

**School of Media, Creative Arts and Social Inquiry
Faculty of Humanities**

**Connecting the Dots: Case Studies into the 'Invisible
Presence' of Aboriginal People Living in Victoria**

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To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement is made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

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ABSTRACT

Aboriginal Victorians have been rendered as an ‘invisible presence’ by the various discourses of race and culture that emerged in 19th-century forms of colonialism, which remain influential today. This thesis demonstrates how (white) belonging is constructed within national narratives by drawing on case study analyses of contemporary Victoria’s central and western goldfields districts, and of Aboriginal Victorian participation in Australian (Rules) Football. Semi-structured interviews were conducted across two case studies, with 28 Aboriginal participants and four non-Aboriginal participants. Interviews were analysed using a grounded theory framework, which prioritises culturally respectful and transparent research by positioning the research around participant testimony rather than the 19th-century colonial research conventions that are still influential and popular today. Working within critical theory, this thesis draws on race and settler colonialism to position the invisible presence of Aboriginal people within the ‘(white) settler colonial psyche’. A central feature of the (white) settler colonial psyche is the maintenance of settler sovereignty, as imagined through (white) belonging. Previous research has focused on areas of Australia that have a higher population of Aboriginal people who exist in a ‘visible’ and ‘authentic’ space. The focus is shifted in this thesis to the intersection between Victorian Aboriginal communities and contemporary processes of colonisation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABS – Australian Bureau of Statistics

AFL – Australian Football League

AHRC – Australian Human Rights Commission

ANA – Australian Natives Association

ATSI – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

CaLD – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

CRT – Critical race theory

NAIDOC – National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Observance Committee

SANFL – South Australian Football League

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

VFL – Victorian Football League

WAFL – Western Australian Football League

KEY TERMS

Aboriginal – In Latin the term means ‘from the beginning’. The term will be used in this thesis when referring to First Nations people from mainland Australia (including Tasmania), where it is not appropriate to use a specific tribal or language name. Where known, this thesis will refer to the specific tribal or language name of a peoples. See figure 3 for the VACL Aboriginal language map of Victoria for a more detailed understanding of the tribal and language boundaries in contemporary Victoria.

Gubba – An Aboriginal-English term for a non-Aboriginal person.

Indigenous – The term comes from the Latin word, *indigena*, meaning native. The term is used to describe plants, animals and people that are native to an area. This term reflects the long period of Australia’s history, prior to 1967, when First Nations Australians were legally defined as part of the flora and fauna. Whilst I acknowledge that neither term appropriately reflects cultural diversity, nationhood or the complex and dynamic histories of Aboriginal people, the term Aboriginal is considered the more culturally respectful.

Torres Strait Islander – A term which refers to the First Peoples of the Torres Strait Islands, which are a part of contemporary Queensland, Australia. The term is used to mark the distinct cultural attributes which distinguishes them from Aboriginal people from mainland Australia.

Uncle/Auntie – The corresponding terms, ‘Auntie’ and ‘Uncle’ are used as a mark of respect for Aboriginal elders. The term reflects the familiar nature of the relationships that may exist between Aboriginal people.

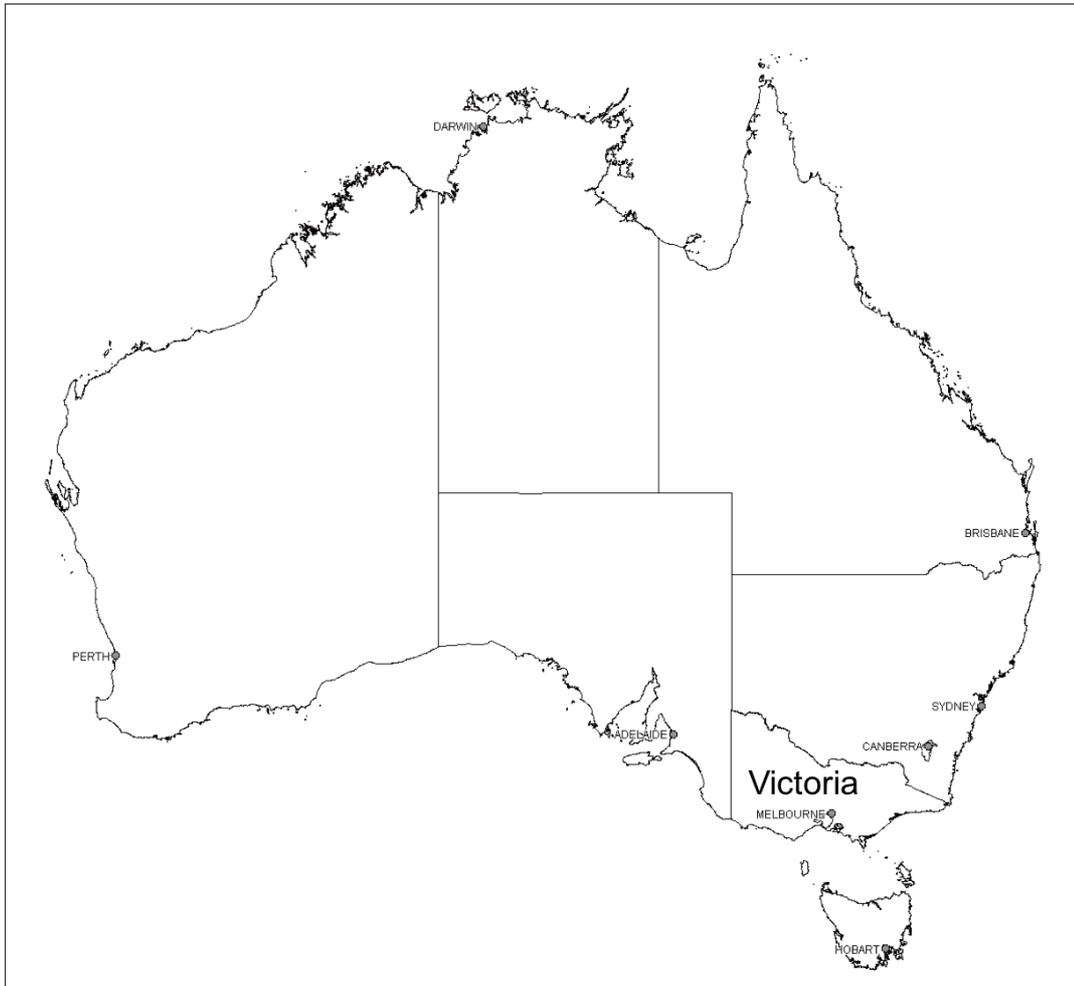


Figure 1: Basic outline map of Australia with capital cities, © University of Melbourne 2001.
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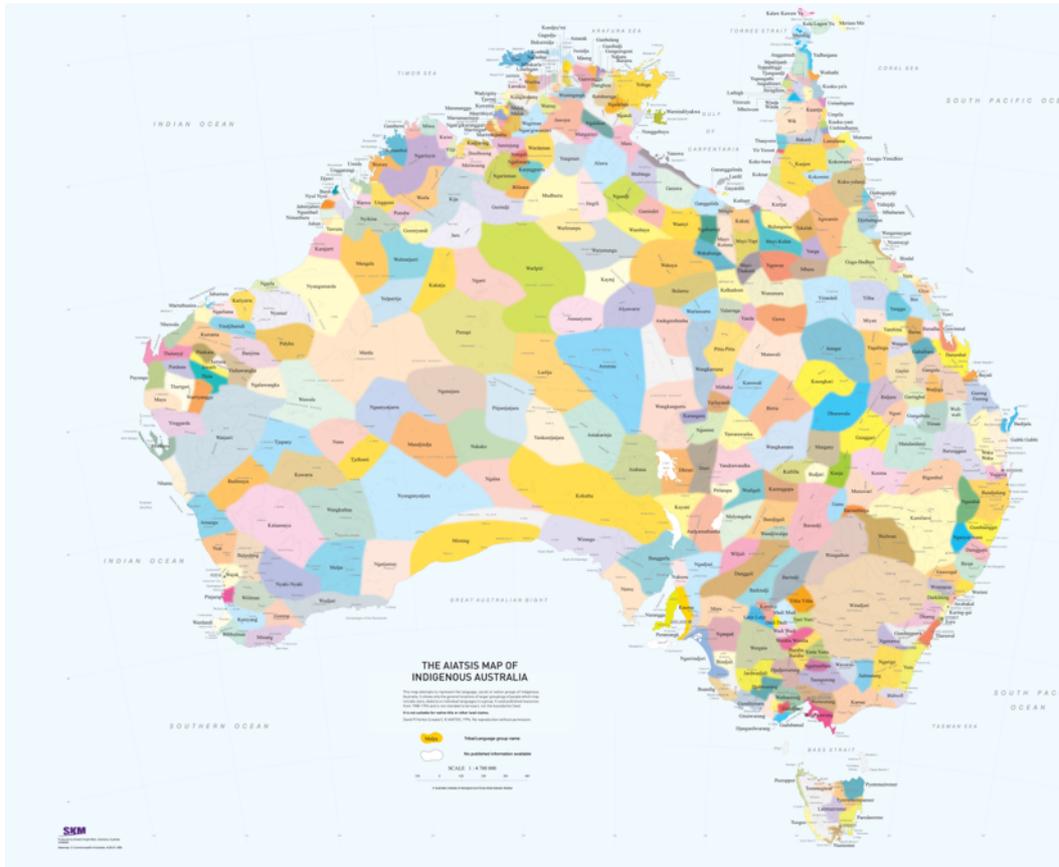


Figure 2: AIATSIS map of Indigenous Australia, David R Horton (creator), © Aboriginal Studies Press, AIATSIS, and Auslig/Sinclair, Knight, Merz, 1996

This map attempts to represent the language, social or nation groups of Aboriginal Australia. It shows only the general locations of larger groupings of people which may include clans, dialects or individual languages in a group. It used published resources from 1988-1994 and is not intended to be exact, nor the boundaries fixed. It is not suitable for native title or other land claims. David R Horton (creator), © AIATSIS, 1996. No reproduction without permission. To purchase a print version visit: www.aiatsis.ashop.com.au/

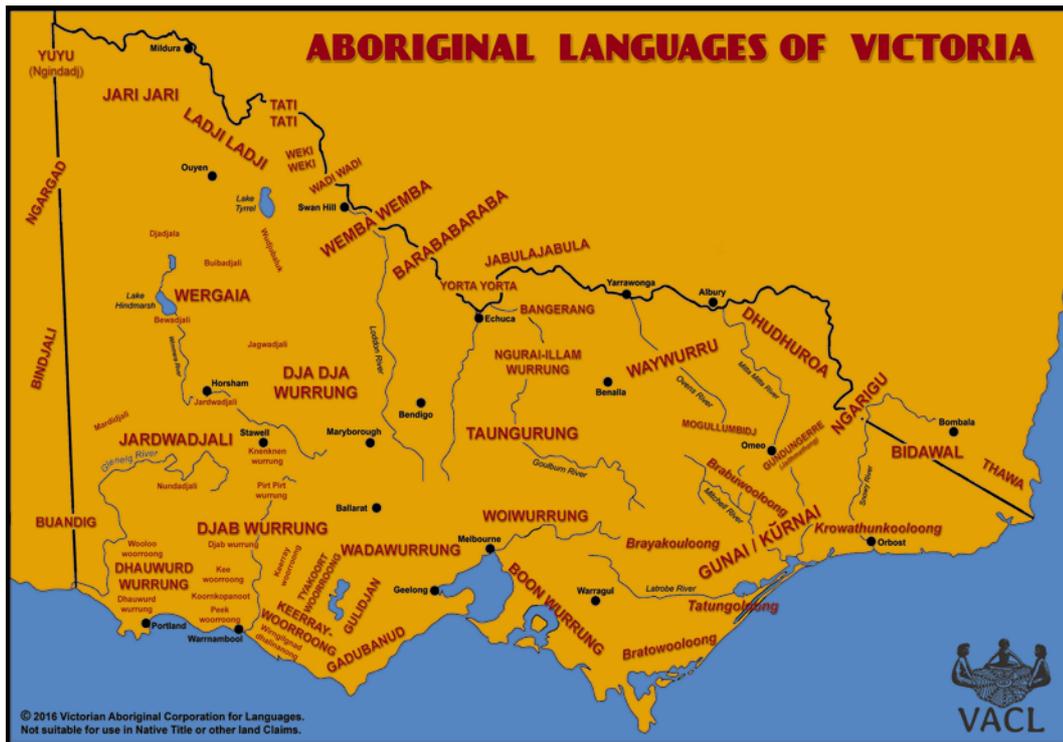


Figure 3: VACL Aboriginal language map of Victoria, Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, © 2016

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Bunjil Bless

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PREFACE

The National Gallery of Victoria

I have walked past the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) on St Kilda Road in Melbourne (the State's capital), many times as an adult. A sense of safety and familiarity envelops me; the water cascading down the glass entrance to the bluestone fountain walls seem to both barricade the Gallery and invite me in. I was a small child when I first visited the iconic gallery space on an outing with my parents. To me it was majestic. My mum and stepdad took me to see the Australian fine art collection at the NGV sometime in the early 1990s when I was five or six years old. At the time, it was an exciting and much anticipated family day trip. Now I realise that it was probably all we could afford to do, as the permanent collections at the NGV were free to the public. Mum and stepdad took us to the NGV to teach us about fine art. As parents, they helped us to interpret and understand the works we marvelled at.

I can still vividly remember this visit and how safe and comfortable I felt surrounded by the landscape paintings. These landscapes were the backdrops of my own country upbringing. I remember one artwork in particular. In my mind, I can see my mum and I sitting in front of a giant three-panelled painting. With its melancholic smoky hue, it seemed at once familiar, romantic and mournful. As we sat looking at the canvas my mother encouraged me to think about what the painting meant and who the people in it were. I eagerly made up a story. I loved that painting, not just for what it represented to me as a child (a rare day out with the family and an easy bond between my mother and me), but because of the familiar backdrop — the Australian bushland. This painting, Frederick McCubbin's 'The Pioneer',¹ completed in 1904, is a triptych that tells the stories of the pioneer and his wife, the land and the birth of a nation (Clark, 2006; Crotty, 2007; DiMuzio, 2010; Rainbird, 2003).

When I think about this first visit to the NGV, a number of things stand out for me. I now realise that my childhood, as reflected through this experience, is not representative of a stereotypical Australian childhood where summer days are spent at the beach building sandcastles and playing barefoot cricket. Our family didn't do the things that other families seemed to do; we didn't go to the zoo, or holiday at the water's

¹ For a digital record of the painting see:
<http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/work/5990/>

edge. At the time, I craved the normalcy that these experiences symbolised for me. Without the envy that I felt towards other families I probably wouldn't have grappled with such strong colonial themes as those explored within this thesis. Australia's colonial history has been told to me through the ravaged bush, the celebrated gallery and museum space and, as I come to discuss, through the Victorian gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football.²

Now when I look at 'The Pioneer' (I have my own framed print) I am conflicted over what drew me to it in the first place. As a child, the sheer size (it stands at almost two and a half metres by three metres) is probably enough of an explanation, but now it exemplifies the role that representations of colonial landscapes play in securing standardised national myths as well as the erasure of Aboriginal sovereignty from Australian national identity and collective memory (Banivanua Mar, 2012). Rather than thinking about the pioneer man who worked hard to build a home for his wife and unborn child, I see a man who struck a claim for the land with his body, a man who laboured over that plot again and again until it barely resembled the place it was before his time. I think of how this painting represents settler Australian sovereignty and possession. I think of John Locke's labour theory of property ownership (2006), which argues that property ownership is determined by the exertion of labour upon natural resources. I think of the people whose land this (fictitious) pioneer took possession of, and I wonder to what lengths he went in order to stake his claim. I contemplate most of all the final panel where the pioneer man looks over the grave of his wife, her death signalling an end to the frontier and the birth of a nation.

McCubbin's triptych is a celebrated and iconic part of Australia's national story. The story it paints is familiar and iconographic to many Australians, and not just those who grew up in the bush like me. Similar stories have been etched into settler Australian memory through folk stories and local histories, through literature and paintings, through poetry and song. It is one inherently tied to land possession — through squatting, pastoral leases, the gold rush and various mapping expeditions — the Australian national story is quite literally about a land grab on a national scale

² Drawing on the work of Chris Hallinan and Barry Judd (2009), Judd and Tim Butcher (2016) and Judd (2018), this thesis uses the term, Australian (Rules) Football when referring to the Australian game of Australian Rules football. The bracketed term *Rules* has been used to acknowledge that Australian Rules football is *the* Australian game derived from the Aboriginal pastime *Marngrook*. It is considered as the unofficial Australian Football as the only code of football invented in Australia rather than imported from overseas (i.e. soccer, rugby league and rugby union).

(Boucher & Russell, 2015). What of Australia's First People whose country 'we' took possession of? What of their role in Australia's settler history?

This thesis

Despite the fact that Australia celebrates itself as an egalitarian 'classless' society (McGregor, 2001; Veracini, 2007), where migrants have the opportunity (perhaps for the first time) to make some real money, labels are important. To say you can trace your ancestry back to the First Fleet — that you are of proud convict stock — or that your family were amongst the first to strike it lucky on one of the rich goldfields, means something. It means something to have a family farm, to know that your blood and sweat has mixed with the soil for five or six generations. It means you are truly Australian. In comparison, my family are newly immigrated. I didn't have that proud family history the other kids prided themselves on. We label people and put them into categories of race, class, income bracket, education and geography. If you come from the country you are old-fashioned, racist and conservative, if you come from the city you are educated, cultured and privileged. If you are white you are accepted, if you are non-white you are not.³ I think that such broad generalisations and assumptions are indicative of our need to belong. Belonging is a central theme to this thesis and is an important part of Australia's national identity, as well as to the narratives that nationalist discourses (Anderson, 2006; Hage, 1999, 2003) construct and celebrate. Within this, belonging is central to the settler colonial psyche (these terms are introduced in chapter one).

Australian knowledge production continues to be held captive to the settler colonial project (Buckley, 2005; Russell, 2005) from which it emerged. Such knowledge is constructed around possession and must be represented transparently (J. Anderson & Koch, 2003), as operating within a western epistemological framework. Because of this there are two necessary conditions of conducting culturally respectful research: (1) to consider the position from which the research emanates, and (2) to take seriously the motivations, expectations and assumptions that have the potential to shape research findings (Finlay, 2002; Watt, 2007). As a non-Aboriginal Australian conducting research cross-culturally, I have also found it necessary to reflect on the

³ In this context the term 'white' has been used to denote the socio-political privileging of Australians of Anglo-Saxon descent rather than as a racial category. In this respect, whiteness is socially constructed around divinity, natural rights and hegemonic power.

legacy of research conducted on, with, and about Aboriginal people (Nakata, 1998; Nakata & Langton, 2005; Nakata et al., 2008) and to appreciate the extent to which this legacy continues to contribute to Aboriginal dispossession today (Brady, 1999, 2007).

Deciding on a PhD that focuses on Australian Indigenous studies has meant that I've had to understand my positionality. My interest has been perceived in a number of significant ways, because of similar experiences of family trauma (Kenneth Gelder & Jacobs, 1998), a mistaken hybrid Indigeneity (Judd, 2008) and as an urban/white Aboriginal (Bolt, 2009; Peters & Anderson, 2013). Indigenous methodologies have the potential to decolonise knowledge (Morgensen, 2012). This thesis and the fieldwork that it is centred around prioritise Aboriginal epistemology (Foley, 2003; Rigney, 1999, 2006; Watson, 1997) and is framed by Aboriginal ways of knowing (Bessarab, 2015; McKemmish, Faulkhead, Iacovino, & Thorpe, 2010; Simonds & Christopher, 2013).

A prerequisite for conducting fieldwork with Aboriginal communities was the sharing of my story of alienation and isolation. I spoke not about what I was doing but where I have come from. I sought to listen and learn and to understand. It is with this in mind that I tell my story.

My story

I grew up in a 150-year-old gold-miner's cottage three doors down from the pub on Golden Point Road in Blackwood, Victoria. This is where I spent most of my childhood.

Blackwood, settled during the 1850s Victorian gold rush, in the centre of 'the pivot' of Victoria, is between the Ballarat and Bendigo goldfields and the port of Geelong (a critical history of this region is examined in chapter five). Today Blackwood, a tiny country town of around 100 permanent residents, is threatened with extinction. When we moved to Blackwood in 1989, there was somewhere around 120 permanent residents (a far cry from the 20,000 odd residents during its heyday). Most kids our age had lived in Blackwood their whole lives (as had their parents and grandparents) in typical country houses no more than a decade old. Coming from a broken home, growing up and fitting in in Blackwood was difficult. Being a twin made things harder. Not being considered 'from' Blackwood meant I always felt like an outsider and an intruder. All the other kids were (practically) born and raised in Blackwood.

After primary school, mum and dad sent my twin sister and I to a high school over an hour away from our primary school and even further into the centre of Victoria. Daylesford Secondary College had a good reputation as an 'artsy' school and my parents

said they'd prefer to spend their time there than in Bacchus Marsh where the bigger school was. Only one other girl from my primary school attended Daylesford Secondary and the three of us were the first students to enrol from Myrniong Primary — we were once again in unfamiliar territory. Just like a scene out of *Mean Girls* (Waters, 2004), our year level became split into students from the farms, the town kids and kids from neighbouring Hepburn Springs. Then there were the 'trailer trash' kids from Trentham and those further afield, like us, from tiny towns so far away that no one had ever heard of them. Mum and dad took the opportunity, the first since kindergarten, to put us in different classes so we had the chance to shape our own identities. This just made us feel more alone. Out of fear of being labelled 'the twins', we ignored each other throughout the school days and didn't become friendly with each other until we were in year 10.

Immediately following high school, my twin sister and I moved to Melbourne. Having received less than adequate formal education, we both enrolled at university, me in an arts degree and my sister studied design. Knowing that no other students from home enrolled at our university and being totally unfamiliar with the system since neither of our parents had attended university, we were once again out of our comfort zone, unprepared and alone.

When I was twenty, my estranged paternal English grandmother sent my sister and I each a cheque for a modest amount of money. Against her suggestion to seek investment advice from one of our professors at college (an indication of just how little she knew of our way of life and of Australia in general), we each used the money to travel to England to connect with her. We embarked from Tullamarine in early January 2007 with high hopes of connecting with our family, but instead returned shattered and rejected. My grandmother was a stoic upper-class woman who had migrated to England from the United States of America when she married my grandfather. She had never visited Australia, nor cared to. I will never know how she felt meeting her adult granddaughters, and I will never know if the experience shaped her life as much as it did mine. My identity has been challenged a number of times throughout my life, but that trip to England marked the first time I felt as if I was being judged by my class and judged for being Australian. I grew up feeling poor and inadequate but class was something that never came up for me back home in Australia. Approaching my final semester of my undergraduate degree, the culture shock and trauma of this trip abroad profoundly affected my connection to Australia and changed the trajectory of my study, from journalism and creative writing to (post)colonial studies and literature.

In many respects, I had a happy and fairly normal childhood; without barriers and restrictions I was free to roam the bush. We came home at the end of the day to two parents, a dog and a little sister. But, for me, memories of childhood are marred by experiences of feeling lost and misunderstood, and of being the perennial outsider.

Reflecting on my childhood and formative years enables a contextual explanation for why I, a white (now middle class) woman living in the city, chose to conduct research around issues of visibility and difference that Aboriginal people in Victoria must face. It is because of the anecdotes from my childhood and early adulthood that I have come to situate myself within my research, rather than outside of it. This, I explained to my participants, was how I came to explore whiteness and hegemonic processes of power constructed through settler colonisation. I explained that tiny gaps started to appear throughout my childhood — people said and acted in ways I didn't understand. For instance, the only Aboriginal history I was given at primary school revolved around mythical thirteen-year-old boy initiation ceremonies, which contrasted sharply to the brightly coloured creation storybooks I poured over at home.

At some point, the state curriculum dictated a level of competency in Australian history. I remember spending a small amount of time on 'Aboriginal history' where we coloured in Aboriginal dot art. During this lesson, our teacher told us about how the Aboriginal people lived pre-'settlement'. I got the impression from her that Aboriginal people were largely always naked (save for a red loin cloth), they represented a 'stone age' culture and had no place in contemporary society. We finished off the lesson feeling lucky that we were not Aboriginal children because, as our teacher told us, Aboriginal boys were initiated as men at the age of thirteen by walking over hot coals. This grossly misconstrued 'folk myth', I came to realise, bears no resemblance to ceremonies carried out by Aboriginal communities in any part of Australia. If our primary school teacher had wanted to cement in us a fear of the Other, she could have based it on fact and shown us pictures of bare-chested, scarred Wurundjeri⁴ men exhibited in the early 1900s at Melbourne's Royal Exhibition Building (Maxwell, 2000). But that would have involved an admission that, just like every other state and territory in Australia, Victoria was invaded and its Aboriginal peoples displaced, ignored and subjected to an attempted extermination.

⁴ The Wurundjeri people are a part of the Woi wurrung language group (one of five language groups which make up the Kulin nation of Central Victoria). See figure three: VACL Aboriginal language map of Victoria.

I have no delusions about my childhood and I do not include it here to garner sympathy or create romantic ideas of tragedy. I don't do it to bring up nostalgic or romantic feelings about country living — something that has been done far too often within representations of Australian life in the bush. My perspective, was of a country girl who witnessed the way that intolerance was woven into the everyday lives, cultural heritage and political concerns of regional Victoria. This perspective accounts for the ongoing influence that the gold rush has on country life and town identity within Victoria. I hope to demonstrate that this narrative is one that continues within many aspects of daily life in Victoria, including Australian (Rules) Football, to such an extent that it remains ubiquitous and continues to shape Victorian society and identity today. I include my story, because this is the story I presented in the field, the explanation as to why I, a white woman, wanted to talk to Aboriginal football players about their experiences of racism in Victoria. I knew that their experiences of isolation and alienation were unique and grounded in a settler colonial mindset, which continued to shape the everyday lives of settler Australians and their interactions with Aboriginal Australia.

Introduction

Positioned within the logic of settler colonialism (Wolfe, 2016), this thesis investigates the ways that Aboriginal Victorians have been deemed as ‘invisible but present’ within discursive practices of developing national and state identity. This thesis examines the pervasive presence and everyday practice of whiteness in Victoria and argues that belonging and whiteness are central to the Australian settler colonial psyche (introduced in chapter four). It is my argument that mainstream settler society must imagine Aboriginal Victorians as absent in order to reinforce their own sense of white belonging. Belonging works, within the eliminatory logic (Wolfe, 2001, 2006) of settler colonialism (explored further in chapter four) to remove Aboriginal sovereignty from collective memory. This can be traced to a range of emblems but in this thesis, is demonstrated through the analysis of two pillars of Australian national identity that emerged in 19th century Victoria — the gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football.

Australian Identity

Anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner is credited as breaking the ‘great Australian silence’ (2009, p. 191) surrounding the management and treatment of Australia’s Aboriginal people at the hands of colonial governments and ‘settlers’, and by research institutions, government bodies and universities, which have perpetuated essentialised representations of Aboriginal cultures as static, prehistoric and uncivilised. In his lectures, Stanner acknowledges his own contribution to this misrepresentation and the consequential racial thinking that such representations have bred throughout Australia. For Stanner, his lectures reflected a second turning point away from racist thinking, and an end to the role that Australia’s research institutions and universities have played in representations of Aboriginal culture. Stanner’s lectures are shrouded in an air of hopefulness for the future of Australia, for the treatment of Aboriginal people and for the future of anthropology. Despite this hope, the great Australian silence prevails. Settler colonial sentiments are reflected through Australia’s racist past, present and future and celebrated in Australia’s national identity. In this respect, Stanner grossly underestimated the enduring power of settler colonialism held within

Australian national identity, whose mythic 'pioneer success story' has morphed into all aspects of Australian national culture so that today, broader Australian society remains largely ignorant of Australia's pre-colonial and post-colonial Aboriginal history. Contemporary understandings of Australian national identity cannot be adequately addressed without exploring settler colonialism. In other words, Australian national identity is a structural outcome of settler colonialism in Australia. One cannot be explored without the other.

Australian nationalism celebrates a monocultural national identity, which sets aside history in favour of a more palatable populist telling of the past. This populist telling celebrates and reinforces favoured narratives, which support a peaceful settlement describing the colonisation of Australia and a benign view of British imperialism that celebrates the bringing of civilisation to the continent whilst ignoring and suppressing stories that document and draw attention to colonial violence, dispossession and Aboriginal sovereignty (O'Dowd, 2011, p. 30). The 'Australian way of life' (Ahluwalia, 2001) held within Australian national identity is representative of silence (O'Dowd, 2011) and forgotten Aboriginal narratives (Haebich, 2011). In this respect, 'the cult of forgetfulness' (Stanner, 2009) prevails. The Australian way of life is mythologised through incarnations of the 'fair dinkum Aussie battler' (O'Dowd, 2011), which silences unlikeable parts of Australia's history including the convict legacy and, as explored throughout this thesis, Aboriginal dispossession (O'Dowd, 2011). Within the logic of settler colonialism, Aboriginal people are represented as the backdrop to this national heritage, whilst their stories are represented as outside of settler colonial history and progress. Within representations of the past, a narrative has been carefully constructed that presents the colonist as overcoming the harsh realities of the Australian landscape. This is reflected in the pioneer success story, which falsely places the colonist as conqueror, victor and hero, accommodating a history of absence, and terra nullius. Such incarnations have been celebrated through representations of the

drover,⁵ the bush ranger,⁶ the digger,⁷ the sportsman,⁸ etc., in art, literature, film, through architecture, memorials⁹ and interactions with the land. The state of Victoria has played a central role in establishing an Australian national identity that celebrates mythic pioneer settlers, gold diggers and democratic notions of the 'fair go' and a 'classless society' (McGregor, 2001; Veracini, 2007). Along with the frontier, the pastoral era and war, sport and the discovery of gold are important pillars of national identity. This thesis, examines two incarnations of the 'pioneer success story' reimagined in the goldfields and on the football field. The significance of, and relationship between, the Victorian gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football to the state of Victoria and its capital city, Melbourne, is immense.

The Victorian goldfields district functions as a significant space, both in terms of historical representation and in terms of cultural landscape. The gold rush, explored in this thesis through the central and western goldfields district is emblematic of the psychological process of forgetting Aboriginal narratives within historical narratives and consequently from contemporary Victorian mainstream culture. By understanding the extent to which the gold rush impacted Aboriginal Victorians we are able to better understand how the contemporary invisibility of Victorian Aboriginal people functions today. As with history, sport and recreation are seen as essential parts of Australia's

⁵ See Henry Lawson's poem 'The Ballad of the Drover', his short story 'The Drover's Wife' as well as paintings by Russell Drysdale based on the work of Henry Lawson. Henry Lawson drew considerably from the work of his mother, Louisa Lawson (Zinkhan, 1982), particularly from her essay 'The Australian Bush-woman', first published in 1889, three years prior to the publication of 'The Drover's Wife' in *The Bulletin* (Moorhouse, 2017). Despite this, his most iconic work, 'The Drover's Wife' is still widely attributed to Henry Lawson and the role that his mother played in his writing is not widely known outside of Australian literary and feminist scholarship.

⁶ Ned Kelly and gang are Australia's most famous bushrangers. Ned Kelly has been represented extensively within Australian art, literature and popular culture. See for instance: the Australian silent film, 'The Story of The Kelly Gang' (1906), Sidney Nolan's painting 1946 painting 'First-Class Marksman', A. Bertram Chandler's alternate history novel 'Kelly Country' (1984) as well as film portrayals of Ned Kelly by Mick Jagger (1970) and Heath Ledger (2003).

⁷ Prior to the first World War, the term 'digger' was used widely in Australia to refer to the 'miner'. The term had egalitarian connotations and was associated with mateship. See for instance, representations by Samuel Thomas Gill (1818–1880), Edwin Stocqueler (1851–1914) and Eugene von Guerard (1818–1882). More recently, the term has been used to refer to World War I (WWI) Australian and New Zealand soldiers following their landing at Anzac Cove, Gallipoli on 25 April 1915.

⁸ See for instance: cricketer Sir Donald Bradman, (Aboriginal) Olympian Cathy Freeman and the racehorse Phar Lap.

⁹ For instance: the Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Melbourne Exhibition Building, the State Library of Victoria, the Australian War Memorial, Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance.

national identity (Bloomfield, 2003; R. Pascoe, 1995). The state of Victoria has played a fundamental role in the articulation of the 'sporting nation'. Defining moments in Victoria's history include the (horse) 'race that stops a nation' — The Melbourne Cup and specifically, Phar lap's win in 1930 — the 'Stawell Gift' (a sprint race held annually in the Grampians gold rush township since 1878), the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, and of course as the birth state of the great Australian game, Australian (Rules) Football. Australian (Rules) Football, represented as another pioneer success story, is a space where Aboriginal people are a celebrated part of the 'national game' but one where their representation is problematic and contested.

Collective memory distorts our understanding of the past, and places significance on historical narratives whilst dismissing historical reality. This thesis situates the invisible presence of Aboriginal peoples and narratives within collective memory and demonstrates the contemporary significance of both the goldfields narratives and Australian (Rules) Football to the way we view ourselves as settler Victorians and to the way we understand the place of Aboriginal people within contemporary Victoria. By denying both Aboriginal sovereignty and Aboriginal presence, denial (Due, 2008; O'Dowd, 2011) works within this logic to reinforce (white) belonging. The (white) fantasy of belonging cannot exist alongside Aboriginal sovereignty, and Aboriginal sovereignty cannot occur if Aboriginal people are dehumanised, discredited and their relationship to the land dismissed as wasteful, trivial or primitive (Behrendt, 1998). Such a reading of history paints Aboriginal Victorians as both passive victims of history (without agency, struggle or protest) and invisible within the colonial project of Australian nation building. It is my argument that within the central and western goldfields district, representations of the gold rush have significantly altered the way that the contemporary settler community thinks, or fails to think, about Aboriginal Victoria, especially within the district. The evidence of this can be understood within the context of Australian (Rules) Football, where the significance of Aboriginal Victoria has been silenced. Australian (Rules) Football has been retextualised as a marker of white Australia, rather than as an adaptation of the Aboriginal game 'Marngrook'. Within the game, Aboriginal heritage is forgotten, and Aboriginal Victorian football players remain largely invisible at the elite level of the game — the Australian Football League (AFL). Aboriginal football players are recruited to the elite level as a marker of Aboriginal assimilation into Australia rather than as a marker of Aboriginal cultural resistance, adaptation and appropriation.

Why Victoria?

Although this thesis traces the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians, the exploration of Victorian history and identity is of significance to the development of Australia's national identity because the goldfields region of Victoria has been instrumental in the foundation of Australian values. The gold rush era (from 1851 to the late 1860s) of Victoria's history marked a break from Australia's subservience to Britain and to the empire (Meaney, 2001, p. 77), which is reflected in the emergence of Australian (Rules) Football (Butcher & Judd, 2016, pp. 169–170) during the federation years from the late 1880s to the federation of Australia in 1901 (Judd, 2005b, p. 35). In this respect, the history of Victoria and its development from an outpost of the New South Wales colony to the cultural capital of Australia is of significance to the creation of Australian nationalism. Herein lies the importance of acknowledging this rivalry — it is characteristic of the core differences that existed between Sydney and Melbourne during Victoria's foundation years, which shaped the state's core values (away from those of Britain), and which help to explain the popularity of Australian (Rules) Football over an introduced code of football (as was the case in Sydney). The popularity of the new code of football during the gold rush period indicates how readily Victorian settlers embraced this diversion from Britain, marking the establishment of a uniquely Australian identity. 'Federation Father' (Hallinan & Judd, 2009a, p. 2360), Prime Minister Alfred Deakin stated in a speech to the Australasian Jubilee Football Carnival in Melbourne on August 28, 1908 (Hallinan & Judd, 2009a; T. Ward, 2010) that Australian (Rules) Football embodies Australian values, ideals of masculinity (Butcher & Judd, 2016) and is considered foundational to the nation-building project. Deakin argues that:

It will be those who have played well, the Australian game of football, before they play the Australian game of nation-making and nation-preserving who stand by the old land. (T. Ward, 2010, p. 107)

Although there is much debate about the exact origins of Australian (Rules) Football, two things are certain, the game emerged during the gold rush in the late 1850s and the game's origin is credited to a white man. Thomas Wentworth Wills, heralded as the father of Australian (Rules) Football, was born in 1835 — the same year that the Port Phillip District, later the colony of Victoria, was settled. Having spent his adolescence being educated in England, Wills returned to a transformed Melbourne during the peak of the gold rush in 1856. Far from the scholarly and hardworking man his father wanted

him to be, Wills preferred leisure over work and spent much of his time either playing or organising sport. Wills' interaction with Aboriginal people has been written out of the origin story of football (explored further in chapter six: football) whilst the contemporary underrepresentation of Victorian Aboriginal football players at the elite level is indicative of the inability for settler Victorians to imagine Aboriginal Victorians as playing such a key role in the formation of settler colonial identity. Furthermore, the underrepresentation of Aboriginal Victorian players alongside the important contribution that Aboriginal football players from other Australian states make to the game reflects the essentialised representation of Aboriginal peoples and cultures held within the settler colonial psyche.

This denial positively exemplifies the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism (Wolfe, 2006), whereby Australian (Rules) Football has become 'a signpost of Anglo-Australian nationalism' (Judd, 2005b, p. 33) rather than a celebration of Aboriginal cultural convergence. Here, Britain did not just take possession of the land, but of Aboriginal people as well. In this sports-mad nation (Judd, 2008), it makes sense that 'we' settlers would be equally proud (if not more so) to be the birth-state of Australian (Rules) Football, which emerged during the 1850s and alongside the gold rush, as we are to be the birth place of Australian democracy. This fact is exemplified by the Eureka Centre (formerly the Museum of Australian Democracy), which stands on the site of the Eureka Stockade¹⁰ in Ballarat as a contemporary celebration of the role that the Ballarat goldfields region has played in the establishment of Australian democracy (City of Ballarat, 2018).

However ready Victorian settlers were to create a new identity for themselves, and how easily they/we forget, the illegitimacy of our claim to belong is encapsulated in settler colonial anxiety, fear, and the drive to belong, which is embodied within the settler colonial psyche.

¹⁰ The Eureka Stockade was a rebellion held in Ballarat on December 3rd in 1854 in which gold prospectors, known as miners or diggers, clashed with government forces. The rebellion, lasting just fifteen minutes, was the culmination of long-standing grievances on the part of the gold miners over prospecting-license fees, brutal police procedures for the collection of fees, the lack of rights and representation in the Legislative Council. Despite the fact that (or perhaps because) the diggers retreated, the Eureka Stockade (as it is officially referred to) has become eponymous with labour rights, nationalism, democracy and freedom.

Contribution to the field

This thesis examines the ways that whiteness is centred within Australia's national identity and how this monocultural identity 'myth' has been used as a way of symbolically and physically removing Victorian Aboriginal people from Victoria's history and culture. Understanding the pervasive and everyday practices of whiteness and settler colonialism is an important way of understanding the ways that belonging is perpetuated, as well as the ways that Aboriginal sovereignty continues to be denied in Victoria. In this respect whiteness, race and settler colonialism are always connected.

Within settler colonialism, the history of Aboriginal people in Victoria is invisible. An enormous amount of scholarship exists pertaining to representations of Aboriginal peoples and cultures as well as the circumstances surrounding their attempted dispossession, extermination and assimilation. From anthropology, archaeology and linguistics, to education, and health and wellbeing outcomes in Aboriginal communities, research has both sought to record Aboriginal cultural formation and manage Aboriginal people and communities using a Western framework. Specifically, research has been conducted that looks to the ways that Aboriginality is constructed and represented within settler colonialism. Within this space, this thesis looks to the experiences of Aboriginal Victorians in the context of contemporary practices of whiteness and settler colonialism. Much work has already been done that draws links between Australian nationalism, belonging and identity construction, especially in relation to nationalist ANZAC mythologies (Due, 2008; Lake, Reynolds, McKenna, & Damousi, 2010), but this has not always been linked to dialectically opposed constructions of Australianness and Aboriginalism. Although a body of work does exist that explores the specific circumstances of invasion/settlement in Victoria (and specifically in the central and western district of Victoria), this research (Barwick, 1984; Rolls, 1999; Broome, 2005; Cahir & Clark, 2010; Cahir, 2012; Clark, 1998, 2008, 2009, 2017a, 2017b; Kostanski et al, 2014; Newton, 1996, 2001, 2014, 2015, 2016) has not necessarily engaged directly with Victoria's Aboriginal communities. Such research reflects the long history of writing on, and conducting research about, Aboriginal people, rather than *with* Aboriginal people. This research perpetuates the unequal power dynamic that exists between settler Australians and Aboriginal Australians (K. Anderson & Perrin, 2008). It is for this reason that critical theory is considered as the most fundamental theoretical approach to take when conducting research that recognises the socio-historical conditions of the research field as well as the role that

knowledge production plays in perpetuating this unequal power dynamic (Leonardo, 2004). Situated within critical theory, this thesis traces the contemporary invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians, within Australian (Rules) Football, to the settler colonial psyche, which emerged in the mid-late 19th century, specifically during the gold rush. This thesis demonstrates the ways that Aboriginal sovereignty has been removed from mainstream tellings of Victoria's history. This narrative perpetuates the myth of peaceful settlement and presents an essentialised understanding of Aboriginality. In tracing the settler colonial psyche held within Australian identity, this thesis works to dislodge contemporary and historical practices of whiteness and settler colonialism in Victoria. Although this thesis specifically looks to the gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football as significant to Australian identity construction and nationalism, the settler colonial psyche as well as variations of it can be similarly traced in other parts of Australia (and the world) with similar experiences of settler colonialism and marginalisation.

The circulation of misinformation about Aboriginal people and issues, the romanticised 'white-washed' (Clark, 2006, p. 3) settler narrative and subsequent invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians exists within a larger discourse reflected in popular tellings and representations of settler history, readings and representations of Aboriginality (1993). This is also shown in contemporary representations of Aboriginal Victorian communities and attitudes towards Aboriginal people and issues.

Theoretical framework

Informed by critical theory, this thesis examines historical and contemporary practices of settler colonialism and white supremacy. Within the logic of settler colonialism, belonging is an essential tool in the maintenance of white supremacy. White supremacy is maintained through the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians, who are deemed to be so within the settler colonial psyche. Robert Young states that, 'if colonial history, particularly in the 19th century, was the history of the imperial appropriation of the world, the history of the 20th century has witnessed the peoples of the world taking power and control back for themselves' (2001a, p.4). Settler colonialism cannot be adequately explored without understanding the ideological and hegemonic prevalence of whiteness, and race more broadly. Within critical theory, postcolonial theories are useful when interrogating the unconscious and often ignored role that colonialism/imperialism has had, and continues to have, on dominant social structures. While critical race and whiteness theories are useful in understanding how closely

connected concepts of race and whiteness are to Australian national identity. In this way, the development of racial formation cannot be considered in the global context without considering its relationship with settler colonialism (and imperialism). Critical race theory (CRT) and postcolonial theory (Young, 2015) share a commitment to developing theory based on the voices and experiences of racially (and culturally) oppressed peoples as well as based on the thoughts of intellectual thinkers. They both also emerged out of, and represent, intellectual challenges to contexts of racial oppression. CRT works to unpack and critique racially oppressive social structures, meanings and ideas (Nicoll, 2014) whilst postcolonial theories look to the specific historical process of colonisation and imperialism as key markers of the practice of hegemony and control and how this history is reflected and practiced through time and space (Gandhi, 1998).

This thesis, and the concepts it explores, are situated within critical theory. Built upon the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and further developed by Max Horkheimer and other prominent Frankfurt School theorists, critical theory is a mode of thinking that challenges commonly held assumptions about everyday social life. Critical theory is not a traditional discipline but is best understood as a convergence of exciting disciplines (Leonardo, 2004) with the implicit goal of advancing the emancipatory function of knowledge. By interrogating research protocols and practices from the outset, one is essentially partaking in critical theory. Critical theory identifies the role that the social sciences have played in further cementing knowledge production with those in the position of power. As a consequence, the social sciences continue to perpetuate the positioning of power with those in positions of political and economic power (Dahms, 2008, p. 6). Within critical social theory, history is not seen as static. Rather than seeing history as transparent to knowledge, critical theories argue that a particular history produces a particular knowledge that obscures the constraints of the lived experience that it produces (Dant, 2003, p.156). In this way, hegemonic ideology can be seen as a central concept within critical theory. Furthermore, critical theory acknowledges that the social sciences and the Western academy as a whole do not sit outside the bonds of society but have the capacity to perpetuate contemporary ideology.

Since its development in the 1930s by Frankfurt School theorists Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno, critical theory has evolved from a theory which sought to better understand the holocaust and World War II (WWII), with theories of commodity fetishism, capitalism and alienation at its centre to a way of engaging with

the socio-historical context which has been neglected in mainstream approaches to the social sciences. Since the theory's inception it has stood as a 'reminder that the specific economic, political cultural, and ideological configurations of socio-historical contexts have a direct bearing on the form, content, practice, and normative orientation of both social life and social sciences' (Dahms, 2008 , p.18). Each version of critical theory challenges how history and society are currently understood within the entrenched patterns of power that shape modern society (Dant, 2003, p.156). The approach to critical theory, which has been adopted in this thesis, is shaped by the work of contemporary critical theorist Harry F. Dahms and the discursive turn that critical theory has taken since the 1970s. Dahms sees critical theory as, 'acknowledging the difficulty of stepping back from social reality in a manner that enables observers to recognise the particularity of formations of societal life, and its significance for how we coexist and make choices (Dahms, 2008, p.5).

In the present context, critical theory is intended to initiate change (Dant 2003, p.156) and is considered the most appropriate framework when engaging with literature and fieldwork because of its reflexive approach to understanding hegemonic processes of power, knowledge production and ideology. The importance of understanding the socio-historical context surrounding contemporary Aboriginal studies and postcolonial research is clear when we reflect on the role that anthropology has played in both constructing the 'Aborigine' and its role within the colonial governance of the 'natives' (explored in chapter four).

Within critical theory, CRT provides a useful way of understanding the ways that race, despite being socially constructed, operates hierarchically and discursively today. The everyday applicability and use of CRT makes it an important tool in disrupting the everyday practice of racialised power relations. The development of CRT is attributed to Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, Charles Lawrence, Mari Matsuda and Patricia Williams (Delgado & Stefancic, 2005) and has been applied to law and education theory. Delgado and Stefancic define the CRT movement as 'a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism and power' (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 3).

Critical race theory was developed in response to the need for an ideological interrogation of the meaning of race and racism in America (Feagin, 2000). CRT provides a useful starting point from which to question the exercise of colonial power against the discursive construction of the racialised other (K. Anderson & Perrin, 2008) and to refocus the theoretical lens onto anti-oppressive theory, race equality and

related areas in a variety of fields including sport and leisure studies (Hylton, 2005, p. 82). Critical race theory is necessarily transdisciplinary (Hylton, 2010, p. 338) and is an effective framework to challenge racism (Hylton, 2010, p. 337), which had been utilised in the social justice system before becoming popular within the academy. CRT pioneers (such as Derrick Bell) argued that, 'racism should not be viewed as acts of individual prejudice that can simply be eradicated' (Parker & Lynn, 2002, p. 9) but that it is at once socially constructed, deeply ingrained and endemic with manifestations in legal systems, racial categories and privilege.

CRT is important in this context because it navigates the landscape of racialised discourse and combats racial subjugation and applies them pragmatically (Hylton, 2010, p. 338). Rather than posing the question, 'Do we live in a racist society?' CRT asks us to consider the taken-for-granted-ness and everyday experience of racism (Hylton, 2010; Langton, 1999; Moreton-Robinson, 2003) assumed in colonial language, legal doctrines and texts and is thereby hegemonic in its practice.

As I have specified, CRT provides a useful framework for approaching research with Aboriginal people. Whiteness studies within CRT further challenge the everyday pervasive presence of whiteness and asks that we centre it within the research process and continually acknowledge the rights, responsibilities and privileges whiteness brings with it. In this way, subjectivity and location are important themes to consider when conducting field research. CRT necessarily demands that the hegemonic pervasive power of whiteness is centred in debates about the role and consequence that the social construction of race has had, and continues to have, on society. CRT acknowledges the relationship between knowledge and power and asks us to locate ourselves in relation to our research.

Understanding race and racism within the context of critical theory is important, because by doing so we recognise that race is not the problem, but that 'we whites' are the problem.

Thesis outline

This thesis responds to the following question: *Why do Aboriginal Victorians function as invisible within the settler colonial psyche?* It does so through an analysis of the goldfields and Australian (Rules) Football and argues that white belonging is essential to Australian national identity. In order to respond to the research question, this thesis examines the following:

- How have Aboriginal Victorians been forgotten within mainstream Victoria?

- Why have Aboriginal Victorians' narratives been forgotten?
- Why do Aboriginal Victorians function as invisible within mainstream Victoria?
- What happens when the myth of white belonging is challenged?

This thesis is organised around two case studies, both of which examine the relationship between white belonging and the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorian people/cultures within the settler colonial psyche. Settler nationalism is articulated through white belonging, which is explored here by drawing on gold rush and football narratives. The first case study, looks to the central and western goldfields district, both in its history and narrative construction of Australian national identity. The gold rush narrative provides a mythical origin story that is celebrated within the settler colonial psyche. Aboriginal Victorians have been removed from this origin story, which reinforces white belonging. The invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians is manifested within the goldfields landscape at both the structural and symbolic level. The second case study chapter situates white belonging within the historical and contemporary context of Australian (Rules) Football and argues that racism and intolerance toward Aboriginal people is symptomatic of white anxieties over belonging in Victoria.

Aims

Wendy Brady (1999) as well as Leslie Brown and Susan Strega (2005), Priscilla Pyett (2002) and Martin Nakata (1998) argue that researchers can no longer stand back in conscious distance but instead must be engaged in asking questions both of themselves and of their participants. Because of this, I have drawn on my own life experiences in demonstrating hegemonic practices of white superiority that exist in daily Australian life when compiling this thesis. Reflecting this, a central concern of this thesis lies in centering whiteness, rather than centering Indigeneity. I hope that by centering whiteness, I am able to better serve the concerns of the research participants. By focusing on their interests, rather than on my own assumptions, I hope to break down constructed assumptions and articulate the way that white supremacy operates discursively as a core stabiliser for settler colonialism.

Plan

The following chapter (chapter two) situates this thesis within race and settler colonialism and provides a critical review of relevant literature to the development and execution of race and settler colonial studies in Australia and abroad. Within the

critical theory framework, this thesis is interdisciplinary and is informed by geography, history, cultural studies, Australian Indigenous studies, (post)colonialism, settler colonial studies, anthropology and related disciplines.

In addition to the theoretical literature review provided in chapter two and the methodological literature review in chapter three, the fourth chapter provides an introduction to the two case study chapters that follow. Chapter four introduces memory and belonging as fundamental to Australian national identity construction and argues that each of these concepts informs the settler colonial psyche which is embedded in Australian national identity. Locating white belonging within the central and western goldfields district and Australian (Rules) Football, the two case study chapters demonstrate how the settler colonial psyche operates to remove Aboriginal presences from Victorian goldfield narratives and in Australian (Rules) Football. The final chapter (chapter seven) contextualises the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians within contemporary research and discusses how the settler colonial psyche can be used as a tool for examining the relationship between racism, settler colonialism and nationalism in other areas of Australia as well as in other settler colonial nations throughout the world.

Theoretical Literature Review

There are multiple ways of approaching race and racism theory and, as this chapter articulates, the concept, practice and social construction of race has a long history and future. Race is hierarchical, invisible and present, is practiced differently through time and space and is deeply connected to imperialism and colonialism. This makes the task of writing a literature review chapter for the purposes of a PhD all the more arduous and necessarily complicated because not all racial theory takes settler colonialism into account and not all (post)colonial¹¹ theory takes race into account. Because of this, it has been necessary not just to learn from the theory but to be mindful of its inherent biases.

This thesis is situated within a broad scope of scholarship and has been shaped by multiple disciplines; primarily Australian Indigenous¹² studies, cultural studies, anthropology, race studies, settler colonialism, sports sociology and (post)colonial studies. Despite divergent perspectives, each of these disciplines and fields can be examined for their engagement with power, knowledge production and race. Following on from the introduction, this chapter situates the thesis within the context of international and Australian critical race, whiteness and settler colonial scholarship. In the previous chapter I briefly introduced the settler colonial psyche and invisible

¹¹ In this thesis I will use the bracketed term *post* in (post)colonial to acknowledge that Anglo-Australia as a sovereign nation-state is commonly considered as constituting a postcolonial society because of its political independence from the United Kingdom. Colonialism cannot be unproblematically considered as a period in historical memory but as a continued hegemonic system. The term *decolonial* has been used (interchangeably) to highlight that postcoloniality does not exist and that coloniality is embedded in all parts of Western civilisation (Weiner, 2018). Other (post)colonial critics, such as Judd (2007, 2010b) and Judd & Hallinan (2009) have made a similar distinction. Further discussion of the different ways that the term *postcolonial* has been applied is provided later in this chapter.

¹² In Australia, the term 'Indigenous' is favoured when referring to Australia's First Peoples. The term encompasses both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In this chapter, the term is used when reflecting theory and practice, which has historical and contemporary relevance to First Nations people in all parts of Australia and the rest of the world. I use the term, 'Aboriginal', when referring specifically to Indigenous people in mainland Australia (including Tasmania), and when it is not appropriate or necessary to use their clan or tribal language group names.

presence as important terms that articulate the dichotomy that exists between settler Victoria and Aboriginal Victoria. It is my argument that the settler colonial psyche, as practiced through Australian nationalism, works to dislodge Aboriginal claims to sovereignty and positions Aboriginal Victorians as outside the bounds of settler colonialism and, therefore, as invisibly present. Although chapter four explores the relationship between the settler colonial psyche and invisible presence in more detail and to a fuller extent, it is important to firstly situate these terms in the context of race, whiteness and settler colonialism.

Within Patrick Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism, race and racism are foundational to the construction of Australia's national identity. This is clear when we look to the nation's history of discriminatory immigration restriction and Aboriginal 'management' policies. Despite the fact that Australia has moved beyond such overt indications of racial intolerance, racism continues to operate discursively to position whites¹³ as the norm around which 'otherness' operates. In this respect, racism is not going anywhere (Bell, 1992; Fanon, 2008) and we (referring specifically to those who live in settler nations) are not, nor will we ever be, post-race (Essed & Goldberg, 2002, p. 4) as Essed articulates:

Manifestations of racism remain complexly articulated, deeply embedded, and subtly intertwined with seemingly neutral to innocent social phenomena. Even contemporary calls for colour-blindness, race neutrality, and tolerance towards those different from oneself often cover over hidden, invisible, forms of racist expression and well-established patterns of racist exclusion that remain, unaddressed and uncompensated, structurally marking opportunities and access, patterns of income and wealth, privilege and relative power. (2002, p. 4)

Essed's assertion is important in the Australian context because it highlights the way that supposed emancipatory acts actually work to hide forms of racist expression. The Australian government's Close The Gap initiative promotes ways of decreasing the social, health and economic disparity between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people, and can also be considered as contemporary assimilation. Rather than promoting both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples and organisations and working towards cultural awareness and inclusivity (and thus closing the metaphoric gap) the

¹³ In this context, the term 'white' has been used to denote the socio-political privileging of Australians of Anglo-Saxon descent rather than as a racial category. In this respect, 'whiteness' is socially constructed around divinity, natural rights and hegemonic power.

policy focuses on Aboriginal Australians improving in each sector and thus moving closer to crossing the colour-line (Du Bois, 1990). Furthermore, Essed's assertion that racist expression remains largely hidden, unaddressed and mirrors the distribution of wealth, power and privilege is important in the context of this thesis, because it highlights the mechanisms through which invisibility works to disempower Aboriginal people.

The representation of Aboriginal people within the mainstream has played (and continues to play) a fundamental role in the ways that settler Australians think about Aboriginal people and their place within contemporary Victoria. Although racism and colonialism are interconnected and supported by the ideological structures that colonialism operates around (Wolfe, 2016), race has not always been implicated within settler colonialism. This chapter examines the ways that 'racial thinking' (Coram, 2007) has been applied within the logic of settler colonialism and argues that, within this logic, Aboriginal Victorians are deemed as both invisible and present. This invisible presence works to stabilise settler colonialism by eliminating 'the native as native' (Wolfe, 2006).

This chapter critically examines the ways that racial thinking is used to stabilise settler colonialism. Race and racism are fundamental to the colonising process and the settler claim to sovereignty. By conceptualising whiteness within a reading of both race and racism, I attempt to demonstrate the ways that racial privileges form ways of being, knowing, and becoming in ways that are taken for granted.

The following chapter considers the role that colonial practices of knowledge production plays in cross-cultural research practices and contemporary understandings of Aboriginality. Tracing the history of this movement through the development of classical/social anthropology in Australia has been a fundamental way of understanding how to appropriately conduct research today. For this reason, I have surveyed the historical development of Australian anthropology through the literature as a way to understand the problematic relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Western academy in Australia, and the implications this has for both me as a white researcher and for the processes through which I have conducted this research. The research methodology is representative of ethical research engagements with global Indigeneity and can be considered as a useful exemplar of culturally respectful research practice. This is supported by Kathy Absolon and Cam Willett who argue that:

One of the most fundamental principles of Aboriginal research methodology is the necessity for the researcher to locate himself or herself. Identifying at the outset, the location from which the voice of the researcher emanates is an Aboriginal way of ensuring that those who study, write and participate in knowledge creation are accountable for their own positionality. (in L. A. Brown & Strega, 2005, p. 97)

Increasingly, research conducted with Aboriginal people is considered as cross-cultural research. By identifying race and whiteness, researchers are better able to address the disparities and assumptions that work to maintain racial hierarchies rather than feed into them. By locating myself within the thesis as a white settler Australian I am able to draw attention to invisible practices of race and settler colonialism, which operate to perpetuate the status quo. This methodology reflects a new mode of conducting research whereby the voice of the researcher is located within the text and their relationship to the area of study is interrogated.

Race

Few other features of the modern world are as ubiquitous as the experience of race. Race is both seen and unseen; projected and embodied, it is ancient and new; real and unreal (Coram, 2007); and is both taken for granted and scrutinised. Alongside (and within) imperialism and colonialism, race is the dominant means through which the world is ordered.¹⁴ Despite its pervasiveness the concept of race is experienced differently through time and space. It has evolved from a category denoting nobility and divinity during the enlightenment to the moral socially inclusive idea of a people and their nation (Winant, 2004, p. x). Race orders, 'human beings according to their corporeal characteristics' (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. 3), which over time has become an overarching mechanism for control, dispossession, exploitation and resistance. Alongside gender, race is the central mechanism through which the western world is organised. Through the concept of race, humans are categorised into different 'racial' groups based on physical features. These physical features have come to denote health and wellbeing, intelligence, purity and social order. Race has become a silent and taken

¹⁴ Although often mistaken as synonymous, imperialism and colonialism differ in the way that domination is practiced. The term 'imperialism' draws attention to the way that one country exercises power over another, whereas 'colonialism' refers specifically to the transfer of population to a new territory. Within colonialism, 'settler colonialism' refers to the permanent transfer of population, whereas for colonialism, the population does not necessarily stay, or settle.

for granted indicator of social and cultural belonging. Analyses of race do not and have not always considered the fundamental differences that exist between the raced *Indigenous* experience and the raced *Black* experience. This thesis aims to fill this gap and contributes to a wider reading of Indigeneity (a discussion of the relationship between race, Indigeneity and settler colonialism is provided in the second part of this chapter).

There has been an enormous amount of analysis of race since the early 1970s (Essed & Goldberg, 2002, p. 1), ranging from studies of race and racism in America (van den Berghe, 1967; Rose, 1968; Bonilla-Silva, 1996, 2004, 2013; Emirbayer & Desmond, 2015; Essed, 2002; Feagin, 2013a, 2014; Massey & Denotn, 1994) and the health and wellbeing outcomes of First Nations peoples (Humphery, 2000, 2001), to the deconstruction of the fetishised colonial 'Other' (Brady, 1999; Dyer, 1997; Fabian, 2002; Said, 1979) and the analysis of colonial discourse and structures of domination (Bhabha, 2002; Guha, 2002; Hall, 2002). Despite their diversity they all work within a paradigm of 'race-centrism' (Wimmer, 2015, p. 2193), which maintains that:

First, race is the primary principle of stratification [...]. Second, all racial inequality can be explained by the racism (explicit, conscious or not) of the white majority and/or the state institutions that operate on its behalf. Third, racial inequality has transformed but not lessened, or even worsened over the past fifty years. Fourth, racial groups represent collective actors with shared interests and outlooks on the world. And fifth, race plays a similarly structuring role around the world. (2015, p. 2186)

Although race has been conceptualised in different ways since antiquity¹⁵ (McCosky, 2012), Charles Darwin's publications on evolutionary theory have played a significant role in how race is understood today. Published in 1859 and 1871, Darwin's theories established a 'scientific' basis for racism — the belief that white people were biologically superior to non-whites (Heynes, 2011), and played a fundamental role in the way that whites and non-whites were managed throughout the world, including in colonial era Victoria (then the Port Phillip district of the British colony of New South Wales). Despite the fact that scientific racism (in both theory and practice) was formally

¹⁵ In very simple terms, there has been three major phases in race thinking. From antiquity, up until the 1850s race was characterised by environmental, geographical variants and to some degree humanity. During the second stage, from the 1850s to the 1930s, race was characterised by biological differences in intelligence and other attributes. Races were distinguished by skin colour, facial features, cranial size as well as hair colour and texture.

denounced by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 1950 and disproven in 1953 with the discovery of the structure of the DNA molecule (by James Watson and Francis Crick), the biological justification for racism is still widely used as a validation for discriminatory practices today (Coram, 2007). Acknowledging that race is a social rather than a biological construction has done very little to alter the way that race is constructed nor the way racism is practiced ideologically today (Langton, 1993, p. 22).

As will be further outlined in the following section, understanding race as biologically determined rather than for its social and cultural variants (Hallinan & Judd, 2007, p. 422; Wolfe, 2016, p. 2) works to further disempower and marginalise 'raced' subjectivities (Root, 2008) who do not belong within a particular binary classification of black, white, settler, Aboriginal and so on (A. Smith, 2010, p. 1). Anthropologist Marcia Langton states that, 'few Australians are aware that there is no reliable evidence that any physical reality conforms to the notion of "race", which is assumed in our language and our legal doctrine and text, including our constitution' (1993, p. 22). Because of this, and despite the fact that race is socially constructed,¹⁶ race is an important 'signifier of relational identity politics, a fundamental principle of social organization and identity formation that moves people to act in certain ways' (Luke & Carrington, 2000, p. 5). Critical race scholar Stella Coram refers to the ideological practice of racism as 'racial thinking' (2007). Racial thinking is fundamental to Australian national identity construction, and is paramount to understanding the practice of race and racism in Victoria today. Firstly, because, in evolutionary terms, racial thinking positioned Aboriginal people as inferior, 'dying out' and closer to ape than white man (Luke & Carrington, 2000, p. 5) this had the effect of validating white

¹⁶ Social constructionism has been used as a concept to explore alternative approaches to the study of human beings as social animals since the early 1980s (Burr, 2015). Social constructionism is a general term, which can be applied to theories, which emphasise the socially constructed nature of social life. This is, in a sense, the standpoint for the social sciences in general, but specifically to discourse studies and sociology. Andy Lock and Tom Strong define social constructionism by five tenets: (1) It is concerned with meaning and understanding as the central feature of human activities. (2) Meaning and understanding have their beginnings in social interaction and in shared agreements as to what these symbolic forms are to be taken to be. (3) Ways of making meaning are inherently embedded in socio-cultural processes, are specific to particular times and places. Thus, the meaning derived can change. (4) People are self-defining and socially constructed participants in their shared lives. There are no pre-defined entities within them. In this sense, social constructionists are interested in delineating the processes that operate discursively in social life. (5) Social constructionists are concerned with revealing the operations of the social world, and the political apportioning of power that is often accomplished discursively (Lock & Strong, 2010).

settler claims to land. Secondly, because racial thinking has also been used as a mechanism for power and control since before first settlement. Each of the case study chapters, chapter five: The Goldfields, and chapter six: The Football Fields, demonstrate the way that race and racial thinking is used as a mechanism for control. In order to understand the way that racial thinking operates discursively today, it is important to trace the way that race is conceptualised and understood.

Critical race scholarship is indebted to the work of W.E.B. Du Bois, civil rights activist Stokely Carmichael and political scientist Charles V. Hamilton,¹⁷ sociologist s Oliver Cromwell Cox and Peter Rose, sociobiologist Pierre van den Berghe and anti-colonial cultural theorist Frantz Fanon who looked beyond race prejudice and racialisation to the way that race is embedded structurally. Du Bois, Carmichael, Hamilton, Cox, Rose, van den Berghe and Fanon are key figures in the way that race has been conceptualised and understood within critical theory. Their work is particularly significant for its focus on race and racism as a structural problem rather than at the individual level (Essed & Goldberg, 2002). Of particular importance here is the work of Van den Berghe, Rose and Fanon. Van den Berghe (1978) stresses the importance of considering both the objective and subjective aspects of race and ethnicity (1970, 1974, 1978). Berghe developed an understanding of race and ethnicity as an extension of kin selection. He differentiated two broad types of human collectives, the first (Type I) is defined by kin association and includes race and ethnicity, whilst the second (Type II) encompasses class and other varied group (political, neighbourhood, professional bodies and so on). His work is important because of its emphasis on the way that race and ethnically have been socially constructed through time. American sociologist Peter Rose highlighted the relationship between imperialism and race in his book *The Subject is Race: Traditional Ideologies and the Teaching of Race Relations* (1968) and highlighted the importance of tracing imperial control in understanding the emergence of race. Fanon, a psychiatrist and critic of settler colonialism, furthered this by looking at race and racism from the perspective of colonial domination, where both 'native' and 'settler' operate within the same system of power to sustain colonial domination. For Fanon, the psycho-analytic process of identification is informed by colonialist culture. His book, *Black Skins, White Masks*

¹⁷ Along with Carmichael, Hamilton developed an understanding of individual racism and institutional racism in their 1967 book *Black Power: The Politics of liberation in America* (Carmichael & Hamilton, 1967).

(first published in 1952) was the first book to investigate the psychology of colonialism (Fanon, 2008, p. x).

Fanon, as well as Du Bois, focus on the role that identity plays in the colonising process. Whilst Fanon refers to it as the 'identification' of both self and 'other', Du Bois uses the term, 'double consciousness' (1990) to describe the process of looking at self through the eyes of others. Today, W.E.B. Du Bois (1868–1963) is considered a 'protean intellectual and activist' (Winant, 2000, p. 5) who pioneered race and racism scholarship and mainstream sociology in the United States of America (USA) (Feagin, 2013b; Omi & Winant, 2015). His work marks a shift away from evolutionary theories and Social Darwinism towards a socially and politically grounded concept of race, racism and white supremacy. His political theory of race maintains that race operates to organise humans into 'races' for the purpose of class rule (Olson, 2005). He argues that race will continue to have social, cultural and political connotations until the power of the dominant group is abolished (Olson, 2005, pp. 119-120). Du Bois has also contributed to social theories of education (Rashid, 2011) and religion. Considering the significant contribution that Du Bois made to both critical theorisations of race, social theory as well as to empirical and ethnographical research methods, it is interesting that he hasn't been credited with pioneering social theory in the USA (Bobo, 2015). The fact that, Du Bois, an African-American scholar, has been wiped from collective memory speaks to the impact that the colour-line has played and continues to play within the production of knowledge. This point is an interesting observation which is highlighted in the following chapter, as well as discussed in chapter five and at the conclusion chapter of this thesis.

Michel Foucault's understanding of power (Foucault, Faubion, & Hurley, 2000), discourse (Foucault, 1981) and knowledge (Foucault, 2005) are useful when thinking about the way that race, despite having no biological basis, functions within settler colonialism. Like Du Bois and Fanon, Foucault argued that we are all caught up in the circulation of power as both oppressor and oppressed (Hall, 2001, p. 77). Foucault understood discourse as a system of representation where physical things and actions exist, but only take on meaning and become objects of knowledge within discourse (Foucault, 1981). Stuart Hall confirms this and states that, 'since we can only have a knowledge of things if they have a meaning, it is discourse — not the things-in-themselves — which produces knowledge' (2001, p. 73). For Foucault power is always implicated in how and when knowledge is applied (Hall, 2001, p. 76). The significance of the relationship that exists between power and knowledge is reflected in the

hyphenated (or backslashed) power-knowledge and power-discourse (Nola, 1998). Foucault's understanding of the racialised body in relation to power and sovereignty (Moreton-Robinson, 2006) is relevant to the theoretical framework of this PhD thesis. Although his work in this area is considered underdeveloped and limited (McWhortar, 2004; Stone, 2004; Young, 1995), Foucault's valuable contribution cannot be overstated. Race and racism scholars have drawn on Foucault's theories¹⁸ of the relationship that power has to both discourse and knowledge, in articulating the centrality of race and more importantly, the way that whiteness works as the central point in the relationship between power and knowledge (Yancy, 2001).

For Foucault, the relationship between knowledge and power is articulated through the construction of race. He describes this form of power as biopower, arguing that race became a means of regulating and defending society from itself. Foucault's biopower is understood as a way of maintaining power and control in the contemporary context of political power, where sovereign states are governed by their political system rather than through tradition and a virtuous monarch. In this context, Moreton-Robinson takes Foucault's definition of race as a 'linguistic and religious marker that precedes the modern nation-state' (Moreton-Robinson, 2006, p. 386). Foucault argues that race surfaced as a biological construct in the late 18th century as new disciplinary knowledge emerged and regulatory mechanisms were developed to control the population.

Moreton-Robinson draws on Foucault's genealogy of race and its relationship to biopower in demonstrating the social production of knowledge in a broader discussion around how the contemporary nation state works to claim its sovereignty. Moreton-Robinson states that, 'by analysing the relationship between knowledge, representation and whiteness, we can come to understand the silent, normativity and invisibility of whiteness and its power within the production of knowledge and representation' (2004, p. 75). Moreton-Robinson looks to Foucault in her analysis of this relationship and draws upon his discussion of biopower, sovereignty and war.

War continues in modernity in different forms, while sovereignty shifts from a concern with society defending itself from external attacks to focus on its internal enemies. Race became the means through which the state's exercise

¹⁸ Foucault's reluctance towards labelling something as a 'theory' stemmed from his hesitation toward calling anything a complete or permanent understanding of the world. It was exactly this reductionism of 'truth'-seeking that he was trying to move away from (Taylor, 2014).

of power is extended from one of 'to let live or die', to one of 'to let live and to make live'. (2006, pp. 386–387)

Moreton-Robinson notes that although Foucault acknowledges the relationship between biopower and colonialism/imperialism, he does not extend this analysis of sovereignty to the colonial context. Despite this, she maintains that Foucault's biopower provides a useful discourse around which discussions of the nation states' resistance to Indigenous sovereignty can be better understood. Moreton-Robinson uses the concept 'possessive logic' to denote this resistance whilst at the same time reinforcing the taken-for-granted state owner, control and domination. The possessive logic of patriarchal white sovereignty is compelled to deny and refuse what it cannot own — the sovereignty of the Indigenous other (Moreton-Robinson, 2011a, p. 647).

This section has introduced race as significant to this thesis and identified W.E.B. Du Bois, Frantz Fanon and Michel Foucault as fundamental thinkers who have shaped the way that race is theorised today. Both the social construction of race and racial formation theory were developed in consideration of the contributions that Du Bois, Fanon and Foucault have made.

The social construction of race and racial formation theory

The social construction of race is an important and useful way of understanding the consequences that race thinking (Nayak, 2007) have on social structures. Understanding that race is socially constructed has the potential to disrupt the taken-for-granted belief that race is both biologically based and hierarchical, whilst accepting race as a social construct acknowledges that race has been constructed as a way of appropriating power. Despite the significance of the concept, racial thinking cannot be undone just by understanding race as a social construct (Hylton, 2010). This line of argument is demonstrated in a contemporary sense through the work of American sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant and their racial formation theory (2015), which traces the 'sociohistorical process by which racial identities are created, lived out, transformed, and destroyed' (2015, p. 109). Omi and Winant argue that no other social conflict can be understood without first understanding the ubiquity of race. Inspired by Du Bois among others, racial formation emerged in the 1980s as a reaction to the then-dominant modes of theorising about race in mainstream social science as fixed, binary and as a false consciousness (Omi & Winant, 2012, p. 303).¹⁹ Racial

¹⁹ False consciousness refers to the inability to recognise inequality and exploitation in a

formation theory is considered one of the most influential contemporary theories of race and ethnicity in the social sciences (Feagin & Elias, 2013). Each edition of *Racial Formation in the United States* (1984, 1994, 2015) addressed the ever-changing construction of race whilst reminding us that race is neither mythic nor simply a construct (Knowles, 2010, p. 30). Race is not static, instead cultural and social understandings and practices of race change through time and space. This means that as much as race is socially constructed, and the scientific basis for racism has been invalidated, it relies on the maintenance and practice of racialised cultural and social attitudes to sustain it. In other words, it is not enough to acknowledge that race is socially constructed, the specific social and cultural structures that sustain racial thinking must be transformed. Racial formation theory maintains that in order to understand the racial state we must first understand how race is constructed. In contrast to racial formation theory, sociologists Joe Feagin and Sean Elias argue that we must understand how racism works before we can theorise race (Golash-Boza, 2013).

Racism

Despite the contributions that American scholarship, particularly racial formation theory, had on early studies of race, it failed to trace race and whiteness back to the dispossession of Native Americans and their colonisation. Although Omi and Winant's racial formation theory remains fundamental when understanding race, a number of scholars (Bonilla-Silva, 1996; Feagin & Elias, 2013; A. Smith, 2010) have critiqued its focus on political determinism and the fact that it ignores whiteness, Indigeneity and settler colonialism whilst focusing on the racialisation of African Americans, slavery and the civil rights movement. These scholars argue that it is more important to look to the social structure and culture within which race and racism emerged, rather than tracing racial formation. In other words, racial formation theory has been criticised for its emphasis on race rather than on racism (Golash-Boza, 2013). Central to this debate is the question as to what came first: race or racism. In this, Australian critical race and whiteness scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson sees a 'refusal within the American work to acknowledge America as a former colony of Britain; instead the focus is on its independence as a nation' (2004, p. viii). Alongside Moreton-Robinson (2015), Marcia Langton (1999), and Aboriginal educationalist Martin Nakata (2007) bridge this gap in

capitalist society because of the prevalence and existence of social class (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2016).

the context of race and whiteness studies in Australia, connecting the discursive construct of race with processes of colonisation, occupation and oppression.

Similarly, sociologist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva critiques Omi and Winant's racial formation theory as giving undue attention to ideological/cultural processes, which he claims obscures the social and general character of racialised societies (1996, p. 466). Although the concept of racism has become a central analytical category in contemporary social science, the concept is of recent origin (Bonilla-Silva, 1996; Bowser, 2017; Coram, 2007; Kaufman, 2001). Despite being used as a descriptor in the 1902 edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Bowser, 2017), its use within the social sciences can be traced to the world of American anthropologist Ruth Benedict (1945) and mission educator Edmund Soper (1947). In both of their books, racism was used to describe the hierarchical organisation of human beings based on visible difference.

Bonilla-Silva argues that far too often racism is under theorised and under defined (1996). Building on the institutionalist, internal colonial, and racial formation perspectives, Bonilla-Silva proposes a structural theory of race which understands that racism is one aspect of a larger racial system. Here race is understood as foundational to the structure of the society in question. Whilst recognising that all racialised social systems are hierarchical, Bonilla-Silva demonstrates that racism prevails regardless of the way that the social system is structured.²⁰ Bonilla-Silva uses the example of slavery in America (1996), but here I want to draw on the Australian context. In Australia, the domination of Aboriginal people through colonial government policies was overt and ideologically racist, however, following the discovery of the DNA molecule, and the fact that government policies no longer overtly discriminated against Aboriginal people, racism transformed and became covert, hegemonic and indirect. Bonilla-Silva states that, 'generally, the more dissimilar the races' life chances, the more racialized the social system' (1996, p. 470). This is clearly the case, when we consider the lower life expectancy, higher incarceration rate, disparate health and education outcomes of Aboriginal Australians compared to white Australians. Here, we can see that racism is hierarchical, ideological, hegemonic and structural. Bonilla-Silva argues that once a society becomes racialised, racialisation develops a life of its own.

²⁰ Bonilla-Silva proposed that racialised social systems are present in those societies in which economic, political, social, and ideological levels are partially structured by the placement of racialised bodies (Bonilla-Silva, 1996, p. 469).

Alongside Bonilla-Silva's structural theory of racism, Feagin's theory of systemic racism (2013a) was developed as a response to the failure of racial formation theory to fully conceptualise the central role that racism has played in the formation of the USA (Feagin & Elias, 2013) and can be expanded to include other settler colonial nation-states around the world. Similar to theories of structural racism, the theory of systemic racism maintains that racial oppression is foundational and systemic to social organisation, and that, in this respect, racism and racial oppression are understood by taking the specificities of social organisation, like time and space, into account (Feagin & Elias, 2013). Systemic racism describes the material, social and ideological relationships of racism that manifest in all major social institutions throughout the world. In this respect, racism will always exist so long as the racial social systems within which they are sustained continue. Similar to Bonilla-Silva's structural theory of racism, Feagin identifies systemic racism through the racialised dimensions of society, including but not limited to: racist ideology, stereotyped attitudes, racist emotions and discriminatory habits (2017, p. xii).

These conceptualisations of racism both recognise white supremacy as the central point around which systemic (Feagin, 2013a) or structural (Bonilla-Silva, 1996) racism operates. Essed's 'everyday racism' (2002, p. 177) similarly connects 'structural forces of racism with routine situations in everyday life [and] links ideological dimensions of racism with daily attitudes' (2002, p. 177). Her theory interprets the reproduction of racism in terms of the way that it is experienced in everyday life and expands on the above accounts in that her application of structural theories of racism recognises that racism occurs at both the institutional and individual level (p. 178). Such a perspective acknowledges that racism occurs at both the structural and intersectional level (Essed, 2002) bringing macro and micro level analyses of race and racism together.

By looking at the way that race is practiced structurally, and to what end, we understand that whiteness is the common denominator. Feagin uses his concept, the 'white racial frame' (2013b), to articulate the way that race is positioned around the dominant framework of whiteness. He demonstrates that America was founded on racism and that systemic racism operates within the white racial frame that has legitimised, rationalised and shaped racial oppression and inequality in America. Cynthia Kaufman (2001) similarly draws attention to racism, at both the structural and systemic level, as central to white lives and highlights the way that white privilege operates discursively to deem racism a black problem rather than a white one. Drawing on an Australian context, the Federal Government's 'Close the Gap' initiative works

from the perspective that settler colonialism is the dominant paradigm which Aboriginal people need to work within in order to 'close the gap'. This puts the responsibility for social transformation on Aboriginal people to work within the dominant system of power rather than on the dominant system of power working to compensate and extinguish white privilege. Langton, Moreton-Robinson and, in particular, legal scholar Larissa Behrendt have demonstrated this concept, though not explicitly using this term, within the Australian context, where they have argued that the racialisation and oppression of Aboriginal people was (and is) fundamental to colonisation and has been an important part of the Australian constitution. Langton uses the term 'Aboriginality' to highlight that for many settler people, their understanding of Aboriginal peoples and culture is informed by dominant (white) discursive constructions rather than from Aboriginal people themselves (1993). Moreton-Robinson draws on the term, *patriarchal white sovereignty* (2015) to highlight that the Australian nation has been constructed around white straight men taking possession of Australia as well as its systems of power. Non-whites, women and gay men are excluded from this system of power to various degrees. For Behrendt, contemporary systems of power work to perpetuate a psychological terra nullius that validates white claims to sovereignty (1998).

Moreton-Robinson's 'white patriarchal sovereignty' articulates the conditions within which social dominance is practiced in Australia today in consideration of social, cultural and historic contexts of possession. She writes that patriarchal white sovereignty in the Australian context 'derives from the illegal act of possession and is most acutely manifest in the state and its regulatory mechanisms such as the law' (2009, p. 64). In this way, possession is always tied to rights²¹ and power in already racialised ways. Moreton-Robinson uses the concept 'possessive logic' to denote this resistance whilst at the same time reinforcing taken-for-granted state ownership, control and domination. The possessive logic of patriarchal white sovereignty is compelled to deny and refuse what it cannot own — the sovereignty of the Indigenous other (Moreton-Robinson, 2011a, p. 647). The possessive logic of patriarchal white sovereignty is epistemologically and ontologically privileged yet is invisible within its socio-discursive regime. It is perpetuated through disciplinary knowledges and modern colonial practices (Moreton-Robinson 2011, b, p. 414). It is important to note, as Moreton-

²¹ See philosopher John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* (2006) and his arguments around 'natural rights'.

Robinson does, that whiteness is constitutive of the epistemology of the West, and is therefore constitutive of colonisation. She states that whiteness 'is an invisible regime of power that secures hegemony through discourse and has material effects in everyday life' (2004, p. 75). From this perspective, race cannot exist without whiteness.

Whiteness

Over the past thirty years in particular, the study of whiteness has become one of the primary modes through which racial oppression and privilege have been explored (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; McIntosh, 1988). After all, race is a term that has been used primarily by whites, as a way of maintaining the status quo (Levine-Rasky, 2002). From this perspective, race cannot exist without whiteness. Critical race and whiteness scholar Anoop Nayak states that 'whiteness is the rubric through which many of our ideas of citizenship and human rights are written' (2007, p. 738). It is predominantly because of the everyday and normalised practice of whiteness that the construction of whiteness is a central concern of this thesis. Sociologist Cynthia Levine-Rasky argues that whiteness cannot be examined without understanding social difference, because whiteness is constructed around social differences (2002, p. 1). Levine-Rasky unpacks the term 'white', by relating it back to 'the conglomerate of the racially dominant group of people of European descent' (2002, p. 2) and refers to 'whiteness' as the processes through which whites acquire and deploy social dominance (p. 2). Whiteness is a modern invention, with the ability to change over time and space, it is a social norm where many social privileges and importantly, bonds of whiteness have yet to be deconstructed (Nayak, 2007, p. 738). Race and ethnicity scholar Richard Dyer points out that:

A sense of being white, of belonging to a white race, only widely developed in the USA in the nineteenth century as part of the process of establishing US identity. The appeal to a common whiteness addressed European settlers, on the one hand over and against the indigenous reds and the imported blacks, and on the other over and above the particularities of the different European nations from which they had come. (1997, p. 19)

Dyer and social geographer Alastair Bonnett have both written extensively about the invisibility of whiteness and the role that it plays in the distribution of power. Whites have and continue to comment on racist practice but tend not to write about the privilege and lived experience of whiteness and the consequential degradation and marginalisation of non-whites. This situation is particularly apparent in Australia

where formal education articulates Indigenous or Aboriginal studies programs in preference to studies of race and racism that are not available to Australian secondary or tertiary students. Dyer's important book, *White* (1997) explores this contention. Dyer argues that as long as race is something only applied to non-white peoples, whiteness functions as the human norm. He points out that, 'Other people are raced, we are just people' (p. 1). A key aspect of critical race theory is the belief that by challenging this assumption, we have the ability to dislodge them/us from the position of power (p. 2).

Similarly, Bonnett states that, 'whilst European, relatively recent, forms of whiteness are attracting attention, other experiences of whiteness, developed before the late modern era or outside North America and Europe, have receded ever further from view' (2000, p. 7). Whiteness, in this respect, is considered as natural, invisible, normal, and unbound by the social and cultural restrictions of race. One of the most fundamental issues with whiteness is the inability for whites to understand the way that whiteness is privileged, and within this, the fact that racism works to reinforce white racial superiority. Likewise, Coco Fusco recognised that, 'To ignore white ethnicity is to redouble its hegemony by naturalising it' (1988, p. 91). Fusco's often-quoted remark is significant because it articulates the hegemonic²² nature of white supremacy and privilege (Cahill, 2014; Kaufman, 2001). Their conceptualisation of this can be understood as 'hegemonic whiteness' (Allen, 2004; Meghji, 2017; Peake, 2009; Schein, 2018; Spanierman & Smith, 2017). White supremacy locates whiteness within the institutions, practices and processes that produce whiteness in the first place. More specifically, as Anne Bonds and Joshua Inwood note, white supremacy, 'describes and locates racial domination by underscoring the material production and violence of racial structures and the hegemony of whiteness in settler societies' (2015, p. 716). A second pillar of white supremacy is the logic of genocide. This logic holds that Aboriginal peoples must disappear. In fact, they must *always* be disappearing, in order to enable the non-Aboriginal peoples' rightful claim to land (A. Smith, 2010, p. 2). Langton argues that this 'mythology of white supremacy' survives in Australia today and is kept current by 'neo-conservatives, or the new right, in the academy who reintroduce these ideas as if they were natural' (1999, p. 30). Similarly, Alistair Bonnett (2000) argues that through the spread of Western ideologies and practices, whiteness has been culturally produced and reproduced within different nation states around the

²² From Antonio Gramsci's theory on hegemony.

world. Bonnett argues that an examination of the ways that different cultures assimilate and reproduce racial whiteness is important (1997).

Embodying whiteness

In order to understand how whiteness and, more widely, race are socially constructed, whiteness scholars have explored the representation and embodiment of whiteness (Dyer, 1997; Hage, 1999). Dyer defines the embodiment of whiteness by three elements of its constitution: Christianity, 'race' and enterprise/imperialism (Dyer, 1997, p. 14). Briefly, Christianity can be understood in this context, as shaping almost all of the fundamental levels of Western culture — the way we parent, values of suffering and guilt and of being a 'good (read: white) citizen'. It is this, more than whether or not we know or understand the Bible story, that is important when understanding the way that whiteness is conceptualised and practiced today. Until relatively recently, in line with ethnocentric and racist sentiments, Catholics, especially those from Ireland and Italy, have been discriminated against since (at least) the late 17th century, especially in the USA and Australia. Being Christian, in this respect, is referred to as being Protestant (Dyer, 1997; Ignatiev, 1995). The belief was that if you were white and English you were protestant. Whereas those whose cultural heritage aligned with Ireland or Italian, i.e. with an Irish- or Italian-sounding name, or those who spoke in their native tongue or with an Irish accent were assumed as Catholic and therefore were not considered as white.

Over time the exnominal nature of whiteness has changed to include people who were previously raced but have since transcended into 'whiteness', for example the Catholic Irish (Ignatiev, 1995). The Catholic Irish, were raced and thus persecuted due to anti-Catholicism and the assumption of poverty. This can similarly be extended to Catholic Italian immigrants in America. Dyer refers to this group as 'ethnic Whites' and argues that some ethnic groups are 'more securely white than others' (1997, p. 4). Following the logic set out by Dyer, being English and poor was more important than being Irish and wealthy. Bonnett also draws this link, stating that within Western-European and European settler societies, the pale complexion attributed to aristocrats provided a physical marker of their noble descent and that these traditions were woven into 'Christian representational tropes that privileged whiteness by associating chastity and godliness' (2000, p. 16). This is exemplified by the fact that Jesus Christ, a Middle-Eastern Jew with brown skin, transcended into whiteness within Christian depictions. To 'embody whiteness' is to be Christian, and to live within a settler colonial capitalist system. So for instance, I am white because I am operate within Christian ideals, have English

lineage and abide by imperial and capitalist conventions. Dyer observes that in contrast to the other two major religions of 'the book', Judaism and Islam, Christianity is both physical and body-minded. Neither Judaism nor Islam has a comparable iconography and sacramental system of the body; in fact, Islam expressly forbids representations of the Prophet. Christianity by contrast, is obsessed with Christ's body and mind/body dualism. Dyer argues that the motif of embodiment stems from Christianity's obsession with Christ's body. By embodying whiteness, one is demonstrating their ethereal link to Christ (1997, pp. 16-18). So, despite the fact that the role that Christianity plays within the Western world has changed, its significance to contemporary understandings of whiteness prevails because of the distinctive European culture founded upon it (Dyer, 1997, p. 18). Because of this relationship, the practice of race, and within it, whiteness, has been naturalised and is today seen as common sense, and has hence, become exnominational (Barthes, 1972).

Australian critical race and whiteness scholar Fiona Nicoll's research focuses on 'white virtue' (2004) and, aligned with critical race and whiteness studies, goes beyond the everyday practice of 'being the good white person' (2004). Through her research, Nicoll presents whiteness 'as a set of institutionalised practices which legitimate and privilege certain ways of knowing, seeing, curating and being at home in Australia' (2004, p. 8). Whiteness in this context is practiced as natural, normal and invisible. Rather than focusing on overtly racist behaviour, critical race and whiteness studies look at the ways that whiteness serves to disempower those considered as non-white. Nicoll argues that it is precisely 'our ontological sense of being a good white person' that is the problem: 'We are conditioned to exercise our sovereignty against that of Aboriginal Australians through [...] the performative assumption of perspective' (2004, p. 19).²³ Nicoll presents whiteness 'as a set of institutionalised practices which legitimate and privilege certain ways of knowing, seeing, curating and being at home in Australia' (2004, p. 18). In this way, whiteness is practiced as natural, normal and invisible. Whiteness is linked to individual agency whilst race is aligned to non-white people.

²³ Nicoll's 'performative assumption of perspective' expands on Judith Butler's definition of 'performative acts': 'Performative acts are forms of authoritative speech: most performatives, for instance, are statements that, in the uttering, also perform a certain exercise and exercise a binding power. Implicated in a network of authorization and punishment, performatives tend to include legal sentences, baptisms, inaugurations, declarations of ownership, statements that not only perform an action, but confer a binding power on the action performed. The power of discourse to produce that which it names is thus essentially linked with the question of performativity. The performative is thus one domain in which power acts as discourse' (Butler, 2014, p. 255).

Moreton-Robinson warns that, 'it would be a mistake [...] to place total responsibility with the individual white subjects for their attitudes and behaviours when relations of force shape and produce the conditions under which racism flourishes' (2011a). Patrick Wolfe similarly argues that as useful as it is to recognise race as a social construct (especially for denaturalising race) it does not actually get us (those within settler colonialism) very far (2016, p. 6). In this respect, it is important to understand that despite the fact that race (inclusive of whiteness) is socially constructed it has real connotations and consequences (Ahmed, 2007). It is not enough to state that race is socially constructed, we must also understand the ways that race, as a construct, has been used as a mechanism for colonial power. In this respect, settler colonialism continues today through white supremacy. Settler colonialism, as a project of empire, enables white supremacy (Bonds & Inwood, 2015, p. 716). Alongside Moreton-Robinson and Wolfe, postcolonial theorist Robert Young argues that race and colonialism, despite assumptions about the biological basis of race, are always linked. In this respect, Young asserts the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised as one continually in conflict for power (1996). This conflict over power is asserted differently depending on the specific goals of the settler colony. That is to say the historical experience and emergence of the racialisation of Aboriginal Australians is embedded differently both socially and historically to that experienced by African Americans. Race and racism are therefore constructed in different ways. While African Americans were bought into slavery to work the land (in the Lockean tradition),²⁴ in effect confirming white ownership of land, Native Americans (much like Aboriginal Australians) were not valued for their propagation of the land, but were raced in a different way. Wolfe explains that, 'the role that colonialism has assigned to Indigenous people is to disappear' (2016, p. 2), whereas African Americans were colonised for their labour. In this respect, just as it is important to understand that race and racism are practiced differently through time and space, so does the settler colonial system that maintains it.

Settler colonialism

What we know, how we know, and on whose terms, we know (Sonn, 2004, p. 306), are inextricably linked to issues of race, ethnicity, and other dimensions of oppression. Vital to understanding the centrality of race in everyday life, the concepts of discourse and representation help us to understand the way that race has been so effectively

²⁴ See James Tully's *A Discourse on Property: John Locke and his adversaries* (1980).

socially constructed (Moreton-Robinson, 2009, p. 65) and represented as common sense. Discourse analyses of race (Gilroy, 2002) focus on the way that race is communicated rather than on 'raced bodies, lives, social practices and social inequalities' (Knowles, 2010, p. 26). Although such racist practices remain an urgent political and social problem, Paul Gilroy's approach to discourse argues that theorists concerned with race reinforce common-sense understandings of race (Knowles, 2010, p. 26). Just as discourse analysis helps us to understand the centrality of race in everyday life, the analysis of discourse helps us to understand the centrality of settler colonialism in Australian everyday life as well as the way that Aboriginal people are raced in Australia.

Despite the significance of critical theorisations of race and whiteness, they do not always reflect the experiences of First Nations people. This is especially true within American scholarship where the focus has been on the African American experience of race rather than on the Native American experience of race (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Du Bois, 1990; Feagin, 2014; Omi & Winant, 2015). This is highly problematic because it serves to further marginalise Native American people as outside of race scholarship and places both Native Americans and colonisation as part of the past. Within critical race scholarship, especially as applied to the law, sociology and within the humanities and social sciences, the experience of race has been represented in terms of the racialised African American 'black' body and tied to slavery, the civil rights movement and white hostility. Racism has also been studied in relation to immigration and its threat to national identity and unity encapsulated within the 'white' body. Both of these experiences of race and racism do not fully appreciate the experience of Indigeneity in America nor in Australia and rest of the world. In the introduction to his book, *Settler Colonialism and the elimination of the Native* (2016), Patrick Wolfe discusses the ways that racism is practiced and experienced differently by 'settlers' and Indigenous populations. Wolfe speaks to the importance of understanding the specificities of race within the colonial context whilst acknowledging that race and the execution of racism are experienced differently historically, geographically and culturally.

There has been an enormous amount of scholarship that speaks to the experience and practice of colonisation, from both the perspective of the coloniser and the colonised. Colonialism has been theorised by Edward Said (1979), Homi Bhabha (1984, 1994, 2002) Frantz Fanon (1963), Paul Gilroy (1993) and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1999) among others. Perhaps because of the scholarly attention that it has received, postcolonialism, settler colonialism, decolonisation, neocolonialism and

(post)colonisation are terms which tend to be under appreciated or incorrectly consolidated (Young, 2001a). As Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen remind us, ‘the age of settler colonialism may be behind us, but its legacies are everywhere to be seen’ (2005, p. 1) as exemplified through landholding, laws and race relations. John McLeod defines colonialism as a ‘particular historical manifestation of imperialism, specific to certain places and times’ (2010, p. 8) and argues that, ‘we can regard the British Empire as one form of an imperial economic and political structure’ (2010). In this way, it is important to understand that the colonising process is never complete but that, as Moreton-Robinson argues from the Aboriginal perspective, ‘it has only changed in form from that which our ancestors encountered’ (2015, p. 11). I want to briefly summarise the importance of differentiating between, particularly, colonialism, postcolonialism and settler colonialism before moving onto a broader discussion of the settler colonial framework for understanding the way that colonisation continues to define Australian national identity today, a core focus of this thesis.

Settler colonialism is a mode of domination and an ongoing phenomenon that continues to reproduce the unequal relationships which colonisation was founded upon (Wolfe, 2016). It is geopolitical (Cavanagh & Veracini, 2017), gendered (Arvin, Tuck, & Morrill, 2013; Nakano Glenn, 2015) and is a globalising and contemporary phenomenon (Veracini, 2012). Although settler colonial studies has only consolidated in the last two decades as a distinct field, the study of domination is much older (Cavanagh & Veracini, 2017) and has taken many forms ranging from a focus on decolonisation in the 1950s and ‘60s, on neocolonialism and internal colonialism in the 1970s, postcolonialism (or post-colonialism) in the 1980s to new imperial history of the 1990s (Cavanagh & Veracini, 2017). Despite their geopolitical and contextual differences, each of these evolutions was established on the understanding that colonialism is characterised by the ability to reproduce itself by maintaining difference and inequality between coloniser and colonised. The ideological structures which colonialism operates within are organised around cultural understandings of race (Wolfe, 2016). As a further area of study, settler colonialism refers specifically to colonial situations where the colonisers stayed. Both Wolfe and settler colonialist Lorenzo Veracini articulate this difference in that colonialism works to dominate the body whereas settler colonial domination works to erase or eliminate colonised subjectivities (Cavanagh & Veracini, 2017; Wolfe, 2006).

Geographers Anne Bonds and Joshua Inwood define settler colonialism by the permanency of its occupation and by the attempted removal of Aboriginal peoples with

the express purpose of building an ethnically distinct national community (2015, p. 716). Their understanding of settler colonialism is important in the context of this thesis, because it helps us to understand the way that whiteness has emerged as Australia's consolidated national identity. Langton argues that the scientifically disproven racialisation of Aboriginal people by white Australians and the related set of assumptions associated with this 'clearly serves some deep psychological purpose in Australian society' (1999, p. 30). This social psychological purpose can be unpacked within the framework of settler colonialism. Moreton-Robinson confirms this and argues that whiteness is constitutive of the epistemology of the 'West'²⁵ (Young, 2001b), and is therefore constitutive of colonisation. She states that whiteness 'is an invisible regime of power that secures hegemony through discourse and has material effects in everyday life' (2004, p. 75). The possessive logic of patriarchal white sovereignty is epistemologically and ontologically privileged yet is invisible within its socio-discursive regime of settler colonialism and is perpetuated through disciplinary knowledges and modern colonial practices (Moreton-Robinson, 2011b, p. 414).²⁶

The 'burgeoning field' (Kelley, 2017, p. 267) of settler colonial studies cannot be understood without acknowledging the foundational contribution that Patrick Wolfe has made to understanding the nature and practice of settler colonialism as well as to specificities of race and racism. Wolfe's logic of elimination is especially useful because of the contradictory way that settler colonialism both requires the dispossession of First Nations peoples to claim sovereignty, whilst also laying claim to Indigeneity. In other words, settler colonisation seeks to simultaneously possess and dispossess Aboriginal people. Wolfe confirms this assertion in the context of Australia in his statement: 'the

²⁵ Daniel Martin Varisco (2015) asks, 'Is there some cultural entity that can viably be deemed the West?' (p. 164). This is an important question to ask especially considering that, not unlike, whiteness, the west is a concept which so often lacks reflection, especially in relation to representation and analysis of the 'East'. However, it is important to remember that the East, or the 'Orient' as it is conceptualised as by Edward Said (Said, 1979) does not exist without the West's conceptualisation of it. In this respect, the West exists in its relation to the Orient or the East and encompasses all those attributes that the East cannot and does not. Varisco articulates these characteristics well: 'To be a Westerner is not just to be a native of Europe or America (Europe's earlier West), but to identify as both the culmination of a lauded tradition of civilisation from classical Greece and as the synecdoche of modernity. The West, in the most chauvinistic sense, stands for the broad civilization in which enlightenment rationality has theoretically trumped religious dogmatism and military superiority' (Varisco, 2015, pp. 164-165).

²⁶ This will be explored in the following chapter, which focuses on the problematic way that Aboriginal people have been represented and written about through the academy and within the public sphere.

erasure of indigeneity conflicts with the assertion of settler nationalism' (2006, p. 389). He argues that, 'on the one hand, settler society required the practical elimination of the natives in order to establish itself on their territory' (2006, p. 389) whilst, 'on the symbolic level, however, settler society subsequently sought to recuperate indigeneity in order to express its different — and accordingly, its independence — from the mother country' (2006, p. 389). Here we see how the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism works both negatively and positively — it simultaneously removes and transforms.

Wolfe's logic of elimination not only refers to the summary liquidation of Aboriginal people, but also to the reappropriation of a 'foundational disavowed Aboriginality' (2006, p. 389). In this respect, settler colonialism has both negative and positive dimensions. Wolfe states that 'negatively, it strives for the dissolution of native societies. Positively, it erects a new colonial society on the expropriated land base' (2006, p. 388) and '[i]n its positive aspect, the logic of elimination marks a return whereby the native repressed continues to structure settler-colonial society' (2006, p. 390). Although Wolfe's logic of elimination was developed as a way of understanding genocide and assimilation as important structural dimensions of settler colonialism, I want to expand on this logic to include the logic of the settler colonial psyche which requires that Aboriginal people are dispossessed whilst their culture is reappropriated and retextualised within settler colonialism, as a way of legitimising white settlement. This psychological logic is useful in explaining the many cultural contradictions within the central and western goldfields district, where Aboriginal sovereignty has been retextualised into white belonging.

The logic of elimination is also useful when tracing the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians to the gold rush era, where Aboriginal people were present and visible (as demonstrated in chapter five). By applying the logic of elimination, we are able to situate the invisible presence of Aboriginal-Victorian people and cultural heritage (particularly in the central and western goldfields district) within the larger framework of settler colonialism. The gold rush narrative removes Aboriginal presences from goldfields narratives, and replaces their absence with a celebration of the accomplishments of settler colonialism, primarily through processes of meaning-making and place-making, which constantly affirm metanarratives of terra nullius (Banivanua Mar, 2012, p. 177). Wolfe's logic of elimination requires that settler colonialism works negatively and positively to not just replace Aboriginal sovereignty, but through a process of refraction (2006, p. 389), to imprint Aboriginal sovereignty as

belonging within the framework of settler colonialism. Acknowledging that, 'invasion is a structure not an event' (Wolfe, 2006, p. 388) as Wolfe reminds us, is important because it helps us to better understand the continued process of removing markers of Aboriginal sovereignty from the Australian settler consciousness, or as I propose in chapter four — from the settler colonial psyche. The validity and significance of understanding that invasion is a structure is clear when we think about the way that Aboriginal sovereignty is continually retextualised through the settler colonial psyche. It is for this reason that belonging is seen as central, within the framework of settler colonialism, to the settler colonial psyche.

For Wolfe, the role that settler colonialism assigned to Aboriginal people was to disappear, whilst the settlers' role was to fulfil the vacancy left open and, in a sense, 'become' native. The significance of being 'native-born' (Hirst, 2010a) was formalised in 1871 with the foundation of the Australian Natives Association (ANA), which was only for whites born in Australia, Aboriginal people were not regarded as Australian and instead became relegated to 'Aborigines' (O'Dowd, 2011, p. 31). Not only does the changing terminology of Aboriginal people speak to Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism, where Aboriginal people were removed 'as native' and replaced with settler people, it also speaks to the limitations of language and the connotations implicit within colonial language, a point made by Patricia Grimshaw and Russell McGregor:

The shift from 'native' to 'indigenous' has not been absolute. In much of Asia, the term 'native' still has a deeply unacceptable taint of colonial contempt. In North America by contrast, the adjective 'native' retains a relatively positive connotation, at least in the construction 'Native American'. Nor has the term 'indigenous' fully escaped the implication of being primitive. Even if indigenous values are now celebrated in a way that was not possible half a century ago, indigenes never conjures up images of modernity, technology and progress. (2006, p. 225)

Furthermore, Grimshaw and McGregor point out that the use of the term 'Indigenous' has come to refer to small, tribal, communities and as a global, social and cultural category of insubordination (p. 227).

Just as settler colonialism cannot be adequately understood without appreciating the valuable contribution that Wolfe has made to contemporary understandings of the acquisition and perpetuation of power, the discursive construction and representation of colonised subjectivity, and therein its presence and visibility, cannot be adequately understood in the context of colonisation without

appreciating Edward Said's critique of . For Said, refers to the discursive construction of the 'the non-west; the East — in particular Asia, India and the Middle-East — by the West (1979, p. 2) and includes the assumed authority that the Western academy has over the subject of the Orient and through discourses of binary opposition between the Orient and the 'West' (p. 1). For Said, is a style of thinking that extends beyond imperialism (p. 13) and continues to dominate, structure and authorise the world (p. 3) through the academy, politics, literature and technology (p. 2). Said's Orientalism maintains that the West is defined and comes to be known by what it is and not is, 'not only adjacent to the West but reflects the West's triumph; its material, cultural and geographical acquisitions (pp. 1-2). Here, Orientalism does not reflect the lived experiences, stories and identities of those living in 'the Orient' but reflects the way that the West thinks about the 'Orient' as a place of romance, adventure, exotic beings, memories and landscapes, and as a place of discovery (Said, 1979, p. 1). Western tourism of the east, the collection of 'Eastern' artefacts and the representation of the East as barbaric are examples of orientalism.

In this respect racism and colonialism will always be connected. The ideological structures that colonialism is organised around are structured by cultural understandings of race (Wolfe, 2016). Robert Young has written extensively on this idea and draws on Edward Said's application of Foucault's discourse theory. Foucault's theory of discourse describes the particular language which knowledge has to conform to in order to be regarded as true (Young, 1995) or the 'will to truth' (Foucault, 1981, p. 55) as Foucault termed it. Said builds on Foucault's 'discourse' by demonstrating the ways that the colonial project works to disempower non-whites (p. 22). In relation to this, Young argues that, 'Orientalism as a discourse allowed the creation of a general theoretical paradigm through which the cultural forms of colonial and imperial ideologies could be analysed' (1996, p. 58). In this respect, 'othering' is always tied to colonialism because as Young asserts the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised is continually in conflict for power (1996); one cannot exist without the other. Young, like Wolfe, argues that race and colonialism, despite assumptions about the biological basis of race, are mutually exclusive, because race is a central tool in the colonising process. The West defines itself as a superior civilisation by constructing itself in opposition to an 'exotic' but inferior 'Orient' (A. Smith, 2010).

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak similarly discusses the relegated, voiceless and disempowered position of the West's 'Native Informant' (1999, p.9) in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, where she argues the 'Native Informant' to be an incarnation of

Kant's 'man in the raw' (1999, p.14). To expand on this idea, Spivak tells us that a necessary modality of power binds the 'savage' to the West. The 'savage' has taken many forms, from Rousseau's 'noble savage' (Rousseau, 2009), to Said's 'Other', to Kant's 'man in the raw', and Spivak's 'Native Informant'.²⁷ It is because of this that Spivak argues that the native informant only exists because of its relationship to the West, through the power/knowledge nexus of whiteness (Yancy, 2001, p. 2), whereby 'the structure of the sublime is a troping'. I take Spivak's interpretation of Kant's sublime as the moral compass upon which humans act. If the structure of the sublime is hierarchical, placing educated/moral beings above all else, including nature, and the 'native informant' is defined by its failure to ascribe to this structure, then by definition the 'native informant' can only exist in relation to the sublime.

It is interesting to note, as Spivak does (1999), that far from documenting 'authentic' and ancient cultures, research discursively created a new way of thinking about, and positioning, Indigenous peoples worldwide. Therefore, Aboriginality could not exist as it does today without this period of exploration and 'discovery'. Because of this it is important to think about the social and historical factors that influence the outcomes of research.

Expanding on Said's 'Orientalism' in the Australian context, John Arnold and Bain Attwood use the term 'Aboriginalism' to characterise the mode of discourse which, 'produces authoritative and essentialist 'truths' about Indigenes, and which is characterised by a mutually supporting relationship between power and knowledge, as well as other forms of knowledge characterised by non-oppressive discursive practices' (1992, p. i). In the Australian context whiteness becomes known according to what it is not; structured discursively in the language of Aboriginalism (Arnold & Attwood, 1992). Arnold and Attwood's *Power, Knowledge and the Aborigines* focussed on ideological processes of control rather than violence as a way of interpreting the historical experience of Aboriginal people. The authors, explicitly referring to Edward Said's work, produced a critique of the conceptual and ideological apparatuses of knowledge and constructed notions such as the 'Aborigines' and 'Aboriginality', which implied the incompatibility of Aboriginal culture with modernity. The term, 'Aboriginalism', is informed by the work of Foucault (Foucault et al., 2000) and his particular assumptions

²⁷ Although Rousseau never actually used the term 'noble savage'; he believed that in a state of nature, men are essentially animals. He believed that people were born with great potential for goodness but that civilisation invariably corrupted them and alienated them from their higher selves.

about knowledge and power. The term speaks to the view that settler Australians have of themselves as native to Australia, as the true Indigenes (McLean, 1998). In this respect, for Attwood and Arnold, ‘power, knowledge and Aborigines are mutually constitutive [...] they produce and maintain one another through discursive practices’ (Attwood in Arnold & Attwood, 1992, p.i). Aboriginalism is important in this context because the term speaks to the hegemonic system of ideology, which continues to influence government policies, shape cultural attitudes and the disempowerment of Aboriginal peoples (Veracini, 2003, p. 227). Furthermore, it highlights the link between contemporary racism and attitudes towards Aboriginal people as symptomatic of colonialism’s need to remove Aboriginal subjectivity, individual experience, and downplay Aboriginal agency to be replaced with white belonging (K. Anderson & Perrin, 2008).²⁸

Colonialism and postcolonialism can be thought of as particular historical periods of time; the first is a period of control under imperial rule, whilst the second can be considered as the period following decolonisation — that is the process of transferring power from the empire to the new settler-colonial nation-state (McLeod, 2010). However, what has become increasingly clear over the last few decades, especially with the turn away from Commonwealth literature to ‘postcolonial’ literature, is the assumption that colonisation is over. This is problematic for a multitude of reasons, which, like thinking post-racially, gives the impression that because explicit colonial control is over, oppression, ideology and marginalisation are too. Far from this, as Stuart Hall (1996b), Patrick Wolfe (1999; 2006) and Robert Young (2001a; 2015) assert — colonialism is a state of mind, which exists far beyond the limits of past and present. Because of this, it is important to reflect on what post colonialism actually refers to and how it can be applied. Here John McLeod’s discussion of the distinctions between postcolonial, post-colonial and post colonial (2010) is useful. McLeod rejects the hyphenated post-colonial as giving the impression that colonialism is over, and instead refers to post colonialism as, ‘disparate forms of representations, reading practices, attitudes and values [which] circulate across the historical border between colonial rule and national independences’ (McLeod, 2010, p. 6). Here, the post colonial refers not to something tangible but to a way of thinking (McLeod, 2010, p. 6). In this way, it is important to understand that the colonising process is never complete,

²⁸ A point that will be expanded on throughout the following three chapters.

but that, as Moreton-Robinson states, 'it has only changed in form from that which our ancestors encountered' (2015, p. 11).

Similarly, Judd (2007) employs the term (post)colonial to critique the use of the term 'post' arguing that colonialism's legacies are alive and well (Strakosch & Macoun, 2012). Anne McClintock (1992), Ella Shohat (1992) and Stuart Hall (1996b) have similarly criticised postcolonialism, as an imperial ideology of ambivalence, binarism, linearity, ahistoricity and reductionism, which places the coloniser at the centre and the colonised as part of the distant past. In relation to this, Shohat argues that, 'the hegemonic structures and conceptual frameworks generated over the last five hundred years cannot be vanquished by waving the magical wand of the "post-colonial"' (1992, p. 105). Further to this, Hall states that, 'like the other "posts" with which it is aligned, it collapses different histories temporalities and racial formations into the same universalising category' (1996b, pp. 242-243). Instead, 'we' in the West must acknowledge that 'we' will never be *post* colonial and accept that post-colonisation is a myth that protects the settler from recognising the lived experience of colonisation and the continued power dichotomy that exists between settler and First peoples. An important aspect of this dichotomy is its inability to imagine the complexity of colonial identity, for those who occupy the space as both settler *and* Aboriginal. A critique of both settler colonial studies and race critical theories is that neither adequately account for this subjectivity, nor do they fully account for the key variances in discrimination between 'ethnic' groups and First Nations people (A. Smith, 2010, p. 1). Although Wolfe does point out the differences in the treatment and representation of black Australians compared to similarly dispossessed people around the world as distinct from the treatment and oppression of diasporic Africans (2016, p. 2), his eliminatory logic of settler colonialism has been critiqued as essentialising the Aboriginal experience as agentless and binary (M. Johnson, 2014). Chris Hallinan and Barry Judd demonstrated this fact in relation to Stuart Hall's ideas about inferential racism and argued that, 'there is a clear need to address the specific cultural and historical factors associated with Australian indigeneity and colonialism' (2007, p. 433). For Hallinan and Judd, the emergence of an Australian postcolonial theory can only be achieved if it is framed in reference to Australian-Aboriginal thinkers. Such a theory requires that Aboriginal culture is accepted for its fluidity, diversity and complexity (2007, p. 433).

The failure of contemporary (post)colonial theory to account for the 'in-between' space that many Aboriginal people occupy as both Indigenous and settler was a core focus of Judd's PhD thesis, and remains a core focus of his critique of the cross-

cultural and binary engagement with Aboriginal people. It is one of the reasons why this thesis looks to the diverse experiences of Aboriginal people in post-settlement Victoria as opposed to identity construction in pre-contact or remote areas of Australia where Aboriginal people live in more characteristically 'traditional' ways. It is for the oversaturation of such a representation that this thesis is primarily concerned with the everyday practice of whiteness within Australian settler nationalism. Here, whiteness is more than a subjectivity, it permeates all aspects of Australian society. Whiteness is both a frame of mind, a lived experience, invisible and taken for granted, it is both a starting point and an end point. Similar to Judd, Sara Ahmed speaks to the way that whiteness is assumed to be 'the starting point' (2014) from which society is constructed, or 'oriented' around. She problematises this positionality as one inherently flawed for those who, like Judd (as both Aboriginal and settler) and herself (as white, brown and queer), have a 'mixed orientation' (2014, p. 106).

This section has situated race within imperialism and colonialism and subsequently as a mechanism for control. Although racial superiority has been practiced for millennia, this thesis situates the analysis of race as relation to the now-defunct biological basis of race, which was popularised in the mid-late 19th century. Despite its invalidity, the biological basis of race theory continues to define racial hierarchies and white supremacy throughout the world. It is important to understand that despite the fact that race is socially constructed, it is still politically grounded and embedded structurally. Rather than tracing the way that race has been constructed, it is more important to look at the specific social and cultural mechanisms that sustain it. It is for this reason that the study of racism is so important. We must understand racism as more than an individual bias or pathology but recognise that racism is sustained structurally through discourses of whiteness. For all the good that race scholarship has done, its emphasis has been on racial discrimination and ethnicity, which does not fully account for the dispossession of First Nations people and racism as symptomatic of colonisation (A. Smith, 2010, p. 1). It is because of this that race, racism and whiteness are examined through the framework of settler colonialism. Settler colonialism, despite drawing from post-colonialism, must be understood as operating discursively, structurally and culturally. Despite the fact that Australia was federated in 1901, we still live in and sustain a settler colonial identity. Aboriginal people occupy a precarious place within settler colonial Australia and challenge the Commonwealth's sovereign claim to Australia. I propose in the following chapters that

racism and racial thinking operate as both a mechanism for control as well as symptomatic of a white identity crisis.

Conclusion

This chapter has positioned race within settler colonialism where whiteness works to perpetuate colonial power. For this reason, I consider settler colonialism as a useful framework for interrogating the unconscious and often ignored role that imperialism and colonialism has had and continues to have on dominant social structures. Critical race and whiteness theories are useful in understanding how closely connected concepts of race and whiteness are to Australian national identity and how they are fundamental for cross-cultural research. This has been essential in understanding how I as a 'white' researcher am implicated within the research process as well as when approaching ethical and culturally-appropriate cross-cultural fieldwork. Race works within the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism where the native is eliminated *as native* through genocide and assimilation, but also symbolically/psychologically through sport, where the native becomes 'black'. This is different to the colonial period, including the Victorian gold rush, where the native was eliminated *as native* so that the white settler could become 'native'. Bonds and Inwood remind us that, far from relegating white supremacy and settler colonialism to historical contexts, white supremacy and settler colonialism 'both inform past, present and future formations of race' (2015, p. 715).

Memory, time and place dictate our interpretation of the past, how we think about the present and how we imagine the future (Banivanua Mar, 2012, p. 176). Langton asks:

Can we ever decolonise Australian institutions? Can we decolonise our minds? Probably not! But we can try to find ways to undermine the colonial hegemony. (1993, p. 8)

The pervasive presence and everyday practice of whiteness is the very reason that decentring the normalisation of whiteness in racial narratives (as well as in everyday life) is an important step towards 'decolonising' Australia, if indeed this is even possible. Understanding the pervasive and everyday practices of whiteness and settler colonialism is an important way of situating Aboriginality and Aboriginal sovereignty in contemporary Australian culture in a meaningful way.

This chapter has articulated the core differences between race, ethnicity and Indigeneity, and has provided a critique of the representations of Aboriginal peoples in essentialised ways. Such a reading of Indigeneity does not account for the contemporary settler colonial experience where Aboriginal and settler people occupy multiple subjectivities at the same time. The following chapter draws a link between colonial knowledge production practices in Australia and the contemporary representation of Aboriginal people within the mainstream.

Methodological Literature Review

Constructing the Other: Contemporary Research Practices in Australia

The previous chapter situated this thesis within a settler colonial framework, where race is explored through the lens of critical race and whiteness studies. Here, race is acknowledged as a core stabiliser of settler colonialism. Colonial power and control are sustained through racial thinking. This perspective acknowledges the continued role that colonial power and control plays in the everyday experience of race and racism in Australia. This chapter considers the role that colonial practices of knowledge production plays in cross-cultural research practices and contemporary understandings of Aboriginality. Tracing the history of this movement, through the development of classical/social anthropology in Australia has been a fundamental way of understanding how to appropriately conduct research today. For this reason, I have surveyed the historical development of Australian anthropology through the literature in order to understand the problematic relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Western academy in Australia, and the implications this has for both me as a 'white' researcher and for the processes through which I have conducted this research. The research methodology is representative of ethical research engagements with global Indigeneity and can be considered as a useful exemplar of culturally respectful research practice. Kathy Absolon and Cam Willett argue that:

One of the most fundamental principles of Aboriginal research methodology is the necessity for the researcher to locate himself or herself. Identifying at the outset, the location from which the voice of the researcher emanates is an Aboriginal way of ensuring that those who study, write and participate in knowledge creation are accountable for their own positionality. (in L. A. Brown & Strega, 2005, p. 97)

It is important for contemporary white researchers conducting cross-cultural research to consider the way their own research is informed by colonial research practices and to be aware of the hegemonic power dynamic that places the researcher within the

position of power and the participant as subordinate. In this respect, taking an historicist approach to exploring the central themes of this thesis — white Australian nationalism, the gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football — is important. This methodology reflects a new mode of conducting research whereby the voice of the researcher is located within the text and their relationship to the area of study is interrogated.

Christopher Sonn states that, ‘the challenges for decolonising practice are complex and call for the explication and negotiation of epistemological and ontological positions that inform praxis’ (2004, p. 307). Reflecting on past research practices and methodology has been an important and necessary part of conducting primary and secondary research for this thesis. This has been important because it has allowed me to gain a greater understanding of the broader context of research conducted about Aboriginal peoples in Australia, the role that this specific research has had in essentialised constructions of Aboriginal cultural formations and has helped to acknowledge the limitations and ongoing consequences of past research practices. By tracing the relationship between power and knowledge in the practice of the Western academy (*the academy*) in Australia, I hope to demonstrate that the way that we do research can greatly shape the outcome of that research. Presently, and in consideration of past research, the processes of conducting research with people are monitored closely. Although it might not be considered as important to reflect on past research practices when engaging in theoretical research, it has been a necessary part in determining which research methods are considered culturally and contextually relevant and respectful. This is because the representation and portrayal of Aboriginal people in postcolonial research is a deeply contested space and reflects a wide range of epistemological practices used to disempower Aboriginal people, which continue to colonise, marginalise and possess. As Attwood and Arnold’s ‘Aboriginalism’ (Arnold & Attwood, 1992) demonstrates, discourses of power have shaped and continue to perpetuate an essentialist view of Aboriginal people and cultures, which constructs the ‘Aboriginal as Other’ as a rationale for British-(Anglo)Australian colonisation. The following chapter draws on anthropology and history as discourses which have perpetuated ‘Aboriginal as Other’. This research played a critical role in determining a culturally-respectful, ethical and collaborative research design (as outlined in the final sub-section of this chapter).

Knowledge production and the colonial present

The academy has a complicated and contentious history of conducting research about Aboriginal peoples in Australia. From the role that education institutions have played in the selective representation of Aboriginal Australians in the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology (in Australia operating as physical anthropology) and linguistics, to the study and perpetuation of racial categories of eugenics (often as a branch of anthropological investigations), the academy has been used as an apparatus of colonisation (Rowley, 1970, 1971, 1972; Bennett, 2009; Halstead, Hirsch, & Okely, 2008; Moreton-Robinson, 2009, p. 65; Morgensen, 2012).

Contemporary understandings of Aboriginal people, which circulate within mainstream Australia, emerged out of the wealth of knowledge created during the development of anthropology and ethnographic fieldwork (Rowley, 1970) in Australia. Rather than reflecting accurate representations of Aboriginal cultural practice, such knowledge was produced through the lens of the white (usually) male field worker, whose own prejudices and beliefs shaped his interpretation of the 'field' (Rowley, 1970, 1971, 1972; Barwick, 1984). The narrow view of Aboriginal cultures that emerged out of this period perpetuate the dying race view of Aboriginal cultures and a belief that 'authentic' Aboriginal people occupy the remote and central parts of Australia — a fallacy that this thesis challenges.

In Australia, the practice of classical anthropological inquiry in Aboriginal communities perpetuates the imperial gaze and power struggle practiced since British invasion in 1788. Anthropologists W.E.H. Stanner (2009), Kathleen Gough (1968), Gillian Cowlishaw (2003, 2006, 2009) and Diane Austin-Broos (2011) have highlighted the conflicting roles that anthropology plays within the academy, and the formal politics of the Australian nation-state, as well as within Aboriginal communities. Anthropologists were among the first to cross the 'savage' (Trouillot, 2003) line between the world of the 'settled Australian' and the world of the 'un-settled' native, and it is for this reason that the field of classical/social anthropology²⁹ is considered an appropriate starting point for a critique of colonial knowledge production in Australia.

²⁹ The term 'classical/social anthropology' is used to denote the broader field of study within which anthropologists, linguists and ethnologists worked. Anthropology as a discipline has developed considerably since the early-mid 20th century. In reflecting the terms, classical anthropology and social anthropology are used interchangeably to refer to the same broader discipline practiced during this period of time.

(Male) anthropologists conducting fieldwork were, in many cases, more focused on the tribal ceremonies of men, thus they failed to represent women in any meaningful way and analysed cultural activities through a Western lens (Gray, 2007). As evidenced by the exhibition period of colonial Australia, we can consider the period of study into Aboriginal communities prior to 1925 (Gray, 2000) as the 'wild west' of Australian anthropology, with little regulation and moderation, and the lines between academic integrity and personal, commercial and/or political gain blurred. Without a formal Chair of Anthropology (established in 1925 at the University of Sydney), amateur fieldworkers set out to map 'wild and untamed' areas of the continent and in doing so, further extended the reach of Australian colonialism. This period saw many shifts in the ways that non-Aboriginal fieldworkers interacted with Aboriginal peoples, from their purpose, agenda and political affiliations, to the methods employed.

In *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions: Representations of the 'Native' and the Making of European Identities* (Maxwell, 2000), Anne Maxwell traces the representation of Indigenous people in the Great Exhibitions of the colonial period and states that:

The exhibition phenomenon came early to Australia, with the first international exposition opening in Melbourne in 1854. The gold-rich colony of Victoria, in particular, lost no time in emulating the English practice of using exhibitions to stimulate trade and industry, and later to advertise the colony's dramatic material progress; as a result more exhibitions were staged in Melbourne between 1851 and 1900 than in any other city in the world, including London. (2000, p. 134)

Maxwell explores the consequences that classical/social anthropology (and the subsequent exhibition period (between 1851–1900) had on the representation of Aboriginal people. She states that throughout this period colonised peoples were 'banished figuratively to a permanent space of savagery beyond history' (2000, p. 2). In the 1880s and 1890s exhibitions became less concerned with furthering commercial ventures than with disseminating the scientific theories about race that were in vogue. During this period, through the guise of 'science', exhibition curators created the illusion that the Aboriginal people they represented were remnants of the past who, as Maxwell states, 'existed outside of the common bonds of humanity and the flow of history' (2000, p. 3). The images they displayed represented people (and subsequently culture) frozen in time, and were seen as objects for public consumption and wonderment.

In many ways, the history of dispossession in Australia parallels that of classical anthropology. Bennett (1995) defines the classic era of anthropology as the period between 1916–1953 whilst Gray extends this period, within the Australian context, as the period between 1900–1960. Gray defines this period as a time when ‘anthropology strengthened its position as an academic and professional discipline, consolidating itself in the colonial period’ (2007, p. 1). During the late 19th and 20th centuries, racial thinking centred around the ‘dying race’ theory of evolution, and as a result anthropologists, ethnologists and linguists were tasked with preserving (Gray, 2007) as much ‘traditional’ Aboriginal culture as possible.

Alfred Radcliffe-Brown, Baldwin Spencer, Charles Merton Hart, Alfred Howitt, A.P. Elkin, W.E.H. Stanner and Norman Tindale were amongst the first formally trained to conduct research within Aboriginal communities. Their research was motivated by the desire to document a people ‘untouched by the perils of modernisation’ (Cowlshaw, 1999; Gough, 1968) before it was ‘too late’. Amateur anthropologist (Mulvaney & Calaby, 1985) and celebrated ethnographic filmmaker (Henley, 2013) Baldwin Spencer (1860–1929) is an important figure in the development of Australian anthropology. For Derek Mulvaney and John Calaby, Spencer was someone:

[w]hose anthropological experience was restricted to two full-time years and seven part-time years, interspersed between forty-two active years as a biologist, public servant and Aboriginal welfare advisor, university and science administrator, pioneer conservationist, museum director, popular journalist, art patron and sportsman. (1985, p. 1885)

Spencer held many prominent positions including the Chair of Biology at The University of Melbourne (1887–1919), director of the National Museum of Victoria, and vice-president of the board of trustees of the public library, museums and National Gallery of Victoria. He also served for one year (1911–1912) in Darwin as a special commissioner of the Commonwealth Government and chief protector of Aborigines, and was also president of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science and ‘by way of cultural contrast’ (Mulvaney & Calaby, 1985, p. 1) maintained a seven-year term as president of the Victorian Football League (1919–1926), despite the fact that he was a ‘non-participant sportsman’ (Mulvaney & Calaby, 1985, p. 230). Spencer conducted significant fieldwork in Central Australia, but despite his high standing, his work has not always been considered academically strident, with W. Lloyd Warner remarking that he found Spencer ‘to be a most inaccurate observer’ (Gray, 2007, p. 129).

Gray explains that although Spencer had a reputation as an ethnographer, his 'views were based on ideas of evolution and biology' (2007, p. 33), which surely altered his interpretation of the field, as he ascribed to the 'dying race' thesis of Australian Aborigines to boost Anglo-Australian colonial expansion and enterprise. In this respect, his data collection was, 'relatively untheoretical' (G. M. Brown et al., 2009, p. 27).

Further to this, Spencer worked closely with the Alice Springs post and telegraph station master Frank Gillens (1892–1912), who it is argued was responsible for much of the anthropological work that Spencer is credited for (Mulvaney & Calaby, 1985, p. 122). It is also argued that Spencer's publication *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (1904) was largely shaped around the translations of Aranda man Erlikilyika (also known as Jim Kite) (Mulvaney & Calaby, 1985, p. 207).

Regardless of whose work one can attribute Spencer's anthropological findings and publications to, his influence and power throughout the English speaking world was vast and can be considered in two key ways. Firstly, because of his high standing within the university space and the public service; and secondly for the large collections of Aboriginal artefacts in galleries and museums in Australia and England, for which he is attributed.

John Mulvaney argues that it is important to reflect on the important contributions that Spencer made in consideration of the 'intellectual milieu' (1985, p. 159) of the time and that he should be 'assessed within the conceptual space-time of his fieldwork, not only from post-modern vantage points' (Mulvaney & Calaby, 1985, p. 155). However, I argue that in order to understand the contribution that Spencer made throughout his influential career, it is fundamental to understand the impact that his contributions have made to the way that, as a whole, settler Australians position Aboriginal cultures and Aboriginal peoples as part of the distant past or as collectively occupying remote parts of Australia more befitting of the 'authentic', 'savage' culture Spencer and his contemporaries documented.

In his book *Making Culture, Making Society* (2013), Tony Bennett discusses the central role that Spencer had in developing the simplistic ways in which Aboriginal Australians came to be understood by the broader non-Aboriginal society. Spencer's fieldwork became significant long after he returned from the field. In this way, the artefact period of Australian anthropology contributed to new ways of thinking about Aboriginal culture, and helped to reinforce the 'dying race' and 'pre-history' narrative. This period is particularly important because it came at a time when Australia, moving away from its British colonial roots and into a new world order, was redefining itself as

a white Australian nation. Spencer's collections became an important part of nation building at the turn of the 20th century (and of federation in 1901) for their 'symbolic capture and display of the Other' (Bennett, 2013, p. 78). The museum space thus placed 'visitors in a particular relationship to objects in ways that make real "prehistory" or community or art' (Healy & Witcomb, 2006). Bennett argues that Spencer's significance in orchestrating the ways in which non-Aboriginal Australians came to 'know' and understand Aboriginality is fivefold:

1. Spencer rejected the more traditional 'armchair' anthropology by choosing to undertake ethnographic fieldwork rather than artefact analysis.
2. The photographs and artefacts that he collected were studied in Australia rather than sent to America or Europe.
3. Because Spencer and Gillen's fieldtrip to study the Arunta (now commonly spelled Arrernte or Aranda) of Central Australia was the first in the country to involve film and sound recording.
4. Because each of these factors 'made it possible for him to make and to mobilise a specific production of Aboriginal culture' (Bennett, 2013, p. 78), which helped define the relationship between white and black Australia (Bennett, 2013). In this way, we can understand how Aboriginal cultures have been condensed into 'pan-Aboriginality' (Broome, 1994), whereby all Aboriginal cultures were reduced into the one overarching culture (Carlson, 2016; Martinez, 1997). Studies such as those undertaken by Spencer were instrumental in this reductionism. This is exemplified by the Arrernte concept of *Ūlchurringa* translated and confirmed by Spencer as the pan-Aboriginal religion of the Dreamtime.
5. Spencer became influential in his writing because he published in English — German missionary Carl Strehlow was a much more meticulous ethnographer than Spencer but his publications were produced in German and his influence was therefore restricted to continental Europe. (Mulvaney & Calaby, 1985)

Aside from the important contributions that Spencer made to the development of classical anthropology, as well as the way that his studies contributed to contemporary understandings of Aboriginal culture today, Spencer held many important positions within government, the arts, sport and education. It is precisely because of the dual roles that Spencer played in each of these socio-political and cultural spheres that make classical anthropology so problematic today. This is particularly problematic when we

consider the relationship and dual roles that anthropologists held that positioned them between their Aboriginal subject/participant and government funding agencies/authorities. Much of the knowledge about the 'native' and 'untouched' people that anthropologists produced was used by government bodies in demonstrating the helplessness of the people and the dire situation this 'dying race' were living, thus justifying the need for intervention (Gray, 2007). In a similar way, anthropologists did not see Aboriginal people who lived on missions and reserves or in the fringe camps that often appeared on the edge of Australian towns as authentically Aboriginal and were, therefore, seen as unworthy of study. Gray demonstrates this point and states:

Social anthropology as practiced in Australia had not recognised the southeast as a legitimate domain of Aboriginal culture and thus of anthropological interest. (2000, p. 175)

One contemporary consequence of this is the long-held myth that 'real Aborigines' live in the central and western deserts and the tropical north (the consequences of this belief are detailed in chapters five and six). In this we understand that it is those in the position of power who define a particular community as 'remote'. These assumptions support the notion that Aboriginal culture belongs to, and is most authentic in, remote areas of Australia on the periphery of the nation, on an imagined 'last frontier' and further perpetuate the common settler myth that there are no authentic Aboriginal peoples in Victoria (a central concern of this thesis and a myth that is explored in chapter five). Furthermore, by emphasising remote areas of Australia, colonial narratives and academic discourses, including anthropology, deem Aboriginal people living in urban and less remote areas of Australia as having abandoned their Aboriginality (Rowley, 1971; Hollinsworth, 1992; Prout, 2011) and therefore as less authentically Aboriginal.

Australian anthropologist Gillian Cowlishaw has critiqued the various ways in which understandings of race and ethnicity have been shaped by processes of knowledge production and refers specifically to the role that anthropology has played in this process. Reflecting on her own role within Aboriginal communities, Cowlishaw acknowledges that, 'we anthropologists placed ourselves on the side of tradition, rather than beside contemporary Aborigines; anthropology's role was to interpret Aborigines [relationship] to colonial society' (1999, pp. 4-5). In her later work, Cowlishaw accepts that, although 'anthropologists tried to bring a sense of legitimacy to the otherness they observed' (1999, p. 5); contemporary research needs to explore the cultural expression

of 'particular social forms in everyday places' (1999, p. 5). That is to say, that research needs to look at the relationship between different social groups, not simply at the inner workings of a particular group, which leads to continued social stratification and binarism.

Similarly, Australian anthropologist Diane Austin-Broos critiques the way that classical anthropologists privileged cultural difference in remote areas of Australia, rather than on cultural contact and post-contact experiences in missions, reserves and on the outskirts of settled townships. In her book, *A Different Inequality: The Politics of Debate around Remote Aboriginal Australia* (2011), Austin-Broos draws on two contemporary debates in her critique of classical anthropology, one within the university space and the other within the public domain. She argues that within the university space, the postcolonial critique of classical anthropology is its focus on cultural difference over inequality. On the other hand she argues that the debate within the public domain centres around the need for equality in remote communities that fail in their lack of understanding around cultural difference. Austin-Broos argues that the application of classical anthropology in both debates fails to take poverty and race into consideration in any meaningful way. She argues that one cannot understand inequality without understanding cultural difference and states that her central task is to understand the application and practice of classical anthropology in each of the debates in order to defend it. She states that, 'Anthropology's tools are important because they are designed to interpret difference' (2011, p. 23) and advocates for an anthropology, which enters fully into dialogue with other humanistic social sciences, and addresses Aboriginal Australia (2011, p. 23).

Marcia Langton, Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Martin Nakata have each demonstrated how Australia's paternalistic colonial past is reified (Snelgrove, Dhamoon, & Corntassel, 2014) within Australian research. Such research, which assumes the *white*, Western superiority of the researcher, and takes on the role of 'keeper' of Aboriginal knowledge (Hawkes, Pollock, Judd, Phipps, & Assoulin, 2017, p. 19), has resulted in the perpetuation of the 'Aborigine' as pre-historic and unable to assimilate into contemporary Australian culture. Examples of this include the lazy 'dole-bludger', alcoholic and passive welfare recipient (Peters-Little, Curthoys, & Docker, 2010, p. 99).

Langton critiques the lack of discursive exchange between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and uses the term 'Aboriginality' (Langton, 1993) to explore the discursive ways that settler colonialism works to destabilise 'claims by those the British

vanquished' (1999, p. 30). She states that for the most part, non-Aboriginal people come to 'know' Aboriginal Australians not through actual life circumstance of Aboriginal people, but through the cultural and textual construction of things 'Aboriginal'. This, she argues serves to legitimise Australia's colonisation as legal through terra nullius, 'effectively render[ing] Indigenous people invisible on the basis of assumptions about their supposed 'racial inferiority' (1999, p. 23). Langton outlines the consequences of conducting fieldwork with Aboriginal people with the limited view of culture that ethnology and early anthropology held and advocates for an Aboriginal research methodology, which might better take the history of dispossession (culturally, physically and academically) into consideration when conducting fieldwork. Langton argues that a significant consequence of the narrow view that anthropologists had of Aboriginal cultures, is that they failed to take 'urban Aborigines' into consideration and argues that researchers 'too often displayed a cultural arrogance and superiority that blinkered them, confining them to a limited perspective' (1999, p. 32). Langton relates this perspective to Stanner's 'salvage approach' to anthropology, which prescribed to the 'lost and dying race' narrative, which called for the documentation of remnant 'traditional' Aboriginal cultural life 'before it was too late' (1999).

In their respective texts, Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Martin Nakata demonstrate the importance of understanding past research practices and contemporary culturally-specific protocols in conducting fieldwork alongside Aboriginal communities. They both also provide Indigenous methodologies and ethical ways of engaging with Indigeneity through research. Tuhiwai Smith states that 'the term "research" is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism' (2004, p. 1) and explains that the word itself is one of the dirtiest and loaded words within the Indigenous worlds' vocabulary (2004, p. 12). Understanding and acknowledging the ways that research is implicated within the colonising process is an important and necessary step in conducting culturally respectful and ethical research. Nakata expands on the work of Tuhiwai Smith by discussing the implications of Western research practices in the Torres Strait in his book, *Disciplining the Savages, Savaging the Disciplines* (2007), where he traces the development of knowledge production on Torres Strait peoples as well as discussing 'how accepted disciplinary practices come to both inform and delimit how we can understand Islanders today' (2007, p. 11). In his book, Nakata describes the injustice he felt when he realised that the history of Torres Strait Islander people written in academic books was considered more credible and trustworthy than the oral history that had been passed down to him from his family and community (2007).

The negative impact that past processes of conducting research within Aboriginal communities continues to have on the construction of Aboriginality is undeniable. Over time, the preservation of Aboriginal cultural practices positions Aboriginal cultures as a part of the past rather than as living cultures still practiced today. The way that the researcher interpreted cultural practices has also resulted in deep-seated misrepresentations of those Aboriginal cultural practices, further skewing the already problematic way that non-Aboriginal people conceptualise Aboriginal cultures. Nakata argues that no matter how carefully ethnological or anthropological texts are reinterpreted or filtered, they can never offer more than that intended by their original purpose, 'simply because the viewpoint from which they were framed was, from the beginning, constrained both historically and intellectually' (Nakata, 2007, p. 101). This is an important point and one worth considering when we think about the insurmountable volume of cultural knowledge that has been reframed within Western research paradigms. Aboriginal artefacts, songlines, dreaming stories, creation paintings, cultural iconography and bones are amongst the overwhelming volume of cultural heritage lost to museums, libraries, universities and private collections around the world.³⁰ In his PhD thesis, Judd, argues that 'the essential characteristics of the Aboriginal Other were confirmed through the experience of colonial government and the individual settler alike' (2007, p. 38). In relation to this, he argues that the Western academy played an even more insidious role in 'dehumanising and degrading Indigenous peoples through the production of scholarly writings and scientific research that confirmed popular discursive representations of the Aborigine as "sub-human", "savage" and "pre-historical"' (Judd, 2007, p. 38).

In this respect, it is fundamental that the relationship between power and knowledge is carefully considered. Despite the fact that we may have moved beyond the exhibition period of settler colonialism³¹, cowboy anthropology and its influence on racist government policies (Rowley, 1971), Australian history can never be divorced from Australia's present and future. So long as knowledge is being produced there is always a risk of perpetuating and strengthening unequal power dynamics. This has been highlighted in the Australian context within historical discourse and nationalism

³⁰ One of the most widely known words to be associated with Aboriginal creation stories was encapsulated by W.E.H. Stanner, who coined the phrase 'the Dreaming'. Stanner later reflected on the consequences of using such a term which did not adequately reflect the intricacies and cultural significance of Aboriginal creationism, which is more aptly considered in relation to the Bible (if even such a comparison can be made).

³¹ Introduced in chapter five.

discourses which have emerged in an attempt at decolonisation since the 1960s (Barwick, 1984, p. 103; Banivanua Mar, 2012, p. 176; Gray, 2007, p. 1; Huyssen, 2000, p. 22). Geoffrey Gray states that, 'the American involvement in Vietnam had led to a dramatic reassessment of the anthropological project' (2007, p. 1) and the antihistorical approach it used. Anthropologists and historians searched for alternative and revisionist histories (Huyssen, 2000, p. 22) in an attempt to identify and deconstruct colonial metanarratives (Banivanua Mar, 2012, p. 176), though this was not without its consequences.

Although Aboriginal voices were virtually silenced prior to the 1970s (Beckett, 1994, p. 97), the representation of the 'Aboriginal problem' (Biskup, 1973; Boucher & Russell, 2015; Reid, 2006) following the 1970s continued to frame Aboriginal subjectivities within the historical imagination through experiences of subjugation, marginalisation and in essentialised ways (Cavanagh, 2012).³² In this way, Aboriginal people became known, 'not as they experience themselves, but in the image, stereotypes and discourses' (Cowlshaw, 2003, p. 3), which made them known in the public domain. Because of their research focus, social commentators, anthropologists and historians became unconsciously implicated in discursive constructions of White Australia (Fujikawa, 2006, p. 176). Further to this, despite the increasing representation of Aboriginal cultures and issues within mainstream Australia, these representations can be problematic. Aboriginal people are often represented in stereotypical ways or in deficit to white Australians. An example of this, is the representation of Aboriginal people as subservient, helpless and as victims of colonisation. For instance, the framing of the frontier wars as colonial frontier massacres and the use of the term 'massacre sites' can be seen to reframe Aboriginal resistance to settlement (Veracini, 2002). Historian Lyndall Ryan (Ryan, Debenham, Brown, & Pascoe, 2017) has developed a digital map that records such locations, whilst cultural geographer Ian Clark has similarly mapped massacre sites in Victoria (I. Clark, 1995). By positioning these historical events in this way, Aboriginal resistance and agency is reframed, which perpetuates an essentialised understanding of Aboriginal people as unable to adapt to

³² Aside from Diane Barwick's impressive PhD topic which developed from conversations she had with Aboriginal people about their knowledge of the Coranderrk 'rebellion' (labelled by the colonial administration) between 1875-1885. This knowledge had been passed down from those directly involved in the 'paper war' (1988, p. 1) instigated by the Coranderrk community as a response to the future sale of their mission land. Although her research was primarily anthropological it is important to note the role that contemporary Aboriginal people had in the development of her ideas.

the imposed social order, something that hidden goldfields narratives (as exemplified in chapter five) disprove.

Racial thinking about Aboriginal people is enacted in *our* constitution (Langton, 1999, p. 23), government policy (Rowley, 1971; Hallinan & Judd, 2009b, p. 1225), education system (Vass, 2013), the law (Curthoys, Genovese, & Reilly, 2008) and medicine (Fogarty, Bulloch, McDonnell, & Davis, 2018) and is perpetuated in folk myths and national legends, popular culture (Langton, 1993), sports and politics (Bamblett, 2011) and in the news (Roy, 2012). Aboriginal people continue to be positioned within a Western framework that represents them as operating outside of white society. An example of this, is the focus within research on the 'authentic' Aboriginal experience as recorded 'out there' in 'the red centre' and in remote areas of Australia. The following section articulates the specific research methodologies used to ensure that this research project remained respectful and centred around the concerns of the Aboriginal participants.

Methodology

Research design

This thesis uses qualitative research methods, including semi-structured interviews and ethnography, within a grounded theory methodological framework and uses interview strategies derived from both grounded theory and hermeneutics. The approach to the interview process, from recruitment to transcription, has been informed by an interdisciplinary critical theory framework and uses Aboriginal research methodologies in ensuring respectful and appropriate research practices. Here, the particular type of ethnography conducted translates to information learned from interview participants to enable an analysis of the way that behaviour (in this case, invisible presence) is subsequently organised (Pettigrew, 2000, p. 256).

During the first phase of interviews, I focused my attention on speaking with current and retired Aboriginal football players who grew up in Victoria. I sent out an expression-of-interest email to people who I did not know personally or professionally but felt would be of significance to the project. Participant information sheets (see appendix 4) were also attached to the email. Through this process, I was able to secure interviews with a number of people who worked within management positions within the AFL and AFL Victoria, including Jason Mifsud (AFL Australia) and Aaron Clark (AFL Victoria). Through 'cold calling' I was able to secure the participation of the Korin Gamadji Institute, based at the Richmond Football Club, and through them, players

from the Fitzroy Stars. In each case, I made sure that we had someone in common who could vouch for my project and for my character.

The following research design section will identify the specific strategies employed in maintaining the ethical conduct of research beyond obtaining 'ethics approval'. In line with grounded theory (discussed further below), the research design can be understood in terms of five phases, across the pre-fieldwork, fieldwork and post-fieldwork stages:

1. Methodological literature review (pre-fieldwork)
2. Interview preparation (pre-fieldwork)
3. Interview (fieldwork)
4. Interview analysis (post-fieldwork)
5. Literature review (post-fieldwork)

Methodological literature review

The methodological literature review, (comprising the first section of this chapter) was an important first step in defining the fieldwork parameters because it helped me to understand the context within which my own research would be conducted and the fields that it would contribute to.

Going into the fieldwork stage of research, it was important for me to reflect on the impact that my subjective position might have on the research process. I needed to have a strong idea of my own pre-conceptions, strengths and weaknesses and approach the fieldwork both humbly and truthfully, this was especially important when interviewing Aboriginal participants who were not working within the football space professionally. In this respect (and as my interviews demonstrate), the interview process was guided by the participant and my own transparency about my background, upbringing and my perspective on why I'd come to choose a PhD on the issues of visibility for Victoria's Aboriginal communities. Because this was not a concern for the four white participants (who were engaged for their expertise in Aboriginal and settler history within the central and western goldfields district) the interviews followed more of a structured and conservative interview approach, which focused on their specific research area as well as their experiences living and working in the central and western goldfields district. These interviews focused on the research rather than my engagement in the research and thus represented more of a conservative academic interview style.

By focusing my preliminary literature review on colonial research engagement with Aboriginal communities, and by tracing the consequences that Aboriginal research practices have had for contemporary researchers, I was able to understand the cultural baggage that I potentially carried with me into Aboriginal spaces. I needed to break down the researcher/informant relationship, and make sure that the authority remained with the participant. Being an outsider, a woman and a non-football player meant that I was very much out of my depth and relied on the expertise of the participants to understand the social dynamics at play. Going into each interview setting, my primary focus was on connecting with the participant, finding some sort of commonality rather than steering the conversation towards each of my questions. I was willing to share personal details about myself, and knew that this was an important way of reciprocating for the potential vulnerabilities that the participants were sharing with me.

I had concerns about my place as a white woman conducting research with Aboriginal men and the implications of my research within this space. These have been central concerns for other non-Aboriginal people working within the social sciences (Muecke, 1992; Nicoll, 2004; Cowlshaw, 1999) and in particular, within the field of the sociology of sport. In many ways, it is these concerns that shape the framework within which those researchers chose to work and the research that they undertook. As such, this chapter has explored the epistemological boundaries that have defined the research paradigm and demonstrated that in conducting research within the social sciences (and, in particular, within postcolonial studies, Australian Indigenous studies and critical race and whiteness studies) those within the Western academy must acknowledge their position of power and conduct research accordingly. The ethical considerations that I made were based on a cultural and historical understanding of the issues that Aboriginal Australians may contend with in their everyday lives. Accordingly, I needed to gain a greater contextual understanding of how their cultural background shaped their interactions with the world.

It was important that the research was exploratory and was open to analysing the concerns of the participants. Reflecting the concerns raised in the methodological literature review, the interviews and their subsequent analysis were participant-led and followed a grounded theory approach (introduced in the following section). In this context, participant-led research refers not just to the process of reflexive engagement with the interview participant (with a focus on capturing their own life stories from their perspective rather than on pre-determined focus points) but also to the

collaborative process of working with participants to locate potential interviewees. In this context, participant-led research also refers to the process of determining how the interview was approached as either structured, semi-structured or unstructured.

Fieldwork

Ethics approval

Ethics approval for the project was granted by Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval No: HR4567/2013) prior to the commencement of fieldwork, including recruitment. The research was guided by the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human research (updated in 2015) as well as the NHMRC's guidelines for ethical conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research (2003).

Introducing the grounded theory method

This methodology reflects a grounded theory approach to qualitative research analysis. I will briefly outline grounded theory before articulating the specific research design applied in this thesis.

Grounded theory was developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967) as a way of ensuring that underlying assumptions about the area of study were acknowledged and challenged; it refers both to the methodology as well as the theoretical product. Strauss and Glaser sought to find a way of quantifying qualitative data which made sense within the increasingly quantitative and scientifically oriented discipline of sociology. They developed an approach that attended to the understandings, interpretations, intentions and perspectives of the people studied on their own terms, as expressed through their actions as well as their words (Clarke, 2005, p.5).

Grounded theory was 'an attempt "to make scientific" that which had commonly been accused of being "mere journalism" or even "fiction"' (Johnson, Long, & White, 2001, p. 245) and an attempt to 'liberate theory from the seductive comforts of the armchair' (Dey, 2004, p. 82). Grounded theory seeks to bridge the gap between theory and empirical research by providing practical guidelines that would enable rigorous deconstruction of theories relating to social processes from raw data. The grounded theory analysis is committed to representing *all* understandings, knowledge and actions of those studied (Clarke, 2005, p. 5). It facilitates the discovery of theory from data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p.1), which ensures that the researcher is not focused

on testing hypotheses taken from existing theoretical frameworks, 'but rather develops a new "theory" grounded in empirical data collected in the field' (Dunne, 2011, p. 111).

Grounded theory, as derivative of symbolic interactionism (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), is considered one of the most appropriate research methodologies of analysis within Aboriginal research methodologies (Foley, 2003), sociology (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007) and is applied in other disciplines like management, business and social work (Gales, 2003). Using the case study approach to fieldwork, grounded theory is a considered and reflexive approach to analysing the fieldwork data, which allows the findings to emerge without forcing them. It is a 'systematic yet flexible methodology, designed to assist with the development of substantive, explanatory models grounded in relevant empirical data' (Hutchison, Johnston, & David, 2009, p. 283). The purpose of a grounded theory study is to explore the aspects of social phenomena that are of concern to the participants, and to look for similarities, differences, contradictions and gaps in and between participant testimony and literature (Pettigrew, 2000, pp. 256–257). In other words, the researcher goes into the field of study with a research question, but without having drawn conclusions about what the outcome will be. It is left open-ended so as to allow for the participant's perspectives and voice to come out of the interview rather than the researcher's dominant voice directing the participant to a particular perspective. In this respect, knowledge is considered as emergent and arises out of the context of the research rather than as a result of what data the researcher includes and excludes (Gales, 2003, p.137).

Grounded theory, in line with critical theory, acknowledges that research is shaped by epistemological shifts, perspectives and concepts, and that theories have the power and potential to influence and shape the social issue/group at the centre of the study. As such, grounded theory maintains that the research design is not rigid and must be flexible and adaptable according to each field setting. Essentially, grounded theory provides a framework to develop critical theory by giving voices to those it studies.

Grounded theory has been applied within this thesis as both a research framework and an approach to interview style. Considering the range of participants interviewed, including cultural background, age, socio-economic status and education level, the interview style was determined according to the specific aims of the interview.

Participants

A total of 31 participants were engaged from four spaces across two geographical locations (Melbourne and Ballarat):

- (1) 'experts' who worked within the Aboriginal sports space.
- (2) ex-professional Aboriginal football players who grew up in Victoria
- (3) Aboriginal junior football players who lived in Victoria
- (4) 'experts' engaged within the areas of local history, Aboriginal studies and those members of the Ballarat community who operated within both the sporting and Aboriginal space.

Interviews

Interviews were digitally recorded and professionally transcribed verbatim and ranged in length from 8 minutes to 90 minutes. I conducted one interview per participant over two research trips, the first of which focused on interviews conducted in Melbourne, whilst the second focused on Ballarat. Of the 31 participants interviewed, five interviews related to both of the case studies because of their engagement in both Australian (Rules) Football and their experiences living or growing up in the central and western goldfields district of Victoria.

Acknowledging the problematics of organising participants into binaries of 'Aboriginal' and 'non-Aboriginal' the best way of articulating the approach taken to interviewing participants is by differentiating them according to the aim of the interview, that is for their 'expert' knowledge or 'lived experience'.

'Expert' knowledge engagement using grounded theory

When interviewing 'experts', including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants, interviews ranged from structured to semi-structured and followed basic questions and prompts:

Prompt: Introduced myself with a focus on the project and/or (for cultural reasons), my reasons for undertaking the project.

Prompt: Central and western goldfields district/Australian (Rules) Football as a 'space'. I spoke about my understanding of the space, my interactions within that space and invited their response to my own understanding.

Questions focused on their specific 'expertise' i.e. AFL management, strategies for the inclusion of Aboriginal players with AFL programs, Aboriginal representation in archival goldfields research.

Listened as the participants spoke of their own research findings and their response to my perception that Aboriginal Victorians were deemed as invisible within mainstream narratives.

'Lived experience' participant engagement using a hermeneutic approach

The majority of participants were interviewed because of their lived experiences as Aboriginal footballers living in Victoria. Given that the majority of participants who were interviewed for their 'lived experience' testimony were Aboriginal, interviews were consistent with Indigenous research protocols (Pyett, 2002; Raven, 2010; A. Smith, 2010), were semi-structured or unstructured, and were conducted in a place of the participant's choosing. All interviews commenced by asking the participant where they were from (both geographically and culturally), which is an important Aboriginal protocol (Australian Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Commission, 1997; Pyett & Waples-Crowe, 2008).

Each interview commenced with an introduction of myself and the project (to a varying degree depending on the level of engagement the interviewee showed to this research background). I made sure that each participant understood the details of the project, either by referring to the Participant Information Sheet or by answering any questions they had. Before each interview commenced, I made sure that each participant had signed the Consent Form (see appendix 5). Each interview was structured around three key themes:

1. **Home:** culture, family, Aboriginal presence in community, school and/or work;
2. **Football:** first memory of football, who the participant played/plays for and barracks for, the role that football played in their life;
3. **Racism:** the visibility of Aboriginal people within mainstream Victoria compared to other areas in Australia; issues faced by Aboriginal people in Victoria; views, myths or perceptions that non-Aboriginal people have of Aboriginal people.

The approach taken to each group reflected how comfortable the participant was with the interview process, for example, whether the participant had previously conducted interviews for the media, never been interviewed before, or been out of the football scene for some time. Interviews with those working within the corporate sporting environment tended to be more structured whereas, for those who had been out of 'the game' for a period of time or for those starting out their professional football careers,

the interviews were conducted in the format of an unstructured conversational ‘yarn’ (Osmond & Phillips, 2018; Bessarab, 2015; Carey, 2008; M. Clark, 2004). Challenging traditional modes of Australian Indigenous sports historiography, such an approach works within Indigenous research methodologies which challenge western epistemological perspectives and modes of knowledge presentation (Phillips & Osmond, 2018; Bond et al., 2015). By inserting myself within the research process rather than outside of it, I was able to encourage participants to open up and helped them to feel comfortable. A relationship of trust was actively sought as an outcome of these practices with the overarching aim of the interview being the sharing of life experiences and stories. In this respect, I considered the participants as research collaborators. The point of the research was not to find testimony that supported my hypotheses but to acquire a rich and varied data set. This practice is reflective of hermeneutics research (H. S. Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991, p. 270), because of the shared aim of eliciting the most detail possible about the informants’ un-interpreted experiences in the subject under study (H. S. Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991, p. 270). Holly Wilson and Sally Hutchinson explains that:

In hermeneutics research, the researcher lives the phenomenological question. Becoming a partner with the informant, they work together to produce the interview. They work together to ‘get the story straight’. (1991, p. 270)

Whilst hermeneutics has the potential to reveal shared meaning and common practices that can inform the way we think about the phenomenon, grounded theory provides a conceptual framework that is useful for explicating a theory about the phenomenon (H. S. Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991, p. 263) under study. Although the terms *phenomenology* (lived experience) and *hermeneutics* (interpretation of lived experience) are often interchangeable, they speak to different stages of the research process. Using both hermeneutics and grounded theory is a useful way of eliciting theory that remains centred in the stories and lived experiences of the participants. Hermeneutics, also known as thick description, combines peoples’ detailed stories, paradigm cases, exemplars and thematic analysis.

Data analysis

Nvivo and Scrivener

I used the qualitative data analysis software program, ‘Nvivo’ (Nvivo 10 for Mac, 2014) and the word-processing program, ‘Scrivener’ (Blount, 2005) to analyse the interview

data. Combined, these two programs represent a triangulation of the research findings where theoretical data, contextual data and interview data are coded and allow theory to emerge out of the data.

Nvivo

Although Nvivo is a standard qualitative data analysis program, which can be used to draw meaning out of large sets of data, I used it primarily in the initial stages of coding the interview data according to specific themes. All coded text is consolidated into one 'node'. Text can be coded into multiple nodes and thus can be analysed in different ways. I imported the coded nodes from Nvivo into the word processing and project management program Scrivener, to code alongside theory and literature.

Scrivener

Scrivener is a relatively new word-processing program that was developed to aid writers working with large bodies of work. The program, although primarily aimed at novelists and screen-writers is useful for academics extensive amounts of text, i.e. chapters, sub-chapters, themes, key words, literature, theory and data sets can be visualised hierarchically and reordered easily. This allows for themes and sub-themes to be identified within the data, and theory can be developed accordingly.

Grounded theory: using Nvivo and Scrivener to explicate theory

There are three stages of coding data within grounded theory, as outlined in the following figure.

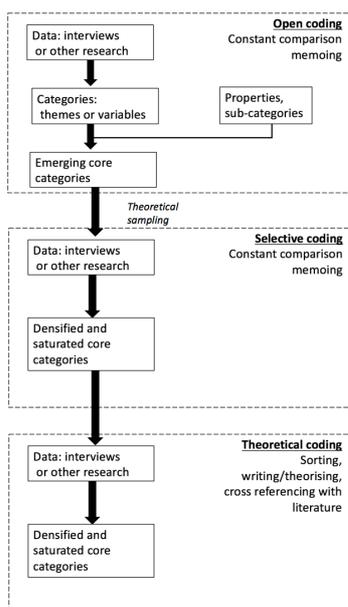


Figure 4: The Process of Grounded Theory (From Jones & Alony, 2014, p. 115)

Open coding

The first stage of coding is 'open coding' which involves the process of collecting interview data according to specific themes, events, places, people and other areas of interest (Bryman, p. 596). For Nvivo, coding is accomplished through nodes — nodes are the route by which coding is undertaken (Bryman, p. 596). In this first stage, interview data undergoes intensive scrutiny, and analysis moves beyond thick description to a micro-analysis of the data. It is an iterative process (Hutchison et al., 2009, p. 290), where patterns emerge. Memoing, the linking of theory to phenomena requires constant reflection and is a core stage is the process of generating theory (Jones & Alony, 2014, p. 118).

I chose to code all interview transcripts at the same time, regardless of which 'case study' they were a part of. I coded each transcript as it was uploaded to Nvivo according to the three major themes that the interviews revolved around: home, football, race.

Selective coding

The second stage of coding, selective coding, also employs constant comparison and memo-ing. This results in dense, saturated core categories that are sorted, written, theorised and cross-referenced with literature, during the final stage of coding: theoretical coding (Jones & Alony, 2014, p. 114).

Once all interviews had been coded, I began a second stage of coding into sub-themes according to the number of coded quotations in each theme, for instance 'home life' was further coded into 'family', 'divorce' and 'lifestyle'. This allowed me to focus my analysis on the themes and topics that the participants focused on, rather than on specific issues that interested me. For instance, responses that spoke to 'non-Aboriginal perceptions of Aboriginal people' revolved around the way that Aboriginal people were represented:

- the inability for non-Aboriginal people to recognise Aboriginal Victorians as legitimately Aboriginal as well as a lack of awareness of the colonial processes, which have led to this reality
- the mostly negative media representation of Aboriginal people, including stereotypes and negative assumptions that non-Aboriginal people have of Aboriginal people
- failure of mainstream society to recognise Aboriginal success outside of sport.

For the participants, the fact that the Aboriginal presence in Victoria was underappreciated translated into a decreased chance of AFL recruitment. Although this outcome was anticipated, a few themes emerged which I had not anticipated, including:

- the role that intergenerational trauma and lateral violence played in the participants daily lives
- the role that social media played in experiences of marginalisation and racism
- the extent to which racism factored into participants daily lives on and off the football field.

This final point became the focus of this thesis, with the goldfields research situating contemporary experiences of marginalisation, visibility and racism as a contemporary display of the settler colonial psyche. This argument, and the term *settler colonial psyche*, are introduced in the following chapter.

Theoretical coding

After data collection, a point is reached where no new data results from additional data collection (Jones & Alony, 2014, p. 120) this is referred to a *theoretical saturation*. As the coding procedure before this phase worked to fracture the data and cluster them according to abstract similarity, theoretical coding (along with sorting) connects the fractured pieces back together again to conceptualise causal relationships between the hypotheses derived through open and selective coding (Jones & Alony, 2014, p. 120). Ultimately, the goal of theoretical saturation is to identify a basic social process (core category that has been developed through densification) which is found, through the process of open and selective coding, to substantially represent a major social process of the phenomenon under study. It is through the articulation and explanation of this basic social process that explanatory theory emerges. (Jones & Alony, 2014, p. 120). The ultimate goal of grounded theory is the facilitation of an explanatory theory that identifies how a basic social process operates. In the case of this research, following this grounded theory approach, the basic social process identified at the beginning of the research was the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians, the analysis drew a link between white belonging and ultimately identified the settler colonial psyche as the theoretical model which sustained it.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the significant role that colonial practices of knowledge production have had on contemporary research practices with the Australian academy.

This review was an important first step in determining a culturally-appropriate and ethical research methodology that works within critical theory to make the relationship between knowledge and power visible whilst also acknowledging my positionality as a white-settler woman. Because of the centrality of whiteness within settler colonialism, it is fundamental that contemporary researchers working cross-culturally understand the implications that past research practices have for both contemporary 'researchers' and 'researched'.

Undertaking a methodological literature review determined grounded theory to be the most appropriate approach to data analysis because the construction of knowledge production is guided by the stories and experiences of the participants. By focusing data analysis around historical experiences of racism, I was able to situate the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victoria within the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism where the settler colonial psyche stabilises and reinforces white belonging. Here, we understand that colonialism is not part of the distant past but is reflected discursively throughout the world around us. This, alongside a discussion of the terms, *white belonging* and *settler colonial psyche* are the main concerns of the following chapter.

Introducing the settler colonial psyche: white belonging in Australia

Introduction

Drawing on settler colonialism as both a framework and a logic of elimination (Wolfe, 2006), the following chapter introduces white belonging and narratives of nationhood and argues that the settler colonial psyche works as a mechanism of control within contemporary Australia. Working within the theoretical and methodological framework introduced in the previous two chapters, this chapter examines the way that whiteness, race and racism are practiced within the logic of settler colonialism, to both assert white belonging and remove Aboriginal sovereignty. Chapter two introduced race and racism within the context of settler colonialism and argued that a critique of whiteness is necessary in order to understand the way that racial thinking functions as a core stabiliser within settler colonial societies. In chapter three I argued that a necessary practice of conducting ethical and respectful research in this domain is the acknowledgement of firstly, the position(s) from which the research emanates and secondly, the taken-for-granted privileges and assumptions that are embodied within whiteness.

As the previous chapter demonstrated, research in Australia and abroad has challenged the everyday pervasiveness of whiteness and its inherent connection to settler colonialism. Despite this, researchers have not explicitly focused on, nor traced, the embodiment of whiteness and settler colonialism to everyday practices of racism at the individual level, instead focusing on the ways that whiteness and settler colonialism are practiced at the state level. I expand on this important work by demonstrating the defining role that settler colonialism has played, and continues to play in establishing a white national fantasy of belonging, which is exemplified and stabilised by the settler colonial psyche.

This thesis is structured around two case studies that trace the settler colonial psyche through colonial history and demonstrate that Aboriginal Victorians have been left out of state history and cultural identity. Before commencing this analysis, it is

important to situate the case studies within the broader context of settler colonialism. Therefore, this chapter positions the settler colonial psyche within Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism, where it is sustained through memory, emotions and the uncanny. The settler colonial psyche works to stabilise white belonging which is celebrated and reinforced through narratives of nationhood. The case studies argue that Aboriginal Victorians are imagined as absent through the gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football as a way of reinforcing national narratives of white belonging. This absence is sustained by the settler colonial psyche.

The settler colonial psyche

The settler colonial psyche works within the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism to ensure the success of the settler colonial project (to belong) where alternative narratives must be erased, forgotten and ignored. This is demonstrated clearly in the Victorian context, where Aboriginal colonial history has been erased from collective settler memory. Although Wolfe refers specifically to ways that Aboriginal people are eliminated at the structural level, i.e. through genocide, government policies of removal and so on, I want to expand on this logic to include psychological elimination, which continues today through the settler colonial psyche. The settler colonial psyche plays an important role in determining what 'we' (settler Australians) remember and forget as well as how 'we' choose to remember or forget.³³

Many Australian scholars have used the term 'psyche' as a descriptor or as an explanation for discrimination and prejudice but few have defined what this psyche actually is. Others have similarly drawn on other concepts to speak to the way that white supremacy has been established and maintained in Australia (Wolfe, 2001, p. 867). Patrick Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism draws on settler discourses and regimes of power (2016) to demonstrate the ways that settler colonialism continues to operate today.

Despite not explicitly drawing on the settler colonial psyche, a number of Australian scholars identify the relationship between memory, myth-making and nationalism. Aileen Moreton-Robinson's concepts 'possessive logic' (2011a) and 'patriarchal whiteness' (2005) speak to the way that Aboriginal sovereignty is 'unsettling' to settler Australia (2017), whilst Lorenzo Veracini draws on the 'settler

³³ I use the term 'we' referring to white settler and non-indigenous Australians who benefit from the settler colonial psyche, not to be divisive but to draw attention to both the invisible construction of whiteness and its inherent privilege.

colonial collective' (2007), 'settler colonial state of mind' (2007) and the 'settler colonial situation' (2010) to highlight the way that settler colonialism organises subjectivities as working within or outside of the boundaries of settler colonialism. Similarly, Elizabeth Strakosch and Alissa Macoun speak to what they indicate is the myth of postcolonialism and argue that, far from moving beyond colonialism, we are always operating within settler colonialism (2012).

Further to this, the term 'psyche' has been used within anthropology (Cowlshaw, 2004), postcolonial theory (Bhabha, 1986), cultural studies (Muecke, 2010), creative writing (Birch, 2010), Australian history (Lake et al., 2010) and critical race and whiteness studies (Fanon, 1963) as speaking to a range of emotional phenomena, such as melancholy, nostalgia, fear, guilt and anger. Others, including Frantz Fanon, have used the term 'colonial mentality' to speak to psychological colonialism, which alienates the colonised from the colonial culture (Fanon, 1963). Contrastingly, in an attempt to understand the irrationality and emotional instability of the settler colonial psyche, this chapter maps out ways that settler colonialism is sustained through the psychology of the coloniser. I have positioned the settler colonial psyche within Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism and acknowledge, once again, that settler colonialism is a structure that operates to maintain the status quo, rather than as a specific period of time. In fact, I would argue that understanding settler colonialism in this way are actually symptomatic of the settler colonial psyche.

The settler colonial psyche can be thought of as a state of consciousness that works to maintain settler colonialism and white belonging through memory, fear, anxiety, melancholy and nostalgia. I am not the first to draw this link. Marcia Langton has long articulated the psychological nature of racism in Australia, using terms, 'psychotic racism' (1993, p. 31) and 'national psychosis' (Kerin, 1996) to highlight the inability of white Australians to reflect on Australia's history of Aboriginal oppression and subjugation. More recently Emma Flood (2000), Carol Johnson (2001), Lorenzo Veracini (2008, p. 373) and Barry Judd (2012, p. 5) have articulated the inability for settler Australia to reflect on this shared history. They argue that this inability is central to settler colonialism. It seems that every few years an event, a report, an article or a speech exposes the unsettling truth of Aboriginal dispossession in Australia, before being dismissed once more. In the public sphere, social commentators have exposed the truth of Aboriginal dispossession in Australia, namely W. E. H Stanner (Stanner & Manne, 2009), John Pilger (Pilger & Lowery, 1985, 2013), Stan Grant and Richard Flanagan. In 2015 it was Stan Grant's speech on racism and the 'Australian dream' (2015)

and in 2016 it was the ABC's Four Corners report on institutional child abuse in the Northern Territory's Don Dale detention centre (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2016). Most recently, in 2018, it was with Richard Flanagan's speech at the Garma festival of traditional culture (Flanagan, 2018) held annually in the Northern Territory. The psychological process of outrage, anger, denial and forgetting identified in these examples is symptomatic of the settler colonial psyche where white Australians soon forget the origin of their discomfort. Each of these examples, which occurred over the past 30 years, had a strong media presence and were discussed at length within, but have done little to alter the prevailing view that settler Australians have of 'the Aboriginal problem' as symptomatic of the inability for Aboriginal people to adapt to contemporary Australia and accept the way things are, rather than acknowledge that 'the Aboriginal problem' is a result of long-held prejudice and deeply entrenched systemic racism.

Emotions

The settler colonial psyche highlights the central role that emotions play within the organisation of social, cultural and political life (Damousi, 2010, p. 114) and speaks to the way that white supremacy functions within Australian nationalism both historically and today.

Briefly, emotions can be understood within social and psychological theory as phenomena that are shaped, experienced and interpreted through social and cultural processes (Clay-Warner & Robinson, 2008; Lupton, 1998, p. 8). Emotion is a concept, a social practice, a way of being-in-the-world (Parkinson, 1995, p. 4). Although theorisations of emotion draw on multiple perspectives, including classical social theory (such as Marx, Durkheim, Weber and Simmel), psychoanalysis (such as Freud, and Lacan), phenomenology (such as Husserl, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre) as well as more recent sociological formulations (such as Kemper, Hochschild, Shott, Scheff, Denzin, and Collins), the contemporary sociocultural analysis of emotions can be broadly defined by the interpretive, phenomenological, and interactionist (Denzin, 1984) analysis of the way that social processes affect emotional responses and the way that emotional responses affect social processes (Kemper, 1990). In other words, emotions tell us important information about our interaction with the world and about the creation of imagined communities (B. Anderson, 2006).

Emotions work to align individuals with collectives or, as Sara Ahmed argues, emotions work to align 'bodily space with social space' (Ahmed, 2004, p. 26). Collective

emotions or 'collective feelings' (Ahmed, 2004) work to mediate the relationship between the psychic and the social, and between the individual and the collective. Emotions work to normalise 'the collective' as natural rather than as socially and culturally constructed (Lupton, 1998). There are generally considered to be three levels of phenomena which distinguish how emotions are experienced; the individual, the interpersonal and the consensual level (Parkinson, 1995, p. 3). Emotions can thus be understood as performative (Butler, 1993, p. 2) because they both repeat past associations and generate new ones, and involve the alignment of subjectivities with and against others (Ahmed, 2004, p. 32).

Although it has been difficult for me to narrow down what the settler colonial psyche is and how it operates, it has been a necessary way of articulating how Aboriginal presences have been removed from Victoria's past, present and future as well as in demonstrating why this is significant. The settler colonial psyche operates discursively through incarnations of nationalism disguised as pioneer success stories. Because of the pervasive presence of such narratives, the settler colonial psyche is represented as an essential part of the story of Australia, rather than as stabilising settler colonial hegemony.

Birch states that:

Imperial history cannot recognise the existence of Indigenous histories. A history of dominance is seen as the history of a 'nation'. An attempt to recognise the history of Indigenous people creates insecurity, paranoia, even hysteria (in Cowlshaw & Morris, 1997).

Incompatible within the possessive logic of white sovereignty, Birch speaks to the emotional responses that white people within the central and western goldfields district have to 'Indigenous histories'. These emotional responses can be understood as defensive moves triggered by white fragility. I spoke with Birch about white emotional responses to Indigenous histories. In the interview he explained that denial is fundamental to white forgetting:

So, as long as you can muddy the waters. Unless you say there's a number of Aboriginal people killed here, somebody says, 'We don't really know the numbers. Where's the evidence?' etcetera. They don't say it didn't happen, they just muddy the waters enough so that people can actually forget about it, not have to confront it, not have to reflect on it.

This notion of ‘muddying the waters’ is an interesting one, which points to the power that place-making has within the ‘settler colonial psyche’ to forget the circumstances of Aboriginal dispossession. Aboriginal dispossession is overlaid with a rich tapestry of settler colonialism. Here, place names might be understood as a final step in cementing settler sovereignty in the land.

Perhaps because of this denial, which operates to reinforce white belonging, white responses to Aboriginal sovereignty is often characterised by guilt and shame. Settler Australians can ‘move beyond’ guilt and shame (Maddison, 2011), or they can reify it into feelings of outrage and anger in an attempt to remove collective responsibility. White guilt — or collective guilt — has been theorised to be associated with support for compensation and reparation of exploited groups for past injustices’ (Branscombe & Doosje, 2004, p. 17). In the Australian context, white guilt explains both white commitment to Kevin Rudd’s *Apology to the Stolen Generations* (See for instance McGarty & Blius, 2005; Smits, 2008) as well as public objections to native title land claims and to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Brunton, 1993). In an interview between myself and Fred Cahir, Cahir articulated how white guilt is experienced by students that he teaches:

Yes, that they feel made to feel guilty and they feel a certain proportion of the population is angry literally about being made to feel guilty. ‘I didn’t do it!’ is an expression I would hear in tutorials and ‘They’ve just got to get over it’...‘They have the same opportunities!’...‘I really resent being forced to learn about Indigenous health when most people aren’t Indigenous’.

Birch similarly discussed the way white Australians need to rid themselves of guilt:

They want someone to appease their guilt, or they are so frightened that they want someone to say, ‘Oh, it doesn’t matter’.

Australian mainstream media have long been using white guilt and shame as a call to arms against threats to Australian nationalism (Daniel, 1993), where apologies, native title (The Sydney Morning Herald “Black rights and white guilt,” 1992) and government reports are seen as ‘giving in’ to black armband history.

Guilt and shame are used to affirm settler belonging through the assertion of a singular national identity (Ahmed, 2005). In this respect, appeals to white guilt situate white people in one of two ways: as either accepting of white guilt and pro-Aboriginal rights, or (within the settler colonial psyche) as rejecting white guilt and anti-Aboriginal rights (Allpress, Brown, Barlow, & Louis, 2010). Within the settler colonial

psyche, white shame and guilt are rejected and replaced with emotions like melancholy and nostalgia, which reinforce settler belonging to Australia. The final section of this chapter situates belonging as central to the settler colonial psyche and to the forgetting of Aboriginal histories and narratives within Victoria.

Places inscribe national identity and reassure settler-Australian unease by making us feel at home, melancholic, nostalgic and proud. Ian Clark identifies such emotional sentiments in the diaries of George Augustus Robinson, where Robinson can be seen to respond to alienation from the environment with 'delight' (2010, p. 564). Clark states that, 'Robinson's gaze was culturally mediated; it was constructed by European paradigms or conventions of seeing, such as the picturesque and the panoramic' (2010, p. 567). Here we can see the important role that emotions play in the construction of national narratives. In this way, emotions can reflect an individual's link to larger societal entities (Branscombe & Doosje, 2004, p. 17).

Reflecting the role that emotions play in creating social inclusion and exclusion, I argue that emotions are fundamental to the performativity of white belonging within the settler colonial psyche. Peter Read states that, 'while intellectually we may acknowledge dispossession, the land is ours and our love for it seals the union' (2000, p. 16). This is an important point worth considering when we think about the role that emotions play within the settler colonial psyche and to white belonging. Because whiteness is normalised, white people do not necessarily see the privilege that their whiteness affords them (DiAngelo, 2011). White people may react to this privilege, within the practice of white supremacy in emotional ways. Within the settler colonial psyche, guilt and shame function to deny Aboriginal dispossession and white sovereignty. Whilst melancholy and nostalgia are used to reinforce white belonging as a distraction away from racial tension.

Robin DiAngelo uses the term 'white fragility' (2011) to describe '[h]ow fragile and ill equipped most White people are to confront racial tensions, and their subsequent projection of this tension onto people of colour' (2004, p. 177). DiAngelo explored the term in her PhD thesis that looked at the context of white Americans and their experiences of racial thinking, and has further expanded on this concept in multiple publications, including *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism* (2018). Her term has been used in the Australian context but has not been substantially defined, instead it is used to explain the ways that white people think (or fail to think) about white supremacy and racism as well as how white people react to race-based issues. I would like to draw on DiAngelo's term to describe the spectrum

of emotional responses that white people experience, as a part of the settler colonial psyche. DiAngelo refers to these emotional responses as ‘defensive moves’, which are triggered by racial stress. She explains:

White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium. Racial stress results from an interruption to what is racially familiar. (2011, p. 57)

DiAngelo’s term is relevant here because of the role that white fragility plays in the psychological denial of race-based issues and in the parts of history that white people celebrate and ignore. Denial has been used as a strategy for maintaining the settler colonial psyche as well as a way of removing white guilt (Kelada, 2014; Maddison, 2011; Pearson, 2007). Ian Clark articulates this in relation to the sale of non-Victorian Aboriginal art sold throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria:

Why is it more acceptable, palatable to appropriate Central Australian, Northern Australian or even North Western Australian or Northern Queensland Indigenous cultural forms and not Victorian? Is it because there has been that cultural dislocation and is there a judgment that anything Aboriginal Victorian is so degraded so to speak in inverted commas that therefore it’s not authentic? Therefore, the real authentic Australian Aboriginal people are North. Is there a guilt? Do they not want it? Is that more comfortable than to sell what those people have survived? We won’t deal with ramifications of what happened to the people down here.

Here, white fragility denies Aboriginal sovereignty in Victoria because it is too difficult, uncomfortable and uncanny to acknowledge the inherent contradictions of appropriating Aboriginal art practices from other areas of Australia into the tourist art market in Victoria, whilst simultaneously denying Victorian Aboriginal cultural artefacts.

A central function of the settler colonial psyche is to feed the myth of settler sovereignty and rightful possession over the land. However what is less clear is the process by which the settler colonial psyche feeds this myth. Positioning the settler colonial psyche within Wolfe’s eliminatory logic is useful because it helps us to understand the specific ways that settler sovereignty is both established and enforced.

Within Wolfe's logic, settler colonialism removes in order to replace. At the structural level, this is validated by the forced removal of Aboriginal people and the subsequent establishment of British settlements. At the symbolic level, this is less clear. I argue that within the settler colonial psyche the reality of possession is disguised, forgotten and replaced with national narratives that celebrate white belonging.

Introducing white belonging and narratives of nationhood

A number of Australian scholars draw on the way that whiteness is embodied within nationalism. Ghassan Hage's concept of the 'White Nation' fantasy (1999) helps us to better understand the historical, social and cultural context within which Aboriginal people continue to be dispossessed today. Hage defines the 'White Nation' fantasy as 'a fantasy of a nation governed by White people' (1999, p. 18) and argues that it is a fantasy of white supremacy in a nation structured around white culture, where Aboriginal people and non-white 'ethnics' are merely national objects to be removed according to a white national will (p. 18). In this context, multiculturalism is actually a form of assimilation, where the objective is to become 'Australian' and thereby transcend into being white. To put it another way, racism is a white problem: 'People who are white created white supremacy and people who are white sustain it' (Harvey, in Moreton-Robinson, 2011a, p.164). Aligned with Moreton-Robinson's white patriarchal sovereignty, Fiona Nicoll draws on the terms 'white virtue' (2014) and 'white knowing' (2004) to speak to the ways that whiteness is embodied by individual subjectivities, whilst Mary O'Dowd identifies the ways that the Australian nation is embodied by the Australian (white) male (2012) and the Australian landscape. An example of this imagining is the pioneer success story that romanticises the relationship the (white, male) drover, bushranger, gold digger, and pastoralist has with the Australian landscape. Here, we can imagine the settler colonial psyche as a lens that shapes the way the world is perceived according to the specific positionality of the subjectivity. This perspective shapes the way that settler people, both white and non-white, imagine the world around them as well as their place within settler Australia.

Richard White states that:

[N]ational identities are invented within the framework of modern Western ideas about science, nature, race, society, nationality. Not only is the very idea of national identity a product of European history at a particular time, but each addition to the Australian identity has reflected changing intellectual needs and fashions in the West. In other words, not only is the idea of

'Australia' itself a European invention, but men like Charles Darwin and Rudyard Kipling have contributed as much to what it means to be Australian as Arthur Streeton or Henry Lawson. The national identity is not "Born of the lean loins of the country itself", as one ardent nationalist put it, but is part of the "cultural baggage" which Europeans have brought with them, and which we continue to encumber ourselves. (1981, p. ix)

Acknowledging White's astute observation that national identity is neither fixed nor organic, this chapter demonstrates that white belonging is central to national identity. Race has played a central role in the image of Australia, practiced through Australian identity and, inclusive of whiteness, has been a key strategy for social and cultural organisation. By removing Aboriginal people as the sovereign heirs to Australia, the position of *native* is vacated. By referring to themselves as native, white settlers invalidate Aboriginal claims to sovereignty whilst also reinforcing their own sense of belonging (Veracini, 2010, p. 107).

Held within the myth of terra nullius (Ahluwalia, 2001, p. 65), the reality of Aboriginal dispossession has been silenced and forgotten. This myth is one constructed by, and celebrated within, the ideology of national identity. Terra nullius has been constructed to support white claims to sovereignty and is perpetuated to uphold white supremacy. For Anthony Smith, national identity is, 'a multidimensional concept, and extends to include a specific language, sentiments and symbolism' (1991, p. vii). He argues that we cannot begin to understand the power and appeal of nationalism as a political force without grounding our analysis in a wider perspective where the focus of national identity is treated as a collective phenomenon (1991, p. vii). Seeing national identity as a collective phenomenon, which the nation works to uphold, is an important point and one which this chapter works to unpack in the Victorian context. I have used the term settler colonial psyche to speak to the way that white supremacy works within a settler colonial mindset to uphold the national myth of white belonging.

A discussion around nationalism, national identity and belonging would not be complete without acknowledging the profound influence that Stuart Hall has had on the way that national discourses of power are understood. He argues that:

A national culture is a *discourse* — a way of constructing meanings which influence and organizes both our actions and our conceptions of ourselves. National cultures construct identities by producing meaning about "the nation" with which we can *identify*; these are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and

images which are constructed of it. As Benedict Anderson (1983) has argued, national identity is an “imagined community”. Anderson argues that the differences between nations lies in the different ways in which they are imagined. (1996a, p. 613)

Building on Benedict Anderson’s ‘imagined communities’, Stuart Hall has developed five main elements that contribute to national imagining. These are: (1) narratives of, (2) an emphasis on origins, continuity, tradition, and timelessness, (3) the invention of tradition, (4) the foundation myth, and (5) symbolically grounded on the idea of a pure, original people. I will briefly outline these below within the Australian context before drawing on them in a broader discussion around how white supremacy, imagined within national identity is embodied by the Australian national figure.

Belonging and the uncanny

A number of Australian scholars have drawn on Freud’s ‘uncanny’ to describe the anxiety that many settler Australians have about their own sense of belonging to/in Australia. Damien Riggs, uses Freud’s notion of ‘the uncanny’ to examine the ways in which white belonging in Australia is founded upon the repression of ongoing histories of colonisation (2003, p. 84). For Freud, the ‘uncanny’ occurs when something that is long known to us becomes unknown, forgotten and unfamiliar. The coexistence of familiarity and unfamiliarity provokes terror (Freud, 1985). In Australia the uncanny is experienced when settler Australians are asked to reflect on the truth of Aboriginal dispossession. The uncanny occurs when settler people are faced with the reality of Aboriginal belonging, which exposes the illegitimacy of their own belonging. White settler Australians occupy the space of both feeling at home in, and alienated from, Australia. This is where the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians is important.³⁴ The uncanny is experienced by white settlers because, for them, Aboriginal people are both seen and unseen. Settler Australians are comfortable with familiar discursive constructions of Aboriginality that do not challenge their own positionality in Australia. The uncanny is experienced by settler Australians when the discursive construct is replaced with representations that do not fit within their own view of the world, a point which Judd validates in his PhD thesis (2007), where he draws on ‘the

³⁴ The use of the term ‘invisible presence’ can be likened to Joyce Dalsheim’s theorisation of the ‘uncanny absence’ (Dalsheim, 2004) of the Palestinian/Arab ‘other in nationalist imagination. This term can be applied to the settler colonial imagination in Australia, which fails to imagine an Aboriginal presence outside of stereotyped portrayals.

medium-rare man' (Judd, 2007, p. 74) to articulate the 'in-between' (Judd, 2007, p. 67) space that those who are both settler and Aboriginal occupy as a hybrid creation of colonial/imperial interactions. Judd states that:

In this sense, the [man in the raw] imagined by Kant resembles the Aborigine constructed within Anglo-Australian nationalism, whose contemporaneous presence within 'modern' Australia is read as uncanny and where images of the Aborigine remain a source of anomaly capable of inspiring terror. (2007, p. 72)

Ken Gelder and Jane Jacobs articulate the uncanny in the settler colonial context and state that:

An 'uncanny' experience may occur when one's home is rendered somehow and in some sense unfamiliar; one has the experience, in other words, of being in place and 'out of place' simultaneously. This simultaneously is important to stress since, in Freud's terms, it is not simply the unfamiliar in itself which generates the anxiety of the uncanny; it is specifically the combination of the familiar and the unfamiliar — the way the one seems always to inhabit the other. (1995, p. 171)

Although Gelder and Jacob's argue that the uncanny is experienced as a consequence of postcolonialism, their analysis fails to substantiate what is postcolonial about the uncanny (Reetvinder & Wadham, 1999). They have also been criticised for their lack of critical reflection on the distribution of power, white privilege and systemic racism (Reetvinder & Wadham, 1999; Wright, 1999). Despite this, their use of the term 'uncanny' in the Australian context has been useful to explain the range of emotions which settler Australians, particularly white settler Australians, feel when thinking about Aboriginal dispossession and contemporary Aboriginality in Australia.

Freud's concept of the 'uncanny' is important because it helps us to understand the relationship between the settler colonial psyche and the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians. The continued presence of Aboriginal people within the Australian settler colonial nation is a crucial point and one which Simon Clark and Anthony Moran address. They argue that, 'the strangeness of Aborigines [to settlers' perceptions] is intrinsically related to settlers' own anxieties centred on their own chaotic, disrupted, and displaced position in a new world' (2003). In this sense, the settler colonial psyche can be understood as an emotional response to the uncanny. As a nation, 'we' invest in Aboriginal arts, sport and tourism, and celebrate the uniqueness

that such Aboriginality provides for 'us', whilst at the same time refuting Aboriginal claims to sovereignty, which impedes on our own claims to sovereignty. Here the uncanny can be seen as an unprocessed emotional response.

In his article, *Nothing has changed: the making and unmaking of Koori culture*, Birch explores the way that colonial names reflect white mythology and discourses of national character and identity, which write over Aboriginal cultural landscapes (2010, p. 152). Birch draws on a case study of the Grampians National Park,³⁵ which has been the topic of much public debate since 1989 when the then-minister for Tourism, Steve Crabb announced (without consultation with the five Koori³⁶ communities who make up the Western District) that sites in the region would revert to their Aboriginal names. The Grampians was to become Gariwerd, the Black Ranges would be known as Burrunji, the Glenelg River as Bugara, Halls Gap as Budj Budj and so on. No doubt the Grampians was to become Victoria's Uluru. The name push legitimising the regions claim to Aboriginal authenticity, as Birch argues, 'to tag the sites with Aboriginal names confirmed their legitimacy as artefacts of an 'ancient' culture' (2010, p. 147). The restoration of Aboriginal place names met significant opposition from a variety of groups, including shire councils and community organisations, as well as local and state enterprises who questioned the legitimacy of Aboriginal place names, cultural artefacts and carbon-dated rock art, and worried for the appropriate commemoration of 19th-century pioneers and explorers who 'established' the area, in this respect to change the name is to lose possession of the area.

Not only does the name change challenge the myth of peaceful settlement, but to embrace Aboriginal tourism as part of the heritage of the region would challenge popular notions of 'real' Aboriginal culture, as Cahir observes, 'both domestic and international tourists, are entering into Victorian Aboriginal cultural centres such as Brambuk in a tabula rasa fashion with very little contextual knowledge of Aboriginal cultural heritage and with the 'long-held notion that Victoria is not an Aboriginal area' (2010, p. 414). For these tourists, their expectation of authentic Aboriginal culture is challenged.

³⁵ The Grampians National Park is a nature reserve in Victoria, approximately 250 km west of Melbourne. The region is known for its picturesque valleys and sandstone mountains, wildlife and waterways. It is a popular tourist destination for recreation.

³⁶ The term Koori is a term used by Aboriginal people in Victoria (and bordering regions of NSW and South Australia) when referring to themselves.

Clark demonstrates the homogenised understanding that settler Australians have of Aboriginal culture/s in the context of the Grampians Aboriginal Art Gallery where tourists' idealisations of Aboriginality were challenged:

Many 'white' Australians wrongly accept the notion of a dichotomy between the present Aboriginal people of western Victoria and their ancient forebears. Their pre-contact ancestors, generally called the 'old people', are regarded as the 'real' Aborigines, and the present population as some kind of imitation. In part, adherence to this dichotomy explains how some white people are able to exhibit with pride the material remains left by the 'old people', whilst at the same time pour scorn on their descendants. (1998, p. 1)

Here, Clark speaks to the role that authenticity plays within racial thinking and to the uncanny nature of representations of Aboriginality within contemporary Victorian culture. It is uncanny because, settler people can refute the validity of contemporary claims to Aboriginality whilst at the same time using essentialised Aboriginal cultural iconography to claim their own sense of authenticity and belonging to Australia, whilst also illegitimising pre-colonial Aboriginal sites of significance as 'made up'.

Narratives of the nation

Stuart Hall argues that white supremacy is constructed as invisible through, what he terms, 'narratives of nationhood' (Hall, 1996a) which stand for, or represent, the shared experiences which make up a nation's past, present and future and give meaning to our individual lives. Both of the case studies represent significant narratives of nationhood.

Representations of the colonial period of Victorian settlement reflect a narrative of white possession and perpetuate a 'pioneer success story' devoid of an Aboriginal identity. Rather than an honest engagement with the past, Richard Flanagan believes we have been served a 'veil of comforting lies and half-truths' (Flanagan in Birch, 2002, p. 42). This is confirmed by Birch who speaks of his frustration and anger, 'that Australia is stuck somewhere in the past, continuing to regurgitate shallow national myths and clichés' (2002, p. 43) that make us white Australians feel comfortable and safe.

The settler colonial psyche operates through Captain Cook statues, War memorials, the education system, Australia Day and any other part of Australian life that represent a white-settler view of Australian history. In relation to this, Gillian Cowlishaw argues that the state is invested in these celebrations because it legitimises its claim to sovereignty. She states that 'by mediating the identity of its citizens, the

State authorises itself' (in Cowlishaw & Morris, 1997, p. 224). Because of this, race is central to the creation of the Australian nation. Of significance to this is the role that whiteness plays in the construction of race, whilst not being raced itself. Here, racial order is naturalised, and thus seen as just the way things are (Bonilla-Silva, 2012). In Australia, being white, or embodying white characteristics, has acted as a unifying mechanism, which over time has come to establish one's claim as an Australian. In other words, you might be from Britain, Germany, Poland or Sweden but you are also white. Being white allows these particular subjectivities to not need to rationalise their occupation of space nor their free movement throughout it. Above all others, being English and being white means that while other non-white, non-English people are raced and thus 'come from somewhere else', for English whites there is no need to name these attributes. In this way, hegemonic whiteness, perpetuated through the settler colonial psyche renders white supremacy as invisible.

Martin Crotty (2007) states that, 'the question of what it means to be "white", and to be Australian, has been debated in Australian literature since the colonial period' (p. 254). Crotty argues that the evolution of this debate is derivative of settler Australian anxiety over rootlessness, racial decline and external threats to the new nation. These particular ways of understanding the settler colonial psyche can be articulated through, the 'white possessive logic' (Moreton-Robinson, 2011a) of settler colonialism. That is to say that the conscious and subconscious acts of remembering and forgetting shape the white possessive logic by which mainstream Australian culture is defined. An example of this is Australia Day, which is celebrated each year on January 26th as a national holiday. On this day, in 1788 Captain Arthur Phillip ceremoniously substantiated the claim to the eastern half of the continent for Great Britain (Worgan & Currey, 2009). After a six-month long harrowing journey from Portsmouth, England in 1787, this day and its subsequent celebration in national history represents a celebration over grief, and of a new beginning over the end to a unique cultural history. Today, this history is reflected in attitudes towards Aboriginal people and issues, the circulation of misinformation about Aboriginal people and issues, the romanticised 'white-washed' settler narrative and subsequent invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians is sustained through the settler colonial psyche.

Origins, continuity, traditions, and timelessness

National identity is represented as primordial. Remnants of a colonial past create the fiction of a unique, singular, optimistic and ahistorical regional identity. They are

implicated in the process of naming 'empty' spaces, in 'the classical image of an Australian space as structured by a void or an absence which needs to be filled in' (Morris in Barcan, 1996, p. 36). This colonial trope is the linchpin of the legal fiction of terra nullius and continually reinforces the notion that Aboriginal Australians were passively colonised and that this process was at once peaceful, inevitable and welcome.

In contemporary Australia, the performance of place can be understood as a response to a settler 'identity crisis' (Cowlshaw & Morris, 1997, p. 231). Andrew Lattas argues that the construction of Australian nationalism is mediated by a 'conceptual space of alienation from the environment' and a deep anxiety over placelessness within the Australian environment. Within Australian nationalist discourses, Lattas positions the performance of place as a response to alienation:

Here the 'self' gains its identity through the struggle to overcome the distance separating it from the land. The land becomes a testing ground; it represents a challenge to prove the worth, character and mettle of those who wish to claim her (Schaffer 1988). This is the space of the pioneer, explorer and artist. Each of them is involved in giving birth to our sense of nationhood. Each represents a figure for colonising the land, for gaining over it some kind of spiritual possession. Each of these figures assumes a spiritual form through the suffering they experience as they move through the land in search of its hidden truth(s). Their suffering takes on the epic proportions of a pilgrimage that redeems and heals the nation. Indeed, this suffering at the hands of the land can have its creative unifying potential rendered as a process of giving birth to nationhood (in Cowlshaw & Morris, 1997, p. 234)

Lattas explores the notion that by being situated in an alien landscape, white settler Australians are made to internalise a sense of not being at home with themselves and argues that the practice of creating home makes us feel safe. Lake and others (2010, p. 9) similarly conceptualises colonial place-making as a response to homesickness. Whilst, Tom Griffiths explains that place-making was a technique for the filling of 'open spaces', which 'needed to be talked up; they needed to be developed and population for the defence of nation and the defence of race' (1997, p. 10). In this respect, the settler colonial psyche both attempt to 'become Indigenous' to the land, whilst also requiring the *coming from somewhere else* as a prerequisite for white belonging.³⁷ These places

³⁷ Here, the social construction of whiteness comes into play. Some non-whites are able to 'become white' (like the Irish and parts of Europe) whilst others are unable to become white, such as those from Asian, India and Middle-Eastern countries.

reinforce settler belonging, by perpetuating mythic histories, which help us to forget the reality of our alienation and relinquish anxiety. Bernard Smith, in his 1980 Boyer lecture, *The Spectre of Truganini*, argued that melancholy was as much a product of fear and guilt as it was of homesickness and loneliness, a conflation of Aboriginal culture with the bush itself. As dispersion proceeded, writers projected the pain and anxiety of colonial experience onto Australian nature (Griffiths, 1996, pp. 3-4). In this respect, melancholy is used in the Australian context to romanticise the past and tell us how to feel about it and ourselves. Melancholy has been used as an aesthetic response to the Australian environment, and is used in literature and art, as a national unifying device (Newton, 2001, p. 2). Melancholy of landscape is used in response to Australia's lack of an historic past (Griffiths, 1996, p. 3105), and as a way of distracting us away from our own alienation from the landscape. Further to this, melancholy is often referenced in relation to colonial period Australian landscape art and literature, which centres the 'Australian pioneer success story' as the central figure of the account. In this respect, melancholy contributed a national story and situated the national origin story, which positioned settler sovereignty as the centre point.

The invention of tradition and the Australian national character

Russel Ward's *The Australian legend* (1978) is one of the most widely cited and celebrated studies of Australian national identity. It traces the emergence of the archetype throughout postcolonial history, from the convict to the pastoralist, squatter, gold digger, bushranger and frontiersman. White, on the other hand (1981), argues that rather than tracing Australian national identity to the convict, we should instead see the construction of Australian national identity as an attempt to move away from the convict stigma and to challenge a negative imagining of Australia held by the British in England. Similarly, John Hirst argues that the 'Australian legend' owes much of his character to the larrikin, which he offers is perhaps 'a residue from convict times' (2010b, p. 63). He also argues that the convict could not possibly figure as highly as Ward believes him to, considering that 'larrikins flourished in all cities, particularly in Melbourne — the largest — which only has a faint convict history' (2010b, p. 63). Historians Paul Carter (1983) and Simon Sleight (2009) have both drawn significant links between 19th-century Melbourne and the emergence of the 'larrikin'³⁸. In fact Sleight traces the emergence of the larrikin to the emancipatory potential of the gold

³⁸ An Australian slang term which emerged in the late 19th century to describe a young man who displayed socially anti-authoritarian, rebellious and unconventional behaviour.

rush, which usurped the larrikin from the social restraints of class and social respectability, and highlights the tensions that this cultural and economic divide created (2009, p. 250). Hirst argues that the emergence of the larrikin in Victoria marks a cultural shift away from Britain towards the new world of America (2010a). Going further than this, Humphrey McQueen faults Ward for his emphasis on both Sydney and the bush in the creation of the Australian legend, and reminds us that the growth of the city was possible because of gold. McQueen argues that, 'the crux of the Australian legend is not a divide between the city and the bush, but rather their interactions within the conflicts between wage-labour and capital' (2008, p. 250). One need only think of the Eureka Rebellion, which has featured prominently as iconic of Australia, unionism and democracy (explored further in the following chapter) to accept McQueen's argument. Despite the fact that the bushman ethos has evolved, one thing remains the same — the national figure is embodied as single, white, male (Curthoys, 1993, p. 28), independent, laconic and 'imbued with an ethic of mateship' (O'Dowd, 2011, p. 36). Non-whites and women fall outside of this imagination and therefore, outside of Australian national discourse (Lake, 1997). The significance of the national figure to Aboriginal dispossession is clear, as Mary O'Dowd argues, '[i]n this dream past there is no dispossession, no unworthy death and no Indigenous history' (2011, p. 36).

The Australian legend fails to acknowledge the significance of Aboriginal cultural heritage to settler colonial demarcation from Europe. Fred Cahir, Dan Tout and Lucinda Horrocks claim that, 'Aboriginal cultural traditions and Aboriginal expertise had a formative influence on the skills, culture and outlook' (2017, p. 4) of Ward's Australian legend.

In this respect, the Australian legend can be understood as an important marker of colonial hegemony and potentially as a reification of Indigeneity (Cahir et al., 2017). By removing Aboriginal people as the sovereign heirs to Australia, the position of 'native' is vacated. By referring to themselves as native, white settlers invalidate Aboriginal claims to sovereignty whilst also reinforcing their own sense of belonging (Veracini, 2010, p. 107). Here, The Australian legend represents the 'filling of a gap' (Bhabha, 1984) within the quest for an origin story (Bhabha, 1984). The Australian legend, in an attempt at self-legitimation goes through a process of indigenisation, which then authorises 'the' beginning. Rather than a direct copy, Homi Bhabha (1984) would argue, and I agree with him, that in the search for an authentic national identity, indigenisation takes on the mimetic form of the colonial 'Other' (Said, 1979). Similarly,

Patrick Wolfe might see white indigenisation of the Australian legend as operating discursively within the logic of elimination (2006), as a refraction of Indigeneity, wherein Aboriginality is both dispossessed and repossessed at the same time.

Although Ward's *Australian legend* articulates the national figure well, it fails to fully account for the important role that Victoria has had on the development of the national character. Ward traces his national character, imagined through the Australian legend, to the convicts (Hirst, 2010b, p. 58) of the New South Wales colony, but such a narrative fails to appreciate the impact that other experiences of settlement had on this national type (Alder, Sept 2008) and little to explain the significance of the gold rush, the development of Melbourne as the first city in Australia founded on trade and commerce; and of free settlement in the Port Phillip district, more broadly, to the development of Australian nationalism. Going beyond the convict image, Ward fails to consider the role that the city (Hirst, 2008, p. 36) and the gold rush played in establishing a more democratic and egalitarian society (see Blainey, 2013; Crowley, 1988 and Serle, 1968 and 1974 for further discussion of this). In fact, Ward believes that the gold rush did very little to change the 'bushmen's ethos' (1978, p. 157).

Each year January the 26th is marked as a day of celebration for many Australians and a day of invasion for Indigenous Australians. On this day, in 1788, the First Fleet captained by Governor-elect Arthur Phillip sailed into Port Jackson (including the Sydney Harbour district) and claimed New South Wales as the continent's first penal colony (Flannery, 1999). In 1994, January 26th became a unified national holiday practiced by all Australian states and territories. Since then, Australia Day has come to signify the birth of the Australian nation and a celebration of Australian nationalism. Over the last few years more and more Australians, both settler and Indigenous, are choosing not to celebrate Australia Day, both out of respect for Indigenous Australians but also because the day holds little significance outside of Sydney and New South Wales.

In November 2016, the Fremantle council (in Western Australia) announced that the portside city would no longer celebrate Australia Day (including fireworks displays and citizenship ceremonies) with the rest of the country on January 26th, but would instead celebrate 'One Day' on January 28th. The Western Australian premier, Colin Barnett, chastised the Mayor of Fremantle, Brad Pettitt, for what he believed to be a divisive decision. Barnett characterised the decision as being contrary to the Australian way of life and stated that, 'it's disloyal to our country, it's disloyal to our state, and I think it's disloyal to the community of Fremantle' (ABC News, 2016). Barnett

explained that, ‘everyone understands the history and the debate about Australia Day but Australia Day is our national day, most Aboriginal groups accept it and history is put to one side’ (ABC News, 2016). Barnett’s comments are symptomatic of an Australian nationalism that celebrates a monocultural national identity, which ‘sets aside history’ in favour of a more palatable popular telling of history. This popular telling of history celebrates and reinforces favoured narratives, which support a ‘peaceful settlement’ telling of the colonisation of Australia and a benign view of British imperialism that celebrates the bringing of *civilisation* to the continent. However, this ignores and suppresses stories that document and draw attention to colonial violence, dispossession and Aboriginal sovereignty. In 2017, Invasion Day rallies were held alongside Australia Day celebrations in many of the nation’s capital cities and attracted record-breaking numbers. In Melbourne, as many as 50,000 people attended the rally, marching from Spring Street’s Parliament House to Federation Square on Flinders Street. Protestors’ calls for a date change for Australia Day and the need for recognition and reconciliation for Indigenous Australians, but for politicians and right-wing citizens (such as then Deputy Prime Minister, Barnaby Joyce), such conversations were considered nothing more than ‘political correctness gone mad’ (Hunter, 2017).

Settler colonialism eliminates Aboriginal sovereignty in practical as well as psychological terms and replaces it with settler narratives, which are held and reinforced within the settler colonial psyche. Although this thesis looks to two settler narratives in particular — those relating to the Victorian gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football — each of these narratives depict incarnations of the Aussie battler.

Foundational myth

The settler colonial psyche speaks to settler Australia’s inability (or unwillingness) to critically reflect. Within the settler colonial psyche national myths are regurgitated and blindly celebrated out of comfort, habit or blind allegiance. Acclaimed Koori writer and historian, Tony Birch is one researcher who has specifically focused on the role that white possession plays in the forgetting of Aboriginal narratives in Victoria. Birch refers to this as a lie of necessity, which endures so that the ‘pioneer success story that underpins the construction of the nation-state is able to present itself as the innocent agent of a struggle over adversity’ (Birch, 2005, p. 187) and even as the hero of the story — saving the natives from themselves so that they might die out quietly. This ‘saviour’ narrative is perpetuated in other invaded territories throughout the world. Alongside Birch, Katrina Schlunke contends that ‘we’ (that is non-indigenous Australians) lie to

ourselves, as a society, because the truth is unsavoury and too difficult to swallow. To acknowledge Aboriginal sovereignty is to acknowledge that the doctrine of terra nullius is invalid and that the land we occupy today is not our own. Schlunke states that this 'truth' would be too 'messy' (2005) for white Australians, so instead, a narrative has been carefully constructed that presents the colonist as overcoming the harsh realities of the Australian landscape — that of the pioneer success story. Such histories falsely place the colonist as conqueror, victor and hero, accommodating a history of absence and of terra nullius.

Although the Australian legend has been a feature of nationalist ideals since at least the 1980s (O'Dowd, 2011, p. 36), this typology wasn't invoked at times of celebration or crises by the state nor the people (Meaney, 2001, p. 83) until the later part of the 20th century where it emerged through the Anzac legend. Birthed in the 1970s by, in particular, Bill Gammage and Patsy Adams-Smith (Lake et al., 2010, p. 31) the Anzac spirit became a source of national pride under the prime ministership of John Howard and Kevin Rudd (Lake et al., 2010, p. 124).

Today, the Anzac legend works within the settler colonial psyche as white Australia's creation story (Lake et al., 2010, p. 12). Anzac mythology demonstrates the role that memory and emotions play in the creation of national identity. A point which Marilyn Lake, Henry Reynolds, Mark McKenna and Joy Damousi confirm in their book *What's Wrong with ANZAC: the Militarisation of Australian History* (2010) where they critique and problematise the rise of Anzac mythology. They state that:

The ANZAC spirit, ethereal it may be, is the impetus behind our never say die attitude, the reason we excel at sport, the reason the country galvanized behind the victims of the Victorian bushfires, the reason we came to the aid of East Timor...ANZAC Day is not just about honouring the war achievements and bravery of the war dead but acknowledging the virtues of our nation past and present so that they may be preserved for future generations. (2010, p. 15)

The fanaticism over Anzac mythology demonstrates the resistance that settler Australians have toward the less-than-heroic circumstances of Australian settlement. Within the settler colonial psyche the realities of Australia's racist history mean nothing compared to the enduring Aussie battler who fights against the harsh bush, against the 'other' (both here and abroad), to overcome adversity against all odds. 'We' did it on the battlefield, 'we' did it on the goldfield and on the football field (Weir, 1981). The myth endures so that that 'we' are not faced with the reality of our cohabitation, so that we may sleep easy in the white fantasy of belonging.

Disguised as Australian nationalism, Anzac Day, Australia Day, the gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football all operate within the settler colonial psyche to remove Aboriginal sovereignty whilst reinforcing settler possession.

Being native

Chris Healy states that the 'mode in which indigenous people are remembered in Australia is as absent' (2008, p. 11) and argues that it has been all too easy for contemporary non-indigenous Australians to forget Australia's past and present mistreatment of Aboriginal people. Shifting the focus and thinking about mythology and storytelling can both work to subvert as well as reinforce the establishment. Healy identifies the ways in which colonial monuments, and the monumental forms of history out of which they emerge, have served to block from view the Aboriginal presence in place before and after colonisation. He similarly traces the role that museums have had in perpetuating and strengthening the process of forgetting, and claims that we forget a particular truth and weave a story more becoming to our national identity. Colonial artefacts, representations and reflections are thus used as a way of reinforcing this story. As an insurance against the failure of collective memory (Lake, 2006, p. 1) public memorials and monuments have been erected with increasing frequency since the late 19th century. Along with them, the cultural significance of heritage has been practiced through education curriculum and museums as well as cultural iconography including art, literature and popular culture.

In relation to this, Pal Ahluwalia states that, 'terra nullius was dependent both upon the non-recognition of the local population and the "indigenisation" of their white conquerors' (2001, p. 65). In his PhD thesis, Rob Garbutt explored the way that the concept of terra nullius is used by settler Australians to both reinforce white belonging and as a way of becoming Indigenous (Goldie, 1989, p. 13) to Australia, thus legitimising white claims to sovereignty. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin refer to this process as validating the 'New World in the eyes of the Old' (2002, p. 135). For settler Australians, becoming native to Australia demarcated them away from Britain and shaped the way they saw themselves. This image has been celebrated, reinforced, strengthened and evolved into the national figure of the Aussie battler and his various incarnations — the national father (O'Dowd, 2011, p. 36), the larrikin (Hirst, 2010a), the bushman (Meaney, 2001, p. 83), shearer (O'Dowd, 2011, p. 36), pioneer, and most significantly, the Australian legend (R. Ward, 1978) and the Anzac digger (Lake et al., 2010, p. 12).

The important role that remembering and forgetting play in reinforcing and celebrating settler colonialism has been identified by a number of Australian scholars, historians, and social commentators, including Mark McKenna who states that, ‘the culture of forgetting is deeply embedded in Australian society’ (2003, p. 131).³⁹ McKenna argues that, ‘the history we remember creates the framework within which our politics take place’ whilst Tessa Morris-Suzuki refers to Australian nationalism as collective memory. From this perspective the flip side of collective memory is collective forgetting (1994). Collective forgetting works within Wolfe’s eliminatory logic of settler colonialism in both its positive and negative elements, where settler colonialism *creates* (its positive element) as well as *destroys* (its negative element). In other words, for new memories to emerge, old ones become forgotten. Katrina Schlunke demonstrates that the lines between memory, representation and history are blurred, and that the embodied experience of remembering history is subject to prevalent and popular discourses, which change through time and space. She states that, ‘when something is re-presented something is (partially) lost’ (2013, p. 255), and that despite this, such representations work to continually reinforce dominant ideology. Schlunke refers to this process of memory making as ‘material remembering’ and states that despite the fact that memory is often opposed to materiality, where memory is seen as subjective, materiality is seen as an ‘unchanging substance’ (2013, p. 254). Schlunke uses the term ‘gagging the past’ (2005) to speak to the emotional response that settler Australians have towards the realities of Aboriginal dispossession. Schlunke (2005) sees this forgotten history as a way of cleansing ourselves of our shameful colonial history. The settler colonial psyche functions to simultaneously remember settlement whilst forgetting the specific circumstances of settlement. The following two case study chapters demonstrate how processes of remembering and forgetting are practiced within the settler colonial psyche to reinforce white belonging.

Conclusion

This thesis responds to this forgotten history and focuses on the particular ways in which dominant narratives have written over the reality of Aboriginal dispossession in Victoria. Victoria is an interesting case study of these issues because of the role that the

³⁹ For instance, historian Anna Haebich refers to settler memory as ‘retro-assimilation’ (2007 ; 2016), whilst cultural theorist Katrina Schlunke explores memory and materiality (2013). Julianne Schultz refers to the comfort of the settler collective memory as, ‘terra nullius of the mind’ (2017).

state has had in Australian national identity as well as its contribution to the economy. It is within the settler colonial psyche that the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians can be understood. Aboriginal Victorians are deemed as invisibly present within the settler colonial psyche to both reinforce white belonging and possession. The settler colonial psyche is characterised by the frenzied and simultaneous need to belong, to remember and forget, to feel at home and free of guilt in Australia. The white fantasy of belonging and the possessive logic of denial are central to this psyche, where white sovereignty is established and celebrated through the landscape and reinforced through heritage, tourism and in everyday practices of place-making.

This chapter has established that white belonging is central to the settler colonial psyche. The settler colonial psyche draws on emotional instability and uncanny experiences to reinforce white belonging within settler colonialism. In this respect, settler colonialism is an ongoing process rather than an event in time (Wolfe, 2016). Within the settler colonial psyche white belonging is celebrated through what Stuart Hall calls 'narratives of nationhood'(1996a). These narratives speak to settler triumph, the birth of the nation and celebrate the real Australian. Over time these narratives become invisible and normalised and taken as truth. When Aboriginal sovereignty threatens white sovereignty, white belonging is destabilised. Emotional responses to the perceived threat can be characterised by white fragility, which works to reinforce white belonging. The settler colonial psyche works within Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism where memory and emotions remove Aboriginal sovereignty and override it with mythologised origin stories that memorialise and celebrate white men. Within the settler colonial psyche white belonging is reinforced while the alternate narratives of Aboriginal Victoria are silenced and denied.

The settler colonial psyche can be used to explain the failure of settler Australia to acknowledge and accept the long history of Aboriginal dispossession, settler violence, segregation and policies of elimination. The settler colonial psyche refers to the way that white belonging has been embodied in Australian nationalism as well as the processes by which Aboriginal sovereignty has been forgotten. To acknowledge the presence of Aboriginal Victorians is to acknowledge, accept and take responsibility for the role that settler colonialism has had in displacing Aboriginal Australians so their presence is contextualised within settler colonialism, ignored and made invisible. The truth of Aboriginal dispossession is too ugly to remember (Feagin, 2017, p. xi) so it is denied, forgotten and written over with narratives, which celebrate settler triumph and progress. Over time these narratives become known as truth, and alternate narratives

(which speak to Aboriginal resistance, success and diversity) are denied, ignored, overwritten and ultimately forgotten.

The following two case study chapters speak to the process of remembering and forgetting and demonstrate the ways that memory is used within the settler colonial psyche to deny Aboriginal sovereignty in Victoria. Both case studies are important signifiers of white belonging and can be considered as white spaces where Aboriginal narratives are actively silenced. As I highlighted in the introductory chapter, as divergent as these case studies may appear, they are both significant to Australian cultural identity and to the contemporary invisible presence of Aboriginal people in Victoria. Although the two case studies are both markers of Australian nationalism, they approach this discussion in different ways. As articulated in chapter three, an important aspect of approaching research with Aboriginal people is the culturally-respectful and ethical conduct of cross-cultural research. This has significantly shaped the way the research has been approached, analysed and reported and thus, how the case study chapters have been developed.

Case study 1: the central and western goldfields district

The first case study focuses on the central and western goldfields district of Victoria and demonstrates how space, place and landscape are used to reinforce white belonging. The first case study chapter draws on the central and western goldfields district in tracing the ways that Aboriginal people have been written out of Victoria's cultural history.

This first case study chapter looks to the historical and contemporary presence of Aboriginal people within the central and western goldfields district of Victoria, with an emphasis on the ways Indigeneity has been (and continues to be) constructed as invisible. I interviewed four non-Aboriginal historians and four Aboriginal community members about their experiences living and working in Ballarat and their perspective on whiteness, racial intolerance and the visibility of Aboriginal people within the district.

Case study 2: Australian (Rules) Football

Drawing on the first case study, the second case study positions Australian (Rules) Football, as a space, place and a landscape. Within Australian (Rules) Football, racial thinking and racist experiences are emblematic of white belonging and are used within the settler colonial psyche as mechanisms of control. I interviewed 25 Aboriginal

participants specifically for this chapter, with three additional Aboriginal participants from the first case study able to speak both to their experiences within Australian (Rules) Football and their experiences growing up and/or living in Ballarat.

The second case study focused on player experiences within Australian (Rules) Football and demonstrates the contemporary consequences that colonial narratives have had on the invisible presence of Aboriginal people in Victoria. Because of the emphasis on the ethical conduct of research, colonial research practices and the construction of knowledge in this thesis, the second case study prioritises the voices of the participants. In facilitating the participants to speak for themselves, the emphasis remains on their perspectives rather than solely on my translation of their experiences. Drawing on the first case study, I was able to situate their perspectives in the context of white belonging and the settler colonial psyche. As outlined in chapter three, both the interview process and the analysis were participant-lead. I conducted a thematic analysis of the interview transcripts using Nvivo (a computer software package for qualitative analysis). Drawing on the thematic analysis I was able to situate the interview data (for both case studies) in the context of theory, phenomena and historical record. This resulted in two case study chapters which highlighted how white belonging is practiced within the settler colonial psyche but which do so in very different ways

The Goldfields: A case study into the invisible presence of Aboriginal people in the central and western goldfields district of Victoria



Figure 5: Contemporary map of the central and western goldfields district.

Introduction: Frank of Ballarat

Today, Frank's grave stands near the south-east corner of the Ballarat⁴⁰ cemetery as a monument to Ballarat's Wathaurung tribe.⁴¹ Not far from the unmarked graves of babies, the orphan and the Chinese blocks, Frank's grave represents the parts of Ballarat

⁴⁰ See figure 5 on page 102.

⁴¹ The Wathaurung tribe are the Traditional Owners of Ballarat and surrounding areas. Their land extends to Geelong and along the Ballarine Peninsula. Flanked by the Dja dja wurrung to the north, the Woi wurrung and Bun (Boon) wurrung to the east, the Gulidjan and Gabubanud to the South and on the other side of Geelong, and by the Djargurb wurrung, Girai wurrung and Djabwurrung to the west. The spelling can vary and includes Wadawurrung and Wathawurrung, which are used by other registered Aboriginal groups in the area.

heritage which have been forgotten. A year after his death in 1896, a monument was erected over the grave using funds raised by the ironically named White Australian Natives Association (Hallinan & Judd, 2007, pp. 424-425). The inscription reads:

The
Resting Place
Of
Frank,
The Last of the
Ballaraat⁴² Tribe
of Aborigines.
Erected by
Public Subscription
1897

The monument was erected to commemorate his passing and signified an end to Aboriginal Ballarat in colonial history (Hallinan & Judd, 2007, pp. 424-425). It wasn't until much later, only in the past few decades, that historians and local academics Janice Newton, Ian Clark and Fred Cahir were able to confidently identify Frank by his tribal name, Mullawallah.

Mullawallah, also known as William Wilson and King Billy, died on the 23rd of September in 1896 at the Ballarat hospital. His death was reported extensively in local news and his funeral was attended by hundreds of people. He was a Wathaurung elder, who, 'in death, took on the role of "the last of his tribe"' (Newton, 2001, p. 61). Despite his high standing within the Ballarat and surrounding communities, today he is largely forgotten.

In early December 2014, endorsed by the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation,⁴³ the Ballarat City Council selected 'Mullawallah' as the name for its newest suburban development from a list of 51 public submissions. The council received over 100 written objections from affected community members, and on the 10th of December 2014, under pressure from the local community, they ultimately rejected the name. Those

⁴² Ballarat originated with two boroughs — the Borough of Ballaarat (incorporated in 1855) and the Borough of Ballaarat East (incorporated in 1870). The Borough of Ballaarat became a city in 1870, whilst the Borough of Ballaarat East, which became a town in 1872. Although the second 'a' was quickly dropped by the community, it wasn't until 1921, when the two boroughs merged and became the City of Ballarat that it became official ("From Ballaarat to Ballarat: What's really in a name?," 2017).

⁴³ Trading as Wadawurrung.

opposed to the name claimed their objections were not racist⁴⁴ but were instead about reflecting the community. Objections to the proposed name ranged from concerns over the proposed names' difficult pronunciation and spelling, its similarity to other names in the district to the lack of cultural significance that the name held for concerned citizens (Newton, 2016). Opponents maintained that the issue was not one of racism (McNab, 2014) but one of practicality for the community, citing confusion for emergency service responders as the primary reason for its rejection (Newton, 2016). The backlash received national news coverage and was reported in Ballarat's *Courier* newspaper as well as in *The Guardian* (Davey, 2014), the *Herald Sun* (Jefferson, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c), the *Daily Mail* (Jeans & Duff, 2014; McNab, 2014) and by the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)* (ABC News, 2014). Although there are a number of places in the Ballarat district which are taken from Aboriginal words (such as Ballarat, Wendouree and Buningyong), I haven't been able to find a single name that is similar enough to 'Mullawallah' for this to be considered a legitimate concern for emergency services. Furthermore, no such placename was provided as evidence in the numerous newspaper articles which cited the name similarity as a viable objection.

The fact that opposing community members failed to appreciate that the name 'Mullawallah' has as much significance to the area as the names of its pioneers and gold miners is symptomatic of the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians within mainstream Victorian culture, specifically in the central and western goldfields district. Tony Birch confirms the invisible presence of Aboriginal people within the district and states that, 'many people of the Western District of Victoria cannot accept a Koori presence in the area, either in the past or present. If they do recognise an Aboriginal presence, it is one that is long dead' (Cowlshaw & Morris, 1997, p. 18). The inability for this sector of the Ballarat (and surrounding) community to be able to imagine an Aboriginal presence⁴⁵ within the district is problematic and reflects a long-held tradition of forgetting Aboriginal sovereignty within Victoria's central and western districts. The tradition of forgetting is one which defines, not just the settler colonial psyche in Victoria but, as the previous chapter introduced, Australian nationalism

⁴⁴ For specific comments made by community members, see for instance the article 'Aboriginal elder Mullawallah to be honoured in name of Ballarat's newest suburb' (Jeans & Duff, 2014) in the online edition of the *Courier* newspaper.

⁴⁵ As discussed in both the introductory chapter and chapter three, I argue that Aboriginal Victorians maintain an invisible presence within the settler colonial psyche, which celebrates a 'pioneer success story' telling of colonisation rather than presenting an honest engagement with Victoria's colonial legacy of systematic violence towards Aboriginal people.

(Birch, 2002, p. 43) and is reflected in regional and rural townships throughout Victoria. The central and western goldfields district is riddled with examples of intolerance, which build up to a much larger narrative of white heteronormativity and a deep conservatism that reinforces white belonging.

The gold rush and Australian national identity

The Victorian gold rush represents a significant period in Victoria's history, culture and identity and is central to the development of Australian nationalism as well as to the development of Victoria's state identity. Strengthened through colonial art and literature, goldfields narratives reinforce the settler colonial psyche by asserting a palatable 'origin story' that can be memorialised, celebrated and reproduced. As the previous chapter argued, the settler colonial psyche operates in response to settler Australian anxiety, guilt and fear to reinforce white belonging in Australia. I argue that the central and western goldfields district functions within this space to facilitate the psychological process of forgetting Aboriginal narratives within historical narratives and consequently from contemporary Victorian mainstream culture. Because of this, the central and western goldfields are also central to the contemporary invisibility of Aboriginal people living in the state of Victoria. By understanding the extent to which the gold rush impacted Aboriginal people we are better able to understand how the contemporary invisibility of Aboriginal Victorians functions today.

Less concerned with an historical reconstruction of the presence of Aboriginal people on the Victorian goldfields, this case study has more to do with the significance that such historical narratives have for contemporary understandings of Aboriginal sovereignty in Victoria. There are a handful of texts that explore Aboriginal occupation in the central and western districts of Victoria, although their representation is not without faults. Richard Broome's *Aboriginal Victorians: A History Since 1800* (2005b) provides an historical overview of (post)colonial life for Aboriginal people in Victoria, but does not specifically focus on life on the goldfields — in fact Broome does not pay enough attention to the significance of this period to Aboriginal Victorian history. Cahir's PhD and subsequent book, *Black Gold: Aboriginal People on the Goldfields of Victoria, 1850–1870* (2012), does an excellent job of articulating the varied roles that Aboriginal people played on the goldfields and demonstrates the fabled ideology that saw Aboriginal people removed from their country, culture and from historical narratives. It does little to address the reasons for this representational neglect and continues to position Aboriginal people as relicts of the past.

This chapter identifies memory as working within the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism to systematically remove Aboriginal presences from the settler colonial psyche. The processes of remembering (replacing) and forgetting (removing) work psychologically within Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism (introduced in chapter two) to reinforce settler claims to sovereignty. By tracing the trajectory of memory (through nationalist myths and representations) and the role that it has played in colonial discourse, we can map the varied and often fabled constructions of whiteness, race and Indigeneity. By doing this, we are better able to understand contemporary experiences of racial intolerance, racism and racial thinking in Victoria.

Presented as one of two case studies, this chapter draws on personal reflection, ethnography, participant testimony and scholarship in establishing and exploring the invisible presence of Aboriginal people within the central and western goldfields district of Victoria, as encapsulated by the settler colonial psyche. By articulating how the settler colonial psyche is shaped by (firstly) national discourses, art and literature, and (secondly) through the physical interaction with space, place and landscape, this chapter demonstrates the role that collective memory plays in reinforcing settler belonging and the removal of Aboriginal sovereignty.

Chapter plan

This chapter is set out in two sections. First, in order to demonstrate the significance of the gold rush to the contemporary invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians, I contextualise the case study within mainstream goldfields narratives. Situating the goldfields as a significant space in the context of Aboriginal history, this section provides both an historical overview and critique of the ways that the goldfields' history has been recorded within the logic of settler colonialism. By drawing on two case study examples, the first section situates the invisible presence of Aboriginal people within the contemporary central and western goldfields district.

The second part of the chapter introduces belonging as central to the settler colonial psyche. Within the logic of settler colonialism, white belonging is celebrated and reinforced through collective memory, which replaces Aboriginal narratives with one that situates the settler at the centre of the story. This is illustrated clearly through incarnations of the celebrated relationship between settler Australians and the land. I will outline this relationship drawing on space, place and landscape within the context of memory and processes of remembering and forgetting. Aboriginal Victorians are deemed as invisible within settler colonial discourses in order to validate white claims

to sovereignty, which feed into and reinforce essentialised and homogenous depictions of Aboriginal Australian cultures within mainstream Australia.

This case study was initiated by my personal experiences growing up in a goldfields township as well as by my experiences from having lived, studied and worked in Melbourne, Victoria. I have had the privilege of immersing myself in the research field, primarily in Ballarat and with this unique experience have interviewed participants in a range of fields who grew up in, live and/or work in Ballarat and the surrounding central and western district. I interviewed social anthropologist Janice Newton, historians Fred Cahir, Ian Clark and Alice Barnes, for this case study. They have been quoted throughout this chapter, drawing on the interview data as well as their published works. At the time of interview Newton, Cahir and Clark held academic positions at Ballarat's Federation University whilst Barnes was an historian and educator at Ballarat's open-air museum, Sovereign Hill, conducting research about the Aboriginal presence on the Ballarat goldfields as part of a (then yet to be released) digital tour of the museum park. Positioned within the settler colonial, the interviews I conducted with Newton, Cahir, Clark and Barnes speak to their experiences living and working in Ballarat as well as their understanding of the dichotomy between settler colonial and Aboriginal Ballarat.

Tony Birch, Jon Kanoa, Uncle Murray Harrison, Belinda Duarte and Uncle Ted Lovett have also been quoted for their unique insight into Aboriginal Ballarat and the surrounding districts. Birch is an acclaimed Koori writer and historian. He grew up in inner-city Melbourne and has conducted considerable research on (post)colonial Aboriginal Victoria, particularly within the central and western goldfields district. Kanoa is a young Gundidjmara man, and has lived and worked in the Ballarat area for most of his life. When I spoke with Kanoa he was working for the Department of Justice in Ballarat. Belinda Duarte is a Wotjobaluk and Dja Dja wurrung woman with Polish and Celtic descent who was raised off-country in Ballarat; her mother is a Stolen Generation survivor. When I spoke with Duarte she was the managing director of an Aboriginal Victorian cultural engagement organisation, the Korin Gamadji Institute (KGI). Gunditjmara man Uncle Ted Lovett and Wotjobaluk man Uncle Murray Harrison are both Stolen Generation survivors who were taken into 'care' at the Ballarat Orphanage when they were children. Tony, Belinda, Jon, Uncle Murray and Uncle Ted's interviews provide a contemporary Aboriginal perspective on Ballarat and the surrounding district. Alice Barnes and Jon Kanoa, who completed their secondary education in Ballarat during the same period that I completed my schooling in near-by

Daylesford, demonstrate how conservative and white the district was in the 1980s and 90s — something that I can relate to (as illustrated in the preface chapter).

Case study background

The book, *Lucky City: The First Generation at Ballarat 1851–1901* (1978) by Weston Bate has shaped the way that many people reflect on the gold rush period of Victoria's history. Despite (or perhaps because of) the important role that Bate has had in recording local community history, his work is problematic. His histories record the development of affluent suburbs like Brighton, and pastimes like golf, and prioritise European perspectives and in this respect. Much like Russell Ward's *Australian legend* (1978), Bate's historical work serves to reinforce his own vision of Australian identity. His book was also instrumental in the creation of Sovereign Hill. He fails to represent Aboriginal history beyond essentialised readings of Aboriginal culture and life. In fact, he claims that when the then-chief protector of Aborigines, George Augustus Robinson, visited the Ballarat region in 1840, he was 'too late' to save Aboriginal culture (1978, p. 2) in essence removing responsibility from white settlers and especially the gold rush generation and placing the blame on Aboriginal people. Bate claims settler-Aboriginal conflict to be 'over' well before the discovery of gold in 1851 (1978, p. 4) and depicts a region devoid of Aboriginal people, culture and heritage. Within his histories there is no mention of Aboriginal Victoria beyond frontier conflict and the demise of Aboriginal culture from the perspective of the Port Phillip Protectorate and other government agencies.

The denial of Aboriginal occupation is clear when considering the way that Bate dismisses Aboriginal people, industry and environment: 'the grazing and cultivation, the splitting of trees for slabs, the building of huts and houses, and the regular movement of men and animals between fixed points indicated a different civilisation [for Aboriginal people]' (1978, p. 2). This is remarkable, especially considering the multiple sources (Blainey, 2013; Broome, 2005; I. Clark, 1998; B. Pascoe, 2014) which evidence Victorian Aboriginal clans who were primarily sedentary, occupied stone foundation huts, cultivated and harvested lands and waterways, used established farming techniques and traded (Barwick, 1984; B. Pascoe, 2007, 2014) with nearby clans. For these people, the 'civilisation' which Bate speaks of, would have seemed quite unremarkable. The fact that Bate's research fails to represent an Aboriginal presence on the goldfields is emblematic of white Australia's broader desire to ignore post-colonial Aboriginal narratives in Victoria and to represent favourable tellings of

Victoria's settlement history. My interview with Janice Newton highlights the context in which Bate's book appears:

Weston Bate, in his history of Ballarat, had said that [Ballarat] wasn't really a place that [Aboriginal people] lived in, they just passed through but surely, every place was a bit like that. It was making it sound like they didn't really stay here and I'm certain if there was a swamp at Wendouree and there were lakes at Learmonth and Burrumbeet that they were certainly staying here for quite long periods and that it was very much part of their land and so forth. Yes, there was a perception and some historians wanted to write their PhDs without mentioning Aboriginals having been here and we said, 'Look, you must have a paragraph to at least acknowledge that they were here before and not just assume that the Scots or the Cornish were the first people here'.

Bate makes the assumption that not only were Aboriginal people absent on the goldfields, they were absent in the district. This sentiment has been similarly perpetuated in other historical accounts of Victoria and of the goldfields despite significant evidence to the contrary (B. Pascoe, 2014). Newton argues that Mullawallah's death was used to evoke melancholy and 'played out the dominant social ideologies and cultural beliefs of the time concerning the demise of the Aboriginal population' (2001, p. 71). Mullawallah's death was used to symbolise the end of Aboriginal occupation in the Ballarat area. Ballarat's *Courier* newspaper similarly used the Mullawallah suburb name proposal as a call to arms against Aboriginal sovereignty. Janice Newton recalls this:

I don't get the local paper and don't look at the local news. I had no idea there was a lobby against it and the *Courier* helped beat us up evidently and they were the ones who put all the things on these sites and then the people got organised.

Many historians have written about this period of colonisation, especially in relation to migration, political consciousness and racism against the Chinese by the colonial government, but few have discussed the ways that Aboriginal Victorians responded to the gold rush. One of two exceptions, *Gold: forgotten histories and lost objects of Australia* (McCalman, Cook & Reeves, 2011) includes a section on Aboriginal

involvement in gold rushes, but their representation centres around narratives in Western Australian, Northern Territory and island gold mining.

Even now, there is a strong sense in the central and western goldfields district that if there were any Aboriginal people in the district prior to settlement, the numbers were few and the communities transient. Janice Newton who has lived in Ballarat since 1987 recalls:

When I first moved here there was a sense that Ballarat ... wasn't really a place that they [Aboriginal people] lived in, they just passed through.

Many people believe the environment to be too cold to be able to support an Aboriginal population, a sentiment that I have heard, whilst others believe that they abandoned the region. Ian Clark confirms this misconception:

I've seen people who were deemed to be the founder of all knowledge, sort of keepers of Ballarat's history. This one was a retired solicitor, been in the district for a long time. She said, 'Now what's the title of your dissertation?'

I said, 'The Ethnocide of the Dja wurrung, their disposition, etcetera'. She said, 'They weren't dispossessed, they just wandered away.' You sort of think to yourself, 'Well, if they wandered away, where are they now?' They should be somewhere in the district.

Even when it is acknowledged that Aboriginal people did, at the very least, occupy the Ballarat area, it is assumed that they passively died out and moved on (with no fault on the settler-pastoralist), which left the region open for the taking. The absence of any significant record of Aboriginal occupation within histories of Victoria; as is the case in Geoffrey Serle's history of the colony of Victoria (Serle, 1974) as well as their limited and essentialised representation is indicative of this myth. Serle does at least mention Aboriginal occupation in his (other) book, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria*, where he states that, 'the aborigines [...] were no longer a serious problem' (Serle, 1968, p. 2). For Alan Buckingham and Margot F. Hitchcock, a 1927 article from *The Argus* is proof enough that the district was not occupied:

[T]he district was scarcely known, and was rarely visited by either whiteman or aborigine. The rough timbered ranges had no attraction for the settler, and they were too cold and inhospitable for the aborigine. (Buckingham & Hitchcock, 2002, p. 2)

Although Geoffrey Blainey does at least acknowledge Aboriginal occupation of Victoria pre-invasion, his calculation does not reflect the pre-contact deaths and lower birth rate that occurred due to small-pox, syphilis and other European diseases contracted through contact with east-coast tribes and European whalers. He also fails to characterise Aboriginal Victorians in an accurate way, stating that the 'blacks [...] roamed Victoria' (Blainey in Leeper, 1955, p. 3). There is and has been significant evidence provided that demonstrates that Aboriginal people in Victoria were largely sedentary, relocated seasonally and had well-established farming, housing and agricultural techniques.⁴⁶ Today, the region has continued to facilitate the 'died out myth' as Belinda Duarte recalls:

I think in Ballarat there was a perception that the Wathaurung people had completely died out and that they no longer ... existed.

Jon Kanoa remembers contesting this myth to his school teachers:

That's one of the things that I always had a crack to teachers about at school, [I'd say]: 'I know about the gold rush and all that sort of thing, but what part did Aboriginal people play within that gold rush?' 'We didn't have Aboriginal people here.' I said: 'We didn't have Aboriginal people here?' 'No, we didn't'.

Whilst Janice Newton also looks to the education system as perpetuating essentialised and out-dated notions of Aboriginality:

When I was in primary school, we did a little-- we got told there were six full-blood Aboriginals left in Victoria. That is in the late '50s, early '60s.

This mythology is not unique to the central and western districts of Victoria and is one that continues to flourish throughout the eastern states of Australia, and the rest of the world (Madley, 2004), today. The impact that the 'last of his tribe' and 'dying out' mythology (derived from the Darwinian notion of evolution and natural selection applied to human societies in the form of social Darwinism) is clear in the Tasmanian context (Lehman, 2005), as is Australia's heritage of suppressing its colonial heritage of violence, dispossession and attempted genocide, a fact which Greg Lehman speaks to:

⁴⁶ Bruce Pascoe's excellent book, *Dark Emu: Black Seeds Agriculture or Accident?* (2014) provides a multitude of colonial sources that attest to this.

'Despite voluminous colonial documents and a wealth of visual records from the time, the Black War remains absent from Australian national remembrance' (Lehman, 2013). As Lehman highlights, in reality Aboriginal dispossession is absent from colonial memory.

Alongside the belief that Aboriginal people were a 'doomed race' (Broome, 2005), late 19th-century anthropologists only strengthened this misconception further by conducting fieldwork in areas of Australia with a higher concentration of 'traditional' Aboriginal communities, as was outlined in chapter two. Although significant, Aboriginal fatalities can be attributed to the spread of disease, famine and frontier violence; Aboriginal people did more than just 'survive' the pastoral era. Although the gold rush further articulated the loss of life, especially through the spread of venereal disease (Mayne & Broome, 2006) and the dispossession of Aboriginal people from their land, it also provided Aboriginal people an industry by which to thrive and establish autonomy. Celebrated settler colonial narratives, through art, literature, heritage and tourism, have failed to adequately account for Aboriginal heritage in the central and western goldfields districts of Victoria. Whilst, historians and social scientists have demonstrated the links between the gold rush and both Australian national identity construction and racism⁴⁷ few, if any, have drawn these links in relation to the presence of Aboriginal people on the Victorian goldfields and their interaction with other non-whites. As indicated in chapter one, this is the first study to highlight the significance of this research gap within the contemporary context and within Victoria.

Why gold?

As highlighted in the previous chapter, many social commentators argue that at the time, the gold rush didn't greatly change the prevailing view of Australia (White, 1981, p. 36). More attention needs to be paid to Victoria's gold rush period of settlement for its perpetuation and strengthening of Australia's self-image, not just for the enormous social and economic effect that it had on Australia. The gold rush solidified potential migrants' liberation from Great Britain (Hirst, 2010b), where Australia was 'portrayed as the land of opportunity, a paradise to whom Britain offered nothing' (White, 1981, p. 36). Not only did the gold rush popularise this image and increase the number of

⁴⁷ These links have been explored within the context of the Eureka Rebellion of 1854 and later by the intruding Chinese.

settlers attracted by it, it also 'hastened the demise of the convict image' (White, 1981, p. 36) and had a tremendous impact on the way that new Victorians imagined themselves (Crowley, 1988). Political ideals were forged on the goldfields — mining unionism and the Australian Labor Party are traced to the Eureka Rebellion (Beggs-Sunter, 2015; Serle, 1974), and the Eureka Stockade is still widely celebrated as the birthplace of Australian democracy (Beggs-Sunter, 2015) and nationalism (Leeper, 1955). The gold rush period can be considered as a part of this landscape aesthetic, for its perpetuation and strengthening of the settler colonial psyche held within the image of the Australian legend, not just for the enormous social and economic effect that it had on Australia.

The onset of the gold rush marks the beginning of a new era for colonial Victoria, a break away from the colony of New South Wales in 1851 (and from the 'old world' it represented) and the formation of a distinct culture. White belonging was reinforced (as a result of gold) through the erection of townships, town halls, churches, hotels etc. The gold rush helped Melbourne and the Colony of Victoria assert its economic independence with the erection of the State Library (established in 1854), the University of Melbourne, the Royal Exhibition Building (completed in 1880) and Parliament House (the site on Eastern Hill was agreed on in 1854, whilst building commenced in 1865) as well as the erection of hundreds of statues, monuments and other markers of colonial wealth and legitimacy throughout the newly-formed colony of Victoria.

The newly-appointed colony of Victoria (in 1851 the Port Phillip district separated from the New South Wales colony and became the colony of Victoria) changed rapidly following the discovery of gold. As Geoffrey Blainey notes, 'in the space of barely half a century Melbourne had grown from a patch of grass on the riverbank to a city larger than such ancient cities of Edinburgh and Lisbon' (2013, p. 102) and was, for a time, the most significant city in the world. Almost a decade after the discovery of gold, there were just under 540,000 non-Aboriginal people living in Victoria (Boucher & Russell, 2015, p. 2). The Victorian gold rush is central to the process of white belonging in Victoria, primarily because it 'civilised' its settlers, with the birth of a political consciousness, economic independence, increased migration and through the building of infrastructure. In this respect, the gold rush gave birth to modern Victoria, something that has been attributed to pastoralisation. However, within the logic of capital, squatter and pastoral ownership was legitimised, through the economic prosperity that the gold rush brought. Wool exports relied heavily on international gold

exchange whilst the local economy relied on the exchange of wealth between the pastoralists and the gold diggers through the sale of beef and mutton, and through other forms of economic exchange on the goldfields. Indeed, the significance of this industry is represented today both in terms of the Australian economy and through the national image of the drover, popularised in art and literature in the late 19th century. Up until 1871, gold supplanted wool as Australia's main export (Crowley, 1988) and gold discoveries 'invigorated the pastoral industry by creating lower freight rates to Europe for wool, good prices on the diggings for mutton and beef, and labour for fencing and dam building' (Crowley, 1988, p. 138).

The gold rush marks a significant cultural shift for Victoria, especially for pastoralists who had, up until the 1850s, dictated the terms of British colonialism (Crowley, 1988) within the region. Furthermore, the gold rush represents a significant shift in the type of colonist to arrive in the district, from settler to 'sojourner' colonisation (Reeves, 2010). Additionally, without the wealth of the gold rush, the impact that the industrial revolution had on infrastructure in Victoria might have been marginal.

Importantly, not only did the gold rush increase the population and expand the colonial territory, it displaced Aboriginal peoples, altered the ecology of the land and contributed artefacts and Aboriginal cultural material, which were later housed in the Melbourne Museum and studied at the University of Melbourne (as outlined in chapter two). The gold rush period marks a significant shift in knowledge production, from ethnographic and academic knowledge production during the pastoral era of Victorian settlement to the tourist and amateur knowledge production produced during and following the gold rush. Although it is a possibility that the invisibility of Aboriginal Victorians on the goldfields can be attributed to this neglect, it does not explain the contemporary denial of Aboriginal sovereignty within the region or the circulation of myths that deny their presence at all.

The central and western goldfields district

Until recently, there has been very little research focused on post-settlement histories of Aboriginal Victoria and the research that has been done focuses on frontier life prior to the gold rush and Aboriginal segregation on missions and reserves following it. The saturation of frontier violence narratives has led people to believe that by the time the gold rush arrived in the 1850s there were no Aboriginal people left in Victoria. There is

even less of an awareness of Aboriginal history in the central and western goldfields districts. I have wondered whether the gold rush has contributed to this.

Gold rush narratives have focused on the struggle between white miners and the threat of the 'yellow peril' — particularly, that represented by Chinese labour. Alongside white women (Frances, 1993; Kingston, 1994), Aboriginal people have overwhelmingly been left out of this narrative, leaving many to believe that their involvement on the goldfields was either non-existent or at the most limited and peripheral. Over recent years, Chinese representation has increased within goldfields narratives and in fact, it is the only deviation from the colonial success story represented at Sovereign Hill. Eric Rolls (1992), Ann Curthoys (2001), Keir Reeves (2003, 2004, 2005), Reeves and Chris McConville (2011), Patricia Grimshaw and Russell McGregor (2006, p. 190), have each discussed the lack of historical representation of Chinese immigrants on the goldfields and have significantly bridged this research gap.

Despite the fact that the emergence of any alternative gold rush narrative is important, a consequence of focusing on, in particular, the experiences of Chinese gold diggers has situated racial tension as an external threat rather than an internal one — the threat of the Chinese to settler Anglo-Australians (Cahir & Clark, 2015, p. 23) rather than the threat of settler Australians to Aboriginal people, or vice versa. By focusing on the threat of Chinese diggers, the message was clear: Aboriginal people have been dispossessed, dispersed, controlled, and were therefore no longer considered a threat to white settlement (Cahir & Clark, 2015, p. 23).

Pastoralisation, both before and after the gold rush, is attributed as being fundamental to the creation of the national character because of its role in the first wave of colonisation. It is interesting to note that, not unlike the representation of Aboriginal people in goldfields narratives, Aboriginal involvement in pastoral life has also been neglected within historical narratives. Rodney Harrison demonstrates this in his analysis of the shared Aboriginal/settler space of pastoralisation in colonial New South Wales (Harrison, 2004) and highlights that despite the significant role that Aboriginal people have had in the history of the pastoral industry, their presence has largely been absent within pastoral heritage. Although Harrison and Cahir address the absence of Aboriginal people within pastoral and goldfields narratives, their respective research does not address the reasons for, and consequences of, this representational neglect, a gap which this thesis fills. Despite the well-documented evidence that Cahir brings forward, which speaks to the presence of Aboriginal people on the Victorian goldfields, his research has failed to alter the prevailing essentialised image of

Aboriginal people in Victoria as insignificant and as a part of the distant past. The inability of settler Victoria to acknowledge the complexity of Aboriginal occupation, prior to and following white settlement has contributed to the widely-held myth that, even prior to the gold rush, there were few Aboriginal people in the Ballarat district. In this respect, denial has been used as an important technique in removing Aboriginal histories. If these histories aren't recorded within nationalist projects of history-making they become forgotten and, within the settler colonial psyche, are denied.

Birch confirms this in the Victorian context, where there is a similarly large body of colonial documentation that speaks to the realities of Aboriginal dispossession prior to, during and following the gold rush:⁴⁸

That's the first thing, but we know, at the same, because the-- Through the protectorate that there are returns and comments from Aboriginal guardians, which basically say that the Aboriginal community are starving to death in the central part of Victoria so they don't have enough ration to care for people. It's a really terrible situation where people aren't being killed but they're being starved out of their existence.

As Birch highlights, despite no official colonial legislation on the management of Aboriginal people during the gold rush years, dispossession continued through benign colonial neglect. The colonial government neglect of Aboriginal people combined with the gold rush has had significant consequence for contemporary understandings of Aboriginal Victoria. The first of these consequences is that Aboriginal people had to move in order to survive, the second is the focus shifted from the management of Aboriginal people to the management of unwanted migrants and control of the colony. The third is the contemporary misunderstanding that Aboriginal occupation in the region ended before the gold rush, which is in fact not the case at all. The final consequence is that due to a mass influx of people, economy, governance, infrastructure and agriculture developed to such an extent that telling a coherent story has become difficult.

Contrary to mainstream narratives, which position Aboriginal people as absent from the central and western district goldfields, the gold rush was just as significant a

⁴⁸ Richard Broome (1994, 2005a, 2011, 2015), Ian Clark (1990, 1995, 1998, 2008), Jan Critchett (1990, 1992, 1998), Bruce Pascoe (2007, 2011) and Barry Judd (2010b) have conducted research that draws on colonial documentation and archived records to map out the specificities of settler-Aboriginal relations, governance and control in colonial-era Victoria.

space for Aboriginal people as it was for settlers and migrants. Although, on the surface the gold rush might represent a second wave of Aboriginal dispossession in Victoria, the first being pastoral invasion during the 1830s (Cahir, McMaster, Clark, Kerin, & Wright, 2016; S. Clarke & Moran, 2003), Aboriginal people used the goldfield as a site for economic exchange, which provided them with a certain level of freedom that the pastoral era did not. Clark and Cahir (Cahir & Clark, 2010, p. 418) have explored the way that Aboriginal people practiced cultural performance on the goldfields and explain that:

Judging from the frequency with which touristic-styled corroboree events were held on the Victorian goldfields, it is clear that monetary considerations became an underpinning feature in the performance of corroborees for non-indigenous audiences particularly after the 1850s. This is further confirmed by the substantial turn out of paying non-indigenous viewers, and how well organised the dance troupes were. (2010, p. 412)

Ian Clark expanded on this in his interview with me, where he argued that whilst the 'front stage' of corroborees and public performances allowed tourists to interact with Aboriginal people:

'There is also the back stage ... where Aboriginal people — away from the gaze or authority of tourists — do live their personal lives and that is where they do maintain their traditional cultural traditions or elements. They're making sure marriages are still appropriate, that marriages are right, stories are still passed down. They are trying to live an authentic Aboriginal life in this context of the settlement they're living on.'

Further to this, there is substantial evidence that demonstrates that Aboriginal people were the first police on the Ballarat goldfields (Cahir, 2012) and acted as guides escorting diggers to and from the fields (Cahir, 2010, p. 22). Evidence demonstrates that Aboriginal people sold possum skin cloaks and other clothing and supplies to new settlers, diggers and underprepared migrants (Cahir, 2018), as Cahir summarises:

[S]howing new goldfields, rescuing, providing food, liaising, warning, trading and naming features in the landscape, determining the most direct and easily traversable route (often along traditional pathways) and locating food, medicine and water in order to sustain their non-Indigenous companions, safely conveying gold seekers and others by fording rivers safely, preparing temporary shelters, acting as diplomats and interpreters, negotiating passage

through the country of resident clans met on the line of march and locating precious waterholes for horses and other stock. (2010, pp. 35–36)

Despite the overwhelming affect that the pastoral period of settlement had on the Aboriginal population in the Port Phillip District, we know that there were still Aboriginal people living in the central region during the gold rush, and we know that there was still a concentration of Aboriginal people in the district after the gold rush. Ian Clark attributes the invisibility of Aboriginal Victorians within the central goldfields district to the development of missions, reserves and stations from the 1860s onwards. In this respect, the lower Aboriginal population within this region can be attributed to the forced migration of Aboriginal people out of the central district to missions and reserves. Once the missions and reserves closed down, many Aboriginal people chose to stay in the area on their appropriated traditional country, as Ian Clark states:

A consequence of [the] centralisation of stations and the closure of stations [is that] the [town] centres where you [have] significant Aboriginal populations: Warrnambool, Heywood near Lake Condah, Dimboola near Ebenezer, Healesville area near Coranderrk, obviously Lake Tyers and the Murray towns — Swan Hill, Mildura, Echuca, Shepparton.

For a time, there were no missions or reserves operating within the central goldfields district and thus, fewer Aboriginal people compared to areas with established missions, but as Clark explains there was still a concentration of Aboriginal people in the district. In a report to the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines, honorary correspondent of the board, Andrew Porteous reported the Aboriginal population of the Ballarat and Mount Emu area as 69 (Central Board Appointed to Watch over the Interests of the Aborigines in the Colony of Victoria, 1864). It is safe to assume that such numbers were significantly underestimated because of the movement of Wathaurung people throughout the district including their involvement on the goldfields and connection to Aboriginal clans throughout Victoria, as Clark and Cahir attest to in their significant research on the district outlined earlier in this chapter. Furthermore, such accounts demonstrate that the presence of Aboriginal people in the goldfields district has been neglected within historical narratives, and demonstrates that contemporary mythology around the number of Aboriginal people within this district, prior to, during and following the gold rush is unfounded.

The 1860s onwards represents a third wave of dispossession for Aboriginal people. This time, through the establishment of missions and reserves. Despite the fact that many Aboriginal people, primarily children, were forcibly relocated to missions and reserves in the first few years of the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines, missions and reserves were seen by many Aboriginal people as a way of regaining agency. Despite the fact that there were no official reserves set up during this time in or near Ballarat, evidence suggests that Wathaurung people recognised the positive aspects that this system of government had for their people. Clark and Cahir have conducted research that demonstrates that Wathaurung people knew that the Ballarat region held little refuge for the Aboriginal people and sought out ways to ensure their survival, as Fred Cahir explains:

When they got [to Coranderrk] and saw the Boon wurrung and Tung wurrung were kith and kin through marriage and association, the elders left their children under the care of the Aboriginal communities as it was then, and came back to Carngham, back onto country. My feeling is that they — of course, it's only interpretation — is that they knew that Coranderrk was the future. That the environmental, social, and economic chaos that was occurring in their country, that it wasn't the future for their kids [and] that they were just beggars on their own land. Whereas at Coranderrk they saw school, they saw Aboriginal law being practiced; culture wasn't squashed at that point in time, language wasn't abandoned. They weren't totally oppressed, in fact, there [was] a great deal of cultural liberty. So yes ... many have read in some simplistic versions of that period that they were forced out of their land. They weren't. Ostensibly they weren't forced ... When I say they were forced off I argue it doesn't show that they've got no agency, and they had agency. They made choices, they, it's not like they didn't have choices.

Cahir believes that Aboriginal people practiced far more agency than contemporary narratives suggest:

The missionaries did not come and take their children away. They literally left them under the care of other elders and the missionaries. They stayed there for a week, they saw what went down. There was-- yes was the regimental nature of the reserves, but there was also-- the Aboriginal

community literally had held councils, they decided just by way of example the punishment for getting drunk by the aboriginal people themselves was you can't marry for two years. They were allowed some-- at that point to a very limited degree, mind you-- to govern themselves within their own cultural-- acceptable cultural parameters that had a synaptic connection with white culture. What was acceptable with them was acceptable so they made those connections.

Cahir's point is validated by, in particular, Broome (2015), Diane Barwick (1998) and Judd (2010a). Broome provided a thorough history of the Aboriginal activism in Victoria, primarily through the development of the Victorian Aboriginal Advancement League (AAL) in his book, *Fighting Hard: the Victorian Aboriginal Advancement League* (2015). Barwick's PhD thesis and subsequent book, *Rebellion at Coranderrk* (1998) illustrates the political agency and autonomy that the Coranderrk Aboriginal station fought for. Whilst Judd drew on 19th century Aboriginal cricket participation at Coranderrk to demonstrate the agency of Aboriginal Victorians, both politically and economically as well as their 'ingenuity, intelligence and willingness [...] to make cultural adaptations and accommodations to ensure their survival' (Judd, 2010a, p. 38).

The fifth report of the central board appointed to watch over the interests of the Aborigines in the colony of Victoria, presented to parliament in 1866, records Carngham's honorary correspondent of the board, Andrew Porteous, as requesting land on behalf of the Aboriginal community:

A number of the tribe have requested me to apply to the Government to reserve a block of land near Chepstowe for their use, where they might make a paddock, and grow wheat and potatoes, and erect permanent residences. I believe most of the tribe would remain permanently there if land was reserved for their use; their hunting is in the neighbourhood, and there is plenty of water. The young men seem to be very anxious about it; I believe this has arisen from hearing of the comfort and happiness of the Aborigines at Coranderrk (Central Board Appointed to Watch over the Interests of the Aborigines in the Colony of Victoria, 1866, p. 13)

Such historical documents demonstrate that, despite the surveillance and control that the Victorian government practiced towards Aboriginal Victorians, Aboriginal people in the central and western district, were able to practice certain levels of agency and maintain some level of connection to their country. Something that essentialised

readings of Aboriginal surveillance and control have failed to fully appreciate. Alongside the reframing of the frontier wars as massacres, which removes the active participation of Aboriginal people in their own lives and positions them as powerless recipients of colonial violence (B. Pascoe, 2007), this narrative positions Aboriginal Victorians as powerless victims of colonisation. In line with Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism, the settler colonial psyche works to remove Aboriginal resistance, agency and sovereignty within goldfields narratives and replaces it with colonial success stories and narratives, which further reinforces settler claims to sovereignty. Aboriginal colonial history is retextualised so that Aboriginal people are represented as powerless within the settler narrative and thus belonging, as part of the land, to settler Australia. In this respect, Aboriginal narratives where Aboriginal people are active participants in their own lives are removed. I am not trying to deny that Aboriginal Victorians have been or are agentless. There are many works, including those by Broome, Barwick and Judd, which document the multiple ways that Aboriginal Victorians have (and continue to) assert their agency, rights whilst subverting colonial strategies for assimilation. Far from deny Aboriginal agency and the important role that Kulin people have played in the rich traditional of political activism, this thesis addresses the inability for settler Victoria to acknowledge, understand, and celebrate this rich history.

Balla-arat

Ballarat, located 100 km west of Melbourne, is Victoria's third largest city, behind Melbourne and Geelong. With a population of just over 100,000 people, the regional city remains an important agricultural and industrial centre which, thanks in part to Sovereign Hill (the city's open-air gold museum) is one of Australia's most heavily visited cities. The name 'Ballarat' is taken from two Aboriginal words, *Balla* and *arat* meaning 'resting place, or reclining on elbow' (Hallinan & Judd, 2007, pp. 424-425). William Cross Yuille and Henry Anderson are celebrated as founding Ballarat (W. B. Withers, 1887), after they named their sheep station *Ballaraat* ("DISCOVERY OF BALLARAT.," 1904) in 1838. Prior to their claiming of the Ballarat area, the land belonged to the Wathaurung, consisting of approximately 20 clan groups their territory spread from Ballarat along the Werribee River to Werribee, Geelong and Aireys Inlet,

along the Barwon River to Cressy, Mount Emu Creek, and Fiery Creek to present-day Beaufort (Morris, 2013).⁴⁹

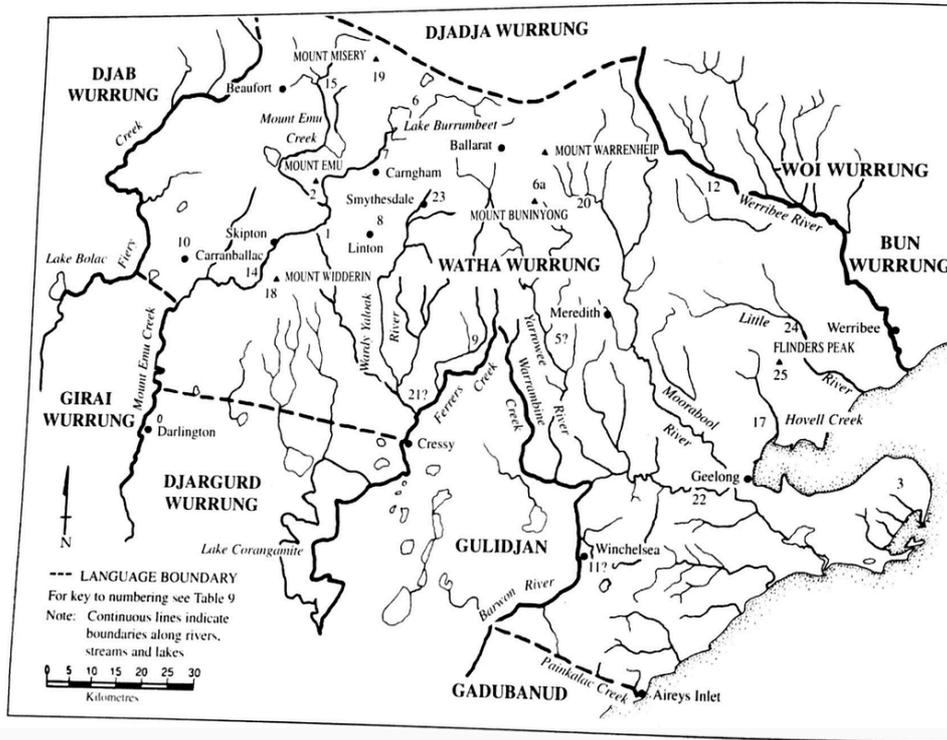


Figure 6: Wathaurong territory map, Ian Clark, (printed in I. Clark, 1995, p. 170)

The social upheavals following the gold rush meant that the township of Ballarat was home to a large number of orphaned and destitute children. To address this problem, a number of charitable institutions were established, including benevolent asylums⁵⁰ in 1858 (O'Neill, 2013a) and the Ballarat Female Refuge⁵¹ established in 1867 (O'Neill, 2013b). The Ballarat District Orphan Asylum was established in 1865 after it was decided that the benevolent asylum was no longer suitable for orphaned children. The first building opened in 1866, followed by the orphanage farm in 1869. In 1909 the institution became known as the Ballarat Orphanage, the Ballarat Children's Homes in 1968, and Ballarat Children's Homes and Family Services in 1984. The final two-name changes reflected shifts in philosophy and practice in the provision of 'care', away from the

⁴⁹ See figure 5 on page 102.

⁵⁰ Benevolent asylums, also known as destitute asylums or infirmaries for the destitute, were institutions established throughout the colonies of Australia in the 19th Century to house deserted and destitute men, women and children (O'Neill, 2011).

⁵¹ The Ballarat Female Refuge was established with the objective of reforming 'prostitutes' and became a shelter for single mothers. It was the first such institution on Australia's goldfields (O'Neill, 2013b).

organisation's origin as the Ballarat District Orphan Asylum and into foster care. The name changed again to Child and Family Services Ballarat in 1998. Over the years Ballarat has hosted more than 19 institutions for outcast children (Golding, 2016).

I spoke with members of Ballarat's Aboriginal community as well as non-Aboriginal members working within the Aboriginal history space. The non-Aboriginal people I spoke with, Alice Barnes, Fred Cahir, Ian Clark and Janice Newton, each confirmed my own experiences growing up in the region, where an assumption of whiteness homogenised and removed ethnicity and cultural difference. Alice Barnes explains:

Ballarat was really white It's only starting to really open up now. We had a kid from the Philippines. He came when I was in grade nine into my class and his name was Jesus, poor thing. He lasted [at the school for] two days.

He was the only Asian kid in school. My school's huge [laughs]! It's interesting to think about the experiences young people in this region are having now. Now that it's becoming more diverse.

When I reflect on my own experiences in the region combined with those of Alice Barnes, Belinda Duarte and Jon Kanoa, I realise that it is not that the community is wholly Anglo-Saxon, but that those who do not fit into this category of whiteness have the ability to transcend into whiteness (Dyer, 1997). Those who could not transcend into whiteness (the homogenisation of whiteness is discussed in chapter two) because they displayed distinct ethnic markers, occupied a marginal space and were seen as different. Barnes reflected that:

You just make this assumption that everyone lives the same kind of family as you. They've got the same kind of heritages as you. It's easy to gloss over that stuff.

I think about my own upbringing in the region. Cultural diversity was something we did not celebrate or even think about. Thinking back to particular student's names, I understand that not everyone would have always been considered white, or considered themselves white. Now, I identify names as Greek, Italian and Dutch but at the time, everyone was just white. In this way, whiteness becomes a way of homogenising and creating a single national identity rather than multiple identities and perspectives.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016), there were 1,556 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people living in Ballarat in 2016, the year that census data was collected. This figure represents 1% of the district's broader non-Aboriginal population and is consistent with the Indigenous population of Victoria. Despite this, Ballarat's Aboriginal community sustains an invisible presence, as Fred Cahir validates:

People just-- generally people in Ballarat don't think that there is an Aboriginal community and are shocked when they hear it's exactly the same proportion as the rest of Australia.

This is despite the long history of Aboriginal child 'protection' services in operation in Ballarat between 1858 and 1970. This history, much like the frontier wars, colonial violence and the history of Aboriginal involvement on the goldfields, has been 'expunged from memory' (Cahir & Clark, 2015, p. 23) and forgotten.

The fact that people in the Ballarat district are not aware that there is an Aboriginal presence in the district is problematic because it reflects Australia's deeply-rooted history of forgetting the government processes through which Aboriginal people have been dispossessed from their homelands, families and cultures — a practice that continues today. Ballarat hosted a number of government and privately-run institutions where Aboriginal children were placed once they were removed from their families. Along with three other children's institutions, the Ballarat Orphanage (as it was referred to by participants) was a central institution for Aboriginal children who were removed from their families (Commonwealth of Australia & King, 2008, p. 457) up to the late 1960s. Although official government policy only mandated Aboriginal child removal in the Port Phillip district in 1869 with the Aborigines Protection Act, Aboriginal children have been forcibly removed from their families and communities since the very first days of European occupation. Because of this, along with the mismanagement of documentation, it is difficult to know the number of Aboriginal children who have been removed from their families (Commonwealth of Australia & Wilkie, 1997, p. 30; Read, 2006). A number of researchers including Christobel Mattingley and Ken Hampton (1988), Peter Read (2006) and Jane McKendrick (Commonwealth of Australia & Wilkie, 1997, p. 30) have attempted approximations of Aboriginal children removed, whilst the Federal Government estimated the proportion of Aboriginal children removed to be one in ten, although the documentary film *Lousy Little Sixpence* placed this number closer to one in three (Bostock, Morgan, & Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 1997). Read puts this disparity down to the state's

desire to demonstrate the success of assimilationist policy (2003) whilst the *Bringing Them Home* report argues that this is due to the fact that those removed during the early periods of the practice are now deceased (Commonwealth of Australia & Wilkie, 1997, p. 30).

Many of Ballarat's Aboriginal community remained in Ballarat following release from institutional 'care'. I spoke with Stolen Generation survivors Ted Lovett and Murray Harrison, and also to Belinda Duarte, the daughter of a woman placed into 'care' at the Ballarat Orphanage. Although I was unable to speak with her mother, Belinda spoke of the intergenerational trauma that is experienced by descendants of children removed from the care of their families:

In Ballarat, you would know who was Aboriginal and my mom would either say-- Ballarat was a site in which there was a lot of care. There's a lot of as in foster care and so displaced Aboriginal people. The community itself, it was a community but it was fractured. And it was fractured because of the trauma. My mum growing up as a child I know she had fears about us being discriminated against about our Aboriginality because she experienced that. She worked really hard at trying to get us to excel in our own right and not be defined by our ancestry on either side.

Belinda's mother was removed from her traditional homelands and taken to the Ballarat Orphanage when she was a child. After her release from state 'care' Belinda's mother briefly returned to country before settling in Ballarat. Belinda's father was a Polish child refugee whose family settled in Ballarat during the World War II. Uncle Murray Harrison, is a Wotjobaluk man who was removed from his family at the age of ten, after a period of state 'care' in Melbourne, Harrison and his sisters were taken to the Ballarat Orphanage in 1948 until he was released as a ward of the state when he was 21. Although the years that Murray spent institutionalised will haunt him for the rest of his life (Peart, 2005), he is thankful that his experiences brought him to Ballarat so that he could meet his wife.

Gundidjmarra elder and Stolen Generation survivor, Uncle Ted Lovett was also raised off country. As an Aboriginal child growing up in assimilationist era Australia, in an attempt to avoid the attention of the welfare department his family moved around a lot. Despite their best efforts, Lovett was placed in state care in Melbourne at the age of 14 in 1955. He spent some time in Royal Park's boys receiving depot before being placed in the Bayswater Salvation Army Boys Home until at the age of 17 he was sent to

Langi Kal Kal Reformatory Prison (near Beaufort) where he remained until he was released from state care at the age of 21. Lovett played football and cricket for Langi Kal Kal within the Lexton district. Upon his release, Lovett was recruited to the North Ballarat Football Club, moved to Ballarat, secured employment and continued to play football. Lovett continues to live in Ballarat today, where racism is a regular feature of his daily life:

I cop it on the street. I have been told to get back to my own country and turn around while they shake my head. Sometimes I'd like to get out and punch them in the-- And when they all sit there and with some of their language. It does piss me off.

I spoke with Stolen Generation survivor and Ballarat community member, Murray Harrison about his experiences growing up and living in Ballarat, after he was taken off country and placed into care at the age of ten in 1948. Like Ted Lovett, Murray Harrison was recognised as a talented football player, but unlike Lovett, Murray can't recall any instances of racial abuse either on the football field, in the workforce or in the Ballarat community. I am curious about the reasons why Ted and Murray have had such polarising experiences of racism growing up and living in the Ballarat region and I cannot help but wonder if it is because of perceived success of cultural assimilation, Murray's ability to 'pass as white', because he has blocked such interactions out, or perhaps he failed to see those interactions as racially motivated. It is possible that it is each of these reasons.

Today, little remains that reflects Ballarat's heritage of child institutionalisation. Despite its cultural significance to the history of Ballarat as well as to children who were placed into care there, the Ballarat Orphanage was sold and demolished. This further reflects the district's, as well as the state's, inability to fully comprehend the appalling treatment of both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people within state and charitable institutions across Victoria. A point which Chris Hallinan and Barry Judd confirm:

Even with the story of Watha Wurrung 'extinction,' there has been little recognition that Ballarat has been called 'home' by a small but significant number of Aboriginal people from other parts of Australia throughout the (post)colonial period. There has, likewise, been little recognition that the Ballarat Orphanage participated in the creation of the stolen generations

ensuring that Ballarat remained a key site of Aboriginal dispossession until the 1960s. (2007, pp. 424-425)

Isolation combined with the emphasis that the white community put on cultural authenticity is one which Belinda Duarte identifies with:

There were Aboriginal people living in Ballarat but they weren't necessarily the traditional owners of that area. So that's got some layers in it as well because there are people that identify with some lineage to Wathaurung country in Ballarat. I think Aboriginal people tend to know Aboriginal people, but the education or the lack of education of non-Aboriginal people recognising Aboriginality, that's where they're visible or not. 'Well, she identifies as being Aboriginal but she's not really Aboriginal. How much Aboriginal is she?'

Belinda Duarte also speaks to the fear of difference and believes that it is largely still a part of Ballarat today:

Well, I felt that. When I reflect back on it, that's what we were experiencing. My identity and how I view myself as an Aboriginal person wasn't one valued or recognised by the people around us. Well, you're not black. How much Aboriginal are you or--? Really, it was constantly questioned because there was an absence of awareness in that community.

Consistent with the Ballarat community's inability to comprehend Aboriginal occupation within the district, there is an unwillingness to acknowledge the Aboriginal community who live in Ballarat today. Jon Kanoa confirms the lack of awareness that the non-Aboriginal community in the Ballarat district have about the contemporary Aboriginal community in Ballarat:

But if you're talking to any resident, if I go out the front here and pull someone to the side and talk to him about if they're aware of Aboriginal services or programs and initiatives that we're running within the community, I don't think too many of them know.

Putting aside the lack of consideration that Ballarat's white community gives to the district's Aboriginal heritage, the inability for the community to recognise the place of

Aboriginal heritage as well as Aboriginal people in Ballarat, regardless of whether it reflects Wathaurung culture, speaks volumes.

The fact that community members fail to recognise the role that Ballarat institutions have had in removing Aboriginal children from their families and homelands, that they fail to appreciate their significant contribution to Ballarat's cultural heritage is deeply problematic. It speaks to the lack of critical reflection that white people have towards negative and shameful aspects of the past, especially when supported by a settler colonial framework. Operating as invisible and natural within the settler colonial psyche, whiteness continually works to stabilise white belonging in Australia. Rather than engage in an honest and nuanced reading of Ballarat's heritage, the settler community remains captive to the settler colonial psyche, where their own sense of belonging is reinforced and celebrated through empty colonial success stories. This is demonstrated by drawing on a reading of Sovereign Hill.

Sovereign Hill

I have visited Sovereign Hill, Ballarat's open-air museum, numerous times. As a child, I visited at least six times and as an adult, another four times. Childhood visits are characterised by hard lollies, wooden bowling pins, horses and gold panning — always missing out on finding anything and never having any money for sweets or tourist paraphernalia. Aside from one trip in summer as a five-year-old, I have always been to Sovereign Hill in the coldest part of winter. Our noses and ears red with cold and hands in pockets, without enough layers to deal with the wind, rain and muddy ground. Permanently foggy, with smoke mixed with breath condensation, Sovereign Hill was a miserable place. I could imagine myself a gold miner, dirty and cold and going hungry, nothing but a canvas tent to protect me from the wind and rain. Now, I know I wouldn't have been a gold miner — well according to Sovereign Hill's representation of the goldfields I wouldn't have. I might have been lucky enough to have a shop front, or be married to a local squatter, or I could have been at one of the many brothels. Of course, there are no brothels at Sovereign Hill, and aside from the Chinese Protectorate Camp, very little to hint at the goldfields' more sinister happenings. No one walks around drunk, there are no fights or barely-dressed women. It is not the 'Wild Wild West', but the beginning of a civilised Victoria. Such a depiction of colonial Victoria characterised by Sovereign Hill is representative of Australian history's paternalistic tradition, where

the representation of women has, until relatively recently, been left out (Grimshaw, 1991).⁵²

Since its opening in 1970, Sovereign Hill has evolved from a reproduction of the Ballarat diggings to an open-air museum, which represents a social history of Victoria's goldfields (Evans, 1991). In this respect, the visitor experience plays a fundamental role in the development of Sovereign Hill and its representation of history. Visitor experience determines what is represented and how it is represented. In an article responding to claims that Sovereign Hill presents a 'past purged of historical guilt' (Evans, 1991, p. 142) Sovereign Hill's then-curator Michael Evans argued that Sovereign Hills presents a 'necessarily quieter, cleaner and more orderly' (Evans, 1991, p. 142) gold mining township because of the necessity for park visitors to have a good time. Referring specifically to the failed representation of death on the goldfields, Evans states that the situation, 'caught visitors so unaware that they did not feel comfortable with the re-enactment' (Evans, 1991, p. 151). Aboriginal people, like death, disease and prostitution, are not represented at Sovereign Hill because their presence does not conform to the image that Sovereign Hill needs to present to its visitors. The image is one that can be easily consumed, one which makes us feel good about how far we have come. We are required not to mourn for the past, but to celebrate our pioneering years. Ian Clark argues that contemporary tourism in Victoria, 'continues to be understood and framed from old-world perspectives' (I. Clark, 2010, p. 571). Although, Aboriginal troopers are not represented at Sovereign Hill, we might assume that their representation works within the settler colonial psyche. By presenting a sanitised representation of Aboriginal people on the already-colonised goldfields, white belonging is not challenged.

In this way, Sovereign Hill is significant, as an historical narrative within the tourist gaze, and has important cultural and historical ramifications. Despite the fact that Sovereign Hill presents a social history of the goldfields rather than an historically accurate view of a particular goldfield, it presents itself to the tourist as an authentic telling of Victoria's goldfields heritage. What is not represented is just as important as what is represented, which speaks to the thoughts, feelings and concerns held within the settler colonial psyche.

⁵² Alongside Grimshaw, Beverley Kingston (1994) Marilyn Lake (1996, 1997, 2013) and Raelene Frances (1993, 1999, 2007) have made important contributions to the historical representation of women throughout Australia's colonial history, from first transformation, and frontier to post-war work and family life.

Until recently Sovereign Hill has displayed virtually no mention of Aboriginal involvement in the diggings. According to Cahir, the relationship between Sovereign Hill and the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation had, 'become decidedly frosty' (Cahir, interview). It is as if the districts' Aboriginal people just vanished, or that they were never there to begin with. Cahir, who began to research Aboriginal involvement on the goldfields over 15 years ago, says there is still no response to his research from Sovereign Hill. I spoke with Fred Cahir about whether or not this was a conscious decision Sovereign Hill made, or was it one of ignorance. For Cahir it came down to a long history of cultural misunderstanding between Sovereign Hill and Ballarat's Aboriginal community, about the representation of Aboriginal people as troopers on the goldfields. Cahir states that Sovereign Hill has known about the presence of Aboriginal people on the goldfields for over 15 years and wanted to employ Aboriginal community members as 'police troopers':

Because a fair number of [Aboriginal] community members in the Ballarat region are from Queensland and in Queensland in particular, they were used as a power of military force against other Aboriginal people-- that they didn't have that historical understanding that here in Ballarat-- we have illustrations of them leading off white miners to jail and they were ... put in as goldfields police, not as a marauding force against other Aboriginal people — as they were almost exclusively in Queensland. Effectively they saw Aboriginal police in one [way], and that— [they were] 'traitors'— is too weak a word. They were scum of the Earth. You've got German heritage, we'll dress you up as a Nazi and you'll waltz around. Effectively that's what Sovereign Hill was suggesting, from their perspective. There's no way they were going to allow their young men to perform this role of being pricks of all pricks. How could you even ask that? Was their perspective. They were so indignant that there's been this frosty silence for a decade. Sovereign Hill, naturally enough when they discovered this, was sort of 'mia culpa mia culpa' and they said, 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry, sorry' but the damage was done. They had an entire-- almost an entire generation of Aboriginal community members and leaders who thought Sovereign Hill were the bastards of all bastards unbeknownst to Sovereign Hill.

Today, Aboriginal involvement on the Victorian goldfields is represented at Sovereign Hill, but is mostly hidden from view. Fittingly, Sovereign Hill's Aboriginal history is

told through the 'hidden histories project' (from interview with Alice Barnes) and is offered as a free 'digitour' titled *Hidden Histories: The Wadawurrung People*, created by Sovereign Hill Education and the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation (Barnes, 2017, p. 71). The project drew on Cahir's *Black Gold Aboriginal People on the Goldfields of Victoria* (2012) to 'chronicle Aboriginal participation in, and resistance to, the Victorian gold rushes' (Barnes, 2017, p. 71). Despite the fact that there are various artefacts and exhibitions 'dotted around the outdoor museum' (Barnes, 2017, p. 71) the stories behind them are presented within the digitour, and are consequently still largely hidden, except for those using the tour — primarily school students (Barnes, 2017). I visited Sovereign Hill for its annual winter light show in 2017. Aware that the project had been released, I looked for signage about the tour at the entrance map, through the park and in the information pamphlet but couldn't find anything. Admittedly, with three small children in tow my time was limited, but the same is true for most people who frequent the popular tourist destination, which is seen as more of a theme park (Evans, 1991) than as a museum to visitors. Despite the fact that, as Alice Barnes, states, the project has been successful, it's success is measured in terms of its accessibility for students and teachers, and not on the reception of the project by general visitors. As with many Aboriginal sites of significance, Aboriginal history is presented as a niche market rather than as an important part of Victoria's cultural history beyond primary and secondary education. Presenting Aboriginal goldfields history within education makes it compulsory and a requirement for students rather than as an exciting aspect of the mainstream Sovereign Hill experience. Their presence is presented as 'extraordinary' rather than as the typical experience of the central and western goldfields.

Thus far, this chapter has highlighted the significance of the central and western goldfields district within the context of Victorian history and Australian identity construction. I have demonstrated the presence of Aboriginal people on the goldfields, traced the invisible presence of Aboriginal people within historical narratives and argued that this invisible presence is perpetuated today by white Victorians both within and outside of the central and western goldfields district. What I have not addressed is the reason for this. The following section, addresses this question drawing on collective memory and white belonging.

Belonging through collective memory

Victorian goldfields narratives are significant to contemporary understandings of Aboriginal sovereignty and white belonging in contemporary Victoria because such

narratives, devoid of an Aboriginal presence, perpetuate the invisible presence of Aboriginal people within the district today. Memory is a central mechanism through which white belonging is established, reinforced and celebrated. Within this, the processes of remembering and forgetting are physically and psychologically repressed, created and recreated through narratives, spaces and places. In this way, white belonging is deployed both strategically and spatially (Hoops, 2014, p. 199). Within this framework, memory is a process of creating collective memory (remembering) and removing collective memory (forgetting). Drawing on the relationship between memory and the belonging held within the settler colonial psyche, the following section traces the ways that cultural memory removes Aboriginal sovereignty and replaces it with settler belonging. In tracing the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians through history, the important role that remembering and forgetting plays within knowledge production is clear. The process of remembering and forgetting are vital first steps in the colonising process. How we think about the past is constructed around what has been represented and by whom. In this sense, remembering can be understood as an essential tool in constructing the ideologies of a nation, and forgetting as an essential tool in maintaining them. For Aboriginal Victorians, the history of Victorian 'settlement' is the history of removal from land. Popular Victorian history is written about the winners, who fought battles with the land before conquering it. Control of the Australian landscape is vital (Birch, 2002) to the settler colonial psyche. Representations of the colonial period of Victorian settlement reflect this narrative and perpetuate a pioneer success story devoid of an Aboriginal identity. We need to see representations of history as acts of repression, colonialism and power constructs not as events in time.

There is a wealth of work that highlights the role that memory plays in solidifying the colonial project (see for instance Young, 2001a; Tatz, 1995a; Bennett, 2004; Blainey, 2003; Schlunke, 2013) in Australia and more broadly on the dominant Western cultures' desire to wipe injustice, massacre and political assimilation from our collective memory (see Anheier, 2011; Bennett, 2004; Healy, 1997; Lake, 2006; Logan & Reeves, 2009). For instance, within the goldfields context, Anne Beggs-Sunter highlights how collective memories and contestation over ownership of memory distort historical narratives surrounding the Eureka Stockade (2015), whilst Birch explores how colonial memory is reinforced through national myths and discourses (2010), colonial landscapes (2005) and iconography (1999). Reeves has sought a more sophisticated understanding of Chinese involvement in the goldfields (2004) and Kostanski has explored how dual place-names can simultaneously represent hegemonic histories and

alternative narratives (2014). However, little research has situated the contemporary invisibility of Aboriginal Victorians within the central and western goldfields region and within the context of goldfields historical narratives. As I have stated, such narratives are significant to the practice of white belonging within collective memory. Their absence within the academy is emblematic of the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victoria.

Reflecting on popular and well-known Victorians historical narratives, the first 15 years of Victoria's post-settlement history is overshadowed by the gold rush, the Great Depression and the Commonwealth of Australia's commitment to overseas conflict. With John Batman's illegitimate treaty⁵³ and pastoral violence against Aboriginal Victorians as the backdrop, the gold rush marks the commencement of a more befitting telling of Victorian history, which more accurately reflects state identity and confirms white sovereign claims to the land. The validation of white belonging is central to this process. Alongside Tony Birch, Katrina Schlunke, Fiona Nicoll and Aileen Moreton-Robinson (introduced in chapter two), Rob Garbutt, Richard Flanagan and Janice Newton have highlighted the importance of belonging to white Australia and articulate how it has shaped 'our' everyday lives. Garbutt articulates both the problematic nature of white belonging as well as the taken-for-granted logic of settler colonial possession and argues that by positioning ourselves as locals we position ourselves as though, 'we and our culture have naturally emerged from within the bounds of this place' (2011, p. 4). White belonging, as imagined through the 'local' and the 'born-and-bred' settler Australian, 'depends on selectively forgetting settler migration, while, paradoxically, maintaining a memory of first settlement' (Garbutt, 2011, p. 5). Rather than an honest engagement with the past, Richard Flanagan believes we have been served a 'veil of comforting lies and half-truths' (quoted in Birch, 2002, p. 42) to help us feel at home in Australia. Birch speaks of the frustration and anger 'that Australia is stuck somewhere in the past, continuing to regurgitate shallow national myths and clichés' (2002, p. 43) that make us feel comfortable, safe and that we belong. Autochthony is vital to this process.

⁵³ On the 6th of June, 1835, squatter and private citizen John Batman signed a treaty with representatives of local Aboriginal tribes. Batman believed that the treaty entitled him to 600,000 acres of grazing land. However, the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Richard Bourke, immediately disavowed the treaty because Batman was not a government representative and therefore could not authorise the treaty. Nevertheless, the 'treaty' quickly led the way to a great number of settlers establishing squatters rights through the Port Philip District of the New South Wales colony (Braybrook, 2012).

Autochthony, from the Ancient Greek word 'autochthon', means 'sprung from the land itself' (see Newton, 2016 and Garbutt, 2011) and implies being Indigenous to a territory. Like picturing the face of a long lost loved one, the clarity of white belonging fades with time. Tracing white belonging back to 'the beginning' becomes almost impossible. People forget why a place was named or where the name came from. We forget how a well-worn road or bridge came to be — it just is/has always been there. These places, like their names, become autochthonous. 'We' (whites) can't let them go, lest we forget the knowing of our belonging. It is here that the settler colonial psyche exists — to remind us, to comfort us and to take away the realities of our being here. Garbutt and Newton have similarly drawn on autochthony to understand the everyday assumption of white belonging. White belonging, articulated through autochthony, is constantly challenged.

The significance of autochthony, within the colonial context is understood in a number of ways. Firstly, the inequalities and violence that accompany the foundation of the state are forgotten through a single unifying myth. Secondly, autochthony eliminates previous claims to sovereignty and provides the myth (Garbutt, 2011) of peaceful origin. Thirdly, autochthony legitimises claims to territory through a connection to the land and, finally, by distinguishing between those whom a territory belongs to from whom it does not (Garbutt, 2011, p. 177). Garbutt argues that, '[t]wentieth- and twenty- first-century claims of autochthony are, and have been, a response to territorial and cultural uncertainties, usually connected with nationalist sentiment' (Garbutt, 2011, p. 184). It is ironic, or even uncanny, that the settler colonial experience is authenticated through the appropriation of Aboriginal spiritualism, culture and language.

The origin story

Within mainstream narratives, Aboriginal Victorians have been constructed as simultaneously forgotten and invisible within the context of representations of the landscape in art and literature. This section considers the ways that white possession is transplanted into the landscape and celebrated through collective memory.

The exploration, clearing, and cultivation of land was not only central to the ongoing viability of European settlement, but was also fundamental in determining the very nature of that settlement (Macneil, 1999, p. 20). The 'real' Australian settler fought battles against the harsh Australian landscape and faced near starvation, failed harvests and empty gold pans. Despite the strong sun, harsh climate, formidable land and

obscure flora and fauna, the new settler made his mark on the land, and in turn the land created 'the Australian legend' (R. Ward, 1978). Much like the 'pioneer' origin story, the Victorian gold rush works as a constructed historical narrative to legitimise settler belonging. In the state of Victoria, and especially within the central and western districts, the impact that gold has had on the settler colonial psyche is clear.

The self-legitimation of the pioneer legend is reinforced today through gold era buildings, streetscapes and narratives, especially within the central and western goldfields district. It is through this legitimisation that Wolfe's logic of elimination is enforced within the settler colonial psyche. Today, goldfields architecture, streetscapes and iconography reflect white belonging and simulate the settledness of white belonging. White achievement is celebrated through incarnations of the digger [war], the pioneer [agriculture], the battler [who overcame the harsh Australian environment] (Moran, 2002; Moreton-Robinson, 2004) and through the miner [on the goldfields]. These figures are reimagined within settler colonial narratives, and represent 'the beginning' of Australian history. Within this narrative, Aboriginal Australians are cast as 'precolonial, pre-industrial and essentially, primordial' (Macneil, 1999, p. 5). Homi Bhabha confirms the fundamental role that 'origin stories' play in the self-legitimation of settler societies:

The deep ambiguity which is commensurate with beginning, with speaking or writing *in the first place* — the division between the subjects of the enunciation and announced — is resolved in the discourse of literary history through the inception of an 'origin' whereby history turns to a kind of myth, and the problem of beginning is resolved as the progressive distinction between past and present. The authority of the past is finally authored (and authorised) in the present. (1984, p. 93)

Despite the continued celebration and practice of colonial myth-making, heritage and tourism industries (both central to this process) have privileged particular sites and representations of the past but fail to produce a coherent view. What happens when there is nothing left to bring visitors through a town? How will people know it existed? Ghost towns, colonial-era machinery and historical plaques exist throughout Australia, but are particularly prominent within the central and western goldfields district and function as reminders of 'our' colonial past, as a way of perpetuating white ownership of an area. Void of a worthy 'historical' past, Big Things operate in much the same way. The erection of 'Big Things' translates into ownership of a place and a metonym of colonialism. Big Things are man-made structures that work to take possession of a

landscape void of the history-telling markers of settlement. There are Big Things dotted all over Australia, and range in style from a tourist centre in the shape of a koala in a small Victorian township of Dadswells Bridge south-west of Stawell, to the Big Pineapple in Gympie (demolished in 2008), Queensland, the Big Pineapple in Woombye, Queensland and the Big Banana in Coffs Harbour, New South Wales. Barcan states that, 'Big Things are about the exchange of both images and capital, and the relationship between these two (1996, p. 35). Big Things are produced and help to affect a writing of history, an inscription and reification of identity and a production of community. Big Things testify to a fear that we have no history. Of course, the fear that we have no history hides the history that we fear — that is, the history of colonial invasion, appropriation of the land and the attempted subjugation of Aboriginal people (Barcan, 1996, p. 36). In this way, we can see them as another key post-modern marker of colonising the land.

This is most certainly the case in the Mullawallah example, where the acknowledgement of Aboriginal sovereignty, both nationally and regionally, destabilised white settler claims to belonging. In this respect, white belonging is understood as uncanny, because white connection to place rests on both becoming Indigenous, through the appropriation of Aboriginal place-names, whilst also concealing Aboriginal autochthony.

The central region, by maintaining its particular cultural significance and in its celebration of the Victorian gold rush, functions in the same way. Blackwood is typical of any Victorian gold rush town. Permanently held within the gold rush, the township celebrates an authentic settler narrative, which the acknowledgement of Aboriginal heritage would disrupt. Blackwood, like so many gold rush towns has struggled to survive — with no industry to safeguard it against collapse, the township must reinforce its historical significance as a tourist destination in order to survive. With little historical investigation, nothing is known (at least by the local community) of Aboriginal heritage in the area; this too would alter the narrative and disrupt the myth of peaceful settlement.

Remembering and forgetting in space, place and landscape

The Australian landscape, as popularly conceptualised, has been instrumental in the creation of the nation-state, both in terms of ecological and cultural imperialism, whilst the dispossession of Aboriginal Australians is a key feature of nationalism. Roberta Falcone reminds us that landscapes are forged through the mediation of the cultural

and the natural (Falcone, 2009, p. 124). This is no truer than during the gold rush, where whole townships and industries emerged as a response to the discovery of gold. What happens when a place no longer functions in the same way? The gold rush, as representative of one of Victoria's most significant cultural landscapes, is an essential part of Australian identity and is therefore, significant in removing Aboriginal heritage from Victoria's history (Banivanua Mar, 2012). Similar to the pastoral period of settlement (which preceded it), the Victorian goldfields should be read as a cultural landscape that commemorates a white-washed (A. Clark, 2006, p. 3) version of Australian and local history. The gold rush shaped the way that settlers interacted with the land and subsequently defined their relationship with it. This legitimised (in their own minds) their claim as the 'First Australians'.

The pivotal role that the Victorian goldfields landscape played in the colonising process, and thus in the process of denying Aboriginal sovereignty, can be understood in the context of place-making. Lake highlights the central role that memory places in place-making and states that, 'When space is inscribed with memory and thus made meaningful in new ways, it becomes place' (2006, p. 8).

Considering the central role that 'land' has played in establishing settler colonial control in Australia, a further discussion of land as related to space, place and landscape is required. Edward Relph states that landscapes are 'both the context for places and an attribute of places' (Relph, 1976, p. 123). In this respect, landscape is best understood as a cusp concept; it serves to distinguish place from space. Place being the point of their most salient difference. Although there is no landscape of space, there is landscape of both place and region. It is important to stress this difference, since it is easy to think of landscape as a mere middle term between place and space — as the transition between the two. No matter how capacious a landscape may be, it remains a composition of places.

The following sections will explicate the core differences between, and functions of, space, place and landscape within the processes of 'remembering to forget' (Banivanua Mar, 2012) and 'forgetting' Aboriginal sovereignty and the subsequent process of 'remembering' white belonging. Colonial memory, and the processes of remembering and forgetting require the constant reimagining of white belonging, within colonial memory our relationship to the land is constantly changing. This process has been conceptualised through the examination of space as distinct from place, and place as distinct from landscape. I will briefly introduce these concepts

before moving on to a discussion of the ways that colonial memory and white belonging are practiced through space, place and landscape.

Discourses of space, place and landscape are articulated in ways that give communities meaning, legitimacy, and value (Hoops, 2014, p. 196) and thus, have the ability to unite, fragment and affirm cultural identities (Hoops, 2014, p. 196)). It is within this power dynamic that understanding space and place are considered as fundamental in understanding the invisibility of Aboriginal Victorians within the central and western district. Both pastoralisation and the gold rush have played a significant role in the way that spaces and places are organised and understood. Tracy Banivanua Mar confirms the importance of thinking critically about the spaces of settler colonialism, as not just sites of dispossession but as 'texts physically inscribed with historical narratives that naturalise and legitimise settler sovereignty' (2012, p. 176). This is an important point and one that becomes clear when thinking about the role that the gold rush has played in the cultural identity of the central and western goldfields districts.

Geographers have long been engaged with issues of race and colonial expansion (Bonnett, 1997), but it wasn't until the 1970s and 1980s that white geographic scholarship began to address race and racial inequality⁵⁴ (Mott, 2016) and it is only recently, in the late 1990s, that whiteness and white supremacy have been implicated within geography (Shaw, 2006), primarily through the work of Alistair Bonnet, who introduced whiteness to the discipline in 1992 (Bonnett, 1992). Linda Peake points out that, like white people, white places have largely escaped the geographical gaze (Peake, 2009, p. 249). The invisibility of whiteness can be understood within the context of human geography, where spaces, places and landscapes have been seen as common sense, normal and neutral. Such a reading of place, suppressed the multiple ways in which places are known and experienced, and failed to take account of the broader social power relations that structure experiences of place (Ellemor, 2003, p. 235). In this respect, the making of places, spaces and landscapes are, in essence, the making of whiteness.

We owe much of the contemporary understanding of space and place to sociologist Henri Lefebver (1991) and geographers Yi-Fu Tuan (1974), Anne Buttimer

⁵⁴ Contemporary discourses of space in geography argue that we must allow for various conceptions of space, which are created by human activity (Aase, 1994, p. 51). In this respect, spaces can be racialised, which determines the ease of access and movement that different groups have (Hoops, 2014, p. 195).

(1976) and Edward Relph (1976, 1981, 1993). Space, according to Lefebvre, is 'not a thing but rather a set of relations between things' (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 86). Within the social sciences, Lefebvre's contribution is particularly important (Hoops, 2014, p. 195) because of the ways he conceptualised space beyond traditional understandings of space as unproblematic and materially independent (Tuan, 1977, p. 4). Definitions of space and place have been expanded to reflect the understanding that space produces social life and thus, produces the ways that people interact within space differently (Gieseeking, Mangold, Katz, Low, & Saegert, 2014, p. 208). This is especially important when considering the ways that intersections of whiteness and race differ in time and space (Banivanua Mar & Edmonds, 2010, p. 1). Drawing on Joshua Hoops concise definition, space can be understood as referring to the 'physical, geographical contours of sites, the ideological signification of those material dimensions, and the movement of people in those locations' (Hoops, 2014, p. 195). Within the settler colonial context, '[s]pace theoretically matters because it structures life on both lived and discursive levels' (Hoops, 2014, p. 195). Because space, like race, is conceived as natural (Banivanua Mar & Edmonds, 2010, p. 5), it is understood as essential for understanding how white belonging functions both historically and contemporarily.

Controlling space

At the fundamental level, the control of space is central to the colonising project. As Birch highlights:

In order to avoid becoming a European terra nullius and as an attempt to create certainty within the physical and imaginary landscapes of this less prosperous sector of the western district, the landscape has been retextualised. (1999, p. 63)

Joshua Hoops argues that Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space (1991) can be used to highlight, 'how social productions of space can both reinforce colour blindness ideology and render whiteness visible for the satiation of specific identity needs, such as affirmation' (Hoops, 2014, p. 193). Mapping can be understood within Lefebvre's theory of the production of space as essential for reinforcing the colonial project, where places and features of the land are re-inscribed to reflect white belonging within the landscape (Moynan, 2017). Additionally, as Charles Withers has noted, maps have been used as a technique with which to acquire and possess the landscape, where natives have either been 'mapped out' of their own spaces or falsely 'mapped in' (C. Withers, W.J., 2000). Within mapping, the naming and identifying of specific features,

'places a symbolic British flag on each of them' (Kostanski, Hercus, & Clark, 2014, p. 225). Just as spatial organisation has been used as a way of reinforcing settler colonialism, the spatial disorganisation of Aboriginal people has been used as an imperial technique. Spatial organisation has been used as a mechanism of white control to displace and dispossess Aboriginal people from their land and culture. Clark highlights the lasting consequences that spatial organisation had for Aboriginal communities during the pastoral era (between 1835 and 1851) in Victoria:

It didn't take long for the [Wathaurung] to effectively become defunct.

Likewise, the 'Gunai kurnai' people around Omeo.⁵⁵ It was really the centralisation that forced the amalgamations of peoples at the various stations.

Clark's comments demonstrate the ways that spatial disorganisation was used as a way of disconnecting Aboriginal people from their homeland, culture and people. Not only did spatial organisation dispossess Aboriginal people of their land, it dispossessed them from their means of survival, as Birch explains in the context of the Victorian gold rush:

We know that Aboriginal community [were] starving to death in the central part of Victoria so they don't have enough rations to care for people. It's a really terrible situation where people aren't being killed but they're being starved out of their existence.

Birch highlights that Victoria's gold rush era, specifically the period between 1851 and 1858, can be characterised as a period of government neglect of Aboriginal Victorians. This neglect has been considered by E. J. Foxcroft, to be an 'aim of euthanasia' (Cahir, 2012). Although this might seem like an overly dramatic term, Alfred Crosby's theory of 'ecological imperialism' (Crosby, 1986), demonstrates how passive neglect can be accurately described in such terms. Crosby argues that European settlers were successful in colonisation because of the accidental and deliberate introduction of plants, animals and diseases, which lead to major ecological shifts in the natural environment. Such a shift meant that Aboriginal people were no longer able to sustain themselves in the way they had been able to prior to European colonisation. With their food source cut off, land tenure significantly reduced and reproductive abilities

⁵⁵ Omeo is a township north-east of Melbourne, in east Gippsland, just over five hours from Melbourne. It was the site of a small gold rush.

challenged due to imported syphilis outbreaks, Aboriginal people did not passively die out, but were rather systematically decimated. Crosby's theory is useful here for two reasons. Firstly, because it highlights the fundamental role that the gold rush played in the migration of humans, animals, pests, pathogens and weeds to Australia and thus acted as a form of ecological imperialism. Secondly, because it is the settlers' constructed relationship to the landscape that confirms their affinity to Australia.

Performing white belonging through place

The following section explores the way that belonging is practiced within geographies of whiteness. Geographies of whiteness (Bonnett, 1997) are places where white privilege is actively constructed in the 'micro-geographies of everyday life' (Housel, 2009). In this respect, whiteness is not just about *who* you are, but it is about *where* you are. In this respect, whiteness cannot be understood as universal but must be positioned in the specific 'geographical and social systems within which it operates and through which it is produced' (Peake, 2009, p. 249). Because of this, geographers have increasingly looked to how whiteness has been constructed across time and space (Peake, 2009, p. 249). This section argues that denial is central to white belonging. This denial is reinforced by place-attachment and is constructed through the landscape as well as how we feel about the landscape. White belonging is continually reinforced through naming, tourism and heritage as well as through other forms of place-making.

According to Lorenzo Veracini, '[c]olonialism and settler colonialism are both essentially concerned with the making and unmaking of places' (Banivanua Mar & Edmonds, 2010, p. 179). This is an interesting statement, especially when we consider the role that the making of settler colonial places has had and continues to have on the way that Aboriginal places are understood. Not only have Aboriginal places been written over, they have been reimagined within the settler colonial psyche, and thus are conceptualised as belonging within the logic of settler colonialism. In this respect, power is reproduced according to who has access to place, who is reflected in that place and who is not (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, p. 39). Within the Western knowledge framework (Seawright, 2014, p. 555), place is conceptualised according to normalised processes of domination (white supremacy, settler colonialism, anthropocentrism and so on), which shape the way self, other, and the natural world are understood (Seawright, 2014, p. 555). In this respect, the ways that we understand place has an enormous role in the way we understand the world, and our place in the world. In this

respect, belonging is central to the performance of place, which is central to the settler colonial psyche.

From philosophical justifications for the colonisation of Australia⁵⁶ to the impact that colonisation has had on the landscape, 'Australia' has been realised through the colonisers' relationship to the land. Kali Myers traces the evolution of historical trauma through colonial landscapes and states that:

It is this image of Australia, and the physical and imagined Australian landscape within which it exists, which has made Indigenous people and the trauma of colonisation invisible within that landscape and thus within history, allowing white Australia as the descendants of the colonisers and settlers to construct a narrative in which they are both the primary inhabitants and owners of the Australian landscape. (2013, p. 45)

Here Myers refers to the central role that both the physical and imagined Australian landscape plays within the settler colonial psyche.

Roberta Falcone states that:

'in Australia, the relationship the Anglo-Australian ethnic group had with the land was of such importance in the creation of a national identity that landscape was (and still is) one of the main themes in literary production in order to create a sense of place, belonging and self' (2009, p. 123).

Within the settler colonial psyche, relations to place are understood through Western conceptions of nature, private property (McGaw, Pieris, & Potter, 2011, p. 299) and personhood (Seawright, 2014, p. 544). White places are performed through terra nullius (Behrendt, 1998), houses and gardens, through architecture and farming practices (Seawright, 2014), as well as through art and literature (O'Dowd, 2011, p. 32). For Keith Basso, place-making is the retrospective building of 'place-worlds', where aspects of the past are brought into being (Basso, 1996, p. 6), or as Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie put it, '[p]lace-making is a revisionary act, a re-memory act, in which multiple pasts co-mingle and compete for resonance towards multiple futures.' (2015, p. 133). In this respect, places have the potential to be transformative although, as this chapter argues, the settler colonial psyche works to dictate the terms of transformation. Today, places can be retextualised and used in radically-open and non-essentialised ways, as acts of

⁵⁶ See James Tully's *A Discourse on Property: John Locke and his adversaries* (1980) for a further exploration of the rationale for English colonial expansion derived from John Locke's property theory and related labour theory of value, imagined in his *Two Treatises of Government* (1690)

defiance and reminders of history or can be used to stabilise the status quo, removing fault and blame and relinquishing white guilt and shame.

Performing white belonging with Aboriginal place-names

Places are constructed through boundary-making, mapping, building, pastoralisation and agriculture, townships and in-houses, and through place-names. As the Mullawallah example highlights, naming is fundamental within the process of establishing and reinforcing settler sovereignty and white belonging. Places in the central and western goldfields district come to embody the settler colonial psyche. White belonging has been constructed in the central and western goldfields district through, movement and action in space (explored above), through symbolic activities of place (explore below) and through textual constructions about place (in the final section). Aboriginal place-names are used to reconfigure Aboriginal places and landscapes within settler colonialism whilst settler place-names are used to reinforce, 'notions of local, and by extension national, identity being that created by colonists and perpetuated by their descendants' (Kostanski, 2014, p. 282). Both Aboriginal place-names and settler place-names reinforce the assumption that settler belonging is fundamental to understandings of the Australian bush, as defined through the landscape. Place-names provide meaning by which we understand and conceptualise a place, they are encoded with important information about what is important and what is not important, they are autochthonous and reinforce a sense of belonging. Thomas Thornton draws attention to the important role that place-names play in our everyday lives:

Place-names are a particularly interesting aspect of culture because they intersect three fundamental domains of cultural analysis: language, thought, and the environment. As linguistic artefacts and distinct semantic domains in the lexicons of all the world's languages, place-names tell us something not only about the structure and content of the physical environment itself but also how people perceive, conceptualize, classify, and utilise that environment. (1997, p. 209)

Despite the fact that I grew up in the central goldfields district, it wasn't until my honours year that I began to fully realise the everyday evidence of Aboriginal sovereignty within the district. I remember learning that familiar words like Ballarat, Myrniong and Wendouree were local Aboriginal words. I was often asked by friends and acquaintances why I had decided to focus my honours research on Aboriginal

people, especially considering that I lived in Melbourne where, I was reminded, Aboriginal people died out. I relayed this to Ian Clark when I interviewed him in 2014:

That is remarkable though because when you think about it if you thought about where you live, there's Indigenous place-names everywhere. Those Indigenous place-names betray that view, they subvert it ... Like Buningyong, Wendouree, Wurrenheip — They were swamps!

Later, as a university lecturer and tutor I observed my students' similar shock upon learning that places like, Tullamarine, Prahran and Toorak (Melbourne suburbs) were also derived from Aboriginal words. This is a common phenomenon where Aboriginal place-names are used without understanding their origin and heritage (I. Clark, 1998, p. 1). Like taking off the white blindfold, it becomes hard to 'unsee' what is now so clear within every context of contemporary Victorian life. How can places both signify settler colonialism and Aboriginality at the same time? It is this question that this section responds to. Settler and Aboriginal place-names are both transformed to signify white belonging.

Attaching names to places legitimises the ownership of the culturally dominant group that 'owns' the names. Birch refers to the appropriation of Aboriginal place names and argues that this appropriation is a way of taking possession of Aboriginal culture and relegating it to a form of 'pre-history'. Aboriginal names themselves do not constitute a threat to white Australia. Houses, streets, suburbs and whole cities have Aboriginal names. This is an exercise in cultural appropriation, which represents imperial possession and the quaintness of the 'native'. For the colonisers, attaching a 'native' name to a place does not represent or recognise an Aboriginal history, and therefore possible Aboriginal ownership, it instead takes possession of it.

In Australia, Aboriginal place-names inhabit an interesting cultural space, where they are used to both confirm and celebrate Aboriginality, such is the case with Uluru, or they are utilised in the naming of colonial places, as is the case with Ballarat. Kostanski refers to this as the process of *Anglo-Indigenous toponomy* (in J. Anderson & Koch, 2003; Koch & Hercus, 2009; Kostanski, 2005, 2009) herein 'the names once used exclusively for Indigenous landscape purposes were captured by colonial powers and used for their own means of identifying the landscape' (Koch & Hercus, 2009, p. 175). Kostanski (2005) categorises place toponyms by their 'colonial historical identification' and 'Anglo-Indigenous historical identification'. Whether a place-name was imported from overseas or from Aboriginal people, it matters little. Within the settler colonial

context, both place toponyms come to signify white belonging. For this reason, the use of Aboriginal place-names within the colonial context is problematic and is emblematic of the settler colonial need to take possession, both physically and symbolically. ‘Banjo’ Paterson’s poem *Those Names* is an excellent example of the appropriation of Aboriginal place-names with no acknowledgement of their origin (Paterson, 2009). The Mullawallah example I introduced at the start of the chapter is also emblematic of this contradiction. Mullawallah can be rejected as the name for a new suburb, whilst other Wathaurung words, like Buninyong,⁵⁷ Wendouree⁵⁸ and (even) Ballarat (from Ballarat) have been reappropriated to mark settler colonial possession. Those Ballarat community members who rejected the place-name ‘Mullawallah’ based on its difficult pronunciation and spelling are the same community members who use local Wathaurung language in their everyday lives without difficulty because they do not see them as contributing to Aboriginal heritage in the district. In this respect, Wolfe’s logic of elimination helps us to understand the way that Aboriginal Victorian place-names, mythology and industry have been reappropriated through settler colonialism.

According to Jonathan Richards, Australian settler place-names arise from three different historical categorisations or events. The first refers to relatively mundane or benign events and ideas, such as the numerous Dry, Muddy, or Rocky Creeks, (2014, p. 147) whilst others reference colonial violence such as various ‘Murdering Creeks and Skull Holes’ (2014, p. 147). The third category of names, ‘commemorate pioneers, some of whom are connected with episodes of genocidal violence on the Australian frontier’ (2014, p. 147). In this respect, place-names tell us who belongs and who does not (2014, p. 225).

During the pastoral era of Victorian settlement (then the Port Phillip district of the colony of New South Wales), the use of Aboriginal place-names fulfilled a range of purposes (Kostanski, Hercus, & Clark, 2014). From their symbolic meaning, Aboriginal place-names were used because they sounded nice or were familiar to names from ‘back home’ and because they were the only names that seemed suitable to describe the Australian landscape (Koch & Hercus, 2009). For practical purposes, Aboriginal place-names were also used because they added legitimacy to illegal squatting and because they provided the squatter/pastoralist a way of asking local clans and groups for directions back to the homestead or to the run (Kostanski, Hercus, & Clark, 2014).

⁵⁷ A township 11km south of Ballarat.

⁵⁸ A large suburb in Ballarat.

Aboriginal place-names have been a common feature of white place-making in Victoria from frontier times to today. There are at least four sheep stations named after resident clans (such as Carngham Station and Coranballac Station) in the Ballarat area (I. Clark, Hercus, & Kostanski, 2014). Even during the mission and station, where Aboriginal people were relocated to central Aboriginal stations, Aboriginal people were asked to provide Aboriginal names for geographical developments (I. Clark, 2017b, pp. 215–216). Far from representing peaceful relations between squatters and Aboriginal people, the use of Aboriginal place-names exists within a wider ‘dualism in behaviour’ (I. Clark et al., 2014, p. 234) where, despite the naming of sheep stations and runs after resident clans (see Clark, 1995), land owners were deeply fearful of Aboriginal people, resulting in the orchestration of violence against them. Clark and others refer to local land holder Von Stieglitz, who in journal entries notes that on account of his fear, ‘had cooperated with a neighbour to make ‘blue pills’ a euphemism for strychnine) to use on local clans’ (I. Clark et al., 2014, p. 234). This was far from an anomaly of the colonial frontier (I. Clark et al., 2014, p. 234).

The use of Aboriginal place-names works to marginalise and displace Aboriginal narratives in Victoria by enacting the possession of Aboriginal terminology, knowledge and place-names. Over time, these imperial origins are forgotten and thus begin to signify ‘Australianness’ rather than ‘Indigeneity’. This act further cements the notion that Aboriginal sovereignty has long been ceded, and represents imperial possession and the quaintness of the ‘native’ (Birch, 1999, p. 64).

Attaching names to landscapes legitimises the ownership of the culturally dominant group that ‘owns’ the names. Birch refers to the appropriation of Aboriginal place-names and argues that this appropriation is a way of taking possession of Aboriginal culture and relegating it to a form of ‘pre-history’. Aboriginal names themselves do not constitute a threat to white Australia. Houses, streets, suburbs and whole cities have Aboriginal names. This is an exercise in cultural appropriation, which represents imperial possession and essentialism. For the colonisers, attaching a ‘native’ name to a place does not represent or recognise an Aboriginal history, and therefore possible Aboriginal ownership, it instead takes possession of it, as Birch argues: ‘In identifying, naming and textualising such places they remain ‘claimed’ by Europeans’ (1999, p. 64). Ruth Barcan refers to this act of colonisation as, ‘place marketing’ and states that it is not just a matter of individual entrepreneurship but is now a central role of local government. It involves more than simply selling, place marketing is heavy cultural, economic and mythological work’ (1996, pp. 35–36).

The community response to the Mullawallah suburb naming is indicative of the role that denial plays in legitimising white claims to belong. Members of the Ballarat community who objected to the use of an Aboriginal place-name denied its significance to the area and in effect, denied Aboriginal sovereignty. Denying Mullawallah, (because an Aboriginal place-name couldn't possibly be significant to the area) as the suburb name reinforces what Aileen Moreton-Robinson calls the 'possessive logic of white sovereignty' (Moreton-Robinson, 2015).

To draw on the Mullawallah case study, uncanny is experienced because the use of the name Mullawallah acknowledges Aboriginal sovereignty, which needs to be repressed in order for settler Australians to feel as though they belong. Riggs suggests that, 'our identification as white subjects in Australia may be understood as foundationally uncanny, in that we are reliant upon the collective repression of our non-Aboriginal status' (2003, pp. 83-84). Aboriginal place-names, which were once unfamiliar, become, through the process of Indigenisation, familiar and belong within the logic of settler colonialism. The representation of Aboriginal people within colonial landscape painting works similarly.

White belonging through landscape

Along with place-names, landscapes reinforce white belonging. Representations of 'the' Australian landscape have been used to articulate the taming of the bushland, to romanticise Australian colonisation (Falcone, 2009, p. 124), to attract new migrants, to commemorate the past and to reinforce the colonial project. Roderick Macneil states that 'it has become a truism, that what is popularly promoted and accepted as Australia's national identity represents a composite of idiosyncratic characteristics derives from the Australian natural environment' (1999, p. 20). This is an interesting point, especially in relation to the important role that the landscape plays in reinforcing and celebrating the Australian legend, the settler Australian possession of the Australian landscape and the contemporary invisibility of Aboriginal Victorians.

For anthropologists Eric Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon, landscape is best understood as a process that 'attains a form of timelessness and fixity in certain idealized and transcendent situations, such as a painted landscape representation, but which can be achieved only momentarily, if ever, in the human world of social relationships' (1995, p. 22). Hirsch highlights the significance of the relationship between the 'foreground' and the 'background' within landscape painting and extends this to social life (Lien, 2009, p. 92). The significance of this is clear in in the Australian

context when thinking about the role that the landscape has had within Australian literature and art as well as the representation of 'the other' (the bush, the Aborigine, the native animal) with representations of landscapes. Within the discourse of settler-Australia, landscape coincides with an existing settler-Australian iconography of Aboriginality, where Aboriginal people are represented in stereotypical ways or as absent. Within cultural geography, landscapes are seen as a dominant way in which white power is played out. Narratives of the past celebrate the Australian settler psyche, and are reconstructed in the landscape, both real and imagined.

Birch states that, 'control of the Australian landscape is vital to the settler psyche' (2010, p. 152). Landscapes are culturally mediated spaces and are thus socially constructed (Banivanua Mar, 2012; Seddon, 1997). The term represents the end point of making the material/real construction of space into the imagined/mental construction of place (Harrison, 2004). Drawing on a Marxist (critical social theory) analysis, landscapes can be seen to embody the particular cultural and political concerns of the dominant society. In this respect, landscapes make meaning of so-called 'uninhabited' land and represent the distinction between the natural (wild) and the material (controlled). In the Australian context, landscape-making is the physical and psychological act of taking possession of the natural. Today, a dichotomy exists between Aboriginal and settler landscapes. The Aboriginal landscape represents uncivilised, untamed pre-history, while the settler landscape represents progress, civilisation and history.

The representation of the Australian landscape in colonial paintings has been instrumental in the creation of an Australian iconography. The landscape was represented to embody the similarities and differences between Britain and Australia (Macneil, 1999, p. 14) as well as to signify the birth of a nation. Colonial artworks function as a memorialised historical record and to memorialise a particular landscape, in this sense landscape paintings distort and define our understanding of a place. Many writers have looked to the way early Australian art and literature discourses construct landscape, truth and reality (Myers, 2013) as well as the way that this discourse has been used to solidify the landscape as an essential part of the Australian settler colonial psyche. I want to look the art and literature as constructing the gold rush as a landscape.

Paintings of Aboriginal people were set amidst idyllic Australian landscapes where the happy co-existence of settler-Australians and Aboriginal tribes were a far-cry from the realities of colonial intervention which transported the landscape with the

introduction of weeds, pests and the cessation of Aboriginal burning practices (Gammage, 2011; B. Pascoe, 2014). After the gold rush, from the 1860s onwards, the representation of the landscape came to embody Australian identity and became about defining Australia as distinct from Britain, with its egalitarian ideals more in line with America. During this period of time, the depiction of Aboriginal people often strongly contrasted the colonial experience of Aboriginal dispossession and displacement (Macneil, 1999, p. 13). In his PhD thesis, Macneil addresses the representational absence of Aboriginal people within late 19th-century landscape paintings and argues that, 'the absence of Aboriginal people from late 19th-century paintings represents part of a process of 'whitening' the Australian landscape which was attendant to the nationalist re-invention of 'Australia' in the 1880s and 1890s' (Macneil, 1999, p. 7).

Landscape paintings have been instrumental in defining the 'discourse of realism and romanticism in the perception of Aboriginal people by the earliest explorers and settlers' (Macneil, 1999), but as Macneil states, 'in the decades preceding Federation [...] Aboriginal people began to disappear from the canvases of Australian artists' (1999, p. 6). This disappearance of Aboriginal people in colonial art can be attributed to the emergence of an Australian identity over the oppositional gaze, which had previously been used, as well as to the belief that 'relations between Aboriginal people and settler-Australians had by this time reached a plateau, and thus, presumably, there was little to be revealed by closer study' (Macneil, 1999).

Even when Aboriginal presences are represented they are explained away. The *Art Gallery of Ballarat* held an exhibition in early 2018 featuring a collection of sketches, paintings and artefacts by celebrated colonial painter Eugene von Guerard. One of the paintings at the exhibition depicts an interaction between local Aboriginal people 'on the road to the Ballarat diggings'. This representation, like those by S. T. Gills, depict a typical goldfields interaction between Aboriginal and settler. Though such a scene was a common occurrence on the goldfields, the painting has been reimagined within the settler colonial psyche as picturesque and not a true depiction.

In an interview conducted with prominent art historian and von Guerard specialist Dr Ruth Pullin, Caleb Cluff assumes von Guerard's *Aborigines met on the road to the diggings* (1854) to be perhaps painted in a similar vein to Glover's *Natives at a corrobory, under the wild woods of the Country*. However, as Pullin explains, the painting depicts from life: 'In the diary he talks about being on the road to the diggings and stopping near the Moorabool River, and he talks about an exchange with a group of the local Aboriginal people, Wautharong people, and the possum-skin cloak is

described, that whole incident is described' (Cluff, 2018). This is interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, the *Courier* is the Ballarat and district's leading provider of news and information and has been in print since 1867. Secondly because of the manner in which Cluff attempts to explain away the presence of Aboriginal people on the goldfields as a romanticised depiction in the picturesque landscape style rather than as historically accurate. This is emblematic of the region's desire, held within the settler colonial psyche, to wipe Aboriginal presences from historical record so as to legitimise settlement.



Figure 7: Eugene von Guerard's *Aborigines met on the road to the diggings* (1854), Geelong Gallery

Situating Victorian colonial art within the context of Australian colonial art is important because it helps to explain the way that the presence of Aboriginal Victorians within colonial art is idealised and mythologised. Just as landscape art can depict particular versions of history, so too can it represent specific events. This can also be distorted into romanticised representation. John Glover is considered as one of the most important landscape painters working outside of Europe in the 1830s and is widely recognised as the finest landscape painter of the early colonial period (NGV, n.d). Far from recording a specific place in time, Glover's focus was on commemorating a landscape untouched by white settlement. In correspondence between Glover and George Augustus Robinson (chief protector of Aborigines), Glover explains his motivation for creating a landscape painting featuring Aboriginal people, *Natives at a corrobory, under the wild woods of the Country* (c.1835) as 'to give an idea of the manner they enjoyed themselves before being disturbed by the White People' (State Library of New South Wales, , accessed 26 March 2018). As Marianne Elisabeth Lien highlights, the Aboriginal population that Glover depicts in his landscapes had largely been

displaced and forcefully moved to Flinders Island (Lien, 2009). Lien states that, 'by obscuring the actual circumstances of the Aboriginal people (forced migration, attempted massacre), and highlighting instead an idealised vision of the 'noble savage', Glover positions himself within the framework of the picturesque' (Lien, 2009, p. 93). In this sense, Glover depicts the beauty of the Australian landscape whilst also reminiscing about pre-contact Aboriginal culture.



Figure 8: John Glover's *Natives at a corrobory, under the wild woods of the Country* (c.1835) (Glover, 1835)

Glover's style, typical of picturesque landscape, is important in this context because it demonstrates the consequences of taking colonial artwork as historical record. From Algernon Talmage's re-creation of Captain Phillip's raising of the Union Jack on the shores of Sydney Cove in 1788 (1937) to Frederick McCubbin's romanticisation of settler life in *The Pioneer* (1904), landscape paintings show us what to feel about the Australian landscape as well as what it means to be Australian. In this respect, Australian nationalism has been forged through the literal and figurative domestication of the bush. The gold rush continued the work of frontier pastoralisation to literally and figuratively take possession of the land and all that relied upon it.

Viewing the goldfields as a cultural landscape

Much has been written about the role that landscapes play within the colonising process, but this tends to be done in the context of the 'perceived' natural Australian landscape and is generally held within the frontier. In her chapter, 'Australian Landscape as the Language of a New Identity', Falcone investigates how landscapes are used in the process of place-making and meaning-making within pastoral-era Australian poems, whilst Christa Knellwolf King looks at place-making in the context

of late 19th century folk stories and traces the emergence of mateship, the 'fair go' and the settler struggle. I would argue that these themes were already well-established on the goldfields and were reinforced by late 19th century writers.

In this chapter, I want to expand on this to include landscape making within the context of the gold rush. By creating 'new' ways of interacting with the natural environment, the gold rush created new ways of thinking about the landscape and made Aboriginal ways of using the land virtually impossible. Cultural landscapes have similarly been used within historical geography discourse to understand the processes of dispossession. Clark states that, 'dispossession, as a direct outcome of invasion, can be deaggregated into four interrelated processes or dimension: spatial disorganisation, ecological degradation, political alienation and cultural disintegration' (1998, p. 5). By viewing contemporary goldfields landscapes as cultural landscapes, we are able to reveal the specific ways that Aboriginal people have been removed from goldfields heritage.

Cultural landscapes emerged in academic literature in the mid-twentieth century (Blankenship, 2016), but the term has also been used to describe sites that are of both aesthetic and historical significance (Reeves & McConville, 2011) for the purpose of World Heritage listing. The inclusion of such sites on World Heritage lists is justified for their religious, artistic or cultural associations, which may not be aesthetically significant. In the Australian context, the term has most often been associated with Aboriginal sites of significance (Lennon, 2016). In their article, 'Cultural Landscape and Goldfield Heritage: Towards a Land Management Framework for the Historic South-West Pacific Gold Mining Landscapes', Reeves and Chris McConville explore the limitations that current definitions of 'cultural landscape' have for mining heritage sites, which are not 'evolved organic landscapes' (2011, p. 191), culturally significant to only Aboriginal people, nor solely aesthetically significant — the contexts within which the term has been applied. Reeves and McConville raise an important point about the way that cultural landscapes have been understood and conceptualised within the heritage space. Defining these spaces as 'cultural' landscapes implies that the natural and cultural are diametrically opposed. This perspective is pursued by the historical archaeologist, Rodney Harrison, in *Shared Landscapes: Archaeologies of Attachment and the Pastoral Industry in New South Wales* (2004), who examines pastoral 'landscapes' shared by Aboriginal people and settlers. He rejects the use of the term 'cultural' as situating Aboriginal heritage as pre-colonial and in opposition to (post-colonial) pastoral heritage. Similarly, Cahir reinforces the fact that 'auriferous areas did

not cease to be Aboriginal cultural landscapes' (2012, pp. 46–47) just because gold was 'discovered' by settlers.

The central and western goldfields are best understood as a cultural landscape, which continually creates and recreates settler colonial belonging, within the settler colonial psyche, where Aboriginal Victorians are invisible. Denis Byrne states that by mapping the land, we are making meaning of the environment thusly making it a landscape. In this respect, he argues that mapping functions as both a psychological and physical act of imperialism/colonialism (Byrne, 2003). This has been demonstrated in the central and western goldfields districts of Victoria, where Aboriginal people remain invisible to the broader white community and Aboriginal sovereignty has been denied. The denial of Aboriginal involvement on Victorian goldfields works to reinforce the possessive logic of white claims to sovereignty. The gold rush, as a cultural landscape functions in the same way. Reeves and McConville validate this in their article, 'Cultural Landscape and Goldfields Heritage' (2011) where they argue that goldfields landscapes function as cultural landscapes and constantly remind us, and reinforces the significance, of the gold rush, in this way they reaffirm colonisation. By changing the natural environment to the extent that the gold rush did, the environment functioned in an entirely new way.

In this respect, the landscape has become culturally mediated. By extension, the possession of the Australian landscape is the white settler possessive logic (Moreton-Robinson, 2011a) of Aboriginal histories, culture and lives. Considering the impact that the gold rush had on the relationship that many colonists and miners had with the Australian environment, the significance of the gold rush to the Australian legend, to the landscape and thusly to nationalism is clear. Past research has investigated Aboriginal land management pre-contact (Gammage, 2011; B. Pascoe, 2014) the consequences of colonialism on the land (Blainey, 2013; Broome, 2005; B. Pascoe, 2014), the ways that landscapes are used as a way of symbolically/physically colonising space (Banivanua Mar, 2012; Myers, 2013), landscape and memory (Birch, 2005), even the ways that colonial landscapes are being reimagined by Aboriginal peoples (Benterrak, Muecke, & Roe, 1996). Richard Baker argues that as the landscape is a mental construct, we must see it as a cultural construct and should observe it as the physical form of social and political ideologies (Kostanski, 2014, p. 275). Many social commentators and writers have identified the role that the Australian landscape has played in establishing settler Australian identity. This chapter sits within this space and asserts that if we view the central and western goldfields district as made up of cultural landscapes, including

Sovereign Hill, we can better understand the significance of the gold rush to the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorian people within the narrative of Australian national identity as well as to the particularities of Victorian cultural identity.

Today, Victoria's central and western districts look nothing like the prosperous land Aboriginal peoples had cultivated over tens of thousands of years. From a district made up of squatters, cattle and sheep in the period between 1835 and 1851 (Blainey, 2013; Broome, 2005) to a bustling region filled with merchants and diggers from different parts of Australia and the rest of the world between 1851 and 1858 (Blainey, 2013; Broome, 2005), these regions reflect a fractured land and people. What has become of this district now that gold rush is over? What happened when township populations began to decline, when the economic incentive to stay was no more and whole townships packed up and moved elsewhere?

Goldfields iconography such as architecture, statues, public spaces and geography actively work to reify colonial ideals of what a 'modern' society should be. In this way the development of a settler cultural landscape, as celebrated through art and literature, metaphorically takes control and possession of the land (Seddon, 1997). In this sense cultural landscapes are deemed to be so through their 'cultural baggage' (Seddon, 1997, p. 15). Such iconography doesn't even have to be around anymore, derelict buildings, abandoned machinery and old photographs reflect a cultural landscape that represents colonial expansion rather than Aboriginal possession or dispossession. Ghost towns are emblematic of both the unsettled and the settled spaces.

Conclusion

The inability of Victorian goldfields narratives to take Aboriginal people into account has had three major consequences. The first is that settler Victorians fail to acknowledge Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage. Second, settler Victorians fail to imagine a contemporary presence of Aboriginal Victorians. The third consequence, owing to the essentialised pre-colonial Aboriginal construct, removes 'the possibility of an ongoing, vital and contemporary Aboriginal culture operating within present-day Australian society' (Macneil, 1999, p. 6).

These consequences are demonstrated in the inability of goldfields institutions to engage with local Aboriginal people. Despite the contribution that both Fred Cahir and Ian Clark have made to contemporary understandings of Aboriginal cultures in Victoria both pre- and post-settlement, their research is nonetheless problematic. Firstly because their research conducted within settler colonial institution perpetuates

the possession of Aboriginal knowledge systems by settler colonial individuals and institutions. Secondly because such narratives are constructed from a settler colonial perspective, are uncovered in colonial archives, recorded by white administrators and thus carry settler colonial assumptions and dominant ideology. Furthermore, such research continues to construct Aboriginal presence as a part of the past. The following chapter challenges this research paradigm.

This chapter has drawn on a case study of Victoria's central and western goldfields district in demonstrating the relationship between white belonging and the invisible presence of Aboriginal people within Victoria's historical narratives and as reflected within collective memory. Within Victoria, the settler colonial psyche works to maintain white belonging by replacing Aboriginal sovereignty with narratives which speak to the successes of the settler colonial project. This chapter argued that the Victorian gold rush is emblematic of this process. Aboriginal possession has been forgotten and replaced with white belonging through the transformation of Aboriginal 'space' into (white) place and celebrated within (white) landscape narratives and through the (white) cultural landscape.

Over time, the foundation of settler belonging becomes forgotten and new modes of belonging are established. Along with whiteness, belonging has become invisible and normalised. To draw on the Mullawallah case study, the local Ballarat community who objected to the Aboriginal place-name, did so, in their own eyes, not out of racism but out of their inability to see the *place* of Aboriginal culture within the Ballarat region. This unseeing of Aboriginal heritage is indicative of white privilege, because white people, who are not-raced themselves, do not see race as a problem. Because they do not 'see' Aboriginal people, they assume there have never been Aboriginal people in the area and therefore, that no dispossession occurred.⁵⁹ In this respect, the settler colonial psyche becomes a crucial mechanism through which white belonging is stabilised.

In closing out this chapter I would like to, once again, draw attention to the significance of Patrick Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism, where he states that settler colonialism destroys to replace. When we consider the way that Aboriginal occupation has been systematically ignored, removed and denied, the fact that Aboriginal culture is celebrated the world over as a unique and celebrated part of

⁵⁹ Garbutt has similarly demonstrated how white privilege is practiced in Lismore, NSW (2011, pp. 164-165).

Australian culture, we come to understand the extent to which we continue to live within settler colonialism. Even the 'discovery' of evidence of Aboriginal occupation has been reframed within settler colonialism, as legitimising 'Australia' in the eyes of the rest of the world (Cane, 2013; Dean & Butler, 2014), rather than as recognition of Aboriginal sovereign rights. This is uncanny because Aboriginal occupation is both an assertion of 'Australianness' as well as a denial of Aboriginal sovereignty. Through the process of colonial expansion, within the practice of settler colonialism, Aboriginal claims to sovereignty are continually invalidated. As a further practice of settler colonialism Aboriginal belonging is replaced by white belonging (Read, 2000, p. 17) — Aboriginal place-names, customs and iconography come to represent Australia rather than Indigeneity. In Victoria, Aboriginal presence comes to be explained away as inauthentic, or illegitimate and thus become framed within settler colonialism. The fact that we settler Victorians continue to live within Aboriginal sovereignty has been forgotten, and we forget that we have forgotten. We begin to deny, and divert to narratives which support and celebrate white claims to sovereignty. One such narrative, Australian (Rules) Football is the focus of the following chapter.

The football fields: A case study into the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorian Australian (Rules) Football players

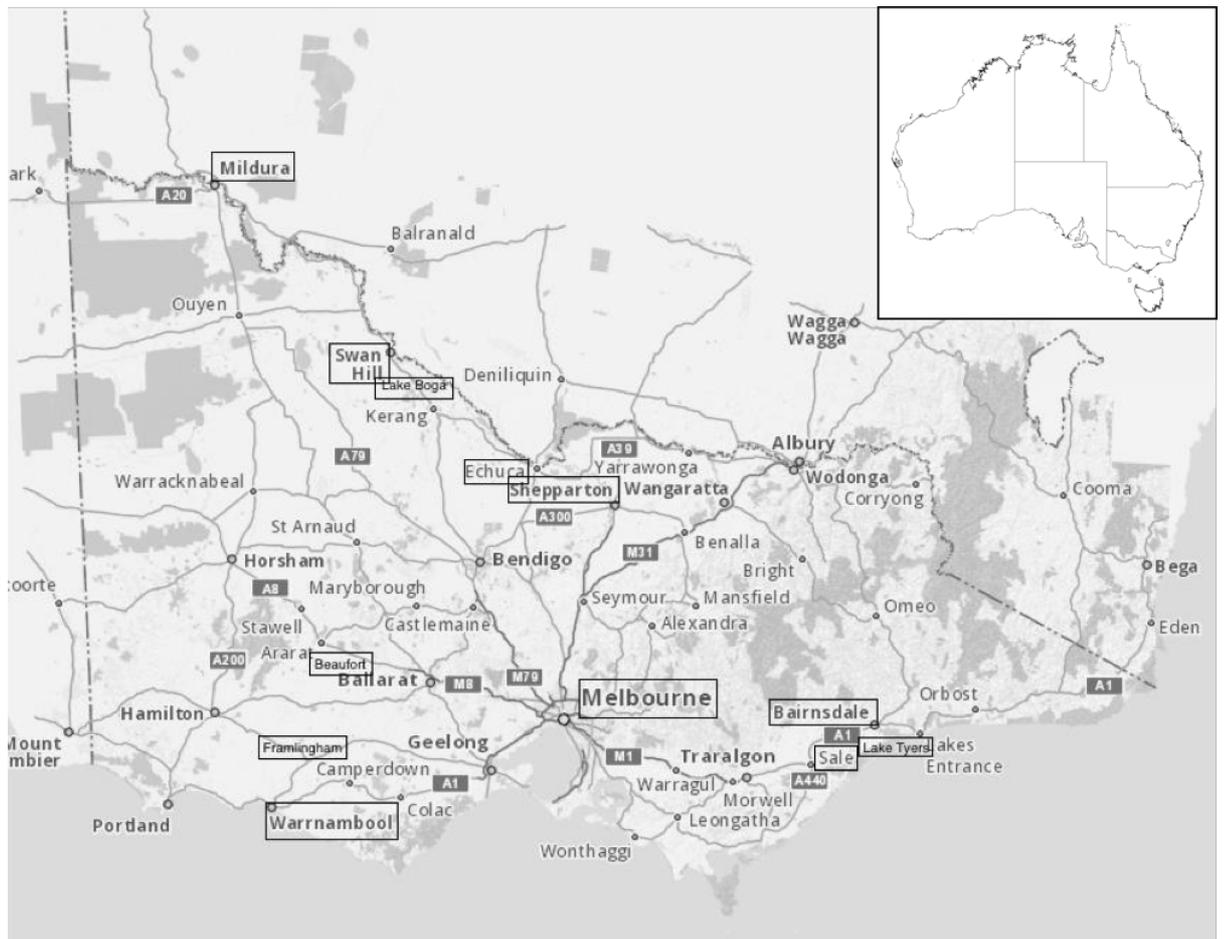


Figure 9: Contemporary map of the State of Victoria.

Introduction

Sport is a mirror of many things. It illuminates political, social, economic and legal systems[...] In the land of sporting obsession, playing fields are not where most people expect to find, or want to see, racial discrimination. Yet sport is a measure of Australian racism. To look beyond the immediacy of the oval and the ring is to find central issues: who is or is not Aboriginal; the policies and practices of protection-segregation, paternalism, assimilation,

integration and Aboriginal autonomy; and the continuity of some gross inequalities, even in the civil and human rights eras. (Tatz, 1995a, p. 143)

Colin Tatz's ground-breaking book *Obstacle Race: Aborigines in Sport* (published in 1995 — the same year that the AFL's vilification laws were introduced) explores the relationship between memory, sport and race. He highlights the paradoxically different ways that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians *remember* and *forget* Australia's history whereby Aboriginal Australians become victims of 'organised forgetting' (Tatz, 1995a). This is especially true in Victoria, where (as outlined in the previous chapter) Aboriginal people have been systematically removed from the history of the state's colonisation and where Aboriginal history remains largely ignored. Similarly, Aboriginal voices have also been left out of Australian Indigenous sports history, where researchers have prioritised archival and imperial research methodologies over Indigenous research methodologies that privilege Aboriginal voices, a point which Gary Osmond and Murray Phillip make (2018, p. 561). Rather than a case study documenting the contribution that Aboriginal Victorian football players have made to professional Australian (Rules) Football, the following chapter situates participant experiences of racism, racial thinking, cultural isolation etc., as symptomatic of white belonging and their perceived invisibility within professional football as working within the settler colonial psyche to maintain Australian (Rules) Football as emblematic of white cultural identity rather than cross-cultural collaboration.

With a history of violence, displacement and historical erasure as the backdrop (introduced in the previous case study chapter), there are a multitude of issues which Aboriginal Victorian communities face in their day-to-day lives. Aboriginal Victorian football players, who also face discrimination in the game, are not excluded from this burden. This chapter draws on the experiences of Aboriginal Victorian Australian (Rules) Football players and support staff at both the professional and junior levels, and identifies the obstacles that Aboriginal Victorian players face both on and off the football field. Participant experiences of racism and issues of visibility both within their communities as well as within the football realm are symptomatic of white belonging, sustained within the settler colonial psyche. The case study demonstrates the marginalisation of Aboriginal Victorians within their communities and within mainstream society, and argues that this marginalisation works to stabilise white belonging.

The aim of this thesis is twofold in that it seeks to highlight the invisible presence of Victoria's Aboriginal communities, and also demonstrate that this invisible presence is a central function of white belonging, sustained by the settler colonial psyche. Through an analysis of the central and western goldfields district, chapter five demonstrated that Victoria's gold rush narrative, as popularly told, continues to deny the presence of Aboriginal peoples on the goldfields and today. I argued that this denial reinforces a white settler colonial national identity, which celebrates a pseudo-history telling of settlement. This pseudo-history fails to account for a contemporary Aboriginal presence in Victoria and denies Aboriginal sovereignty. The following case study chapter draws on Australian (Rules) Football as emblematic of this pseudo-history and a space where Aboriginal Victorians remain invisibly present today.

This chapter will focus on the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians today. Australian (Rules) Football is a space where Aboriginal players are celebrated and are sought after, but it is also a space which fails to identify Aboriginal talent within Victoria. This is represented through low recruitment numbers as well as reflected in the assumption that Aboriginal players are recruited from out-of-state. This chapter demonstrates that, much like Victoria's hidden history of Aboriginal participation on the 19th century goldfields, the contemporary presence of Aboriginal football players in Victoria is under-appreciated and misunderstood. More broadly, these case studies demonstrate how deeply seated Australia's colonial telling of history is and the extent to which this narrative is celebrated as part of Australia's national identity. This chapter will identify the key issues faced by Aboriginal Victorian football players and will demonstrate the important role that Victoria's Aboriginal community plays within Australian (Rules) Football.

A closer reading of Victoria's gold rush was provided in chapter five, where it was argued that the gold rush exemplifies state identity and nation building, and highlighted contested representations of history — one which includes Aboriginal Victorians and one which does not. Chapter five explored the often *hidden* truth of Aboriginal involvement on the goldfields and demonstrated that for many regions around Victoria, particularly the central and western goldfields district, Aboriginal history is still hidden and that non-Aboriginal people fail to understand the place of Aboriginal people within their communities nor accept them as a part of the colonial history of the region or of the nation. I argued that the inability for non-Aboriginal Victorians to appreciate the place that Aboriginal people have within their communities, townships and cultural heritage is emblematic of the settler colonial

psyche, where an acknowledgement of Aboriginal sovereignty would deem white belonging as illegitimate. The prospect of such an acknowledgement creates fear and anxiety which results in amnesia, denial and outrage (Tatz, 2011, p. 44).

Just as Aboriginal Victorians have been left out of official gold rush narratives, so have Aboriginal Victorians been left out of professional Australian (Rules) Football. Despite the fact that Aboriginal football players are a celebrated feature of Australian (Rules) Football, the games' Aboriginal roots remains largely untold and denied by the Australian Football League (AFL) (Gorman et al., 2015; Hallinan & Judd, 2012b; Judd, 2005a; Judd & Butcher, 2016; R. Pascoe, 1995; R. Pascoe & Papalia, 2017). Contemporary Australian (Rules) Football, celebrated as a truly 'Australian' game, can be traced back to the local Aboriginal game Marngrook (explored further in the background section of this chapter), played in the central and western districts of Victoria. Despite this, Aboriginal Victorian football players have historically been under-represented at the elite level within the AFL.

Australian (Rules) Football emerged during the Victorian gold rush — the turning point in Victoria's colonial history, both economically and politically (Blainey, 2010; R. Pascoe, 1995) and is today celebrated as *the* national game. Aboriginal players are an important part of the game and are recognised for their skill and unique way of playing (R. Pascoe & Papalia, 2017). Despite this, they are more often portrayed as 'the "exotic other" rather than as "real" players' (Nelson, 2009, p. 101). Such a representation is steeped in Australia's colonial history and is representative of a long history of racial discrimination and white supremacy.

The AFL is celebrated as a national leader in the promotion of racial, religious and ethnic tolerance in Australian society and, since the introduction of Rule 35 (the AFL's Racial and Religious Vilification Laws) in 1995, has demonstrated its commitment through national education and community development programs (Gorman & Reeves, 2012; Reeves et al., 2012). The AFL is further recognised as a leader in Aboriginal community outreach programs and the promotion of Australian (Rules) Football in communities right across Australia, and the world (Reeves et al., 2012). This commitment is demonstrated in the number of Aboriginal footballers currently playing at the elite level. The number of Aboriginal football players on AFL sides increased from 74 players in 2016 (AFL Development, 2013) to 83 at the start of the 2018 season (AFL Players' Association, 2018). Despite the increase, overall representation stayed the same between the 2016 and 2018 seasons, with Aboriginal players representing 9% of all active AFL players over this period. This is significantly higher than the national population

of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which stands at 2.8% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

Chapter plan

This chapter gives voice to the concerns of Aboriginal participants and identifies the key issues faced by Aboriginal football players in Victoria, as identified by Victorian Aboriginal football players. The first section of the chapter situates Australian (Rules) Football within Victoria's colonial history and argues that Australian Football works within Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism to confirm white belonging. Australian Football has come to represent white belonging through the process of removing the games' appropriation of the Aboriginal game *Marngrook* and replacing it with a white settler narrative which confirms white belonging. In addition to situating sport and specifically Australian (Rules) Football within the context of national identity and colonial history, this first section outlines the individual participants and organisations interviewed for this chapter. Before moving onto a more detailed discussion of the research findings, the first section concludes with a discussion of the main research findings, and their significance to the thesis more broadly.

This chapter positions racism, racial thinking and experiences of racism as symptomatic of the settler colonial psyche. Through racist commentary, racial thinking and prejudicial treatment, the settler colonial psyche sustains white belonging. The second section of this chapter addresses the issues which players face within their football communities and on the football field (on-field). The final section addresses the key issues faced by players off the football field (off-field) and in their lives outside football at both the societal (macro) and the community (micro) level. Throughout the chapter I draw on player profiles to highlight how racism and settler perceptions of Aboriginality play out in the football careers of specific players at different stages of their career and during different eras, demonstrating the extent to which settler colonialism operates in Australia today. This chapter allows the Aboriginal participants to relate their own experiences of racism, racial thinking and other experiences of racial and cultural exclusion and articulate their own understanding of Aboriginal identity. Out of respect for the participants, and as a response to colonial research practices still used today, this chapter uses directly quoted materials to build an analysis of the various understandings and discourses of race which circulate in contemporary Victoria.

Part 1: Background

Sport and national identity

Sport and recreation are seen as essential parts of Australia's national identity (Bloomfield, 2003; Hirst, 2010b; R. Pascoe, 1995). In fact, in Victoria, sport (in particular cricket and horse racing) has been a prominent feature since colonial settlement in 1835 (Hess & Stewart, 1998, p. 6). Today, alongside national public holidays held for Anzac Day and Australia Day, the state honours public holidays for both the Melbourne Cup and the AFL Grand Final. Furthermore, the historical significance of Australian Football to the state of Victoria is reflected in the fact that it is linked to the turning point in Victoria's history (both economically and politically); the gold rush (Blainey, 2010; R. Pascoe, 1995).

Robert Pascoe (1995) links the popularity of Rugby in Sydney and Australian (Rules) Football in Melbourne to the divergent metropolitan cultures, which were established through very different colonial cultures. Pascoe contends that the popularity of Rugby in Sydney and Australian (Rules) Football in Melbourne reflects the cultural ideologies that shaped each city respectively (R. Pascoe, 1995, pp. xi-xvii). Pascoe's insight goes some way towards identifying the ideological differences between Sydney and Melbourne, how the history of Australia is in many ways the history of Australian sport and, finally, how these ideological differences are reflected on the football field. Sydney, as the site of the first colonial settlement in Australia, with roots deeply tied to England, and Melbourne, with its riches and political system tied to the working class and unionism through the gold rush, paint sharply contrasting images of Australia's biggest cities.

Australian (Rules) Football and national identity

There are good grounds for claiming that Australian Rules football is not just the nation's great indigenous game but also Australia's most popular and most passionately supported pastime. It is a sport that has captured the hearts, minds and imaginations of millions of ordinary Australians for almost a century and a half. Football is more than a game, it has become an integral part of the cultural life of many Australians (Hess & Stewart, 1998, p. 1)

In the above excerpt Rob Hess articulates the central role that Australian (Rules) Football plays in the day-to-day lives of 'ordinary' Australians as well as the debate over the games' Aboriginal roots (discussed in the following sub-section). Australian (Rules) Football is a unique part of the Australian way of life — a game with its origins deeply

embedded in European colonial history and a widely celebrated part of Australian national identity. Australian (Rules) Football, with teams across almost all of Australia's states and territories, is very much considered the Australian national game. Nonetheless, Victoria remains its cultural heartland. It is for this reason; that it is truly the 'Australian' game, that research into the ways that race and identity are practiced is so important.

Colin Tatz reminds us that 'sport is a mirror of many things' (Tatz & Tatz, 2000, p. 7) and that although the playing field may not be a place where people expect to find racial discrimination sport is an important indicator of Australian racism where political, social, economic and legal systems are reflected (Tatz & Tatz, 2000). The sports arena operates as a microcosm of Australian society at large (Tatz, 1995a) where attitudes and prejudices are played out through racial vilification directed at Aboriginal and other minority players on the field as well as in the spectator stands (Gorman et al., 2015) and within colloquial conversation in the time before and after matches. For instance, when then-Collingwood Football Club player Leon Davis missed games during the 2010 and 2011 AFL seasons, it was not unusual to overhear throwaway remarks that Davis had gone 'walk-about'⁶⁰. In my experience, these and similar comments have been made when it comes to the AFL's Aboriginal players. I can recall hearing similar misgivings about former AFL players Che Cockatoo-Collins and Liam Jurrah. It is common too, when a player such as Nicky Winmar (Klugman & Osmond, 2013) or Adam Goodes (Judd & Butcher, 2016; Gorman et al., 2015; Philpott, 2016) makes a stand against racism, for fans to call their masculinity into question and shrug it off as being 'soft' (Judd & Butcher, 2016, p. 77). It is uncanny that Aboriginal football players are vilified in this way considering that Australian (Rules) Football is an 'Aboriginal cultural artefact' (Judd, 2005a).

Marngrook

Australian (Rules) Football was developed in the late 1850s as a way of ensuring MCC cricket players remained fit during the winter months (Hess & Stewart, 1998, p. 7). Despite the fact that Geoffrey Blainey states that Australian (Rules) Football is 'essentially an Australian invention' (2010, p. xi), he refuses to acknowledge the game's

⁶⁰ As a 'born-into' Collingwood supporter I can personally attest to the throw-away comments made by family members with reference to the absence of Aboriginal players from a game line up. Some of my uncles witnessed the despicable racial vilification from Collingwood supporters directed at St Kilda's Nicky Winmar at the now, eponymous Victoria Park game in 1993. Although, they would argue that there was no incident.

similarity to Marngrook, and denies the significance that Thomas Wentworth Wills' own (celebrated as the father of Australian (Rules) Football) proximity to Aboriginal people has to the origins of Australian (Rules) Football. Wills grew up alongside Aboriginal people, the Djab wurrung, in the Grampians district of Victoria and no doubt witnessed them playing and speaking of Marngrook and other aspects of their game's culture (Judd, 2005a; Poulter, 2008). Despite substantial evidence that suggests that Australian (Rules) Football was developed from Marngrook, the AFL's official historian Gillian Hibbins (2008) dismisses such claims as 'ludicrous' (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2008) despite a substantial body of work that speaks to this truth. Although a number of researchers (Gorman, 2011; Gorman et al., 2015; Gorman & Reeves, 2012; Hess, Nicholson, Stewart, & De Moore, 2008; Hess & Stewart, 1998; Klugman & Osmond, 2013; Reeves et al., 2012) maintain Australian (Rules) Football is a contemporary incarnation of Marngrook. Aside from Barry Judd, few researchers draw the link between Australian (Rules) Football, the Victorian gold rush and the Aboriginal pastime 'Marngrook'. Amongst others (Gorman, 2011; Hess et al., 2008; Tatz, 1995a), Barry Judd has written extensively on the Aboriginal origins of Australian (Rules) Football, including the article, 'Australian Rules Football as Cultural Artefact' (2005), his PhD thesis 'Australian Game, Australian Identity: (Post)Colonial Identity in Football' (Judd, 2007), and the subsequent book, *On the Boundary Line: Colonial Identity in Football* (Judd, 2008) as well as more recent articles (Gorman et al., 2015; Judd, 2012; Judd & Butcher, 2016). Despite significant research, Judd's research, 'like that of Adam Goodes in the official history of Australian Football [...] has effectively been eliminated from the realm of "proper" history' (Judd, 2012, p. 1). Considering the fact that Australian (Rules) Football developed during Victoria's colonial era (Hay, 2017; Blainey, 2010; Hess & Stewart, 1998; R. Pascoe, 1995), and despite the significance of Australian (Rules) Football to Australian national identity, there is very little research that positions Australian (Rules) Football as an exemplar of settler colonialism (Judd, 2012, p. 1). Aside from Gorman, Judd and Hallinan who have published extensively on Aboriginal cultural and racial exclusion within sport (Gorman, 2011; Gorman et al., 2015; Gorman & Reeves, 2012; Hallinan & Judd, 2007, 2009a, 2009b, 2012a, 2012b; Judd & Hallinan, 2008; Reeves et al., 2012), most researchers focus on Aboriginal involvement in sport in positive and romanticised ways (Blainey, 2010, p. xii), focusing on the health and wellbeing benefits for Aboriginal communities (Nelson, 2009; Oliver, 2014; Philpott, 2016) and positioning football as a saviour for Aboriginal men.

The contemporary debate over Australian (Rules) Football's Aboriginal roots (Hay, 2017) demonstrates the extent to which Aboriginal Victorians have been written out of the colonial history of Victoria and highlights the crucial role that the present plays in the construction of accounts of the past (Attwood & Magowan, 2001). This 'whiting out' narrative serves to reinforce dominant cultural attitudes and is further represented within Australian recreation and pastimes, such as cricket (Judd, 2010a) and soccer (Maynard, 2011), where Aboriginal involvement is erased. John Lazenby's 2015 book, *The Strangers who came home*, which focuses on 'the first Australian cricket tour of England' (Lazenby, 2015) does just that, stating that the first tour took place in 1878-1879, completely neglecting the Aboriginal cricket team who toured England a decade earlier in 1868. This denial exemplifies how white belonging is perpetuated within different facets of Australian culture and reinforces the culture of history-making, whereby Australian (Rules) Football has become 'a signpost of Anglo-Australian nationalism' (Judd, 2005b, p. 33) played and supported by Anglo-Australians (Hallinan & Judd, 2009a, p. 2367) rather than as a celebration of Aboriginal cultural convergence. The failure for the AFL, its historians, social commentators and followers to fully acknowledge that Australian (Rules) Football is an Aboriginal game highlights the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism. As I have highlighted throughout this thesis, settler colonialism removes to replace but it also *transforms*. Within this context, the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism transformed Australian (Rules) Football as derived from Marngrook into a narrative, which celebrates Australian (Rules) Football as an Anglo-Australian invention. Barry Judd has similarly mapped this process:

The distortion results because in their desire to assert Anglo-Australian connections, all traces of Indigenous Australia are extinguished. In this view, Wills is portrayed as though he was an Englishman, an immigrant straight off the boat and ignorant of the business of Australian colonialism and the dirty business of war, killing and dispossession inherent in its logic. (2012, p. 1)

In the same way, Aboriginal football players are transformed from representative of Aboriginal sovereignty, playing their game and celebrating cultural resilience to become markers of cultural hegemony within the settler colonial project.

Aboriginal recruitment

Australian (Rules) Football is a symbol of national identity where Aboriginal men are accepted and celebrated (Tatz, 1995; Gorman et al., 2015; Gorman, 2011; Judd, 2005a)

but where Aboriginal Victorian players remain under-represented. Recruiters look to Aboriginal players in parts of Australia that are perceived as more ‘authentically’ Aboriginal, such as Western Australia and the Northern Territory (Philip, 2008). This highlights the invisible presence of Victoria’s Aboriginal community. The recruitment of Aboriginal football players from out-of-state (i.e. outside the state of Victoria) is significant because, for many settler Australians, the football ground *may* serve as their main interaction with Aboriginal people. This space either affirms or challenges perceptions of Aboriginal men and can shape settler barrackers’⁶¹ understanding of First Nations people in general (Tatz & Adair, 2009). Further, the fact that Aboriginal players are primarily recruited from out-of-state is important because it suggests that AFL talent scouts and recruiters fail to see Victoria as an important space for Aboriginal recruitment. A potential consequence of this is the further perpetuation of the myth that ‘real Aboriginals live in the desert’ (Birch, 1993, 2005, 2010); a common misconception even today.

Alongside Ted Lovett (introduced in the previous chapter) there have been a number of celebrated Aboriginal Victorian football players who have played professional-level Australian (Rules) Football:

- Les Bamblett played from 1983 to 1988 and was recruited from the Lemnos Football Club;⁶²
- Robert Muir played from 1974 to 1978 and again in 1980 and 1984 and was recruited from the Ballarat Football Club;
- Doug Nicholls, perhaps one of the game’s most renowned Aboriginal players, was recruited through the inner-city Northcote Football Club into the Fitzroy Lions Football Club in 1932 (Tatz et al., 1998, p. 30);
- Joe Johnson, recruited in 1904, is widely celebrated as the first Aboriginal Victorian Football League (VFL) player;⁶³
- Albert ‘Pompey’ Austin, who played for the Geelong Football Club in 1872 (Judd & Hallinan, 2012, p. 9) is considered the first Aboriginal footballer to play senior Australian (Rules) Football in Victoria in the 19th century.

⁶¹ The term ‘barracker’ is used colloquially in Australia and refers to the act of giving support or affiliation to a particular sports person or team.

⁶² Outside of Shepparton near the border of Victoria and New South Wales.

⁶³ Joe Johnson is recognised as the AFL’s first Indigenous football player, though he never formally acknowledged his Aboriginal heritage. This debate is taken up by Barry Judd in the article *Joe Johnson: The ‘first’ Aborigine in the VFL* (2005).

This demonstrates two things, firstly that Victorian Aboriginal football players were visible within the game at certain points throughout its history and second, that this visibility has since faded. The lower recruitment levels of Victorian Aboriginal players into the AFL is not simply a result of lower levels of talent among Aboriginal Victorians and changes to recruitment from zoned catchment areas to the TAC Cup system⁶⁴ but can be attributed to the particular historical and cultural apartheid that Aboriginal Victorians have lived under since Victoria was settled in the early 1800s as exemplified by contemporary settler perceptions of Aboriginal people living in Victoria.

This chapter situates the lower recruitment levels of Aboriginal Victorian football players into the AFL as symptomatic of the settler colonial psyche, where Aboriginal people maintain an invisible presence within the settler colonial psyche in the pursuit of white belonging. When this invisible presence is challenged, for instance in Australian (Rules) Football, racism is used as a way of restoring white belonging. Australian (Rules) Football provides an important space for such a case study because it is celebrated as both a white space and as an Aboriginal space, as discussed further in the background section of this chapter.

From the VFL's early days on the football grounds of Melbourne, recruitment has changed significantly. For instance, the TAC Cup significantly delineates recruitment away from Victorian players, which means that recruiters are searching for talent in an increasingly smaller pool of players in semi-professional underage competitions around Australia. In a move away from 'the old metropolitan and country zoning recruitment method' (Sportingpulse, 2013), the VFL adapted to new competition where many young Victorian under-18 players made the transition to become senior AFL players. In 1992 the VFL consisted of five metropolitan teams and one country team, today the competition consists of 15 teams, 12 representing Victorian regions and one each in Tasmania, Australia's Capital Territory (ACT)/New South Wales (NSW) and Queensland. So, if Aboriginal football players are not visible within the TAC cup competition, as the primary path for recruitment into the AFL from

⁶⁴ AFL Victoria's TAC Cup, established in 1992, is an under-18 Australian (Rules) Football representative competition. Comprised of 12 teams, it is based on geographic regions throughout country and metropolitan Victoria. Today, alongside state leagues (SANFL in South Australia, WAFL in WA etc.), it is the main pathway for recruitment into the AFL. The 12 TAC Cup teams are: the Bendigo Pioneers, the Calder Canons, the Dandenong Stingrays, the Eastern Ranges, the Geelong Falcons, the Gippsland Power, the Greater Western Victoria Rebels, the Murray Bushrangers, the Northern Knights, the Oakleigh Chargers, the Sandringham Dragons, and the Western Jets.

Victoria, it makes sense that Victorian Aboriginal players are significantly under-represented in the AFL as well. In this way, there are fewer pathways for talented players in Victoria, and as the Aboriginal population in Victoria functions as invisible, it holds that it is much harder for Aboriginal Victorian football players to be seen compared with their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Essentially, the AFL has lost the Victorian Aboriginal community to other sports, like soccer and basketball, because the AFL and AFL Victoria have not fostered the relationship with Victoria's Aboriginal community. This is confirmed by comments made by Jason Mifsud during his presentation at the 2012 *Wellbeing Not Winning* symposium at RMIT in Melbourne. Mifsud argued that the AFL had lost the Aboriginal community in Victoria and stated that more Aboriginal Victorians played basketball and soccer than Australian (Rules) Football (Mifsud, 2012).

Until recently, despite the growth of the AFL into the conglomerate organisation that it is today, the number of Aboriginal Victorians recruited to play elite Australia (Rules) Football has been consistent at 2–3 players per decade. Furthermore, the majority of Aboriginal players recruited into the VFL and TAC Cup competition are not from Victoria. This is concerning given that the TAC Cup competition is the most prominent recruitment pathway into the AFL. Out of the 68 Aboriginal players listed on AFL team lists in 2013 just six were raised in Victoria (AFL: Development, 2013) and despite the fact that 10 of the 18 national league teams were based in Victoria, half played with out-of-state teams (AFL: Development, 2013). That number has improved in the last few years following the introduction of AFL Victoria's Indigenous programs and the Korin Gamadji Institute's (KGI) Laguntas program. KGI (a research partner introduced in more detail below) recognised that Aboriginal Victorian football players were not getting the same level of attention as Aboriginal players from other parts of Australia, and so created a pathways program to facilitate Aboriginal Victorian recruitment into the AFL.

The research field

The main focus of the fieldwork was to investigate Aboriginal player experiences of racism in Victoria. I focused my attention on speaking with Aboriginal players who played/ were playing in the VFL, the AFL, and/or played for an Aboriginal football team such as Rumbalara, the Fitzroy Stars and the Laguntas. Participants ranged in their experience of playing professional Australian (Rules) Football, from those playing recreationally to those hoping for a career in the AFL, to retired professional players. The

impact that player experiences of racism have on players was dependent on a number of factors and varied according to where the players lived, their sense of self and the level of cultural support they received. Participant experiences demonstrated the extent to which these factors influenced a player's likelihood of pursuing their AFL dream and of this dream coming true.

I interviewed 24 Aboriginal men and one Aboriginal woman across four organisations. The interviews focused on their experiences growing up in Victoria, playing/working within Australian (Rules) Football, and their interactions with Aboriginal Victoria and settler Victoria. The experiences of the participants that emerged through the interviews indicated the extent to which racism shapes the lives of Victorian Aboriginal people, both on and off the football field. Their concerns have ultimately guided this research from a focus on the ramifications that historical and contemporary representations of Aboriginal Victorians have to a project which positions racism and racial thinking as symptomatic of the settler colonial psyche in the pursuit of white belonging. The following section identifies individual stakeholders and, where appropriate, their affiliate organisations.

Individual stakeholders

Jason Mifsud

Jason Mifsud is a member of the Gundidjmara nation in South West Victoria. A former player and assistant coach with AFL teams St Kilda Football Club and Western Bulldogs, Mifsud was the first senior advisor of Indigenous and multicultural affairs for the AFL, a position he held at the time that I sat down with him. Today he is the executive director for Aboriginal Victoria in the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Ted Lovett

Uncle Ted Lovett, a Gundidjmara man and Stolen Generation survivor was one of three participants whose testimony was used for both case studies. Speaking specifically to his football career, Lovett was a talented footballer who played for the North Ballarat Roosters before being recruited to play in the VFL with the Fitzroy Lions for the 1963 and 1964 VFL seasons. Despite winning two Henderson Medals (best and fairest as voted by the umpires) with North Ballarat (the first he won whilst playing with Fitzroy), he played just nine seniors games before returning to his home side in Ballarat.

Murray Harrison

Uncle Murray Harrison (Uncle Murray) is a descendant of the Wotjobaluk people and is a Stolen Generation survivor. He played football for East Ballarat. Despite their similar stories of dispossession, a love of football and a life spent in Ballarat, Ted and Murray's experience of racism as told to me were completely different. Uncle Murray, preferring to talk of his familial experiences, his wife and children, was adamant that he never experienced any racism nor was treated differently in any way. Uncle Murray's unwillingness, or inability to reflect on aspects of his life can be considered a coping mechanism for dealing with the trauma he experienced as a child removed from family. It is not surprising that he would choose to focus on positive life experiences and accomplishments, rather than on experiences of structural racism and past incidents of racial vilification, especially with a stranger. My interview with Uncle Murray can be considered an important reminder of the ethical considerations that must be taken when interviewing individuals about their lived experiences.

AFL Victoria

Aaron Clark

Aaron Clark is a descendent of the Tjap whurrung people of the Gundidjmara nation and was born and raised in Framlingham.⁶⁵ A skilled footballer, Clark had a successful playing career spanning more than a decade and over 130 VFL seniors games. Clark played for the Geelong Falcons in the TAC Cup in 1999 before commencing an impressive VFL Seniors career, playing with the Box Hill Hawks in 2000, the Carlton Football Club in 2001, the North Ballarat Roosters from 2003–2007 and was senior playing coach with the North Ballarat City Football Club for the 2008 and 2009 seasons. Clark also played in the Northern Football League with the Fitzroy Stars from 2014–2016. When I interviewed him, Clark was AFL Victoria's Indigenous program manager, and a partner of the KGI's Laguntas program. Clark became managing director of Korin Gamadji in 2016.

Chris Johnson

Chris Johnson is a descendant of the Gundidjmara people. He grew up in the Melbourne outer-northern suburb of Jacana. He was recruited to the Fitzroy Lions shortly before the team merged with the Brisbane Bears to become the Brisbane Lions in 1996, he

⁶⁵ See figure 9 on page 157.

spent the majority of his professional career living in Brisbane. Johnson played 265 games including three premierships. When I sat down with Johnson, he was AFL Victoria's diversity talent manager and Laguntas head coach.

Dan Dowd

Born in the Gunai Kernai region of Gippsland, Dan Dowd is of the Noongar people of Western Australia. He was educated and grew up in Sale.⁶⁶ When I interviewed Dan, he was working alongside Clark and Johnson with AFL Victoria as Indigenous programs coordinator. As part of his role, Dowd worked with the Laguntas program.

Korin Gamadji's 'Laguntas' Program

The Korin Gamadji Institute (KGI), established in 2011, operates out of the Richmond Football Club, a mere 200 metres from the home of football, the MCG (or Melbourne Cricket Ground) in the Melbourne⁶⁷ inner-city suburb of Richmond. Also home to the Melbourne Indigenous Boy Transition School and the Wirrpanda Foundation, the Institute uses football to facilitate empowerment through the delivery of programs that help 'affirm identity and culture whilst creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth ages between 14–21 years' (Korin Gamadji Institute, 2018).

The Laguntas program offers young Aboriginal men between the ages of 16 and 19 the opportunity to further their development on and off the football field with a strong focus on improving their understanding of their cultural heritage. Supported by the AFL, KGI and AFL SportsReady,⁶⁸ the aim of the program is to further develop the pathway into the AFL competition for Aboriginal players. I attended the Laguntas second (of two) three-day training camps held in early August 2014. I spent a total of four days at Korin Gamadji Institute in July and August 2015. Alongside the interviews that I conducted with support staff I sat down with 12 of the Laguntas players. Because of their age they have been de-identified in this study.

The three-day camp provides participants an opportunity to meet other Aboriginal football players, participate in cultural activities, train with elite AFL football players and play an exhibition match against opposition teams including, the Western Jets Majak Daw Multicultural Squad.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ See figure 9 on page 157.

⁶⁷ See figure 9 on page 157.

⁶⁸ AFL SportsReady is a national, not-for-profit organisation aimed at helping young Australians develop careers through traineeships and education opportunities.

⁶⁹ The Western Jets are a TAC Cup side. Each year they run a program which engages with

Belinda Duarte (neé Jakiel)

Duarte is a descendant of the Wobjabaluk and Dja Dja Wurrung people with Celtic and Polish origins. She was born and raised in Ballarat and was able to provide insight into both case studies, due to her insight into both Ballarat and Aboriginal engagement in sport. In 2016 Belinda left her position as director with Korin Gamadji Institute and became the CEO of Culture Is Life, a not-for-profit organisation aimed at supporting cultural strength and the prevention of youth suicide.

Alex Splitt

Alex Splitt is a Gubbi Gubbi man. Born in Tennant Creek, Northern Territory, his family moved to Adelaide, South Australia when he was small. When I sat down with Splitt, he was KGI's chief operating officer and has since held similar positions at The Foundation for Young Australians and Aboriginal Housing Victoria. In 2017, Splitt became director of national programs at Culture Is Life.

Luke Murray

Luke is a Wamba Wamba and Yorta Yorta man from the Murray River. He lives on Dja Dja Wurrung country in the goldfields regional city of Bendigo. When I sat down with Luke in 2015, he was the Indigenous community engagement manager with KGI — a position he still holds.

Rumbalara Football Netball Club

Founded in 1997, the Rumbalara Football Netball Club (RFNC), nicknamed 'Rumba', is an Aboriginal-owned and operated sports club with wider benefits for the community, focusing on health and social support. The football club has played in the Murray League since 2006, but has cultural heritage that can be traced back to the early 20th century. Located in the northern Victorian country town of Shepparton⁷⁰, the league is associated with the Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative.

Paul Briggs

I spoke with Rumba's founding president Paul Briggs about his experiences operating an Aboriginal football club, engaging with the wider non-Aboriginal community in which the club is based, as well as the club's engagement with mainstream (non-

players from Melbourne's western metropolitan region aged between 15 and 18 with above average abilities in Australian (Rules) Football.

⁷⁰ See figure 9 on page 157.

Aboriginal) football clubs in the district. Briggs is a Yorta Yorta man based in Shepparton, he grew up on the banks of the Dungalla (Murray River) at Cummeragunja. Paul is a significant Aboriginal leader, who has worked tirelessly towards Aboriginal rights and advancement since the early 1970s.

Fitzroy Stars Football Club

The Fitzroy Stars is a long-running Aboriginal football club that operates out of Thornbury, 7 km north-east of Melbourne. Formed in 1970, the club has moved between different football leagues throughout Melbourne including the Metropolitan Football League and the Northern Metropolitan League. Disbanded in 1997, the club was reformed in 2008 as a part of the Northern Football League. The club fields senior and reserve teams in division 2 football. Their home games are played at Sir Douglas Nicholls Oval in Thornbury.

Damien Walker

Damien Walker is descended from the Lake Tyers⁷¹ mission mob. Walker had a promising career as a football player but played during a time when the league's eyes were focused on Aboriginal players from outside of Victoria. Although a talent to watch in the TAC Cup, Walker never played at the elite level. Since he commenced playing with the Fitzroy Stars in 2011, he has been one of the teams most consistent players. In 2018 Walker played division 1 football with the Port Melbourne Colts in the Southern Football Netball League (SFNL).

Chris Egan

Chris Egan is a Yorta Yorta man, he grew up in Shepparton and played for Rumbalara. Egan was recruited by the AFL team Collingwood Football Club as their first round draft pick in 2004. He played 27 games with Collingwood between 2005–2008.

Lionel Proctor

Lionel Proctor is a Gundidjmara man, he grew up in Lalor, a northern outer suburb of Melbourne. He played with the Richmond Football Club in the AFL between 1998–2001. After ten years playing with the Fitzroy Stars, Proctor retired in 2017.

⁷¹ See figure 9 on page 157.

Fieldwork findings

Throughout the fieldwork process, two broader trends emerged. Regardless of where a participant lived, all felt that non-Aboriginal people failed to recognise the place of Aboriginal Victorians within broader Aboriginal Australia both historically and today, including within the AFL, however the extent to which they felt visible depended on their geographical location. Players who lived near the borders of Victoria, i.e. closer to the coast or state borders between South Australia (SA) and NSW tended to have a stronger cultural identity and felt supported in their community, whilst participants from central Victoria, both the goldfields and adjacent farming districts, were often the only Aboriginal family, felt culturally isolated and did not feel supported by the broader community. This is further validated by two recent instances of racial vilification that occurred in Victoria's central and western goldfields districts. The Central Highlands and Ballarat Football League faced multiple incidences of racial vilification in 2014. Ballarat North football player Aaron Clarke (not the same Aaron Clark as interviewed for this thesis) was the target of a racist slur during a match against Smythesdale (20 minutes from Ballarat by car). That same year, under-17 player Matty was verbally abused during a game by the father of an opposition player. Also in 2014, Ted Lovett, was racially vilified by an opposition supporter whilst watching his grandson play football. He was attending a match between North Ballarat Football Club and Darley Football Club (a suburb of Bacchus Marsh, a 40-minute drive from Ballarat on the way to Melbourne).

The fact that the central and western goldfields district does not recognise the place of Aboriginal people within their communities is perhaps best explained by colonial and state policies that removed Aboriginal people to missions, government institutions and restricted their ability to live on traditional lands. As the previous case study chapter demonstrated, no established mission survived in Victoria's central district beyond 1901 (reserve land was set aside at Chepstowe in 1865) when the land was 'handed back to the Department of Lands, on the assumption that 'all the Aborigines of that district were dead' (I. Clark, 2008, p. 106). Victoria's established missions — Ebenezer, Lake Condah, Framlingham, Coranderrk and Ramahyuck — are each located in coastal and state border areas. As figure 10 (below) demonstrates, no such missions and reserves are located within central Victoria.

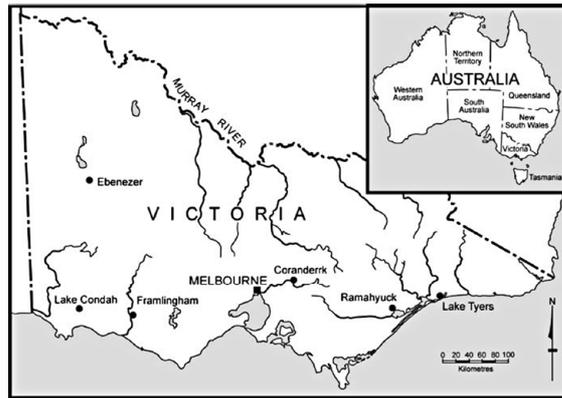


Figure 10: Map of Aboriginal Missions and Reserves in Victoria by Kara Rasmanis (printed in Lydon & Burns, 2010, p. 40)

The second trend that emerged revolved around instances of racism. Most players experienced some degree of racism either at school, in their community or in football. The extent to which racism was a problem in football at the lower level demonstrates that Aboriginal football players are visible to some degree within Victoria because they are seen as Aboriginal and vilified for it. This raises the question as to whether the lower recruitment level is based on their invisibility to recruiters, not being considered ‘Aboriginal enough’ or the fact that players are worn down by lower league racism and choose not to pursue a professional football career.

For the everyday Australian Football fan, the football field represents a space of cultural inclusion and might be considered a safe haven for Aboriginal people away from the burdens of race which operate in broader society, but the reality is far from that simple. Incidents between 2015–2016 are evidence of this. On Friday the 24th of May, in round 9 of the 2013 AFL season, a 13-year-old Collingwood supporter racially slurred Sydney Swans Aboriginal player Adam Goodes during a match between Collingwood and the Sydney Swans (Australian Broadcasting Corporation & Australian Associated Press, 2013). Somewhat ironically, this incident occurred during the AFL’s Indigenous round⁷². Over the 12 years playing professional football prior to the racial vilification incident Adam Goodes was a well-respected and celebrated football player (Gorman, 2011), with two Brownlow medals, he played 372 games and scored 464 goals (Sydney Swans, 2018). But gradually, as his fight against racism began to take centre stage, football fans turned against him, booing his triumphs and applauding his

⁷² The Indigenous Round is an annual AFL round recognising and celebrating Indigenous players and their cultures.

opponents (Hoffman, 2015; Scobie, 2015; Spooner & Gough, 2016; C. Wilson, 2018). It is as if football fans uniformly believed that so long as Goodes played well, and kept his Aboriginality out of it, he would be embraced, and if not he would be marked as a 'show pony' and verbally accosted by the barrackers, who claimed it not to be a matter of race but a question of his showmanship (Gorman et al., 2015). The booing, racism and inadequate response from the AFL (Wood, 2016) ultimately led to Goodes retirement from the AFL (Wood, 2015) in 2015.

The racism that Goodes faced following the 2013 racial vilification incident is indicative of the settler colonial psyche. For settler Australians, Adam Goodes' stance against racism in the AFL, both from the sidelines as well as within the governing body, reminded 'us' that racism is still a prominent part of Australian culture. As Barry Judd and Tim Butcher highlight:

Goodes reminded non-Aboriginal Australia that as First Nations peoples, Aboriginal peoples possess a compelling right to cultural difference that is based on the irrefutable historical fact that their occupation of the continent pre-dates the contemporary Australian State by thousands of years. In doing so, he reminded the overwhelmingly non-Aboriginal public of these historical facts and in response they booed and called for his deportation. (Judd & Butcher, 2016, p. 82)

In responding to crowd booing, Goodes did more than celebrate his cultural identity. By performing an Aboriginal war dance and throwing an imaginary spear to non-Aboriginal audiences he dared insert Aboriginal cultural meaning into the national game, *their* national game (Judd & Butcher, 2016, p. 70). His celebration provoked fear, anger and the uncanny. The colonial veil now thrown off bared the truth of Aboriginal dispossession and left settler Australians exposed to their own illegitimate claims to belonging both within the cultural heritage of football and the nation.

Part 2: Issues faced by Aboriginal people living in Victoria

The second part of this chapter focuses on issues faced by Aboriginal people living in Victoria as identified by participants. The first section focuses on racism as a major issue. Racism, including racial thinking, emerged as a significant part of this study's participants' lives. Racial thinking articulated through mainstream (white settler) perceptions of Aboriginal people living in Victoria, was identified as an important issue for participants, in addition to the issues faced both off-field (in their lives outside of football) and on-field (in their lives within football)

Mainstream perceptions of Aboriginal people living in Victoria

There are a number of issues that affect Victoria's Aboriginal communities, which go some way to explaining the lower recruitment levels of Aboriginal Victorian football players from Victoria. The perception that 'real blackfellas' don't live in Victoria is a commonly-held misconception, which reinforces and contributes to the ongoing effects of colonisation for Aboriginal peoples living in Victoria, and contributes to experiences of lateral violence (Australian Human Rights Commission & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, 2011). Unable to recognise a place for themselves within contemporary Victorian society, Aboriginal Victorians face social disadvantage, historical trauma as well as racism and cultural disadvantage.

In relation to this, ex-VFL player and AFL Victoria's Indigenous programs manager⁷³, Aaron Clark identifies the expectation that Australia's broader non-Aboriginal population has about what constitutes 'authentic' and 'traditional' Aboriginal culture and states that sport is a leading contributor to this misrepresentation. He explains that:

[The AFL has] played a role in this [misconception] in terms [of] the way we [have] represented our Aboriginal communities, and this is a big aspect of Australia's tourism. At the Sydney Olympics, the first thing they promote is Aboriginal people running around the desert, playing the didgeridoo⁷⁴ and wearing the lap-lap⁷⁵ — that doesn't represent our population [in Victoria] that well.

Clark highlights that an essentialised representation of Aboriginal people as 'running around the desert, playing the didgeridoo and wearing a lap-lap' does not represent Victoria's Koori community. Considering Victoria's cooler climate a possum-skin cloak might be considered a more appropriate representation of Victoria's Aboriginal heritage. The impact that essentialised representations of Aboriginal cultural identity as pan-Aboriginal is highlighted by Dan Dowd. He demonstrates the extent to which broader societal prejudice affects Victoria's Aboriginal community, as well as how this plays out in terms of funding and recruitment:

⁷³ At the time of interview.

⁷⁴ A didgeridoo is an Aboriginal wooden wind instrument, thought to have derived from the Northern Territory, and is one of the world's oldest musical instruments.

⁷⁵ The lap-lap is a loincloth worn in Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific. More recently, a red lap-lap has become iconographic of pre-invasion Aboriginal cultural clothing.

A lot of people [...] say Indigenous people just get heaps of stuff given to them. The common thing I hear is that, 'they don't work, all they do is get Centrelink, Centrelink looks after them', 'my kid can't get this cos he's white' blah blah blah and they saw the Laguntas program as that same sort of thing. So, our biggest thing was trying to explain to non-indigenous communities that the kids need this because they're not progressing through the talent pathway as it is because they don't have that sort of support network, so our main thing is creating that support network for these kids because we know that they've got talent, and there's got to be a reason why before last year only one kid got drafted from a Koori community in the last three years before that and then with the implementation of Kickstart⁷⁶ and Laguntas we had three boys all go in the one draft, so its proving to get results and I think that makes the case for these programs a whole lot easier to argue for.

Both AFL and KGI players and management staff identified broader non-Aboriginal perceptions of Aboriginal communities living in Victoria as a key issue faced by these communities. As Jason Mifsud, explains:

When you look at Gundidjmarra and you look at say from Framlingham through to Lake Condah and to the Gariward, so you look at that triangle, that's as rich and as diverse and as dynamic as any Aboriginal region in the country. You got this discreet Aboriginal community out in Lake Condah where you've got the fish traps to Gariward, which is the Grampians, and the story and the Dreamtime that comes with that, you've got mountains, rivers and coastland — It's as dynamic as you get in this country and I've been traveling the country for 20 years. And now I'm biased because it's my Country but I'm not blindly biased by nature of saying that there's no more diverse and dynamic region in Australia that represents the diversity of Aboriginal Australia.

⁷⁶ Kickstart is a state-wide program in Victoria aimed at male and female Aboriginal participants under the age of 15. The program uses Australian football as a vehicle for participation, education health and wellbeing, employment and talent pathways.

Similarly, Aaron Clark highlights the essentialised view that non-Aboriginal peoples have of Aboriginal communities and explains how this translates into a lack of cultural respect:

All cultures evolve. When you go to the Pacific Islands and they're playing ukulele to their traditional dances. They didn't come up with ukulele, all cultures evolve around food and new customs, that's culture. For some reason, Aboriginal culture has got to be put in this box. Yet, Italian culture and any other culture in the world is [allowed to] adapt. Look at China — their culture is as strong as ever and adapting all the time and even our president (of the AFL) will jump in [to speak] Chinese, get up and take on some of the mannerisms to greet them. Yet, when you walk into an Aboriginal community, you don't say, 'I'm going to put on a bit of ochre or put on a possum skin cloak', that's not replicated and that respect isn't there.

The significance of this point highlights that despite the fact that the appropriation of First Nations cultures by the dominant culture is derivative of settler colonial and imperialist processes, Aboriginal Victorian culture is not considered as 'worthy' of appropriation, read here as cultural respect.

For many participants, the inability for broader society to recognise a place within the AFL for Aboriginal Victorian football players was an extension of the way that mainstream Australia perceived, or failed to perceive Victoria's Aboriginal communities as 'present'. Reflecting on the ways that non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal communities failed to acknowledge Aboriginal Victorian communities, one participant (Elliot) stated that:

We do live here and we are a part of that [Aboriginal Australian] culture.

In an article published in *The Age* in 2012, (now retired) Essendon Victorian Aboriginal player Nathan Lovett-Murray recognised the 'dying out' myth as contributing to the contemporary invisibility of Aboriginal Victoria and identified how it played out in his everyday interactions:

There is this view that there are no indigenous people in Victoria because we were all wiped out and so they all come from Northern Territory or Western

Australia [...] That many people, even some people at my club, think I am from Darwin. We get a bit overlooked. (Gleeson, 2012)

For AFL's head of diversity⁷⁷, Jason Mifsud, the misconception that Aboriginal culture belongs in the north-western parts of Australia remains an issue within the AFL:

I've just come back from the Kimberley and somebody said, 'That would have been a great cultural experience'. People don't say that here in Victoria. If a whitefella⁷⁸ come from Sydney, come to Melbourne, another whitefella wouldn't say, 'That would have been a great cultural experience'. If they did say that, they would have meant the bars, and the cafes and the laneways. They wouldn't have meant it about blackfellas⁷⁹.

For Laguntas player, Kaiden the essentialised perception of Aboriginality determined his chances of making it into the AFL as a Victorian Aboriginal player:

[You] don't get [your] chance down here being a Victorian Aboriginal, so you have to go to the Northern Territory to [...] really grab your chance. That's really the main thing that there's not many of us down here [...] that's the perception that they [the non-indigenous community] have.

This concern is further validated by Aaron Clark who highlights the consequence that the invisibility of Victoria's Aboriginal communities have on recruitment into TAC Cup sides:

I think that's changing, we implemented the Laguntas program this year highlighting all the boys that sat outside of the TAC Cup competition. We had 40 Indigenous boys 16 to 18, only 13 of those boys run TAC Cup lists the rest sit outside of it.

Clark speaks of the surprise that TAC Cup teams have at the competitiveness of the Laguntas side and highlights how normalised this invisibility is for Victoria's Aboriginal communities when it is assumed that players are visiting from the Northern Territory:

⁷⁷ At time of interview.

⁷⁸ A contemporary Aboriginal English term meaning non-Aboriginal person and or culture.

⁷⁹ A contemporary Aboriginal English term referring to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and/or cultures.

We played TAC cup teams and we were super competitive and they were like, 'Wow, where did these boys come from?' Even when the boys badge up and walk around in their AFL tops down the main streets of Melbourne they're like, 'You boys from Northern Territory or where you guys from?'.
'Nah Nah we all be Victorian', it's really broken...

Kaiden and Aaron Clark highlight the role that essentialism plays in mainstream perceptions of Aboriginality, a point confirmed by Stella Coram who argues that the 'celebration of Indigenous athletes, as representative of Indigenous culture and society, is paradoxically an indicator ... of the persistence of race thinking and practice' (Coram, 2007). The inability of settler society to equate Victoria with Aboriginal player talent highlights the validity of Coram's claims. Aboriginal people are invited into mainstream settler society, but only if they meet the criteria for 'authentic Aboriginal' (Coram, 2007).

The complexity of this demand is highlighted further when we consider that the 'vast majority of Australians come to 'know' and 'understand' Indigenous people through the various representations constructed for their consumption by non-Indigenous people' (Hallinan & Judd, 2009b). Through the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism Aboriginal Australians are repositioned in particular ways that serve to reinforce the status quo. As such, when Aboriginal Australians are celebrated within the public sphere, this visibility is conditional and restrictive.

According to Jason Mifsud, the AFL is all too aware that there is a missed opportunity within Victoria to recruit Aboriginal players:

And we're still a relevant part of the community and a prospering part of the community, a young community. When you look at the age demographics of our community here, it's not dissimilar nationally, but we're a young community. So, what it was for the players and the footy club was just that realisation that I think they've come to terms with what they missed out on knowing in terms of what's been in their own community.

Aaron Clark highlights the importance of social support networks for players and believes that this is a significant barrier for players coming through country league football, where cultural awareness among the non-Aboriginal community is limited:

You don't have those close networks like you should have and that's one of the barriers I think country Victoria have and I'll say quite often I've experienced myself, I've seen a number of my family members experience it and still today it happens where from a lack of understanding and knowledge and ignorance from just some general population in these small communities. Our people have constantly been pushed to the fringes.

Clark identifies the impact that colonial processes of elimination, removal and relocation have had for contemporary Aboriginal Victoria. For Clark this impact plays out through under-representation and misrepresentation in country Victoria. Although Clark identifies racism as reflective of ignorance, I would argue that by claiming ignorance, settler Australians excuse themselves from being accountable. In this respect, ignorance functions within the settler colonial psyche to deny Aboriginal sovereignty and reinforce white belonging.

Part 3: On the playing field: Issues faced by Aboriginal football players in Victoria within football

There are a number of factors that contribute to a football player's outcomes on the football field, such as finance, nutrition, support and confidence. Whether or not a player has each of these factors in their lives plays a tremendous role in the success of the player. Despite the fact that many non-Aboriginal football players experience these same issues, participant data demonstrates that these factors are overwhelmingly present in the day-to-day lives of Aboriginal Victorian football players. Regardless of socio-economic, cultural and other factors, which vary from Aboriginal player to Aboriginal player, there are a number of higher-level factors that shape the relationship the AFL has with Aboriginal players. If these issues occur at the highest level of Australian (Rules) Football, where teams are held to a much higher level of scrutiny, it follows that similar issues would also occur at lower levels of the game, especially since sledging has been considered a part of the game over much of the 20th century.⁸⁰

A number of participants held management roles within their sports organisation. These participants highlighted the role that misconceptions about the Aboriginal population have on Aboriginal player outcomes within the AFL. For Aaron

⁸⁰ Sledging is a term used in sport to describe the practice of verbally intimidating an opposing side player. The purpose of which is to weaken the opponent's concentration, causing them to make mistakes or underperform (Kerr, 2007). Sledging is still a part of football from both players and spectators (Ikonomou, 2016).

Clark, this extended to how players were managed on the field and the positions they were recruited to fill:

Look, no doubt it's changing and it shouldn't be okay and this is where — when we [have] boys identify [as Indigenous] and play football. It's still like as a small forward or you haven't got any endurance because you are Indigenous and you can't play in other positions apart from being at the forward line. You get pigeonholed.

Similarly, Paul Briggs from Rumbalara, identifies the invisibility of Victoria's Aboriginal population as a key factor in terms of the relationship between the Shepparton-based Aboriginal sports club and the AFL:

It's that stereotypical image, we've really struggled with our relationship with AFL, and with AFL clubs.

Briggs explains that such misconceptions are at the core of the way the AFL operates with the Aboriginal community:

The AFL still [have] a long way to go on this issue. And AFL clubs, Rumbalara has tried partnerships with Essendon Football Club and Collingwood Football Club, the clubs don't feel they get any sort of positive feedback from their relationship with Rumbalara.

Briggs also identifies what he thought were the key issue that the AFL have in terms of Aboriginal recruitment:

You're picking a bloke up out of his environment, swap him in here, get him to do some tricks and then he's going back home.

This is demonstrated nowhere more clearly than with circumstances surrounding Liam Jurrah's dismissal from the AFL in 2012 . Liam Jurrah, known within the football community as 'the Warlpiri Wizard', the 'Jurrahcane', the 'Warlpiri Warrior' and 'the Cougar' grew up in Yuendumu, 300 km north-west of Alice Springs. Jurrah is known as the first 'initiated' (Ellen, 2015) Aboriginal football player from a remote central Australian community to play in the AFL. Recruited by the Melbourne Demons in 2009, Jurrah won the 2010 AFL Mark of the Year (MacKinnon, 2011) and kicked 81 goals over

36 games. His recruitment into the AFL and subsequent playing years is the stuff of dreams for AFL commentators and media personalities:

For several years, Liam Jurrah was [the AFL's] poster child. 'His story is worthy of a Hollywood scriptwriter,' said Demetriou⁸¹ at [the] launch [Bruce Hearn MacKinnon's *The Liam Jurrah Story: From Yuendumu to the MCG*] in 2011. But allegations of machete attacks and drink driving don't sit too well with the AFL's own burgeoning band of scriptwriters. Having squeezed every last promotional drop out of Jurrah they recently pinpointed the precise moment when he became a binge drinker. 'It's late at a night in Shanghai,' whispered the exclusive on afl.com.au, 'Liam Jurrah is in a nightclub taking a swig from a bottle of Moet...' (Horn, 2013)

Jonathon Horn encapsulates the central issues well: the limited ways in which Aboriginal people are 'allowed' to operate within mainstream society, what happens when an Aboriginal person goes against this as well as the parallels between the AFL's and the Australian government's management of Aboriginal people. Similarly, Mifsud contends that 'in the eyes of some football clubs, it appeared that indigenous players were either 'too black [from remote outback] or not black enough' from places such as Warrnambool, and neither group could be drafted' (Gleeson, 2012).

Another incident highlights the impact that everyday prejudice plays within AFL recruitment. Former Adelaide Crows recruiting manager, Matt Rendell, told the AFL's community engagement manager, Jason Mifsud, and national multicultural program manager, Ali Fahour, that he 'wouldn't recruit an indigenous player unless he had at least one white parent' (Leinert, 2012). Rendell was forced to resign after details from his meeting with Mifsud and Fahour came to light. In addition to Rendell's 'discriminatory policy of screening potential Aboriginal draftees' (Rucci, 2012), Matt Rendell's 'plan' 'called for 30 under-16 indigenous players to be sent to Melbourne on scholarships two years before they could be drafted by AFL clubs' (Rucci, 2012). Rendell said the comment 'was a regrettable line in a long conversation with Mifsud on how to combat what he called the 'attrition rate' of Indigenous footballers being lost to the AFL' (Leinert, 2012). Rendell's comments are indicative of everyday attitudes towards Aboriginal Australians and speak to a much larger issue: that of the imperial need to 'white wash' Aboriginal Australians.

⁸¹ Former VFL player Andrew Demetriou was the chief executive officer (CEO) of the Australian Football League (AFL) from 2003–2014.

In 1993, then Collingwood president, Allan McAllister, stated that, 'as long as [Aboriginal football players] behaved themselves like white folks off the field, they would be admired and respected' (Gorman et al., 2015; Judd & Butcher, 2016; Klugman & Osmond, 2013; Tatz, 1995a, p. 154). Obviously, much has changed within the AFL since McAllister made this comment. The year 1995 saw the introduction of the AFL's vilification laws, and on behalf of the Australian people then-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said 'sorry' to Aboriginal Australians and acknowledged the Stolen Generations in 2008. It is important though to consider public comments such as McAllister's as a reflection of a society with deeply rooted racist and hegemonic belief systems including those of Australian nationalism and national identity.

As demonstrated by McAllister's comments, Aboriginal footballers have long been asked to behave like white people off the field but are required to perform like 'savages' on the field so long as they don't make non-Aboriginal people uncomfortable. From this perspective Aboriginal footballers are recruited for their 'wow factor' and are thus viewed and treated as different to Anglo-Australian and white players, a point confirmed by Alison Nelson:

[C]urrent attitudes and discourses about Indigenous young people and sport are steeped in Australia's colonial history. Historically, the positioning of Indigenous people in 'Western' sports was as the 'exotic other' rather than as 'real' players. (Nelson, 2009)

In this regard, Aboriginal success is measured by how well Aboriginal people 'fit into' the mainstream world, where 'whiteness' is equal to success. Aboriginal people are not just asked to succeed but to succeed in a 'white' way. The following section identifies racism and racist thinking as representing a significant barrier to AFL recruitment for Aboriginal football players.

Barriers to success:

Aaron Clark identified the lack of representation of Victoria's diverse Aboriginal communities, both within the football domain and outside of it, as a significant barrier to success for Aboriginal Victorian football players. He acknowledged that despite Melbourne's cultural diversity, the Koori community's diversity is not represented alongside of it. He explains:

We [are] lost amongst the crowd [in Melbourne where] there's more diversity of culture. You walk around here you see every colour, every

background, every nationality. When you go to country areas, go to Mildura, Bairnsdale, Warrnambool, Shepparton and Echuca there are strong Aboriginal presences in those towns.

Here, Clark is referring to the dominant Anglo-Australian settler population in regional townships and communities in Victoria, such as Mildura, Bairnsdale, Warrnambool and Echuca⁸². Despite the 'visibility' of Aboriginal peoples within these spaces compared to more diverse and multicultural areas of Victoria such as Melbourne, Clark states that Aboriginal communities in regional Victoria are still peripheral and that the relationship between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community is still difficult:

Look they're strained relations[hips] at best I think, you['ve] only got to look at the law and justice systems that have been in place, [as well as] the number of Aboriginal men in incarceration from those communities, [you] got to look at the health statistics and the school attendance that show the strained relationships. Our people have constantly [been] pushed to the fringes.

Despite the fact that Aboriginal heritage and Aboriginal people are present within Victorian country regions, there is little-to-no recognition of this fact reflected in education, tourism and historical narratives nor an active engagement within the community, thus reflecting an invisible presence. When heritage and community are represented it is drowned-out by popular and mainstream narratives, which celebrate and emphasise settler heritage (as chapters four and five demonstrated). This chapter investigates the consequences of this reality and explores how the lack of recognition affects recruitment trends at the elite level of Australian (Rules) Football.

A second barrier that Aboriginal Victorian football players face, that Clark highlighted, is the culture set within the AFL around the role that Aboriginal players fill at the professional level. Clark argues that this culture is one inherently shaped by institutional racism:

[The AFL's response to racism] gets clouded by other people's greater historical agendas, like Eddie McGuire was a classic case. The first interview he'd done after making that comment about Goodes, he said, 'Oh it was a slip of the tongue, it was taken out of context'. But I actually watched this

⁸² See figure 9 on page 157.

old Marngrook⁸³ tape with Allen McAllister, the former Collingwood President, who said those comments about Nicky Winmar: ‘So long as [Aborigines] behaved themselves like white folks off the field, they would be admired and respected’ on the field. His first interview he said, ‘It was a slip of the tongue’. Now, here’s Eddie McGuire, 20 years later, saying the exact same thing, ‘It was a slip of the tongue!’

The Eddie McGuire example demonstrates that unless there is a significant cultural shift at the higher level within the AFL, Aboriginal football players will still face discrimination. This cultural shift is one that Australia, more generally must also face.

From a management standpoint, club leaders felt that cultural safety was integral to the on-field success of Aboriginal football players. Aaron Clark, who has been a part of KGI since its inception in 2012, has seen the way the program brings out the players’ confidence:

Oh! That affirmation stuff. The boys walk 10 feet tall, that’s a point of difference for our programs and why our programs are so crucial because it gives the [boys] opportunities [to play alongside other Indigenous boys]. [Whereas they might be the only] Indigenous kid at the footy club [or] at the school. The pressures of being Indigenous and all the things that come with it and being the ‘one’ where you’re the minority in a group.

Recognising the lower recruitment levels of Aboriginal Victorian football players, KGI’s Laguntas program has provided Aboriginal Victorian football players a platform for visibility and support, but also provided participants with the opportunity to connect with other Aboriginal players. Head coach, Chris Johnson reflects on his own pathway into the AFL, through the TAC Cup:

When I was coming through TAC Cup with the Northern Knights, I can only recall two Indigenous players that I come across. One myself and the other one was Justin Murphy, and I didn’t come across any other Indigenous players in the two years that I played there. I’ve never seen another Indigenous come through. I knew David Wirrpanda but never

⁸³ The Marngrook Footy Show is a sports entertainment panel show that provides an Aboriginal perspective on the AFL. The show focuses on Aboriginal contributions to football. Launched for television in 2007, The Marngrook Footy Show first aired for radio in 1997. It was adapted to television in 2007 and airs on NITV/SBS.

actually come across him. I knew that he was on the Eastern's list but I'd moved onto the AFL for a while by then. Once they sold [the idea to be a part of the Laguntas], I was more than happy to be involved and give the kids the opportunity because I'm one of the rare ones, I was the earliest one to come through the TAC Cup in its first and second year. And then come out the other end being drafted and having a reasonable football career.

Johnson's statement is important because it demonstrates that the ability for Aboriginal Victorian football players to progress through to the AFL has been significantly restricted with the introduction of the TAC Cup and provides one explanation as to why we have seen so few Victorian Aboriginal football players make it to professional football. So, even if an Aboriginal Victorian football player is able to get to training and buy the gear, if that player isn't picked for TAC Cup sides then recruitment is unlikely.

Ex-players and football staff identified the fractured relationship between the AFL and lower leagues as a problem and demonstrated that the issues filtered down from the AFL. Despite the talent within the Aboriginal football community in Victoria, the AFL looks to Aboriginal football players outside of Victoria. Paul Briggs speaks to the issue of recruiting Aboriginal players from remote communities:

Yes, well, that was a real challenge. You're picking a bloke up out of his environment, swap him in here, get him to do some tricks and then he's going back home. Yes, you can pick a Liam Jurrah but you can't come to Rumbalara but that's nothing against Liam.

Briggs explains the strained relationship that Rumbalara has with the AFL:

We're still with the Murray's. As I said, we're starting our 18th year this year as an affiliate club. We've been in the Murray now since 2006. It's still tense, and I don't feel that the AFL can relate to us, as a club. I think if we can identify a talent. Then it can look at that talent, but as a club they're finding it very difficult to understand how to communicate with us. How to assist with resourcing issues with us. We're still very vulnerable. We don't have the sort of economic profile in our community to drive with. We don't have the businesses. The Aboriginal businesses, that can get behind us as a sponsor and build social and economic networks. It's so related to the issues around school retention, and jobs, and social inclusion or social

exclusion. How that operates in country towns. There's a lot of class consciousness issues, about Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal people. People really don't feel that they have anything in common with Aboriginal people to want to socialise. I think that's a real challenge. It's not just about what goes out on the ground. What happens out there it's what happens off the ground. We took 14 years or thereabouts to convince businesses, that it was okay to put your brand along with your business brand, alongside Aboriginal communities. That it wouldn't be detrimental. The jury's still out on that as to whether or not that's sustainable or — But we do know businesses that got a lot of negative feedback from their peers for associating their business with Aboriginal communities. And players know this. Kids know this.

For Aaron Clark, it is the culture of the AFL that is the problem, where 'old attitudes die hard':

That's where we are. We're caught in a time warp. And unfortunately, a lot of people that are involved in the industry come from an age where these things were acceptable. It wasn't so long ago, the '90s were pretty rife. It's not that long ago now. A lot of the people and coaches in our game played in the '90s. I commend those people that have been brave enough to come out and say, 'Okay look, I said a few things and I got it wrong. I want to learn more and understand more,' but it's the other guys that are uncomfortable with it, they're more uncomfortable with themselves than the Aboriginal blokes are.

Clark identifies the important role that the AFL could play in educating the wider community about Aboriginal culture in Victoria as well as identifying the importance of cultural awareness within the AFL:

I think some ways you alleviate that is to constantly have the reflection in our industry of our communities which we still getting better at. That's multicultural and Indigenous as well and still there's not people like myself in the roles or in roles influential with AFL clubs, we're still going to find that these hurdles exist because it's one to educate people in those positions and for them to have empathy and understanding but it's a whole

new realm when you actually have Indigenous people in those roles. You can't teach someone what it feels like to be Aboriginal, you can't teach someone what it feels like to be in a minority and be segregated into feel oppressed by the systems of the world. Sometimes you need some people look forward to that way and you need people from that community, you need those local champions to move up through industry.

Damien Walker also identifies the potential role that the AFL could play in increasing Aboriginal recruitment in Victoria:

And if you can put a cap on them sort of a thing and get them and steer them in the right direction, you get good things out of them. Pretty much putting time into them, where back when I was coming through the ranks there was no time. Yes, I was. I started off with Western Jets when I was like 14 and then came through the TAC Cup when I was 17, and then because I got lost in the white community I fell behind and then started hanging out with my mates and things like that.

Briggs explains how Rumbalara has challenged the way that the non-Aboriginal community thinks about the place of Aboriginal people outside of the creative arts:

I think it's the social stuff, it's the arts space that allows people to communicate differently. I think that's what the footy and the netball bring about and have challenged the ... social norms [and expectations]. [Rumbalara has] made people feel uncomfortable when they have to question their own [thoughts and ask] 'Am I racist or not? ... Why do I feel uncomfortable about them coming into my space?' ... The Aboriginal club will go to the township, it will go to Numurkah, it will go to Echuca, it will go to Deniliquin and those towns are, for the first time, opening — and are forced to — open their doors to the Aboriginal community in a hospitable way.

Briggs's insights demonstrate the level of resistance that many Victorian townships have about interacting with an Aboriginal sports club. In this sense, playing for a sports club like Rumbalara requires an enormous amount of strength and resilience from the players. Briggs talks about the struggle to get clubs to come to the Rumbalara home

ground in Shepparton. Briggs believes the hesitation stems from historically rooted racism:

They do but they come under sufferance and the hospitality — it's not as easy for us to go to them. Why wouldn't it be like that? That's history. That's the manifestation of history in generational patterns of behaviour. Why wouldn't it be like that because the issues of cultural competency and the value and rights of Indigenous people has never been addressed.

For Rumbalara, one of the struggles for acceptance has come about because of their 'perceived' unwillingness to take conventional team colours. This reflects the mainstream expectation that Indigenous peoples must assimilate into Anglo-Australian traditions and cultural attitudes, as stated by Briggs:

Even got to a point where people say well, our colours are our Aboriginal colours; the red, black and yellow. the royal blue which is about river and sky, and — so, we haven't taken a mainstream team colour like Essendon or Richmond colours or Melbourne colours...we keep our own identity. Non-Aboriginal people will struggle with that, so we're inviting more of the racist attitudes from team members.

Cultural isolation:

A further barrier for success was identified as cultural isolation. Many players felt isolated in their communities, where they were one of a handful of Aboriginal people or the only Aboriginal family in the community, at school or at the football club. The significance of connecting with other Aboriginal Victorian football players was clear in the way that participants spoke about their sense of belonging, confidence and team camaraderie playing with the Laguntas team, as expressed by Matty:

I'd never been in any Indigenous programs and then came down the last year for the first time. It was uncomfortable at first but then all of a sudden it was the best thing that happened really. You feel better, cos you know I don't think I've ever played in a team with another Aboriginal boy, 'cept for the carnivals maybe. It's great.

Similarly, one participant, Callan, described his frustration at having lost his connection to culture:

There is more culture over there, there is no culture in Shep'.⁸⁴ There's a tiny bit. There is a dance group of about four boys ... six boys in Shep', they're my age. I don't know of any adult dance groups [apart from] like Gundidjmara Warriors. There is none of them, not enough culture.

For Callan, football and being a part of the Laguntas program was a way of connecting to culture:

I think we're born to play it. It's our sport. I don't know, for me, I don't know much about the grounds we play on in Shep', but here, I think if you get rid of all this shit, all these buildings, it's a big Corroborree⁸⁵ ground. Campfires, Marngrook. It feels more to Aboriginal people, it makes you feel special. It's your sport. Magic.

Callan spoke of how the Laguntas program had helped give him the confidence to celebrate his culture:

Being around these boys, these players it's the best thing that has happened to me in a long time, by far. It's the best thing and the REAL program — the camps. I've been involved with that and everything and ever since that my confidence has just gone up. Like I ran an assembly. For the School.
Like I ran an assembly about Aboriginal [sovereignty]!

Another player, Jax spoke of how the Laguntas program gave players the confidence to connect with culture:

Yes, most of the boys will probably agree to this, it gives you a sense of belonging and you can say that just brings out the leadership in some people and some of the boys especially and it connects you with your brother boys. It drags people to get more of an understanding of their culture. When they go home there's some boys of colour that don't really regularly hang out with Aboriginal boys and they didn't have a connection to their culture before here. Being around the boys will probably drive them to get more of an understanding of their culture.

⁸⁴ A colloquial shortening of 'Shepparton'.

⁸⁵ Corroboree is the Anglicised version of the Aboriginal word, *Caribberie*, which refers to the performance of songs and dances and connotes a celebration.

For many players, the Laguntas program has provided a platform for visibility to AFL and TAC Cup recruiters:

These programs are really good. It gives people that don't get an opportunity an opportunity to show [spectators and recruiters] their skills and how we work together and stuff like that. It's obviously really good because it gives confidence to younger Aboriginal players that they can do this and this is what it is to be in an elite program. It's, obviously, a really big step to come forward in football. (Billy)

Dan Dowd (AFL Victoria), spoke about the opportunity that the program created for players to connect to each other and learn more about their cultural heritage in a safe and supportive environment:

Yeah, it's massive, and you can see it with the kids who have missed that, like we have a lot of kids who come in and may not even know which mob they're from, so, like they know whose family and who's not and that kinda stuff and its funny once you start getting all the boys talking, is they find out they might be second or third cousins with another boy who they've never met, and this kid can now help him discover about their own culture, because they're part of the same mob. It's quite easy for culture to get lost, and that's something throughout the community in Victoria as a whole, it's just, our main aim is to not let it happen, and as you can see it's just growing with programs like Laguntas, and our under 15 one's the same, and our female one's the same, there's a very strong cultural component to it.

As much as KGI's Laguntas program is about football, the program uses football as a way of reinforcing their focus on cultural safety, building career pathways and confidence, as Dan Dowd highlights:

It's the off-field stuff that's more important to us than the on-field stuff, because we know the kids can play, there's not going to be a whole lot you can do over three days to make them [...] a better player but there's a lot you can do to help them off [the field], so, that's our main target with it all. You give them that support base amongst each other as well and you bring them into stuff like this, the boys come together really well over camps like this, which is something that in the mainstream talent path they don't get,

because they don't have that feeling of camaraderie and all that and once again it comes back to being the one black kid in the school sort of thing ... a lot of them don't know how to deal with that and how to be strong with their identity which is what we try to teach them.

Belinda Duarte, articulated how closely-linked cultural safety and confidence are for players. For these players, cultural safety cannot exist without them feeling accepted by the wider non-Aboriginal community:

I look at family and I look at community and I think, 'What are the critical things that hold them back?' It's the fear of not being valued or the depth of hurt that comes with criticism. And that could be racial and it might not be racial. Sport can build your confidence but at an elite level, it can actually flip things on its head as well. And actually, unless you're facilitated in a way which is really healthy about your growth, it can erode your confidence because your measure of self is about this external identity rather than your measure of yourself [being] measured by your behaviours in your commitment to an aspiration [and] not necessarily [by] the external result.

Not only does Duarte speak to the importance of cultural safety, she highlights the crucial role that cultural safety plays in the pathway to success.

Damien Walker's story highlights the importance of cultural safety, the ongoing and lasting effect of cultural isolation (as a direct result of processes of colonisation) and the importance of feeling supported by the wider community. Damien grew up in Braybrook, in Melbourne's Western suburbs, which he describes as, 'a pretty rough area' defined by socio-economic disadvantage. Damien knew that he was Aboriginal, but growing up in Melbourne's inner-west without a strong sense of what his heritage meant, both culturally and in terms of racism and prejudice, he felt isolated:

In one case, it was good because everyone knew me, everyone knew me.

But in a case too, a lot of the men knew I was 'the' blackfella. And I was getting accused of things that I didn't even know about it. And being young too you don't understand. It was pretty hard.

Raised predominantly by his adoptive grandparents and his single mother, Damien explains that football became a place where he could get away from the stresses of his

life. Walker played for the Western Jets at the age of 14 and as a 17-year-old, Walker made it into the TAC Cup system. He also played for the Bendigo Bomber, Werribee Tigers as well as the Richmond Football Club and Essendon Football Club's VFL sides. Despite demonstrating talent, Walker was not picked up for any AFL lists. He states that:

It was at a time where Aboriginals were not recognised. They were recognised but they didn't understand them so they weren't, they were scared, because they weren't good enough at understanding the people so for me trying to get into the league and that was a lot harder than the other boys coming in but now, today, it's gotten a bit different for the younger generation because everyone's recognised that, gee — the boys can play, you know what I mean? And if you can put a cap on them sort of a thing and get them and steer them in the right direction, you get good things out of them. Pretty much putting time into them, where back when I was coming through the ranks there was no time.

For Walker, the frustration of not being recognised lead him to give up:

I got lost [amongst] the white community [so] I fell behind [with my football] and then started hanging out with my mates and things like that.

Walker describes the inequalities he faced compared to non-Aboriginal peers:

I had to work double [as hard to be respected and to be seen] ... then I had to work extra hard to prove myself that I was better than them to play footy so being so young it was a lot on my shoulders. And I felt that I done all the hard work and done the right things and then I got let down a little bit. So, I just walked away from it for a bit, then I came back a year later.

When Walker returned to the TAC Cup the following year, and again failed to be recruited, it was clear that being picked up came down to the colour of his skin.

It was during that time frame again that they weren't recruiting Aboriginal boys. I mean, had to tell us about everything else and but they just picked the colour of the skin. You don't like to think that that's the case, and I'm pretty thick-skinned. I grew up with — my mum was adopted by English

people and she lost her contact with her mum and that. So, I got brought up by poms⁸⁶.

Without cultural support and guidance, Walker struggled to understand why he wasn't being considered by AFL teams and says that he was oblivious to what was going on until he was older:

I was pretty lost. I was lost and I didn't have anyone to guide me or teach me anything about the culture. That's why when I was trying to excel on I didn't understand what was going on, why I was doing something that they were doing, probably better, but I wasn't getting looked at.

Finding the Fitzroy Stars provided Walker with both a platform to connect with family and a place where his talent was recognised and acknowledged:

I came in contact with a lot of my family because my mum [was adopted] and then I played with the Aboriginal community [at the Fitzroy Stars] since 2000. Since then I've found my way through the community. Found all the rellos⁸⁷ again from Lake Tyers. Now it's totally different. Every night I look back and I think I didn't really understand what it was, why I didn't get seen and why I didn't make it. And now I look back as [an] older person, I couldn't see what was going on around me, and now I understand the whole thing of being Aboriginal, it's harder to get through the ranks. So being the only blackfella out in the western suburbs was very hard.

Had a program like the Laguntas existed at the time he was coming through the TAC Cup system, Walker might have been better prepared to understand the extent to which race and racism plays in recruitment.

Experiences of racism:

When asked to talk about their experiences playing football in their home communities, the majority of participants spoke about experiences of racism within football. Many participants experienced racism from their own team mates as well as verbal sledging during games. Participants spoke of experiencing racism that was followed up, and also spoke of times when they 'let it go' because they didn't want to

⁸⁶ A colloquial term for an Anglo-British person.

⁸⁷ A colloquial shortening of 'relatives'.

make a big deal of it. At other times, participants were too young to fully grasp the magnitude of the incident. Overall, the level of support that a player had from his teammates, club and family made an instrumental difference in the way they moved forward and the extent to which they felt safe.

Managing casual racism:

Many participants experienced casual racism in their day-to-day lives and chose not to focus on it and to move on, as one participant, Macala, explains:

Oh, there is always racism on the footy field. But I just laugh it off because obviously they are just being jealous. Like I'm not being cocky or anything but obviously they are jealous when I'm at the Stingrays and they are just at the local club.

Macala's statement reflects the need for Aboriginal players to be well-equipped with support, self-confidence and a thick skin. One player, Jamie, experienced racism in junior football, which quietened down as he progressed:

Not really. There's always — you always get those racial comments on the ground and that sort of stuff. Just like dirty Abo⁸⁸, that sort of stuff. [I] get pretty angry. Take it to heart a little bit, but it doesn't happen much anymore. Last few years it did.

Jax also experienced racism at a young age from older club members:

Not really. I have been racially discriminated, though, once and that was in my local footy club. That was only when I was, I think, 11 or 12? I was up at the oval, having a kick, and the older age group was training. They were doing their warm-down laps and I heard, 'There's the Abo' and 'Let's get him some petrol'. I was around 11 or 12 and at the time, I didn't really know much of it, so I went home and told my mum and dad. They walked back up and told the coach, and he demanded that the players give me a handshake and said sorry, and all that sort of stuff. Yes, and the fact that I

⁸⁸ A derogative and offensive term used by settler Australians when referring to Aboriginal people. The term carries similar cultural weight as those derogatory terms used when referring to African Americans, Native Americans and other oppressed and marginalised peoples and cultures.

told my mum and dad and they were mad, I was really confused. I didn't know what was going on. I thought I was in the wrong.

For another participant, Kaiden, the experience left him wondering where the learnt behaviour came from:

[I've] been called Abo, but it was when [I was] young. It was confronting, I was probably in the under-14s or something — it made me angry. Just thinking that people can still do that. You know that if they are saying it there they must be learning it from somewhere.

Despite identifying casual racism within the football community, Kaiden did not identify any incidence involving racism outside of football:

No, I've never come across that because I just don't have the time of day to deal with that stuff so I just move on.

Although Kaiden doesn't speak of a specific incident of racism within football, he is familiar with racist stereotypes of Aboriginal Victorian football players as 'lazy' and 'not committed'. Kaiden recognises the impact that such negative stereotypes have in terms of AFL recruitment:

From first hand, we're lazy, not committed. [We] don't want it as much as other cultures, they only rely on their talent. That's mainly what I've heard and seen. The fact that there aren't many there. There aren't many Victorian Aboriginal boys playing AFL.

Similarly, Macala acknowledged experiencing racism, however he stated that it didn't bother him because it was from his friends:

It's not too bad, not too bad [at the football club], just all the racism. All the boys mucking around, like I can handle it because they're my friends and I know all the other boys and girls who are Aboriginal they can handle it too.

Macala's coping mechanism for dealing with racism, that it's not racism when it's your friends or team mates, speaks to the taken-for-granted ways in which racism has become an acceptable and invisible part of daily life for Aboriginal people in Victoria.

For Kaiden, the fact that he put effort into his appearance explained why he didn't experience racism:

From the point of view of white Australian, I'm not the typical Aboriginal. Just for instance, like I present myself well, I dress in a good manner, I'm a genuine guy. I know when to have some fun but then again, I'm serious, but they don't see that — which is completely opposite to what they think of what Aboriginals are, not just in Victoria but the rest of Australia. They just think, 'Yes, doesn't take care of himself, doesn't wear nice clothes, doesn't shower, blah-blah-blah, all that stuff'. Yes, probably just the fact that I take care of myself. I don't really get those comments.

Like Kaiden, not all participants felt that they'd experienced racism. A number of participants spoke about the way their visibility as Aboriginals played into the level and types of racism they experienced on the field:

I've had a few [incidence involving] racial vilifications playing football, in junior's, [of] people knowing that I'm Aboriginal, because I obviously don't look it. But, knowing that I'm Aboriginal, they've obviously put me down about my Aboriginality. Like saying I'm one of them [gesticulates referring to racial slur], by putting us in a different category and like I'm one of 'them', I'm going to be a stuff-up and just go down the 'Aboriginal' path that 'Aboriginals' do. Obviously, I've gotten angry about it but I haven't really taken any action or anything like that. (Billy)

Whilst another player, Elliot, admitted to not experiencing racism, he explained that it was probably because no one knew he was Aboriginal:

Nah, no one really knows I'm Indigenous unless I tell them, some do — they ask— but [there hasn't been any] racism towards me or anything.

Many participants who experienced racism, did so on more than one occasion. A key factor in how a player managed racism came down to the level of support he received from his club and team mates. As was the case with Callan:

A little. Cos, I play seniors so you don't expect it. Because they're grown men! They should be educated! Because they should know better and learn from it. Like I'm a 15-year-old kid! Why should they be saying something to

a 15-year old kid. Like it starts a big brawl, like all the seniors' boys, I'm the little bloke. they look after me, nothing ever happens to me, saying 'Don't touch [Callan]!' sort of thing. Oh, what happened? Someone went and kicked the ball and I bumped him on to the ground, it was a fair bump, got him off balance a bit [...] And then he yelled out something, I heard him yell out and I turned around and didn't take notice or anything and kept on going after the ball. Then I turned around and there was a full on 'all in' brawl. He got sent off. There was blood and everything. The club ran an investigation and everything. I was thinking, what's going on here? I thought 'oh someone's probably got punched' ... bit of fighting. Then one of the, the full forward, he was in the forward line, full forward comes up to me and goes, 'Don't worry about it,' I was like, 'What do you mean?', he goes 'What he said —don't worry about what he said!', I said, 'I didn't hear what he said' and he goes 'Don't worry about it', I go 'No! Tell me!', 'Nah I don't want to mention it'. I was like, 'Just tell me, I've heard everything under the sun, you can tell me,' he was like, 'yeah I'm sure you would have but you wouldn't want to hear this one.' It was that bad and I didn't want to hear it myself. I was like alright, I won't know. They ran investigations on that and no one heard him say it besides a couple of people. I [still] don't want to know. It's better to move on from that.

Incidence of on-field racism often led to violence. For Damien Walker this would lead to suspensions:

Being brought up in the Western suburbs as the only Indigenous boy playing, and with plenty of skill. The only way they could pin me down was to throw taunts at me: 'Black this, black that, black that'. I'd try not to show it, but it really hurt me to the point where, I'm not a fighter, but it would get me into a big scrap. At the end of the day, I was the one that was getting suspended for weeks for retaliating to racism. I was very singled out in the white community because there was no one else around [to say something]. Playing footy when I was, was just really hard.

For Chris Egan, who played with Collingwood Football Club, between 2005 and 2008, incidences of racism were just as pronounced in the early days of his playing career:

I copped more racism when I was playing TAC Cup. I was called a nigga during the grand final by a guy at the Calder Cannons and I punched him in the head a couple of times. I don't react to stuff like that, I don't react like that. Yes, I'll get the scruffs in football and you do you fly the flag but that was first time I'd gone fist-to-cuffs really on someone because of what he said to me. I didn't really follow it up because I know he was just a kid. He was the same age as me and obviously he needed some educating in his life but he was very apologetic after the game. He actually come up to me and crying tears and apologised and all that, so I didn't really follow through on it. I didn't want to make a big deal out of it.

Egan experienced racism on a number of occasions on field as well as from spectators:

Then well, pre-season of that year, it was just after Redfern Riots had happened and I was playing down in Gariward at — it was an inter-club practice match ... Yes, but I had remarks over the fence, 'Go back to Redfern,' and all this stuff. Xavier Tanner who's the Bushrangers' coach was very good. I told him at quarter time and saw him and the other coaches went down there and told them, 'Bugger off,' and no they didn't. Then basically next thing I know 10 cop cars showed up and got them to nick off. I felt good about that because I had support from Xavier and the boys from within the club and staff a lot too so.

A year later, Egan recalls another incident of spectator racism:

Then that happened one more time probably a year later. It just started, I don't know something you said like I missed a goal or something. I don't feel it's more like — it wasn't racial thing to say but yes, somebody said, 'I thought blackfellas had great skill level or something.' That was from the other side of the fence as well. It wasn't like calling me a black dog or anything but using 'blackfellas' in that nature, I still class that as racism.

Egan's anecdotes demonstrate the extent to which racism has been a part of the fabric of the Game, even as far as shaping umpiring decisions. He reflects on how racism affected on-field decisions whilst playing for Shepparton's Aboriginal team, Rumbalara:

It was I guess, umpiring and stuff like that, people who didn't want to see Rumbalara succeed. You can tell there is a bit of racism in the way the games were umpired. Like usually, I don't care too much about umpires, I've fought with them all the time out there but if umpires make an impact on the game, they'd done a bad job the way I see it. The year we were playing the fourths, the thirds played the grand final we were up after by 8–9 goals by 3/4 and ended up losing by three goals. It wasn't because the other team was better than them in the last quarter, it was we're cheated out of it and that's a 100%. That did spark a massive brawl at end of it. It was between crowd, players on both sides. Yes, that was clearly what had happened, we felt cheated. I don't usually get into that sort of stuff by being cheated and that but yes, but with stuff like that it's clear. Even playing here. I haven't played yet but I'll watch it and you can see that they are more biased towards the other teams and they'll call a lot of bull crap calls that are out there against us to try and help the other team go on. Perhaps, we've been lucky that we're good enough to keep on the spot to win the games.

Similarly, Egan explains that racism wasn't always overt and that it often came down to a feeling:

We [the Fitzroy Stars] were playing in Diamond Creek a few weeks ago, you see a fair bit of it and their crowd obviously got into us a lot more as well and nothing racial was said but you could tell there's a bit of hatred there towards our people, especially in Hurstbridge⁸⁹ and places like that. I won't call them redneck towns but yes, they're from the outer suburbs of Melbourne. I guess they just haven't been educated as well.

For Egan, whose defences against racism are always up, it's an easy thing to spot:

Uncle Phil introduced me to this bloke in the change rooms after the game. He wasn't really engaging in the conversation and you could tell he didn't want to be in the conversation but he was there because his best mates were good friends with Uncle Phil. I felt a bit of — not on edge but just uneasy I guess. I just didn't want to be in his presence because I knew what

⁸⁹ North-eastern suburbs in outer Melbourne.

he was like. You can pick up on 'em and I can tell a person who actually is engaged with you and he's just not staring at you and just had no interest in your conversation. It is like you could almost see hate in his eyes. If you know what I mean? You see that everywhere you go.

Participants spoke of experiencing racism online from team mates, suggesting that many non-Aboriginal football players do not understand the highly offensive and problematic nature of their comments and behaviours. Callan also highlighted this:

Online you see it ... fuck ... oh ... NAIDOC week is the worst, it is terrible.

You see things about this and that ... 'Oh, why do they have their own week?' but actually Australia Day is probably the worst. Australia Day is terrible. There was a status on Facebook, I said something saying 'Happy

NAIDOC week' and put up a photo with a couple of Aboriginal people being proud, and all these people commented, I was like, 'Are you kidding me?' The disrespect to comment and say something like that on my status.

And then my dad got involved and he had a go. I didn't [defriend them] because they are involved in the footy club. There had to be a meeting and all that. But now they realise and they haven't done nothing it's been good since, they haven't said nothing no more.

Although Callan's experiences demonstrate that racism is an issue within the football community, in this case, the club was able to step in and provide support for Callan and education for the broader football community. This is not always the case, as the experiences of one participant demonstrate. For Matty, football was meant to be a space where he could escape from the pressures of school and home, but unfortunately it wasn't. Sick and tired of the lack of support, the constant barrage of insults and experiences of casual racism Matty finally left the football club all together:

I was playing for a team about 20 minutes down the road, I was playing for Beaufort⁹⁰. I played for them for 10 years and it was like, I liked footy but then throughout the club, because we were the only Aboriginal family there, we would cop it from my own teammates. And I love footy so much that I wouldn't just quit and I wouldn't go to another team. I just wanted to play. I was just rocking up and doing my own thing and going home, you

⁹⁰ See figure 9 on page 157.

know [I told myself] it was just talk and then I'd just play me game. Because it was mainly the president's son so nothing would be done about it, they were just mouthing off — 'You black Abo', 'You Abo this', all the time. They tried to say that they didn't know it would hurt, but they knew what they were doing. That was the worst thing, the cover up. And then came the time when I'd had enough. There was one time when I got sent to tribunal for having a go at the umpire because one of my mates got king hit and I sorta just pushed this kid and then all of a sudden, the umpire started having a go at me. Then the umpire pushed me, so I told him 'Don't touch me', all of a sudden, he has reported me and I gotta go to tribunal. I thought 'Fair enough' but it was the first time I'd had to go to tribunal and it was embarrassing. The Club president was all like, 'Yeah I'll be there to support you' ... he knew I was already angry at him, and I rocked up to the tribunal, I was obviously angry because I'd been reported just after [coming back from the Laguntas camp] and the President turns around to mum and goes, 'Would you be offended if I called you an Abo?' I lost it. I just walked out. I walked out of there and felt like I could hit him. I left and it was just crap. We thought about it, cos he didn't really like me, well he was trying to get me fired up before heading into tribunal, he'd done it before we'd even stepped in there, so it was just all weird. I had a massive falling out with the club so I left and it was good.

After experiencing a lack of support from his previous club, Matty moved to another club, where he, once again, experienced racism. This time, however, he had the support of his club:

I was playing a really good game and all of a sudden it got really close. And [you] go as hard as you can go. And who ever goes in hardest wins. So, I went in and I bumped this kid and I knocked him out and the umpire said 'fair hit', and then all of a sudden, this one kid wanted to really fight me. And a couple weeks before that there was a fight and I'd been reported so I thought it wouldn't look good to [the Laguntas] program [if I fought], [because] last year I got reported and [KGI] found out straight away, so I was thinking 'You gotta be on your best behaviour, you can't lose this opportunity for footy'. So, I just laughed at him and looked over his shoulder and there is this one bloke [on the sidelines] that really stood out,

he starts mouthing off, being racist and all that and he calls me a coon⁹¹. That was it, it was real weird, so slow motion. I realised that it was his son that was trying to fight me. I lost it and grabbed this kid and thought screw him, I went up there, and I went up to this hill, near the ground and went straight up to him, and he ran off. I went off for ages like 5–10 minutes ... I had my whole team trying to stop me from getting to him. I walked off the ground and went into the changing rooms for a bit and had some time to myself. No one really knew what had happened except for a couple of players who were around and realised what he had done. I brought myself together and all the coaches and everyone came around and got around me and the crowd just went all quiet, it looked like I was just bad tempered and going off. [My teammates] got around me and I told them what happened and they realised that it was more serious than what they'd first thought. The coach comes up to me and goes, 'There will be more to this after the game, but it's your decision whether you want to get back out on the ground' and I thought, 'I might as well just finish off the game', so I went out there and I kicked three goals within five minutes and really got stuck into them. I kicked the first goal within 30 seconds of the start of the quarter and the whole team just came onto the ground and went berserk and everyone was giving me support and I was thinking this is really good. The opposition team, everyone got around me as well. So, everyone was supporting me. And so later on, after the game, the guy who had done it came up to me talking crap and trying to apologise and that and umm they sort of ... he ended up being kicked out of the club. So, it ended up being dealt with really well, it was massive.

Matty explained that on-field racism hit harder because of his love for the game:

Yeah, and I've copped it all my life. Just been through stages, always fighting because I was so angry because of it. In the end, like I just don't care about it but then you know, I had never had it when I was on the footy field when I was playing footy and it just hit so much harder. It's weird to

⁹¹ An ethnic slur.

explain — everything just stopped and went all slow. It just hit heaps harder ... because playing footy is the thing I loved most.

Had Matty not had the level of support at his football club, he would have left football behind. Other football players have not been so lucky. For Matty, had he remained at his old club the incidence of racism he experienced would have had a very different outcome.

The importance of cultural support is highlighted by Ted Lovett. Lovett played nine games for the Fitzroy Lions between 1963–1964 (Holmesby & Main, 2002, p. 389). As a warden of the state, he was not permitted to live in Melbourne, Ted lived in Ballarat where he played most of his footy, save for a season with the Fitzroy Lions, where he experienced racism from his own team mates:

I had a coppa⁹² there I had a run in with, he wouldn't kick me the football, and another coppa who was senior, and he says why wouldn't he kick the football to you and when I told him, he said well it should be left outside the ground mate. But that's life, that's the way it was, people didn't know ... a lot of my friends say, 'What happened to you? Like a lot of the old players are really good people. What happened to you?' And when I told them about all the shit that I went through there with them in those days ... and they go 'you fair dinkum⁹³?' and I say 'Yeah'. and you could hear it over the fence ... You seem to get another skin, you know what I mean? Sometimes, you got to take it. If you let them get to your head, they got you. I used to do some things which people never see me. I was showing a picture of a man tonight, one guy called me a 'f-ing cunt' on the football ground, he went off with a broken jaw. He was coming to me and I just went like that' (gestures elbow). When another bloke says, 'You split my brother's tongue.' As I was running off, he called me a black c and as I ran I nicked him under the jaw.

He reflects on the lack of support he received during his year playing with Fitzroy:

I had a lot of racism [at Fitzroy] and couldn't knock around with my own people. They did the dirty on me. They were supposed to buy me a car cos I

⁹² An Australian colloquial term for police officer.

⁹³ An Australian colloquial term used to confirm the truth of something.

couldn't go and live down there [in Melbourne] because that was part of my parole. They bought a Volkswagen and I ended up paying for the bloody thing. They put me right into shit — wasn't allowed to knock around with my own people. I played a couple of 'permit' games in '63, the years I won the medal. Then I just told them to stick it.

At the time, racism was considered 'a part of the game'. Ted experienced racism on the field as well as from spectators:

I heard it over the fence, don't you worry about that. When I'm on the field, and you know, like there's nothing you can do about it then. They say, 'You black B[astard]...You black this, you so and so, boong⁹⁴, nigga ...'

Had Ted not experienced the level of racism that he did, he might have had a stellar career playing at the elite level. Due to the lack of support from his Club his potential was never realised.

Issues faced by Aboriginal Victorian football players off-field

As indicated earlier, there are a number of important factors that shape a player's ability to succeed in their career and progress into the elite level of Australian (Rules) Football with the AFL. Although a number of these factors, like financial stability and support, affect all football players, there are a number of concerns, which are pronounced in players from 'culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds' (Oliver, 2014), including Aboriginal players. This section addresses each of these factors, drawing on participant testimony. These issues can be thought of as those at the community level and those at the broader societal level.

Community-level concerns:

Participants highlighted that the key issues that contributed to their success on-field revolved around cultural safety, cultural isolation and a lack of support from the wider non-Aboriginal community. For Belinda Duarte (KGI), Aaron Clark (AFL Victoria), Dan Dowd (AFL Victoria) and Jason Mifsud (AFL), the lower recruitment levels of Aboriginal Victorian football players into TAC Cup sides and into the AFL was not the result of a lack of talent within Victoria's Aboriginal community, but was due to a wide

⁹⁴ A derogatory term for an Aboriginal person.

range of factors including family responsibility, financial disadvantage and lateral violence.

Family responsibility/life:

Aaron Clark sees the strain that fulfilling dual roles has on players, especially when there is a lack of understanding from the wider community:

All the boys at a young age are actually playing strong roles in their family. They have [to be] almost like the man of the family at the age of 15, 16. Yet when they are in school in the classroom and feel treated like a young boy: 'You got to do this ... you've got to do that ...'. Some of these boys are like, 'I'm going home at night buddy to look after my family, organise my mum, I'm doing this, I'm going up on the train to footy training and now I'm in the classroom and being talked down to like a little kid, instead of being respected like the man I'm operating as in my home life!'

Financial disadvantage:

Jason Mifsud speaks about the financial strain that the Aboriginal community face and highlights how it plays out in the daily lives of Aboriginal football players:

There's more talent in Aboriginal communities than opportunity so our job as an industry is to provide more opportunity and to provide the right cultural support and the cultural infrastructure around those kids and their families. Our stuff's very holistic. Our work is equally invested in educating the family around what the demands of the system are. It's no good us saying to Billy and Ben, 'Eat the right food, do your training, get up in the mornings and do your stretching recovery and then go and do a hydration pull after a training session'. They go home and mum and dad, they're trying to put food on the table. They've got no idea about hydration pulls or sport psychologies or physicians or you've got to go to this Melbourne sports aquatics centre and it costs you \$75 to park there let alone the \$200 to get the scan. That's ridiculous. Fuck, give us a break [...] You've got to keep it real.

Although there are many non-Aboriginal Australians who face disadvantages due to financial strain, it has an ongoing and lasting impact on an Aboriginal player's ability to 'play the game'. AFL Victoria's Indigenous programs coordinator, Dan Dowd

recognised that a common obstacle for all players, regardless of cultural background, was financial disadvantage. However, he felt financial disadvantage was overwhelmingly present in the lives of Victorian Aboriginal players and had significant impacts on their ability to play football:

This year we've got one boy who's an elite talent, one of the best kids in country Victoria who just couldn't get to training and for that reason missed the squad, so that kind of stuff was really prominent and a lot of kids just went 'Oh well they cut me because I can't get to training ...'. Word of mouth [gets out] to other cousins, who go, 'Well I'm not even going to bother then because I know I can't get there because I'm living in Lakes Entrance [and] I gotta get to Morwell. [It's] two hours away.' There become so many reasons for them not to do it and not enough [reasons] for them to actually do it, and with the TAC Cup being where the majority of the drafts [are] picked [from], if boys [aren't] progressing through that, then they [aren't] getting drafted and that's basically [what] it [comes] down to.

Although family responsibility and financial disadvantage are both issues that can affect all members of the football community regardless of racial or cultural background, financial disadvantage and lower socio-economic status overwhelmingly affects the Aboriginal community compared to the non-Aboriginal community. According the Australian Bureau of Statistics, education is critical for overcoming social disadvantage (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011) and highlight the link between education, socio-economic status and health outcomes. Implicit within Dan Dowd's comments is the role that *shame* plays in Aboriginal player outcomes. The concept of *shame* (*gaming, lies, pretending*) can dramatically shape the way a person responds to a situation and includes embarrassment resulting from situations outside of the persons control (Leitner, 2007). Shame encapsulates the disempowerment that many Aboriginal people feel and cannot explain. Whilst a non-Aboriginal player might explain to the coach that he cannot make it to practice because his dad has the family car and works an hour away, an Aboriginal player might not turn up and will not provide explanation. He will instead accept the punishment i.e. being dropped from the team or being benched for a game, rather than explain the circumstances. For this player, the circumstances beyond his control become his responsibility and he accepts the consequences without question. This lack of cultural understanding has significant consequences for Aboriginal players when it comes to recruitment:

So, a lot of it [is] because the talent pathways themselves didn't know how to engage Indigenous kids, they sort of went, 'Well it's one-size-fits-all. Why should we give this kid any kind of special treatment?'. But the boy isn't asking for special treatment, he's asking for a hand when he needs it, so there's a difference between the two. If he's coming from a tough upbringing, where, like I said he might not be able to get a ride, he might not be able to afford stuff, being able to help him out, give him a pair of boots or help him find someone who lives around him to carpool with or something like that it's not hard to do but for a lot of years that was put on the back burner and it was like, 'If the kid can't get there, then we're not going to bother.' So, it was both parties [country football and the AFL] not really working together to get the kids the best opportunity.

Lateral violence:

For many participants, lateral violence was a common feature within their community.

Aaron Clark explains that lateral violence occurs when:

[O]ppressed people that are pushed down start to push outwards and start to extend that violence laterally to others in their community and that's a major issue. It's like crabs in a bucket.

In the Australian Human Rights Commission's 2011 Social Report, Richard Frankland defines lateral violence as:

the organised, harmful behaviours that we do to each other collectively as part of an oppressed group: within our families; within our organisations and; within our communities. When we are consistently oppressed we live with great fear and great anger and we often turn on those who are closest to us. (Australian Human Rights Commission & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, 2011)

The report (Australian Human Rights Commission & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, 2011) highlighted the significance of lateral violence within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and provided practical actions to address lateral violence within these communities. It also provides culturally-specific examples of the ways that lateral violence plays out. The contemporary concepts that the report addresses are power, needs and disadvantage, negative stereotypes and trauma. Whilst some participants specifically used the term

'lateral violence', most participants demonstrated experiences of lateral violence without using the term, as this section outlines. KGI's chief operating officer Alex Splitt⁹⁵ believes lateral violence to be particularly prevalent in Victoria:

Lateral violence is probably the biggest issue that I've noticed. Maybe because I wasn't involved in this space when I was in South Australia. It just didn't seem like it was as prevalent in South Australia. Speaking to a few other people from different states they have the same opinion as well.

Splitt demonstrates the wide range of ways that lateral violence can affect Aboriginal Victorian footballers and how it plays out in the success of their football aspirations:

I think there's a lot of external influences and some from the community and some from your family that are stopping a young Aboriginal man from actually being successful. It's tough to actually say 'no' to all the people who'll make choices in your life that many people see as sacrifices, but I think once you can actually differentiate what a sacrifice is compared to what a choice is, is where they're probably lacking that. It's hard for a young man because often alcohol starts playing a big part in their life, and partying, and women. There's a lot of external factors and environmental factors that probably — they think, 'Yes this is right for me right now', but they don't understand the repercussions of that years later when they're 21 and they missed the boat by a little bit and years later the penny drops and they think 'If I'd only worked harder. I think if I had only done this'. It's probably one thing that a lot of young Aboriginal men play into because there's certainly a lot of talent there.

Aaron Clark demonstrates the reasons why lateral violence is particularly important within the football context:

The ones coming up they will want to pull him back down and that's pretty rife among some communities.

Clark highlights the importance of the Laguntas program in empowering Aboriginal Victorian football players, as a way of counterbalancing lateral violence:

⁹⁵ At time of interview.

One of the biggest issues I find at the TAC Cup level now is really providing the family with the support to understand the expectations of what's on the boy. Obviously, their peer network is also very important. Through our programs we try and provide a peer network of all the boys because they [are all going] for the same goal, they are going through the same stuff.

For Lionel Proctor, lateral violence is a major issue amongst Aboriginal communities in Victoria and one that becomes amplified through social media:

Lateral violence — it's not so much going up to someone and calling them a bad name. It's more, a lot of it is social media and a lot of it gets put on social media — you know not saying it directly to the person but it's out there and everyone is reading it.

A number of informants who had cultural ties to Shepparton, noted just how problematic lateral violence is to the Aboriginal community there. Although participants did not use the term 'lateral violence' the issues they highlight are consistent with definitions of lateral violence:

Far out Sheps' like one of the worst areas for ice and drugs and parties every Friday, Saturday, Sunday night. Just the big amount of people, like the whole school like 1300 kids ... is what we have, and 1000 people will go and take drugs and drink. It's terrible. (Callan)

Callan identifies how much peer pressure feeds into lateral violence:

Because everyone else is doing it! Everyone else in Shep, mainly Shep, everyone around is dropping out, they are going, 'Oh he's gone off drinking tonight, I'll go over there and do that'. Some of the boys in here are into that kind of thing, but they're trying to get out of it. It's pretty bad. I think it's just ... it's like a sheep thing. And you know, 'He does it so I'll do It'.

A number of participants highlighted just how important sport, and football in particular, is in their lives and identified it as a guiding force:

Footy, for not just me but for other Aboriginal kids in my community, footy is probably the only reason that black kids, Aboriginal kids mainly, for

example Rumbalara are sometimes, almost sometimes out of trouble. If that wasn't there it would be hectic, just hectic. Like it's pretty bad. (Callan)

While Jax states that:

Just for me, [footy] keeps me out of trouble. It keeps me out of doing the things that stereotype Aboriginals, going out, drinking, all that stuff. It keeps me nice and fit.

Although lateral violence is perceived as internal to Aboriginal communities, external factors contribute to lateral violence as well. These factors are addressed in the following section.

Societal level concerns

Off-the-field Aboriginal Victorian players experienced varying degrees of racism, from the everyday inability for non-Aboriginal peoples to recognise the place of Aboriginal Victorian peoples and cultures within their communities, to negative assumptions and generalisations about Aboriginal peoples as well as instances of overt racism. The main issues identified by participants included racism, ongoing consequences of colonisation, intergenerational trauma and cultural isolation.

Racism:

Every one of the participants I spoke with experienced racism off the field, either directly, or indirectly. Each participant demonstrated their familiarity with the realities of racism — by either experiencing it themselves or as a witness to it, as was the case for ex-Richmond Football Club player Lionel Proctor:

Well for me, I haven't had any issues at all. I am pretty fair-skinned you know so I didn't get any problems whatsoever so you know, but there were a couple of Indigenous guys at the club at the time when I was drafted and they'd tell you stories about what used to happen when they played football, from either the crowd or opponents, and you could just see the look on their faces just how disappointed they were when telling their story.

Some participants recall experiencing racism at such a young age that they didn't have any comprehension of what was happening, as was the case for ex-Collingwood Football Club player, Chris Egan:

It was actually quite funny because, Swan Hill⁹⁶ — my mum's sister used to live in Lake Boga⁹⁷ and we used to go out and see her every school holidays.

Mum took myself and one of mum's close friends who lived in Swan Hill and owned a motel, her granddaughter would take us into Swan Hill and we're just walking down the street. Mum went into get a tatts lotto⁹⁸ ticket next door and then, [Kim and I] went into Toy World. I was only like seven or eight at the time and this girl kept following me around. Well, mum gave me \$10 and mum gave [Kim] \$10 and we were looking around at everything in there and then I finally chose something to buy. When I walked up to the register, I bought it and she goes, 'Don't come back here ever again.' I was like, 'What are you on about?' She goes, 'No, you just don't ever come back here again'. Mum was just walking in the door. I said, 'Mum, did you hear what this girl's sayin'?' She goes, 'What?' I said, 'She reckon just don't ever come back in this shop again.' My mum just let it rip and went back the next day to talk to the manager and apparently the girl quit. Mum goes, 'Good' because mum wouldn't shut up about it. Me as a kid at that point didn't bother me as much emotionally but if I was older I'd probably punch her in the face! It didn't make sense to me on why she would say that. I said that to mum because I thought she was just accusing me of stealing or something. When I told her, 'Mum she shouted, why?' Mum knew straight away, it's because he's black.

Participants recall family and friends' experiences of racism:

My younger cousin on mum's side, when she first started high school, she copped it all the time just for being, like she's half Torres Strait Islander as well, so she's half Noongar half Torres Strait Islander, and she's very dark and she just copped it all through high school. She ended up leaving high school when she was in about year ten and it was her against the world type thing. [This was] in Sale as well, she was in public [school] though, where the kids didn't know any better and there was probably a bigger Indigenous representation at that school as well, so a lot of the kids saw it,

⁹⁶ See figure 9 on page 157.

⁹⁷ See figure 9 on page 157.

⁹⁸ An Australian lottery competition.

basically imagine the black kids hung out together and a lot of kids used to just attack them, and it ate away at her for years and years and she just didn't have those mechanisms as much and you'd try to teach it to her, it'd sort of overwhelm her and she just ended up having to leave school and try to do other stuff. (Dan Dowd)

Chris Egan highlighted the high level of welfare dependency within his community but was quick to point out that it was also a major concern for non-Aboriginal people in Victoria:

What affects us the most? Just obviously living within a society now where [we've] just been [pushed down]. We're kind of living in a white man's world now. I'd like to see more opportunity and more help for Aboriginal people to get a lot of them [off welfare]. People are struggling on welfare, but that's not just Aboriginal people, that's white people as well. I've seen more white people worse off than Aboriginal people.

Given that welfare dependency is considered in proportion to the overall population of Aboriginal people compared to non-Aboriginal people, Egan's point may not be accurate, it nonetheless highlights that welfare dependency is used by non-aboriginal people to stereotype Aboriginal people in a negative way, rather than as indicative of the prevalence and persistence of deep social exclusion. For under 18s Laguntas participant Matty, who grew up in Beaufort, a small township near Ballarat, racism has been a regular part of his world:

Sitting outside the [Aboriginal] co-op we've had people driving past in cars and mouthing off at us. Family days at the [Wendouree] Lake, mum organises all of that — so we'll rock up to that and have big family days and it's the same — at a public lake! They don't care, so it's pretty bad in Ballarat still.

For other young participants, cyber-racism was prominent:

[In terms of cyber racism] verbally I cop it pretty bad as in their mucking around but phew ... some of it is pretty bad ... They'll call me ... they'll call me ... I'll say one of the minor ones, they'll call me a black dog and say, 'you're only good [at football] because you're Aboriginal'. (Callan)

As well as experiencing racism online, Callan recalled experiencing casual racism at school:

I'll be in PE (physical education), like if you don't bring your gear to PE you need to take your shoes and socks off and I'll be running around, and people will go, 'Oh is that how the Aboriginals do it?'. Now I just turn around and say, 'You're uneducated, read more about it before you start saying things,' that's all I say.

Whilst under-18s Laguntas participant drew the link between discrimination and employment:

[The] obvious one is discrimination. Discrimination means poor employment opportunities and getting left out. (Jax)

Another participant, Laguntas player reflected on the main issues that his community faced:

Probably drugs and alcohol, that would be up there and no jobs and no employment. Not enough kids in schools. (Percy)

Under-18s Laguntas player, Kaiden's family are from the Shepparton district — which has Victoria's second largest Aboriginal population outside of Melbourne. Despite the fact that he has spent most of his life living off-country in and around Melbourne's western suburbs, he has a strong cultural connection to Shepparton:

We go back [to Shepparton] quite a bit and dad's seen the decline there as well. It's turning into a bit of a hole out there. You see kids just on the streets, just getting influenced by their cousins, brothers, and by the other boys from different cultures. Just like smoking, and drinking alcohol, drugs. Yes, that's what I can see. Yes, that's not so much in probably the inner city. Where I am, we don't get much like that. I think Shepparton, back where my family's from. Yes, that where accidents take place. The kids my age, even younger, just out every weekend. I'm fortunate enough and I'm grateful to have a mum and dad who are very supportive and told me at a young age that that stuff's wrong. (Kaiden)

Participants generally felt that racism was not being addressed nor was it understood as an issue within Victoria, as Paul Briggs observes:

The racism issue is not just confined to someone shouting abuse over the fence ... it's not being recognised, it's not being looked at. It really permeates with society. We went through the Native Title issues up in the courts — took 12 years.

There are a number of obstacles that Aboriginal Victorian football players come up against in the day-to-day operation and management of their football careers. These obstacles can make or break a player. In the case of Damien Walker and Ted Lovett, the lack of support from the wider non-Aboriginal football community was a huge factor in their ability to perform on field. Dan Dowd, highlights the importance of KGI's Laguntas program for providing Aboriginal football players with the support and guidance to progress through the AFL's talent pathways, but he acknowledges that the model that the AFL sets around racism and discrimination does not always funnel down into the lower leagues — where many Aboriginal players become lost and give up:

Um, but once again once getting them out of Laguntas and trying to get them back into the mainstream program they've still got those same challenges but hopefully they've created the right mechanisms to deal with them now, so that's the whole aim of our stuff, to try and make them better footballers but also make them strong enough to get through the mainstream talent pathways on their own. Whilst also providing that support network if they need it. (Dan Dowd)

Racism doesn't just affect the immediate victim and doesn't always occur as an isolated incident. If a club has a reputation of allowing racism, Aboriginal players are less likely to play for that particular side, which filters down throughout a player's family and social network. Aaron Clark explains:

One thing I found amongst our boys not getting through the pathways is that they move around from club to club quite often, that's because obviously they have instances at clubs or one family member or an uncle might have something happen at the club that's handled poorly and all of a sudden the whole family and community will move out of that club for years to come which hinders their chances of being picked for interleague

and there's no continuity in terms of talent identification, so if you're not involved with a local footy club where the local real estate agent the local lawyer, local doctor all are involved in a local football club so if you're sort of, if you're ostracised or sort of pushed into the fringes of that football club, you are also pushed into the fringes of the whole town operation.

Although everyday experiences of overt racism weren't as pronounced within Melbourne as in less populated regions of Victoria, culturally and linguistically diverse players were just as likely to be prejudiced towards Aboriginal Australians as white Australians:

I find in Melbourne, colour isn't as bad but I still find even the multicultural guys that I work with their perception of Aboriginal people are quite low and they're black themselves. [They think that] Aboriginal people are lazy [and that] they don't want to work. (Aaron Clark)

Harrison, who grew up in Echuca and moved to Melbourne's inner-west validates this point. Although he believed that racism was more overt in regional Victoria, he felt that those in his home community were more aware of Aboriginal culture, even if their understanding was limited:

I know that a lot of people don't know what Kooris, or Murrays or Noongars are and think we're all like one ... they don't understand ... don't realise that we're ... together but not. We're not separate but each state has their own people. They just think that everything is the same. Well that's all I've come across. They all think that the people over in WA are better than us.

Harrison points out the extent to which 'authenticity' plays in the way that non-Aboriginal peoples think about Aboriginal Australians:

People say 'Is your family like what they look like in the Northern Territory?'

Despite the fact that the knowledge that non-Aboriginal people in Echuca had of Aboriginal Australians was limited Harrison highlights that there was at least an acknowledgement that Aboriginal people were a part of the community, whereas in Melbourne, he says this was not the case:

When I first moved over, like they didn't even think that I was Aboriginal,
and they'd never met someone who was Aboriginal.

Harrison explains:

People [in Melbourne] don't know about the culture, they just ... see an Aboriginal and they say 'Abo'. Nobody really knows what is and isn't racist [here], up there [in Echuca], there is more awareness. Up there, there is a lot of awareness of our culture and what we do with our lives, but [down here] there is nothing. It depends on what side of Melbourne you're from. Like in the western suburbs there is no one who knows nothing about our culture.

For Callan, who lives in Shepparton, racism was a part of his life:

Like you cop racism, like I cop it twice a week at least, like some are major, some are minor. But it's dealt with pretty well mostly.

Ex-Collingwood Football Club player, Chris Egan experienced racism within social situations as well as by strangers:

There was one bloke he said something at a party that we were at a little while ago and he didn't realise that — because his [he's] mates with Glen. We had mutual friends and he said it to them in front of me. I actually just grabbed by the scruff of the jumper. I said, 'What are you fuckin' doin' mate?' He goes, 'Oh no, no, no, I thought it was sweet.' I said, 'No, I'm sweet with them. I don't know you. Don't go trash talkin' about my culture in front me, I'll rip your face out.' Then he's like, 'No, no, no I didn't mean it.' I said, 'I don't care mate. Even if it's a joke, it's being racist. Fuck it, I don't know you.'

For Egan, racism was not as clear-cut and obvious but he explains that you learn to watch out for it in certain behaviours:

I still walk in shops. Even when I was at Collingwood and I was well known around here, I had people follow me, shop owners follow me around the shop and they try to make it look not as obvious but you know ... they come

pretending to look at a price on something and then they wait till I move to
another aisle.

For Fitzroy Stars player, Damien Walker — a once-hopeful young star with a promising professional career in front of him — racism has been a constant thread of his life, it wore him down and defeated him. Sometimes, he fought back and tried to educate and other times, he would snap back or ignore the remark:

I actually work with a group of boys down from Yarrawonga in Cheltenham, and they're pigs. They don't give you the time of day. They just happily think because you're Aboriginal, you drink a lot of beer, that you're out robbing cars, always doing no good. They never see any good in you. I was having a chat to one of them today and he said, 'Yeah, you're always like a drink', and I said, 'Yeah?' I said, 'When you leave here tonight where are you going?' and he said, 'I'm going to the pub'. And I said, 'Exactly, you know where I'm going? I'm going footy training'. I said, 'You obviously have the cheek to say things like that!' I said, 'If we go to the pub, you say 'Oh look!'. This is what they say, 'There's the Abos at the pub,' you know what I mean? 'But you've just worked a hard day you deserve a beer don't you mate? We've just worked a hard day too, mate, but we don't deserve a beer, do we?' It got a bit hairy there, but you cop it all the time.

Damien Walker agreed that racism was a key issue that Aboriginal communities faced in Victoria, but felt that ignorance was a bit part of it:

Yes, it is but it's ignorance too because they never want to admit nothing. You know what I mean? That always puts you on the back foot in anything,
any situation.

For Macala, who lived in Hastings, casual racism came in the form of ignorant 'jokes':

It doesn't bother me but yeah, I've experienced it before. Gave them a few but no one really does it anymore. A little bit when we're just knocking around, but they know when they've pissed me off. Oh, you know what people are like, that we're all petrol sniffers, that I'm stealing stuff, on Centrelink⁹⁹ and that shit. Just stupid stuff. It has affected me, but I don't

⁹⁹ Centrelink is a federally run social security service.

take bullshit from people, I stand up for myself. If I see someone else in my community and they won't stand up to it and I stand in for them. Like, people around in my community are pretty weak with it. They act like they don't care, but I know it hurts them inside. I'm not really one to let it get to me.

For Kaiden, his strong cultural identity has helped him to move past racism, but the invisibility of Victoria's Aboriginal history was frustrating:

Probably hasn't affected me, more so just the fact that when I meet people — it hasn't affected me because I've always been really connected to my culture. I'm fortunate enough to be connected to it but probably the main thing is, probably the one thing that really gets me pretty angry and pissed off is that whenever I meet someone, I'm going to say, 'I'm Aboriginal,' and they go, 'What? No, you're not, you're not black.' I'd say it over and over, I tell them the story about how Victoria got settled, they walked us out, and therefore they're more dark in WA. That's probably the one thing that really sets me off.

During the interviewing stage, the experiences of one particular player stayed in my mind. Potentially because the player lived near Ballarat, the site of the gold rush case study, and an area I visit regularly and grew up near, but also because of the quiet reservedness of the participant. One of the first boys that I sat down with, he was quiet and wouldn't take part in the cultural dancing workshop on day 2 of the Laguntas camp — his second camp. Rather than judge or dismiss him, the other players encouraged him to join in the dancing, but respected his decision not to participate. I didn't think I'd get anything out of him, but the magnitude of his story, would prove to be a key proponent in shaping this thesis. For many Aboriginal participants, their experiences of racism were often taken seriously by those around them, but for Matty his community, school and football club had let him and his family down on multiple occasions. He speaks about the racism he experienced at high school from teaching staff:

There was a lot at my school. Always made out to be so much worse than what they are. Teachers were really bad for it at [Beaufort] School. So, we've chucked in so many complaints, like I've been there when one of the

teachers said to me that we're filthy and that they rate us as slum in India. You know, so they're comparing us to that and all this crap, like, I had just, when that had happened I had just gotten back from WA, and for the first time had seen family over there, seeing elders who are homeless and you know they got nothing. Like they are doin' it hard and you come back here and cop teachers saying that we're just filthy.

Matty explains that the teachers and school management were of little help in combatting racism:

Yup. They don't care. My sister had one the other day where she was sitting in class, and all the boys and that started going on and really being racist — you black 'this' and all this crap. Like they won't say it to us anymore but if they can get a chance behind our back they try to sneak one in and the others hear it, even teachers hear it and they pretty much turn their heads [away] from it. It's that bad at school, because when we ... three or four years where I copped it, always going to the teachers, always go to them, cos probably in year 7 I was fighting because of it, and teachers would say, 'Just go tell the school straight away', I said, 'Yeah orright'. For about three years I went to the teachers every time something happened but nothing changed, until one time one kid came to the school, and he was a decent-sized kid, and turned around and mouthed off at me, we were joking around and giving it to each other, and all of a sudden, he goes on about sniffing petrol and I thought, 'Nah I'm not taking this to the teachers I've had enough' and I ended up ... I hit him ... I fractured his eye socket and cheek bone and broke his nose and that left blood behind the eye. I put him in hospital and the teachers were straight onto me. I got suspended for two weeks, he got done for three days for being racist. The teachers turned around and said 'Have you learnt your lesson?' I turned around and said, 'Nah, cos if anything happens and anyone is racist the same things are gonna keep happening and if they don't start getting more than a week [suspension] it's going to get worse. Mum already knew about this, and she is gonna start going to 'big people' and they are gonna come to the school'. They tried to get me charged by the police, and I know I shouldn't have gone off at him the way I did but that was just because 2–3 years of telling

teachers and no suspensions, when I'm always getting suspensions. I got suspended for dacking¹⁰⁰ a kid!

Matty recalls how stressful it was thinking he was going to be called up by the cops. It is clear that he didn't feel protected by his school or by the community:

After he was in hospital, I kept thinking 'Are the police gonna rock up at my door ...?' and his old man was really keen on getting me charged but then they forgot to mention to the old man what he had said so the dad didn't know what he had said or what had happened or anything ... So, then he figured out what had been said and the dad turned around and said 'Oh you can just leave it, nothing is gonna happen cos you [his son] deserved it'.

He explains how he was targeted as a 'bad kid' and faced unfair punishment for doing things that the other students did:

There were two kids, that dacked this other kid, and did it twice in a row — we thought it was funny. This other kid has a name in the school, it got relayed to one of the teachers and I got suspended for a week for dackin' him and he got a lunchtime detention. Always things like that.

For Matty, the prejudice and racism has left him without faith in his school's ability to accurately and respectfully teach Australian Aboriginal content:

But we're at the stage at school where we don't want to learn about [Indigenous stuff] because we will sit in class and just cop it in. There will be times when they'll try to get us or other people to come into the school and teach things but we won't do it. They are trying to get elders into the school, and I'll say no because I don't want elders coming out and just getting disrespected. I know it will happen straight away. So, we're just trying to get it stopped from being taught.

Matty's lack of trust in his school is indicative of the distrust and scepticism that many Aboriginal people have of government and settler colonial institutions, based on intergenerational experiences of oppression, racism and cultural insensitivity. This is

¹⁰⁰ An Australian colloquial term which refers to the act of lowering a person's pants by force.

further articulated through the interactions between Aboriginal organisations and the broader settler (colonial) community.

Community engagement

The dysfunctional relationship between Aboriginal and the wider non-Aboriginal community became clear when talking to Rumbalara's founding president Paul Briggs. Briggs speaks about the struggle for Shepparton's Aboriginal community to connect with the broader non-Aboriginal community. He believes that the football club has the potential to both foster a relationship with the broader non-Aboriginal community as well as the potential to reinforce the strained relationship. As a community elder and advocate, Briggs believes that a necessary part of fostering the relationship to both parts of the community is 'equalising the relationship':

I think it translates into how strong do you feel a part of the community in which you're living. How inspir[ed] are you to be a part of the business world in our community. Becoming a part of the community leadership teams, whether you're working in apexes or rotaries or RSL's¹⁰¹ or you're running pubs — you're doing business in the community. Are you a part of that? That [domain] belongs to [non-indigenous members of the Shepparton community], and the Aboriginal people are in [another] space.

I think that underpins school retention issues [as well].

Here, Briggs is talking about the importance of seeing yourself reflected in the community you are a part of. He highlights the consequences that this has on health and wellbeing, education and employment prospects when you do not feel empowered as a part of your community. Experience has shown Briggs just how fractured the relationship is between the non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal members of the community in Shepparton, where he has witnessed resistance from Shepparton's non-Aboriginal community:

A lot of [white] people don't want to [interact with a blackfella]. 'We have nothing in common ... What would we talk to Aboriginal people about? We don't want to talk about land rights ... We don't want to talk about native title ... We don't want to talk about poverty ... We've got nothing in

¹⁰¹ Acronym for 'Returned and Services League', a support organisation (usually a social club) for men and women who have served or are serving in the Defence Force.

common in agriculture, or industry' ... or whatever is going on in the towns.

It's a very challenging environment. But it's one that's really important to whether [our] people start buying into the notion of ownership of infrastructure.

Briggs speaks to the important role that agency plays in the ability for Aboriginal people to feel a part of a community. Along with Matty's experiences at school, the outward hostility that any Aboriginal communities face reflects the long history of colonial control, which continues to play out for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people today.

Colonisation and trauma:

As chapter five established, Aboriginal Victorians have contributed greatly to the state's development through agriculture, farming, industrialisation and the gold rush. Despite this, Aboriginal representation in colonial and contemporary historical narratives is under-represented. I argue that this under-representation contributes to the cultural trauma that many Aboriginal Victorians face today. Historical amnesia and intergenerational trauma greatly impact on a player's ability to identify and speak confidently about their Aboriginality. When asked to speak about the issues that they felt affected Aboriginal communities around Victoria, those without a strong sense of cultural identity felt unable to respond. As one participant demonstrates:

I don't know – I'm not really that affiliated. (Murray Harrison)

Whilst another, admitted to feeling uncomfortable not knowing his culture the way he felt he should:

I'm still lost because I haven't spoken to [my family] about it. I feel a little uncomfortable [speaking about it]. (Macala)

Similarly, another player responded that it was difficult at first to be a part of the Laguntas program and around Aboriginal players who knew their culture, whilst having little understanding of his own:

In a way, it's weird because I don't know where I come from, but most other people do. Like the first camp they all asked us where we were from and all that sort of stuff and a bit of info about where we are from, but I just didn't know anything. That was a bit tough. (Jamie)

Another respondent stated that:

Probably because there's not as many Aboriginals in Victoria as there are in [Queensland, WA and Northern Territory]. Not that we're not proud of our culture, which we really are it's just that [we] really don't know anything about it. Because my ancestors, my great-grandparents and grandparents were brought up to think [and] to be ashamed [of it]. We were taught the white way. That's just one of the many instances because we used to have language, it's just hard because they made us speak English and they didn't let us talk in our language. (Kaiden)

Kaiden again emphasised the significance of specific colonial policies directed at Aboriginal populations:

Much earlier they sent more [settlers] to the southern states and that's why like even WA Aboriginals, Northern Territory Aboriginals [are] like, 'Damn Victoria they have no culture, they don't know what they're doing.' That's why we're lighter than other Indigenous people because they tried to wipe out our whole race pretty much down here. Luckily enough we're here today. Probably the [biggest] issues are just cultural [knowledge] like, I grew up knowing what bloodlines, knowing all my ancestors through my dad, uncles, grandparents and I was lucky enough to get that support from them but just like other Aboriginals, Kooris around Victoria they don't have the support that I have. That's probably one of the issues, just the family support and the cultural awareness.

Conclusion

Alongside the previous case study chapter, this chapter has provided important insights into the relationship between settler belonging, Indigeneity and memory as well as to the ways that racial thinking play out in Victoria. This chapter has addressed the issues faced by Aboriginal Victorian football players in their day-to-day lives outside of football as well as the issues faced within football. This chapter has demonstrated the extent to which Aboriginal Victorian footballers remain on the periphery of their communities, and remain invisible to AFL recruiters. Drawing on semi-structured and unstructured interviews with professional and amateur Aboriginal Australian (Rules) Football players and support staff from a range of private and not-for-profit

organisations, this chapter has identified the extent to which racism continues to be normalised and that it is still a regular occurrence in the daily lives of the participants.

The first section contextualised the fieldwork by providing a discussion of the significant role that sport, especially Australian (Rules) Football plays in Australian national identity. Drawing on a discussion of Australian (Rules) Football's Aboriginal heritage, I highlighted the way that football is used to reinforce and celebrate white belonging within the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism. I introduced racism and racial thinking as symptomatic of the settler colonial psyche. The second part of this chapter identified racism as a significant problem within Australian (Rules) Football. Participants identified experiences of racism both on and off the football field, from team members and opposition players. Participants spoke of experiencing casual racism on the internet, over social media, and on the field during football games. The final section identified community level concerns (issues within/between Aboriginal communities in Victoria) and highlighted issues at the societal level (within the broader non-Aboriginal community). Family responsibility, financial disadvantage and lateral violence were identified as significant issues facing Victorian Aboriginal communities, whilst racism, mainstream perceptions of Aboriginal people living in Victoria, the ongoing effects of colonisation and trauma, and cultural isolation were highlighted as significant concerns at the broader societal level.

This chapter has demonstrated that for Aboriginal Victorian football players, experiences of racism are not isolated and that racism has the potential to cause life-long damage to victims. The fact that such incidences weren't isolated had a tremendous impact on the players' sense of self, their cultural safety and their ability to 'shrug it off'.

Conclusion and Discussion

In tracing the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians through the gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football, this thesis examined the mechanisms through which whiteness is centred within Australia's national identity. Recognising the pervasive and everyday practices of whiteness and settler colonialism has been fundamental for understanding the ways that Aboriginal Victorians maintain an invisible presence with the settler colonial psyche, both historically and contemporarily. Through case study analyses of Victoria's central and western goldfields district (chapter 5) and Australian (Rules) Football (chapter 6), this thesis investigated the particular ways that the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians is sustained and argued that this presence is inherently tied to settler colonialism and whiteness.

In chapter two I undertook a theoretical literature review and critically examined the ways that racial thinking is used to stabilise settler colonialism. Race and racism are fundamental to the colonising process and the settler claim to sovereignty. By conceptualising whiteness within a reading of both race and racism, I was able to draw attention to the ways in which racial privileges form geopolitical, socio-economic, and socio-cultural ways of being, knowing, and becoming in ways that have been taken for granted. As Essed and Goldberg allude to, in a sense all race theory is critical (Essed & Goldberg, 2002) and it is for this reason that critical race theory (CRT) along with critical race and whiteness studies are considered as fundamental when approaching research that is both ethical, theory-focused and which works against invisible and normalised power structures. Reflecting this, a central concern of this thesis lies in centering whiteness, rather than centering Indigeneity. It was my hope that by centering whiteness, I would be better able to represent the concerns of the research participants. By focusing on their concerns, rather than on my own assumptions, I wanted to challenge constructed assumptions about Aboriginality and articulate the ways that white supremacy operates discursively as a core stabiliser for settler colonialism.

Drawing on the relationship between white belonging and Australian national identity I was able to situate the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians within the

settler colonial psyche. As chapter three demonstrated, much research has already been conducted which looks to the ways that Aboriginality is constructed and represented within settler colonialism, ranging from anthropology, archaeology and linguistics to education, health and wellbeing outcomes in Aboriginal communities. Research has both sought to record Aboriginal cultural formation and manage Aboriginal people and communities within an imperialist framework. However, applying such a framework is not always appropriate, I wanted to prioritise the voices of the research participants whilst also situating their experiences within the context of contemporary practices of whiteness and settler colonialism. In a sense this research practice ‘turned the lens around’ and traced white belonging as a way of understanding the uncanny invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians today. The core aims of this thesis were the prioritising of Indigenous research methodologies and understanding contemporary and mainstream settler perceptions of Aboriginal Victorians. Because of these aims, grounded theory was considered the most appropriate way of conducting research as it allows theory to emerge out of the fieldwork and the research participants to guide the analytical process in the emergence of theory. White belonging and the settler colonial psyche emerged out of the fieldwork analysis to confirm the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism. Chapter four acted as an introduction to these central concepts as well as to the two case studies. It examined white belonging, memory and race within the context of settler colonialism. I argued that each of these concepts inform the settler colonial psyche embedded in Australian national identity.

In investigating the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians, I did not want my research to perpetuate the structures of control that my research sought to expose and understand. It is for this reason that such extensive literature reviews, both theoretical and methodological were conducted for this thesis. It was necessary for me to understand the context that my research as a white Australian would become a part of. I had to ask myself — did I want to confirm or break down colonial era research conventions? By following a grounded theory study, I was able to focus my analysis of the interviews around participant testimony rather than on supporting a pre-conceived argument. I wanted my project to be participant-led, engaged in ethical and culturally-respectful research practices, and one which followed participant’s concerns. As a result, I feel the final thesis is a better project for taking these considerations into account. By analysing the interviews based on their themes and trends I was able to situate the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians within Patrick Wolfe’s eliminatory logic of settler colonialism, in that it removed evidence of Aboriginal

sovereignty and replaced/refracted it into manifestations of white belonging. In the goldfields chapter I gave the example of Aboriginal place names and words as an example of this process, whilst in the football case study the Aboriginal origins of Australian (Rules) Football is indicative of this process. Although each of the case studies explore very different aspects of Australian national identity, the first being a narrative with its focus on the past, the second being a code of football with its focus on the present, the two case studies work together to both highlight the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians, whilst also linking it to white belonging.

Today, as highlighted by the case study of the central and western goldfields district, white Victorians have forgotten the origin and meaning of Aboriginal words and places, have constructed origin stories, and celebrate Australian heroes who are constructed as native. Aboriginal narratives are removed, replaced and translated to work within a framework of settler colonialism rather than challenging this system of control. Despite the fact that Aboriginal footballers are a celebrated and sought-after part of the Australian game of football, their presence is reconstructed within the settler colonial psyche to support an Anglo-Australian football narrative. Players like Liam Jurrah, Nicky Winmar and Adam Goodes demonstrate this narrative structure well. They are positioned as the heroes of the game and as leaders for the Aboriginal community. Until they aren't anymore. When Aboriginal players are seen to put their culture on display, as Adam Goodes did in the final years of his playing career, they are booed and accused of being soft or a 'show pony'. The uncanny message becomes clear: there is no room for Aboriginality within Australian (Rules) Football, except where it can be mass produced, marketed and used within the capitalist settler colonial framework that our society works within. These narratives position Aboriginal football players as 'authentic', 'traditional' and 'real' and therefore as coming from somewhere else. Even those like Adam Goodes and Nathan Lovett-Murray, who grew up in Victoria, maintain an invisible presence.

Although this thesis specifically looks to the gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football as significant to identity construction and nationalism, the settler colonial psyche can be similarly traced to other parts of Australia (and the world) with parallel experiences of settler colonialism and marginalisation. The settler colonial psyche positions racism, racial thinking and emotional responses to Aboriginal sovereignty as symptomatic of the inability for settler people to imagine the illegitimacy of their own claim to belonging. The settler colonial psyche articulates what happens when claims

to belong are challenged. Through the process of memory-making, denial is used as a strategy to forget.

I decided on the two case studies because I wanted to look beyond popular goldfields narratives and because I saw an issue with the lower number of Aboriginal Victorian players recruited into the Australian Football League (AFL) in 2013. At the time, this validated my argument that Aboriginal Victorians maintained an invisible presence. Due to AFL Victoria and Korin Gamadji, this is no longer the serious issue that it was in 2013. Once I commenced fieldwork, I became surrounded by Aboriginal Victorian footballers and began to realise that the issues they faced in their daily lives were not always the result of non-Aboriginal people failing to recognise their Aboriginal cultural identity, and thus was not an issue of uncomplex invisibility. I began to reframe this notion of an invisible presence around the settler colonial psyche, as settler self-reassurance (McKenna, 2003). Had my fieldwork interviews not been participant-led I would not have been required to acknowledge the complexity of interactions that continue to shape the lives of Aboriginal Victorians today. As much as the AFL needs to change the way they think about their Aboriginal football stars, I realised that the AFL is not the problem — it is merely representative of the society we live in today, one structured around whiteness and racism. Once surrounded by the participants it became hard to argue that they are invisible. I wanted my project to be participant-led, engaged in ethical and culturally-respectful research practices, and one which followed their concerns. This is a better project for it.

Whilst this study moves beyond its research focus in Victoria, it was important to conduct the fieldwork in Victoria for two reasons. Firstly, because of the role that Victoria has had in Australia's national identity, and secondly because of the underrepresentation of Aboriginal Victorian narratives within mainstream Australian culture and within the academy. It is no accident that Aboriginal Victorians are an invisible presence to white people. By positioning the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians within Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism, I was better able to understand the relationship between Australian identity construction and the denial of Aboriginal narratives.

Although a key feature of this research has been its focus on Aboriginal voices and perspectives, it was also necessary to look to the ways that Aboriginal people have been represented in contemporary research and in archives. Before concluding this thesis, I want to briefly discuss some of the implications of my findings. Although I found research which *did* focus on Aboriginal tribes in Victoria; including their

folklores, languages and cultures, such research has not necessarily engaged with contemporary Aboriginal communities. For instance, as discussed in chapter five, both Ian Clark and Fred Cahir drew on archival work to document (thus taking possession of Aboriginal cultural artefacts) colonial processes of removal and segregation as well as to map pre-colonial Aboriginal life in Victoria. Although this research plays an important role in the resurrection of Aboriginal knowledge, it is portrayed through a Western research lens and is conducted by white men. I believe this to be emblematic of white belonging, where Aboriginal knowledge comes to reinforce white possession rather than reflect Aboriginal sovereignty. I think that Aileen Moreton-Robinson would agree that such research works within the possessive logic of patriarchal white sovereignty (Moreton-Robinson, 2015, 2017). This type of Aboriginal research cannot go unscrutinised. It reflects a long history of white intervention in the lives of Aboriginal people and perpetuates the unequal power dynamic that critical theory seeks to dislodge. This is one of the central reasons why reflexivity is so important for non-Aboriginal researchers working within this space. It is why grounded theory and its assertion that theory and practice are always connected is considered so important. This issue is also emblematic of the fact that Ballarat's contemporary Aboriginal community are not considered to 'authentically' belong to the district. Their Aboriginality does not matter and is not worthy of collaboration because Aboriginality continues to be measured by outdated understandings of race as biologically determined around whiteness and racism.

Outside of the aims of this thesis, to unpack and situate the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians within contemporary theory, this thesis and its approach to conducting research can be considered as exemplifying ethical and culturally-respectful research practices. Such a research practice is fundamental when conducting intersectional research. In this way, this thesis makes an important contribution to the field as both a methodology as well as a study in contemporary modes of settler colonialism. This thesis contributed the invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians to white (settler) belonging. Because of this, it was important that as a white settler Australian my research moved beyond anthropocentric research practices which preface the white (male) voice above the voice of the participants and research area. This has been an important consideration and one which has been discussed considerably throughout the thesis, particularly in the methodology chapter. This thesis has been written in plain language drawing on uncomplicated terms in order to remain accessible. This has been essential in ensuring that the research can be used by

Aboriginal communities, undergraduate students and non-academic audiences. But more than that, it has been an essential way of ensuring that the research findings do actively work against white belonging.

Within Patrick Wolfe's eliminatory logic of settler colonialism, race and racism are foundational to Australian national identity construction. This is clear when we look to the nation's history of discriminatory immigration restriction and Aboriginal 'management' policies. Despite the fact that Australia has moved beyond such overt indications of racial intolerance, racism continues to operate discursively to position whites as the norm around which otherness operates. In this respect, racism is not going anywhere (Bell, 1992; Fanon, 2008) and we (referring specifically to those who live in settler nations) are not, nor will we ever be, post-race. I argued that Aboriginal Victorians maintain a contemporary invisible presence within the logic of settler colonialism as reflected in Australian national identity, where white belonging is maintained through the denial of alternate histories and perspectives. This thesis connected the contemporary invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians to the settler colonial psyche. This invisible presence continues in the denial of Aboriginal involvement on the goldfields, the Aboriginal origins of Australian (Rules) Football, the lower recruitment levels of Aboriginal players from Victoria and, more broadly, through the representation of Aboriginal people as noble-savages and remnants of the past unable to 'assimilate' and succeed in contemporary Australia. Through an analysis of the case studies, I confirmed that memory is central to white belonging which plays a fundamental role in the establishment and maintenance of Australian national identity. I chose the Victorian gold rush and Australian (Rules) Football as the case studies because of the role that each has played in establishing and reinforcing national (and state) identity. Australian national identity and Victorian cultural identity are both structural outcomes of settler colonialism and one cannot be explored without the other.

The representation of Aboriginal people within mainstream narratives has played (and continues to play) a fundamental role in the various ways that settler Australians think (or fail to think) about Aboriginal people and their place within contemporary Victoria. Although racism and colonialism are interconnected and supported by the ideological structures around which colonialism operates (Wolfe, 2016), race has not always been implicated within settler colonialism. This thesis responds to this neglect by tracing some of the ways that race and racial thinking have been (and continue to be) used as a fundamental structuring force within settler

colonialism. In this sense, this thesis has engaged with critical theory in the pursuit of understanding the relationship between power, race and knowledge production.

Reflection

Considering that this thesis began with a reflection of my own upbringing, it seems fitting to end with one.

This thesis developed out of a desire to understand the contemporary invisible presence of Aboriginal Victorians within mainstream society. At the time, in my honours year of my Bachelors Degree, I was looking at the cultural significance of hip-hop within Aboriginal youth culture in Victoria and was constantly challenged by whites on the validity of investigating such a project in Melbourne. ‘Are you going to Sydney or Darwin?’ I was asked by well-intentioned, and educated friends. ‘But there aren’t any Aboriginal people left here!’ I was told. Friends, family and acquaintances explained to me that Victoria was just too cold to sustain an Aboriginal presence for very long and that Aboriginal people had left well before white settlers came to take their land. I couldn’t understand where these assumptions came from — along with many other settler Australians I knew that there were Aboriginal people in Tasmania (Lehman, 2005) long after settlement so it didn’t make sense that Victoria was simply empty and ready for the taking. I wanted to know how such settler Australians, like my friends, family and acquaintances, came to ‘know’ Aboriginal Victoria as absent of Aboriginal heritage. Although this line of enquiry first became apparent to me in my honours year, it is one that was shaped by my experiences growing up in country Victoria. What started out as an investigation into the invisible presence of Aboriginal people living in Victoria, quickly turned into an investigation of the pervasive presence of settler colonialism encapsulated by Australian national identity and an exploration of the particularities of Victoria’s cultural identity. I knew that there was a small but significant population of Aboriginal people living in Victoria but did not yet fully comprehend the extent to which their presence was denied within mainstream narratives. Through my study I began to see past the settler colonial psyche that had distorted my perception for much of my life.

I used to walk along the Southbank promenade, overlooking the Yarra River and see the grand opulence of European colonial expansion but now I see the rocks either side of Queens bridge which mark the place where an ancient waterfall used to cleanse the Yarra River of the salt water brought in from Port Phillip bay. Where once I saw life, I now see ghosts and shadows. When I first moved to Melbourne from the

country, I loved the anonymity, the fast pace and the cold exterior that Melbourne represented to me, but now, as I've gotten to know the city, its history and development I see beyond the colonial facade. I drive past the MCG and see a corroboree ground, waiting under the clocks at Flinders street station, I am reminded of Tanderrum, which opens Melbourne festival every October. In Fitzroy, Northcote and Collingwood I see evidence of Aboriginal life. For instance, I see the significance of Gertrude Street and Smith Street for reunited Stolen Generation survivors, I see the Koorie markets, Sir Doug Nicoll's oval where the Fitzroy Stars trained during football season and Merri Creek where the Wurundjeri, who camped alongside the riverbanks, were pulled up clad in possum-skin cloaks to the Victoria Park oval where they were persuaded to have their photo taken alongside Collingwood football players. For every colonial Melbourne icon, I see an Aboriginal place of significance. I see beyond the infallible stone facade of the Royal Exhibition building, to the wooden interiors where captive Aboriginals were displayed. I look to the Melbourne museum, where cast in the Royal Exhibition Buildings shadow, an incredible exhibition of Aboriginal Victoria prevails with Bunjil and his wings at its centre. I can see what Melbourne used to look like before the first white people came. I see a swamp land, a vast and intricate ecological system, a wide river that sustained the Boon wurrung. I also see a legacy of dispossession, colonial violence, and attempted genocide. This legacy is always planted firmly in my mind, so as never to allow the settler colonial psyche to take root again.

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Every reasonable effort has been made to acknowledge the owners of copyright material. I would be pleased to hear from any copyright owner who has been omitted or incorrectly acknowledged.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Basic outline maps copyright approval

0 3 ▾



Peta Humphreys <phump@unimelb.edu.au>

Yesterday, 1:38 PM



Hi again Jess,

I don't think I'm going to get an answer before Friday this week.

There won't be a problem with you using the outline maps, what I'm not sure about is the appropriate attribution and whether or not you have to complete the standard form that we ask authors of books or articles that are going to be published to complete.

Apologies for this inconvenience – I'll obtain a definite answer for you as soon as I can.

Regards, Peta

Ph: 8344 8314
Mobile: 0439 352 477
Email: phump@unimelb.edu.au



Peta Humphreys <phump@unimelb.edu.au>

Yesterday, 6:41 AM



Hi Jess,

No problems, I'll follow this up for you and see if I can get an answer today.

Regards, Peta

Ph: 8344 8314
Mobile: 0439 352 477
Email: phump@unimelb.edu.au



Jess Coyle

Tue 1/8, 1:56 PM

Peta Humphreys <phump@unimelb.edu.au> ▾



Hi Peta,

Thanks for getting back to me. I'm planning on submitting my thesis at the end of next week. Is this something that someone else might be able to help me with?

Copyright

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We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.



We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners

Appendix 2

21/11/2018

Mail - jessi.coyle@postgrad.curtin.edu.au

RE: Copyright permission for use of map in PhD thesis

Stephanie Bloxsome <Stephanie.Bloxsome@aiatsis.gov.au>

Wed 11/21/2018 9:43 AM

To: Jess Coyle <jessi.coyle@postgrad.curtin.edu.au>;

Hi Jess,

Thank you for your request to use the AIATSIS map.

Please note that permission will only be granted to use the WHOLE map. There are to be no textual or colour changes, cropping or overlaying of data or other functionality. We'll require the following acknowledgment/disclaimer to appear alongside or below the map:

This map attempts to represent the language, social or nation groups of Aboriginal Australia. It shows only the general locations of larger groupings of people which may include clans, dialects or individual languages in a group. It used published resources from 1988-1994 and is not intended to be exact, nor the boundaries fixed. It is not suitable for native title or other land claims. David R Horton (creator), © AIATSIS, 1996. No reproduction without permission. To purchase a print version visit: www.aiatsis.ashop.com.au/

The licensing fee for this use will be free. If you plan to use the map in any other way, can you please let me know so I can reassess.

Please use the link below to download the image

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The password is: **AIATSIS**

If you have any problems, don't hesitate to contact.

Thanks,

Stephanie Bloxsome

Editorial and Production Officer

Aboriginal Studies Press

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1/2

Appendix 3



Julie Saylor-Briggs <ceo@vaclang.org.au>

Tue 11/20/2018, 12:54 PM

Jess Coyle ↕



Reply all | ▾

Inbox

Hi Jess,

I will look over and get back to you by COB tomorrow.

Julie

Julie Saylor Briggs I

CEO

Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages

(VACL)

70 Hanover Street, Fitzroy, 3065

Ph: (03) 9600 3811

Mob: 0437870890

Email: ceo@vaclang.org.au

Web: www.vaclang.org.au



...



Jess Coyle

Tue 11/20/2018, 8:39 AM



JCoyle map request.pdf

3 MB



Download

Hi,

I would like to reproduce the Aboriginal languages of Victoria map in my PhD thesis. I have filled out the required request form and have attached it to this email. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,
Jess Coyle

PhD student
School of Media, Culture & Creative Arts
Faculty of Humanities
Curtin University

Appendix 4



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Dr Sean Gorman (supervisor)

Department of Humanities
Sean.gorman@curtin.edu.au

Miss Jessi Coyle (PhD student)

Jessi.coyle@postgrad.curtin.edu.au

Project title: Connecting the Dots: Case Studies into the 'Invisible Presence' of Aboriginal people living in Victoria

Introduction

We would like to invite you to participate in this research project because of your interest or involvement in Australian Rules football, either through the Australian Football League (AFL) or the Victorian Football League (VFL). The aim of this study is to investigate the participation of Indigenous men living in Victoria in Australian Rules football within the AFL and the VFL.

This study has been approved by the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval Number HR 4567/2013). The Committee is comprised of members of the public, academics, lawyers, doctors and pastoral carers. If needed, verification of approval can be obtained either by writing to the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee, c/- Office of Research and Development, Curtin University, GPO Box U1987, Perth, 6845 or by telephoning 9266 2784 or by emailing hrec@curtin.edu.au.

What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate, you would be asked to contribute in two ways. First we would ask you to complete a short questionnaire at a time convenient to you. This questionnaire is designed to collect demographic information that will be used when designing the interview questions. Second, we would ask you to participate in a brief interview of about 30 minutes, so that we can get a more detailed picture of your experiences with Australian Rules football. With your permission, the interview would be digitally recorded so that we can make an accurate record of what you say. When the recording has been transcribed, you would be provided with a copy of the transcript, so

that you can verify that the information is correct and/or request deletions. We estimate that the total time commitment required of you would not exceed 45 minutes. Information gathered during this process will only be used by us, for the purpose of this study and other related studies by us. Data will not be used for commercial gain.

How will my confidentiality be protected?

We intend to protect your anonymity and the confidentiality of your responses to the fullest possible extent, within the limits of the law. Your name and contact details will be kept in a separate, password-protected computer file from any data that you supply. This will only be able to be linked to your responses by the researchers, for example, in order to know where we should send your interview transcript for checking. In the final report, you will be referred to by a pseudonym. We will remove any references to personal information that might allow someone to guess your identity, however, you should note that as the number of people we seek to interview is very small, it is possible that someone may still be able to identify you. The data will be kept securely in the Department of Humanities for five years from the date of publication, before being destroyed.

How will I receive feedback?

Once the thesis arising from this research has been completed, a brief summary of the findings will be available to you on application at the Department of Humanities. It is also possible that the results will be presented at academic conferences.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Should you wish to withdraw at any stage, or to withdraw any unprocessed data you have supplied, you are free to do so without prejudice. Your decision to participate or not, or to withdraw, will not affect your relationship with this department or affect any services you may receive now or in the future.

Where can I get further information?

Please contact the researchers if you have any questions or if you would like more information about the project.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of the project which you do not wish to discuss with the research team please contact the Secretary, HREC Office of Research and Development, Curtin University, on ph.: +61 8 9266 9223 or email: hrec@curtin.edu.au

How do I agree to participate?

If you would like to participate, please indicate that you have read and understood this information by signing the consent form and returning it in the envelope provided. The researchers will then contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time for you to complete the questionnaire and interview.

Appendix 5



School of Media, Culture & Creative Arts Faculty of Humanities

Consent form for persons participating in a research project

PROJECT TITLE: Connecting the dots: Case Studies into the 'Invisible Presence' of Aboriginal people living in Victoria

Name of participant: _____

Name of investigator(s): Jessi Coyle _____

1. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a participant information sheet to keep.
2. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form it will be retained by the researcher.
3. I understand that my participation will involve an *interview and questionnaire* and I agree that the researcher may use the results as described in the participant information sheet.
4. I acknowledge that:
 - (a) the possible effects of participating in the *interview and questionnaire* have been explained to my satisfaction;
 - (b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data I have provided;
 - (c) the project is for the purpose of research;
 - (d) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;
 - (e) I have been informed that with my consent the *interview will be audio-taped and I understand that audio-tapes* will be stored at Curtin University and will be destroyed after five years;
 - (f) my name will be referred to by a pseudonym in any publications arising from the research;
 - (g) I have been informed that a copy of the research findings will be forwarded to me, should I agree to this.

I consent to this *interview* being audio-taped

yes **no**
(please tick)

I wish to receive a copy of the summary project report on research findings

yes **no**
(please tick)

Participant signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 6

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Figure 1. The Process of Grounded Theory in your chapter 'The use of grounded theory in research' in 'Being practical with theory: a window into business research' (2014).

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I confirm that I am the copyright owner of the specified material.

Signed: 

Name: Michael Jones

Position: Associate Professor

Date: 19 NOV 2018

Please return signed form to **[Insert name and address of research student]**

Appendix 7

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Figure 15. Watha wurrung Aboriginal language and clans, 'Scars in the landscape: a register of massacre sites in Western Victoria 1803-1859' (1995), page 170

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Signed: 

Name: Dr Ian D. Clark

Position: Professor

Date: 20 November 2018

Please return signed form to **[Insert name and address of research student]**

Appendix 8

Copyright permission

0 6 ▾



Jess Coyle

Tue 1/8, 8:35 AM

Veronica Filmer <Veronica@geelonggallery.org.au> ▾



↻ Reply all | ▾

Sent Items

Hi Veronica,

I agree to the **Gallery's** reproduction policy and will include the appropriate acknowledgements for the image in the thesis.

Could you kindly resend the dropsend link to the image?

Kind regards,
Jess Coyle

PhD student
School of Media, Culture & Creative Arts
Faculty of Humanities
Curtin University

e: jessi.coyle@postgrad.curtin.edu.au
p:0424 234 894
twitter: @jesscoyle
academia.edu: jess coyle

Jess Coyle (2014) Where are all the Koorie football players? The AFL and the invisible presence of Indigenous Victorians, *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*, DOI: [10.1080/17430437.2014.976009](https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2014.976009)
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2014.976009>

...



Veronica Filmer <Veronica@geelonggallery.org.au>

Thu 11/29/2018, 8:37 AM



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Hi John

Please find attached the **Gallery's** reproduction policy. I would be grateful if you could agree to the conditions by return email. Meanwhile, I shall forward the image to you.

Veronica

...

Appendix 10



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Appendix 11

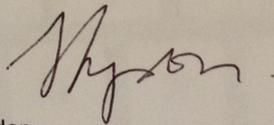
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Figure 1. Location map. Drawn by Kara Rasmanis (page 39) in Jane Lydon and Alan Burns, 'Memories of the Past, Visions of the Future: Changing views of Ebenezer Mission, Victoria, Australia'. *Aboriginal Missions in Australasia, Special issue of the International Journal of Historical Archaeology*14(1): 39-55

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Name: Jane Lydon

Position: Professor

Date: 19th November 2018

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