state, *My Place "*deals explicitly with the 'cultural' politics of being both and neither, with the protagonist negotiating simultaneously her Aboriginality and her whiteness, and their vexed relational nature in formulation as a subject." In doing so, McGowan and

Kitson claim that "*My Place* as a counternarrative counters both White Australia but also Aboriginal Australian assumptions of identity, race and gender" (1995, p. 350). Boynton and Malin (2005, p. 407) agree with this in their statement that "Morgan's text points to the mobility and changing identities – the diaspora – of Aborigines, dislocated from their territories, families, cultures, and even their race." In light of this discussion, it appears that Morgan's *My Place* (1987) deals with the conflict of being in-between cultures due to her mixed heritage. It is within this context that a text such as *My Place* gains significance for studying the nature of the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis.

While it is clear that *My Place* provides an insight into the experience of mixed heritage Indigenous Australians, it is important to examine why Sally's text is important to study in terms of the present crisis. In this context, Newman argues that *My Place* is important because it introduces "many white readers for the first time to the actualities of Aboriginal experiences" (1997, p. 73). In referring to Sally's descriptions of the land as a place of peace, Gare and Crawford (1987, pp. 79-84) argue that the importance of Sally Morgan's *My Place* lies in its ability to prescribe an element of "tranquility", a quietness that lies "at the heart of the Aboriginal Australian". On the other hand, Finn (1997, p. 12) argues that Morgan's text "provides a version of Aboriginality that is intelligible to non-Aboriginals." While these interpretations of "importance" vary, they all point to the fact that, through *My Place*, the reader can gain an insight into the mixed heritage Indigenous experience.

In light of this discussion, it is important to provide further justification for the study of *My Place* (1987), particularly for those who already have knowledge of Aboriginal history. In this context, Newman (1997, p. 33) states:

> It [*My Place*] "brings it home", that is, it renders it close, familiar and personal, and thereby brings into question many stereotypical suppositions which so often govern the thinking of whites who have habitually defined Aboriginals simply in terms of skin colour or by mathematical equations of blood. The narrative may well encourage readers to examine their past assumptions and their prejudices.

Newman's proposition is extended upon by Sally Morgan, who, according to Groen (1992, p. 32), "sees *My Place* as having the potential to change people's attitudes to questions of race relations in Australia." Hence, while a reader may have knowledge of Aboriginal history, *My Place* enables the possibility to challenge the reader's already established knowledge to encourage and contribute to a positive change in thinking about race and culture.

The Perpetuation of the Crisis through Mainstream Australian Culture

An Introduction to Mainstream Australian Culture

While it has been established through narratives that Indigenous Australians of mixed heritage often experience an identity crisis, many researchers have examined the way in which this identity crisis is perpetuated, and sometimes even created, through Australian culture, and in particular through the media (Bullimore, 1999; Stanton, 1997; Spencer, 2006). As Stanton (1997, para. 5) states,

> For white society it has always been easier to identify different peoples from different global regions, by colour, or by biological features. Difference in appearance has always been the primary classificatory rule applied in identifying, and the identification process.

This notion is further consolidated by Rodan (2004, p. 128), who states, "Within the public sphere in Australia, race is still discussed in terms of the oppositional binary of black and white." As a result, many non-Indigenous people believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders must be "dark-skinned" and if they are not "dark-skinned" they are not "real" Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders (Korff, 2007). These stereotypical attitudes can be damaging to Aboriginal identities, as evidenced in the preceding narratives. Hence, because not all Indigenous Australians are "dark", Aboriginals who wish to assert their Aboriginal identities may suffer because of popular culture's belief on identity.

The Role of Media

The role of media has an impact in shaping these stereotypes and perpetuating this crisis (Spencer, 2006). According to Bullimore (1999, p. 72), the media "Plays a significant role in not only providing information about the society in which we live but also in actively constructing for us a picture of that society." Hence, when related to an Indigenous perspective, it could be argued that the media has the power to construct social discourse on "what and who is seen to be Indigenous" (Bullimore, 1999, p. 72). Yet, since it has been illustrated that Indigenous identity is diverse and complex, a certain perspective posited by the media may or may not be an accurate portrayal of Indigenous identity.

The media's power in shaping Indigenous identity can also cause a problem when related to a mixed heritage Indigenous perspective. For instance, since the media is "dominated by elite actors, institutes and organisation (eg. Police, government, universities etc) whose elites are usually white and who give their own interpretations of events and activities", the representation of Indigenous identity may be distorted because "domination, interpretations and evaluations of news events….are routinely embedded in the ideology of the white elite" (Bullimore, 1999). Hence, since Indigenous Australians only make up 2.5% of the total population, according to the most recent census on Indigenous population (ABS, 2006), "the closest that many non-Indigenous Australians will come to having contact with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person is via their representation in the media" (Bullimore, 1999). If this representation is distorted, then the identity of Indigenous Australians may be suppressed. In other words, it is the crux of this media distortion that has the potential to generate and perpetuate the identity crisis.

Media in the Tourism Industry

The media distortion that currently exists reveals itself particularly through the tourism industry. For Spencer (2006), the tourism industry perpetuates the notion of Aboriginal identity as "primitive" through the function of discourse. For instance, in an advertising campaign, tourists can:

> Meet members of the local indigenous community for an educational experience in bush land setting. Learn of the aboriginal culture through the wide range of exhibits. See demonstrations of boomerang and spear throwing and learn about traditional sources for food and medicine. There is opportunity to sample bush foods such as Witchetty Grubs, Bloodwood Apples, Bush Bananas and various seeds. Following a morning tea of damper and billy tea,

> learn about tribal life, languages, art, dance and music, where you can be taught how to play the didgeridoo (as cited in Spencer, 2006, p. 144).

The above text points directly to Aboriginals as being "primitive" and far removed from the "white" Australian society. As Spencer states, "it appears that the static imagery of traditional life-styles unchanged and timelessly pursued in remote settings is the preferred image, the one that is thought to attract tourism" (2006, p. 144). Hence it is evident that "the suggestion that Aboriginal people should remain true to their 'nature' is…very much alive and well and is still the abiding 'safe' image of Indigenous Australians that white Australians and tourism affirms" (Spencer, 2006, p. 150).

Yet this image of the Aboriginal Australian contradicts the lifestyle of many Indigenous Australians, and in particular mixed heritage Indigenous Australians who may not necessarily live the "traditional" Aboriginal lifestyle. As Spencer (2006, p. 144) states, "for many Aboriginal people these images of traditional life are a far remove from their day-to-day reality, living in urban settings often very similar to their white compatriots." In this way, it appears that the tourism industry exploits the Aboriginals and has the potential to contribute to their identity crisis by providing an image of "fixed" Indigenous identity; one that is linked to a set of cultural practices and characteristics rather than diversity in culture.

Other researchers have also examined the extent to which Australia tends to posit a "static" view of Aboriginality. For instance, Muecke (1992, p. 40) argues that Indigenous Australians "are constantly called upon to display this essence, or this or that skill, as if culture were an endowment. This is an enormous burden, and it is the

Western version of culture which gives them this, not the Aboriginal" (as cited in Spencer, 2006, p. 145). Hence it appears that the diversity of Aboriginal identity is not recognized, rather, a "static", "timeless" view of their culture is affirmed through the tourism industry. In this way, it could be suggested that the media divides reality and marginalises the mixed heritage Indigenous Australian, positioning him or her in a "permanent metaphysical otherness" (2006, Spencer, p. 141). Miley (2006, p. 13) makes sense of this representation by arguing that there is a "homogenizing tendency…implicit in earlier held beliefs of the Aborigines as a primitive or 'noble savage'". Thus, it appears that Indigenous people continue to be associated as distant from Australian society, despite the fact that they were classified as Australian citizens in the 1967 Referendum and a move towards equality has been called upon through the process of reconciliation.

Theories on Identity

Notions Surrounding Identity

In order to make sense of the theme of the emerging Indigenous identity crisis that has been discussed throughout this literature review, it is important to examine theories pertaining to the formation of identity. The formation of identity has been a topic of considerable discussion and debate throughout the decades. As Horrocks and Callahan (2006, p. 69) state, the conceptualization of identity originally "evolved from thought (i.e. Descartes' "I think, therefore I am") to a multifaceted construction of interpersonal interaction." Recent theories and research range from the social sciences, which build on the "concept of identity as a process of negotiating ambiguity", to other studies that report that "individuals maintain multiple identities, where specific selves are developed to advance interaction within particular spaces/environments and among a variety of people" (Eisenberg, 2001, as cited in

Horrocks and Callahan, 2006, p. 69). As such, the term "identity" is complex and negotiates a wide variety of interpretations on the way in which it is constructed.

Gee's Theory of Identity Formation

Researcher Gee (2000) theorizes that there are four ways to view identity: Nature-Identity, Institution-Identity, Discourse-Identity and Affinity-Identity (see Table 1). According to Gee, these identities "are not separate from each other" because they "inter-relate in complex and important ways" (2000, p. 4). In other words, "they are four strands that may very well all be present and woven together as a given person acts within a given context" (Gee, 2000, p. 4).

Table 1: Gee's (2000) Types of Identity

IDENTITY TYPE	PROCESS	POWER	SOURCE OF POWER
Nature Identity A state	Developed from	Forces	In nature
Institution Identity A position	Authorized by	Authorities	Within institutions
Discourse Identity An individual trait	Recognized in	The discourse/dialogue	Of/with "rational" in
Affinity Identity Experiences	Shared in	The practice	Of "affinity groups"

Institution Identity

Within this context, it is important to examine what Gee means by Nature-Identity, Institutional-Identity, Discourse-Identity and Affinity-Identity. To do this, we must examine each form of identity separately. The first identity Gee examines is "Nature-Identity" (2000, p. 4), as illustrated in Table 1. According to Gee (2000, pp. 4-5), Nature-Identity is "a state developed from forces in nature" which refers to natural phenomena such as being born a boy or a girl. When related to an Indigenous perspective, Nature-Identity would be the fact that an individual is born Aboriginal as

opposed to non-Aboriginal. In this way, the individual does not have a choice in this type of identity, as "nature is the force of power" (p. 5) that works to identify the individual.

Researcher Woodward (2004) problematizes the idea that "nature" is a factor in defining one's identity by suggesting that identity involves an element of "choice". In her reasoning, she states,

> We may share personality traits with other people, but sharing an identity suggests some active engagement on our part. We choose to identify with a particular identity or group (Woodward, 2004, p. 9).

Woodward's (2004) argument suggests that being born, say, an Aboriginal, is not enough; one must make a choice to *be* an Aboriginal. However, Woodward's (2004) idea does have limitations when compared to Gee's (2000) theory of the Nature-Identity. For instance, Woodward's idea allows an individual, who may be born an Aboriginal, to choose their Caucasian identity. However, as Gee's theory emphasizes, due to the forces in nature, the individual is *still* Aboriginal, regardless of what choice he or she makes. Nature-Identity could therefore be seen as the "truth" about an individual, regardless of what they may choose to conceal.

Nature Identity

While Gee's Nature-Identity (2000) does not rely solely on a choice, Gee argues that Nature-Identities "gain their force as identities through the work of institutions, discourse and dialogue, or affinity groups" (2000, p. 7-9). As such, Gee formulated the second form of identity, which he terms "Institution-Identity" (2000, p. 7). This type of identity refers to "a position authorized by authorities within institutions" (Gee, 2000, p. 7). For instance, being a student in a school is a position, but

authorities such as the school principal or teachers authorize this position. Thus, the source of power is not nature; nor is it simply a "choice" (Woodward, 2004, p. 9). Instead, "the process through which this power works is authorization, that is, laws, rules, traditions, or principals of various sorts allow the authorities to 'author'" (Gee, 2000, p. 9) a certain position such as a student in a school. This would be similar to an Indigenous identity, whereby the government defines a person as being Indigenous based on the current definition of what it means to be Indigenous, as detailed in the previous section. In this case, the government would be the institution – the force – that constitutes the Indigenous identity.

Other researchers, such as Vyran (2007) consolidate Gee's theory of the Institution-Identity by arguing that identities are constructed by naming them, which, in turn, prescribes meaning to an identity. This notion suggests that an Aboriginal does not become an Aboriginal unless he or she is named as such. Goktan's (2010, p. 3) theory of "social identity" also resonates with Gee's (2000) Institution-Identity theory. For Goktan (2010, p. 3), social identity "defines a person or set of persons in terms of the meaning and expectations associated with a socially constructed group or category of people, and locates a person within socially structured sets of relations." This type of identity is mostly related to "sex/gender, family, race and ethnicity, nationality, religion, occupation, sexuality and age" (Goktan, 2010, p. 3). Hence, although these theorists refer to these types of identities in different terms, the essence of their theories appear to resonate with Gee's (2000) notion of the Institution-Identity.

Discourse Identity

The third type of identity Gee proposes is Discourse-Identity (2000). Discourse-Identity refers to an individual trait that is "recognized in the discourse/dialogue

of/with ‘rational’ individuals” (Gee, 2000, p. 8). To exemplify this point, Gee points to a colleague of his who is a “charismatic person”; however, “she is only ‘charismatic’ to the extent to which she is recognized by ‘rational individuals’ as such” (2000, p. 8). Within this context, “rational” means an individual who “treat, talk about and interact with his friend as a charismatic and not because they are forced to do this by ritual, tradition, laws, rules or institution authority” (Gee, 2000, p. 8). In other words, it is “not something that one just ‘is’; nor is it something one can achieve all by oneself” (Gee, 2000, p. 8). Instead, the source of this trait lies in the “power” that determines one; It is the discourse or dialogue of other people who recognize an individual as such (Gee, 2000, p. 8). This notion of identity resonates with other theorists, such as Miller (2006, p. 109) who argues that personal identity “is defined in terms of the relationships one has with specific other people – relationships that allow comparisons and contrasts”. When related to an Indigenous perspective, it could be suggested that an Aboriginal person is not simply an “Aboriginal”; rather, the Aboriginal person must be recognized as others through processes such as those outlined in Gee’s theory of Institution-Identity, hence reinforcing that these identities are interrelated.

Affinity Identity

Affinity-Identity is the fourth type of identity posited by Gee (2000), which is characterized by experiences shared in the practice of affinity groups. Gee claims that “affinity groups” are those, which are “made up of people who may be dispersed across a large space”, but who all must share “allegiance to, access to, and participation in specific practices that give each of its members the requisite experiences” (2000, p. 12). In this way, “for members of an affinity group, their allegiance is *primarily* to a set of common endeavors or practices” (Gee, 2010, p. 12).

It is within these groups that identities can be formed and recognized (Gee, 2000). Thus, there appears to be a focus "on distinctive social practices that create and sustain group affiliations, rather than on institutions or discourse/dialogue directly" (Gee, 2000, p. 13). When related to an Indigenous perspective, these "distinctive social practices" (Gee, 2000, p. 13) could refer to storytelling, ownership of boomerangs and hunting weapons, although these are tangible attributes that mainstream society tends to associate Aboriginality with, as discussed previously.

Gee's theory of "affinity groups" resonates with Miller (2006, p. 96), who suggests that identity revolves around a "social imperative". As Miller (2006, p. 96) states, "Almost from birth the human being strives to attain and maintain acceptance by his or her group and to find and take his or her place in the social milieu" hence being socially isolated is "generally considered a most undesirable state of affairs and social isolation has been employed by human communities as a punitive device from the earliest recorded history" (Miller, 2006, p. 96). In other words, similarly to Gee's (2000) Affinity-Identity theory, Miller's (2006) theory suggests that individuals can find their acceptance through social groups. Hence, Miller's (2006) theory appears to resonate with Gee's (2000) Affinity-Identity.

The Importance of Gee's Theory in Light of the Present Crisis

Since Gee's (2000) theory of identity appears to be consolidated by other researchers, it could be suggested that Gee's (2000) theory provides a valuable framework for analyzing identity. Moreover, an analysis of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis through this framework may illuminate the experience of Indigenous Australians who are currently feeling an "inner conflict" (Erikson, as cited in Rathus, 2010, p. 12) in regards to their identity. Hence, on one hand, rather than simply examining aspects of

Indigenous identity crisis from a personal viewpoint, Gee's (2000) theory may reveal the nature of the forces in society that are currently contributing to the identity crisis. On the other hand, Gee's (2000) theory could provide an insight into the way in which mixed heritage Indigenous Australians can articulate their Aboriginal identity and hence find their "place" through the mediums of the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities. As such, Gee's (2000) theory appears to provide a valuable structure for exploring the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this literature review has revealed that Indigenous identity is not "fixed" to a set of physical attributes or cultural practices. However, colonization has had a drastic effect on the Indigenous population and their identity. Various laws surrounding the treatment and rights of Indigenous people, as well as inter-cultural marriages, contributed to a new generation of mixed heritage Indigenous Australians. However, popular culture, with its "fixed" view on Indigeneity as based on physical appearance, has put pressure on Indigenous identities and the way in which mixed heritage Indigenous Australians can identify with their heritage. Since little research has been conducted on this identity crisis, it is through narrative that the researcher gains an insight into the nature and extent of this crisis. As this literature review has revealed that Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987) seems to provide a valuable insight into this particular identity crisis. In this context, Gee's (2000) theory of identity formation seems to provide a valuable framework for exploring this particular issue. As such, the next chapter will outline the methodology processes undertaken to examine the nature of Indigenous identity crisis in Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987).


CHAPTER THREE:
BONEGILLA
(Deep Water Hole)

CHAPTER THREE: BONEGILLA (Deep Water Hole)

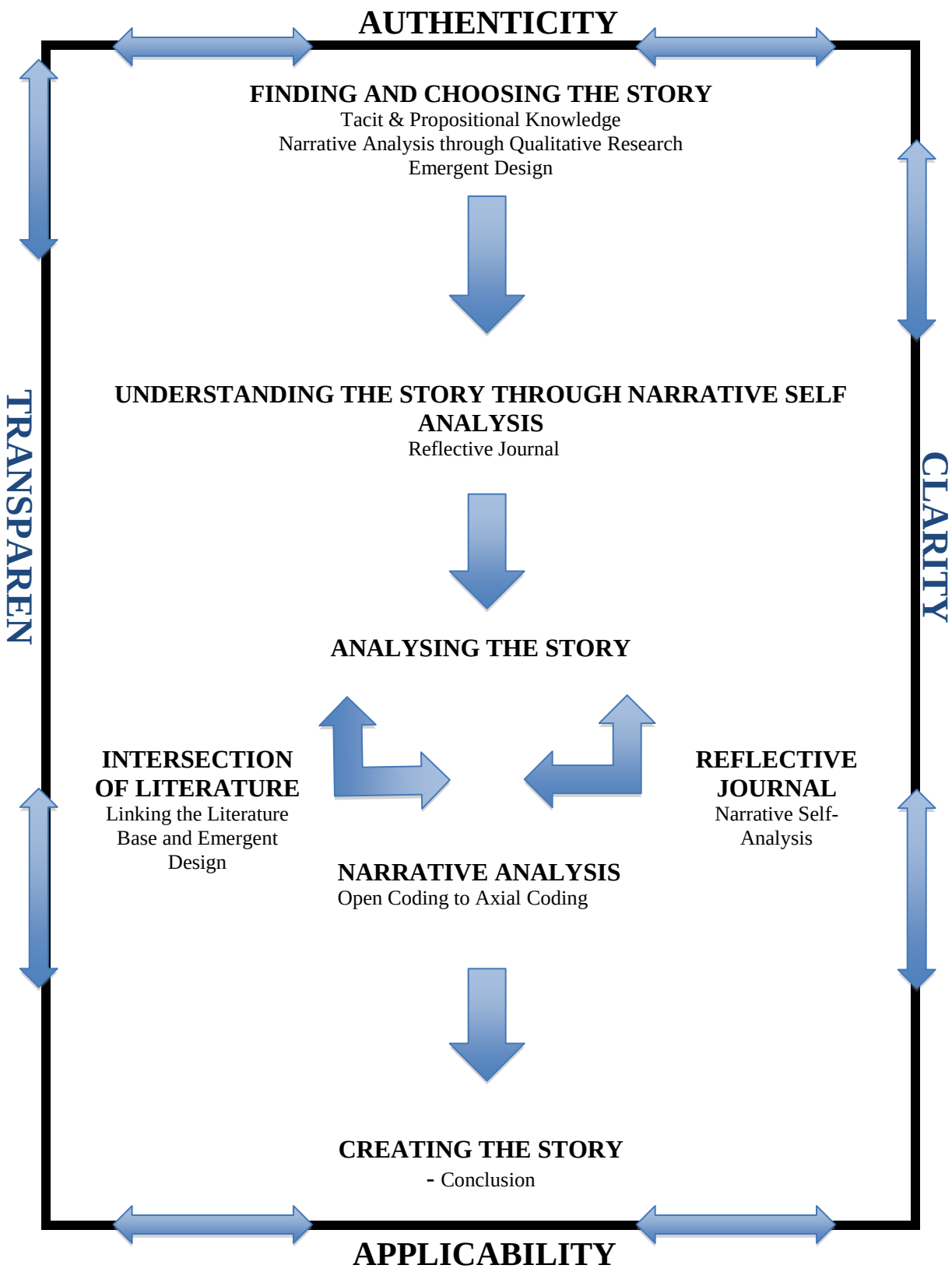
Introduction

This chapter follows on from Chapter Two, which examined the current Indigenous identity crisis that has emerged as a result of Australia's history and mainstream Australian culture, to outline the research methods used in this study for examining the question:

How is the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place* in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity?

In addressing the purpose of this chapter, the Aboriginal term "Bonegilla" (water hole) has been assigned to this chapter because the process of entering the research field was similar to entering a bonegilla (Thompson & Yorke, 1980); I felt as if I were sinking further and further into a deep water hole that was often raging and hence challenging. On several occasions, it would push me back to the surface and I would have to start all over again. Yet, like water, it was always rejuvenating, refreshing and renewing. By the time I reached the bottom of this bonegilla, I had finally grasped the appropriate research method for this study, which would act as a platform for the ensuing chapter that was to detail my findings and provide an analytical discussion. This process has been illustrated on the following page in Table 2, which provides an overview of the five main research design processes implemented in this study. As such, each heading and subheading from this diagram will be unpacked within this chapter.

Table 2: The Research Process



Note: *The black border surrounding this research framework indicates the way in which my study was bound by methods used to ensure authenticity.*

Drawing from the headings outlined in Table 2, this chapter is separated into five main sections: Finding and Choosing the Story, Understanding the Story through Narrative Self Analysis, Analyzing the Story and Creating the Story.

"Finding and Choosing the Story" illustrates the way in which I found the story for this study, with a specific focus on tacit knowledge, propositional knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010) through qualitative research and emergent design (Creswell, 2003). Within this section, I also address the reasons for my choice of autobiography, *My Place* (Morgan, 1987), as a means of studying the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis.

"Understanding the Story through Narrative Self Analysis" examines the way in which I used the approach of narrative self-analysis (Loughran et al., 2004) to make sense of the story and to generate authenticity in the study. Specific examples will be illustrated within this section.

"Analysis of the Story" explores the data collection and analysis procedures used, with a specific focus on the intersection of literature, narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2009) and the use of my reflective journal. A secondary focus will take place on the iterative and emergent design processes I encountered whilst collecting the data and analyzing the text.

Finally, "Creating the Story" sums up the main methods outlined in this chapter, which acts as a platform for the discussion in Chapter Four.

Prior to undertaking this journey, it must be noted that my research questions changed during my analysis of Sally Morgan's experience in *My Place* (Morgan, 1987) as a result of emergent design (Creswell, 2003). The reasons and processes of changing my research question will be spelled out and made clearer in the ensuing sections, although a summary of this process is briefly noted in the following diary excerpt:

My Journey	29/08/11	Emergent Design

Through the process of open coding, the intersection of the literature review and emergent design, it has come to my attention that my research question needs to be refocused. As such, I have changed my questions from:

How is the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place*?

1. What notions of identity does the text *My Place* reveal, from the viewpoint of the "insider"?
2. Whose voices are being heard and whose voices are being silenced, from the narrative standpoint of this text?
3. How can the findings made in this study apply to an educational setting?

To the following question:

How is the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place* in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity?

From this question, three subsequent focus questions will follow:

1. How do the components of Gee's (2000) theory illuminate the current crisis of mixed race identity formation in Australia?
2. How does Gee's (2000) theory relate to the literature base dealing with the current identity crisis?
3. How can the findings made in this study apply to an educational setting?

Note the last question did not change.

Finding My Story

Considering my Tacit Knowledge

As illustrated in the preceding Table 2, this study commenced in an effort to examine the notion of mixed-heritage Indigenous identity crisis. Originally, this inquiry was based on my own "tacit knowledge" rather than "propositional knowledge" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 40). According to Neilson (1997, p. 47),

> Tacit knowledge is knowledge gained from direct experience with objects or events as opposed to propositional knowledge, which may also dwell on objects or events but includes no first-hand experience with them.

Within this context, tacit knowledge (Neilson, 1997, p. 47) was gained firstly from my own experience as a mixed heritage Indigenous Australian. I understood what it felt like to live in a society that often judged one's identity on physical appearance. For example, if I told friends that I was of Aboriginal heritage, I would repeatedly receive replies such as, "Well you're lucky because you don't look Aboriginal", "Oh, that's why you must tan easily", "I wish I had a bit of 'Abo' in me too, then I could tan like you can!" and, "That explains why your brother is so dark." These responses were based primarily on the way in which I appeared.

My "direct experience" (Neilson, 1997, p. 47) with this issue generated in me a desire to explore *if* and *in what ways* other mixed heritage Indigenous Australians experienced an identity crisis. As such, this "tacit knowledge" (Lincoln & Gubar, 1985, p. 40) acted as a "preliminary basis for exploration and the relationships and processes associated" (Neilson, 1997, p. 47) with the mixed heritage Indigenous experience. For this reason, I chose to journal my experience, entitling my diary "My Journey", to contribute to a process called "narrative self-analysis" (Loughran, J., Hamilton, M., Lobesky, V., 2004) and to illustrate the "emergent design" (Creswell, 2010) and "iterative" (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010, p. 505) processes that I would possibly encounter (these terms will be expanded upon shortly). An example of my thinking is illustrated in the following diary entry excerpt:

My Journey	20/03/11	My Direct Experiences
I remember seeing a couple of my friends in school struggle with their identity because they did not "appear" Aboriginal, even though their ancestors were Aboriginal. I would often hear comments such as, "You don't look like a *real* Aborigine!", "Why are you so white if you claim to be Aboriginal?" and "Why would you want to be associated with Indigeneity?" I saw some of my friends deny their Aboriginality in front of certain people such as popular social groups. Later, they would tell me that they prefer to identify with their Aboriginality to other Aboriginals. Sometimes I wonder if this "identity crisis" is common in Australia, or if it is just an infrequent occurrence that has only happened to a few of my friends. I would love to examine the extent of this crisis and find out if there are others out there who experience it. I want people to be proud of their Aboriginality.		

Considering my Propositional Knowledge to Choose the Story

In order to reduce bias and to contribute to my thought processes outlined in "My Journey", I had to begin a process of merging tacit knowledge into propositional knowledge (Neilson, 1997). In other words, I had to discover a way of examining "objects or events but [without] first-hand experience" (Neilson, 1997, p. 47). This understanding acted as a driving force behind my objectives. Hence, whilst conducting my literature review, I chose to explore the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis primarily from a perspective other than my own. To do this, I researched first-hand accounts that discussed this particular identity crisis. This enabled me to reduce bias by discussing the experience of other individuals rather than my own, as illustrated in Chapter Two.

Since Chapter One and Two had revealed that research on the Australian Indigenous mixed heritage identity crisis was highly limited, I wanted to fill this gap by exploring this particular crisis through research. In conjunction with this objective, because an examination of critics and studies in the literature review had highlighted that narratives reveal the nature of mixed-heritage Indigenous identity crisis and thus warranted attention from researchers (Stanton, 1997; Rodan, 2004), I saw the study of narrative as a means of addressing the current gap on mixed-heritage Indigenous identity crisis.

Within this context, the literature review had also revealed that Sally Morgan's autobiographical text, *My Place* (1987) dealt with the experience of a mixed heritage Aboriginal Australian who struggled to find her "place" in Australian society. Moreover, the critical discussions surrounding the value of studying *My Place* (Morgan, 1987) positioned the text in a good light for this research project, as detailed

in Chapters One and Two. At the same time, I also believed that "autobiography is the highest and most instructive form in which the understanding of life comes before us" (Dlithey, as cited in Misch, 2002, p. 8). Spicer (2007, p. 5) testifies to this notion in his statement, "it is not the 'truth of facts,' but the truth of man that becomes legible, and even established, in the act of autobiography." In this way, I saw autobiographies as "'true' insofar as they constitute the self-reflection of the author" (p. 8). Hence, since I wanted to explore a *real* phenomena of human experience, it was appropriate that an autobiography would be used as the sample in this study to "develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon" (Creswell, 2005, p. 202). An example of my thinking can be found in the following diary excerpt:

My Journey	20/03/11	My Direct Experiences
I recently found a statement that says autobiography is not about the "truth of facts" but "the truth of man that becomes legible, and even established, in the act of autobiography." I really like this statement as it points to the fact that autobiography does not necessarily need to be about a bung of facts that make up a story. Instead, autobiography is really about human beings and the truth of human existence: what is it like to be a human that has feelings that fluctuate, feelings that can be damaged and feelings that can impact the way one treats another person? What does autobiography say about the way in which we look at people and judge them based on their appearance? These are all the questions that I believe this statement deals with. I am really looking forward to delving into more reading on autobiography and what the essence of autobiography is all about.		

Given this propositional knowledge, it was in this context that I chose to learn more about the identity crisis through autobiographical narrative, and in particular *My Place* (Morgan, 1987), rather than other forms of literature and formulate a research inquiry process to do so. Hence, although my journal, "My Journey", would act as a secondary to the main objective, I would be able to reduce bias by relying primarily on Sally's experience in *My Place* (Morgan, 1987), rather than my own experience.

Hence this propositional knowledge gained from my literature review allowed me to formulate my objective, which was to answer the following question:

How is the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place?*

In order to narrow down the main objective, subsequent focus questions ensued:

1. What notions of identity does the text *My Place* reveal, from the viewpoint of the "insider"?
2. Whose voices are being heard and whose voices are being silenced, from the narrative standpoint of this text?
3. How can the findings made in this study apply to an educational setting?

These questions framed the choice of research design that could be implemented, which will be discussed shortly. The process in which I undertook to formulate the preceding questions is illustrated in the following diary excerpt:

My Journey	16/10/10	Formulating the Questions
I have been writing my literature review and have found that there is a major gap when it comes to academic research on the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis. This is despite the fact that there are so many narratives out there that deal with this issue. In this way, I believe that mixed heritage Indigenous voices are being silenced because little research has been conducted on the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis. I would love to explore what notions of identity are revealed in Sally Morgan's "*My Place",* considering this is a text that deals with the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis. I also want to examine whose voices are being heard and whose voices are being silenced in "*My Place".* Perhaps this way I will be able to explore the notion of Indigenous identity and the reasons why mixed heritage Indigenous Australians seem to be encountering an identity crisis.		

Propositional Knowledge into Narrative Research

Evidently, in response to the propositional knowledge, objective and focus questions discussed above, the type of research chosen for this study became narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010) because I understood that "We dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, plan, revise, criticize, gossip, learn, hate and love by narrative" (Hardy, 1968, p. 5). In this way, I was

interested in examining a first-hand experience of mixed heritage Indigenous Australians by "attending to [their] stories" (Lawler, 2002, p. 225) to "characterize the phenomena of human experience" (Heil-burn, 1998, p. 225). Since "wherever there are humans there appears to be stories" (Cobley, 2001, p. 2), I saw narrative inquiry as an important method in "trying to make sense of life as lived" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 78) in the mixed-heritage Indigenous Australian experience. As such, narrative inquiry appropriately fit the objective of exploring the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis in *My Place* (Morgan, 1987).

Within this context, it is important to distinguish between "narrative" and "narrative analysis" (King & Harrocks, 2009). According to Connelly & Clandinin (1990, p. 2), narrative refers to people who "lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives", which can be re-told in the form of autobiography, biography, journal articles, diary-entries and other forms of texts (Collins, 2008, p. 23). The purpose of telling these stories can be summarized in Fulford's (1999, p. 14) statement that "storytelling is an attempt to deal with and at least partly contain the terrifying haphazard quality of life." In other words, individuals or groups who tell stories often do so with a certain "agenda", whether this is for leisure, political purposes or to raise awareness about a certain phenomena of human experience. In response to this awareness, my reflections can be found in the following diary excerpt:

My Journey	04/04/11	Autobiographies
After researching the characteristics of narrative, I have come to realize that stories carry a lot of value because they get to the core of human experience by using words that can often come from the heart. However, I must recognize that writing does often come with a certain agenda. Bearing this in mind, I must think about ways in which I can alleviate inconsistencies or bias. On the other hand, I could use this "agenda" as empowerment, for if *My Place* was written specifically with the agenda to highlight the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis, then I will be able to explore this in more depth than I would be able to with other texts that only touch upon the issue.		

Narrative analysis, on the other hand, consists of studies in which the primary data source is some type of subject provided by oral, written or visual story-telling (Lieblich, Tuval-Maschiach & Zilber, 1998). Rather than simply reading the narrative, "narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000, p. 2). In this way, I saw that narrative analysis could be used as "a way of understanding experience" of individuals "over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000, p. 20). Thus, since narrative analysis "focuses on the composition of a story as a way to represent experiences" (Lego, 2004, p. 98), I understood that this research method would be most appropriate for the objective of my study in examining the experience of mixed heritage Indigenous Australians.

In order to further justify my use of narrative inquiry in this study, I would like to note that narrative analysis provides the opportunity for developing an understanding of human experience that may not be possible without the application of such a method. My reasoning comes from researcher Lawler (as cited in May, 2002, p. 255), who states,

> If we want to find out how people make identities, make sense of the world and of their place within it – if we want to find out how they interpret the world and themselves – we will have to attend to the stories they tell.

This understanding strengthened my reason for choosing narrative research, confirming that it is important in academic research as it conveys personal feelings, experiences and discourses that may never be discovered through quantitative evidence. As Clandinin (2007, p. 37) states, "narratives often seem able to give us understanding of people in a way that more 'objective' methodologies cannot." Thus,

narrative inquiry was appropriately chosen to meet the objectives of this study. The thought processes in which I encountered in choosing narrative inquiry is illustrated in the following diary excerpt:

My Journey	05/04/11	Narrative Analysis
There is so much research out there that explores the ways in which narrative analysis can be meaningful and highly valuable for exploring human experiences. Unlike many other methodologies such as questionnaires and experimental designs, narrative analysis seems to provide a deep understanding of people, the way they do things, the way they feel and the way in which they deal with certain situations. For this reason I believe narrative inquiry is very valuable for my study.		

Qualitative Research

Since my propositional knowledge placed me in the position of studying Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987) instead of statistics surrounding the issue of mixed heritage Indigenous identity, the narrative analysis (King & Harrocks, 2009) approach I had chosen placed me in the position of undertaking qualitative research (Mariampolski, 2001). Unlike quantitative research, which "explains phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods" (Aliaga and Gunderson, 2000), I chose to use qualitative research for this study because, as Mariampolksi (2001, p. 7) states,

> Qualitative research seeks the meanings and motivations behind behavior as well as a thorough account of behavioral facts and implications via a researcher's encounter with people's own actions, words and ideas.

As outlined in Chapter Two, since narrative is a means by which one can find out the meaning and motivations behind human experience, I saw qualitative research as a means for answering these questions and to "explain the meaning of [the] phenomena with as little disruption [to] the natural setting as possible" (Merriam, as cited in Dallas, 2009, p. 98). Thus, rather than relying heavily on statistics, which had the potential to lead to generalisations in the findings (Flick, 2009), I wanted to deal with

the *core* of human experience rather than statistics that may arise from human experience.

A secondary to my reason for choosing qualitative research was "the nature of the research question itself" (Mertens, 2005, p. 233). Since I wanted to explore *how* the notion of Indigenous identity was framed in Morgan's *My Place*, quantitative data would have limited the possibilities of the findings and, once again, lead to generalizations of findings (Flick, 2009). My reasoning is supported by Patton (2001 as cited in Golafshani, 2003, p. 598), who argues that the real world are subject to change and therefore, "a qualitative researcher should be present during the changes to record an event after and before the change occurs." Hence for these reasons I saw qualitative research as a necessary method for addressing both my objective as well the narrative inquiry approach I was to choose, as will be discussed shortly. Further details regarding the thought processes behind my reason for choosing a qualitative method over a quantitative strategy can be found in the following diary excerpt:

My Journey	09/04/11	Qualitative Research
I really want to examine the *core* of human experience. I want to attend to the emotions, feelings, thoughts and experiences of Indigenous Australians who have mixed heritage. As my research suggests, the best way to explore this kind of experience would be through qualitative research. Qualitative research will open up a world of possibilities for me. If I were to use quantitative research on *My Place,* I would have to create specific strategies for measuring the identity crisis; but I don't even know what kind of experiences this identity crisis encounters yet. As such, I really want to use a qualitative research approach to explore the "phenomena" of human experience in relation to the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis. I believe this will allow me more freedom to delve into the nature of this particular experience.		

Understanding the Story through Narrative Self Analysis

My Journey

As mentioned previously, I chose to keep a process diary as a key element of data collection and analysis to detail my "presuppositions, choices, experiences, and

actions during the research process" (Mruck & Breuer, 2003, p. 3). By keeping this reflective journal, I would provide another element to this study, "narrative self-analysis". This meant that I would be able to,

> ..Make it clear how [my] own experiences, values, and positions of privilege in various hierarchies have influenced [my] research interests, the way [I] choose to do [my] research, and the ways [I] choose to represent [the] findings (Harrison, MacGibbon, & Morton, 2001, p. 325).

Hence in keeping this process diary, I would be able to detail "what I am learning from [my] data" (Johnston & Christenton, 2010, p. 517) such as "emerging concepts, themes, or patterns found in the data; the need for further data collection; a comparison that needs to be made in the data", my own perspectives on Indigenous identity and any other emerging knowledge that may contest, confirm, challenge or illuminate both my tacit and propositional knowledge. As Johnson and Christenton (2012, p. 517) state, journaling is an "important tool to use during a research project to record insights gained from reflecting on data." In this way, I would also be able to provide an "audit trail" (Holloway, 1997, p. 26) which would contribute to the authenticity of this study, as will be addressed shortly. An example of this reflective journal can be found in the following diary excerpt:

My Journey	07/10/10	Choosing to Journal My Experience
I have decided to keep a process diary for the course of this study. This will enable me to reflect upon research, experiences and my reading of "*My Place".* I may also be able to use this diary in my methodology chapter to highlight the reasoning behind the decisions I make in regards to the formulation of objectives, choice of research methods and data collection and analysis. I have elected to call this diary "My Journey" because this is a journey into the "unknown" – into a world that might be confronting, challenging, appeasing or surprisingly pleasant. Either way, this study will be a journey not only for the writer, but for the reader as well, which means that I must document it in the form of a journal.		

Researcher as Instrument

Since I was working within the qualitative framework, I understood that "the researcher-as-instrument [was] a defining characteristics of qualitative research" (Padgett, 1998, p. 18). Hence my decision to conduct a narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2009) and self-narrative analysis (Loughran Hamilton, & Lobesky, 2004) within the framework of qualitative methodology for this study placed me in the position of being the "instrument" collecting the data for this inquiry (Padgett, 1998).

Within this context, I saw my role in accordance with Padgett's (1998, p. 18) metaphor of the qualitative research as "a voyage of discovery" where the researcher is "the captain and the navigator of the ship." In other words, I saw my qualitative research as a process of discovery and I was in charge of making sense of these discoveries. As Padgett (1998) argues, in paraphrasing the French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss (1966),

> The qualitative researcher is a bricoleur, a Jack (or Jill) of all trades, a professional do-it-yourself who creates a bricolage, a pieced-together construction of ideas. We must be pragmatic and creative, deploying multiple methods and approaches to produce new knowledge in often unpredictable ways (as cited in Padgett, 1998, p. 18).

Given this context, I understood the potential risks involved in being the "researcher-as-instrument" such as the unpredictability of the findings; however, I am "a person willing to take risks and rejection with good humor", which is a "critical factor in the study's success" (Padgett, 1998, p. 24). Thus, while Padgett (p. 18) states that "qualitative research need not be conducted by a single investigator [which] can be very effective", I have opted to be the single investigator to decrease the "demanding

flexibility and creativity" (Padgett, 1998, p. 24) that can arise when more than one investigator is involved in the inquiry process.

Being the sole investigator, I became in charge of deciding "which questions to ask and in what order, what to observe, what to write down" (Mertens, 2005, p. 247). As such, the credibility of the qualitative research depended on "the ability and the effort" I was willing to put in to ensure that the findings were "authentic" (Golafshani, 2003, p. 598). Due to this responsibility it was important that I adopted strategies that generated authenticity in my data collection, analysis and findings. Thus, several strategies were implemented to ensure authenticity throughout this study and will be detailed next. The thought processes I encountered as I became aware of my position as the "researcher-as-instrument" are detailed in the following journal entry excerpt:

My Journey	15/06/11	Researcher-As-Instrument
After researching the characteristics of qualitative research, I have come to realize that I am the "researcher-as-instrument". Being the "instrument", I understand that there are potential risks that may arise because all human beings can make mistakes, present bias and choose to omit or represent certain aspects of the research design. In order to ensure that my findings are as authentic as possible, I must consider a variety of methods that can be used to alleviate bias. I will consider this as I continue my study by recognizing potential biases that may arise throughout my analysis.		

Authenticity

Following on from my position as the "researcher-as-instrument" (Padgett, 1998, p. 18), in order to explain the data collection and analysis processes I undertook for this study, it is essential to first describe how I aimed to present findings that had a high level of authenticity. As outlined previously, being "the researcher is the instrument" (Patton, 2001, p. 14), I understood that "the credibility of a qualitative research depend[ed] on the ability and effort of the researcher" (Golafshani, 2003, p. 598). This placed me in a position of great responsibility, as I had to present findings that were "credible, trustworthy, authentic, balanced about the phenomenon under study,

and fair to the people studied" (Patton, 2002, p. 51). Without authenticity, this study would have been rendered invalid, as its objective was to address, real, genuine experiences in "trying to make sense of life as lived" (Clandinin & Conelly, 2000, p. 78).

While researchers such as Lincoln & Guba (1985) provide terms such as credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability to ensure authenticity, I understand that narrative analysis is inherently subjective. As such, the notions of trustworthiness outlined by Lincoln & Guba (1985) do not apply to such a study and indeed in many thesis' they are not even used. For the purpose of this study and to show how my personal understanding came to be, I created my own criterion. In other words, Lincoln & Guba's (1985) criterion was not used, but the substance of their criterion has enabled me to make up my own criterion.

In this way, I agree with Morris (2009, p. 197) who argues that it is up to the researcher to "make [his/her] own judgments about the validity of the findings and their applicability to other settings" because differing approaches to research would require a variety of strategies "in order to reflect the multiple ways of establishing truth" (Golafshani, 2003, p. 603). As such, I formulated my own criterion to ensure authenticity and reliability and chose a variety of appropriate methods to meet this criterion and termed them transparency, clarity and adaptability. The next section will illustrate the ways in which I contributed to authenticity by incorporating techniques that I termed transparency, clarity and adaptability. Before I present this criterion, however, it is important to examine my thought processes that I encountered prior to creating this criterion, as detailed on the following page:

My Journey	11/07/11	Creating Authenticity
I really need to use a variety of techniques to ensure that I produce high quality qualitative data by demonstrating a high level of authenticity! Because of the nature of this research design, being narrative-analysis and self-narrative analysis, I don't think I will use the terms "credibility", "transferability", "dependability" and so forth as described by Gilbert and Guba (1985) because of the nature of this study (being narrative self-analysis and narrative analysis). I need to create my own terms and show how these contribute to the overall authenticity of my study. While I will draw on the concepts behind their definitions, the terms will be slightly different in order to reflect the processes I used to ensure "authenticity" in my study.		

Transparency

The first method I used to ensure authenticity was a strategy I termed "transparency". The term "transparency" refers to ""the full, accurate, and timely disclosure of information" (Oliver, 2010, p. 30). When applied to a research context, Duke and Mallette (2010, p. 320) argue that design transparency refers to "the extent to which there is adequate description of the research design type from an existing typology or an adequate description of the elements of design if the research design used is new." In this context, since the focus in qualitative research is data, one way in which I addressed credibility was "to make the data visible" (Lundy, 2008, p. 62). Hence where possible, I made direct quotations from the text visible to the reader by presenting them via photographic evidence (see Appendix 2) and in a grid (see Appendix 4). As Lundy (2008, p. 66) states, "By having access to the data, readers of this study are able to judge the accuracy of my interpretations and are able to see how they are formed." In other words, by making these direct quotations visible to the reader, I was able to highlight that my findings derived from direct quotations from the text rather than my own tacit knowledge. An example of my ability to make my findings "transparent" can be found in the following photo, which illustrates my interpretive notes:

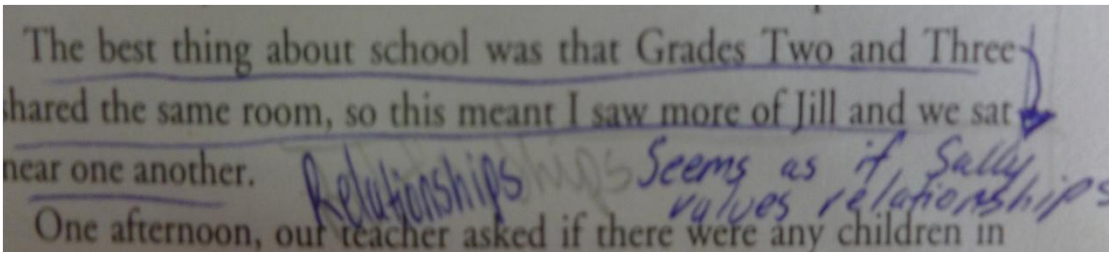


Figure 2: An example of the way in which I enhanced authenticity through making my findings transparent

Another way in which I ensured transparency within this study was by making my personal experience up front through the use of a reflective journal. In this way, I was able to address any biases that may exist, provide descriptions of the research design and the reflective processes I experienced in coming to these decisions. I was also able to detail how I refined my understanding with constant reflection, comparison and analysis. In other words, this reflective journal indicated the logical processes I went through to come to the conclusions that I made. Hence, this process enabled me to ensure that my study contributed to a high level of transparency (Oliver, 2010). An example of this "transparency" can be found in the following excerpt:

My Journey	08/05/11	Transparency
I really want to examine the *core* of human experience. I want to attend to the emotions, feelings, thoughts and experiences of Indigenous Australians who have mixed heritage. As my research suggests, the best way to explore this kind of experience would be through qualitative research. Qualitative research will open up a world of possibilities for me. If I were to use quantitative research on "*My Place",* I would have to create specific statistical strategies for measuring the identity crisis; but I don't even know what kind of experience this identity crisis encounters yet (other than through my own tacit knowledge). As such, I really want to use a qualitative research approach to explore the "phenomena" of human experience in relation to the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis.		

Clarity

Similarly to the way in which I ensured "transparency", I utilized the reflective journal to ensure that my study was clear, concise and made sense to the reader. In this way, I left an "audit trail" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 317) so that the "findings [could] be confirmed by others" (Padgett, 1998, p. 101) in the case of an audit. Leaving an audit trail meant I had to adopt "a spirit of openness" and document "each

step taken in data collection and analysis" (Padget, 1998, p. 101). This strategy was pertinent to my study as I was operating within the narrative analysis framework, which meant that change was expected, but it had to be tracked and made publically inspectable (Mertens, 2005). Thus I created an "audit trail" (Holloway, 1997, p. 26) by keeping researcher notes in regards to the processes I used to collect the data, interpret the data and construct the findings from the data in a separate analysis grid (Morris, 2006). This process contributed to the overall clarity of my study. This "audit trail" (Holloway, 1997, p. 26) has been, and will continue to be, displayed throughout this entire chapter, although I provide an example in the following excerpt:

My Journey	29/08/11	Emergent Design

As a result of the narrative analysis, literature base and emergent design, it has come to my attention that my research question needs to be refocused. As such, I have changed my questions from:

How is the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's My Place?

4. What notions of identity does the text *My Place* reveal, from the viewpoint of the "insider"?
5. Whose voices are being heard and whose voices are being silenced, from the narrative standpoint of this text?
6. How can the findings made in this study apply to an educational setting?

To the following question:

How is the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place* in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity?

From this question, three subsequent focus questions will follow:

4. How do the components of this theory illuminate the current crisis of mixed race identity formation in Australia?
5. How does Gee's theory relate to the current literature base dealing with the current identity crisis?
6. How can the findings made in this study apply to an educational setting?

Note the last question did not change.

Applicability

Applicability was particularly pertinent to this study because, as outlined in Chapter One, I wanted this study to act as a stepping-stone for Australia to merge towards the reconciliation process. According to Deming and Swaffield (2011, p. 56), "Applicability refers to forms of external validity of or generalizability, where procedures and/or findings may be extended or are transferable to a wider context or analogous situation." Since "this derives particularly from the choice of research

design and its implementation" (Deming & Swaffield, 2011, p. 56), I formulated the following question that demonstrated a high level of applicability:

4. **How can the findings made in this study apply to an educational setting?**

As a result, this would allow others to "make transferability judgments based on their own experience" (Mertens, 2009, p. 259) this is an attempt to develop an instrument that has arisen out of the elements and may be applicable to other teaching sights. My thought processes can be found in the following journal entry:

My Journey	29/08/10	Applicability
If my study is to be of any significance within society, it NEEDS to be applicable to other contexts. Nothing can be done unless this study is read and applied to other contexts! As I have noted, the Australian National Curriculum aims to appreciate the Aboriginal culture and as such I believe that this study is of great importance to the educational system. Hence, I need to formulate a question that will connect the findings of this study to recommendations that can be applied to the educational field.		

Analysing the Story

Since I have highlighted how I aimed to present findings that were authentic, I can now turn to the process of analyzing the story. Data collection and analysis occurred at the same time and therefore these processes will be detailed in this section in collaboration with one another. As such, I have rejected the idea that the data collection process can (and in some cases, should) be written up separately to the data analysis section (Wood, Kerr & Brink, 2006). My reasoning derives from Ezzy (2002, pp. 60-61) who argues, "If data analysis begins only after the data have been collected, researchers will have missed many valuable opportunities that can be taken only at the same time as they are collecting their data."

A secondary reason for choosing to collaborate data collection with analysis in this section can be summarized by Straus and Corbin (1990, p. 6), who state,

> Each investigator enters the field with some questions or areas for observation, or will soon generate them. Data will be collected on these matters throughout the research endeavor, unless the questions prove, during analysis, to be irrelevant. In order not to miss anything that may be salient, however, the investigator must analyse the first bits of data for cues.

Hence when the data was collected I commenced analyzing it (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 6) as it was used to "guide the questions that [were] asked as the research progress[ed]" and also guided the "formulation of concepts" (Ezzy, 2002, p. 62). These processes will be detailed shortly.

An Iterative Process

Because I alternated between the data collection and data analysis, an iterative process encased the narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2009). According to Miles & Huberman (as cited in Johnson & Christenson, 2012, p. 517) an iterative process refers to a "cyclical or recursive process of collecting data, analyzing the data, collecting additional data, analyzing these data, and so on throughout the research projects." Since I was the researcher-as-instrument, I was basically acting like a "detective" by "carefully examining and asking questions of my data and then re-entering the field to collect more data to help answer my questions" (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 517). Hence, an iterative process was conducted throughout this study. As such, you will expect to see an iterative process throughout the next section.

Intersection of Narrative Self-Analysis

As highlighted previously, narrative self-analysis (Loughran, et al., 2008) has played a major role in the beginning stage of this study and the choice of methodology. Likewise, the narrative self-analysis (Loughran, et al., 2008) process plays a major

role in analyzing the story. Through narrative self-analysis (Loughran, et al., 2008), I was able to identify the major themes and fragments within the text that could be coded and categorized to generate meaning. As such, you will expect to see examples of narrative self-analysis (Loughran, et al., 2008) in journal entries, photographic evidence, written notes and typed notes within tables throughout this section.

Choice of Open Coding

In order to make sense of the text and to relate it back to study questions, I understood that I needed to devise a system of coding to dissect the data into "meaningful pieces" (Becker & Bryman, 2004, p.11). As Taylor, Sinha and Gosha (2006, p. 160) state,

> It is not possible to overstate the importance of coding. It is not just that codes provide a means for data organization and data retrieval. They are essential for any thorough analysis of research data.

Hence the initial process I undertook through collecting the data was "open coding" (Punch, 2005, p. 207). Open coding refers to the process of "breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data" (Strauss & Corbin, 2007; 61) by assigning labels/codes on pieces of data (Punch, 2005, p. 2005). This process will be illustrated shortly.

There were several reasons associated with my choice of open coding. Firstly, I agree with Charmaz (2006, p. 45) who argues that qualitative coding functions to summarize segments of the data, "name them in concise terms, and propose an analytic handle to develop abstract ideas for interpreting each segment of data." In this way, I believed that open coding would enable the completion of "the most mundane categorical identification" (Punch, 2005, p. 207) through which I, "on a word-by-word basis, [would] identify and organize raw data" from the text "into

broad categories of words, actions, and perceptions" (Millis, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010, p. 156).

A secondary reason for my initial choice in open coding was because I agree with Boeijie (2010, p. 97) who states:

> Open coding encourages a thematic approach since it forces the analyst to break up the text into pieces, to compare them and to assign them to groups that address the same theme.

In this way, I saw open coding as a means of creating a "clear organization of the data" to enable "the easy retrieval of the fragments that have been assigned a specific code" (Boeijie, 2010, pp. 97-98).

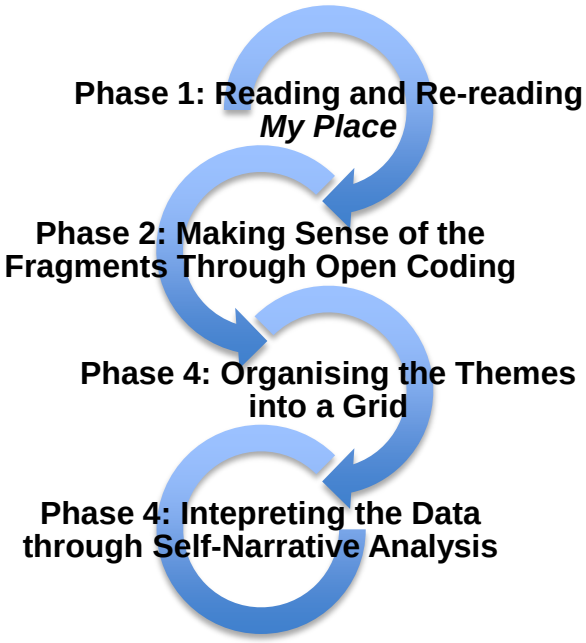
In addition, open coding would allow the possibility of emergent design, as discussed previously. As Millis, Durepos & Wiebe (2010, p. 156) state,

> Open coding stimulates generative and comparative questions to guide the researcher in future coding and interpretation and theory development, and may even guide the researcher to return to the field for more data.

Hence open coding (Millis et al., 2010) would provide a means for "generating conceptual labels and categories for use in theory building" through the function of "expos[ing] theoretical possibilities in the data" (Punch, 2005, p. 207). Hence, rather than using a "priori coding scheme" (Punch, 2005, p. 207) as the first data collection and analysis phase, open coding would enable the possibility for emergent design to take place, which would contribute to a greater, more insightful understanding of the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis.

On the following page, Table 3 illustrates the way in which I undertook this process of open coding, which will be expanded upon next.

Table 3: The Open Coding Process



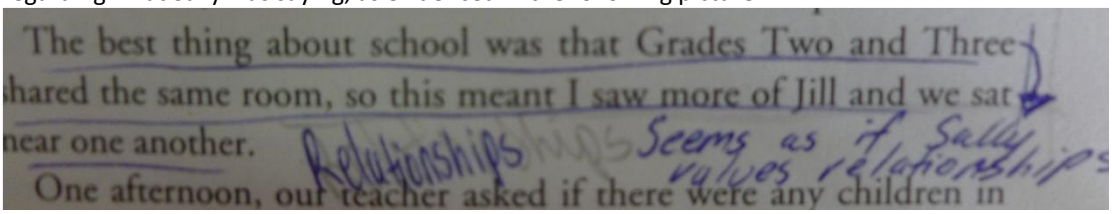
The Open Coding Process

Phase 1: Reading and Re-Reading My Place

As detailed in Table 3, the first process I undertook was a reading of *My Place*. This was a crucial step, as it would enable me to have an understanding of the narrative and the themes that were present within the text. After having read the text, I then re-read it "line by line" (Boeijie, 2010, p. 98) and examined each "fragment" (Boeijie, 2010, p. 98) that stood out through the process. I also wrote interpretive notes, as illustrated in Appendix 2 and in the following journal entry:

My Journey	10/09/10	Reading 'My Place'
I have been reading through *My Place* again to explore what the dialogue and descriptions say. Rather than skimming over the words, I have been reading each word line by line to examine the points that seem to stand out. For instance, when Sally states, "I felt alienated" in the first chapter, I read the dialogue surrounding the words and what they also said. Hence, instead of selecting these words as a semi-fragment, I examined how these words were connected to the words surrounding them, which produced the main "fragment". I also made interpretive notes throughout the reading of the text		

regarding what Sally was saying, as evidenced in the following picture:



Phase 2: Making Sense of the Fragments Through Open Coding

When reading the text during Phase 1, I realized that there were repeated themes that were arising, such as Sally's love of the nature, relationships and stories. This meant that the next process I had to undertake was to determine "why this fragment [was] a meaningful whole" by examining which fragments "belonged together and dealt with mainly one subject" (Boeijie, 2010, p. 98). Hence I decided to collate all of the quotes together that "dealt with mainly one subject" (Boeijie, 2010, p. 98) to produce a list of themes.

However, although I had written numerous notes surrounding the themes that were being drawn out of the text in phase 1, I realized that I needed to form a system of "coding" that would be easily identifiable to the reader. As such, I colour coded the fragments that dealt with the main themes, such as nature, relationships, "Othering" and stories. This enabled me to easily identify the themes (see Appendix 3). An example of the way in which I highlighted this text can be found in the following photos in Figure 3 and 4:

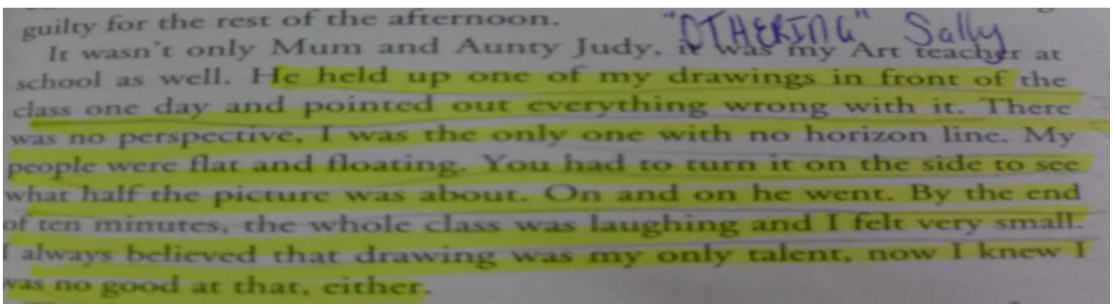


Figure 3: *This is an example of the colour coding process I undertook to highlight the main theme of "Othering" in Sally's experience. Yellow was used to indicate this theme.*

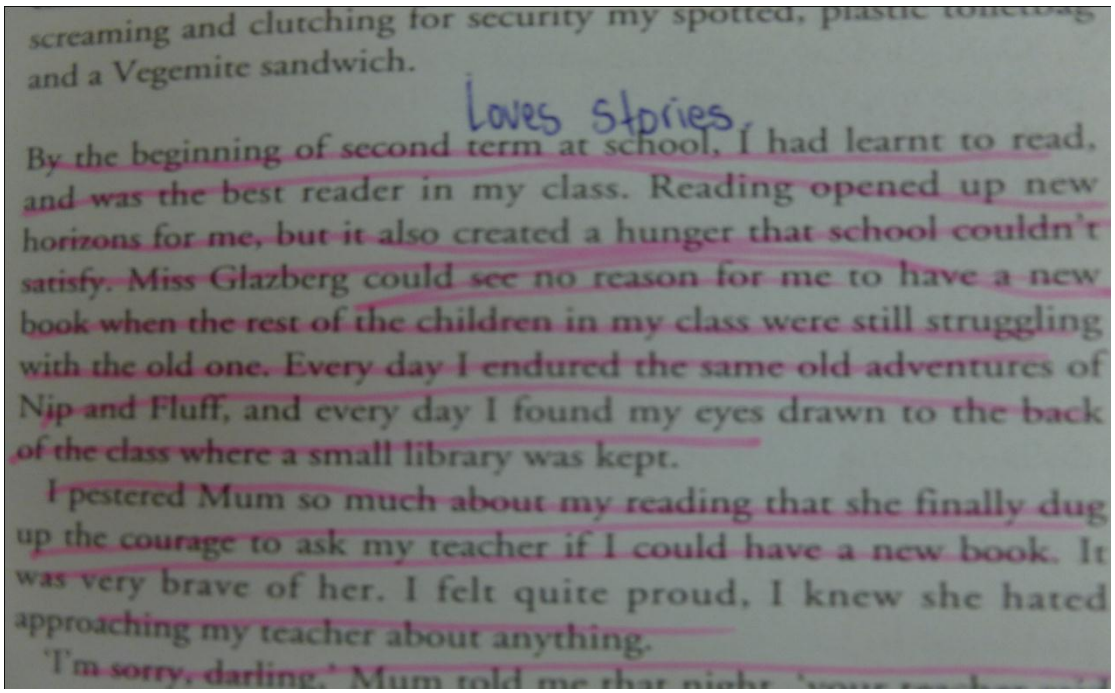


Figure 4: *An example of the way in which I highlighted the theme of "stories" in pink.*

Phase 3: Organizing the Data into a Themed Grid

The next process I undertook was "on a word-by-word basis", I "identified and organized raw data" from the text "into broad categories of words, actions, and perceptions" (Millis, Durepos, Wiebe, 2010, p. 156). To do this, I collated all of the highlighted segments within the text and organized them into a grid. I also colour-coded this grid in accordance with the preceding highlighted fragments, as illustrated in Figure 3 and in Appendix 3. Moreover, through the process of coding, I assigned an appropriate name for the themes, which derived from the main themes that had been highlighted. An example of this process can be found in Table 4 on the following page (see Appendix 4 for more details).

Table 4: An Example of the Themed Coding Process

SALLY'S EXPERIENCE	COLOUR CODING: Orange = Nature Purple = Family Pink = Stories Yellow = Othering Blue = Aboriginality Green = Finding Place
Code	**Evidence**
Finding Place	- We were different people now. What had begun as a tentative search for knowledge had grown into a spiritual and emotional pilgrimage. We had an Aboriginal consciousness now, and were proud of it (p. 296). - "We belonged now…" (p. 296).
Nature	- The swamp behind our place had become an important place for me. It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small, muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to join the Canning River.
Relationships	- I felt very strongly about families stick together. So strongly, in fact, that I had a secret meeting with my brothers and sisters; for some reason, I was frightened we would be put in an orphanage (p. 59). - The best thing about grade two was that I got to share the room with Jill.
"Othering" Sally	**The Hospital** - The hospital again, and the echo of my reluctant feet through the long, empty corridors. I hated hospitals and hospital smells. I hated the bare boards that gleamed with the newly applied polish, the dust-free windows and sills, and the flashes of shiny chrome that snatched my distorted shape as we hurried past. I was a grubby five-year-old in an alien environment. **The School** - Shaking her head in disbelief, she muttered, 'You dirty, dirty girl." She dragged me back to the front of the class and shoved me out the door. "Out you go, you are not to enter this class again. You sit out there and dry off!" I sat alone and wet on the hard jarrah bench (p. 28). - My prize was a choice of any book available from the bookshops. When our headmaster, Mr Buddee, asked me what I had in mind, I replied, without hesitation, "A book of fairytales please." I think he was rather taken aback, because he told me to go away and think about it for a few days. - Chapter entitled "Pretending" (p. 39). - The kids at school had also begun asking us what country we came from. This puzzled me because, up until then, I'd thought we were the same as them. If I insisted that we came from Australia, they'd reply, "Yeah, but what about ya parents, bet they didn't come from Australia" (p. 45 **The University** - "Mrs Morgan," the senior officer said as I sat down. "We'll get straight to the point. We have received information, from what appears to be a very reliable source, that you have obrained the Aboriginal scholarship under false pretences. - The senior officer looked at me silently for a few minutes and then said, "Well, Mrs Morgan. You are either telling the truth, or you're a very good actress! I was amazed, still my innocence wasn't to be conceded." … I felt sick and wasn't sure how much longer my legs would support me. It was just as well I'd lost my temper, I thought (p. 178). - What did it really mean to be Aboriginal?
Stories	- By the beginning of second term at school, I had learnt to read, and was the best reader in my class. Reading opened up new horizons for me, but it also created a hunger that school couldn't satisfy. Miss Glazberg could see no reason for me to have a new book when the rest of the children in my class were struggling with the old one. - There was nothing we loved better than huddling around the wood stove on cold afternoons, swapping stories (p. 91). - She desires to hear the stories of Arthur, Daisy and Gladys (to gain an insight into her heritage and what makes her who she is).

Phase 4: Interpreting the Grid through Reflective Thought Processes

Since "all qualitative research involves attributing meaning to segments of text" (McLeod, 2011, p. 79) and as I was the researcher-as-instrument, I had to develop a system of interpreting the fragments that I had collated through the preceding processes. To do this, I judged "whether the fragment was relevant to the research" (Boeijie, 2010, p. 98) by linking it back to the question on identity. For instance, the fragments that dealt with nature suggested that Sally's identity was tied to the nature; thereby these fragments were clearly relevant to the objective of this study. The thinking behind this process can be found in the following diary excerpt:

My Journey	10/09/11	Interpreting the Themes
There seems to be five main themes arising in Sally's experience: Finding Place (a journey), Relationships, Othering, Stories and Nature. It seems that Sally consistently describes the nature over the suburban land, foregrounding that the nature is more important to her than the suburban area in which she lives. Moreover, the repetitive feelings of "alienation", "puzzlement" and "confusion" appear to occur when Sally is in the "white" world such as the hospital, the school and the university. They also arise when her mum and nan refuse to tell her about her heritage. Interestingly, however, Sally still foregrounds her family as a massive part of her life by consistently referring to them. She seems to feel "secure" around them by explaining how she felt "warm" and "safe" when she slept with her family and sat around the fire with them. In addition, Sally also appears to love stories by her consistent discussion around the topic of reading. As such, it appears that Sally's identity revolves around her the nature, stories and family; however, the school, hospital and university seem to other her as she tells me they are "dedicated to taking the spirit out of life". Hence, Sally's Othering appears to present "itself through the use of metaphors" (Hays, 2006, p. 41).		

Following on from the thought processes outlined in the preceding diary, I created a table that details my "interpretation/relevance to identity" in relation to the themes that I had discovered. While Appendix 5 provides an in-depth example of this process, I have incorporated an excerpt on the following page in Table 5.

Table 5: An example of interpretation/relevance to identity as indicated on the right hand column

SALLY'S EXPERIENCE		COLOUR CODING: Orange = Nature Purple = Family Pink = Stories Yellow = Othering Blue = Aboriginality Green = Finding Place
Code	**Evidence**	**Interpretation/ Relevance to Identity**
Finding Place	- We were different people now. What had begun as a tentative search for knowledge had grown into a spiritual and emotional pilgrimage. We had an Aboriginal consciousness now, and were proud of it (p. 296). - "We belonged now…" (p. 296).	Suggests that she has gained a sense of belonging, which is related to her "Aboriginal Consciousness"
Nature	- The swamp behind our place had become an important place for me. It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small, muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to join the Canning River.	It seems that Sally's identity revolves around the nature. It appears like it is inherent within her.
Relationships	- I felt very strongly about families stick together. So strongly, in fact, that I had a secret meeting with my brothers and sisters; for some reason, I was frightened we would be put in an orphanage (p. 59). - The best thing about grade two was that I got to share the room with Jill.	It seems that Sally feels a strong connection to her family, almost like they are a "protective" mechanism.
"Othering" Sally	**The Hospital** - The hospital and the school: they were places "dedicated to taking the spirit out of life." (p. 14). - The hospital again, and the echo of my reluctant feet through the long, empty corridors. I hated hospitals and hospital smells. I hated the bare boards that gleamed with the newly applied polish, the dust-free windows and sills, and the flashes of shiny chrome that snatched my distorted shape as we hurried past. I was a grubby five-year-old in an alien environment. **The School** - If I insisted that we came from Australia, they'd reply, "Yeah, but what about ya parents, bet they didn't come from Australia" (p. 45) **The University** - Accused of being un-Aboriginal (p. 178).	The way in which Sally experiences "Othering" suggests that her voice is being silenced. She also feels "alienated" and "grubby" in the hospital, suggesting that the hospital could be read as a metaphor for "mainstream" society that serves to suppress her identity. Likewise, the school and university appear to "Other" her, which are also metaphors for the Institution-Identity. These metaphors appear to be silencing Sally's voice.
Stories	- By the beginning of second term at school, I had learnt to read, and was the best reader in my class. Reading opened up new horizons for me, but it also created a hunger that school couldn't satisfy.	Sally's statement is indicative of her deep love of stories. It appears to be something she cannot change about herself.

Intersection of the Literature Review

Implications on Emergent Design

After completing the preceding grid and organizing the information into a coding system that related to my questions as outlined in the preceding Table 5, I realized that I had a lot of information, themes and personal interpretations that related directly to Gee's (2000) theory of identity. The thought processes and analysis that I encountered can be found in the following diary:

My Journey	Gee's Theory	08/09/11
Through my narrative analysis, I have found that the themes in Sally's experience resonate with Gee's (2000) theory of identity. For instance, Sally's love of nature could be read as her Nature-Identity because it is seems to be inherent within her. The Institution-Identity could represent the hospital, school and university, all of which I have found are metaphors for an institution. The Discourse-Identity could refer to the discourse surrounding Sally's identity, such as those posed by her schoolmates regarding to Australian identity. Moreover, since the Affinity-Identity revolves around shared practices, this identity can be seen in Sally's lack of shared practices when she asserts, "What does it mean to be Aboriginal? I'd never lived life as a hunter.." and so forth. As such, I plan to examine Sally's experience in light of Gee's theory (2000) as I believe it can provide a valuable insight into the nature of her identity crisis.		

As a result of the thought processes described in the preceding journal, an important feature that arose throughout my narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010) framework was emergent design (Creswell, 2003). As previously detailed, originally this inquiry was based on my own tacit knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which was the understanding that there are many mixed heritage Indigenous Australians who are caught in between a space of ambiguity because of their mixed-heritage. Secondly, my propositional knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) derived from the literature review highlighted that mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis reveals itself through narratives. However, simply knowing this was not enough, as it limited my focus on examining the nature of mixed heritage Indigenous Australians in terms of finding out *how* and *if* they can overcome this crisis. In other words, my tacit

knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and literature review had limited the possibilities of this study to a mere generalization of Indigenous identity crisis in terms of mixed heritage.

While the open coding process (Millis et al., 2010), which was illustrated previously, was appropriately chosen to explore the notions of mixed heritage Indigenous identity, it, too, limited my ability to delve into the *real* issue that was going on in this identity crisis because I ended up with the same ideas outlined by Gee (2000) in regards to the nature of the identity crisis. Furthermore, as Mishler (2005, p. 316) states, "more inclusive research strategies should combine research types thereby furthering and strengthening developments in the field of narrative study." As such, I understood that optimal research would occur when a variety of research methods were employed in a collaborative way. This realization propelled me further in my research inquiry process and the way in which I should undertake the narrative analysis. Thus, whilst continuing the research for this study, I reviewed the literature review and adapted my research question to gain further depth in my data to include Gee's theory of identity.

Table 6: Gee's Types of Identity

IDENTITY TYPE	PROCESS	POWER	SOURCE OF POWER
Nature Identity A state	Developed from	Forces	In nature
Institution Identity A position	Authorized by	Authorities	Within institutions
Discourse Identity An individual trait	Recognized in	The discourse/dialogue	Of/with "rational" individuals
Affinity Identity Experiences	Shared in	The practice	Of "affinity groups"

As Chapter Two and Table 6 highlighted, Gee's (2000) theory of identity is linked to four processes: Nature Identity, Institution-Identity, Discourse-Identity and Affinity-Identity. Nature-Identity refers to forces in nature that define an individual, such as one's inheritance being Aboriginal or being born a girl instead of a boy (Gee, 2000). This type of Nature-Identity seemed to resonate with the themes of nature, relationships and stories, which I had interpreted as a part of Sally's core identity, as illustrated in the preceding tables and diary excerpts. Hence, by examining the Nature-Identity in relation to Sally's experience, I would be able to delve into the nature of this type of identity as present within Sally.

The Institution-Identity refers to authorities within institutions that define an individual on terms such as their intelligence and position in society (Gee, 2000). It was within this context that I realized the metaphors of The Hospital, The School and The University represented Gee's (2000) theory of the Institution-Identity. As was detailed in Table 5, these metaphors appeared to "Other" Sally by rendering her insignificant and voiceless. As such, I decided to explore Sally's experience in relation to the Institution-Identity through these metaphors.

The Discourse-Identity refers to the dialogue that an individual has with "rational" individuals such as speaking a certain language or about a particular topic (Gee, 2000). Since the discourse within the school surrounding Sally's identity appeared to "Other" Sally, I desired to explore the nature of this identity in terms of Sally's experience.

In addition, the Affinity-Identity refers to the practice of "affinity groups" such as a participating in similar cultural practices (Gee, 2000). As the open coding process (Millis et al., 2010) had revealed Sally's lack of cultural practices in regards to being a "hunter" or a "gatherer" and participating in "corrooroborees", I decided to explore the nature of this type of identity.

As such, I adapted Gee's (2000) theory of identity to provide me with a framework for analyzing the themes that had arisen from the preceding open coding process (Millis et al., 2010). I also re-focused one of my sub-questions to deal with the literature base, as I wanted to examine how Gee's (2000) theory could provide an insight into the current Indigenous identity crisis. Hence, through this process of emergent design (Creswell, 2003), I changed my question to:

> **How is the nature of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place* in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity?**

This emergent design (Creswell, 2003) process included the following focus questions:

1. How do the components of Gee's (2000) theory illuminate the current crisis of mixed race identity formation in Australia?
2. How does Gee's (2000) theory relate to the literature base dealing with the current identity crisis?
3. How can the findings made in this study apply to an educational setting?

Axial Coding

Although I had changed my question through emergent design (Creswell, 2003), this did not mean that the open coding process discussed previously was rendered insignificant. Instead, I created a grid using Gee's (1000) theory of identity formation

and transferred the themes and examples from the open coding process. Moreover, after changing the research question, I began a process of merging from open coding (Millis et al., 2010) to axial coding (Strauss, 1987) to tighten and provide more of an insight into the study. The term axial coding refers to "intense analysis done around one category at a time, in terms of the paradigm of items (conditions, consequences, and so forth" (Strauss, 1987, p. 32). In this way, my role as the "researcher-as-instrument" (Padgett, 1998, p. 18) placed me in a position where I interpreted the open coding through the medium of axial coding. My overall reason for choosing axial coding was because I believed that it would "result in cumulative knowledge about relationships between the category and other categories and subcategories" (Strauss, 1987, p. 32).

I also linked this narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2009) process to the literature review by filtering the analysis through Gee's (2000) theory of identity. By creating and completing this table, I found that the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities had the potential to "Other" Sally's Nature-Identity. Sally's experience also resonated with those discussed in the literature base, although Sally's experience was taken a step further by being described as "Un-Australian" through the function of the Discourse-Identity (Gee, 2000). An example of these findings the process I used to develop these findings can be found in Appendix 6 and in the following Table 7.

Table 7: Sally's Experience as Filtered through Gee's Theory

SALLY'S EXPERIENCE		COLOUR CODING: Orange = Nature Purple = Family Pink = Stories Yellow = Othering Blue = Aboriginal heritage
Identity Type	***What data points can be used as evidence?***	***Interpretation + Linkage to Literature Review***
Nature Identity	- Did you hear the bird call?...What a magical moment it had been. (p. 12). - I was trapped. I mumbled a reluctant yes, and let my gaze slip from the bag to the large expanse of green grass nearby. I wanted to run and fling myself on the grass. (p. 13). - I felt very strongly about families stick together. - By the beginning of second term at school, I had learnt to read, and was the best reader in my class. Reading opened up new horizons for me, but it also created a hunger that school couldn't satisfy. - "We're Aboriginal, aren't we, Mum?" "Yes, daer," she replied, without thinking. (p. 170).	Nature seems to be a form of escapement for Sally; it seems to provide her with life, similarly to the way in which Aboriginals saw the land prior to colonization (and still do). Sally also seems to have an inherent love of stories, as well as a love of families.
	Summary: Nature, relationships and storytelling seem to be re-occurring themes that are inherent and integral to her identity.	
Institution Identity	**The Hospital** - The hospital and the school: they were places "dedicated to taking the spirit out of life." (p. 14). **The School** - Shaking her head in disbelief, she muttered, 'You dirty, dirty girl." - There was a great deal of social stigma attached to being Aboriginal at our school (p. 121). **The University** - Accused of being un-Aboriginal by the university (p. 173).	- She takes on the role of being defined by the institution – as mentally dumb, dirty and significantly "Other", similarly to the way in which the colonizers were "Othered" through "Terra Nullius".
	Summary: The Institution identity seems to **disjoin** Sally from her Nature-Identity through the metaphors of the hospital, school & uni.	
Discourse Identity	- Chapter entitled "Pretending" (p. 39). - The kids at school had also begun asking us what country we came from. This puzzled me because, up until then, I'd thought we were the same as them. If I insisted that we came from Australia, they'd reply, "Yeah, but what about ya parents, bet they didn't come from Australia" . "You really think your family's normal?" "Course they're normal. What's so unusual about them?" "Everything! "You've got the most abnormal family I've ever come across. Don't get me wrong, I like your mother, I really do, but the way you all look at life is weird." My classmate continued to chuckle on and off for the rest of the lunch hour. I never asked her to explain further, I was too embarrassed (p. 134). - How could I tell her it was me, and her and Nan. The sum total of all the things that I didn't understand about them or myself. The feeling that I'd never belong anywhere. Never resolve anything (p. 134). - But you're lucky, you'd never know that you were that, you could pass for anything" (p. 176).	Similarly to the way in which the narratives in the literature base revealed, Sally seems to be rendered "Un-Australian" based on her physical appearance. She is also made to feel abnormal because of her Nature-Identity in relation to her connection with her family.
	Summary: The Discourse-Identity seems **re-orientate** Sally's N-Identity. She is positioned as "Un-Australian".	
Affinity Identity	- What did it really mean to be Aboriginal? I'd never lived off the land and been a hunter and a gatherer. I'd never participated in corroborees or heard stories of the Dreamtime. I hardly knew any Aboriginal people. What did it mean for someone like me? …I felt so weighed down with all my questions that I decided to give it all up.	Sally seems to "Other" herself because she appears to believe that Aboriginals have to be connected to affinity groups to be Aboriginal.
	Summary: The Affinity-Identity also seems to **disconnect** Sally's sense of her Nature-Identity.	

Summary of Sally's Experience through Gee's Framework

Through the process of analysis detailed in Table 7, I found that Sally's experience within Gee's framework was mainly linked to an "Othering" process. The thought processes that I encountered can be found in the following journal excerpt:

My Journey	The Othering Process	10/09/11
Through the process of open and axial coding, I have found that Sally's experience within the framework of Gee's theory of identity was actually Othered. However, her "Othering" experience seemed to relate to her Nature-Identity. In other words, it seemed to be her Nature-Identity that was being Othered. The Institution-Identity, which was made up of the metaphors of the hospital, school and university, seemed to disjoin Sally's Nature-Identity by creating dissonance to it. The Discourse-Identity, which was linked to the disempowering stereotypes surrounding Sally's Nature-Identity, sought to re-orientate Sally's identity by prescribing names such as "Un-Australian" and "Indian" to Sally. In addition, Sally seemed to "Other" herself through the Affinity-Identity because she did not feel like she had participated in any specific cultural practices that could render her an "Aboriginal". As such, these processes seemed to Other Sally's Nature-Identity, much like the way in which the narratives in the literature base detailed their experience. As such, I have called Sally's experience within Gee's (2000) framework "The Othering Process".		

In accordance with the thought processes detailed in the preceding diary excerpt, I drew a diagram entitled "The Othering Process" (see Appendix 7). From this original drawing, the following diagram was created, which illustrates the way in which Sally's Nature-Identity seemed to experience a process of "Othering" through the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities:

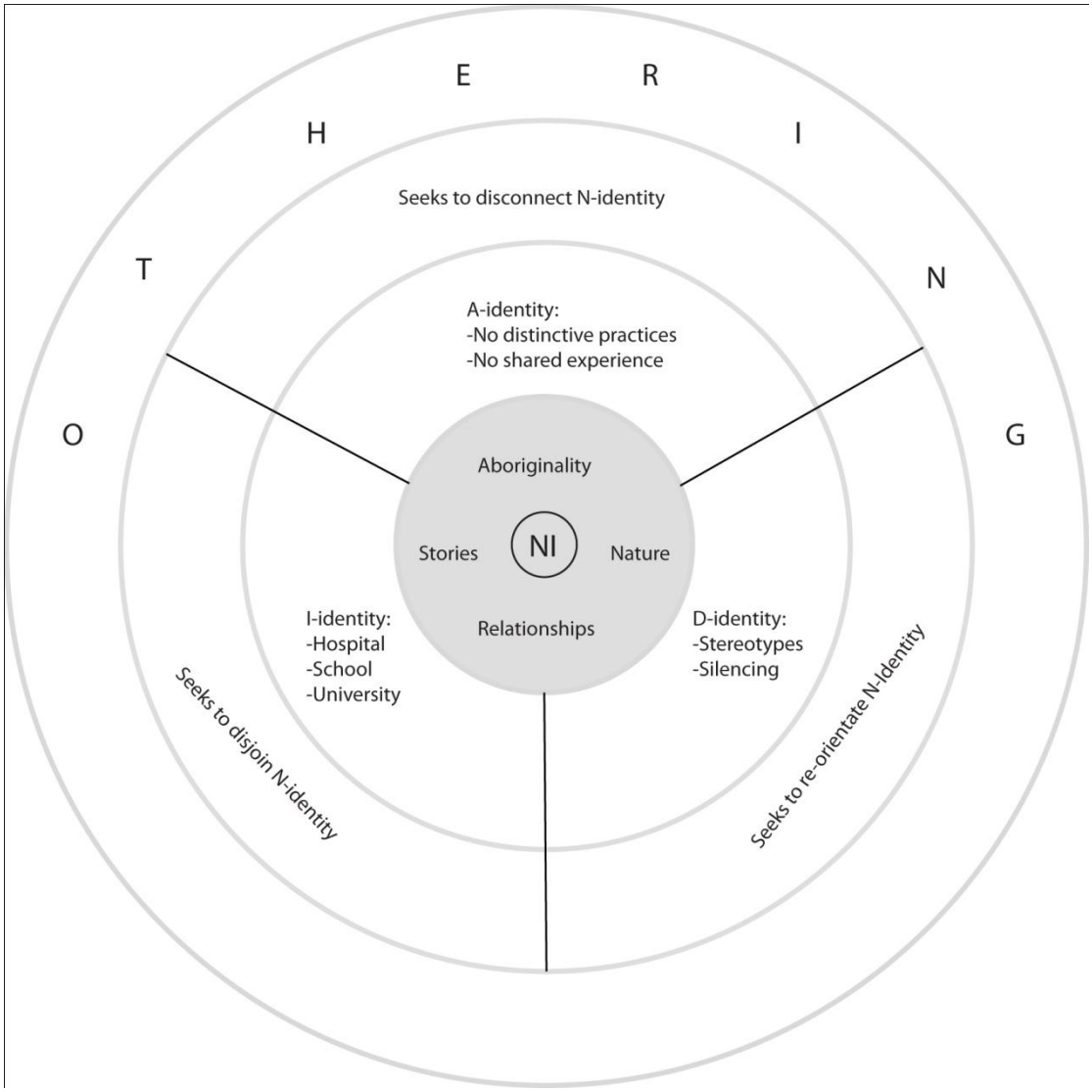


Figure 5: *This picture indicates the process of "Othering" Sally seemed to experience within the framework of Gee's theory of identity. The Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities seem to be impinging on her Nature-Identity, re-orientating, disjoining and disconnecting it from its sense of place.*

A Combination of Axial and Open Coding

As outlined in Table 7 and Figure 5, it appeared that Sally was being "Othered" through the function of the Discourse, Institution and Affinity Identities. However, her Nature-Identity appeared to her sense of place. This suggested that her Nature-Identity was her core identity. Moreover, since the initial open coding process had revealed that Sally was able to find her place (as highlighted in Table 5), I could not simply leave Sally's story "unfinished" by only highlighting her "Othering"

experience, which I have termed "The Process of Othering". The thought processes I encountered can be found in the following journal excerpt:

My Journey	The Othering Process	10/09/11
It is interesting to note that the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities have the potential to "Other" Sally. I find this quite interesting because the open coding process revealed that Sally was able to find her place by gaining an "Aboriginal Consciousness". Given this understanding, I need to examine HOW she gained an "Aboriginal Consciousness" and consequently her place. This means that I might need to merge out of Gee's (2000) framework to explore HOW Sally found her place.		

Following on from the preceding diary excerpt, I decided to use the findings made in the open coding process (Millis et al., 2010) and combined them with the process of axial coding (Strauss, 1987) to create a new grid that centered on Sally's sense of place. Through this process, as well as the thought processes of narrative self-analysis (Loughran et al., 2008), I found that Sally seemed to find her place through developing a sense of "Aboriginal Consciousness" by undertaking a physical and spiritual journey. The way in which I found and interpreted these findings can be seen in the following Table 8 and in Appendix 9.

Table 8: Finding My Place

FINDING MY PLACE		**COLOUR CODING:** **Orange = Nature** **Purple = Family** **Pink = Stories** **Yellow = Othering** **Blue = Aboriginality** **Green = Finding Place**
SALLY'S EXPERIENCE	**What does Sally say/do to find her place?**	**Interpretation + Link to Link to Literature Base**
Initial feeling of place	It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to joint he Canning River (p. 71).	Sally seems to find a sense of belonging in the nature. As she says, it has become a part of who she is. It appears that nature accepts her for who she is.
"Breaking the Silence"	- "We're Aboriginal, aren't we, Mum?" "Yes, dear," she replied, without thinking. "Do you realize what you just said?!" I grinned triumphantly….It was as if a wall that had been between us suddenly crumbled away. I felt	It seems important that Sally gains a knowledge of her Aboriginal ancestry to articulate her sense of Nature-Identity. This is foregrounded by Sally's statement that this knowledge is "a beginning".

	closer to Mum then than I had for years..” (p. 171) - The way I look at it, it’s a beginning. Before, we had nothing. AT least now, we’ve got a beginning.	
Return to Corunna Downs	- After much thought, I decided that our best course was to return to Nan and Arthur’s birthplace, Corunna Downs. - IT was totally different now, open arms, and open hearts. By the time we’d been hugged and patted and cried over, and told not to forget and to come back. - Mum and I sat down on part of the old fence and looked across to the distant horizon. We were both trying to imagine what it would have bee like for the people in the old days. Soft, blue hills completely surrounded the station. They seemed to us mystical and magical… (p. 290). - But we had a sense of place now. (p. 291).	Sally seems to make a conscious choice to try and claim her Nature-Identity. It seems to be in the land and kinship that Sally finds her sense of place. However, she does not necessarily need to have shared practices (A-Identity) with the other Aboriginals, nor does she need to look like them. Rather, this journey seems to be a spiritual, emotional and healing journey; she has a “sense of place now” which suggests this place is a “Self-Conscious Awareness” that cannot be taken away from her.
Leaving Corunna	“We felt very full inside when we left. It was like all the little pieces of a huge jigsaw were finally fitting together…” (p. 295). - We were different people now. What had begun as a tentative search for knowledge had grown into a spiritual and emotional pilgrimage. We had an Aboriginal consciousness now, and were proud of it (p. 296). - “We belonged now…” (p. 296).	Sally foregrounds her belonging through her new “Aboriginal Consciousness”. It seems that she gained this consciousness through the journey. Interestingly, there are no more comments about her feelings of puzzlement and abnormality, suggesting that this process has been a healing one for her. It could be argued that she has found the “essence” of Aboriginality in the “heart”.
SUMMARY	Sally’s place seems to be found in her “Aboriginal Consciousness”, which she appeared to gain through a spiritual and physical journey.	

Summary of Sally's Experience through Open and Axial Coding

Following on from the findings made in Table 8 and Appendix 8, I created a summary of the way in which Sally appeared to find her place. As such, I have entitled this journey "Finding My Place". This journey, which is illustrated in Table 9, was the last stage in my narrative and self-narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2009; Loughran, 2003) of Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987). Since Sally appeared to find her place through gaining an Aboriginal Consciousness, I have termed this type of identity "Self-Awareness Identity".

Table 9: The Journey: Finding My Place by Gaining a Self-Awareness Identity

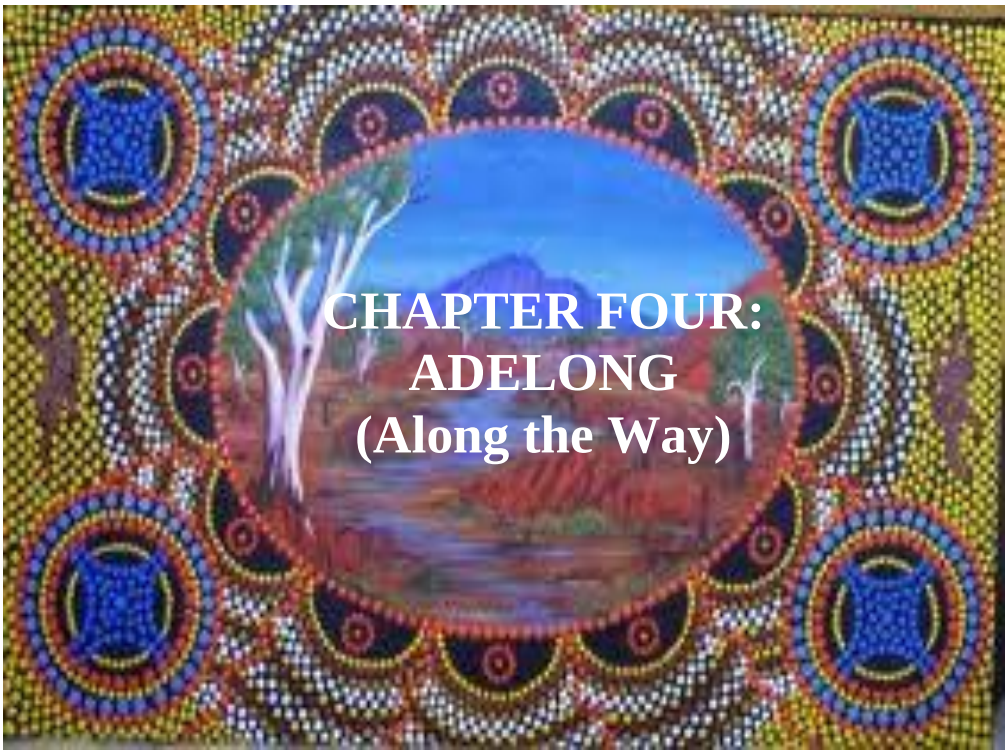


Creating the Story

This chapter provided an outline of the research methods and data collection procedures used for examining the question,

How is the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place* in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity?

It has been established that the theoretical method that is most relevant to this study is narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2009) and narrative self-analysis (Loughran et al., 2008) within the framework of qualitative research (Creswell, 2003); however, as a result of the open coding process (Strauss, 1987) and the thought processes outlined in "My Journey", Gee's (2000) theory of identity became a valuable method of analyzing this text and as such has become the main framework for this narrative analysis. Through this process, I was able to discover "The Othering Process" through the function of the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities (Gee, 2000). On the other hand, by way of emergent design (Creswell, 2003) and the open and axial coding process (Strauss, 1987), I found that Sally was able to find her place outside the forces of the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities by undertaking a spiritual and physical journey to obtain an Aboriginal Consciousness, which I have termed Self-Awareness Identity. In addition, this chapter outlined the various ways in which authenticity bound the framework of this study to ensure that the findings were transparent, clarity-based and adaptable. Thus, this chapter has essentially been an outline of the journey that was undertaken to critically analyze the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis in Sally's experience as outlined in *My Place* (1987).


CHAPTER FOUR:
ADELONG
(Along the Way)

CHAPTER FOUR: ADELONG (Along the Way)

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings that arose from the methodology framework underpinning the focus question:

How is the nature of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place* in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity?

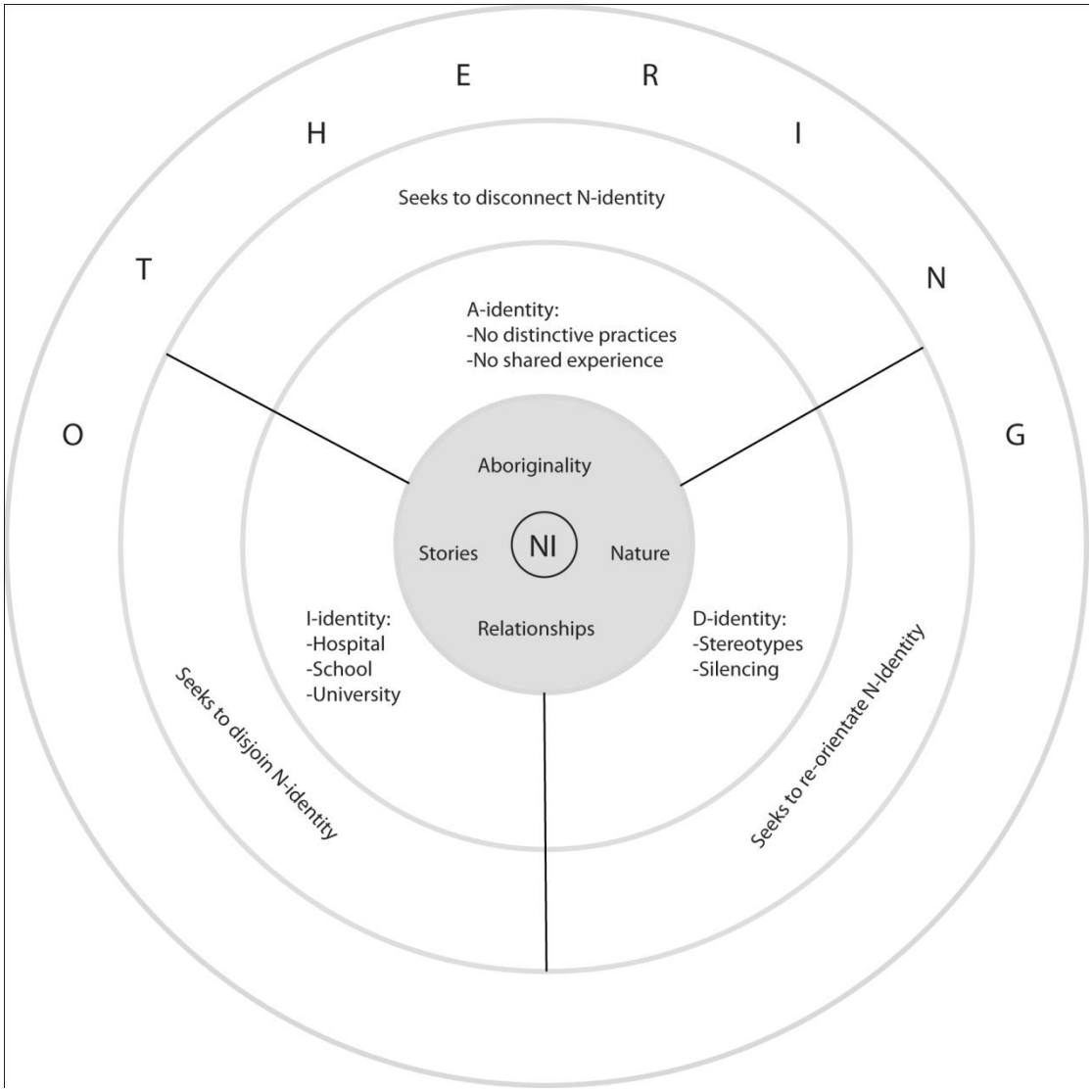
While I realize that the purpose of Chapter Four in the traditional mode is to present the findings, because this is a self-narrative (Loughran, et al., 2004) and narrative analysis study (King & Horrocks, 2010) this chapter will meld both description and analysis together into a cohesive analytical whole.

As a result of the open coding, axial coding (Bornheim, 2000, p. 77) and emergent design process (Creswell & Clark, 2010), this study became filtered through Gee's (2000) theory of identity. This provided a "particularly powerful lens" (Wallace, 2009, p. 195) for exploring the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis. Within this chapter, references to direct quotes in Morgan's *My Place* (1987) and Gee's (2000) theory of identity may only entail page numbers where appropriate.

Through an examination of Sally Morgan's experience as outlined in *My Place* (1987), this chapter will be divided into two main sections: 1) The Othering Process and 2) Finding My Place. "The Othering Process" will provide an analytical account of the nature of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis through the framework of Gee's (2000) identity theory. As such, there will be four subsections within this section: Nature-Identity, Discourse-Identity, Institution-Identity and Affinity-Identity (Gee, 2000). Within this section, Nature-Identity will be foregrounded as the *core* of

identity, as mentioned in Chapter Three. Each identity category thereafter will be discussed in relation to the way in which they confirm, foreground, enhance, contest and/or challenge Sally's Nature-Identity. The overarching notion expressed in this section is that Sally's Nature-Identity has the potential to be "Othered" (Dominelli, 2004, p 74) by a process of identity re-orientation, disconnection and dissonance, as outlined in the following diagram:

Table 10: The Othering Process



The second section, "Finding My Place", extends Gee's (2000) theory by exploring how the "Self-Awareness Identity" was formed through emergent design (Creswell & Clark, 2010), as outlined in Chapter Three. As such, this section examines how Sally confirmed her Nature-Identity and consequently achieved a sense of place, despite the "Othering" (Dominelli, 2004, p 74) process she experienced through the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities. The overarching notion within this section is that Aboriginality cannot be put in a "box" in regards to identity, as this may impinge upon an articulation of place.

In addition, this chapter will draw from the narratives and notions of Indigenous identity outlined in the literature base. Given the context of this chapter, the title "Adelong" ("Along the Way") serves as a metaphor for the journey Sally experienced to find her place.

The Nature-Identity: The Core of Identity

As outlined in Chapters One to Three, Nature-Identity is defined by Gee (2000) as "a state developed from forces in nature" which makes us "what we are primarily because of our 'natures'". Gee (2000, p. 5, 6) provides examples of this identity, such as being born a twin and having ADHD from birth. In referring to the former example, Gee (2000) states, "Being an identical twin is a state that I am in, not anything that I have done or accomplished." In this case, "the source of this state – the 'power' that determines it or to which I am 'subject' – is a force ([i.e.] genes) over which I have no control." Moreover, "the source of this power is nature, not society, and the process through which this power works is developmental (it unfolds outside my control or the control of society)". This suggests that Nature-Identities are controlled by nature rather than society (Gee, 2000).

Hence, although Gee does not overtly recognize the Nature-Identity as the core of identity, I argue that it is the *core* of who we are because it is not something we can do to accomplish or achieve, nor is it something we can do to create; it is simply there due to the long-term forces of nature (Gee, 2000). As such, Nature-Identity has been placed in the middle of the diagram in TABLE to represent the "core" of identity. Within this context, this section will examine what notions of identity *My Place* reveals about mixed heritage Indigenous identity by examining Sally's natural "state" in being an Aboriginal, including her natural affinity with nature, storytelling and relationships, as evidenced Table 11. The way in which this Nature-Identity appears to be constructed as the "core" of Sally's identity will also be examined.

Aboriginality

Nature-Identity seems to be portrayed as the *core* of Sally's existence through the story of her mixed heritage. As we are told later in the text, Sally's grandmother, Daisy, claims that the man who fathered her was the "white" Howden Drake-Brockman (p. 222). Although Daisy never admits who fathered Sally's mother, Gladys, she does suggest that Gladys may also have a white father by stating, "When I came home from hospital, he [Howden] said, 'Bring her [Gladys] here, let me hold her.' He wanted to nurse Gladdie before he died" (p. 423). However, even if Gladys' father is not white, the fact that Daisy has a white father renders Gladys an Aboriginal Australian of mixed heritage. Sally's mixed heritage is further consolidated through her father, who is also "white". This positions Sally alongside the many other Aboriginal Australians who are of mixed heritage in today's society (Senzani, 2008, p. 425).

Hence, although it has been established that Gee does not explicitly recognize the Nature-Identity as the core of identity, it appears that Sally's mixed heritage is the core of who she is as it was created due to "nature" (Gee, 2010, p. 3). In this way, Sally's Nature-Identity is not something she can change about herself, as it is through blood that she is born as an Aboriginal Australian of mixed heritage; it has been given to her by nature. As such, Sally's Nature-Identity has been placed in the middle of the circle as illustrated in Table 11, as I argue that it is the "life-blood" (Gill, 2004, p. 7) of identity formation; it is the starting point.

Since it appears that Sally's Nature-Identity is the core of who she is, her Nature-Identity gains significance as it transcends stereotypical notions that Aboriginality is based on physical appearance. Although Sally's Nan is "black" (p. 117) and Sally's physical appearance could "pass for anything" (p. 176), they are both born Aboriginal. Hence, while popular culture tends to view Aboriginal identity in terms of a dark-skinned, primitive "Other" through the mediums of images, discourse and the media (Spencer, 2006; Rodan, 2004), Sally's physical appearance rejects the binary opposites mainstream society often places on culture in terms of who is and who is not a "real" Aboriginal Australian.

Within this context, Korff (2007) illuminates Sally's Nature-Identity by suggesting that Indigenous identity does not have to be based on physical appearance. As he states, "People who identify themselves as 'Aboriginal' range from dark-skinned, broad-nosed to blonde-haired, blue-eyed people, very much to the surprise of non-Indigenous people" (2007, para. 2). Hence, it could be suggested that Sally's Nature-Identity not only rejects stereotypical notions of Aboriginality presented through

mainstream Australian culture, but also those posited by various researchers who claim that "Australia's indigenes are a dark-skinned people" (Bracey, 2005, p. 83). Hence, through the function of the Nature-Identity, it appears that Sally's very existence disproves popular stereotypes posed by Australian culture and various researchers by confirming that Aboriginal Australians do not have to *look* "Aboriginal" to be born "Aboriginal".

Nature

While Sally's Aboriginality appears to be the core of her Nature-Identity, she also makes it strikingly clear that another aspect of her Nature-Identity seems to be her place in nature. Although *My Place* is mainly set in a suburban world, Sally suggests that she is not a part of this place by privileging the natural setting over the man-made setting. For instance, instead of consistently describing her suburban village, there are countless occasions where Sally describes the nature, from the weather (p. 73) to the love that she has for the wildlife (p. 66). She even prescribes terms such as "Wildlife" (p. 66) and "Rather peculiar pets" (p. 111) to entire chapters within her text. These descriptions not only depict her internalized love of the land and animals, but they also highlight the central role nature plays in her life, suggesting that it is her source of life and continual existence. To illustrate, Sally describes the "bird call" as a "magical moment" (p. 12) and when she feels "trapped" (p. 13) she desires to "run and fling [herself] on the grass" (p. 13), suggesting that nature also provides a means of escape, magic and belonging. This notion is foregrounded by Broome (2003, p. 18), who argues that for the Aboriginals, the land "not only gave life, it was life." Hence, by running to the grass after feeling "trapped" (p. 13), it could be suggested that the land is metaphorically transformed into a place where Sally is able to feel a sense of safety that barricades her from any impeding danger. In this way, it appears

that nature provides life for Sally; in turn, Sally seems to rely on nature as the "life-blood" (Gill, 2004, p. 7) of her existence.

Sally's Nature-Identity is important for two reasons. On one hand, her love of the nature enriches research conducted on the importance of the land for Indigenous people (Gare & Crawford, 1987; Broome, 2003; Davis, 1997). Although Sally does not physically "own" the land, given that her house is a "government house", "the tie that binds" Sally to the land appears "almost tangible" (Gare & Crawford, 1987) through the preceding descriptions of nature. In this context, it could be suggested that Sally's connection to the land reinforces the belief that Aboriginals do not own the land; rather, "the land owns us [Aboriginals]" (Gibson, 2005, p. 227). On the other hand, Sally does not need to live a "primitive" Aboriginal lifestyle that is often posited by popular culture (Spencer, 2006) in order to feel a sense of connection with the nature. Hence, while popular culture tends to put Aboriginality into a "box", as highlighted in the literature review, Sally's Nature-Identity appears to refute these notions.

Stories

There are countless instances throughout *My Place* whereby Sally reinforces her love of stories, suggesting that stories are another element of her Nature-Identity. For instance, during school, Sally reads her books faster than the rest of her class, she desires to read new books, she gets bored with reading "Nip and Fluff" (p. 24) and when she is not provided with a new book in school she turns to the newspapers in her house, suggesting that her very existence revolves around having an abundance of stories readily available to meet her needs. Moreover, Sally loves hearing stories around an open fire with her family. As she states, "There was nothing we loved

better than huddling around the wood stove on cold afternoons, swapping stories" (p. 91). Hence it could be suggested that Sally's love of stories forms another element to her Nature-Identity, as it does not appear to be something she had done to accomplish; rather, she has been born with this passion inherent within her (Gee, 2010, p. 3).

Relationships

Sally's value of relationships seems to be an additional yet crucial aspect of her Nature-Identity, which also seems to serve as her "life-blood" (Gill, 2004, p. 7) throughout her narrative. On numerous occasions Sally describes her love of her family and the strong bond that she has with them. Her statement, "I felt very strongly about families sticking together" (p. 59) acts as a precursor for the happiness she experiences in having her family members join school: "The best thing about school was that Grades Two and Three shared the same room, so it meant I saw more of Jill and we sat near one another" (p. 41). Sally even sleeps with her brothers and sisters and feels "secure" and "warm" (p. 45) with them, suggesting that her sense of identity is directly related to her acceptance as a member in her family. Even when she gets married, Sally tells us that she stills sees her family nearly every day, once again foregrounding the strong bond that she has with her family and the role they play in her life. Hence, similarly to Leitner and Malcom (2007, p. 183), who argue that "kinship and family relationship are at the core of Aboriginal cultures", Sally's Nature-Identity is consolidated through the medium of her family, who appear to be the "life-blood" (Gill, 2004, p. 7) of her existence.

Analytical Summary of the Nature-Identity

In light of the preceding discussion, it can be suggested that Sally's Nature-Identity is made up of her mixed Aboriginal heritage, inherent love of nature, stories and relationships. These elements appear to be the *core* of who she is as a person; it is not

something she has done to achieve, nor is it something she has done to maintain. Instead, according to Gee (2010), it is a "state" that was produced by the force of "nature", which consequently forms her Nature-Identity. Hence, it can be argued that the subtext of this book suggests that there are some immutable, unchangeable elements of Aboriginality that can act as a protective mechanism to provide life and well-being to Aboriginal Australians by keeping their sense of self contained.

However, when applied to Gee's theory of identity formation, this notion gives rise to a range of complexities. For instance, since I have taken Gee's (2000) notion of the Nature-Identity a step further by arguing that it can be seen as the "life-blood" (Gill, 2004, p. 7) of Aboriginal human existence through my analysis of Sally, I must take into account what Gee says about *how* this Nature-Identity is recognized and hence maintained as this source of "life-blood" to mixed heritage Indigenous Australians. As Gee (2000) states, "Nature-Identity can only become an identity because it is recognized through forces such as "the work of institutions, discourse and dialogue, or affinity groups, that is, the very forces that constitute our other perspective on identity." In conjunction with this notion, the literature review highlighted that identity relies on an element of choice. As Woodward (2004, p. 6) states, we must "choose to identify with a particular identity or group" in order to articulate our identities. When combined with Gee's theory (2000), it appears that other forces in nature must not only recognize identities, but the individuals themselves must also choose them.

Yet, as it has already been established, Australian society tends to view Aboriginality in terms of the binary oppositional "black" vs. "white" (Rodan, 2004). This

immediately places mixed heritage Indigenous Australians on the "Outer", because, like Sally, they might not appear outwardly "black" or "white". Thus, if Aboriginal Nature-Identity is to be recognized through the "workings" of these forces, then what "kind of person" (Gee, 2000) will they be rendered? Will they be recognized as an Aboriginal Australian or a "white" Australian, and if so, how will they be recognized as such? More importantly, what will happen to their identity if they are not recognized by their Nature-Identity, considering it appears to be the core of who they are? Moreover, if identities involve an element of choice, then how can Indigenous peoples choose to identify with their Nature-Identity given the complications the preceding questions raise?

Given these questions, it can be suggested that mixed heritage Aboriginal Nature-Identities lie in a precarious position where their well-being has the potential to be affected in either a positive or negative way. Thus, since Nature-Identities are subject to other forces in society (Gee, 2000) that can contest, challenge or confirm one's Nature-Identity, this notion necessitates a closer examination and as such will be discussed next.

The Institution-Identity: Creates Dissonance to the Nature-Identity

As detailed in Chapters One to Three, Nature-Identities can gain their force through the workings of institutions, which Gee terms the Institution-Identity. In order to explain this type of identity, Gee (2000) provides an example of his position as a professor in a University. As he states, "Being a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is a position. It is not something that nature gave me or anything I could accomplish by myself" (p. 7). In this way, Gee's position as a professor is powered by authorities, which are "the Board of Trustees, the administration of

University, and the senior faculty of my Department" (2000, p. 7). This means that "the source of power is not nature, but an institution" and "the process through which this power works is authorization, that is, laws, rules, traditions, or principals of various sorts" (Gee, 2000, p. 7).

Gee's (2000) theory on the Institution-Identity gains significance when related to a mixed heritage Indigenous perspective such as Sally's. As detailed in Chapter Three, the Institution-Identity "presents itself through the use of metaphors" (Hays, 2006, p. 41), whereby there were three major metaphors that stood out in the context of the Institution-Identity: The Hospital, The School and The University. As such, these three metaphors will be unpacked in regards to the way in which they appear to create dissonance to Sally's Nature-Identity.

The Hospital: Alienates Sally

Interestingly, Sally commences her story in a place that is "dedicated to taking the spirit out of life" (p. 14). As she tells us,

> The hospital again, and the echo of my reluctant feet through the long, empty corridors. I hated hospitals and hospital smells. I hated the bare boards that gleamed with newly applied polish, the dust-free window-sills, and the flashes of shiny chrome that snatched my distorted shape as we hurried past. I was a grubby five-year-old in an alien environment (p. 11).

The hospital, with its "newly applied polish" (p. 11) and "flashes of shiny chrome" (p. 11) represents a form of "whiteness". This "whiteness" could be read as a commentary on mainstream's view on race and culture, as outlined in the literature review (Spencer, 2006). Within this context, it is interesting to note that this "whiteness" appears to silence Sally, as she tells us, "I felt if I said anything at all, I'd

just fall apart. There'd be me, in pieces on the floor." Hence, similarly to Gillman's story, where "two major organizations she approached did not confirm her Aboriginality" (as cited in Korff, 2007, para. 6), the institution of the hospital appears to silence Sally's Nature-Identity, as she is made to feel like an "Other" – a "grubby" girl in an "alien" environment (p. 11). At the same time, it is also important to note that hospitals can be read as representative of a set of binary oppositions: sickness vs. healing, happiness vs. sadness and death vs. new life. Hence, Sally's comment that the hospital is a place "dedicated to taking the spirit out of life" (p. 14) transcends the positive aspects of the preceding binary oppositions, suggesting that Aboriginal identity cannot be necessarily healed or given new life through the function of an institution.

The School: Renders Sally "Incapable"

The Institution-Identity continues to challenge Sally's Nature-Identity through the use of educational system practices. Like the hospital, Sally tells us "the school is a place dedicated to taking the life out of a person" (p. 14). Sally illustrates this point through the metaphor of the school. For instance, she is rendered "dumb" in accordance with the IQ test given at her school, her science teacher tells her she "will definitely fail" so she shouldn't "bother to turn up" (pp. 136-137), her teacher expects truancy "from the Milroys" (p. 109) but not from girls of other "calibre" (p. 109) and her frequent visits to the Guidance Officer was "based on the premise that there was something wrong with" Sally, for she skipped school as much as possible (p. 109). Thus, Sally's Nature-Identity seems to be challenged through the means of the Institution-Identity, which appears to position her as an "Other".

Perhaps the epitome of Sally's "Othering" through the Institution-Identity occurs in

Sally's second year when she wets her pants in class. To her dismay, the teacher embarrasses her by calling her "dirty" and "chucks" her out of the classroom to sit outside alone (pp. 27 – 28). Being placed "outside" renders Sally insignificant and immediately silences her voice; she is viewed upon as "dirty" through the Institution-Identity and therefore must be excluded from the rest of the social group. Hence, similarly to the way in which the Aboriginal Australians during colonization were rendered insignificant through the declaration of "Terra Nullius" (Gilbert, 2006, p. 26), Sally's experience makes it clear that the Institution-Identity has the potential to "Other" Aboriginal identities.

The University: Renders Sally "Un-Aboriginal"

The way in which the Institution-Identity (Gee, 2000) has the potential to "Other" Sally is further consolidated through the metaphor of the university. When Sally discovers that she is of Aboriginal heritage, she turns to the Institution-Identity to assert and confirm her Nature-Identity by applying for an Aboriginal scholarship in an attempt to "do something to identity with my new-found heritage" because "that was the only thing I could think of" (p. 173). However, while the scholarship was meant to give Sally a sense of Aboriginal identity, Sally demonstrates the limitations of such an identity based purely on the Institution-Identity. Since Sally "suddenly switched" her racial "allegiance from India to Aboriginal Australia", she tells us that the other Australians could not see any reason but money as an incentive (p. 175), which negates her real aim of familiarizing herself with what it means to be Aboriginal. As such, Sally is forced to refute a claim that she "obtained the scholarship under false pretenses", which leads her to defend her case in the Commonwealth Department of Education (p. 176). Thus, whereas Sally was "too dark" to associate with the deacon's daughter and her friend, Susan, during her school years, she is now rendered "too

white" to be associated as an Aboriginal. She is therefore left in a space "in between", a liminal space (Turner, 1970) because the institution of the university appears to define who is Aboriginal and who is not Aboriginal. This notion is foregrounded in her comment, "It hadn't been easy trying to identify with being Aboriginal" (p. 179). Indeed, the Institution-Identity does not make it any easier for her!

Sally's experience within the Institution-Identity gains significance when related to the history of Indigenous people. Similarly to the way in which government officials re-named the Aboriginals terms such as "full-blooded", "halfe-case", "quarter-blood" and "octaroon" (Spencer, 2006, p. 33) based on the proportion of Aboriginal blood during colonization, Sally's Nature-Identity is contested by the Institution-Identity based on the sum of her parts. In other words, in order to justify her Aboriginality, it appears that Sally must appear "dark" to be an Aboriginal. This notion is highlighted when Sally suggests that she can bring her "black" grandmother in to show the authorities that she is actually Aboriginal. Hence, similarly to the way in which Aboriginals in the twenty-first century have had "to attend Land Council meetings and present themselves physically where facial structures and side profiles were examined as if carrying out anthropological field studies to determine their Aboriginality" (Wehner, 2010, see Appendix 1), Sally appears to face oppression based on her lack of "Aboriginal" physical attributes.

Analytical Summary of the Institution-Identity

In light of the preceding descriptions, it can be seen that Aboriginal identities may be impinged through the function of institutions. It appears that the function of the Institution-Identity has been ongoing, commencing from colonization and continuing up until the present day. This suggests that the notion that "all Australia's indigenes

are dark" (Bracey, 2005, p. 83) is deeply engrained in Australia's culture and presents itself in institutions, which has the potential to render Aboriginal identities as an "Other".

DISCOURSE IDENTITY: Re-orientating the N-Identity

Although Sally's Nature-Identity seemed to be "Othered" through the Institution-Identity, Gee (2000) argues that another form of identity, the Discourse-Identity, can also be used to articulate a sense of the Nature-Identity. As outlined in the preceding chapters, Gee defines Discourse-Identity as "an individual trait recognized in the discourse/dialogue of/with 'rational' individuals" (2000, p. 4). In his argument, Gee points to the example of a friend of his who is a "charismatic" person. While he acknowledges that "being charismatic […] is an individual trait, a matter of one's individuality", he also states that "the source of this trait – the 'power' that determines it or to which my friend is 'subject' – is the discourse or dialogue of other people." In this way, it is only because other people "treat, talk about, and interact with [his] friend as a charismatic person that she is one." This means, "The source of this power is not nature or an institution, but 'rational individuals'. As a result, "the process through which this power works is recognition."

Since Australian society tends to view Aboriginality in terms of a "fixed" set of characteristics and physical attributes (Korff, 2009; Rodan, 2004; Stanton, 1997), the Discourse-Identity could serve to impinge upon Aboriginals' identity formation. As such, this section will examine the disempowering stereotypes and the process of "silencing" that serve to re-orientate Sally's Nature-Identity, as detailed in Table 11.

Disempowering Stereotypes

Within *My Place,* the Discourse-Identity appears to challenge and contest Sally's

Nature-Identity as various individuals recognize Sally as an "outsider" who does not fit the "mold" of what it means to be a "true" Australian. To illustrate, in response to a statement made by peers during her schooling, Sally writes:

> The kids at school had also begun asking us what country we came from. This puzzled me because, up until then, I'd thought we were the same as them. If we insisted that we came from Australia, they'd reply, "Yeah, but what about ya parents, bet they didn't come from Australia (Ibid, p. 45).

This account displays a very strong Discourse-Identity that appears to be concerned about what it means to be a "true" Australian. Moreover, the discourse that the students use gains importance as it reveals the ideology surrounding the notion of Aboriginal identity, as discussed in the literature review. As Reynolds (2008) argues, Western society has established binary opposites when it comes to defining Indigenous identity by preserving a clear distinction between black and white. Hence, the kids' question suggests that they have imbibed these notions of binary opposites surrounding who "is" and who "isn't" Australian and have hence come to "recognize" (Gee, 2000, p. 3) Sally as the opposite of "white".

Within this context, Sally's experience also adds depth to the narratives discussed in the literature review. For instance, Tara June Winch's *Swallow the Air* (2006) revealed that May's sense of identity was contested because she "don't look like an Abo" (p. 66). Similarly, Watson's (2006, pp. 150-151) story, "A Journey of Indigenous Identity", revealed how he was often called "'Coconut' (black on the outside and white on the inside) because I hadn't found my family", once again foregrounding the identity crisis that can arise through the Discourse-Identity because of Australia's stereotypical perceptions of what it means to be a "true" Aboriginal

Australian (Reynolds, 2008, p. 238-9).

However, while Winch and Watson's stories highlight the way in which they were "Othered" (Dominelli, 2004, p. 76) based on their physical appearance, Sally's experience is taken a step further in that she is described as "Un-Australian" because of her appearance. As she tells us, "They could quite believe we were Indian, they just didn't want us pretending we were Aussies when we weren't" (Morgan, 1987, p. 45). Hence, rather than allowing Sally to feel a sense of her Nature-Identity, it could be suggested that her Nature-Identity is re-orientated through the function of the Discourse-Identity, by those who recognize and talk about her as a certain "kind of person" (Gee, 2010, p. 6). However, in this scene, the "kind of person" (Gee, 2010, p. 6) Sally is recognised as conflicts with her Nature-Identity; her Nature-Identity is consequently re-orientated from an Aboriginal Australian to an "Un-Australian".

The process in which "mainstream" society questioned Sally's identity can be explained in terms of the process of "Othering" (Dominelli, 2004, p. 76), as discussed in the literature review. As Lam and Shankararaman (2007, p. 42) argue, the process of Othering involves "stress[ing] differences and creat[ing] a distinction between "us" and "them". It could be suggested that these "differences" were established through the creation of binary opposites surrounding what it meant to be Australian and Un-Australian in Sally's school. "Us" appeared to refer to the "white Australians", while "them" referred to those who did not fit the "mold" of a true Australian (Lam & Shankararaman, 2007, p. 42). Once these binary opposites were established, it could be suggested that Sally was "identified and outcast as [she was] different from oneself [the mainstream Australians]" (Lam & Shankararaman, 2007, p. 42). Within this

context, it becomes clear that rather than being recognized by her Nature-Identity as an Aboriginal Australian, the question posed by Sally's peers eliminates her from the group of "Australians" with whom she naturally belongs to. In so doing, it appears that her identity becomes negotiated as she is positioned as an "Other" (Jackson, 2011, p. 521). Hence, while the process in which the Discourse-Identity works is "recognition", Sally appears to be recognized as an "Other" rather than in accordance with her Nature-Identity.

While it appears that the Discourse-Identity functioned to "Other" Sally, Sally's own discourse highlights the damage this identity causes to the Nature-Identity. As she tells us, the function of the Discourse-Identity makes her feel "puzzled" because "up until then, I'd [Sally] thought we were the same as them" (p. 45). Hence, it appears that Sally does not now how to articulate her sense of place as a result of the Discourse-Identity and is left in a "liminal space" – a period of ambiguity (Turner; Eimke, 2010, p. 11). In other words, it could be suggested that Australian culture, through the function of the Discourse-Identity, has alienated Sally from herself and from the Australian community to which she belongs. This is despite the fact that her Nature-Identity testified to her "Australianness".

Silencing the Nature-Identity

In order to make sense of this "in-betweeness" (Eimke, 2010, p. 11), Sally turns to her mother, the source of her Aboriginal Nature-Identity by asking, "Are we Aussie, Mum?" (p. 45). Sally's question suggests that the discourse surrounding her identity has caused her to question her Nature-Identity, although she thought that she was "the same as them" (p. 45). While Gladys is aware of her mixed heritage, Morgan demonstrates the power of the Discourse-Identity by revealing how her mother

appears to "Other" Sally's Nature-Identity, saying, "Tell them you're Indian" (p. 45). Although this "new" Indian identity may "constitute meaning for [Sally] in terms of being a certain kind of person" (Gee, 2000, p. 3), by telling the students that she is Indian her Aboriginal Nature-Identity becomes silenced and suppressed. In other words, it appears that the discourse between Sally and her mother work together as a medium that re-orientates her Nature-Identity by suggesting that she has Indian blood. Yet, in doing so, it would seem that Gladys also "Others" Sally's Nature-Identity by excluding her away from her Nature-Identity through the "process of separation" (Dominelli, 2004, p. 76). Thus, instead of making sense of Sally's "liminality" (Eimke, 2010, p. 11), it appears that she is further confused, as she later tells us that she had a "feeling that a very vital part of me was missing and that I'd never belong anywhere. Never resolve anything" (p. 134).

Within this context, Sally's identity re-orientation shares links with the way in which Indigenous Australians were "silenced" through the workings of the "Protection" and "Assimilation" policies (Ellinghaus, 2003), as outlined in the literature review. While the purpose of these policies was to "silence" the Indigenous population to ensure that they would be "bred out" in an effort to "re-orientate" their identity, it appears that Sally's Nature-Identity is also silenced through the function of the Discourse-Identity, even in the twentieth century. Hence, Sally's Indian "state" is not something that she was "given" through the Nature-Identity; nor is it something that she can "accomplish", instead, through the medium of the Discourse-Identity, it would appear that Sally's mother and society re-orientate her Nature-Identity by silencing it, much like the practices and policies such as protection and segregation during the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries.

Silencing the Discovery

Although Sally discovers that she could possibly have Aboriginal heritage in the chapter entitled "a black grandmother" (p. 117), the function of the Discourse-Identity continues to make her feel "Othered" because "there was a great deal of social stigma attached to being Aboriginal at our school" (p. 121). Sally appears to reveal this social stigma, which is powered by the Discourse-Identity, in two specific occasions. The first occasion is when her sister, Jill, explains that Susan's [a school friend] mother "doesn't want her mixing with you [Sally] because you're a bad influence. She reckons all Abos are a bad influence" (p. 121). The second instance occurs when, after spending time with the deacon's daughter, the deacon pulls Sally aside and says, "I'd like you to stop mixing with Mary…I think you know why…You're a bad influence, you must realize that" (p. 128). These statements suggests that Sally's Aboriginal Nature-Identity is recognized, but in a way that renders her as an "Other" within the Australian society through the medium of the Discourse-Identity, that is, "individuals [who] treat, talk about and interact" (Gee, 2000, p. 3) with Sally as an "Othered" being. Hence, through the Discourse-Identity, Sally's Nature-Identity is constructed as an "Other", similarly to the Aboriginals who were termed "savages" during the initial contact period.

Suppressing the Nature-Identity

In the chapter entitled "Owning Up" (p. 165), Sally discovers that she does, indeed, have Aboriginal heritage when her mother informs her of her heritage. However, Morgan demonstrates the social stigma that arises due to this new discovery. For instance, when she starts to tell others about her Aboriginal heritage, she is met with negativity by the "white" Australian society: some say they are "sorry" for her, others feel "embarrassed" and keep silent, whereas others say that Sally is lucky because she

"could pass for anything" (p. 175) based on her physical appearance. These comments suggest that Sally should not be proud of her ancestry; rather, she is lucky to be "white" enough to "assimilate" into "white" society, similarly to the thought processes behind the policy-makers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries surrounding the notion of absorption (Ellinghaus, 2003). Moreover, by society's conception of Aboriginality as something to be ashamed of, Sally is pressured to remain "silent" about her Aboriginality, suggesting that she should claim the "other half", considering she "could pass for anything" (p. 175). These pressures, however, barricade her from developing a sense of her Aboriginal Nature-Identity.

While the comments that Sally received work to suppress and re-orientate her Nature-Identity, they also link directly to the stereotypes related "who is and who is seen to be Indigenous" (Bullimore, 1999). As Korff (2007, para. 1) states, "light-skinned Aboriginal people are being challenged on their Aboriginal identity" by popular culture, "even though the official definition accepts anyone who identities as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such in their community." Hence, similarly to the tourism industry as discussed in the literature review, which posits that Aboriginals are dark-skinned and "primitive' through "imagery of traditional life-styles unchanged and timelessly pursued in remote settings" (Spencer, 2006, p. 144), it appears that Sally's identity is re-oriented through the function of the Discourse-Identity. Moreover, since Sally can "pass for anything" (p. 176) she is also encouraged to "Other" herself by choosing to associate with her "White" ancestry.

An Abnormal Family

While the Nature-Identity elements of Sally revealed her belief in the importance of families "sticking together" (p. 59), this element of her identity also appears to be

challenged and contested through the Discourse-Identity. For instance, Sally tells us, "The kids were amazed to hear that I shared a bed with my brother and sister" (p. 44). Sally, perhaps in embarrassment, does not admit that sometimes she even slept with more than one family member: "I never told them about the times we'd squeezed five in that bed" (p. 44). As Sally is later told in the text, "You've got the most abnormal family I've ever come across" (p. 134). The latter statement demonstrates an overlap between the Nature-Identity and the Discourse-Identity, whereby Sally's Nature-Identity is made to feel "abnormal" because she may be considered "different" to the other students at school. Hence, through the Discourse-Identity it appears that Sally is made to feel like an "intruder" who is in an "alien" (p. 7) environment: "I realized how abnormal I was, or at least, that's how I felt" (p. 107).

Summary of the Discourse-Identity

In light of the preceding discussion, it can be suggested that the Discourse-Identity has the potential to re-orientate Sally's Nature-Identity. Although Gee (2000) argues that "people can construct and sustain identities through discourse and dialogue", rather than interacting positively with the Nature-Identity by confirming and enriching it, the Discourse-Identity prescribed by the "mainstream" society appears to "Other" Sally by recognizing her as "different" and hence prescribing the term "Un-Australian" to her Nature-Identity. On the other hand, the Discourse-Identity prescribed by Sally's mother encourages Sally to "Other" herself by suggesting that her Nature-Identity is actually Indian. Yet, as evidenced in the analysis of the Nature-Identity, these terms do not represent Sally's *core* identity; instead, they serve to impinge upon Sally's sense of her self and belonging, as evidenced by Sally's statement that she felt "abnormal" (p. 107). Hence, Sally's identity essentially becomes a question mark through the forces of the Discourse-Identity, which appear

to re-frame and re-name her Nature-Identity in the instances described above. Since Sally is eventually left to feel "abnormal" (p. 107), it can be concluded that this process has the potential to create confusion and cognitive dissonance.

Affinity Groups: Disconnecting the Nature-Identity

While Sally appears to be "Othered" through the function of the Institution and Discourse-Identities, Gee suggests that identities can also be formed through an identity he terms Affinity-Identity. As outlined in Chapters One to Three, Gee (2000) claims that "affinity groups" are those, which are "made up of people who may be dispersed across a large space", but who all must share "allegiance to, access to, and participation in specific practices that give each of its members the requisite experiences." In this way, "for members of an affinity group, their allegiance is *primarily* to a set of common endeavors or practices" (Gee, 2010, p. 13). It is within these groups that identities can be formed and recognized (Gee, 2000). However, when related to a mixed heritage Aboriginal perspective, the literature review highlighted that individuals may experience an identity crisis because society pressures them to have a "fixed" set of cultural practices or associate with other Indigenous peoples. Within this context, this section will examine how the Affinity-Identity works to disconnect Sally from her Nature-Identity on the basis of her lack of allegiance to affinity groups or specific cultural practices.

Lack of Specific Cultural Practices

A complication arises for Sally when she tries to articulate her Nature-Identity through the Affinity-Identity. Since Sally has never lived as a "hunter and gatherer", "never participated in corroborees" or even "heard stories of Dreamtime" and "hardly knew any Aboriginal people" (p. 178), she appears to question the authenticity of her

Nature-Identity: “What did it really mean to be Aboriginal? What did it mean for someone like me?” (p. 178). It could be suggested that Sally’s questions links to the “timeless” view of Aboriginality that has been purported through the media and various researchers (Spencer, 2006), suggesting here that she has imbibed these stereotypes and has come to “Other” herself. Yet, as has been discussed in the literature review, Aboriginality was never “fixed” (Bennett, 2005, p. 133) in terms of cultural practices, even prior to colonization. As Bennett (2005, p. 133) argues, “there is no fixed set of characteristics that define or determine Aboriginality” (Bennett, 2005, p. 133). Hence, it could be suggested that, since Sally appears to associate Aboriginality with a “fixed” (Bennet, 2005, p. 133) set of cultural practices during this point in her story, she has not yet found the “essence” (Yamanouchi, 2010) of Aboriginality, which Bennett argues lies “in the heart” (2005, p. 133) rather than in physical attributes or practices.

Lack of Affinity Groups

Since the second part of the Affinity-Identity involves an allegiance “to other people in terms of shared culture and traits” (Gee, 2000, p. 12) Sally’s Nature-Identity continues to be suppressed on various levels. On one level, Sally does not share the same “traits” in regards to physical appearance; her grandmother is black, she is tanned and it is implied that her father is white. On another level, Sally does not appear to have a “shared culture” with the Aboriginal people she initially encounters during the first part of the story. To illustrate, although she says that she “seemed to have a natural affinity” and “a special insight into the Aboriginals girls” with whom she met at a church camp (p. 138), she does not understand a “very dark Aboriginal girl” who she “became friends” with and “enjoyed her company” (p. 140). As she recounts,

> One day, she told me she was leaving. "What do you mean, leaving?" I asked. "Where are you going?" I'm going back to live with my people." Your people? I was so dumb. I wondered who her people were and why they needed help. What was wrong with them? I was too embarrassed to ask (p. 140).

The above statement demonstrates the limitations of the Affinity-Identity on Sally's articulation of her Nature-Identity. Although Sally is Aboriginal, she does not seem to understand the terminology or cultural practices of the "affinity group" to which mainstream society often associates Aboriginals with. This is validated by the older Sally's self saying, "I was so dumb" (p. 140) following her question regarding who her people were.

Summary of the Affinity-Identity

It appears that the Affinity-Identity associates Aboriginality with a shared set of practices or an association with other Aboriginals. However, while there may be many characteristics that are shared across all Aboriginal tribes, as outlined in Chapter Two, this does not necessarily mean that all Aboriginals share these traits. Hence, for those who do not share these traits, this is where the identity crisis can arise if they are relying specifically on the Affinity-Identity to articulate who they are as a certain "kind of person" (Gee, 2010). Through Sally's experiences, we find that just as the land and weather can change, so too can Aboriginal "affinities" with certain practices and traits. As such, the Affinity-Identity has the potential to "Other" Aboriginals by disconnecting them from their Nature-Identities.

Summary of Section One

It appears that Sally does not see herself as an Aboriginal Australian primarily because of blood (Nature-Identity) or because of an institutional category (Institution-

Identity), or because others respond to her in certain distinctive ways (a Discourse-Identity); nor does she see herself in relation to the Affinity-identity as participating in certain practices that render her "Aboriginal". In fact, similarly to the narrative accounts detailed in the literature, these aspects of identity actually have the potential to "Other" Aboriginals' by suppressing, silencing and re-orientating their Nature-Identities. This process of "Othering" appears to generate in Sally an identity crisis, as she is left to feel alienated, puzzled and abnormal. However, through the narrative analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010) process outlined in the preceding chapter, this study also found that Sally was able to articulate her place. As such, the next section will examine how Sally finds a sense of place, despite the pressures she faces through the Discourse, Institution and Affinity-Identities.

Section Two: Finding My Place

While Gee (2000) argues that Nature-Identities "must always gain their force as identities through the work of institutions, discourse and dialogue, or affinity groups" (Gee, 2000, p. 4), section one highlighted that the Discourse-Identity, Institution-Identity and the Affinity-Identity appear to "Other" Sally by re-orientating and silencing her Nature-Identity. As such, this section will examine the way in which Sally finds her *place* within the space of a mainstream Australian society, despite the "Othering" she experienced through the latter forms of identity. To do this, I will attend to the chronological instances in Sally's life whereby she seems to feel a strong, self-conscious sense of place. By self-consciousness, I mean an acute awareness of one's self as it is, being "positively related to [an] internal state awareness" (Sneed & Whitbourne, 2003). In addition, through this discussion of Sally's "self-awareness", I will begin to form a model for the way in which

Aboriginals may find their sense of identity without the often overt, overarching functions of the Discourse, Institution and Affinity-Identities.

Table 11: Finding My Place



Initial Self-Awareness of Place

As mentioned in the Nature-Identity, Sally initially feels a sense of "place" through the medium of nature. However, it could also be suggested that this sense of "place" is related to her self-awareness. As Sally writes:

> It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to joint he Canning River (p. 71).

This statement is important for two reasons. Firstly, it seems that Sally declares her Nature-Identity by suggesting that the nature is a part of who she is as a person. In other words, her place appears to be grounded in her self-awareness that nature accepts her for who she is. In this scene, I argue that her experience here may reflect her "private self-consciousness" (Sneed & Whitbourne, 2003, pp. 314-315). As Sneed and Whitbourne (2003, p. 315) state, "Private self-consciousness reflects the tendency

to direct attentional resources inwardly; that is, the tendency to be aware of one's inner thoughts and feelings." It is the crux of her self-conscious "inner thoughts and feelings" (Sneed & Whiitbourne, 2003, p. 315) that Sally declares the nature as "part of what I was as a person" (p. 71).

On another level, this scene is also important as it complicates the notion of Aboriginal identity as "timeless". While anthropologists have been accused of representing Aboriginality in an unauthentic light by "solidifying Aboriginal culture into a timeless, constant phenomenon" (Layton, 2010, p. 96), Sally testifies to the "timelessness" of her Nature-Identity by asserting that she "lost all track of time" in the swamp. Yet, the type of "timelessness" she posits here is interesting, as she equates it with the creek which shifts and changes as it "meandered". This is an ironic contrast as it suggests both immortality and fluidity.

Hence, it is possible to extrapolate from this scene a commentary on Aboriginal identity itself. Although Aboriginal physical appearance and lifestyles may change and fluctuate over time (like the meandering creek), it can be suggested that the Aboriginal Nature-Identities are timeless and eternal. This rejects "timeless", "dark-skinned" and "primitive" surface images posited by popular Australian culture (Spencer, 2006; Korff, 2009). On one hand, the "light" physical appearance described previously exemplifies the "fluidity" posited in Sally's description of the swamp. On the other hand, since Sally is born Aboriginal, her Nature-Identity remains eternal. When these two factors are combined, it could be suggested that Aboriginality is not about being "timeless" per se; rather, it is about retaining this "timelessness" despite the change in physical appearance, living conditions or lifestyle. Hence, instead of

placing Aboriginality into a "box", Aboriginality can be viewed as "limitless" in terms of appearance and lifestyle. This notion is foregrounded by Stuurman (2004, para. 14), who argues, "Aboriginal people will never fully succumb to the values and beliefs as determined by the fixed identity frameworks".

As Sally's experience with the land allows her to feel a self-conscious sense of belonging, so too, does her family. Although the Discourse-Identity suggested that Sally's family initially suppressed and "Othered" her Nature-Identity, Sally appears to maintain a sense of belonging through her self-awareness. As she tells us,

> I'll never forget those evenings; the open fire, Mum and Nan, all of us laughing and joking. I felt very secure, then. I knew it was us against the world, but I also new that, as long as I had my family, I'd make it (p. 64).

Hence, although at this point Sally's Mum and Nan have "Othered" her by saying she is Indian (as discussed in section one), Sally's realization that "as long as I had my family, I'd make it" (p. 64) suggests that she has a self-awareness that provides her with a sense of place. In this scene, Sally does not need to share specific practices or share the same physical attributes associated with the Affinity-Identity, nor does her Nature-Identity need to be recognized by the Institution-Identity to feel a sense of place; instead, through her self-consciousness, she seems to know that her family will always be there for her and this is where she belongs. Moreover, Sally's "secure" (p. 64) feeling in this scene negates her feelings of abnormality, embarrassment and confusion, which took place through the mediums of the Institution-Identity and Discourse-Identity (Gee, 2000). This suggests that her self-awareness can transcend the preceding forms of identity in order to articulate a sense of place.

Breaking the Silence

However, since knowledge and self-consciousness (O'Shaughnessy, 2004) are related, Sally's initial feelings of "place" do not seem to constitute anything unless she gains knowledge of her Aboriginal heritage. This notion is exemplified in her statement, "The feeling that a very vital part of me was missing and that I'd never belong anywhere. Never resolve anything" (p. 134). Hence, knowledge seems to be a key component for finding place. This being the case, it could be suggested that Sally needs to "break the silence" that suppresses her Nature-Identity to gain a knowledge of her Aboriginality, which may enable her to articulate her place as an Aboriginal Australian. This knowledge presents itself in a chapter entitled "owning up", as outlined in the following discussion:

> "We're Aboriginal, aren't we, Mum?"
>
> "Yes, dear," she replied, without thinking.
>
> "Do you realize what you just said?!" I grinned triumphantly […] It was as if a wall that had been between us suddenly crumbled away. I felt closer to Mum then than I had for years." (p. 171)

As detailed in the text, this discovery heralds a new phase in her life. To illustrate, the chapter "owning up" precedes the next chapter entitled "a new beginning", suggesting that Sally believes in the importance of knowing her Nature-Identity in order to make sense of the self-conscious feelings of belonging that she previously experienced. As she tells us, "The way I look at it, it's a beginning. Before, we had nothing. At least now, we've got a beginning" (p. 172). The confusion and "otherness" she experienced due to the Institution-Identity and Discourse-Identities seem to be eliminated for a moment in this section as exemplified by the fact that she feels like "a wall between Mum and I was torn down" (p. 171). In this way, Sally now has knowledge of her Aboriginal Nature-Identity.

Journeying to Find Place in Kinship and Land

Although Sally now has knowledge of her Aboriginal aspect of the Nature-Identity, it is not enough to provide her with a sense of place, which appears to be articulated in her question, "What did it mean for someone like me?" (p. 141). In order to make sense of this confusion, Sally decides to take a physical journey back to her Nan's past by going to Corunna Downs with her mother. This decision is important for two reasons. On one hand, her decision to return to Corunna Downs suggests that she has refused to accept the labels such as "Indian" and "Un-Australian" that were placed on her through the function of the Discourse and Institution Identities. On the other hand, her decision suggests that she wants to understand the "essence" of Aboriginality, which Aboriginal peoples in Yamanouchi's (2010) study argue is an essential part of being Aboriginal. On another level, it could be suggested that Sally's decision to travel back to Corunna Downs represents her desire to *feel* her Aboriginality, as articulated in Bennett's comment, "Aboriginality is in the heart" (Bennett, 2005, p. 133). As such, by journeying back to Corunna Downs, it seems like Sally has made a conscious choice (Woodward, 2004, p. 7) to reclaim her Nature-Identity.

Indeed, the journey Sally undertakes to Corunna Downs seems to be an important part of finding place. It is within the land, with its "soft, blue hills" that were "mystical and magical" (p. 289) that Sally tells us,

> We went up and we met our relatives, our extended family, we met grandpas and grandmas and uncles and aunties and cousins and that was fantastic for us because all of a sudden we had a context, we had a big family, we weren't just this small isolated family in the non-Aboriginal community, we were part of this huge family and that really gave us a **sense of belonging**, that was very

important. (Emphasis added).

This statement demonstrates the importance of land and kinship as signifiers for place. By being accepted into her family, and by walking on her Nan's land, it appears that Sally is able to develop a sense of belonging, despite the Othering she experienced due to the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities. Although Sally may not share the same "practices" and "experiences" with her kinship, as Gee's (2000) Affinity-Identity suggests, it is through Sally's physical journey back to the past that enables her to gain this sense of place. In this context, it appears that Sally's original self-awareness of belonging in the land and within her immediate family is given even greater significance; it is not only who she is a person now, but also it is who she will be for eternity.

Finding an Aboriginal Consciousness

However, this journey is not simply a physical journey; it is also a spiritual journey. As Sally states,

> We felt very full inside when we left. It was like all the little pieces of a huge jigsaw were finally fitting together […] We were different people now. What had begun as a tentative search for knowledge had grown into a spiritual and emotional pilgrimage. We had an Aboriginal consciousness now, and were proud of it (pp. 291, 295, 296).

The preceding segment illustrates how the Nature-Identity is confirmed through her consciousness: Sally now has an "Aboriginal consciousness" rather than simply knowledge or speculation surrounding her heritage. In this way, it appears that she has achieved an "essence" of Aboriginality that lies in a spiritual journey. This notion has been foregrounded by various researchers and Aboriginals, who argue that "Aboriginal spirituality is the core part of being Aboriginal" (Douaire-Marsaudon,

2005, p. 145). Hence, although Sally leaves Corunna Downs, her assertion that "We had a sense of place now" (p. 291) foregrounds her self-awareness of her place. In this way, place seems to signify a journey; it is a spiritual, physical, emotional and rewarding journey. It is a journey into "Self-Awareness", which appears to have the power to overwrite the damage that was ensued on Sally through popular myths and stereotypes. By gaining this self-awareness, Sally suggests that place can never be taken away. In this way, "there is no fixed set of characteristics that define or determine Aboriginality", instead, the "essence" of Aboriginality appears to be "something that must be known through experience […] Aboriginality is in the heart" (Bennett, 2005, p. 133).

A Healing Process

There is also a suggestion that this journey is a healing process for Sally. As Sally tells us, "I was trying to keep a tight lid on my emotions" because "I knew if I began, I wouldn't be able to stop [crying]" (p. 288). This statement suggests Sally's desire to release the feelings of confusion and "Otherness" she experienced through the function of the Discourse, Institution and Affinity-Identities. Moreover, after Sally attains her "Aboriginal consciousness", it is interesting to note that there are no more statements about her feelings of "Otherness" that originally permeated the story. Indeed, although Sally fears that no one will recognize her Aboriginality after her Nan dies, her recognition that the "Bird Call" is "in [her] heart" (p. 444) could be read as a metaphor for her Nan's spirit in her heart. In this way, it can be seen that Sally's Aboriginality can never be taken away, for it now lies consciously within her heart.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it appears that Sally does not see herself as an Aboriginal Australian (Nature-Identity) because of an institutional category (Institutional-Identity), or because others respond to her in certain distinctive ways (Discourse-Identity); nor does she see herself in relation to the Affinity-Identity as participating in certain practices or sharing certain traits that warrant her "Aboriginal". In fact, these aspects of identity actually have the power to "Other" Sally by suppressing her Nature-Identity. Hence it could be suggested that the preceding aspects of identity, in this case, function to re-orientate Sally's Aboriginal identity (Nature-Identity) and stunt her articulation of a sense of identity.

Through Sally's self-awareness, however, she is able to develop a sense of "Aboriginal Consciousness". This "consciousness" relied not only on her initial experiences with land and family, but it had to be consolidated through "breaking the silence" and undertaking a spiritual journey to connect with the land and her kinship. This enabled Sally to develop an "Aboriginal Consciousness", which allowed her to find her "place" and consequently "belonging" in the land.

Hence, while Gee (2010, p. 6) argues that Nature-Identities "can only become identities because they are recognized, by myself or others" through the forces of "institutions, discourse and/or affinity groups", my findings suggests that there is an overarching element of identity, a Self-Awareness Identity– an identity conceived by a spiritual journey - that works to over-write the damage done to Sally's identity by the Affinity, Discourse and Institution-Identities. In other words, rather than being

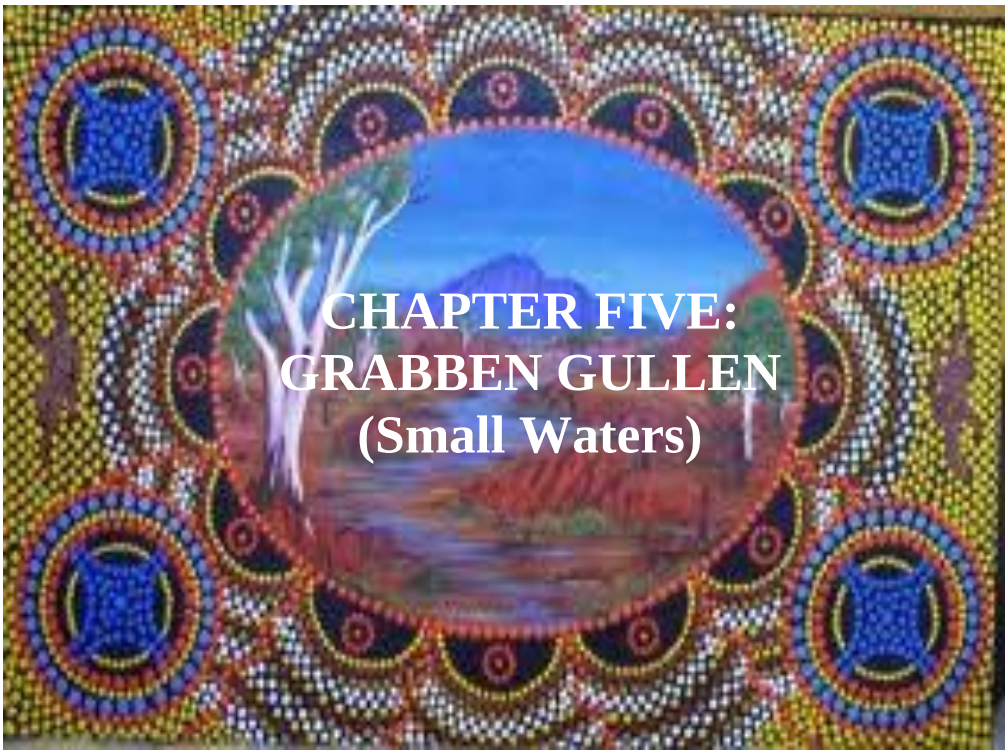
molded by the Affinity, Institution and Discourse Identities as an un-Australian "Other", it appears that Sally's Self-Awareness Identity allows her to find her place and be the "author of [her] own social conduct and social forms in which [she] participate[s in]" which "informs social and cultural processes rather than the individual being passively modeled by them" (Cohen, 1994, p. 172). This Self-Awareness Identity is not based on skin colour, nor is it based on physical attributes; no institution can define it and no discourse can prescribe it. Instead, like Bennett, who argues that Aboriginality "is something that must be known through experience", it is found "in the heart" (Bennett, p. 133).

While it has been established that popular culture, with its binary oppositional thinking, tends to perpetuate the identity crisis Sally experienced as detailed in the first section of this chapter, this study has shown that Aboriginality cannot be put into a "box" when it comes to identity formation. While putting Aboriginality into the "box" of Gee's (2000) theory on identity formation allowed me to explore the notion of Indigenous identity crisis, it limited my ability to explore how Sally overcame this crisis. As such, I realized I was doing the very thing that popular culture tends to do – place Aboriginality into a "box". By moving out of this "box", I was able to discover how Sally's identity was formed and have now come to believe that Aboriginality can be articulated through the S-Identity rather than the forces of the other identities.

This is not to say that Aboriginality cannot be articulated in the forms of identity Gee discusses. I still agree with Gee in that "these four perspectives are not separate from each other" as they "inter-relate in complex and important ways" (Gee, 2000, p. 4). However, these findings suggest that the Self-Awareness Identity is an overarching

element that impacts on the Nature, Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities in a positive way; it is a powerful identity that can enable the articulation of one's Nature-Identity by privileging a spiritual, self-conscious connection rather than one that is sanctioned through discourse, institutions and affinity groups.

As such, Sally's experience can be read as a metaphor for the way in which Aboriginal Australians of mixed race can articulate their sense of place within Australia without the overarching forces of the Institution, Discourse and Affinity Identities. The Self-Awareness Identity is deeper and more solid than the latter forms of identity; it is a spiritual connection that transcends time and surface deep assumptions and appearances to enable the solid articulation of place. It is about a journey, a journey into one's "self".



CHAPTER FIVE: GRABBEN GULLEN (Small Waters)

CHAPTER 5: GRABBEN GULLEN (Small Waters)

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a discussion on the implications that this study has as a result of exploring the following question:

How is the notion of mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis framed in Sally Morgan's *My Place* in relation to Gee's (2000) theory of identity?

As found in the Chapter Two, mixed heritage Indigenous Australians often face an identity crisis due to a variety of factors such as their physical appearance. Chapter Four extended on this issue by examining the nature of the crisis itself, suggesting that the Discourse, Institution and Affinity-Identities can be impeding factors on this identity crisis.

Since Sally's varying experiences within the school system appeared to be a major contributing factor to her experience of "Othering", particularly in regards to the Discourse and Institution-Identities, it could be suggested that the main "stakeholder" (Gossy, 2008, p. 152) for this study is the educational system. Hence, although Sally's experience suggested that some Indigenous peoples might be able to overcome this crisis by gaining a Self-Awareness identity, there are still mixed heritage Indigenous Australians who are currently experiencing an identity crisis, as highlighted in Chapter Two. As such, since education has the power to lead to "positive change" (Swayne, 2008, p. 2), this study holds pertinent implications for the educational system. Given the context of this chapter, the title, Grabben Gullen ("Small Waters") serves as a metaphor for this chapter. Like small waters, which have the potential to lead to green growth, the recommendations in this chapter aim to positive change for mixed heritage Indigenous Australians.

In addressing the implications of this study, this chapter will be divided into four sections. The first section, Discourse: Teaching about Indigenous Peoples, discusses the aims of the Australian National Curriculum and the implications they hold for non-Aboriginal teachers who are in the role of teaching about Indigenous peoples. The second section, Institution: Teaching Indigenous Students, highlights the way in which teachers can recognize the diversity of their Indigenous students. The third section, Affinity Groups: Connecting Indigenous Peoples, highlights the importance of extra-curriculum activities such as Aboriginal clubs and programs. Lastly, the fourth section discusses the implications this study has for future research. All of these implications have the potential to alleviate the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis that currently exists within Australia.

Implications and Recommendations for the Educational System

Discourse: Teaching about Indigenous Peoples

The Australian National Curriculum, which will take affect in 2012 throughout schools nationwide, aims to form an appreciation of Indigenous culture by:

> Ensuring that its curriculum work acknowledges the need for all Australian children to 'understand and acknowledge the value of Indigenous cultures and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

While the ACARA has "engaged with experts across the state and territory curriculum and school authorities and representatives from the Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies (IECBS)", and have "included Indigenous Australians as members of the learning area advisory panels to provide expert Indigenous

perspectives in the writing of the curriculum content in English, mathematics, science and history" (ACARA, 2011, para. 7), Thomson (2008, p. 142) points out that there are few Indigenous teachers within the school system. Moreover, many educators, readers and students "assume little or no knowledge of Indigenous literature and knowledge of Aboriginal experience, history or culture" (Thomson, 2008, p. 142).

In light of Thomson's (2008, p. 142) statement, it could be suggested that the aims of the Australian National Curriculum may be successfully implemented if "both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teacher [….] possess a sound knowledge of Indigenous history, experiences, critique and theory to guide the students on their own journeys towards understanding" (Thomson, 2008, p. 142). It is within this context that this study is important for both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal teachers, as it provides an insight into the Aboriginal culture and the diversity and issues that exist within it.

As this study revealed, the discourse surrounding who is and who is not a "real Aborigine" contributed to Sally's identity crisis. Hence, when discussing the notion of Indigenous identity in class, it is recommended that teachers use the knowledge attained in this study to inform their students of the diversity of the Aboriginal culture. Rather than putting Aboriginal identity into a "box" of a fixed set of cultural practices or physical attributes, it is recommended that teachers acknowledge the diversity that exists within our culture by highlighting the differing physical attributes, lifestyles and languages within their teaching. This will not only contribute to the aims of the Australian National Curriculum, but will also allow the possibility of alleviating the Indigenous identity crisis through the function of the Discourse-

Identity. In this way, the Discourse-Identity can be used as a tool for empowering Indigenous identity rather than silencing Indigenous identity.

Institution: Teaching Indigenous Students

This study revealed that Sally's identity was also affected because the institutions of the school and university "Othered" her Nature-Identity, often because they did not recognize her as an Aboriginal Australian. Similarly, the literature base also highlighted that mixed heritage Indigenous Australians have been "Othered" through the function of government institutions. Given this context, teachers must be aware that they may have "white" students within their classroom who identify as "Aboriginal". This means that they may have differing learning styles to non-Indigenous students. Hence, rather than looking at Aboriginality as surface deep, this study recommends that teachers use the knowledge attained in this study to accommodate for all students, knowing that one may not necessarily look "Aboriginal" but may be Aboriginal. This cultural awareness can act as a driving force in unit and lesson planning, which may lead to a positive change in the circumstances of the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis.

Affinity Groups: Connecting Indigenous Peoples

Since Sally's experience revealed that her disconnection with affinity groups who had "shared practices" (Gee, 2000) contributed to her identity crisis, it is recommended that schools implement a variety of extra-curriculum activities for Indigenous students. These activities can range from simply meeting, eating and talking with one another to multicultural days and excursions to Aboriginal sacred sights. It is also important that these programs enable students, who may not necessarily appear

Aboriginal, or who are not defined as Aboriginal by the government or school institutions, to attend. This will enable those students who may know about their Aboriginality, but who are still trying to articulate it, to find their place. Hence, rather than allowing the Affinity-Identity to suppress the articulation of Aboriginality, it may be enriched within the educational context through an application of the preceding recommendations.

Implications for further Research

While the data collected and analyzed in this study provided depth to the Indigenous identity crisis experiences detailed in Chapter Two, this study can serve as a platform for future studies on the present crisis. Rather than examining the nature of the identity crisis from the perspective of a suburban mixed heritage Indigenous Australian, a comparative study of mixed heritage Aboriginals in regional, remote and isolated areas could shed light on the nature of identity crisis and the way in which identities are constructed and/or deconstructed in these areas.

While Gee's (2000) theory of identity formation provided a valuable tool for exploring this objective of this study, the findings revealed that the Discourse, Institution and Affinity-Identities have the potential to "Other" Indigenous Australians. As such, future studies could be conducted on the way in which the preceding forms of identities can be constructed in a way that allows for the positive articulation of Aboriginal identity.

The findings made in this study also revealed that Aboriginality could not be put in a "box" in regards to defining identity. Instead, it was suggested that a "Self-Awareness

Identity" contributes to Indigenous identity articulation and a sense of place. As such, future studies could be conducted on the way in which the "Self-Awareness Identity" is articulated in Aboriginal Australians from regional, remote and isolated areas.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has revealed that mixed heritage Indigenous Australians can face an identity crisis based on their lack of "Aboriginal" physical attributes and "cultural" practices. While the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities (Gee, 2000) can articulate one's Nature-Identity; it was found that these forms of identities actually have the potential to "Other" mixed heritage Aboriginals. However, by merging out of Gee's (2000) framework of identity, it was found that "place" can be articulated through a form of identity I term "Self-Awareness Identity". This form of identity, which appears to entail a journey, opens up a new way of examining "place" within the context of Aboriginal identity. In this way, Aboriginal identities do not necessarily need to be "fixed" or prescribed by discourse, institutions or affinity groups. Instead, by gaining a Self-Awareness Identity through spiritual journey, Aboriginal Australians can assert their Nature-Identities and feel a sense of place. Moreover, like the varying place names in this study's chapters, place is not rooted to one set journey; every individual may undertake a different spiritual journey to articulate their place. As such, the "essence" of Aboriginality appears to lie in the beauty of this journey.

It has also been established that this study holds important recommendations for the educational system and for future research. When teaching about Indigenous students, teachers can alleviate the mixed heritage identity crisis by stressing inclusivity rather

than exclusivity in regards to the diversity of the Aboriginal culture. When teaching within a classroom, teachers must be aware that Aboriginal students may not necessarily appear "Aboriginal" but identify themselves as such. In this context, it is important for teachers to plan lessons and units that encompass a range of cultures, rather than looking at their classroom as surface deep in terms of skin colour. Furthermore, in order to alleviate the identity crisis that arose due to Sally's disconnection with "affinity groups" (Gee, 2000), this study recommends that schools should adapt a range of extra-curriculum activities to bring Aboriginal peoples together, particularly those who are struggling to find their place. All of these recommendations may enable more mixed heritage Indigenous Australians, who may be currently "masking" their Nature-Identities, to find their place.

Epilogue

As outlined in the beginning of this study, I had hoped that the reader would gain an insight into the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis through this story. I also hoped that the words that I was to write would contribute to Australia's reconciliation process to help close the gap between mixed heritage Indigenous Australians and mainstream Australians. I had also hoped that teachers could somehow use this story in their lesson and unit planning, as well as their day-to-day teaching, to help alleviate the mixed heritage Indigenous identity crisis. Above all, I wanted this story to enable more mixed heritage Indigenous Australians, who may be currently "masking" their Indigenous identity, to find a sense of place. Although these were my aims, to which I wholeheartedly hope I have achieved, I have realized that this story was not just aimed for the reader; it has become a part of my journey into finding "My Place." Instead of seeing "My Place" as a place that is first and foremost prescribed by discourse, institutions or affinity groups, I have come to see "My Place" on a whole new level. My Place is about a journey; it is a spiritual, physical, emotional and rewarding journey. It is a journey that brings "Self-Awareness" that has the power to overwrite the damage ensured through popular myths and stereotypes. By gaining this Self-Awareness Identity, "My Place" can never be taken away, for it is "My Place".

No matter how much you dilute
Mix, match and try to pollute
Our identity remains intact
Something you can't change, that's a fact
Our spirit is not measured by the shade of our skin
But by something stronger found within
A place you can not touch or take away
It will remain shining out till our dying day
We all connect with it again
No matter how far we've been
Deidre Currie, "Identity Intact", Koori Mail, p. 25
(as cited in Korff, 2007).

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APPENDIX 1

Email from an Indigenous Officer Detailing the Indigenous Identity Crisis

Subject	**RE: Macksville High School Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer**
Sender	Werner, Mark
Recipient	s080891
Date	11.11.2010 20:54

Hi Rebekah,

I have just completed reading your text. Great work.

Although I am yet to read My Place I was able to get a good feeling for the book from your paper.

I agree that additional research needs to go into the issue of Indigenous Identity and resources made available to assist people affected by this issue.

A few points that I see on a daily basis include:

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders do not like being referred to as "Indigenous". It is seen to be a government word that takes away our identity.

Another very difficult issue Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders face is having their identity verified by Land Councils. I have been told horror stories of Aboriginal people having to attend Land Council meetings and present themselves physically where facial structures and side profiles where examined as if carrying out anthropological field studies to determining their Aboriginality. I have also spoken to many people who were unable to have their identity confirmed from a Land Council as they are uncertain of their home lands. I can see a day in the not too distant future where the offending Land Councils are brought before the Anti Discrimination Board or Human Rights Commission.

I believe that school aged children will benefit greatly from your work and research. I see kids on a daily basis that struggle with their identity,skin colour and appearance.

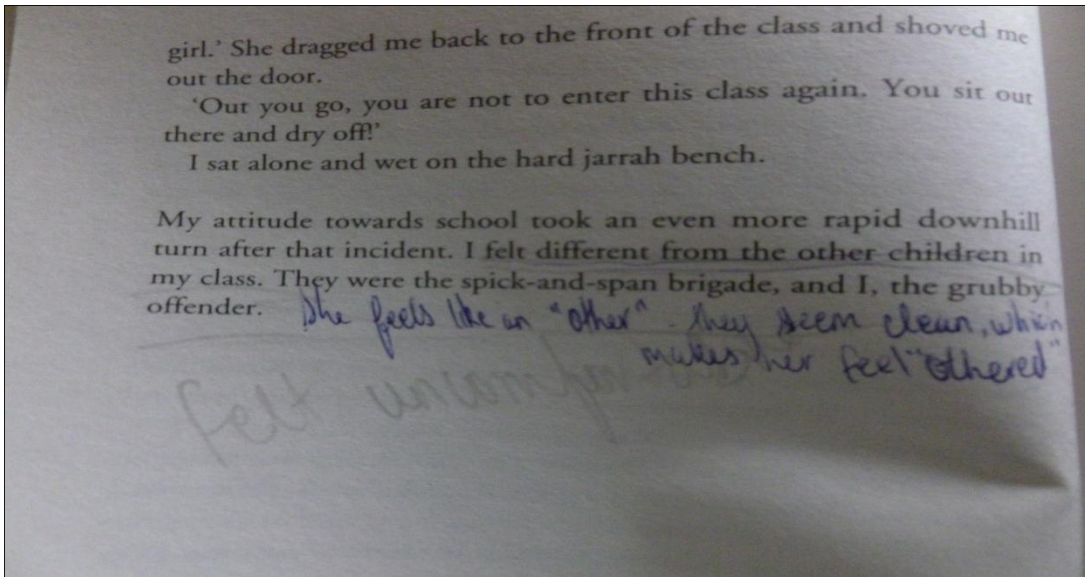
I look forward to reading your future works and please don't hesitate to contact me for more information

Kind Regards
Mark

Mark Werner
Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer
Macksville High School
PO Box 611
Macksville
NSW 2447
Ph: (02)65681066
Fax: (02)65682802

APPENDIX 2

Photographic Evidence of Initial Note-Taking



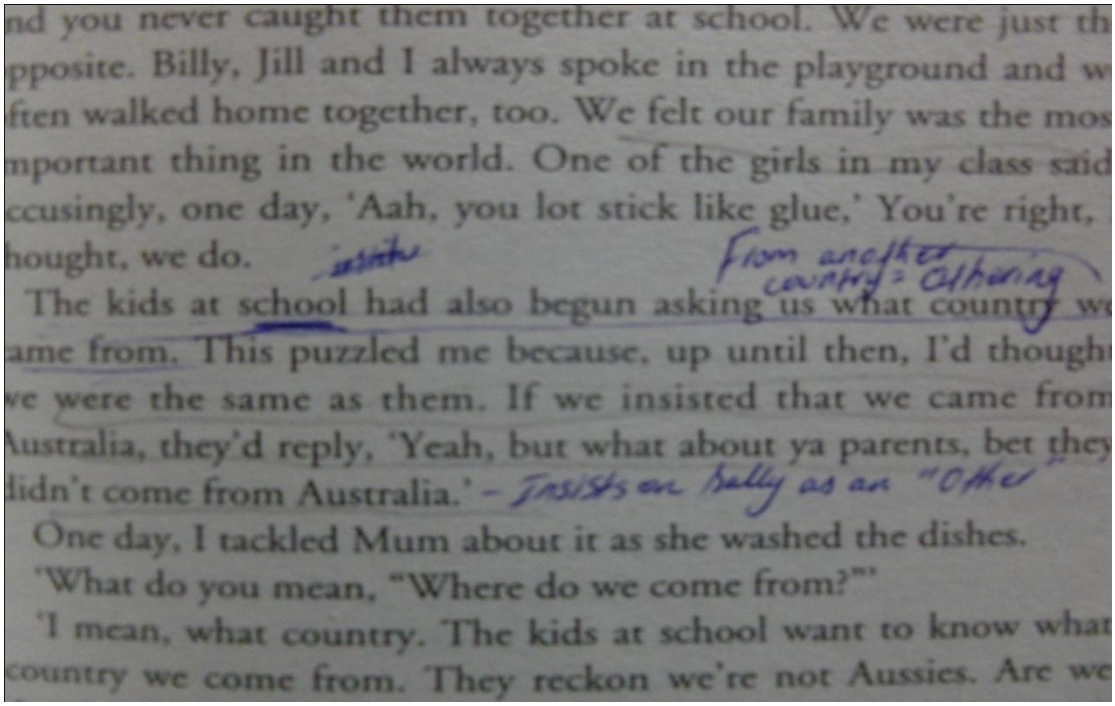
girl.' She dragged me back to the front of the class and shoved me out the door.

'Out you go, you are not to enter this class again. You sit out there and dry off!'

I sat alone and wet on the hard jarrah bench.

My attitude towards school took an even more rapid downhill turn after that incident. I felt different from the other children in my class. They were the spick-and-span brigade, and I, the grubby offender. She feels like an "other" - they seem clean, which makes her feel "othered"

felt uncomfy



nd you never caught them together at school. We were just th
pposite. Billy, Jill and I always spoke in the playground and w
ften walked home together, too. We felt our family was the mos
nportant thing in the world. One of the girls in my class said
ccusingly, one day, 'Aah, you lot stick like glue.' You're right,
hought, we do. insider

From another country = Othering

The kids at school had also begun asking us what country w
ame from. This puzzled me because, up until then, I'd thought
ve were the same as them. If we insisted that we came from
Australia, they'd reply, 'Yeah, but what about ya parents, bet they
didn't come from Australia.' - Insists on Sally as an "Other"

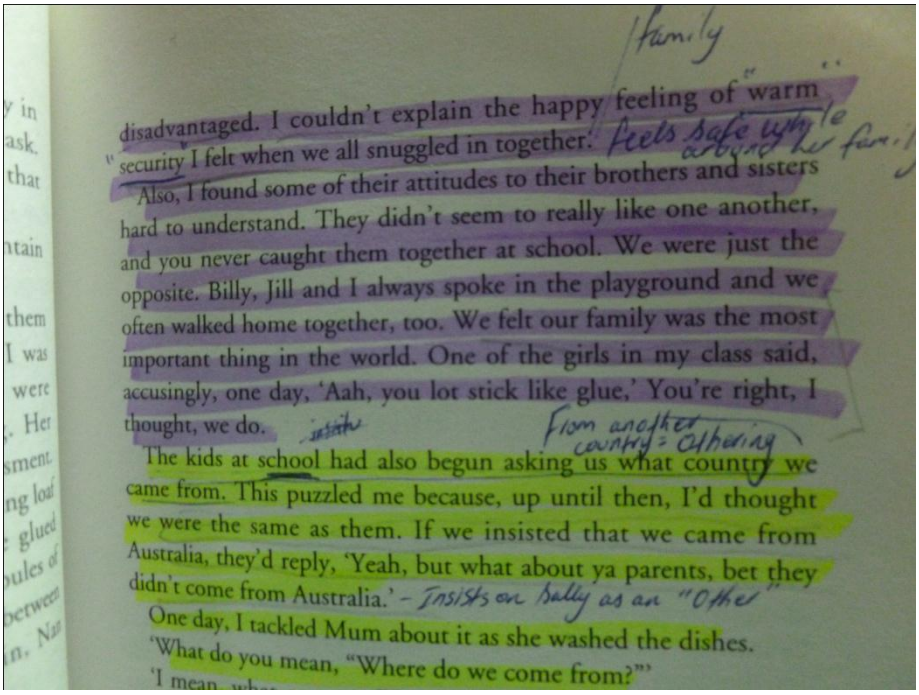
One day, I tackled Mum about it as she washed the dishes.

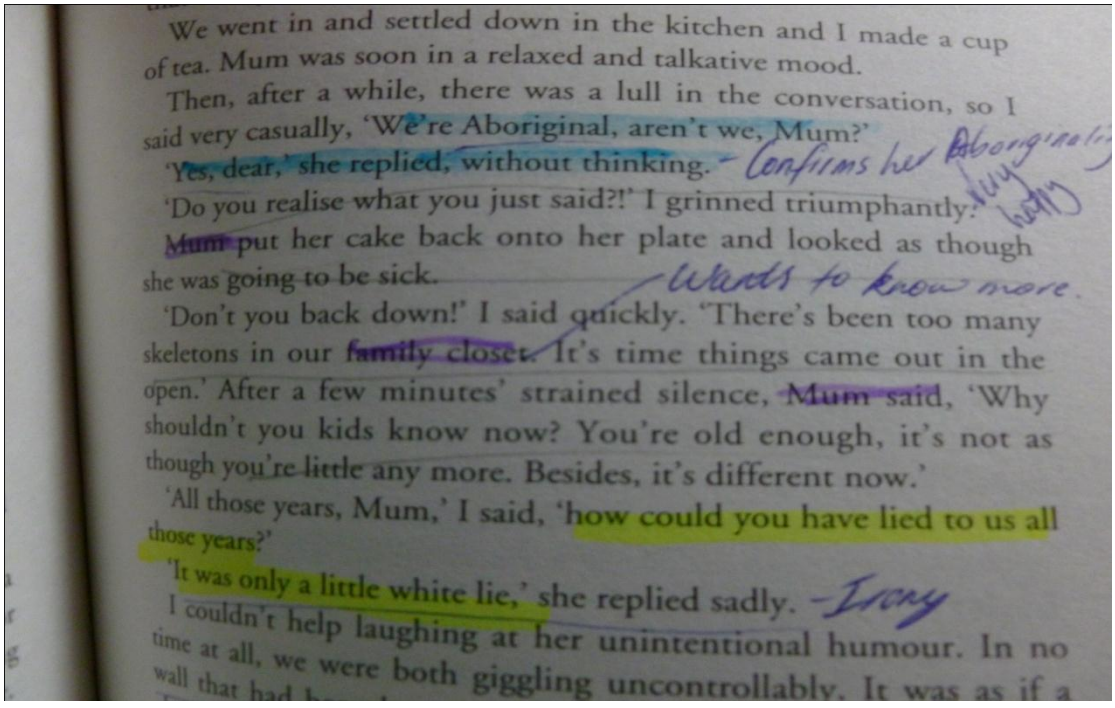
'What do you mean, "Where do we come from?"'

'I mean, what country. The kids at school want to know what
country we come from. They reckon we're not Aussies. Are we

APPENDIX 3

Photographic Evidence of Highlighted Themes





APPENDIX 4

An Example of the Themed Coding Process

SALLY'S EXPERIENCE	COLOUR CODING: Orange = Nature Purple = Family Pink = Stories Yellow = Othering Blue = Aboriginal heritage Green = Finding Place
Code	**Evidence**
Finding Place	- "We're Aboriginal, aren't we, Mum?" "Yes, dear," she replied, without thinking. "Do you realize what you just said?!" I grinned triumphantly….It was as if a wall that had been between us suddenly crumbled away. I felt closer to Mum then than I had for years.." (p. 171) - Chapter entitled "A Beginning" (p. 172) - - After much thought, I decided that our best course was to return to Nan and Arthur's birthplace, Corunna Downs. - Chapter entitled "Return to Corunna" (p. 276). - Mum and I couldn't help thinking of all the things we'd learnt about our family. Our family was something to feel proud of. It made us feel good inside, and sad (p. 286). - Soon, we were all hugging. Gladys and I had tears in our eyes, but we managed not to break down. (p. 289). - IT was totally different now, open arms, and open hearts. By the time we'd been hugged and patted and cried over, and told not to forget and to come back. - an old full-blood lady whispered to me, "You don't know what it means, no one comes back. You don't know what it means that you, with light skin, want to own us." WE had lumps in our throats the size oftomatoes. I wanted desperately to tell her how much it meant to us that they would own us. My mouth wouldn't open. I just hugged her and tried not to sob. .. Our lives had been enriched in the past few days (p. 289). - Mum and I sat down on part of the old fence and looked across to the distant horizon. We were both trying to imagine what it would have bee like for the people in the old days. Soft, blue hills completely surrounded the station. They seemed to us mystical and magical… (p. 290). - We kissed everyone goodbye and headed off towards Nullagine. Mum and I were both a bit teary. Nothing was said, but I knew she felt like I did. Like we'd suddenly come home and how were were leaving again. But we had a sense of place now. (p. 291). - Groups: "You..must be Burungu, your mother is Panaka, and Paul, we would make him Malinga, Now, this is very important, you don't want to go forgetting this, because we've been trying to work it out ever since you arrived" (p. 293)…I repated the names…

	"Good!" he said, "because some of the ones that come up here get it all mudled up. WE want you to have it straight, because it's very important. We don't want you to go getting tangled up in the wrong group" (p. 293) -"Now you can come here whenever you like. We know who you belong to now. If you ever come and I'm not here and they tell you to go away, you hold your ground..You got your place now..There's always a spot here for you all." ..It was one more precious thing that added to our sense of belonging (p. 294). - "Thid is your place too, remember that" (p. 295). - ."the way I look at it, it's a beginning. Before, we had nothing. AT least now, we've got a beginning." We were different people now. What had begun as a tentative search for knowledge had grown into a spiritual and emotional pilgrimage. We had an Aboriginal consciousness now, and were proud of it (p. 296). - "We belonged now…" (p. 296).
Nature	Did you hear the bird call?...What a magical moment it had been. (p. 12). - I was trapped. I mumbled a reluctant yes, and let my gaze slip from the bag to the large expanse of green grass nearby. I wanted to run and fling myself on the grass. (p. 13). - The swamp behind our place had become an important place for me. It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small, muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to join the Canning River. - Chapter entitled "Wildlife": In no time at all, our house became inundated with pets. Cats, dogs, budgies, rabbits, and, of course, the chieckens – any stray creature found a home with us. When our cat population hit thirteen, Mum decided it was too much and found homes for half of them….The dog we lost had been an old and treasured member of the family. I decided we needed another dog to replace him, so I persuaded Mum to look around some local pet shops…'You see Mum no one wants him. What'll become of him if we don't buy him? (pp. 66-67). - Describes the weather (p. 12). - Chapter entitled "Rather peculiar pets" (p. 111) Did you hear the bird call?...What a magical moment it had been. (p. 12). - I was trapped. I mumbled a reluctant yes, and let my gaze slip from the bag to the large expanse of green grass nearby. I wanted to run and fling myself on the grass. (p. 13). - The swamp behind our place had become an important place for me. It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small, muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to join the Canning River. - Chapter entitled "Wildlife": In no time at all, our house became inundated with pets. Cats, dogs, budgies, rabbits, and, of course, the chieckens – any stray creature found a home with us. When our cat population hit thirteen, Mum decided it was too much and found homes for half of them….The dog we lost had been an old and treasured member of the family. I decided we needed another dog to replace him, so I persuaded Mum to look around some local pet shops…'You see Mum no one wants him. What'll become of him if we don't buy him? (pp. 66-67). - Describes the weather (p. 12).

	- Chapter entitled “Rather peculiar pets” (p. 111)
Relationships	- I felt very strongly about families stick together. So strongly, in fact, that I had a secret meeting with my brothers and sisters; for some reason, I was frightened we would be put in an orphanage (p. 59). - The best thing about grade two was that I got to share the room with Jill. -I’ll never forget those evenings; the open fire, Mum and Nan, all of us laughing and joking. I felt very secure, then. I knew it was us against the world, but I also new that, as long as I had my family, I’d make it (p. 64). - “Aah, you lot stick together like glue,” You’re right, I thought, we do (p. 45). - I found some [the school children] of their attitudes to their brothers and sisters hard to understand. They didn’t seem to really like one another, and you never caught them together at school. We were just the opposite. Billy, Jill and I always spoke in the playground and we often walked home together, too. We felt our family was the most important thing in the world (p. 45). - Mum’s Blood’s Thicker Than Water routine (p. 87)
“Othering” Sally	**The Hospital** - The hospital and the school: they were places “dedicated to taking the spirit out of life.” (p. 14). - The hospital again, and the echo of my reluctant feet through the long, empty corridors. I hated hospitals and hospital smells. I hated the bare boards that gleamed with the newly applied polish, the dust-free windows and sills, and the flashes of shiny chrome that snatched my distorted shape as we hurried past. I was a grubby five-year-old in an alien environment. - I felt if I said anything at all, I’d just fall apart. There’d be me, in pieces on the floor. I was full of secret fears (p. 8). - .. and the echo of my reluctant feet rhough the long, empty corridors (p. 7). **The School** - He held up one of my drawings in front of the class one day and pointed out everything wrong with it. There was no perspective, I was the only one with no horizon line. My people were flat and floating…By the end of ten minutes, the whole class was laughing and I felt very small. - Shaking her head in disbelief, she muttered, ‘You dirty, dirty girl.” She dragged me back to the front of the class and shoved me out the door. “Out you go, you are not to enter this class again. You sit out there and dry off!” I sat alone and wet on the hard jarrah bench (p. 28). - My attitude towards school took an even more rapid downhill turn after that incident. I felt different from other children in my class. They were the spick-and-span brigade, and I, the grubby offender (p. 28). - There was a great deal of social stigma attached to being Aboriginal at our school (p. 121). - “We expect it of the Milroys, but not of girls of your calibre” (p. 109). - I was sick of visiting the Guidance Officer myself. I felt very much on the defensive in these meetings, because I knew they were based on the premise that there was something wrong with me. In my view, that was totally unfounded (p. 109). - My prize was a choice of any book available from the bookshops. When our headmaster, Mr Buddee, asked me what I had in

	mind, I replied, without hesitation, "A book of fairytales please." I think he was rather taken aback, because he told me to go away and think about it for a few days. - …and I'm not just talking about Phsyics. In this class, most of you will pass. Then there are a few who are borderline, and one who will definitely fail. He looked with pity at me. "I don't know why you borther to turn up at all. You might as well throw in the towel now." Everyone laughed. I was really mad. Up until then, I hadn't cared whether I passed or failed. I'll prove you wrong, you crumb, I thought (p. 138). **The University** - I don't think Mum realized how deep my feelings went. It wasn't the money I was after, I was still receiving the Repatriation scholarship. I desperately wanted to do something to identify with my new-found heritage and that was the only thing I could think of (p. 173). - "Mrs Morgan," the senior officer said as I sat down. "We'll get straight to the point. We have received information, from what appears to be a very reliable source, that you have obrained the Aboriginal scholarship under false pretences. This person, who is a close friend of you and your sister, has told us that you have been bragging all over the university campus about how easy it is to obtain the scholarship without even being Aboriginal. Apparently, you've been saying that anyone can get it." I was so amazed at the ridiculousness of the accusation that I burst out laughing. That was a great tactical error on my part… "Have you lied to this department? I want to hear what you have to say for yourself." I felt very angry. It was obvious I had been judged guilty already, and I knew why. It was because Jill and I were doing well. The department never expected any of their Aboriginal students to do well at tertiary studies. They would have considered it more in keeping if we both failed consistently (p. 177). - How do you expect me to prove anything? What would you like me to do, bring my grandmother and mother in and parade them up and down so you can all have a look? There's no way I'll do that, even if you tell me to. I'd rather lose the allowance. It's my word against whoever complained, so it's up to you to decide, isn't it?" - The senior officer looked at me silently for a few minutes and then said, "Well, Mrs Morgan. You are either telling the truth, or you're a very good actress! I was amazed, still my innocence wasn't to be conceded." … I felt sick and wasn't sure how much longer my legs would support me. It was just as well I'd lost my temper, I thought (p. 178). - Chapter entitled "Pretending" (p. 39). - The kids at school had also begun asking us what country we came from. This puzzled me because, up until then, I'd thought we were the same as them. If I insisted that we came from Australia, they'd reply, "Yeah, but what about ya parents, bet they didn't come from Australia" (p. 45). - One day, I tackled Mum about it as she washed the dishes. 'What do you mean, "Where do we come from?"' 'I mean, what country. The kids at school want to know what country we come from. They reckon we're not Aussies. Are we Aussies, Mum?" (p. 45) - Mum was silent. Nan grunted in a cross sort of way, then got up from the table and walked outside. 'Come on, Mum, what are we?" "What do the kids at school say?" "Anything. Italian, Greek, Indian." "Tell them you're Indian." I got really excited, then. "Are we really? Indian!" it sounded exotic. "When did we come here?" I added. "A long time ago," Mum replied. "Now, no more questions. You just tell them you're Indian." (p. 45). - It was good to finally have an answer and it satisfied our playmates. They could quite believe we were Indian, they just didn't

	want us pretending we were Aussies when we weren't (p. 45). - "You know Susan?" .. "Her mother said she doesn't want her mixing with you because you're a bad influence. She reckons all Abos are a bad influence" (p. 122). - "You still don't understand, do you," Jill groaned in disbelief. "It's a terrible thing to be Aboriginal. Nobody wants to know you, not just Susan. You can be Indian, Dutch, Italian, anything, but not Aboriginal!" (p. 122). The church deacon: "I'd like you to stop mixing with Mary." He smiled his charming smile again. "Why?" I was genuinely puzzled. "I think you know why." "No, I don't." "You're a bad influence, you must realize that." Believe it or not, that was one part of my character I was unaware of (p. 128). - Sometimes, people would say, "But you're lucky, you'd never know you were that, you could pass for anything." Many students reacted with an embarrassed silence. Perhaps that was the worst reaction of all. It was like we'd said a forbidden word. Others muttered, "Oh, I'm sorry…" and when they realized what they were saying, they just sort of faded away (p. 175). - I began to wonder what it was like for Aboriginal people with really dark skin and broad features, how did Australians react to them? How had white Australians reacted to my grandmother in the past, was that the cause of her bitterness? (p. 175). - The kids were amazed to hear that I shared a bed with my brother and sister. I never told them about the times we'd squeezed five in that bed (p. 44). - One lunchtime at school, I was talking about families with one of the girls in my class. When I mentioned mine and said how ordinary they were, she burst out laughing. "You really think your family's normal?" "Course they're normal. What's so unusual about them?" "Everything! "You've got the most abnormal family I've ever come across. Don't get me wrong, I like your mother, I really do, but the way you all look at life is weird." My classmate continued to chuckle on and off for the rest of the lunch hour. I never asked her to explain further, I was too embarrassed (p. 134). - How could I tell her it was me, and her and Nan. The sum total of all the things that I didn't understand about them or myself. The feeling that I'd never belong anywhere. Never resolve anything (p. 134). - But you're lucky, you'd never know that you were that, you could pass for anything" (p. 176). - What did it really mean to be Aboriginal? I'd never lived off the land and been a hunter and a gatherer. I'd never participated in corroborees or heard stories of the Dreamtime. I hardly knew any Aboriginal people. What did it mean for someone like me? …I felt so weighed down with all my questions that I decided to give it all up. - "Well, I don't know much about them," I answered. "They like animals, don't they? We like animals." "A lot of people like animals, Sally. Haven't you heard of the RSPCA?" "Of course I have! But don't Abos feel close to the earth and all that stuff?" (pp. 119-120).
Stories	- By the beginning of second term at school, I had learnt to read, and was the best reader in my class. Reading opened up new horizons for me, but it also created a hunger that school couldn't satisfy. Miss Glazberg could see no reason for me to have a new book when the rest of the children in my class were struggling with the old one. - She placed my book on my desk, and I couldn't help groaning out loud. It seemed that Dick, Dora, Nip and Fluff had somehow managed to graduate to Grade Two. In a way, I felt sorry for them. None of them lived near a wamp, and there was no mention of wild birds, snakes or goannas. All they ever did was visit the toy shop and play ball with Nip. I resigned myself to another year of

	boredom. - There was nothing we loved better than huddling around the wood stove on cold afternoons, swapping stories (p. 91). - She desires to hear the stories of Arthur, Daisy and Gladys (to gain an insight into her heritage and what makes her who she is).

APPENDIX 5

An example of my interpretations from the themed coding process

SALLY'S EXPERIENCE	**COLOUR CODING:** **Orange = Nature** **Purple = Family** **Pink = Stories** **Yellow = Othering** **Blue = Aboriginality** **Green = Finding Place**

Code	**Evidence**	**Interpretation/ Relevance to Identity**
Finding Place	- "We're Aboriginal, aren't we, Mum?" "Yes, dear," she replied, without thinking. "Do you realize what you just said?!" I grinned triumphantly….It was as if a wall that had been between us suddenly crumbled away. I felt closer to Mum then than I had for years.." (p. 171) - Chapter entitled "A Beginning" (p. 172) - - After much thought, I decided that our best course was to return to Nan and Arthur's birthplace, Corunna Downs. - Chapter entitled "Return to Corunna" (p. 276). - Mum and I couldn't help thinking of all the things we'd learnt about our family. Our family was something to feel proud of. It made us feel good inside, and sad (p. 286). - Soon, we were all hugging. Gladys and I had tears in our eyes, but we managed not to break down. (p. 289). - IT was totally different now, open arms, and open hearts. By the time we'd been hugged and patted and cried over, and told not to forget and to come back. - an old full-blood lady whispered to me, "You don't know what it means, no one comes back. You don't know what it means that you, with light skin, want to own us." WE had lumps in our throats the size oftomatoes. I wanted desperately to tell her how much it meant to us that they would own us. My mouth wouldn't open. I just hugged her and tried not to sob. .. Our lives had been enriched in the past few days (p. 289). - Mum and I sat down on part of the old fence and looked across to the distant horizon. We were both trying to imagine what it would have bee like for the people in the old days. Soft, blue hills completely surrounded the station. They seemed to us mystical and magical… (p. 290). - We kissed everyone goodbye and headed off towards Nullagine. Mum and I were both a bit teary. Nothing was said, but I knew she felt like I did. Like we'd suddenly come home and	Suggests that she has gained a sense of belonging, which is related to her "Aboriginal Consciousness" These statements demonstrate the importance of land and kinship as signifiers for place. By being accepted into her family, and by walking on her Nan's land, it appears that Sally is able to develop a sense of belonging, despite the Othering she experienced due to the Institution, Discourse and Affinity-Identities. Although Sally may not share the same "practices" and "experiences" with her kinship, as Gee's (2000) Affinity-Identity suggests, it is through Sally's physical journey back to the past that enables her to gain this sense of place. In this context, it appears that Sally's original self-awareness of belonging in the land and within her immediate family is given even greater significance; it is not only who she is a person now, but also it is who she will be for eternity.

	how were were leaving again. But we had a sense of place now. (p. 291). - Groups: “You..must be Burungu, your mother is Panaka, and Paul, we would make him Malinga, Now, this is very important, you don’t want to go forgetting this, because we’ve been trying to work it out ever since you arrived” (p. 293)…I repated the names… “Good!” he said, “because some of the ones that come up here get it all mudled up. WE want you to have it straight, because it’s very important. We don’t want you to go getting tangled up in the wrong group” (p. 293) -”Now you can come here whenever you like. We know who you belong to now. If you ever come and I’m not here and they tell you to go away, you hold your ground..You got your place now..There’s always a spot here for you all.” ..It was one more precious thing that added to our sense of belonging (p. 294). - “Thid is your place too, remember that” (p. 295). - .”the way I look at it, it’s a beginning. Before, we had nothing. AT least now, we’ve got a beginning.” We were different people now. What had begun as a tentative search for knowledge had grown into a spiritual and emotional pilgrimage. We had an Aboriginal consciousness now, and were proud of it (p. 296). - “We belonged now…” (p. 296). - We were different people now. What had begun as a tentative search for knowledge had grown into a spiritual and emotional pilgrimage. We had an Aboriginal consciousness now, and were proud of it (p. 296). - “We belonged now…” (p. 296).	
Nature	- The swamp behind our place had become an important place for me. It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small, muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to join the Canning River. - Did you hear the bird call?...What a magical moment it had been. (p. 12). - I was trapped. I mumbled a reluctant yes, and let my gaze slip from the bag to the large expanse of green grass nearby. I wanted to run and fling myself on the grass. (p. 13). - The swamp behind our place had become an important place for me. It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small, muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to join the Canning River. - Chapter entitled “Wildlife”: In no time at all, our house became inundated with pets. Cats, dogs, budgies, rabbits, and, of course, the chieckens – any stray creature found a home with	It seems that Sally’s identity revolves around the nature. It appears like it is inherent within her.

	us. When our cat population hit thirteen, Mum decided it was too much and found homes for half of them….The dog we lost had been an old and treasured member of the family. I decided we needed another dog to replace him, so I persuaded Mum to look around some local pet shops…'You see Mum no one wants him. What'll become of him if we don't buy him? (pp. 66-67). - Describes the weather (p. 12). - Chapter entitled "Rather peculiar pets" (p. 111) Did you hear the bird call?...What a magical moment it had been. (p. 12). - I was trapped. I mumbled a reluctant yes, and let my gaze slip from the bag to the large expanse of green grass nearby. I wanted to run and fling myself on the grass. (p. 13). - The swamp behind our place had become an important place for me. It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small, muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to join the Canning River. - Chapter entitled "Wildlife": In no time at all, our house became inundated with pets. Cats, dogs, budgies, rabbits, and, of course, the chieckens – any stray creature found a home with us. When our cat population hit thirteen, Mum decided it was too much and found homes for half of them….The dog we lost had been an old and treasured member of the family. I decided we needed another dog to replace him, so I persuaded Mum to look around some local pet shops…'You see Mum no one wants him. What'll become of him if we don't buy him? (pp. 66-67). - Describes the weather (p. 12). - Chapter entitled "Rather peculiar pets" (p. 111)	
Relationships	- I felt very strongly about families stick together. So strongly, in fact, that I had a secret meeting with my brothers and sisters; for some reason, I was frightened we would be put in an orphanage (p. 59). - The best thing about grade two was that I got to share the room with Jill.	It seems that Sally feels a strong connection to her family, almost like they are a "protective" mechanism.
"Othering" Sally	**The Hospital** - The hospital and the school: they were places "dedicated to taking the spirit out of life." (p. 14). - The hospital again, and the echo of my reluctant feet through the long, empty corridors. I hated hospitals and hospital smells. I hated the bare boards that gleamed with the newly applied polish, the dust-free windows and sills, and the flashes of shiny chrome that snatched my distorted shape as we hurried past. I was a grubby five-year-old in an alien environment.	The way in which Sally experiences "Othering" suggests that her voice is being silenced. She also feels "alienated" and "grubby" in the hospital, suggesting that the hospital could be read as a metaphor for "mainstream" society that serves to suppress her identity. Likewise, the

	- I felt if I said anything at all, I'd just fall apart. There'd be me, in pieces on the floor. I was full of secret fears (p. 8). - .. and the echo of my reluctant feet rhough the long, empty corridors (p. 7). **The School** - He held up one of my drawings in front of the class one day and pointed out everything wrong with it. There was no perspective, I was the only one with no horizon line. My people were flat and floating…By the end of ten minutes, the whole class was laughing and I felt very small. - Shaking her head in disbelief, she muttered, 'You dirty, dirty girl." She dragged me back to the front of the class and shoved me out the door. "Out you go, you are not to enter this class again. You sit out there and dry off!" I sat alone and wet on the hard jarrah bench (p. 28). - My attitude towards school took an even more rapid downhill turn after that incident. I felt different from other children in my class. They were the spick-and-span brigade, and I, the grubby offender (p. 28). - There was a great deal of social stigma attached to being Aboriginal at our school (p. 121). - "We expect it of the Milroys, but not of girls of your calibre" (p. 109). - I was sick of visiting the Guidance Officer myself. I felt very much on the defensive in these meetings, because I knew they were based on the premise that there was something wrong with me. In my view, that was totally unfounded (p. 109). - My prize was a choice of any book available from the bookshops. When our headmaster, Mr Buddee, asked me what I had in mind, I replied, without hesitation, "A book of fairytales please." I think he was rather taken aback, because he told me to go away and think about it for a few days. - …and I'm not just talking about Phsyics. In this class, most of you will pass. Then there are a few who are borderline, and one who will definitely fail. He looked with pity at me. "I don't know why you borther to turn up at all. You might as well throw in the towel now." Everyone laughed. I was really mad. Up until then, I hadn't cared whether I passed or failed. I'll prove you wrong, you crumb, I thought (p. 138). **The University** - I don't think Mum realized how deep my feelings went. It wasn't the money I was after, I was still receiving the Repatriation scholarship. I desperately wanted to do something to identify with my new-found heritage and that was the only thing I could think of (p. 173). - "Mrs Morgan," the senior officer said as I sat down. "We'll get straight to the point. We have received information, from what appears to be a very reliable source, that you have	school and university appear to "Other" her, which are also metaphors for the Institution-Identity. These metaphors appear to be silencing Sally's voice.

	obrained the Aboriginal scholarship under false pretences. This person, who is a close friend of you and your sister, has told us that you have been bragging all over the university campus about how easy it is to obtain the scholarship without even being Aboriginal. Apparently, you've been saying that anyone can get it." I was so amazed at the ridiculousness of the accusation that I burst out laughing. That was a great tactical error on my part… "Have you lied to this department? I want to hear what you have to say for yourself." I felt very angry. It was obvious I had been judged guilty already, and I knew why. It was because Jill and I were doing well. The department never expected any of their Aboriginal students to do well at tertiary studies. They would have considered it more in keeping if we both failed consistently (p. 177). - How do you expect me to prove anything? What would you like me to do, bring my grandmother and mother in and parade them up and down so you can all have a look? There's no way I'll do that, even if you tell me to. I'd rather lose the allowance. It's my word against whoever complained, so it's up to you to decide, isn't it?" - The senior officer looked at me silently for a few minutes and then said, "Well, Mrs Morgan. You are either telling the truth, or you're a very good actress! I was amazed, still my innocence wasn't to be conceded." … I felt sick and wasn't sure how much longer my legs would support me. It was just as well I'd lost my temper, I thought (p. 178). - Chapter entitled "Pretending" (p. 39). - The kids at school had also begun asking us what country we came from. This puzzled me because, up until then, I'd thought we were the same as them. If I insisted that we came from Australia, they'd reply, "Yeah, but what about ya parents, bet they didn't come from Australia" (p. 45). - One day, I tackled Mum about it as she washed the dishes. 'What do you mean, "Where do we come from?"' 'I mean, what country. The kids at school want to know what country we come from. They reckon we're not Aussies. Are we Aussies, Mum?" (p. 45) - Mum was silent. Nan grunted in a cross sort of way, then got up from the table and walked outside. 'Come on, Mum, what are we?" "What do the kids at school say?" "Anything. Italian, Greek, Indian." "Tell them you're Indian." I got really excited, then. "Are we really? Indian!" it sounded exotic. "When did we come here?" I added. "A long time ago," Mum replied. "Now, no more questions. You just tell them you're Indian." (p. 45). - It was good to finally have an answer and it satisfied our playmates. They could quite believe we were Indian, they just didn't want us pretending we were Aussies when we weren't (p. 45). - "You know Susan?" .. "Her mother said she doesn't want her mixing with you because you're a bad influence. She reckons all Abos are a bad influence" (p. 122).	

	- "You still don't understand, do you," Jill groaned in disbelief. "It's a terrible thing to be Aboriginal. Nobody wants to know you, not just Susan. You can be Indian, Dutch, Italian, anything, but not Aboriginal!" (p. 122). The church deacon: "I'd like you to stop mixing with Mary." He smiled his charming smile again. "Why?" I was genuinely puzzled. "I think you know why." "No, I don't." "You're a bad influence, you must realize that." Believe it or not, that was one part of my character I was unaware of (p. 128). - Sometimes, people would say, "But you're lucky, you'd never know you were that, you could pass for anything." Many students reacted with an embarrassed silence. Perhaps that was the worst reaction of all. It was like we'd said a forbidden word. Others muttered, "Oh, I'm sorry…" and when they realized what they were saying, they just sort of faded away (p. 175). - I began to wonder what it was like for Aboriginal people with really dark skin and broad features, how did Australians react to them? How had white Australians reacted to my grandmother in the past, was that the cause of her bitterness? (p. 175). - The kids were amazed to hear that I shared a bed with my brother and sister. I never told them about the times we'd squeezed five in that bed (p. 44). - One lunchtime at school, I was talking about families with one of the girls in my class. When I mentioned mine and said how ordinary they were, she burst out laughing. "You really think your family's normal?" "Course they're normal. What's so unusual about them?" "Everything! "You've got the most abnormal family I've ever come across. Don't get me wrong, I like your mother, I really do, but the way you all look at life is weird." My classmate continued to chuckle on and off for the rest of the lunch hour. I never asked her to explain further, I was too embarrassed (p. 134). - How could I tell her it was me, and her and Nan. The sum total of all the things that I didn't understand about them or myself. The feeling that I'd never belong anywhere. Never resolve anything (p. 134). - But you're lucky, you'd never know that you were that, you could pass for anything" (p. 176). - What did it really mean to be Aboriginal? I'd never lived off the land and been a hunter and a gatherer. I'd never participated in corroborees or heard stories of the Dreamtime. I hardly knew any Aboriginal people. What did it mean for someone like me? …I felt so weighed down with all my questions that I decided to give it all up. - "Well, I don't know much about them," I answered. "They like animals, don't they? We like animals." "A lot of people like animals, Sally. Haven't you heard of the RSPCA?" "Of course I have! But don't Abos feel close to the earth and all that stuff?" (pp. 119-120).	

Stories	- By the beginning of second term at school, I had learnt to read, and was the best reader in my class. Reading opened up new horizons for me, but it also created a hunger that school couldn't satisfy.	Sally's statement is indicative of her deep love of stories. It appears to be something she cannot change about herself.

APPENDIX 6

Sally's Experience through the Framework of Gee's Theory

SALLY'S EXPERIENCE		**COLOUR CODING:** **Orange = Nature** **Purple = Family** **Pink = Stories** **Yellow = Othering** **Blue = Aboriginal heritage**
Identity Type	***What data points can be used as evidence?***	***Interpretation + Linkage to Literature Review***
Nature Identity	- Did you hear the bird call?...What a magical moment it had been. (p. 12). - I was trapped. I mumbled a reluctant yes, and let my gaze slip from the bag to the large expanse of green grass nearby. I wanted to run and fling myself on the grass. (p. 13). - The swamp behind our place had become an important place for me. It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small, muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to join the Canning River. - Chapter entitled "Wildlife": In no time at all, our house became inundated with pets. Cats, dogs, budgies, rabbits, and, of course, the chieckens – any stray creature found a home with us. When our cat population hit thirteen, Mum decided it was too much and found homes for half of them….The dog we lost had been an old and treasured member of the family. I decided we needed another dog to replace him, so I persuaded Mum to look around some local pet shops…'You see Mum no one wants him. What'll become of him if we don't buy him? (pp. 66-67). - Describes the weather (p. 12). - Chapter entitled "Rather peculiar pets" (p. 111) - I felt very strongly about families stick together. So strongly, in fact, that I had a secret meeting with my brothers and sisters; for some reason, I was frightened we would be put in an orphanage (p. 59). - The best thing about grade two was that I got to share the room with Jill. -I'll never forget those evenings; the open fire, Mum and Nan, all of us laughing and joking. I felt very secure, then. I knew it was us against the world, but I also new that, as long as I had my family, I'd make it (p. 64). - "Aah, you lot stick together like glue," You're right, I thought, we do (p. 45). - I found some [the school children] of their attitudes to their brothers and sisters hard to understand. They didn't seem to really like one another, and you never caught them together at school. We were just the opposite. Billy, Jill and I always spoke in the playground and we often walked home together, too. We felt our family was the most important thing in the world (p. 45). - Mum's Blood's Thicker Than Water routine (p. 87)	Symbolizes rejuvenation, even though it is muddy. - While Sally's Aboriginality appears to be the core of her Nature-Identity, she also makes it strikingly clear that another aspect of her Nature-Identity seems to be her place in nature. Although *My Place* is mainly set in a suburban world, Sally suggests that she is not a part of this place by privileging the natural setting over the man-made setting. For instance, instead of consistently describing her suburban village, there are countless occasions where Sally describes the nature, from the weather (p. 73) to the love that she has for the wildlife (p. 66). She even prescribes terms such as "Wildlife" (p. 66) and "Rather peculiar pets" (p. 111) to entire chapters within her text. These descriptions not only depict her internalized love of the land and animals, but they also highlight the central role nature plays in her life, suggesting that it is her source of life

	- By the beginning of second term at school, I had learnt to read, and was the best reader in my class. Reading opened up new horizons for me, but it also created a hunger that school couldn't satisfy. Miss Glazberg could see no reason for me to have a new book when the rest of the children in my class were struggling with the old one. - She placed my book on my desk, and I couldn't help groaning out loud. It seemed that Dick, Dora, Nip and Fluff had somehow managed to graduate to Grade Two. In a way, I felt sorry for them. None of them lived near a wamp, and there was no mention of wild birds, snakes or goannas. All they ever did was visit the toy shop and play ball with Nip. I resigned myself to another year of boredom. - There was nothing we loved better than huddling around the wood stove on cold afternoons, swapping stories (p. 91). - She desires to hear the stories of Arthur, Daisy and Gladys (to gain an insight into her heritage and what makes her who she is). - Arthur: My mother's name was Annie Padewani and my father was Alfred Howden Drake-Brockman, the white station-owner. Later, there was Daisy (p. 222). - Daisy: When I came home from hospital, he said, 'Bring her here, let me hold her.' He wanted to hold Gladdie before he died. (p. 423). - You bloody kids don't want me, you want a bloody white grandmother, I'm black. Do you hear, black, black, black! (p. 120). - Boongs, we're boongs! (p. 121) - "We're Aboriginal, aren't we, Mum?" "Yes, daer," she replied, without thinking. (p. 170). -	and continual existence. To illustrate, Sally describes the "bird call" as a "magical moment" (p. 12) and when she feels "trapped" (p. 13) she desires to "run and fling [herself] on the grass" (p. 13), suggesting that nature also provides a means of escape, magic and belonging. This notion is foregrounded by Broome (2003, p. 18), who argues that for the Aboriginals, the land "not only gave life, it was life." Hence, by running to the grass after feeling "trapped" (p. 13), it could be suggested that the land is metaphorically transformed into a place where Sally is able to feel a sense of safety that barricades her from any impeding danger. In this way, it appears that nature provides life for Sally; in turn, Sally seems to rely on nature as the "life-blood" (Gill, 2004, p. 7) of her existence. - Suggests she does not need dto be "dark" to love the land!
	Nature, relationships and storytelling seem to be re-occurring themes that are inherent and integral to her identity.	
Institution Identity	**The Hospital** - The hospital and the school: they were places "dedicated to taking the spirit out of life." (p. 14). - The hospital again, and the echo of my reluctant feet through the long, empty corridors. I hated hospitals and hospital smells. I hated the bare boards that gleamed with the newly applied polish, the dust-free windows and sills, and the flashes of shiny chrome that snatched my distorted shape as we hurried past. I was a grubby five-year-old in an alien environment. - I felt if I said anything at all, I'd just fall apart. There'd be me, in pieces on the floor. I was full of secret fears (p. 8).	- She takes on the role of being defined by the institution – as mentally dumb - - The way in which the Institution-Identity (Gee, 2000) has the potential to "Other" Sally is further consolidated through the metaphor of the university. When Sally discovers

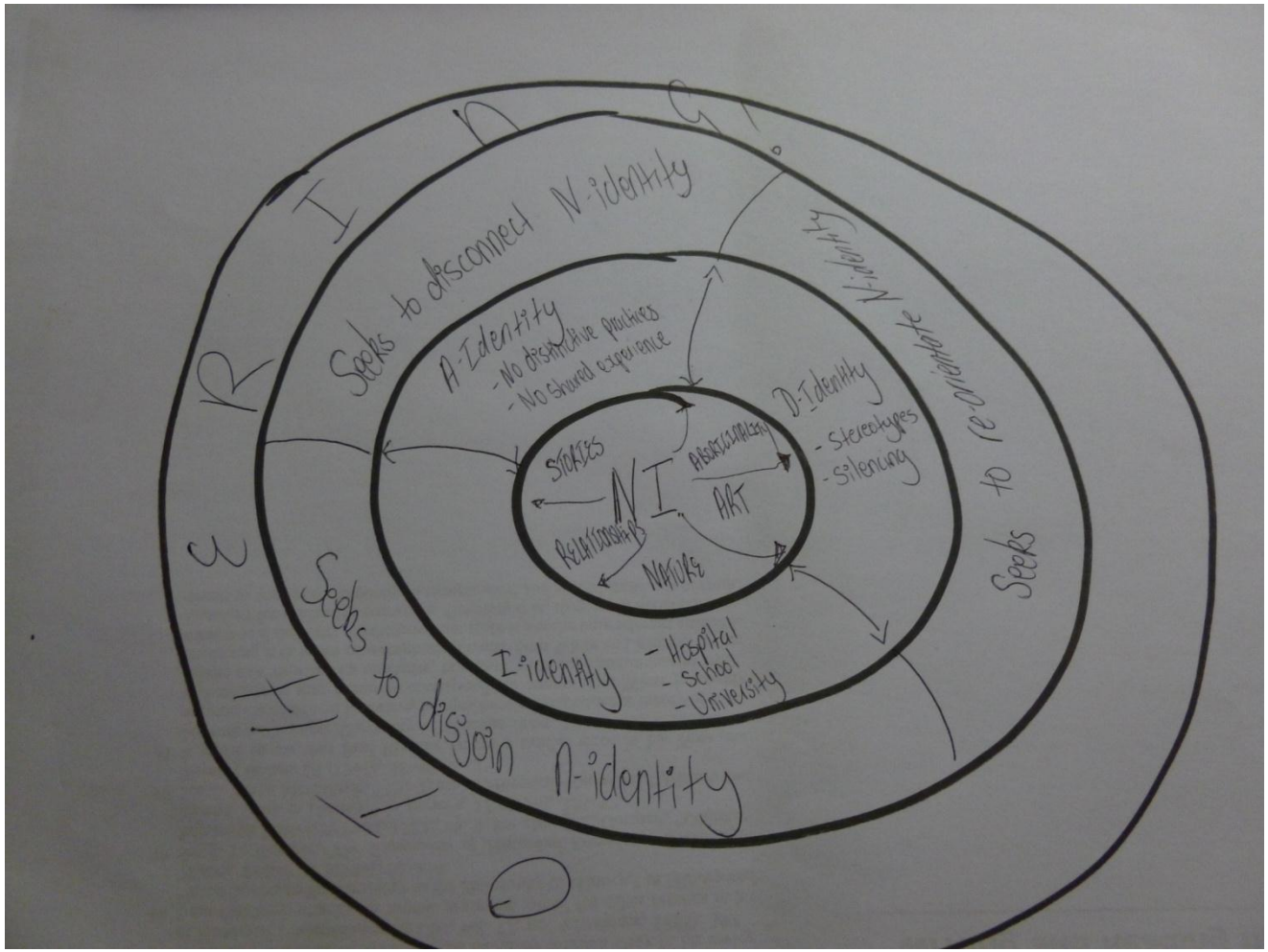
	- .. and the echo of my reluctant feet rhough the long, empty corridors (p. 7). **The School** - He held up one of my drawings in front of the class one day and pointed out everything wrong with it. There was no perspective, I was the only one with no horizon line. My people were flat and floating…By the end of ten minutes, the whole class was laughing and I felt very small. - Shaking her head in disbelief, she muttered, 'You dirty, dirty girl." She dragged me back to the front of the class and shoved me out the door. "Out you go, you are not to enter this class again. You sit out there and dry off!" I sat alone and wet on the hard jarrah bench (p. 28). - My attitude towards school took an even more rapid downhill turn after that incident. I felt different from other children in my class. They were the spick-and-span brigade, and I, the grubby offender (p. 28). - There was a great deal of social stigma attached to being Aboriginal at our school (p. 121). - "We expect it of the Milroys, but not of girls of your calibre" (p. 109). - I was sick of visiting the Guidance Officer myself. I felt very much on the defensive in these meetings, because I knew they were based on the premise that there was something wrong with me. In my view, that was totally unfounded (p. 109). - My prize was a choice of any book available from the bookshops. When our headmaster, Mr Buddee, asked me what I had in mind, I replied, without hesitation, "A book of fairytales please." I think he was rather taken aback, because he told me to go away and think about it for a few days. - …and I'm not just talking about Phsyics. In this class, most of you will pass. Then there are a few who are borderline, and one who will definitely fail. He looked with pity at me. "I don't know why you borther to turn up at all. You might as well throw in the towel now." Everyone laughed. I was really mad. Up until then, I hadn't cared whether I passed or failed. I'll prove you wrong, you crumb, I thought (p. 138). **The University** - I don't think Mum realized how deep my feelings went. It wasn't the money I was after, I was still receiving the Repatriation scholarship. I desperately wanted to do something to identify with my new-found heritage and that was the only thing I could think of (p. 173). - "Mrs Morgan," the senior officer said as I sat down. "We'll get straight to the point. We have received information, from what appears to be a very reliable source, that you have obrained the Aboriginal scholarship under false pretences. This person, who is a close friend of you and your sister, has told us that you have been bragging all over the university campus about how easy it is to obtain the scholarship without even being Aboriginal. Apparently, you've been saying that anyone can get it." I was so amazed at the ridiculousness of the accusation that I burst out laughing. That was a great tactical error on my part… "Have you lied to this department? I want to hear what you have to say for yourself." I felt very angry. It was obvious I had been judged guilty already, and I knew why. It was because Jill and I were	that she is of Aboriginal heritage, she turns to the Institution-Identity to assert and confirm her Nature-Identity by applying for an Aboriginal scholarship in an attempt to "do something to identity with my new-found heritage" because "that was the only thing I could think of" (p. 173). However, while the scholarship was meant to give Sally a sense of Aboriginal identity, Sally demonstrates the limitations of such an identity based purely on the Institution-Identity. Since Sally "suddenly switched" her racial "allegiance from India to Aboriginal Australia", she tells us that the other Australians could not see any reason but money as an incentive (p. 175), which negates her real aim of familiarizing herself with what it means to be Aboriginal. As such, Sally is forced to refute a claim that she "obtained the scholarship under false pretenses", which leads her to defend her case in the Commonwealth Department of Education (p. 176). Thus, whereas Sally was "too dark" to associate with the deacon's daughter and her friend, Susan, during her school years, she is now rendered "too white" to be associated as an Aboriginal. She is therefore left in a space "in between", a liminal space (Turner, 1970) because the institution of the university appears to define

	doing well. The department never expected any of their Aboriginal students to do well at tertiary studies. They would have considered it more in keeping if we both failed consistently (p. 177). - How do you expect me to prove anything? What would you like me to do, bring my grandmother and mother in and parade them up and down so you can all have a look? There's no way I'll do that, even if you tell me to. I'd rather lose the allowance. It's my word against whoever complained, so it's up to you to decide, isn't it?" - The senior officer looked at me silently for a few minutes and then said, "Well, Mrs Morgan. You are either telling the truth, or you're a very good actress! I was amazed, still my innocence wasn't to be conceded." … I felt sick and wasn't sure how much longer my legs would support me. It was just as well I'd lost my temper, I thought (p. 178).	who is Aboriginal and who is not Aboriginal. This notion is foregrounded in her comment, "It hadn't been easy trying to identify with being Aboriginal" (p. 179). Indeed, the Institution-Identity does not make it any easier for her!
	The school and hospital seem to make Sally feel alienated.	
Discourse Identity	- Chapter entitled "Pretending" (p. 39). - The kids at school had also begun asking us what country we came from. This puzzled me because, up until then, I'd thought we were the same as them. If I insisted that we came from Australia, they'd reply, "Yeah, but what about ya parents, bet they didn't come from Australia" (p. 45). - One day, I tackled Mum about it as she washed the dishes. 'What do you mean, "Where do we come from?"' 'I mean, what country. The kids at school want to know what country we come from. They reckon we're not Aussies. Are we Aussies, Mum?" (p. 45) - Mum was silent. Nan grunted in a cross sort of way, then got up from the table and walked outside. 'Come on, Mum, what are we?" "What do the kids at school say?" "Anything. Italian, Greek, Indian." "Tell them you're Indian." I got really excited, then. "Are we really? Indian!" it sounded exotic. "When did we come here?" I added. "A long time ago," Mum replied. "Now, no more questions. You just tell them you're Indian." (p. 45). - It was good to finally have an answer and it satisfied our playmates. They could quite believe we were Indian, they just didn't want us pretending we were Aussies when we weren't (p. 45). - "You know Susan?" .. "Her mother said she doesn't want her mixing with you because you're a bad influence. She reckons all Abos are a bad influence" (p. 122). - "You still don't understand, do you," Jill groaned in disbelief. "It's a terrible thing to be Aboriginal. Nobody wants to know you, not just Susan. You can be Indian, Dutch, Italian, anything, but not Aboriginal!" (p. 122). - The church deacon: "I'd like you to stop mixing with Mary." He smiled his charming smile again. "Why?" I was genuinely puzzled. "I think you know why." "No, I don't." "You're a bad influence, you must realize that." Believe it or not, that was one part of my character I was unaware of (p. 128). - Sometimes, people would say, "But you're lucky, you'd never know you were that, you could pass for	While Gladys is aware of her mixed heritage, Morgan demonstrates the power of the Discourse-Identity by revealing how her mother appears to "Other" Sally's Nature-Identity, saying, "Tell them you're Indian" (p. 45). Although this "new" Indian identity may "constitute meaning for [Sally] in terms of being a certain kind of person" (Gee, 2000, p. 3), by telling the students that she is Indian her Aboriginal Nature-Identity becomes silenced and suppressed. In other words, it appears that the discourse between Sally and her mother work together as a medium that re-orientates her Nature-Identity by suggesting that she has Indian blood. Yet, in doing so, it would seem that Gladys also "Others" Sally's Nature-Identity by excluding her away from her Nature-Identity through the "process of separation"

	anything." Many students reacted with an embarrassed silence. Perhaps that was the worst reaction of all. It was like we'd said a forbidden word. Others muttered, "Oh, I'm sorry…" and when they realized what they were saying, they just sort of faded away (p. 175). - I began to wonder what it was like for Aboriginal people with really dark skin and broad features, how did Australians react to them? How had white Australians reacted to my grandmother in the past, was that the cause of her bitterness? (p. 175). - The kids were amazed to hear that I shared a bed with my brother and sister. I never told them about the times we'd squeezed five in that bed (p. 44). - One lunchtime at school, I was talking about families with one of the girls in my class. When I mentioned mine and said how ordinary they were, she burst out laughing. "You really think your family's normal?" "Course they're normal. What's so unusual about them?" "Everything! "You've got the most abnormal family I've ever come across. Don't get me wrong, I like your mother, I really do, but the way you all look at life is weird." My classmate continued to chuckle on and off for the rest of the lunch hour. I never asked her to explain further, I was too embarrassed (p. 134). - How could I tell her it was me, and her and Nan. The sum total of all the things that I didn't understand about them or myself. The feeling that I'd never belong anywhere. Never resolve anything (p. 134). - But you're lucky, you'd never know that you were that, you could pass for anything" (p. 176).	(Dominelli, 2004, p. 76). Thus, instead of making sense of Sally's "liminality" (Eimke, 2010, p. 11), it appears that she is further confused, as she later tells us that she had a "feeling that a very vital part of me was missing and that I'd never belong anywhere. Never resolve anything" (p. 134).
	The Discourse-Identity seems to "Other" Sally. She is positioned as "Un-Australian".	
Affinity Identity	- What did it really mean to be Aboriginal? I'd never lived off the land and been a hunter and a gatherer. I'd never participated in corroborees or heard stories of the Dreamtime. I hardly knew any Aboriginal people. What did it mean for someone like me? …I felt so weighed down with all my questions that I decided to give it all up. - "Well, I don't know much about them," I answered. "They like animals, don't they? We like animals." "A lot of people like animals, Sally. Haven't you heard of the RSPCA?" "Of course I have! But don't Abos feel close to the earth and all that stuff?" (pp. 119-120).	- She seems to Other herself because she feels that Aboriginal Australians must share similar practices to be rendered "Aboriginal".
	- Othering Sally.	

APPENDIX 7

Findings drawn from Appendix 6



APPENDIX 8

Finding My Place

FINDING MY PLACE	COLOUR CODING: **Orange** = Nature **Purple** = Family **Pink** = Stories **Yellow** = Othering **Blue** = Aboriginality **Green** = Finding Place	
SALLY'S EXPERIENCE	**What does Sally say/do to find her place?**	**Interpretation + Link to Link to Literature Base**
Initial feeling of place	It was now part of me, part of what I was as a person. When I was in the swamp, I lost all track of time. I wallowed in the small muddish-brown creek that meandered through on its way to joint he Canning River (p. 71).	Sally seems to find a sense of belonging in the nature. As she says, it has become a part of who she is. It appears that nature accepts her for who she is.
"Breaking the Silence"	- "We're Aboriginal, aren't we, Mum?" "Yes, dear," she replied, without thinking. "Do you realize what you just said?!" I grinned triumphantly….It was as if a wall that had been between us suddenly crumbled away. I felt closer to Mum then than I had for years.." (p. 171) - The way I look at it, it's a beginning. Before, we had nothing. AT least now, we've got a beginning.	It seems important that Sally gains a knowledge of her Aboriginal ancestry to articulate her sense of Nature-Identity. This is foregrounded by Sally's statement that this knowledge is "a beginning".
Return to Corunna Downs	- After much thought, I decided that our best course was to return to Nan and Arthur's birthplace, Corunna Downs. - IT was totally different now, open arms, and open hearts. By the time we'd been hugged and patted and cried over, and told not to forget and to come back. - Mum and I sat down on part of the old fence and looked across to the distant horizon. We were both trying to imagine what it would have bee like for the people in the old days. Soft, blue hills completely surrounded the station. They seemed to us mystical and magical… (p. 290). - But we had a sense of place now. (p. 291).	It seems to be in the land and kinship that Sally finds her sense of place. However, she does not necessarily need to have shared practices (A-Identity) with the other Aboriginals, nor does she need to look like them. Rather, this journey seems to be a spiritual, emotional and healing journey; she has a "sense of place now" which suggests this place is a "Self-Conscious Awareness" that cannot be taken away from her.

Leaving Corunna	"We felt very full inside when we left. It was like all the little pieces of a huge jigsaw were finally fitting together…" (p. 295). - We were different people now. What had begun as a tentative search for knowledge had grown into a spiritual and emotional pilgrimage. We had an Aboriginal consciousness now, and were proud of it (p. 296). - "We belonged now…" (p. 296). - The bird call in my heart (p. 444).	Sally foregrounds her belonging through her new "Aboriginal Consciousness". It seems that she gained this consciousness through the journey. Interestingly, there are no more comments about her feelings of puzzlement and abnormality, suggesting that this process has been a healing one for her. It could be argued that she has found the "essence" of Aboriginality in the "heart". This is also symbolized through the Bird Call.
SUMMARY	Sally's place seems to be found in her "Aboriginal Consciousness", which she appeared to gain through a spiritual and physical journey. Although she is still worried that others will not see her as Aboriginal when her Nan dies, the Bird Call could symbolize her Nan's spirit in her heart, suggesting that her Aboriginal identity is a place within.	