

**One Country: Different Voices
A Critical Self Reflection**

By

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Declaration of Original Work

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge it contains no material previously published or written for an award of any other degree or diploma of a university of higher learning.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kitty Grazyna Maria Vigo', is written over a light green rectangular background.

Signed

Kitty Grazyna Maria Vigo

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and pay respect to their Elders, past and present. I also acknowledge all the Wurundjeri people and their Elders, past and present. I will strive to respect their culture, stories and traditions. I also acknowledge and respect the Elders and Owners of traditional knowledge in Western New South Wales who own the 8-Ways learning pedagogies, and the work done by the Regional Aboriginal Education Team (RAET), DEC, based at the Bangamalanha Centre, Dubbo, in producing the *8-Ways Aboriginal Pedagogy from Western NSW* publication.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders should be aware that some of the links on the *One Country: Different Voices* website that constitutes my artefact may feature images and voices of people who have passed away, and links to burial sites, art sites and artefacts. I apologise for any distress this may inadvertently cause.

I would like to thank the Elders and Owners of traditional knowledge of Western New South Wales for permission to use the 8-Ways Learning framework in my work. I also thank members of the Wurundjeri community, especially Elders Aunty Dot Peters and Uncle Juby Wandin for their time and permission to use their stories.

To my supervisors, Professor Josie Arnold and Dr Janet Bryant, I wish to express my deep appreciation for their time and assistance and their faith that I would one day finish this work.

I also wish to thank Professor Josie Arnold for being such a good friend.

Finally, I wish to thank my husband David Vigo who was endlessly patient in his support.

To you all, my heartfelt thanks.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my late husband David, my daughter Kate, my sister Barbara, and my late mother Yanina Kompe who lived a truly remarkable life.

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Introduction

This work addresses a number of issues that the examiners of my originally submitted exegesis felt I would benefit from considering.

In Section 1, *Teaching is a learning journey*, I introduce myself and use an autoethnographical approach to discuss some of the events and issues that were significant in shaping my life and how they led to me creating the *One Country: Different Voices* website. I relate some of my parents' experiences in Europe during the Second World War and the lessons they learned that they passed on to me about being a better person. I also talk about my experiences as an immigrant to Australia and my first encounter with racism – not against myself, but against a young Indigenous Australian boy whom they invited to stay in our home. I also briefly revisit why I included readings on the website about writing history and the journey that I undertook in learning to be a teacher.

Section 2, titled *The decolonisation of knowledge*, looks at why Indigenous researchers and scholars seek to decolonise knowledge and how this has led me to reflect more deeply on the cultural complexities of a non-Indigenous researcher working on Indigenous issues. I also discuss why I used a weaving metaphor in my originally submitted exegesis and the power it has for me for expressing the idea of sharing knowledge.

In Section 3, *Indigenous identity and the academy*, I address the search for Indigenous Australian identity that has led to the development of Indigenous research methodologies. I review some of the key theories such as feminism, whiteness studies and standpoint theory and their contribution to Indigenous research methodologies as well as how they influenced my thinking about the creation of the *One Country: Different Voices* website. I also review some of the key works by Indigenous Australian scholars on Indigenous research methodologies, including Rigney, Moreton-Robinson, Fredericks and Martin.

Section 4, *Indigenous research methodologies and working 'alongside'*, looks at the lessons provided by researchers such as Martin, Moreton-Robinson and Fredericks on the protocols for working with Indigenous Australian people and communities. I also look at some of the challenges facing non-Indigenous researchers working with Indigenous people and communities. The experiences and insights of people such as non-Indigenous researchers Rose Carnes, Nado Aveling and Colleen McGloin are reviewed.

In the *Conclusion* I briefly reflect on the insights – both enlightening and sobering – that I have gained during this work.

I also wish to apologise for the tardiness in completing this work. In late 2014 my husband David was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins Lymphoma and underwent continual treatment until July 2016 when he died. My mother died in mid-2015. Together these events served as a great distraction. Fortunately, Swinburne granted me an extension from April 1, 2017 until July 31, 2017

Section 1: Teaching is a Learning Journey

In this section, I introduce myself with a short story about my life and then, using an autoethnographical approach, I discuss some of the events and issues that were significant in shaping my life and how they led to my interest in developing a website that explored introducing Indigenous ways of learning to the non-Indigenous teacher and student.

(i) Introduction

The act of introducing oneself and telling your reader/listener your story is now a common practice among Indigenous writers. Moreton-Robinson (2000) tells us,

The protocol for introducing one's self to other Indigenous people is to provide information about one cultural location, so that connection can be made on political, cultural and social grounds and relations established (Moreton-Robinson, p. xv).

Similarly, Indigenous scholars such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999, 2005), Kovach (2009), Kurtz (2013), and Karen Martin (2008), all highlight the importance for Indigenous researchers and non-Indigenous researchers upon Indigenous people and matters, to write about themselves and their position in the world at the outset of their work as a promise that their research will not take place without the trust of the community. In Kurtz' words,

In locating oneself, personal historic details of one's family and land, and in the case of others know your people or the land you are from and can relate to who you are. By sharing these personal details, the person is also asking for mutual trust based on those relations and connections (p. 218).

Kovach expresses this idea more fully:

Within Indigenous writing, a prologue structures space for introductions while serving as a bridging function for non-Indigenous readers. It is a precursory

signal to the careful reader that woven throughout the varied forms of our writing – analytical, reflective, expository – there will be a story, for our story is who we are (2009, pp. 3-4).

I now have a better understanding that, just as Indigenous scholars recognise the importance of introducing themselves at the beginning of their research, it is just as important – and courteous – to introduce myself. I also now have a better appreciation of the usefulness of autoethnographical methodology to understand and explicate my story. At the time that I wrote my originally submitted exegesis I was faced with many difficult editing decisions that were forced by what seemed to be the inherent limitations of the exegesis. As I will explore in further detail when discussing my academic voice, while there are many creative opportunities and challenges offered by the non-traditional PhD by artefact and exegesis, there are also unavoidable limitations in producing an exegesis limited to around 25,000 words. This left me in a position of having to make difficult decisions about what information to include in the body of the exegesis and what had to be left out.

I eventually submitted a 30,000 word exegesis and decided to locate material not included in the exegesis on the *One Country: Different Voices* website – specifically readings titled ‘My Story’ (which is located in *Story Sharing*), ‘Myself as a Learner and Teacher’ (located in *Learning Maps*) and ‘History – Whose Story? History Writing and the Story of Indigenous Australia’ (located in *Deconstruct. Reconstruct*). With hindsight, including this work in the exegesis would have provided a better understanding of why I was drawn to creating the artefact that is *One Country: Different Voices*. ‘My Story’ gives a brief outline of my life story, ‘Myself as a Teacher and Learner’ deals with my teaching philosophy and the journey which led me to create *One Country: Different Voices* and ‘Whose Story? History Writing and the Story of Indigenous Australia’ discusses some of the issues surrounding writing history, how histories merely reflect points of view and includes what I termed “counterpoints” which provide web links to papers that directly challenge some of the points of view and ideas I was writing about. These three readings are attached.

(ii) Autoethnography

In the section below I provide a brief overview of autoethnography and discuss some of the significant events in my life that I recount in *My Story* using an autoethnobiographical approach.

Based on their insights into the two-way role of the ethnographer, Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2010, p. 1) define autoethnography as an approach to research and writing which describes and systematically analyses (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*). Autoethnographies share the characteristics of biographies and autobiographies in that they retrospectively and selectively write about important events and experiences that stem from being part of a culture and/or possessing a particular cultural identity, however, they differ in that autoethnographers are also required by social science publishing conventions to analyse these experiences.

Denzin (2014, 28) describes the autoethnographical journey as a process whereby the writer “creates the conditions for rediscovering the meanings of a past sequence of events” which results in new ways “of performing and experiencing the past”. This does not mean that autoethnographical rediscovery of the past is necessarily a strictly accurate/factual recall, but rather a reassessment of events or epiphanies that changed one’s life and perhaps only in retrospect are connected. Ulmer (1989) describes the process as seeing and rediscovering the past not as a succession of events, but as a series of scenes, inventions, emotions, images, and stories (p. 112). Ellis (2009) says that as an autoethnographer I am both the author and focus of my story and both the observer and the observed. “I am the person at the intersection of the personal and the cultural, thinking and observing as an ethnographer and writing and describing as a storyteller” (p. 13).

Denzin draws on Ulmer’s concept of ‘mystory’ (my story) to further explain how autoethnography works and that in Ulmer’s approach a mystory text begins with those moments that define a crisis, a turning point in the person’s life. Ulmer (1989) suggests the following starting point:

Write a mystory bringing into relation your experience with three levels of discourse – personal (autobiography), popular (community stories, oral history or popular culture), [and] expert (disciplines of knowledge). In each case use the punctum or sting of memory to locate items significant to you (Ulmer 1989, pp. 209).

For Denzin,

the sting of memory locates the moment, the ‘beginning’ and once located, this moment is dramatically described and fashioned into a text to be performed. This moment is then surrounded by those cultural representations and voices that define the experience in question and opening them up to contest and challenge (p. 32).

Indigenous Australian scholar Bronwyn Fredericks (2008) found that a useful theoretical starting point for her research was autoethnobiography and cites Glesne (1999) who suggests this “...begins with the self, the personal biography” (p. 181) and then moves to scholarly discourse and the cultural group that is the site of the research. In taking this autoethnobiographical approach Fredericks found that by using the narratives of her ‘self’ and her personal life, such as experiences and events related to living as an Indigenous person in an Indigenous community, she came to “understand the dynamics of the research process and that added much more depth to this research”. She says that she came to understand that the research process she engaged in was inevitably linked with forces for change such as politics and advocacy and that in this way she was enacting what Rigney (1997) describes as Indigenist methodology (p. 122).

Heewon Chang (2008) argues that reading and sharing autoethnography “also helps to transform researchers and readers (listeners) in the process” and while this is not necessarily a primary goal of autoethnography, it is an “often powerful by-product and that self-transformation may take place as the result of reaching out to others through both writing and reading autoethnographies because it exposes the unfamiliar to both the author and the reader: As their understanding of others increases, unfamiliarity diminishes and perspectives on others change. As a result, others of difference and of opposition may be reframed to be included in their notion of community and extended community. Through increased awareness of self and others the writer and readers “will be able to help themselves and each other correct cultural misunderstandings, develop cross-cultural sensitivity, and respond to the needs of cultural others effectively” (pp. 13-14). My reading of autobiographies of Indigenous Australians including such books as *Auntie Rita* by Rita Huggins and Jackie Huggins; *Don't take your love to town* and *Real deadly* by Ruby Ginibi Langford; *My place* and *Wanamurraganya. The story of Jack McPhee* by Sally Morgan; *If anyone cared* by Margaret Tucker; *Songman. The story of an Aboriginal Elder* by Bob Randall; Ruth Hegarty's *Is that you Ruthie?*; poetry by Oodgeroo Noonuccal; *Iwenhe Tyerrtye* by Margaret Kemmarre Turner; and so on, has begun to

provide me with some insight into the Australian Indigenous experience. While these books are properly autobiographies – rather than autoethnographies – they nevertheless focus on the cultural experiences of their authors and the injustice and sense of otherness they feel.

Denzin (2014) also describes autoethnographies and biographies as “conventionalized, narrative expressions of life experiences” which relate to Western literary conventions that have existed since the invention of the (auto)biographical form. He notes that some of the conventions are:

more central than others, although they all appear to be universal, while they change and take different form depending on the writer, the place of writing, and the historical moment. They shape how lives are told, performed, and understood. In so doing, they create the subject matter of the autoethnographic approach (p. 7)

These conventions include:

(1) the existence of others; (2) the influence and importance of race, gender, and class; (3) family beginnings; (4) turning points; (5) known and knowing authors and observers; (6) objective life markers; (7) real persons with real lives; (8) turning- point experiences; and (9) truthful statements distinguished from fictions (p. 7).

In the section below I tell ‘My Story’ in greater detail using an autoethnographic approach. I speak in some detail about the terrible experiences my parents endured during the Second World War. Land (2015, p. 23) warns that when writing an account of oneself it can be difficult to avoid writing a self- narrative that is redemptive. I revisit my story not to gain redemption – nothing that has occurred to me or my family has had the long-term generational suffering of Indigenous Australians – but to give some insight into how my parents’ experiences during the war and my family’s life as immigrant Australians have shaped my values and attitudes. How I tell my story is informed by Denzin’s belief that

it is as if every author of an autobiography or biography must start with family, finding there the zero point of origin for the life in question. The beginning coincides with the end and the end with the beginning – which is the end – for

autobiography (like fiction) is an act of ceaseless renewal: the story is never 'told' finally, exhaustively, completely (pp. 8-9).

(iii) Revisiting 'My Story'

Clearly it is beyond the scope of this work to conduct a detailed ethnographic analysis of every event and experience that I touch on briefly in 'My Story', however, I will deal briefly with several and how they influenced my journey to the creation of *One Country: Different Voices*. These include (i) my parent's war-time experiences and how they affected me; (ii) my family's experience as migrants; and, (iii) the visit to our house of the Indigenous Australian boy my parents invited to stay in our house after they encountered him travelling to Melbourne. This discussion is intended to provide some insight into the formation of my voice and to indicate that my decision to create *One Country: Different Voices* was the result of a long period of learning and reflection and a commitment to providing my students with opportunities to open their minds to themselves and others.

Denzin asserts that autoethnographic texts are always written (and performed) with an 'other' in mind, who may a family member, a significant person who affects the author in some way, or even people of another gender, race or cultural group. "The presence of an 'other' in autobiographical and biographical texts means that they are always written with at least a double perspective in mind: the author's and the 'other's'" (2014, p. 8). Often the significant 'other' is dealt with by a consideration of 'family beginnings' which are

grounded in the traumas of family, family history, and the presences and absences of mothers and fathers. It is as if every author of an autobiography or biography must start with family, finding there the zero point of origin for the life in question (Denzin, 2014, pp. 8-9).

As I note in *My Story*, I was born in Holland of Polish parents. My parents arrived in Holland as displaced people after the end of the Second World War. My father, Henryk Kompe, was born near Bytom, Poland, in 1916 and I remember him telling me as a child that he had been born in a baker's oven. This was because his family had been ousted from their home by the Germans and the only shelter his parents could find for his mother to give birth to him was in a ruined bakery. When I was very young I always imagined him being like a gingerbread man that was baked in an oven.

My Father's Wartime Experiences

When Poland was invaded by the Germans in 1939 my father was 24 and formed a partisan group of local young men, including two of his younger brothers. He fought with the group until 1945 when he was eventually seconded by the American Army to manage a displaced Polish soldiers' camp in Germany. He was later sent to Holland by the Americans to do liaison work in Holland where he met and married my mother in 1950. By this time he was working as a tool-maker in a Dutch factory in Enschede, applying the engineering skills he started to study at university before the war but was never able to able to complete.

My father never spoke to me about the war but I was always conscious of his deep and abiding hatred of Germans. I could not understand this until I met his sister when she visited Australia when I was in my thirties and she told me that my father was next to his youngest brother while they were fighting as partisans when he was shot dead. My father was spattered with his brother's brains. She also spoke of the hardships and the cruelty he had suffered at the hands of Germans.

One of the reasons my father could not return to Poland after the war was because when he was placed in charge of a displaced Polish soldiers' camp in Germany by the Americans he had to deal with many Russian soldiers who claimed that they were Polish, although he could tell by their accents that they were not. He nevertheless gave them Polish papers because he knew that Russian soldiers who had fought in the West were being transported to Siberia on Stalin's orders. One day a Russian general visited the camp and accused my father of sheltering Russian soldiers. My father denied this and was stuck on the face by the general. When my father struck the general's face in turn, he was only prevented from being shot by the general's bodyguards by American soldiers also visiting the camp.

My father also despised Jews – another thing I could not understand, especially as many of my school friends were Jewish. He expressed his anti-Semitism to me through telling stupid jokes about Jews and would laugh when I said that I found the jokes offensive, especially as most of my friends were Jewish. Interestingly, while my father would express his anti-Semitism to me, he never expressed his feelings in any way when my friends visited my home. He was always polite and welcoming – perhaps out of respect for me.

My mother, Yanina Ostrowska, explained that this was because most Poles were virulently anti-Jewish before and during the war and that there had been a long-term cultural Polish hatred of Jews which was in part expressed through making fun of them. In hindsight my mother's explanation of my father's anti-Semitism relates directly to Chang's (2008) assertion that autoethnography – insofar as it is about helping one understand key events and experiences in one's life - is essentially about connecting the personal to the cultural. Chang argues that when writing an ethnographical account about one's life the work should be “ethnographical in its methodological orientation, cultural in its interpretative orientation, and autobiographical in its content orientation.” Further, autoethnographers are also expected to treat their autobiographical data with critical, analytical and interpretative eyes to detect cultural undertones of what is recalled, observed and told of them. At the end of a thorough self-examination within its cultural context, autoethnographers hope to gain an understanding of self and others (2008, pp. 48-49).

My Mother's Wartime Experiences

My mother's war experiences were somewhat different. She was born in Poland in 1921 to a well-to-do family and had a privileged childhood. Her family had left Russia in 1919 after the revolution and lost all of their land and possessions. They travelled to Poland because of family connections there. When the Germans invaded Poland in 1939 my mother and grandmother were thrown out of their home, penniless. After nearly starving, my mother decided that the only way to survive was to become a black marketeer.

The problem with being a black marketer was that if you were caught by the Germans you were summarily shot because one way the Germans maintained control was through the distribution of food. She was caught and her life was only saved because her family was well-known in her home town of Poznan and the police chief said he had told the Germans that she was also a prostitute and so she was sent to Germany in a transport of 29 other women who were also labelled as prostitutes. She was told that she would be initially sent to work as a slave labourer in a German munitions factory and then sent to work in a brothel for German soldiers. My mother told me that several of the women on the transport were indeed prostitutes but most were teachers, nuns or women whose husbands fought with the partisans. The last time my mother saw her mother was when she glimpsed her through the palings of the cattle truck taking her to Germany, running

up the station platform. Of the 30 women only two survived – my mother who was never sent to the brothels, and another woman who was. My mother avoided the brothels because she decided to escape from the munitions factory by walking out of the door and stealing a bicycle to ride to Hungary although she was caught and sent to another work camp before she got there. Ironically, she met the other survivor in a department store in Melbourne who told her that she could never make contact with her again because her family did not know that she was forced to be a prostitute.

During the 1970s my mother wrote a book about her wartime experiences and in it she describes the medical check-up she was subjected to when they arrived at the munitions factory:

I stared boldly at the doctor, He sat in a swivel chair, an orderly in a white jacket behind him. I recited my childhood diseases and was asked about what kind of venereal diseases I had suffered in the past or the present. I hissed a hateful ‘None!’ and knew he sensed my hate. He listened through a stethoscope to my chest and back, poked in my mouth with a gloved finger, and tried to inject a very blunt needle into my vein to collect blood. After pressing the needle into one arm and then the other, and swearing to himself, he finally told the orderly to get him a new needle. He changed his surgical glove, then ordered me to bend low over a chair with my legs wide apart. After he pushed his finger deep into my vagina, I tried to push him away with my buttocks, but he kept poking inside while my teeth bit into my tongue to stop the scream welling in my throat. When he moved away and I straightened, my thighs and the tiles on the floor were wet with blood. The orderly threw me a white rag to clean first the floor, then myself. I was told to leave.

Later, when she expressed her hatred of the German guards in the factory to another Polish woman from the transport who was a nun and said to her:

‘We shouldn’t hate them. Remember what Jesus said on the cross, Father, forgive them they know not what they do. Some of them of them jeered at us but others were just as embarrassed as we were when we had to take off all our clothes for the check-up and lice treatment. They’re all so young, straight from school into the army. Don’t hate them. It’s wrong.’ I told myself that’s what Mama would have said.

Later in the war, in 1943, in another work camp, my mother had a child, my older brother Konrad, with a Polish man she met. When babies were born to the prisoners they were assessed and if they looked Aryan they were taken for adoption by German families. Unfortunately, my brother was deemed to look Slavic but was saved by the camp doctor who told my mother to hide my brother in the attic. After the war she asked his father to take care of him while she went to Holland to look for work. She was employed by the American army as a clerk. However, my mother heard from Konrad's father that he had decided to send Konrad to Poland to be taken care of by my grandmother. My mother rushed to Germany to collect him and had to smuggle him across the German-Dutch border. This involved waiting for a group of smugglers on a farm near the border:

The following evening the smugglers came for us. They frightened the wits out of Konrad by telling him while waving a big knife in front of his three-and-half-year-old face, that if he wasn't quiet on the way his throat would be cut. Parting with our German hosts I wanted to leave them some money, but they refused, telling me how much they had enjoyed our company. We parted like old friends, kissing and hugging.

The walk back was hard but Konrad's behaviour was exemplary. He didn't talk, cough or complain. He walked on his own when the terrain was easy and was carried by one of the boys when he stumbled. Eventually at dawn we were in Holland.

Obviously, my mother did talk about the war and her book tells of cruelty of some of the Germans she met, but also of the kindness of many more others. She always told us that we had to look for the best in people and that hatred changed nothing.

My parent's wartime experiences were significant in forming my attitudes and behaviour. I now recognise that I learned tolerance from my mother and my father showed me that if you love your children you treat them with respect and it was for this reason he never revealed his anti-Semitic feelings to my Jewish friends. In reflecting on this I was reminded that Chang (2008) notes that two of the benefits of autoethnography are: "(i) it enhances cultural understanding of self and others; and (ii) it has a potential to transform self and others toward cross-cultural coalition building" (p. 52).

My Family as Immigrants to Australia

As I note in ‘My Story’, I was born in Holland in October 1950 just after my mother married my father. At this stage Holland was still recovering from the end of the war in 1945, which had left the economy running at 27 percent of the pre-war 1938 levels, with 60 percent of the transportation system destroyed and up to 15 billion guilders in total damages (Anderson 2010). After I was born my parents rented a room in a brothel for six months – the only accommodation they could find until they were finally allocated a two-up-two-down house in the poorest part of Enschede. My mother always spoke warmly of the generosity of the people in her street, especially their willingness to adopt Russian children left in a train siding at the end of the war by the Germans.

I did not meet my older half-brother Konrad until I was two because he had been recovering for three years from tuberculosis in a sanatorium some kilometres from where we lived. My younger brother was also born in Holland and my mother was pregnant with my sister when we eventually migrated to Australia early in 1954.

After the war neither of my parents wanted to return to Poland. Indeed, my father could not because of the altercation he had with the Russian general (he would have been sent to Siberia because Poland was now in the Russian-controlled part of Europe) and my mother did not want to face her strongly Catholic mother’s disapproval for having a child out of wedlock. In any case, my mother had always had an adventurous spirit and she was more interested in travelling to somewhere exotic like Australia, South Africa, South America or North America. Because my older brother had tuberculosis it was imperative that they migrate before he turned 12 because prospective migrants were x-rayed after turning 12, and anyone suffering from tuberculosis would not be accepted by any of the countries accepting migrants. They applied for migration to all of the countries they were interested in and the first acceptance came from Australia,

By the time my parents migrated to Australia they had already lived in Poland, Germany and Holland. They left Europe because they wanted a better life for their children and decided that when we arrived here they would attempt to assimilate into Australian culture as quickly as possible. As I note in ‘My Story’, my name quickly changed from Grazyna to Kitty and my sister, who was born here, was named Barbara – the quintessentially multicultural name that is used not only in all English-speaking countries, but also across Eastern and Western Europe, and by Christians from the Middle East. My parents already spoke some English as a result of their working with the American army after the war and

decided that we would speak English as much as possible at home in order to encourage the children's language skills as well as improving their own.

Life for the European immigrant in Australia was not necessarily easy at this time. Kokegei (2012) notes that between 1945 and 1960 there was a strong pressure on European and later South-East Asian migrants from Anglo-Saxon Australia to assimilate into 'Australian culture', stating that during this period,

migrants were victimised and ostracized, discriminated against, forced out of necessity to live and work in sub-standard conditions, were not provided with adequate language support services, and were often not made aware of existing avenues of financial, social and welfare support available to them in Australia (p. 2).

Further, Murphy (1952) writes about the way in which many skilled migrants (doctors, lawyers, etc.) would be forced into manual jobs. If they were able to work in their areas of skill or expertise it was the result of "a matter of luck and the personality of the Employment Officer" (p. 183). Murphy also refers to low wages earned by immigrants, the high cost of accommodation which meant that many immigrant families lived in government-sponsored migrant hostels (many of which were poorly-insulated Nissan huts) for many years (p. 186), and the practice of sending money to families still in Europe (p. 187). Language difficulties also meant that many immigrants had very little contact with Australians.

This would be unimportant were it not for two facts, the conscious desire for assimilation on the part of most immigrants and the efforts to accelerate assimilation which the Australian government is attempting to make (Murphy 1952, p. 189).

My family's experience was much happier than the conditions that faced most immigrants as described by Kokegei and Murphy. We had been sponsored to Australia by a Dutch family who had migrated to Australia in 1948 and we spent only one week in an immigrant hostel in Sydney before travelling by train to Melbourne to live in the seaside town of Queenscliff. My mother told me that even during the first two weeks of our life in Australia we received nothing but kindness from the Australians we met. For example, we travelled from Sydney to Melbourne by train, which my father missed because he decided to buy some ice creams while we were waiting for the train to leave. I remember

crying because I thought I would never see my father again. Within minutes fellow Australian passengers contacted the conductor who assured us that he would contact station staff at our next stop in Goulburn and that they would arrange for our father to be put onto a train to follow us as soon as possible. We had to change trains in Albury where we were taken to the waiting room, plied with drinks and food and told that my father would join us there on the next train and that we could then all continue our journey to Melbourne.

In hindsight, I think it helped that my parents spoke some English. This became more apparent when Australian neighbours in Queenscliff invited us to afternoon tea the day after we arrived to live in the accommodation that had been arranged by my parents' Dutch friends. Before we visited our new neighbours my mother taught me and my brother how to say 'hello', and 'thank you' in English. Within months of starting school in 1950 I had excellent English-language skills and an equal number of 'Australian' and immigrant school friends. I cannot remember ever feeling different or having a long-term sense of being 'the other'.

As far as I can remember, since childhood I have never thought of myself as being anything other than Australian. While I could speak Polish and Dutch when we arrived here, my mother said that within six months I spoke nothing but English. Today I can understand some Polish and Dutch not at all. I think I can still understand some Polish because my parents would speak in Polish when they wanted to have private conversations.

While I cannot remember ever being marginalised because I was an immigrant, the journey was more difficult for my parents. Having decided to assimilate as far as possible into Australian culture, they were criticised by other Poles they met for not speaking Polish to us children and not practicing Polish customs. Further, because they retained strong European accents they were at times marginalised by Anglo-Saxon Australians who up until at least the 1970s called them 'wogs' or 'reffos'. This in spite of the fact that their English language skills were often far better than the people who hurled epithets at them.

Encountering Racial Prejudice for the First Time

In 1963 when I was 13 and we were living in Brighton my parents came home from a day trip with a young Indigenous Australian boy who they encountered hitchhiking and had

invited to stay at our house while he looked for employment in Melbourne. His name was John and he was 16 and came from Nowra. He had finished Year 8 at school, had glowing reports and references from school and hoped to get an apprenticeship of some sort. My mother helped him look for jobs and apprenticeships in the newspapers and again and again he would get an interview but was never successful. After two weeks he decided to return to Nowra. Some weeks later we received a parcel containing a pair of jeans that he sent to my younger brother whose bedroom he had shared while he stayed with us. I remember my mother crying when she read the note of thanks he had included.

This visit by John has remained for me as what Denzin (2014) terms an ‘epiphany’ or turning point in my life. Denzin defines epiphanies as:

interactional moments and experiences which leave marks on people’s lives. In them, personal character is manifested. They are often moments of crisis. They alter the fundamental meaning structures in a person’s life (p. 52).

When John returned home to Nowra I asked my mother why she thought he never got a job offer even though when he arranged a job interview the prospective employer seemed enthusiastic about interviewing him. She explained it was because he was Aboriginal. I asked her what difference that made, and after all, John was Australian and that even though we were immigrants my father had never had a problem getting a job. Her response was, “Ahh, but John is Aboriginal”.

This was the first time I encountered racism and I was shocked. I had grown up in a home which encouraged tolerance and fairness and I had never suffered any overt discrimination because I was an immigrant. The memory has stayed with me in a form that Denzin (2014) calls ‘the relived epiphany’ in which the meaning of the event is formed in remembering and reliving it (p. 53). The event has stayed with me and was significant in forming my beliefs and attitudes when I worked as a journalist for The Herald, the now defunct Melbourne evening newspaper, and when I started thinking about teaching and learning with my first job as a tutor in Journalism and Media Studies at RMIT.

I have been able to make more sense of my first confrontation with racism after recently reading papers by Scheurich and Young (1997), Van Krieken (2012), and Bodkin-Andrews and Carlson (2016), who all assert that racism against Indigenous Australians – and many non-Indigenous immigrants – is still rife. Indeed, non-Indigenous researcher

Van Krieken (2012) argues that two different models of assimilation, integration and multiculturalism co-exist in Australia – one for immigrants, and the other for Indigenous Australians (p. 500). Van Krieken asserts that the experience of Indigenous Australians has been more difficult because over time there have been victims of four sets of shifting attitudes to their status:

- (i) the 19th century belief that Aboriginal cultural identity was doomed to extinction, and that indeed it deserved no better fate (p. 502);
- (ii) Hasluck's belief expressed in 1951 that Indigenous Australians could choose total assimilation "to attain to the same manner of living and to the same privileges of citizenship as white Australians and to live, if they choose to do so, as members of a single Australian community, observing the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties as other Australians" (pp. 502-53);
- (iii) Elkin's (1931-4-1951) contention that assimilation did not mean, or necessarily involve, the extinction of the Aboriginal race through intermarriage, nor that if Indigenous Australians wished to be legally recognised as citizens that they would have to give up all their kinship customs and their beliefs and rites, or their loyalties to their communities. He also argued that the persistence of distinctive cultural identity was no real barrier to a shared national identity (p. 504); and,
- (iv) The period between 1997 and 2007 of Howard Liberal-National Party government which did all it could to revive Hasluck's conception of "assimilation as absorption"; trying to limit the effect of the Mabo and Wik High Court cases and Native Title; and, refusing to recognise that there was anything problematic about the policies of removal of Aboriginal children from their families (Van Krieken, p. 504).

Van Krieken contends that the experience of immigrant – and in particular the white British and European immigrant – was markedly better than the treatment of Indigenous Australians. It is important to note here that I am not including Indigeneity in my discussion of multiculturalism because Indigenous Australians do not believe that they are immigrants to Australia – they are the first people – and therefore any reference to them as falling under a multicultural umbrella is wrong. While at first the expectation from about 1945 to the early 1970s was that all immigrants would become assimilated and be 'just like us', it became clear from about the late 1960s that many immigrants had no intention of giving up their language and cultural practices. Rather, politicians began

to speak of multiculturalism whereby immigrants could maintain cultural practices but adopt the ‘values’ and ‘attitudes’ of Australians (Van Krieken 2012, p. 509) – a strategy not unlike that which Elkin proposed for Indigenous Australians. In spite of these shifts Van Krieken (2012) argues that a strong undercurrent for what Jupp (2009) describes as “an underground river of assimilation” still lies beneath and constantly threatens any real acceptance of multiculturalism.

Revisiting ‘My Story’ has given me a better understanding that what had happened to John was the result of racism towards Indigenous Australians that has existed – and continues to exist – since white invasion in 1788. At the same time, I have been reminded that while there has been no overt racism towards immigrants such as my parents in the 1950s, there does still exist a fundamental intolerance of any other than Anglo status, values and cultural practices. Today, it seems that there is an attitude that while it’s acceptable to eat Italian or Vietnamese food, it’s better to have British forebears. It’s also better to be white.

(iv) Revisiting ‘Myself as a Learner and Teacher’

The reading titled ‘Myself as a Learner and Teacher: The Road to Developing One Country: Different Voices’ offers my reflections on how I have come to ‘write’ myself as a teacher who has interacted with, and has been shaped by, a cast of significant ‘others’ including students, teaching colleagues, and key learning theories that focus on student-centred learning. I included it on the *One Country: Different Voices* website to provide students with some insight into ‘me as a teacher’, who is also always a student, and into my understanding that one does not just become a student or teacher, but one learns to become a student or teacher through both theory and reflective practice. In many ways the paper constitutes an autoethnography because it deals with what I now understand to be several “teacherly beginnings” and “turning points” (Denzin 2014, p. 7). The “teacherly beginnings” I write about are my early struggles as a tutor and lecturer who reflected on myself as a learner and what kinds of teachers I could use as role-models. The “turning points” I write about were a 1992 teaching and learning workshop conducted by leading education researchers Paul Ramsden, Phil Candy and John Biggs. This workshop was a turning point because, like most university tutors and lecturers, I had no formal teacher training and the workshop introduced me to a range of student-centred pedagogical practices. The other most important turning point I refer to in the ‘Myself as

a Learner and Teacher' reading was co-authoring a report in 1999 for Swinburne University, titled *Indigenous inclusion in curriculum*, which I will discuss in greater detail below.

Section 2: The Decolonisation of Knowledge

In this section, I begin to address the problem of why Indigenous researchers feel the need to decolonise knowledge and how this has led me to reflect more deeply on the cultural complexities related to a non-Indigenous researcher working on Indigenous issues. I will address the problem of voice and provide a clearer statement of my position as a non-Indigenous researcher. I will also address and question the concept of authentic and dialogic voice and how this relates to my use of the metaphor of weaving.

(i) The Problem of Voice

In the introduction of her book *Decolonizing methodologies: research and Indigenous Peoples* (1998, p. 1) Linda Tuhiwai Smith says, "...the term, 'research,' is probably one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world's vocabularies". In making this statement Smith expresses the anger that Indigenous people around the world feel that when research on them and their cultures is conducted by non-Indigenous researchers using non-Indigenous research methodologies the result has been to treat them as objects of study. Further, the lives and knowledge of Indigenous people are represented solely through the lens or eyes of the dominant colonial culture. At the centre of Smith's anger is that much of the research done by non-Indigenous academics is based on Western-based perspectives and methodologies and ignores the perceptions and voices of their Indigenous 'subjects' and their ways of knowing, understanding and being.

As I will discuss in further detail below in my discussion of Indigenous research methodologies, there are many Indigenous researchers who argue that to ensure that Indigenous perceptions and voices are heard, only Indigenous people should engage in research on or about their communities (Martin 2003 2008; Moreton-Robinson & Walter 2009; Rigney 1999). This assertion derives from their rejection of the dominant

imperialist culture which tends to see Indigenous people as ‘objects’ of research as well as from their desire for self-determination (Smith 2012). This has led them to developing and supporting the concept of ‘Indigenist’ research which privileges Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing.

As I noted in my revisit of ‘My Story’, Australia was and continues to be guilty of racism. Scheurich and Young (1997) refer to a wide range of racist practices reported by Indigenous people such as racial invective and workplace discrimination, and Bodkin-Andrews and Carlson (2016) assert that racism against Indigenous Australians is implicit in non-Indigenous research and education practices. Further, Van Krieken (2012) refers to cultural and political racism implicit in the inability of the Australian government to recognise the utter lack of moral rectitude of removing Aboriginal children from their families and the expectation that Indigenous Australians should discard their knowledge and ways of being and doing and totally assimilate into white culture.

I will begin by briefly discussing how the impact of colonialism and colonialism post-colonialism have effectively denied Indigenous Australians the ability to have their voice heard, much less respected. I will also address some of the issues related to being a non-Indigenous researcher working on Indigenous issues.

(ii) Post-Colonialism and its Influence on the Social and Political Debates about Indigenous Self-identity

The term ‘post colonialism’ generally refers to the condition and aftermath experienced by people whose country had been invaded and controlled by an external empire. Obvious examples include those countries which were once part of the British Empire, which now have independence and/or self-rule and whose citizens are involved in defining their own culture and history. However, as a number of theorists point out (see, Bhabha 1990; Childs & Williams 1997; Povinelli 2011) even the term ‘post-colonial’ is the subject of much debate. For example, to what extent is the term affected by debate about definition: does it refer to “a culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day” as defined by Ashcroft (1989, p. 6), or does it refer, as Slemon (1991, p. 3) suggests, to the wide range of actions of resistance engaged in by colonial subjects from the time of colonisation?

For Indigenous Australians, the experience of colonialism – and post-colonialism – was far worse than that of other colonised peoples, such as Native Americans and Maori,

because Indigenous Australians simply had their very existence and their rights to land ignored through the ‘doctrine’ of *terra nullius*. Even after the 1901 Federal Constitution, which established Australia as an independent Commonwealth, the “Indigenous native” population existed “as a spectral presence” (Slemon 1989, p. 19), who were not even counted in the nation’s census until after 1967. The Maori and Native Americans at least had their pre-colonial existence and ownership of land recognised even if these were later “annulled through treaty, land seizure and passive and active genocide” (Povinelli 2011, p. 18). In 2017 the situation for Indigenous Australians is still dire: they continue to suffer severe discrimination with problems including Australian governments refusing to recognise that there was anything problematic about the policies of removal of Aboriginal children from their families and the expectation of Australian governments that Indigenous Australians should totally assimilate into white culture.

Another significant form of discrimination they suffer is the refusal of Australian governments to accept that Indigenous law relating to family and property is different. For example, Povinelli (2011) points out that family and kinship are judged by the Australian government according to rules of descent reflecting Western legal definitions rather than through the rules of family, kinship and affiliation as understood by Indigenous Australians and which existed prior to their being colonised (pp. 22-23). This means that Indigenous definitions of family and kinship have no legal status because they were erased by colonial law, whereas the non-Indigenous definitions continue to exist and adapt. Examples of the adaptation of colonial law can be found in legal acceptance of the status of de facto relationships and the movement for equality in marriage for gay men and women. Tragically, colonial law has not been adaptable in accepting the moral right of recognising Indigenous Australians in the constitution. Even when the concept of Native Title was accepted with the 1992 Mabo and 1996 Wik decisions it was done so within the framework of Australian common law rather than through recognition of pre-colonial right.

My decision to include a reading titled ‘History – Whose Story? History Writing and the Story of Indigenous Australia’, was intended to give my students some insight into how histories are always written from the point of view of the dominant culture and that even within the dominant culture there would be different readings and interpretations of the same historical events. In the reading I introduce them to Stanner’s (1968) belief that national narratives such as histories and laws are not fixed and instead undergo a constant

process of reinvention and renegotiation according to contemporary national ideologies, needs and interests. I also referred to the work of Edward Said (1993) who argued that different cultural groups within a particular cultural context not only perceive and record their individual cultural experiences differently, but also that they are closed to each other. For Said, *terra nullius* represents the tendency by Western culture to treat the whole of world history as a “kind of Western super-subject” the purpose of which is to “restore” history to “people and cultures without history”. In this view the colonised subject becomes “the other” because they only exist within the context of a Western-centric history, they have no history of their own (p. 7).

In the ‘History – Whose Story? History Writing and the Story of Indigenous Australia’ paper I also discuss the situation of urban Indigenous Australians who face particular difficulties challenging prevailing cultural stereotyping by non-Indigenous people who mistakenly believe that all Indigenous Australians live a largely traditional lifestyle in remote settlements. This is in spite the Australian population census conducted in 2002 by the Australian Bureau of Statistics finding that only about 120,000 Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander people (or about 24 per cent of the Indigenous Australian population) live in remote communities. Indigenous activists and academics such as Dodson (1994, 2009, 2010), Langton (1993, 2003, 2006), Land (2007), Behrendt (2007, 2010), and McGregor (2011) all argue that non-Indigenous people, not recognising that 76 per cent of Australia’s Indigenous people live in urban towns and cities, are guilty of stereotyping Indigenous people as backward dwellers of inland Australia.

Most non-Indigenous Australians fail to recognise that many, if not most Indigenous Australian people identify as Indigenous and maintain close community ties. As Larissa Behrendt asserts:

I often get asked, ‘How often do you visit Indigenous communities?’ And I reply, ‘Every day, when I go home.’ The question reveals the popular misconceptions that ‘real’ Indigenous Australian communities only exist in rural and remote areas. And it is a reminder of how invisible our communities are to the people who live and work side-by-side with us (Behrendt 2007, p. 2).

As Indigenous academic and member of the Queensland Indigenous and Islander Health Council, Bronwyn Fredericks, succinctly states: “We don’t leave our identities at the city

limits: not at the petrol station, the bus stop, at the jetty, at the airport. Our identity is with us all the time” (2010, p. 1).

Identifying with Aboriginal heritage and having a strong sense of community is clearly demonstrated in the interviews with Aunty Dot Peters and the late Wurundjeri Nurungaeta Juby Wandin which are included on the *One Country: Different Voices* website. In her interview, Aunty Dot Peters reveals that Coranderrk embodies both her internal self or consciousness and her external embodiment. It connects her spiritual past with her physical present. Aunty Dot’s continuing connection with the Yarra Valley Indigenous community is evidenced by her involvement with the Yarra Valley Aboriginal Elders Association, the Mullum Mullum Gathering Place, Indigenous story-telling at the Healesville Sanctuary and giving classes on basket and eel-trap weaving.

The late Juby Wandin talks about his life in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous society in his interview included on the *One Country: Different Voices* website. In his interview he speaks of his identification as both an Indigenous person and as an “invisible” Indigenous person living a “white” lifestyle.

Uncle Juby Wandin was the last baby born on Corranderrk and his Indigenous identity was strongly associated with Coranderrk which in many ways represented his Indigenous life. He talks about how while his Indigenous identity was important during much of his life, he in effect set it aside, to develop an identity as a successful person operating within ‘white’ society, doing well at school and playing football for St Kilda. While he was widely recognised as being Indigenous, this was seen as irrelevant in terms of his success to both himself and white society. When living his ‘white’ lifestyle, he said, he had relatively little knowledge of Wurundjeri customs and practices and it is only later in life, when he was appointed as the Nurungaeta of the Wurundjeri people, that he came to learn more about his people’s traditions. At that time traditional knowledge came to the foreground in shaping his Aboriginal identity.

(iii) Challenges Facing the Non-Indigenous Researcher

In this section, I look at some of the challenges confronting the non-Indigenous researcher who is dealing with Indigenous matters. In particular, I look at the difficulty faced by the non-Indigenous researcher of recognising the unconscious and taken-for-granted use of colonial attitudes and research methodologies.

In her book *Please knock before you enter: Aboriginal regulation of outsiders and the implications for researchers* (2008) Martin asserts that while there has been a great deal of work done by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous universities and research organisations, such as the Australian Institute of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander Studies, and the University of South Australia, nevertheless, little has changed. This is “in spite of the work done by these organizations representing a move from ‘on’ or ‘about’ Indigenous People, to research ‘with’ Indigenous people and/or communities by Indigenous or non-Indigenous researchers”. She argues further that “the theories used to interpret and represent us remained unchallenged ... [I]n essence, Indigenous research remains unchanged as an instrument of colonialism, when entrenched in non-Indigenous worldviews, theories, beliefs, values and agendas” (p. 29).

When I read these assertions, I was very challenged and humbled. It is true that I was already aware of these patterns – for example, the Indigenous person as the object of study, or the belief held by many non-Indigenous researchers that Indigenous people of Australia were ‘primitive objects’ of research who need not be consulted over the nature or outcomes of the research. However, I had not fully understood or questioned the assertions that non-Indigenous researchers judged Indigenous knowledge as ‘public’ and that by creating a website which contained links to Australian Indigenous people’s lives and stories I was guilty of doing just this. Further, by creating such a website as part of a PhD research project – even though it was intended to be a pedagogical tool targeted at non-Indigenous teachers and students which sought to highlight the richness of Indigenous knowledge, culture and pedagogy – I could be judged as seeking to exploit Indigenous culture and people to raise my own status and self-esteem.

However, in many ways, just as the Indigenous academic finds it difficult to challenge the colonial-based epistemologies of university-based research, the non-Indigenous scholar finds difficulties in attempting to understand and respectfully incorporate Indigenous epistemologies in their work. In the case of the Indigenous scholar or researcher the challenge is to convince the non-Indigenous scholar that their epistemologies are grounded in colonial values that implicitly deny the validity and value of Indigenous ways of knowing, In the case of the non-Indigenous scholar, the challenge lies in not only acknowledging and accepting the importance of Indigenous ways of knowing, but also in being given permission by Indigenous scholars to do so.

Non-Indigenous Australian researchers Rose Carnes, Nado Aveling and Colleen McGloin have all confronted the problem of conducting research on Indigenous Australian issues and communities and found some answers in whiteness studies and being critical or informed allies. Carnes (2011) refers to the way that she has found it difficult to negotiate how to go about using Indigenous research methodologies because she is non-Indigenous. She also notes that there are very few guidelines for non-Indigenous academics “on how to respectfully utilize learning from Indigenous people” (p. 18). Her strategy to deal with the challenge of respectfully utilising learning from Indigenous people has been to “meld” a number of what she describes as “intersecting theories”, including “theories of whiteness, power, critical pedagogy, activism and standpoint theory” which allow her to work as an “allied activist” (p. 14). She cites Cross-Townsend (2011) who says, “...the social reality of Indigenous oppression and inequity can be difficult to intellectually and emotionally relate to for dominant culture learners” (p. 74). By drawing on these non-Indigenous research paradigms which she believes may have some resonance with Indigenist research, she can begin to make sense of her own situation as a non-Indigenous researcher working on Indigenous questions and issues (p. 15). She concludes that her “key learning is how to sit back and learn to feel another way of doing life ... and to listen, listen, listen” (p. 30).

Carne’s belief in the importance of listening accords with Watson’s (2003) insight that many Central Australian Indigenous people believe that hearing “is the medium of intelligence” (p. 54). In my previously submitted exegesis I discussed how critical pedagogy and feminism formed a basis for my thinking about the construction of the *One Country: Different Voices* website. In particular, I noted that French feminist Luce Irigaray believes that teachers should shift from ‘looking-at’ (or perceiving) information and ideas – the ‘truth’ in any dialogue – to ‘listening to’ what is being said. For Irigaray, ‘looking at’ implicitly involves accepting the dominant ideology’s values whereas ‘listening to’ involves assessing what is being said according its *particular* values.

Aveling (2013) questions the problem that if research “is indeed a metaphor of colonization” then there are only two choices open to the non-Indigenous researcher:

we have to learn to conduct research in ways that meet the needs of Indigenous communities and are non-exploitive, culturally appropriate and inclusive, or

we need to relinquish our roles as researchers within Indigenous contexts and make way for Indigenous researchers (p. 1).

Like Carnes (2011, p. 28), she concludes that her best strategy is to act as a ‘informed ally’ who is willing to work with Indigenous researchers and, on a personal level, being willing to make mistakes, feel uncomfortable and confronting her own privileges “without necessarily being able to shed them at will” (p. 210).

McGloin (2016) draws on the warning given by African American feminist bell hooks that it is responsibility of the white person to understand that they are part of dominant ideology and not the responsibility of the colonised person they are seeking to ‘help’. There is a danger that in our attempts to ‘get it right’ when working with Indigenous people and communities by forging alliances that we forget the lack of symmetry in the status of us as the white person and that of colonised ‘allies’. As McGloin expresses it,

In other words, in our ambitions to ‘get it right’, unless we are vigilant, we are invariably retuned to dominating discourses we purportedly seek to challenge: or to put it more bluntly, our desire to be ‘relieved’ takes the form of yet another imperialist urge (p. 842).

McGloin argues that it is the responsibility of the non-Indigenous researcher

to learn then protocols, ethics and practicalities of how we might offer our services as allies who are politically and socially motivated to forming collaborative relations that might position us as subordinate to the knowledge of Others. It is also our task to understand where might be times when our efforts are not welcome (Ibid.).

My interest in recognising and confronting my colonial entanglements and subjectivities in relation to Indigenous students was first motivated by my observation that many of the Indigenous students enrolled at Swinburne’s Lilydale campus had relatively little knowledge of their heritage. In discussing this with people such as Gunditjmara woman Lorraine Lilley, the Lilydale campus Aboriginal Liaison Officer, and Auntie Dot Peters, I was asked if I could contribute something by working with Indigenous Elders in the Healesville area to tell their stories about Coranderrk. It was also in response to their request and support that I included these stories as links on the Lilydale campus Media Studies subject websites. Through these means all Media Studies students would learn more about local Indigenous history and culture.

This process of attempting to recognise and confront my colonial entanglements and subjectivities was further enhanced in 1999 when I was a co-author of a Swinburne University sponsored report titled *Indigenous inclusion in curriculum*. This report was co-authored by two Indigenous and two non-Indigenous people: Lorraine Lilley, the Swinburne Lilydale campus Equity and Aboriginal Liaison Officer; Sue Atkinson, a Yorta Yorta woman and academic; Dr Josie Arnold, senior lecturer in Media Studies; and myself. The report was funded through a Swinburne University's Office for Quality Education grant which paid for the work done by Indigenous researcher Sue Atkinson and was supported by Swinburne Vice-Chancellor Iain Wallace and Lilydale campus Deputy-Vice Chancellor Barbara Van Ernst. The *Indigenous inclusion in curriculum* report was part of a 1999 Swinburne University Review of Indigenous Issues which sought to report on specific issues of Indigenous staffing (recruitment, development, career pathways, student recruitment, and support, advisory and consultative mechanisms and appropriate support facilities).

The impetus for the report came from a number of beliefs coming from discussions with the local Wurundjeri community held by Dr Arnold and myself, derived and supported by sources such as Gunew's assertion that "In Australia, Aborigines emphatically distance themselves from multiculturalism, which they perceive as being predicated on various cultures of migration" (1994, p. 2). The report was also informed by the belief that there was a need for practical action to enable Swinburne University staff, particularly the academic community, to make reconciliation a teaching and learning concern.

Swinburne University was already building up connections with the local Indigenous community – especially the region around Lilydale – through initiatives such as the creation of the position of Swinburne University's Lilydale Campus Aboriginal Liaison Officer (which was filled by Lorraine Lilley) and a memorandum of understanding with Worowa College based in Healesville. Further, in 1992 in its bid to gain university status, the then Swinburne Institute of Technology merged with Prahran TAFE and proposed the creation of a new campus in Lilydale which would have as one of its performance indicators the enrolment and successful graduation of local regional Indigenous students. Prahran TAFE already offered several Indigenous subjects, including the Advanced Certificate in Koorie Child Care and the Prahran Diploma of Arts, Small Companies and Community Theatre (Indigenous Stream).

After successfully gaining university status Swinburne appointed a campus-wide Aboriginal Programs Manager and Aboriginal Project Officer in 1996. The Aboriginal Programs Officer was responsible for the development of Indigenous support and recruitment strategies and for ensuring that a coordinated approach was taken across all of the University's sectors. The Aboriginal Project Officer was responsible for generating teaching and learning projects that involved Indigenous content and acting as a liaison between Indigenous community members and University staff involved in the projects.

The *Indigenous inclusion in curriculum* report was supported and reviewed by Swinburne's Australian Indigenous Consultative Assembly (AICA) which was established in 1996 and met four times a year. AICA's membership consisted of local Indigenous community members, including Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, a Wurundjeri Elder who was later appointed as an Adjunct Professor of Swinburne University, and Swinburne academics, including myself.

The production of the publication emerged from AICA's concern that Indigenous culture was largely ignored by curricula taught by Swinburne University of Technology. The report examined the ways in which Swinburne University of Technology could

...enrich its awareness of Indigenous matters and apply them to teaching and learning construction and delivery so that Aboriginal people [could] participate fully in mainstream education and so that all students become aware of the position of Indigenous people in Australia (Arnold et al. 1999, p. 1).

The report looked at Swinburne's policies regarding Indigenous students and teaching of Indigenous matters; two Swinburne courses – the Indigenous-specific Childcare course offered at Swinburne's Prahran campus and the Indigenous-inclusive Media and Multimedia majors offered at Swinburne's Lilydale campus.

The broad aims of the *Indigenous inclusion in curriculum* report were centred on improving teaching and learning outcomes at Swinburne, specifically by "identifying ways in which the general curriculum might involve sensitivity to Indigenous inclusiveness" (Arnold et al. 1999, p. 121). The impetus for producing the report also came in part from our concerns about how the university was actually addressing the learning needs and experience of the Indigenous students it was encouraging to enrol. Our concern came out of the recognition that many Aboriginal students were reluctant to enter formal tertiary education because it was

too often non-inclusive in such curriculum areas as cultural exemplars, references, materials, assessment procedures and readings; that many academics [did] not always take Indigenous inclusiveness into account when preparing or delivering curriculum; and that non-Indigenous students [were] not fully aware of the range of cultural realities of Australia' black history and present existence (Ibid.).

The *Indigenous inclusion in curriculum* report offered a set of recommendations to the university as well as checklists for Indigenous Australian inclusion that could be used by university policy makers and academics developing curricula. While the report's co-authors included two Australian Indigenous people (Sue Atkinson and Lorraine Lilley), the report did not specifically seek to create content about Indigenous Australian knowledge and experience aimed at Indigenous Australian students, arguing that this should be done by Indigenous academics. However, it did set out to encourage both university management and staff to be consciously aware of the pedagogical and curriculum advantages of Indigenous inclusion and to seek to be inclusive as a matter of principle and practice.

As I was a member of the University's Academic Board at that time I tabled the report and was instrumental in its passing a motion that every academic should use its Checklist for Curriculum Development as part of new course and subject development, and that acknowledgement of their having done so should be included in the University formal subject and course approvals process. The checklist consisted of the following criteria:

- I am aware of Aboriginal inclusiveness and understand its implications for my teaching.
- I have examples from Aboriginal cultures that I have related to my course materials.
- I recognise that Aboriginal cultures and peoples have a central presence in Swinburne and so do not use only historical references in my teaching and learning.
- I am sensitive to the culturally diverse practices and needs of Aboriginal students.
- I problematise cultural generalisations/givens about Aboriginal peoples, practices and cultures.
- I can identify ways in which Aboriginal students could respond positively or negatively to aspects of my course and adapt accordingly.

- I can identify and explore ways in which non-Aboriginal students' learning experiences are enriched by Aboriginal inclusiveness in my curriculum.
- I have read professional literature relevant to teaching and learning and awareness of Aboriginal students' cultures.
- I have explored how my subject content can be enriched by a consideration of Aboriginal students' cultural contexts.
- I recognise that Aboriginal students may have particular cultural preferences in their "learning style" (Arnold et al. 1999, p. 6).

While the Academic Board passed the motion proposing the use of the checklists, they did so as a matter of form and 'political correctness', and in recognition of the fact that the university had been granted government funding to develop programs to encourage Aboriginal enrolments. Further, it became clear that while Swinburne academics ticked the box acknowledging that they had used the checklist, they did so under duress and most probably ignored it all together. The reluctance of many university teaching staff to consider using the Aboriginal Inclusion checklist suggests that there was unconscious racism and ignorance about Aboriginal knowledge on their part. They ticked the box but continued to argue that they could not see the relevance of considering Indigenous Australian knowledge when teaching Chemistry or even Accounting. Still, it was early days when this report was produced and since then, while the University has accredited Aboriginal Studies programs, it is not certain that academic attitudes towards Aboriginal inclusion in other discipline areas have changed, revealing both the tacit and explicit racism referred to by Indigenous researchers including Fredericks (2008), Smallwood (2014), and Bodkin-Andrews and Carlson (2016).

The report also included a checklist titled *Checklist for Research into Aboriginal Matters: Research Protocols*. This checklist, which was based on research protocols developed in 1994 by the Deakin Institute of Koorie Education in a paper titled, *Koorie Research Program. Ethics, Protocols and Methodologies*, included the following criteria:

- I have negotiated the conduct of the project, including such areas as content, budget and publication, with the relevant Aboriginal group and I have their agreement in writing.
- I have addressed that the ownership of research material and data shall remain the property of the Aboriginal community concerned.

- I have developed a safe holding place for the data and materials including archiving that is acceptable to the communities involved.
- I have resolved the questions of appropriate authorship whereby Aboriginal contributors are given equal alphabetical authorship.
- The research has been approved by the University ethics committee.
- Publication rights have been approved by the relevant consultative Aboriginal community group.
- The contribution of the relevant community has been properly recorded as authors/participants in accordance with specifically articulated University guidelines.
- It is clear that no identification of individuals or communities will be published without their written consent.
- It is clear that data cannot be used except for the agreed research.
- Strategies are in place for the return or destruction of unarchived data.
- Strategies are in place for royalty payments equivalent to the individual or community contribution to the construction of a commercial text.
- Strategies are in place for media comments by the researcher(s) upon the data to be sensitive, restricted to the area of research and referred to relevant Aboriginal individuals or communities.
- There are proper strategies for the research explanations to be made to individuals or communities in appropriate language which will inform them of the details and implications of the research project.
- Payments are made to Aboriginal researchers and they conform to the University's award system (Arnold et al. 1999, p. 7).

Revisiting this work on *Indigenous inclusion in curriculum* has highlighted to me that while I may have made a good start on thinking about the complexities of working with Indigenous Australian people, I still have a great deal more work to do in confronting my position as a member of the dominant ideology and as a coloniser. Fredericks (2008) describes her experience as an Indigenous woman researcher researching Indigenous women as a 'path' and a process involving travelling through "an internal landscape in the journey of the Self" which required self-reflection and which led her to come to understand herself more clearly both as a researcher and as individual (p. 113). Non-Indigenous researchers Rose Carnes (2011) and Colleen McGloin both question if they

will ever ‘unlearn’ to unconsciously engage in colonising practices and acquire enough knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australian culture. As McGloin notes,

[H]ow much knowledge about Others is enough to engage critically, pedagogically, with those histories that are not ours? Can one acquire ‘enough’ knowledge through a course? Or must we accept that we are always in a state of learning – and unlearning? (2016, p. 844).

Similarly, Aveling writes:

... no matter how well intentioned I may be, my understanding of colonisation can only ever be partial, as my view is invariably coloured by my own experiences. As a white western woman, I can bring my awareness to the fact that there are realities and worldviews other than my own and I can listen to other voices, but I cannot speak about experiences I have not had (2012, p. 210).

The work I have been doing in revisiting my previously submitted exegesis, and reading about the challenges that non-Indigenous scholars such as Carnes, McGloin and Aveling, has led me to realise that unless I constantly remain conscious and vigilant about my white filters, I will be the same as the unthinking colonisers who constitute the majority of Australians.

(iv) My Use of Weaving as a Narrative Metaphor

My first encounter with Indigenous weaving was while I was listening to Aunty Dot Peters speaking about her life at Coranderrk as she showed me how to weave an eel trap. As she created the eel trap she told me stories about how the Wurundjeri people at Coranderrk caught fish, and about women’s work and men’s work. For Aunty Dot, memory and the activity of weaving are clearly intertwined.

The weaving metaphor is one that is shared by many cultures and my use of this metaphor is in no way intended to suggest that any form of knowledge – whether ancient or modern – is superior or inferior. In the introduction of her book, *Weaving words, personal and professional transformation through writing as research* (2014), Jones cites Kruger (2001) who,

portrays the fine threads of history and practice that connect spinning, weaving, story-telling and writing as means by which personal and cultural narratives

have been and continue to be preserved and shared by ancient and modern cultures worldwide (p. 11).

She notes that Kruger argues that weaving is “akin to speaking” for the Dogon people of Africa and that for the Dine people of the Southwest United States the great mother, Spider Woman weaves the world into being (p. 1).

Australian Indigenous researcher Ambelin Kwaymullina (2008, p. 9) writes that in traditional Indigenous lives humans have been seen as one of the many threads in the tapestry of life, as equal and not more important than anything else. I wrote in my exegesis that my use of the weaving metaphor was in part inspired by Indigenous Australian practices of weaving around topics when story-telling, the use of the term ‘yarn’ with its Western connotations of thread that is woven or knitted, and the use of creating string figures while conveying cultural information by the Yolgnu. I also spoke about my use of the terms warp and weft to weave together my pedagogical practices and understandings with the *8-Ways Learning* model (p. 12).

Fowler et al. (2016) have used the practice of object biography in which objects are examined to see what they reveal about the “complex stories from the past and present” (p. 210). The objects they examine are samples of sailcloth and fishing net found at the Point Pearce Aboriginal Mission (Burgiyana) colonial archive, South Australia, which “reveal the resilience, adaptability and strength of the Narungga culture when exposed to colonial contextual risk”. Indeed, these objects reveal the efforts of missions and government agencies to control the lives of Aboriginal peoples (through the lenses of ‘racism’, paternalism and self-interest), as well as agency and the involvement of Aboriginal peoples in capitalist economies. Objects as subjects can also reveal ongoing struggles for traditional commercial fishing rights (p. 210).

Byrne (2007) makes a similar reference to the power of using cloth and weaving as a metaphor of colonialism. Referring to an exhibition of Polynesian fabrics in Canberra she writes:

As visitors to that exhibition, we bring with us memories of colonialism, of the onslaught on traditional ways and of the creation of new nations with a post-colonial heritage woven into older cultural fabrics (p. xiv).

My use of the weft and warp metaphor was intended to weave together what I thought was an excellent model and non-Indigenous ways of teaching and provide non-Indigenous teachers and students with a way of recognising their white privilege and colonial stance. In my conception *8-Ways Learning* occupied privileged position and I was inviting non-Indigenous teachers and students to learn from it.

As Jones et al. (2014) posit, weaving, story-telling and writing “share a long and parallel history” and weaving acts as a metaphor for “the active and complex layering of practices and products of writing in research and in education”. By listening to the stories and experiences of oneself and others you create a cloth that consists of threads that represent “the coming together of diverse identities, cultures and ways of knowing and understanding the world” (p. 11).

One advantage of using an autoethnographic methodology is that it allows one to think about one’s life as consisting of different ‘threads’ of experience that you weave together over time into a whole cloth that is never finally completed. Denzin (2014) refers to the process of writing an autoethnography as an act of ceaseless renewal in which the story is never ‘told’ finally, exhaustively or completely, for the beginning coincides with the end and the end with the beginning (pp. 9-10). I used the weaving metaphor because it explains best for myself how all my current practices in life and teaching and learning constitute a ‘fabric’ woven out of the strands – or threads – of experiences in my life which have occurred and which with reflection are reshaped and take new significance in my life.

The weaving metaphor helps me make sense of how I have come to be who I am and the three readings I included on the *One Country: Different Voices* represent different scenes in the larger tapestry of my life. Some of the scenes deal with my childhood (‘My Story’), others with my instinctive rejection of rote learning – preferring instead to understand the big picture which led me to believe that if I wanted to get good marks for Australian history that the best strategy would be to study it as broadly as possible (‘Myself as a Learner and Teacher’). While understanding the big picture of Australian history proved to be a good strategy at the time because I won the Victorian state prize for Australian History in 1968, I have since learned that Australian history, as it was taught then, consisted of colonial history with barely any mention of the much longer history of Indigenous Australians (‘History – Whose Story?’).

Other important threads – or epiphanies – relate to when I started working as a journalist and realised that news writing was never objective. Later, when I became a tutor and lecturer in Journalism, I decided that I could embed ideas and theories from cultural studies to help student journalists understand that objectivity depends upon the subjective eye of the beholder. Cultural studies also formed the base for teaching Media Studies and providing insights into some of the challenges confronting Indigenous students in my classes.

As I note in my exegesis, another important thread in my life is the academic one in which I was introduced to, and confronted and challenged by, theories such as Freire's ideas about pedagogy as liberation (Vigo 2013, pp. 19-24) and critical feminism (Vigo 2013, pp. 25-29). I was attracted to these theories because they coincided with my already established practice of questioning everything. Ideas about narrative pedagogy led me to think of ways in which I could challenge students to question what they know and what they take for granted and I believe that many of the links in the *One Country: Different Voices* website and its Wiki would facilitate them to do this.

I was an early user of the web and began to see it as an excellent means by which I could not only introduce students to a large range of ideas, but also help them gain some insight into how ideas shift and change, as well as their relational contexts. This was played out in an interesting way in 2004 when, while I was cruising the World Wide Web, I noticed that Neil Postman, an influential American writer in the debate about the future of communications technologies, was looking for public feedback on the draft of his soon-to-be-published book *Amusing ourselves to death*. I suggested to my Media Studies students that they respond and was delighted when Postman engaged in online discussions about his ideas with them for the rest of the semester. It was this experience that led me to include the Wiki space on *One Country: Different Voices* because it would give non-Indigenous and Indigenous students a chance to communicate, share their stories and experiences and gain new cross-cultural insights and understanding.

In the next section, I will address the problems of applying and utilising the traditional academic voice in an Indigenous project and the dominance of hegemonic scholarly discourse.

Section 3: Indigenous Identity and the Academy

In this section, I briefly look at the struggle for Indigenous identity to be recognised by Australian governments and citizens, and how this led to the development of Indigenous research methodologies. I will also review some of the key theories that have influenced these methodologies, including feminism, standpoint theory and whiteness studies. I will also briefly discuss how these theories influenced my creation of the *One Country: Different Voices* website.

(i) The Search for Indigenous Identity

My interest in developing *One Country: Different Voices* with its history of Coranderrk was grounded in my experience as a lecturer in Media Studies (1994 – 2004) and later as a Senior Lecturer in the Masters in Writing (2004 – 2007) at Swinburne University of Technology's Lilydale Campus. During this period, I encountered several students who, over time during discussions in Media Studies classes, revealed their Indigenous ancestry. For some their ancestry was a matter of fact which they seemed to have no apparent desire to further explore. For others, such as Andrews Peters who subsequently developed a course in Indigenous Studies at Swinburne's Lilydale campus, it became a meaningful part of their search for their identity as adults.

This search for their Indigenous identity was occurring in the context of a shifting consciousness by urban Indigenous Australians which gathered momentum in the 1970s in what Sutton (1988, pp. 257-258) refers to as “the emergence of a new form of Indigenous intellectuality”. According to Sutton there is a growing trend among educated

urbanised Indigenous to construct “a metaphysic of identity” which involves a process of self-realisation: ‘We didn’t know who we were’, or ‘I had to find out who I was’. Sutton argues that, as a result, even though many Indigenous Australians live more like Europeans, it has no longer become the exception for them to “explicitly proclaim their distinct cultural identity”. As part of this growing interest in their Indigenous identity by students in my Media Studies classes, we began to investigate the history of Coranderrk, located in Healesville, close to the Lilydale Campus. My work on my artefact, *One Country: Different Voices*, subsequently started after a request by local Indigenous Elders to record their Coranderrk memories. As I will discuss below, this is in keeping with Indigenous standpoint theory which incorporates ideas about identifying who Indigenous Australians collectively are, how this shapes their world view, and how this knowledge can help in identifying the unspoken values and attitudes of the colonial others. The scope of our original project of just recording stories was later developed by me, after discussion with Wurundjeri Elders including Aunty Dot Peters and Uncle Juby Wandin, into a much larger teaching and learning resource that could be used by non-Indigenous teachers and students to learn about Indigenous Australians.

The emergence of the contemporary Indigenous movement for self-determination and forging self-identity is generally recognised as beginning with the 1967 referendum on the status of Australian Indigenous people in the Australian Constitution and the establishment in 1972 in Canberra of the Indigenous Tent Embassy on the lawns of Parliament House (Anderson 2003, p. 18). These events occurred at a time when Australia was undergoing what Manne (2011) refers to as “a genuine cultural revolution” in which “certainties concerning race and gender, authority and sexuality” were being questioned and challenged in a process of national reinvention (p. 17). Significantly questions were being asked about the historic treatment of Indigenous Australians, their representation in Australian histories, and their lack of rights as citizens. It was a period when all Australian governments were concerned with addressing and overturning what Stanner (1979) referred to in his 1968 ABC Boyer Lectures, *After the Dreaming* as the “Great Australian Silence” (p. 207) to convey the notion of the incompleteness of Australia’s history. Stanner contended that while the European experience was well documented, Indigenous history was relegated to a “melancholy footnote” (p. 214). It was also in this period that Indigenous Australian academics began to formulate Indigenous research methodologies that placed the Indigenous experience at the centre of their research.

Until approximately the 1960s the history of Australia focused on events that had occurred since the First Fleet landed in 1788 and was essentially the story of British discovery, exploration, settlement and development of an ‘empty’ continent. Its focus was on the British migrant experience and largely ignored the experiences of other cultural groups in Australia, especially Indigenous Australians (Broome 2010; Cuthoys 2006). Cuthoys (2006, p. 7) writes that the favored stories – or narratives – relating to Australia’s history generally related how hardened, brave British people conquered a harsh country and subdued natives. Most of these stories

...were silent on race and ethnicity, referring only infrequently to non-British immigrants, and obscuring the dispossession of Indigenous peoples almost entirely. In common with other colonial and settler societies, settler Australians developed narratives of reversal, placing Indigenous people as the invaders and seeing the settlers as the defenders of their land (p. 7).

Indeed, she argues, most Australian histories portrayed early British settlers as “victims, not oppressors” (Ibid.). As I have already discussed, it was this kind of approach to history that led me to include the ‘Whose History?’ reading on the website, asking students to re-think their unquestioned reading of Australian histories that ignore the Indigenous Australian experience except in terms of aggressors or as ‘the problem’.

Since the mid-1960s Indigenous activists and activists such as Mick Dodson (1998, 2014), Marcia Langton (1991, 2003, 2006), Gary Foley (1999, 2008) and Ian Anderson (2003), have argued that unless Indigenous Australians start setting cultural debates and agendas, non-Indigenous perceptions of Australia’s Indigenous population will remain locked in what Dodson (1994) describes as an “historical landscape full of absolute and timeless truths which have been set in place by self-professed experts and authorities all too ready to tell us, and the world the meaning of Indigenosity” (p. 1). He argues that in each of these “absolute and timeless truths” Indigenous vision and voices are absent. Further, he argues that Indigenous Australians must actively “subvert” the non-Indigenous hegemony over representations of Indigenous Australian life and participate in the creation of a new national narrative that more accurately reflects contemporary Indigenous Australian life and culture.

As will be discussed in further detail below, Indigenous researchers believe that their people can determine their own identity – self-possession and self-determination –

through two key strategies: (i) developing Indigenous research methodologies (Kovach 2009; Martin 2008; Rigney 1997, 2006, 2010; Smith 2012); and, (ii) through ensuring that education be transformed from what Dodson perceives as being essentially a negative and antagonistic experience for most Indigenous children into one that is affirming and inclusive (Dodson 2010).

(ii) Key Theories Adapted by Indigenous Researchers in the Development of Indigenous Research Methodologies: Feminism, Standpoint Theory and Whiteness studies

As I discuss throughout my revisit of my originally submitted exegesis, Indigenous Australian researchers and scholars are concerned with developing and refining Indigenous research methodologies which will result in more truthful outcomes from research on Indigenous Australians. However, while researchers such as Rigney, Nakata, Moreton-Robinson and Martin are actively engaged in developing and refining Indigenous research methodologies, this does not necessarily mean, as Rigney (1997) notes, that they reject all non-Indigenous theories and research practices (p. 109). Rather, they review and challenge research avenues such as post-colonialism, whiteness studies, standpoint theory and feminism and use them to conceptualise research methodologies that are compatible with “Indigenous realities, interests and aspirations” (Rigney 2010, p. 36). There are many other theoretical methodologies such as critical race theory and Aboriginal post-colonialism which I could address, but it is not within the scope of this work to do so. Feminism and standpoint theory and, later whiteness studies, have been selected for overview because they are frequently referenced by significant Indigenous Australian researchers such as Nakata (2007), Moreton-Robinson (2006, 2013), Martin, (2008), and Rigney (2010), and because they offer important insights to me in relation to my understanding of myself as a non-Indigenous researcher engaged in work on Indigenous knowledge.

Feminism

Feminism offers an important starting point because of Indigenous academics such as Moreton-Robinson (2000) and Fredericks (2008, 2010). As will be discussed in further detail below, Moreton-Robinson and Fredericks have strong reservations about white feminists not understanding the situation of black Indigenous women. Moreton-Robinson has used feminist research methodologies to expand her focus beyond the male oppressor

to include white feminists who fail to question their essentially privileged status as white colonisers and their unthinking complicity in colonising Indigenous women. Smith (2009) notes that for Indigenous women feminists the central tenet is colonialism (p. 153). This position is informed by two major tenets: the marginalisation of all Indigenous people as the 'other', and the oppression of Indigenous women not only by the coloniser but also by Indigenous men. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that feminist methodologies, such as qualitative research, autoethnography and participatory action research (Fredericks 2008, p. 122) can have some value in contributing to Indigenous women developing a clearer conception of themselves and their status as Indigenous Australian women.

While the feminist movement found its modern origins in the late 19th century and early 20th century with the struggle by women in largely Britain, Europe and North America to gain equality of rights such as the vote, since the 1960s its focus has significantly expanded to addressing issues such as gender politics, power relations and sexuality. Key themes that are explored in feminist theory include discrimination, stereotyping, objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression and patriarchy. A central concern of feminist theory is the drive to place women at the centre of their ability to define themselves in their own terms and experience and to challenge the dominant male patriarchy which has largely denied them the right to write (her) story rather than (his) story.

Perhaps not surprisingly there is no one form of feminism. For example, liberal feminists argue that the difference in status and situation between the genders are the result of economic and cultural constructs which can be addressed by women autonomously demanding changes within existing legal and economic frameworks (Mackinnon 1987, 1991). Socialist feminists, on the other hand, argue that the very nature of capitalism results in inequalities between class and gender, for example the role of paid (in the workplace) and unpaid (in the home) labourers. This can only be addressed through the overthrow of capitalism which in part relies on its success on women as workers and consumers (Brenner 2014; Oakley 1974).

Difference feminism asserts that men and women are essentially different with some difference feminists such as Mary Daly arguing that not only are women and men different with different values and different ways of knowing, but that women and their

values are superior to men's (Daly 1998). The problem with difference feminism identified by black feminists is that while it recognises that women and men are different it has an implicit assumption that all women share the same experience (hooks 1986; Moreton-Robinson 2000). Black feminists such as hooks (1986, 1992, 2003, 2014), Fredericks (2010), Lucashenko (1994) and Spivak (1993, 1998, 2015) argue that the position and experience of colonial or black women is not the same as that of white women because they carry the double burden of both colonialism and racism. These black feminists argue that in a post-colonial context, black women are not only dominated by 'imperial' gender relations but are also dominated by 'native' men so that they are doubly-silenced.

Feminist research methodology incorporates both traditional research methods: 'quantitative' and 'qualitative'. Qualitative methods involve in depth research into the motivation, attitudes and behaviour of respondents, or into a given situation. However, since the 1960s, feminists have more commonly used qualitative ethnographic methods which produce descriptive data: people's own written or spoken words and observable.

Ollivier & Tremblay (2000) believe that there are three defining principles of feminist research: (i) its commitment to both the construction of new knowledge and introducing social change which will acknowledge and alleviate various forms of oppression suffered by women; (ii) while recognising that most research is conducted in patriarchal institutions, it is nevertheless grounded in feminist values and beliefs; and, (iii) it is characterised by its diversity. Feminist methodology is interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, uses different methodologies, and it is constantly being redefined by the concerns of women coming from very different perspectives. Feminist research thus requires that such issues as anti-racism and diversity, democratic decision making, and the empowerment of women – including traditionally marginalised women – are addressed (Ollivier & Tremblay 2000, pp. 1-15).

Greaves et al. (1995, p. 334) note that feminist research is especially concerned with reducing the power imbalance between researcher and subject and is politically motivated in that it seeks to change social inequality for women. While either quantitative or qualitative research methods may be used, it must begin with the standpoints and experiences of women. Further, methodological choices must be guided by the particular

situation or context, instead of having a trust in the method as appropriate for every context and situation.

Indigenous women researchers such as Smith (1999), Kovach (2009), Martin (2008), and Fredericks (2008) all acknowledge the use of feminist research methodologies in their work. Smith writes that her book is less concerned with method “but more with the context in which research problems are conceptualized and designed, and with the implications of research for its participants and their communities” (1999, p. 1).

Fredericks (2008) uses the term “talkin up” when referring to her research as a way addressing the problem of the unequal relationship between herself as researcher and the subjects of her research. This use is derived from Aileen Morten-Robinson’s (2000) belief that “talkin up” refers to the concept of “speaking back” rather than “talkin the talk” which has a more one-way connotation of tell[ing] people what to do” (p. 187). Fredericks refers to research guidelines outlined by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), and in particular their *The NHMRC road map: Strategic framework for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through research* (2002) document which sets out criteria for research protocols, including that it be based on identified need, be action oriented, contain skills and knowledge, and include a knowledge transfer strategy. Fredericks also contends that this kind of research should also provide proper acknowledgement of ownership to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, include consultation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of working, and community control of research (2008, p. 119). This arose out of Frederick’s observation that the Aboriginal women with whom she worked did not wish to be simply the subjects of research, but believed the research should lead to providing insights into how things could change (p. 121).

Kovach emphasises the importance of narrative and story-telling as being a “methodological necessity flowing from a tribal epistemology” (p. 84).

I have been a committed feminist since the early 1970s. My interest in feminism was first aroused by my experience working as a journalist for the now defunct evening newspaper *The Herald*. The Herald’s workspace was outrageously sexist and patriarchal. For example, even though I was the newspaper’s first full-time female sub-editor, I was told by the editor that I would not be getting a promotion, even though he acknowledged that I was working at a considerably higher level of responsibility than my male peers, because

I had recently married and would probably have a baby soon. I resigned soon after to start working as a tutor in Journalism and Media Studies in yet another patriarchal institution, RMIT. I certainly felt that I understood the position of the disempowered 'other' but in hindsight, except in general terms, while I knew that Indigenous Australians suffered severe discrimination from white Australians, I had little grasp that among the discriminators were white feminists.

Standpoint Theory

Standpoint theory finds its origins in feminism and argues that women's place in society is determined by political and social power and knowledge. Feminist standpoint theorists such as Harding (1991, 2008) and Haraway (2004, 2008) argue that knowledge is socially situated, marginalised groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for them to be aware of things and ask questions than it is for the non-marginalised, and research, particularly that focused on power relations, should begin with the lives of the marginalised.

This mirrors what Eagleton (2003) suggests in his essay titled "Truth, Virtue and Objectivity" when he says,

Objectivity does not mean judging from nowhere. On the contrary, you can only know how the situation is if you are in a *position* to know. Only by standing at a certain angle to reality can it be illuminated for you. The wretched of the world, for example, are likely to appreciate more of the truth of human history than their masters - not because they are innately more perceptive, but because they can glean from their own everyday experience that history for the vast majority of men and women has been largely a matter of despotic power and fruitless toil (pp. 135-136, italics in original).

Standpoint theorists define standpoint broadly as an achieved collective identity or consciousness. In Western culture the dominant standpoint is the white masculinist hegemony which dominates political, economic and cultural power. However, there are many standpoints which reflect different life situations experienced by groups who are marginalised by the dominant Western masculinist hegemony, such as white women, black women, people of different races, the poor, and so on. Generally, these different standpoints are only recognised by those who are marginalised and they must struggle to have their different standpoint recognised and acknowledged, but by examining society

and culture through the perspectives and experiences of different standpoints it is possible to achieve critical insights leading to a different sense of social realities. According to Sandra Harding:

Only through such struggles can we begin to see beneath the appearances created by an unjust social order to the reality of how this social order is in fact constructed and maintained. This need for struggle emphasizes the fact that a feminist standpoint is not something that anyone can have simply by claiming it. It is an achievement. A standpoint differs in this respect from a perspective, which anyone can have simply by 'opening one's eyes' (1991, p. 127).

Australian Indigenous scholar Martin Nakata has developed an Indigenous Standpoint theory in which he seeks to develop an intellectual standpoint from which Indigenous scholars can read and understand the Western system of knowledge (1998, p. 4). He argues that the challenge for Indigenous scholars is to firstly understand the way in which non-Indigenous research has placed Indigenous Australians into the role of the 'other' and then to determine how to develop research methodologies which place the Australian Indigenous ways of knowing, knowledge and experience at the centre. In his words:

Colonial discourses and their narratives are now so dense that it is very hard to make out whether one speaks from within them, or whether one can speak outside of them, or whether one can speak at all without them (1997, p. 4).

As Rigney (2010) notes, Nakata's position is to ask the Indigenous scholar to reflect on "how knowledge construction and legitimation works, and how it represents and misrepresents, and provides strategies to negotiate when reading the text" (p. 37). As will be discussed in greater detail below, Nakata believes that this can only be achieved through the development of new Indigenous research methodologies.

Moreton-Robinson has developed a feminist Australian Indigenous standpoint theory which adapts the feminist approach to standpoint theory of feminists such as Haraway and Harding to include the work done by Indigenous researchers such as Rigney (1997), Smith (1999), Martin (2008) and Kovach (2009). Moreton-Robinson (2013) states that this feminist Indigenous standpoint theory is based on the premise that

Australian Indigenous research paradigms are founded on a construction of humanness that is predicated on the body's connectedness to our respective countries, human ancestors, creative beings and all living things (p. 335).

Moreton-Robinson's work recognises the importance of Nakata's contribution to Australian Indigenous research but argues that because he is not aware of the different lived experiences of Indigenous Australian men and women he is effectively "gender blind" (2013, p. 338):

Though Nakata draws on the work of feminists, his theory is gender blind. Perhaps this is because his version of Indigenous standpoint theory is centred on knowing as a Torres Strait Islander male scholar. ... However, physical experiences and memories differ and gender is one of the analytical categories that assists us to explain why that is so. One of the strengths of feminist standpoint theory is the inextricable link between theory, politics and practice and the ability to generate a problematic from women's embodied lived experience (pp. 338-339).

Moreton-Robinson's feminist standpoint theory is premised on three elements: Indigenous Australian women's ontology, epistemology and axiology. According to Moreton-Robinson their ontology is derived from their relations to their country and their knowledge of the stories about how their ancestral beings created the land, the animals, the flora and the humans who live on it. These stories provide in part their connection with land and create an "ontological relationship" which becomes an "embodiment based on blood line to country" (2013, p. 341).

This ontology is related to Australian Indigenous women's epistemology (ways of knowing) which are informed by shared knowledge and experience of their social position such as:

...living in a society that deprecates us ... having different cultural knowledges...continual denial of our sovereignties ...the politics of dispossession ... [their] respective countries' histories of colonization ... multiple oppressions ... living in a hegemonic white patriarchal society ... lacking epistemic authority within the academy ... experience of resisting and replacing disparaging images of [themselves] with our own representations ...different class locations ...experiences within [their] communities as mothers, sisters, daughters, aunties grandmothers, elders and community leaders ...different sexualities and gender (Moreton-Robinson 2013, pp. 341-342).

She goes on to state that these “ways of knowing and experiencing generate the problematics of Indigenous women’s standpoint” (p. 342).

Indigenous Australian women’s axiology (way of doing) is informed by their ontology and epistemology and acts as an extension of their “communal responsibilities and sovereignties” (Ibid.).

While Indigenous academics and scholars are now calling for research on Indigenous peoples to be conducted using methodologies that place themselves at the centre of their research and reclaim their own knowledge, this does not necessarily mean, as Rigney (1997) notes, that they reject all non-Indigenous theories and research practices (p. 109). Rather, they review and challenge research avenues such as post-colonialism, whiteness studies, standpoint theory and feminism and use them to conceptualise research methodologies that are compatible with “Indigenous realities, interests and aspirations” (Rigney 2010, p.36).

My strategy to include links and interactions such as the Wiki on the *One Country: Different Voices* website was intended to help non-Aboriginal teachers and students to challenge their taken-for-granted colonialist beliefs and attitudes. It was in part informed by standpoint theory which Nakata (2007) describes as “a method of inquiry... a way of theorizing knowledge from a particular and interested position” (p. 215). Feminist Sandra Harding (1995), writing about the marginalised position of women, describes the concept of standpoint more fully by saying that it uses

experiences of the marginalized to generate critical questions about the lives of marginalized people and of those in the dominant group, as well as about the systematic structural and symbolic relations between them (p. 128).

As I noted above in my reference to working as a female journalist, as a marginalised white female I felt I could strongly relate to Harding’s use of standpoint theory. For this reason, Nakata’s (2004) assertion that standpoint creates a starting point to challenge the hegemony of white privilege and entitlement (p. 5) seemed both appropriate and logical, particularly in terms of his belief in the advantages offered by dialogue between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal academics to develop better understanding not only of the need for Indigenist research theories, but also about their advantage to the broader research community.

In the case of *One Country: Different Voices* I was excited by the potential of the Wiki to act as space where discussion could occur between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and help non-Aboriginal teachers to begin to learn from Wiki postings by Aboriginal students on topics such as racism about their experience, feelings and attitudes. It could also facilitate of discussion about issues such as racism in the classroom to help non-Aboriginals begin to understand where dominant epistemologies influence their attitudes and understanding about racism.

Whiteness studies

For the non-Indigenous researcher engaged in research relating to Indigenous issues, whiteness studies offers a more confronting questions about their situation than answers. The strength of whiteness studies is that it turns the researcher's eye from the Indigenous colonised to the white coloniser. However, while the concept of white researchers shifting their eyes on to themselves – rather than on Indigenous subjects – to examine the implications of the white hegemony of which they are members seems on the face of it a laudable one, Indigenous scholars have pointed to the inherent troublesome contradiction of research being done by white people who do not recognise how their very whiteness gives them a privileged status that is denied non-whites.

Moreton-Robinson (2004) describes whiteness as a social construct and defines it as “[T]he invisible norm against which other races are judged in the construction of identity, representation, subjectivity, nationalism and law” (p. vii). For her, and other Indigenous people, the state of whiteness – with all its associated privileges and power – is taken-for-granted by the white person and is usually only recognised by the person who is not white. Riggs (2004) also points out there is a danger of white researchers undertaking whiteness studies unconsciously coming to affirm the ‘rightness’ of whiteness whereas the Indigenous researcher – for whom the state of whiteness does not exist – is able to have a clearer perception of its implications for the Indigenous person. By starting with the “critiques of whiteness provided by those who are marginalized by it, then we may be more able to engage with analyses of race and whiteness that refuse to reify or fetishise” (p. 6).

As Moreton-Robinson notes in her important 2002 book, *Talkin' up to the white woman: Aboriginal women and feminism*, many white feminists writing about whiteness “fail to appreciate that their position as situated knowers within white race privilege is

inextricably connected to the systemic racism they criticise but do not experience” (p. xx). She argues that white middle-class women’s privilege is tied to colonisation and dispossession of Indigenous people.

This self-delusion by white feminists about their presumed sense of sisterhood with other non-white women is also referred to by Indigenous Australian feminist Melissa Lucashenko (1994) who states that there are three “major pieces of disinformation” which effectively separate black and white feminists in Australia: firstly, the claim of equalitarianism “which says that all women are basically similar with only superficial differences in race, class, age, sexuality, social status and so on”; secondly, even though racism is pervasive in Australia white feminists are somehow excepted because of their claimed sisterhood with Indigenous Australian women; and, thirdly “the misconception held by some white feminists, and by many Indigenous women, which argues that as Blacks we have nothing at all to learn from mainstream feminism or from white women” (1994, p. 21).

Lucashenko asserts that while black feminists understand the dominant Western hegemony very well, white feminists have no understanding of the black woman’s situation which is largely shaped by racism, violence and economic struggle (p. 22). Further, both Moreton-Robinson (2013) and Lucashenko make the case that Indigenous Australian women have a unique consciousness and understanding of their own history prior to white invasion. They also have a unique consciousness and understanding of Australia’s colonial history. As Lucashenko states:

This consciousness means our reality is not your reality. What you call patriarchy, I call one aspect of colonisation: for all their commonalities, for all your hoping and wishing it, our oppressions are not interchangeable. Whether you like it or not, as a white Australian woman you too are at the root of my Indigenous problem (p. 22).

The positions taken by Moreton-Robinson and Lucashenko inevitably lead the non-Indigenous feminist researcher such as myself to ask whether their position is impossible and it would be best to always avoid any involvement in research on Indigenous issues. As will be discussed in further detail below, having placed myself in that position the best I can do is to become actively self-reflective on my status as a privileged white woman and to constantly remind myself of Smith’s contention that

[T]he situated knower is also a participant in the social she is discovering. Her inquiry is developed as a form of that participation. Her experience is always active as a way of knowing whether or not she makes it an explicit resource (1999, p. 6).

If whiteness studies have any value at all they serve to remind the white researcher that they must remind themselves constantly of the ideological, ontological, epistemological and axiological filters that shape their lives.

Aveling (2001) talks about the problem that non-Indigenous teachers face when attempting to “deconstruct their discursive self” and

let go of the notion that the ‘real’ business of schools and education is grounded in hegemonic (white) cultural norms and that racism is something that only happens in schools that have Aboriginal or ‘migrant’ students who have ‘social problems’; something, in fact that is not much of a concern in the ‘mainstream’ (p. 41).

She uses a story-telling strategy in classes in which she shares not only her own experiences but also encourages students to share theirs because they are assured that “their experiences count as legitimate knowledge” (p. 41).

My incorporation of the Wiki space on the *One Country: Different Voices* website is intended to provide a safe space where Indigenous students, as well as all students, can share their experiences of racism and engage in dialogue with ‘white’ students with Anglo heritage or who come from non-Anglo families which have fully assimilated, often over some generations. I agree with Aveling’s contention that if we are to take the challenge of opening our own and our ‘white’ students’ eyes to racism seriously, then we need to become familiar “with the stories of the silenced” (2001, p. 4). As I note in my already submitted exegesis:

By sharing their personal stories through the Wiki discussion forum students gain insights into not only how their personal experience and cultural locations shape their ideas and opinions, but also into how these experiences shape the world views and lives of other students (Vigo 2013, p. 60).

Like Aveling, I believe that sharing stories is not the full answer to addressing racism if the only experiences being examined are those of the victims of racism. It is also essential

that white students are expected to examine why they may be considered racist and how their position as members of the white dominant culture shapes their attitudes, values and behaviours. Indeed, both Carnes (2011) and Aveling believe that whiteness studies can begin to help bridge the chasm of racism and misunderstanding. As Frankenberg reminds us:

To leave whiteness unexamined is to perpetuate a kind of asymmetry that has marred even many critical analyses of racial formation and cultural practice ... critical attention to whiteness offers a ground not only for examination of white selves (who may be indeed white others, depending on the position of the speaker) but also for the excavation of the foundations of all racial and cultural positionings ... critical analyses of whiteness are vital concomitants of engagements with racial subordination (Frankenberg 1997, pp. 1-2).

In the next section, I will address Indigenous researchers' belief that their people can determine their own identity – self-possession and self-determination – through developing Indigenous research methodologies (Kovach 2009; Martin 2008; Rigney 1997, 2006, 2010; Smith 2012).

Section 4: Indigenous Research Methodologies and Working ‘Alongside’

Indigenous Australians, like First Nations People around the globe, are arguably the most studied peoples of the world. The research enterprise as a vehicle for investigation has poked, prodded, measured, tested and compared data toward understanding Indigenous cultures and human nature. Explorers, medical practitioners, intellectuals, travellers and voyeurs who have observed from a distance, have all played a role in the scientific scrutiny of Indigenous peoples (Rigney 1997, p. 109).

In this section, I will provide a brief overview of some of the key developments in Indigenous research methodologies, focusing on the work done by Rigney, Smith, and Martin. I will also address the challenge of working alongside Indigenous Australians, reviewing the guidelines developed by Martin (2008) and some of the lessons learned by non-Indigenous researchers. I will also discuss further my experience of working ‘alongside’ the Indigenous people of the Yarra Valley who invited me to record their Coranderrk stories.

(i) Indigenous Research Methodologies

The work done by Indigenous scholars such as Battiste (2000, 2002), Cajete (1997, 2000), Smith (2012), Kovach (2009), Rigney (1997, 2001, 2010), Moreton-Robinson (2004, 2009, 2013), Martin (2003, 2008) and Nakata (2004a, 2007a, 2007b, 2012) have all sought to develop Indigenous research methodologies which place Indigenous people and their knowledge at the centre of research while emphasising that new contributions to academic research can be made through including Indigenous epistemologies and knowledge.

In his seminal 1997 paper, 'Internationalisation of an Indigenous anti-colonial cultural critique of research methodologies: a guide to Indigenist research methodology and its principles', Rigney proposed the need for an Indigenist research methodology. Rigney argues that research conducted by Australian academics on Indigenous Australians has reflected not only the fundamentally racist nature of Australian society but has also that "[R]esearch methodologies and protocols in knowledge construction ... is the way the colonizers constructed it and as a result a racialized research industry still prevails in Australia." This has meant that Indigenous life, values and knowledge have been interpreted through 'colonial' eyes, which are blind not only to "Indigenous traditions and concerns" but also have resulted in "my people's minds, intellect, knowledge, histories and experiences" being made "irrelevant" (1997, p. 114).

Martin (2008) also asserts that there are and have been distinct ideological patterns or approaches to research into Indigenous people undertaken by colonial researchers. Perhaps the most heinous is the denial of humanity. This denial involves treating the Indigenous person or people as object rather than subject. This attitude extends to their belongings, including their bodies, and the belief that loss can be recompensed through payment/gifts of more 'valuable' colonial artefacts and ideas, for example, blankets or axes (p. 26). She cites Hart and Whatman (1998) who write that these attitudes, first demonstrated with the first colonial landings, have persisted and expanded into the present into five sets of belief or patterns:

A first belief is that only non-Indigenous researchers are capable of 'good' research. This gives rise to a second belief, that it is the right of non-Indigenous researchers to research Indigenous *People* or Indigenous communities to reveal our primitivism, which is the third belief. A fourth belief judges Indigenous knowledge as public and therefore accessible which gives rise to a fifth belief that researchers have a right to exploit Indigenous Australians and own status and self-esteem through such research (p. 26).

Martin (2008, p. 29) agrees that there has been a great deal of work done by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous universities and research organisations such as the Australian Institute of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the University of South Australia. However, she believes that while this work represented a move "from 'on' or 'about' Indigenous People, to research 'with' Indigenous *People* and/or

Communities by Indigenous or non-Indigenous researchers” nevertheless, “...the theories used to interpret and represent us remained unchallenged ...[I]n essence, Indigenous research remains unchanged as an instrument of colonialism, when entrenched in non-Indigenous worldviews, theories, beliefs, values and agendas” (Ibid.).

For this reason, Rigney asserts that Indigenous academics now want to conduct their own research in a way that “contribute[s] to the self-determination and liberation struggles as defined and controlled by their communities” (1997, p. 109). Further, in the foreword to the second edition of her book, Linda Tuhiwai Smith notes that in the intervening years between the publication of the first edition of her book in 1999 and the second edition in 2012, the acceptance of Indigenous rights and research methodologies has changed. While there was evidence of research on Indigenous matters conducted by Indigenous researchers in 1999, she states that “[I]n recent years much more is being published that explicitly focuses on Indigenous research methodologies, Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous practices increasingly these studies are written by Indigenous scholars” (2012, p. xiii). This trend is also reflected in the way that Indigenous Studies has “become a clear strand of study in higher education (Ibid.).

The work done by Smith and Rigney has been particularly important in driving the debate on the development of Indigenous research methodologies. Smith, in particular, has been influential in helping Indigenous researchers understand that research methodology is a “site of struggle” in which “indigenous self-determination, indigenous rights and sovereignty” and “a complementary indigenous research agenda” are vitally connected for achieving “healing, reconciliation and development” (Smith 2012, p. xiii). Rigney, first raised the importance of this relationship in 1997 when he argued that research on Indigenous issues be undertaken by Indigenous researchers and that it was essentially a political activity aimed at challenging the colonial constructions of knowledge and research being conducted by non-Indigenous researchers. In developing what he terms “Indigenist research methodologies” he was working from a position that sees Indigenous Australians as living in a country with a colonial history and which continues to be essentially a racist society (1997, p. 111). He sought to assist Indigenist theorists and practitioners to determine what might be an appropriate response to de-legitimate racist oppression in research and shift to a more empowering and self-determining outcome (p.110). Rigney also argues that in treating Indigenous peoples and culture as objects of classification, non-Indigenous researchers were using the implicit social status and

influence of universities to prop the dominant colonial hegemony and its values to racialise Indigenist Australians. This in itself is a political act. As Rigney asserts: “[W]e were racialized in order to exert power over us” (p. 112).

Rigney includes three “fundamental and inter-related principles” in his conception of Indigenist research:

- (i) **resistance** as the emancipatory imperative in Indigenist research;
- (ii) **political integrity** in Indigenous research;
- (iii) **privileging Indigenous voices** in Indigenist research

(1997, p. 118, bold emphasis in original).

‘Resistance’ refers to uncovering racist oppression which has occurred to Indigenous Australians since white invasion and continues to this day. In Rigney’s terms,

it is research which attempts to support the personal, community, cultural and political struggles of Indigenous Australians to carve out a way of being for ourselves in Australia in which there is healing from the past oppressions and cultural freedom in the future (1997, p. 118).

‘Political integrity’ refers to his position that “Indigenous Australians have to set their own political agenda for liberation” and that “to the extent that research contributes to that agenda, it must be undertaken by Indigenous Australians”. Through this process research is taken into Indigenous Australian communities and it makes the researcher responsible both to them and to the struggle for self-determination (pp. 118-119). Rigney argues that by “privileging Indigenous voices” Indigenist research focuses “on the lived, historical experiences, ideas, traditions, dreams, interests, aspirations and struggles of Indigenous Australians” (p. 119).

Importantly, in this paper Rigney does not reject either non-Indigenous theories or the participation of Indigenous researchers in the process for Indigenous Australians achieving self-determination. Indeed, he recognises that Indigenist research builds on the insights and principles of research concerned with emancipation and liberation, particularly the work done by feminists such as Patti Lather and Catherine Waldby (1997, p. 117). Further, he also acknowledges that Indigenous researchers are not necessarily free of colonial hegemony (colonial internalisation) or that being Indigenous will ensure better research. However, he does believe that Indigenous Australian researchers are

more likely to be more aware and respectful of each other's cultural traditions and to be more responsible to their communities. He also asserts that "it is more politically appropriate that Indigenous Australians speak through Indigenous researchers" (p. 119).

(ii) Working 'Alongside'

The political nature of research and its role in decolonisation is also emphasised by New Zealand scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith whose book *Decolonizing methodologies: research and Indigenous People* (2012) has been influential in informing research done by Indigenous researchers. She believes that research conducted by Maori scholars and researchers can contribute to five significant liberating and emancipatory outcomes for Maori people, including: the development of a critical consciousness which recognises the power and danger of colonial internalisation; privileging Maori epistemologies in order to help Maori reimagine the world in their terms; bringing together strategies and ideas – both Maori and non-Maori – and using them for positive Maori outcomes; using research to destabilise dominant colonial practices; and, using research and knowledge to highlight underlying codes of imperialism and power relations (p. 201).

These principles are the basis of Kaupapa Maori research that reminds Maori who reject all forms of research as being fundamentally another form of colonial oppression, that it can have great value if the research is conducted by Maori in a way that respects Maori culture and benefits Maori communities and life (Smith 2012, p. 185). She notes that properly conducted Kaupapa research must seriously address "cultural ground rules of respect, of working with communities, of sharing process and knowledge". Importantly it should also incorporate processes such as networking, community consultations and the formation of consultative groups consisting of representatives from different groups affected by the outcomes of the research (p. 193).

The kind of approach to Indigenous research described by Rigney and Smith was also applied by Arbon and Rigney (2014) when they engaged in an Indigenous climate change project in Arabunna Country. Their research, which involved Indigenous researchers from other parts of Australia as well as non-Indigenous researchers, used Indigenous research protocols and guidelines which were 'appropriate' and 'respectful' and which "recognized diversity and the dispersal of Arabunna people today, honored relationships, and acknowledged that these were central to Arabunna worldview, spirituality and ceremony". All forms of communication were used – oral, textual and pictorial – and

there was frequent dialogue in one-one-one meetings and workshops which “brought knowledges together and new understandings for all involved” (Arbon & Rigney 2014, p. 489). The final research findings were validated by the Arabunna people and their contribution acknowledged (ibid).

Karen Martin (2003, 2008) is a Noonuccal woman from Minjerripah (North Stradbroke Island) whose ancestral ties are in Quandamooopah land and who placed her ancestral Quandamooopah ontology at the centre of the theoretical framework for her important 2008 work *Please knock before you enter. Aboriginal regulation of Outsiders and the implications for researchers*. Her work with Burungu, Kuku-Yalanji people involved creating listening and learning to their stories as well as self-reflection on her own Ways of Knowing to develop research protocols that were appropriate and acceptable to Burungu, Kuku-Yalanji people as well as the principles of Indigenist research methodologies. Through the process of listening, waiting and immersion in her own Ways of Knowing she learned how to regulate her own behaviour to move from being an ‘Outsider’ “coming amongst” the Burungu, Kuku-Yalanji people to “coming alongside” them (2008, p. 127). Included in her Ways of Knowing were her research principles which honor and reflect her Quandamooopah ontology;

- Recognition of our worldviews, our knowledges and our realities as distinctive and vital to our existence and survival
- Honouring our social mores as essential processes through which we live, learn and situate ourselves as Aboriginal people in our own lands and when in the lands of other Aboriginal people
- Emphasis of social, historical and political contexts which shape our experiences, lives, positions and futures
- Privileging the voices, experiences and lives of Aboriginal people and Aboriginal lands
- Identifying and redressing issues of importance for us (2003, p. 205).

She notes in *Knock before you enter* (2008) that

[F]or Aboriginal *People*, being in someone else’s Country is akin to visiting them in their homes and requires the same level of respect. It is essential, and non-negotiable that to ‘come amongst’ the Burungu, Kuku-Yalanji Entities is not only to learn about them, but equally so they could learn about me (Ibid.).

Her experience also led to her progressing from being *waybal* (being known about) to *jarwon* (being known) (2008, p. 127).

The research methodology developed by Martin reflects her journey with the Burungu, Kuku-Yalanji and led to her identifying seven rules which she presented to the Burungu, Kuku-Yalanji in which she promised to conduct culturally safe and culturally respectful researcher behaviour. In summary, her rules for culturally safe and respectful research promised to:

- Respect Aboriginal land: also encompassing respect for Waterways, Animals, Plants and Skies
- Respect Aboriginal Laws: to give honour to the Aboriginal Elders as keepers of Ancestral laws
- Respect Aboriginal Elders: as the ultimate authority
- Respect Aboriginal culture: as Aboriginal Ways of Knowing, Ways of Being and Ways of Doing
- Respect Aboriginal Community: acknowledging this as a form of relatedness amongst Aboriginal people
- Respect Aboriginal families: respecting the autonomy and authority of families
- Respect Aboriginal futures: acknowledging relatedness of past and present for forming a future and accepting responsibility for this relatedness (2008, p.131).

(iii) Working ‘Alongside’ and ‘Permission to Enter’: The Challenge for Non-Indigenous Researchers

As already briefly discussed above, non-Indigenous researchers face many challenges when working with Indigenous Australians. Carnes (2011a), who describes herself as a “critical ally” (p. 14), writes when starting out as a researcher involved in Indigenous issues she felt that using “[p]urely Western epistemologies did not seem respectful and, as a white person, I could not morally adopt Indigenous Research Methods” (p. 15). She has come some way in resolving this dilemma by privileging Indigenous research methodologies and theories as well as being mindful of what she can learn from theories such as standpoint theory, whiteness, power and privilege, to reach a position of becoming

an “allied activist” (p. 15). She has developed a series of questions that help to guide her allied activist standpoint and that she asks herself each time she engages in research relating to Indigenous issues:

- How has colonial history impacted on sovereign First Nations people?
- How can the sovereignty of First Nations people be respected?
- What can be learned from listening to First Nations people?
- How can I be sure that I am not making things worse for First Nations people?
- Am I following an agenda of importance to First Nations people?
- Do I have permission from the right people? (Carnes 2011a, p. 20).

While Carnes concedes that these questions may be dismissed as “mere utopia” by some Indigenous researchers and people, they at least give her a standpoint from which to operate (p. 20).

Land (2015) adds several other important questions for the non-Indigenous person seeking to work alongside Indigenous Australians:

- Where are you from?
- What is your culture?
- What happened to the Aboriginal people where you now live?
- How are you positioned in relation to colonialism?
- How are your life and your habits shaped by privilege?
- Why are you interested in being supportive to Aboriginal people?
- How do you know you are emerging toward non-racism?
- Do you want something in exchange for work as an ally?
- What are the ethical considerations in ally work? (p. 163).

Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers who work alongside Indigenous people and communities all emphasise the importance of listening when engaging in research. Martin (2003) writes that: “Until recent times, research conducted on Aboriginal lands was done so without permission, consultation or involvement of Aboriginal people ... To be seen, but not asked, heard nor respected” (p. 203). Non-Indigenous researcher Rose Carnes (2011b) uses the term ‘white noise’ to refer to “the interference created by dominant colonial-centric world views and practices that leads to fuzzy, indistinct

reception of Indigenous voices by non-Indigenous voices” (p. 171). Carnes suggests that it is this problem of ‘white noise’ that leads to the kinds of problems raised by Martin (2003, p. 201). Research done by social workers Bennett et al. (2011a) also concluded that “strong, purposeful, and respectful listening skills” were essential if they are to create good relationships with their clients. As one of the non-Indigenous social workers in their sample responded: “The best way to communicate with Aboriginal people is to keep your mouth shut ... listen to what people are saying” (p. 28).

As I have already briefly discussed earlier in this work and in my previously submitted exegesis, listening has been an important principle in my approach to teaching. This was in large part inspired by the work of French feminist Luce Irigaray (2006) who argued that “[T]eaching not only consists in speaking, but in being capable of remaining silent too, of withdrawing in order to let the other be, become and discover his or her path, his or her language” (chap. 20. Kindle location 3665 of 4400). Further, for Irigaray, ‘listening to’ is an important aspect of self-reflexivity because if we listen to our students we indicate to them that the

truth of each one crosses the path of the other, and that the matter then is both one of opening to the other, of listening to his or her truth, and of being faithful to one's own path, one's own truth (ibid.).

Self-reflexivity has also been identified by Carnes (2011b), Bennett et al. (2011a) and Land (2015) as a significant element in establishing good relationships with Indigenous Australians when conducting research. Land states that there is a vital intersection between critical self-reflection and public political work (2015, p. 165). Carnes notes that there are some Indigenous researchers, such as Rigney (1997), who think research on Indigenous matters should only be done by Indigenous people, however, as a non-Indigenous person engaged in such research, and for whom it is impossible to “leave her whiteness at the gate” as she enters into a research project involving Indigenous matters, the best she can do is to consider how she might minimise the impact of her white position of privilege to listen with greater clarity and openness (2011b, p. 173).

Bennett et al. (2011a) state that for social workers, a fundamental beginning point is to understand “how different aspects of their personal and cultural identities impact on their practice with Aboriginal people”. Indeed, they argue that “the development of critical

self-awareness is a form of decolonization” through which they recognise Australia’s history of colonisation and its continuance in the present (p. 25).

It takes time to form trust and relationships with Indigenous communities and this will only occur after the researcher has taken time to develop the skills of ‘listening to’ and self-reflexivity (Bennett et al. 2011a, p. 27; Carnes 2011b, p. 176). Carnes (2011b) warns that one trap that the non-Indigenous researcher can fall into is to focus on the issues or problems that they wish to solve, forgetting that only they may think their agenda is more important than that of the Indigenous community they are researching. “It can be a shock to system when working in a different world view where the researcher is no more or less valued than anyone else” (2011b, p. 176).

In hindsight, I realise that I should have contacted Dr Tyson Yunkaporta early on in my project and discussed with him in far greater detail about how I hoped to use the *8-Ways Learning* model, rather than seeking his permission at the last moment. I will never make that mistake again. I had attempted to make early contact with Dr Yunkaporta with no avail until I finally thought of using Linked In. I had a long telephone conversation with Dr Yunkaporta and he assisted me to obtain permission to use the *8-Ways Learning* model from Alan Hall, an Elder and representative the Regional Aboriginal Education Team of Western New South Wales who worked with Dr Yunkaporta in developing the model. Clearly, it would have been better if this conversation had occurred at the beginning of the process of developing the artefact.

Non-Indigenous academic Dr Clare Land’s (2015) work on the challenges of non-Indigenous people working as critical allies of Indigenous Australians seeking political and cultural change also offers very important insights into ‘working with’ and ‘alongside’. She identifies herself as a long-term critical ally and activist supporting Aboriginal campaigns on civil rights who has learned that to work with Indigenous Australians she must undertake critical self-reflection, commit to being prepared to public political action, and to do what she describes as “personal material work” to change the shape of her life (p. 233). She refers to Indigenous academic Gary Foley who said that a common question he is asked by other Indigenous Australians is: “Why does it often seem that some of our best white friends behave like our worst enemies?” (Land 2015 p. 7). According to Land, Foley believes that this occurs because of the way that non-Indigenous people relate to Indigenous people: ‘patronizing’ and ‘paternalistic’ and

failing to understand the importance of giving control of Aboriginal affairs to Aboriginal people (p. 7).

The importance of knowing who your local Indigenous people are and what has happened to them is also raised as an important issue by Land. She quotes Gary Foley who states:

How many people here and now know *who* the Koorie mob was who lived in the land that they are now, where you live? And it's not just a question of knowing, 'OK the Wurundjeri' or somebody, it's not just a question of knowing who they *were*, it's a question of, what happened to them? What do you know about what happened to the people who lived on the place that you live on now? And, you know, as you gain a sense of that, you gain a sense of just how enormous your own personal ignorance is (cited in Land 2015, p. 182)

As I have already noted, I was inspired to learn more about the Wurundjeri and Coranderrk because several of my students were Wurundjeri and had forebears who lived on Coranderrk. For this reason, and because of my commitment to Indigenous inclusion in my curricula, I linked information about the Wurundjeri and Coranderrk to my Media Studies websites and started recording Coranderrk stories at their request with Aunty Dot Peters and Uncle Juby Wandin. This all led to the subsequent development of the *One Country: Different Voices* website.

The strategy to include links and interactions such as the Wiki on the *One Country: Different Voices* website was also intended in part to help non-Indigenous teachers and students to find out more about their local Indigenous community through discussions with local Indigenous students. It was also intended to help them to challenge their taken-for-granted colonialist beliefs and attitudes. This was informed by standpoint theory which Nakata describes as “a method of inquiry... a way of theorizing knowledge from a particular and interested position” (Nakata 2007, p. 215). Feminist Sandra Harding (1995), writing about the marginalised position of women, describes the concept of standpoint by saying that it uses “experiences of the marginalized to generate critical questions about the lives of marginalized people and of those in the dominant group, as well as about the systematic structural and symbolic relations between them” (p. 128).

Nakata's assertion (2004b, p. 5) that standpoint creates a starting point to challenge the hegemony of white privilege and entitlement seemed both appropriate and logical, particularly in terms of his belief in the advantages offered by dialogue between

Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics to develop better understanding for not only the need for Indigenist research theories, but also about their advantage to the broader research community. In the case of *One Country: Different Voices* I was excited by the potential of the Wiki to act as space where discussion could occur between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and help non-Indigenous teachers to begin to learn from Wiki postings by Indigenous students on topics such as their local Indigenous community. It could also facilitate discussion about issues such as racism in the classroom to help their non-Indigenous classmates begin to understand where dominant epistemologies about racism influence their attitudes and understanding.

The most important aspect of the non-Indigenous scholar's path to acceptance by the local Indigenous community is to work closely with them, particularly if one is to avoid situations such as that described by Smallwood (2015, p. 23) when Mother Theresa contacted Father Ted Kennedy after she visited Redfern to say that she was interested in opening a convent there if Cardinal Freeman approved it. Kennedy was shocked that she did not first seek permission from the Indigenous Australians who owned the land on which Redfern is located or wait for an invitation from local Indigenous Australians. Unlike Mother Teresa, I was invited and supported by members of Healesville's Wurundjeri community to record their Coranderrk stories, and, as I noted above in Section 2, I also worked closely with Indigenous community members to co-author a book for the Swinburne University academic community to highlight the importance of Indigenous inclusion in their curricula. Through these means I began to progress down a path which I hoped would lead to what Kovach (2009) terms new and "mutual forms of dialogue, research, theory and action" (p. 12).

One element of this was to seek permission from Aunty Joy Wandin Murphy, a Wurundjeri Elder who was at that time an Adjunct Professor with Swinburne University, to include her recorded *Welcome to Country* on the *One Country: Different Voices* website. This seemed appropriate as the *One Country: Different Voices* website found its genesis in the Lilydale Media Studies subject websites which also included, with her permission, Wandin Murphy's *Welcome to Country*.

Bodkin-Andrews et al. (2016) note that *Welcome to Country* ceremonies do not act simply as a kind of 'hello' but rather act to make visible to non-Indigenous Australians "a process of Indigenous connection and reconnection, a coming together that establishes and

maintains a strong sense of relationship and responsibility to the lands, and the custodians of the lands” (p. 482). They also warn that misuse of the Welcome to Country can also be seen by Indigenous Australians as a continuation of colonial discourses “that speak more to the underpinnings of non-Indigenous people than to the true nature of Welcome to Country ceremonies” (Ibid.). In discussion with Wandin-Murphy, the inclusion of the Wurundjeri Welcome to Country on the website was conceived of as acting as part of a process of sharing stories about local Indigenous people sharing their stories about their family connections with Coranderrk. Both Lilydale and Coranderrk are in Wurundjeri Country.

Research conducted by Bodkin-Andrews et al. (2013, p. 237) found that while some Indigenous Australian students can and do disengage from schooling because of racism and low academic self-esteem, this can be remedied through positive and culturally sensitive teaching and providing a more culturally supportive environment for Indigenous students. It must also involve an active attack on racism and more carefully identifying the “support agents of resiliency” for Indigenous Australian students. In creating *One Country: Different Voices* I conceived it as one means of building bridges between non-Indigenous teachers and students and Indigenous Australians. I was very excited when I encounter Dr Yunkaporta’s *8-Ways Learning* because it offers such a powerful and holistic approach to learning. I felt that if it offered Indigenous students such a positive way of learning about their culture then perhaps it could also act in that way for non-Indigenous teachers and students, particularly in terms of helping them to recognise and address their position of privilege in a white colonial society. By providing them with links to examples of Indigenous knowledge, papers that discuss Indigenous issues written by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics, and a Wiki forum where they could discuss problems such as racism and learn more about their local Indigenous community, they would have their eyes opened and become more informed.

When I first conceived of the *One Country: Different Voices* website it was primarily intended to act as a teaching and learning resource for students attending Swinburne University’s Lilydale campus. It includes interviews with local Indigenous people, particularly those who were descendants of Indigenous people sent to Coranderrk, as well as links to local Indigenous history (for example, a link to an ABC radio documentary in which Clare Wright looks at the story behind a photograph of Wurundjeri leader William Barak taken at Coranderrk station in and community links

(for example, the Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place which focuses on Indigenous communities in the Melbourne Eastern Metropolitan Region).

When I first encountered the *8-Ways Learning* model I felt that it was an excellent teaching and learning model which could be used in any social studies learning context. Its holistic approach to learning and the concepts of *Community Links*, *Land Links*, *Symbols* and *Images*, etc. could be fruitfully applied to learning about any culture - Indigenous or non-Indigenous – and the questions that the *8-Ways Learning* concepts addressed are just as important for any child growing up in a changing culture. Most importantly, I felt that it offered a wonderful opportunity to learn from Indigenous Australian cultures.

One advantage of using the internet as a teaching resource is that it can draw on a wide range of information and voices, and be adapted and modified as required. The *One Country: Different Voices* website is a living text and has content that be changed and modified as new, better and more culturally appropriate information becomes available. One of its strengths is that it shows how many diverse Indigenous cultures exist in Australia.

Through *One Country: Different Voices* I hoped to achieve an outcome similar that experienced by Aberdeen et al. (2013) who found in their survey of a foundation Indigenous Studies subject offered by Sunshine Coast University replaced false beliefs about the Indigenous Australian experience with knowledge. Aberdeen et al. (2013) found that false beliefs held by students before taking the subject included misapprehensions that most Indigenous Australia receive welfare payments, racial discrimination works in favour of Indigenous Australians and Aboriginal children were better off being stolen from their families. Further, they found that non-Indigenous students taking the subject expressed greater commitment to social injustice and reconciliation and that Indigenous Australians should be recognised as the original owners of the land (pp. 42-45). However, just as Aberdeen et al. found, while their university was originally committed to offering their subject as a mandatory subject, this support has waned with the university subject accrediting committee suggesting that its commitment to Indigenous inclusion is being met in a range of subjects which include “one or two Indigenous-authored articles, a single guest lecture, the involvement of a staff member who identifies as Indigenous regardless of the actual expertise and content of

that person's teaching area" (2013, p. 50). Unfortunately, now that I have retired from teaching at Swinburne University of Technology and due to the closure of its Lilydale campus, there are no current plans for the *One Country: Different Voices* website to be used by Swinburne undergraduate students. However, the site is linked through Swinburne University's Indigenous Knowledge Hub.

In the next section, I will make some final comments about the experience of revisiting my originally submitted exegesis and addressing and reflecting upon the issues that the examiners asked me to also consider.

Conclusion

The experience of revisiting my originally submitted exegesis and addressing issues that examiners felt I that I should also consider has been both sobering and enlightening. Like Carnes (2011b) I have found it difficult to leave my whiteness at the garden gate before embarking on work relating to Indigenous Australian issues and I am daily challenged to remind myself that I am a member of the dominant colonial hegemony.

It has been enlightening to review how attitudes to non-Indigenous academics engaging in Indigenous Australian research have changed since I was involved in 1999 in co-authoring *Indigenous inclusion in curriculum* and that seeking permission to enter is vital and courteous. I mistakenly thought that I was morally prepared to work with Indigenous Australians but now I know I need to learn a great deal more.

Reading the work of Indigenous Australian scholars such as Karen Martin, Bronwyn Fredericks, Lester Irabinna Rigney, and Aileen Moreton-Robinson, has helped me understand the burden Indigenous Australians have experienced as colonised and marginalised people in their own land. I think I have a better understanding of the anger that many Indigenous Australians feel.

In particular, I now understand that if I am to continue to work on developing the *One Country: Different Voices* website, making it more relevant and culturally-appropriate, I must do so with the guidance and partnership of Indigenous Australian teachers and community members.

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