DREAM-PHANTASY OF A UTOPIA

THE MAKING OF THE METHODIST OVERSEAS HALF-CASTE MISSION OF CROKER ISLAND

A PERSONAL HISTORY

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History at the University of Adelaide.

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CONTENTS

Abstract

This thesis presents the combination of my lived experience as a child of the Stolen Generations, and an analysis of the relationships between church, state, and anthropologist A.P. Elkin and the roles they played across the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s in laying the foundations for assimilation and mission endeavour around half-castes which shaped my experience. Interrogation of archival documents reveals a multi-layered history beginning in the late 1920s which led to the setting up in 1941 of the Methodist Overseas Mission of Croker Island the purpose of which was assimilation of Northern Territory half-caste children.

Working from the Aboriginal knowledge position, the thesis is written through feminist standpoint theory. Through employing the methodology of *bricolage*, and incorporating a range of mediums including spoken word personal reflection primary source documents are interrogated through my personal story.

The thesis undertakes an in-depth analysis of the ways 'science', both national and international, was applied to early to mid-twentieth century constructions of full-blood and half-caste Aboriginal people as a 'race'. This analysis is then applied to the broad national discourse on prospective mission, policy and anthropological solutions to what had become known as the 'half-caste problem'.

Demonstrating the impacts of these solutions, the discussion focuses on the development of the Methodist Overseas Mission of Croker Island. This is followed by the presentation of a personal case-study which details the actions, reports and decisions taken by Northern Territory Welfare Department agents and members of the State Children's Council leading to the removal of six half-caste children from their family.

The analysis concludes with a discussion on the current state of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, and the prevailing levels of intergenerational trauma identified as arising from Aboriginal child removal in the twentieth century.

Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint award of this degree.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. The author acknowledges that copyright of published works contained within this thesis resides with the copyright holder(s) of those works. I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University's digital research repository, the Library Search and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

Signed: Date:

Dedication

For Linda Anne Faulkner 1954 – 2014

One of the very few people who saw me as Jenni, rather than as 'my part-Aboriginal friend'

In tribute to

Gladys Helen Cassidy (nee Sultan) May 1930 – April 2011

Duke Ellis/Jock Cassidy 1929 – 1974

Denise (Sultan) Benbow

Faye (Sultan) Samiran

Tony Cassidy

Terry Cassidy

Jock (David Atkinson) Cassidy

Every child who was lost to assimilation

And every Aboriginal mother and father who lost their children to assimilation

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge that the land that I live on are the traditional lands of the Kaurna people and that I respect Kaurna spiritual relationship with Country. I also acknowledge the Kaurna people as the traditional custodians of the Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important to the living Kaurna people today.

Anyente arrpenhe (respect) to my Eastern Arrente and Waanyi ancestors and Elders.

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge my supervisors, Emerita Professor Margaret Allen and Associate Professor Robert Foster for maintaining a continued commitment to this undertaking and providing ongoing support to bring this thesis into reality. They have not only been my supervisors, they have also been alongside me for all of the events of my life over the past ten years.

I thank all the archivists in the National Archives of Australia in Darwin, the Northern Territory Archives, the Fisher Library at the University of Sydney and in the Uniting Church archives in Adelaide. Your archival and research skills and outputs have provided the backbone documents for this thesis, and for this I am very grateful.

Over the years I have received both funding and scholarship support for archival research travel, and for 'buying out' of teaching, freeing up time that otherwise would not have been available. Both of these have provided the means for completion, and I would like to acknowledge the Yitpi Foundation, Dr Richard Russell and Dr Roger Thomas. Thanks to Professor John Williams for submission flexibility after recognising that the past six months have been difficult. Thanks go to Professor Julie Owens, University of Adelaide Division of Research and Innovation for the awarding of the Inaugural Indigenous Staff Scholarship. To my Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, both academic and professional, thank you for bringing community.

Particular acknowledgement goes to Professor Jennie Shaw: Executive Dean of the Faculty of Arts; Professor Jennifer Clark: Head of School of Humanities; and the person who never failed me, the amazing Ms Margaret Hosking, Research Librarian extraordinaire.

Above all, I acknowledge that my family has travelled with me in this endeavour, in particular my husband Tony who became a 'thesis widower' and encouraged me every step of the way. My children, their partners, and my grandchildren who sent me flowers and messages when I didn't think I could make it through, thanks for being my kids and grandkids – this is your history too.

A note on terminology and abbreviations

‘Aboriginal’, ‘Aborigines’, ‘full-bloods’ and ‘half-castes’:
The terms ‘Aboriginal’, ‘Aborigines’, ‘full-bloods’ and ‘half-castes’ are used throughout the body of this thesis. While recognising and respecting that it is accepted practice to use quotation marks when writing those terms, as I am the core primary source for much of the content I consider that to rigidly follow those standards when writing about myself and my people is to engage in a process of (re)objectification of self and others. Therefore a variability of application of parentheses has been applied.

‘christian/christianity’:
Due to the devastating impacts of Protestant and Catholic forms of religion on Aboriginal people ‘christianity’ is used throughout the text rather than with the expected capital ‘C’. The purpose of this is to remove the power of the word as a proper noun, as the methods used by white chrisitian society to force Aboriginal people into ‘mainstream’ Australian society did not reflect what I believe to be the gospel values as taught by Jesus Christ.

A.N.R.C.	Australian National Research Council
C.E.S.A.	Catholic Education South Australia
Croker.	Croker Island Methodist Mission
M.I.M.	Methodist Inland Mission
M.O.M.	Methodist Overseas Mission
M.M.S.A.	Methodist Missionary Society of Australasia
E.P.	Elkin papers: Elkin Series and Items Lists
S. S. C.	State Children’s Council

INTRODUCTION

My name is Jennifer Lorraine Ellis Martin Cassidy Sultan Caruso. Along with my brothers and sisters, I was removed from our family in the mid-1950s and placed on the Methodist Overseas Croker Island Half-Caste Mission. As such I am a member of the Stolen Generations of Australia, and the principal primary source for the thesis. Archival primary source documents are interrogated through the lens of my personal history, inverting the conventional discipline methodological hierarchy. As an Aboriginal person I can only write from an Aboriginal position where the living voice holds precedence.

Detailed examination of primary documents provides evidence of substantial and robust interrelationships which operated on several levels between individual agents of federal politics, agents of the Methodist Overseas Mission and the social anthropologist, Professor A. P. Elkin of the University of Sydney. There is a focus on the collaboration between these agents both in the writing of the 1939 policy and the penning of the 'Croker Island Scheme'. This 'Scheme' remained unchanged from its inception in 1941, until the closure of the site as a children's mission in 1968, when the remaining children were transferred to the Somerville Cottage Homes in Darwin.[1] The result of the policy was that during that period of time hundreds of half-caste children from the across the central regions of the Northern Territory were sent to and housed on the mission.[2]

I will argue that, aside from the self-evident role of 'mission' in the christianisation of Aboriginal people of all 'categories', the socio-anthropological motivating factors for the removal and internment of Central Australian Aboriginal half-caste children on *that specific mission* from 1940 until 1968 were based on the two pronged-apriorisms [arguments made before and accepted as fact] of *a*) the deficit of Aboriginality, *b*) the social-scientific (social Darwinist and eugenicist) belief that the introduction of non-Aboriginal heritage (miscegenation) ameliorated that deficiency, effectively rendering half-caste children prime candidates for assimilation. The thesis will show that although the actions by those involved in Aboriginal affairs were couched in terms of *social* uplift and advancement, much of the national debate on how to deal 'humanely' with Aboriginal people was underpinned and scaffolded by the discourse of '*race*'.

[1] Find and Connect: History & Information about Australian orphanages, children's Homes and other institutions. *Croker Island Mission (1940-1968).* https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/nt/YE00021
[2] Keith Cole, *Aborigines of Arnhem Land* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1979), 132.

When referring to Aboriginal people, commentary on race by those in decision making roles was not new to the discussions, but the rhetoric of the intellectual and sociological capacities of Aboriginal people took a decidedly insidious turn from the 1920s onwards. At that time there was a noticeable shift in sociological and anthropological thinking about Aboriginal people and terminology which was grounded in the application of 'caste' was applied to Aboriginal groups and to individuals. Where 'degrees' of Aboriginality had always been in play, those percentages then became justifications for the various ways in 'different castes' were policed and planned for through policy. Through the auspices of anthropology in the 1920s and 1930s, quantifying of Aboriginality transitioned into 'classification' and became the formal and accepted means of white identification of Aboriginal people. These applications also had a direct correlation to the widely held view of the half-caste as being 'problematic'. This will be examined in light of A. P. Elkin's influence on classification of Aboriginal people as a means of guiding government departments and mission bodies in writing policy for the administration of Aboriginal people aligned to their perceived socio-cultural and racial capacity for assimilation.

Utilising primary source documents from the archives of A. P. Elkin from the Fisher Library at the University of Sydney, and the archives of the Methodist Overseas Mission (M.O.M.) in the Mitchell Library (State Library of N. S. W.), one of the aims of the thesis is to uncover the socio-political and anthropological environment which informed inter-war policy for half-castes in the Northern Territory. The discussions will show how, in their deliberations on the establishment of Croker Island Mission, M.O.M. authorities were also influenced by anthropological discourse (particularly the form touted by Elkin) on Aborigines and half-castes. The history of the development of the M.O.M. policy is outlined, and then juxtaposed with personal documents from the National Australian Archives (Darwin). This brings to the fore a detailed first person case study of the removal of half-caste children in the Northern Territory.

A key initial research resource was *Mission to Arnhem Land* by Maisie McKenzie who was the wife of an Anglican missionary in the Northern Territory.[3] McKenzie wrote that in 1939, three significant events occurred in Darwin; firstly that of interdenominational church agreements for the building of a recreational facility; secondly the outbreak of World War Two. But the most important event in McKenzie's mind was the formulation of

[3] Maisie McKenzie, *Mission to Arnhem Land* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1976).

a new policy for Aborigines by Minister John McEwen who was "assisted" by A. P. Elkin.[4] My initial questions were a) what was the 1939 policy; b) who was Elkin, and c) what did either or both of them have to do with the mission to which my brothers and sisters and I (to name but a few) were sent in the mid-1950s? Those questions became research drivers of the thesis.

The aim of the thesis is to add to the body of work that has been written on the Stolen Generations, whether it has been through academic publication, government reports, biographies and autobiographies of other Stolen Generations people. The hope is that it will introduce new knowledge on the removal of half-caste children to a wide audience, including in the academic field, but particularly for the Stolen Generations as a whole, including my brothers and sisters and my Croker Island family. Drawing from a range of sources and documents, the thesis presents a history of this country that has been uncovered through my experiences as a member of the Stolen Generations. The processes employed in bringing this history to light have not followed the 'academic conventions' of the discipline of history, rather it has interwoven the personal documents and recollections with archival primary source documents. The Chapter Outlines below provide greater detail on each of the aspects of the history which research for the thesis has uncovered.

Chapter outlines

Within the Australian context, christianity and white nationalism became the ideological doctrine which underpinned discourse on the demographic makeup of the nation. In 2010 Phillip Coorey, writing for the *Sydney Morning Herald,* reported that:

> According to former Prime Minister John Howard "Australia has a secular tradition with no established church." But, while that tradition must be respected, it was his personal belief the Judaeo-Christian ethic has been the most profound moral and cultural influence in this country and it should be preserved.[5]

While anachronistic to many in twenty-first century Australia, Howard's comments reflect the ways in which the nation defined itself from the early twentieth century till the 'demise' of the white Australia policy and the emergence of multiculturalism in the 1970s. The foundations for Howard's practice of obliterating Aboriginal people in twenty-first commentary on the white only nature of the nation can be read in Walter Murdoch's 1929

[4] McKenzie, *Mission to Arnhem Land*, 105-106.
[5] Phillip Coorey, "How the West was Lost: a Lack of Faith in civilisation," *Sydney Morning Herald*, (2010). http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-opinion/how-the-west-was-lost-a-lack-of-faith-in-civilisation-20100411-s0ow.html accessed 12 August 2016.

book, *The Making of Australia: An Introductory History.*[6] Murdoch wrote that Aboriginal people should not be included in the Australia's history because we were (according to him) "without history".[7] Murdoch's position is a prime example of the ways in which anthropologist W. E. H. Stanner in his 1968 Boyer Lecture paper *After the Dreaming; Black and White Australians – An Anthropologist's View,* identified that the telling of Australian history had applied "a coat of whitewash" when it came to the inclusion of Aboriginal people in that history.[8] But Murdoch did make one point that is relevant to the discussions in Chapter One, which is that

> When people talk about the history of Australia, they mean the history of the white people who have lived in Australia [they are] concerned with white Australia only as the dwelling place of white men and women.[9]

Embedded within the national discourse of Australia for white people were the deliberations around the administration and treatment of Australia's Aboriginal people. In looking to devise mechanisms to deal with the 'half-caste problem', the state developed policies which were informed by anthropology and influenced by men of 'science.' Also working towards providing for the future of half-castes, the M.O.M., influenced by Elkin, wrote their own mission policy for the creation of a new mission site on Croker Island congruent with the Northern Territory 1939 Half-Caste policy. The threat of war on Australian soil emerged soon after the establishment of the mission, which led to the evacuation of children from all the missions in the Darwin area, including from Croker Island.

In Chapter One, under 'The Myth of Saving the Children', the discussion focuses on the story of the early war evacuation of Croker as told by missionary Margaret Somerville in *They Crossed a Continent*. In 2012 this story was made into an A.B.C. documentary titled *Croker Island Exodus* and, while it is purportedly about the children, the telling effectively positioned the half-caste children from the mission as secondary and tertiary characters. As a result the account became about the perseverance and christian fortitude of the white women, in particular Somerville.[10] The screening of the film was timed to coincide with

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[6] Walter Murdoch, *The Making of Australia: An Introductory History,* (Melbourne: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1929).
[7] Murdoch, *The Making of Australia,* 9.
[8] W. E. H. Stanner, *After the Dreaming; Black and White Australians – An Anthropologist's View,* (Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Commission, 1968), 19.
[9] Murdoch, *The Making of Australia,* 9.
[10] Margaret Somerville, *They Crossed a Continent* (Darwin: Colemans Printing Pty Ltd, 1991).
ABC, *Croker Island Exodus,* screened 20 November 2012.
http://www.abc.net.au/indigenous/programs/croker_island_exodus/

Somerville's 100th birthday. It was also to recognise that Somerville had been a missionary at Croker since the first days of its inception, which was the outcome of initial recommendations from the 1928 Report *The Aboriginals and half-castes of Central Australia and North Australia* by Queensland Chief Protector of Aboriginals, J. W. Bleakley.[11]

Based on the recommendations of the Bleakley Report, the determination was made that missions should relieve the government of some of the burden of administration of Aboriginal people.[12] Transforming this recommendation into reality required a great deal of finesse, negotiation and determination on the part of those individuals who have been identified in the first chapter as significant players in the theatre of Aboriginal affairs and in the establishment of the mission. That Report also held considerable weight in the discussions at the 1937 *Aboriginal Welfare: Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities* as well as providing the framework for classification of Aborigines based on state and region location and race quanta.[13] The Chapter will discuss both the changing role of anthropology with regard to government policy, and Elkin's unwavering perseverance in engineering a social and political space for the realisation of his vision of assimilation of half-caste children.

Through the interrogation of primary documentation, Chapter One will investigate the circumstances surrounding the writing of the M.O.M.'s 1941 Scheme for the establishment of the Croker Island Methodist Mission in response to the 1939 *Northern Territory Half Caste Policy*, known as 'the McEwen paper' and colloquially termed 'A New Deal for Aborigines'.[14] Background to the writing of this policy clearly shows the relationships built and the influences exerted by Elkin. Elkin's relationship with leading M.O.M. figures, particularly with J. W. Burton, Secretary of the M.O.M. Board is brought to bear. The Chapter discusses how that alliance was consolidated in the writing of the M.O.M. *Statement of Aims and Policy Regarding Croker Island* and the establishment of the Croker Island mission. During this period, there was friction between the M.O.M. and the

[11] J. W. Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes of Central Australia and North Australia*. Series: Parliamentary paper (Australia. Parliament): no. 21 of 1929 Govt. Printer, 1929. http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-52836352/view?partId=nla.obj-99908445#page/n30/mode/1up
[12] Bleakley, J. W. *The Aboriginals and half-castes.*
[13] H. S. Bailey, *Aboriginal Welfare: Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities Canberra, 21-23 April 1937* (Canberra: L. F. Johnston Commonwealth Government Printer, 1937).
[14] J. McEwen, *The Northern Territory of Australia: Commonwealth Government's policy with respect to Aboriginals* (Canberra: Department of the Interior, 1939). [Cited 14 June 2012.] http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/121755

Methodist Inland Mission (M.I.M.), with both branches of the Methodist Board of Missions devising their own policies for half-caste children from Central Australia. The eruption of the dispute between the M.O.M. and the M.I.M. over the Scheme will be discussed, as will Elkin's influence in the resolution of that dispute.

Following that, there will be a shift in focus in the Chapter to an examination of the influence by Elkin in the writing of government policy for the assimilation of half-castes into white Australia. I will argue that Elkin developed an assimilation hypothesis as early as the late nineteen twenties, and that the 1939 McEwen Paper was the realisation of that hypothesis in policy form. The discussion will bring to the fore the development and implementation of Elkin's hypothesis, its connection to the removal of central Australian half-caste children and their placement specifically on Croker Island. This is followed by discussion on Elkin's reputation, showing that although his work continues to be seen as setting the standard for shifts in understanding of Aborigines and in particular half-castes in social and anthropological terms, that eulogising is tempered by commentary by those who did not hold him in high regard. While Elkin was seen as "an innovator" who "possessed a strong sense of public duty and moral rectitude", John Pomeroy writes that "he was also an opinionated man who expected his advice to be taken seriously by politicians and the public".[15] The Chapter incorporates analysis of the above, examining how Elkin's ambition led him to use any opening with government and the M.O.M. to influence state and church policy on Aborigines. Both Tigger Wise and Pomeroy agree that "Elkin was bent upon shaping public policy on a range of subjects."[16]

One of the aims of Chapter Two is to discuss Elkin the anthropologist. This includes an examination of his self-promotion, the inconsistencies found in his anthropological discourse on Aborigines and half-castes and his socio-anthropological philosophies, specifically his application of the term 'parasitism' to Aboriginal people. I argue that, as Elkin was attending the London School of Economics during the interwar period, his definition of 'parasitism' of Aborigines and half-castes not only reflected the descriptions of 'Jewish parasitism', but that the assimilation aspects of 'adaptation' in the 1939 Half-Caste Policy were heavily informed by English/European deliberations on eugenicist solutions to 'problem' populations. The Chapter then focuses on the ways in which I

[15] John Pomeroy, "A. P. Elkin: Public Morale and Propaganda" in *Scholars at War, Australasian Social Scientists 1939-1945*, eds., Geoffrey Gray, Doug Munro and Christine Winter (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2012), Part 1: Chapter 1, 36& 40. http://epress.anu.edu.au
[16] Pomeroy, "A.P. Elkin", 37.
Tigger Wise, *The Self-Made Anthropologist: A life of A. P. Elkin* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1985), 127.

believe Elkin, through the development of an assimilation schema grounded in racial categorisation of Aborigines and half-castes, applied his parasitism theoretics to national assimilation policies. Three papers are central to this discussion. Firstly, Russell McGregor's "Intelligent Parasitism: A. P. Elkin and the Rhetoric of Assimilation" which discusses Elkin's template for understanding Aboriginal engagement with the pastoral industry in his 1951 paper "Reaction and Interaction: A Food Gathering People and Australian Settlement" and Heather Goodall's unpublished Ph.D. chapter and conference paper "An Intelligent Parasite: A. P. Elkin and White Perceptions of the History of Aboriginal People in New South Wales", (1982).[17] The third paper, "Reaction", introduced Elkin's concept of 'parasitism' of Aboriginal people.

I argue that the direct impact of Elkin's hypothesising and politicking was that his assimilation pronouncements were embedded in the 1939 Half Caste policy, and the 1940-41 M.O.M. *North Australia District: Statement of Aims and Policy Regarding Croker Island* ('The Croker Island Scheme').[18] It is my contention that, as a result, both policies were informed by eugenicist ideologies on how best to improve the quality of Aboriginal people as a 'race'. "Reaction", I argue, was Elkin's retrospective discussion on his theoretical formulations on the future of full-bloods and half-castes, and that there was a direct correlation between his 'schema' outlined in the paper, and his solution for half-caste children which would be best accomplished on Croker Island. Using the papers named above and other sources, I argue that the children on Croker Island became an anthropological control group for Elkin.[19] The evidence for this conclusion was found in the final pages of Elkin's 1944 publication *Citizenship for the Aborigines: A National Aboriginal Policy.*[20] While in the 1930s Elkin's focus was on half-castes, he maintained an anthropological interest in full-bloods which included gathering as much information on this 'dying race' for future reference.

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[17] Russell McGregor, "Intelligent Parasitism: A. P. Elkin and the Rhetoric of Assimilation," *Journal of Australian Studies*, 20 (1996).
A. P. Elkin, "Reaction and Interaction: A Food Gathering People and Australian Settlement," American Anthropologist 53:2 (1951).
Heather Goodall, "An Intelligent Parasite: A. P. Elkin and White Perceptions of the History of Aboriginal People in New South Wales", Conference Paper: Australian History Association Conference NSW (1982).
[18] E.P.: 130/12/113, *The Missionary Review: Methodist Overseas Missions – North Australia District. Revised Statement of District Policy* (1944).
[19] Elkin, "Reaction and Interaction", (1951).
[20] A. P. Elkin, *Citizenship for the Aborigines: A National Aboriginal Policy,* (Sydney: Australasian Publishing Co., 1944).

A consequence of the general belief that full-bloods were going to die out was that much of the work directed towards assisting this cohort was considered 'palliative'. With this in mind, for anthropologists in particular, this brought the imperative to collect information and knowledge from full-bloods before their final demise as a race of peoples. While this was a focus of anthropology, Elkin's work and policy recommendations for half-castes seemed, in theory, to be a much more enlightened approach. Certainly Elkin's ideological undertaking to draw Aboriginal people 'not of the full-blood' into the polity of the nation as citizens was, on the surface, admirable. A much publicised example of how this would occur was the promotion of the role missions would play in this transition.

Chapter Three draws the focus away from Elkin, and onto Croker Island. Croker Island was set up in 1941 as a 'model' for other missions, combining christianity with skills training as a means of entry into white society.[21] The 1941 Scheme provided the foundations over that period for calls for Methodist families in Adelaide to bring Croker Island children into their families. This is discussed in three sections. The first section will examine the ways in which young Aboriginal half-caste women on Croker were depicted in the *Australian Monthly* mission newsletter of April 1948 which presented assimilation as a humane and christian approach to the 'half-caste problem'.[22] By the late 1940s/early 1950s, Aboriginal people had suffered degrees of cultural and race violence like no other demographic in the nation. That violence was not only cultural, it was also gendered with Aboriginal women being represented as having no mothering/maternal skills. The benchmark for comparison was the inherent positive domestic capacities of white women. Margaret Jacob's *White Mother to a Dark Race* (among other sources), provided strong arguments around the application of 'dirt' and 'dirtiness' of Aboriginal women as justification for removal of their children.[23] Implicit in the gender violence was the overt and covert sexualisation of half-caste women and girls. This carried with it the subterranean imprimatur that sexual abuse of Aboriginal women and girls was somehow excusable, with the blame most often being placed on the victims. A relevant point here is the ways in which representations and images of half-caste women, and half-caste girls were employed to project to the general public the admirable work being done by

[21] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes of Central Australia and North Australia*. Series: Parliamentary paper (Australia. Parliament): no. 21 of 1929 Govt. Printer, 1929. http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-52836352/view?partId=nla.obj-99908445#page/n30/mode/1up (1929).
[22] Uniting Church Archives, Gilles Street Adelaide, Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2, "One Approach to our Color [sic] Problem", *Australian Monthly* (April, 1949), 25-27. Author unknown, Accessed 2010.
[23] Margaret Jacobs, *White mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

missionaries on Croker Island. This Chapter advances the view that these representations became a mechanism to attract white males as potential adoptive and foster parents to those girls by drawing their gaze to the sexualised images of the female half-caste body - the mostly unintended outcomes of which took the form of sexual abuse.

Building upon a discussion of those points, I move to a single 'case study'. The commentary focuses on the Ellis/Cassidy/Sultan family in Alice Springs and employs primary source documents from the National Australian Archives (Darwin). These include a significant number of folios from the State Children's Council of South Australia which also had jurisdiction in the Northern Territory. The documents detail the 1957 removal of the six half-caste children from that home, and the mother's voice begins to emerge.

For the full facilitation of assimilation of one of those children to be effective, the M.O.M. negotiated with a prospective white family in South Australia for her fostering. From personal documents from the N.A.A. (Darwin), I move into detailing step-by-step processes whereby I was fostered into that family. Those documents show the extent of the agreements that were made between the Welfare Department of the Northern Territory and my foster family. In particular they show the lengths to which my foster father went to keep the Welfare Department informed as to my progress, and revealed that I had been monitored for a decade and a half. The language used in the communications and documents fully reflect the terminology and thinking around half-caste children that was in use in the late 1920s-1930s. In particular, Elkin's terminology is evident in all the communications.

As set out in the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's 1997 *National Inquiry into the removal of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*: *Bringing them home* Report, an inquiry which was the result of demands by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending the 1994 'Going Home Conference' in Darwin, the greater percentage of Stolen Generations members were never able to reconnect to their families.[24] Often when they did the result was disastrous and compounded the grief and trauma already experienced by those individuals and their families. In this I was fortunate; I was able to locate my mother and brothers and sisters

[24] Ronald Wilson (Commissioner), National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their Families: *Bringing them home: report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity National Inquiry into the removal of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their families* (Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1997).

(my father had passed away in 1974). In this Chapter I detail my reconnection to my family, describing the impact on myself and my mother and the ways in which my family responded to my return. It also describes my return to Croker Island.

Included in the investigation of primary documents is discussion on the 1955 petitioning of the Minister for Territories (Sir Paul Hasluck) by the Adelaide Central Mission to relocate inmates of Croker to Adelaide, with the result that many of those children, mostly female, were 'transported south'. [25] Section three of this Chapter is a personal reflective memory narrative of my arrival in Adelaide on Christmas Eve 1958.

Chapter Four extends that personal narrative. Through the presentation of my search for family, reflection on my life as a removed child, what I was taught (and learned) about Aboriginality, the blocks of bureaucracy in maintaining control of reconnecting processes and the rebuilding of relationships is evident. This is read alongside personal primary documentation provided by Link-Up, the organisation established to assist Aboriginal people reconnect with family.[26] The Chapter includes a reflective narrative after a return to Croker Island Mission in 2007 and concludes with a 2011 gathering of family in Port Hedland.

In Chapter Five, I situate the devastation experienced by Aboriginal people of the Stolen Generations into current recognition that the removal of half-caste children resonates into the twenty-first century and is prevalent in reporting on present-day levels of Aboriginal disadvantage. Data and information from a range of sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Causes of Death in Australia 2015* "Intentional Self-Harm in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People" report is used to demonstrate how the 'history' of the Stolen Generations impacts on youth suicide rates and all age health rates of Aboriginal Australians.[27] Employing recent data from a range of government reports such as the Australian Government Productivity Commission's *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage* 2016 Key Indicators, I illustrate the connections between current levels of disadvantage

[25] Uniting Church Archives, Gilles Street Adelaide, Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2.
[26] Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (A.I.A.T.S.I.S.) https://aiatsis.gov.au/research/finding-your-family/where-get-help/link-up-services
[27] Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Causes of Death in Australia 2015: Intentional Self-Harm of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.* http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/3303.0~2015~Main%20Features~Intentional%20self-harm%20in%20Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20people~9

faced by Aboriginal Australians to the history of the Stolen Generations.[28] This includes discussion on recent data on Aboriginal youth suicide which the A.B.S. links to the findings of the 1991 *Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody*.[29] That Report connected the deaths in custody of Aboriginal people to the removal of Aboriginal children from their families, and the findings of the R.C.A.D.I.C. are referred to in *Bringing them home*.[30] The purpose of including this information is to show the intergenerational links between early to mid-twentieth century child removal and the levels of disadvantage and trauma experienced by Aboriginal communities today. Those discussions lead to outlining the current processes devised by the Government of South Australia to fulfil the recommendations of the *Bringing them home* Report through the recent establishment of the 2016 *Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme*,[31] which seeks to provide monetary compensation to members of South Australian Stolen Generations.[32] An examination of the status of the implementation of the 54 Recommendations of the *Bringing them home Report* show that it is imperative to keep working towards achieving all the outcomes.

The discussion in the final section of Chapter Five (and indeed of the thesis) was not initially planned. Writing of this section emerged after the death of my foster-father George Martin and the relocation of Leonie Martin to a residential facility in January 2017. When sorting through paperwork in the Martin house, my foster brothers were looking through an old photo album, which not only contained photos, but also a number of letters relating to me. My foster mother had told me years ago that she had received letters from my mother asking how I was, but that she had never kept them. That seems to be true because these letters were not personal or from my mother. They are dated 1958 and were written in official and semi-official form from the then Superintendent of Croker Island Mission, the Rev. E. Moore congratulating the Martins for fostering me, and Una Clarke, my cottage 'mother' telling Leonie what I would need in the way of clothes etc., and how I

[28] Productivity Commission. *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators.* Melbourne: Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, 2014. http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/overcoming-indigenous-disadvantage

[29] Elliot Johnston (Commissioner), *National* Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, (Canberra: Australian Govt. Pub. Service, 1991). http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs112.aspx

[30] *Bringing them home*, (1997).

[31] *Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme,* (Government of South Australia: Department of State Development, 2016). http://statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/aboriginal-affairs/stolen-generations-reparations-scheme

[32] *Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme*.

had finally settled into life on the mission after grieving for my father.[33] It is now 60 years to the day that I was taken away, and even as I write this I am diminished. I have no words to articulate this feeling.

Methods

The original working title for this thesis was *"Government alhwarrpe anthurre ampe mape rakeke-iperre mekwe-ntyele -Ipeltye-irreme: The Government is really sorry for taking the children away from their mothers, apologise, make friends.*"[34] Initial planning included building a set of case studies by recording oral histories of some of the people who had been sent to Croker Island as children. It became clear that this methodological approach would require the taking and using Aboriginal people's knowledge and experiences without an equitable balance of reciprocity and that the benefits would possibly be greater for me than they would be for Aboriginal community members. This would not comply with the requirements of the protocols for working with Aboriginal people set out in national ethics documents, and was therefore ethically untenable.[35] While the use of a range of case studies for contrast and comparison of 'source stories' bringing "intra- and inter-textual coherence or agreement between the and other sources" is considered a standard history discipline approach of contrast and comparison, I realised that if I was personally re-experiencing re-traumatisation through the process of writing the thesis, then, in taking this approach, I would be actively engaging in a process of re-traumatisation for any other participants.[36] The thesis therefore employs only one case study to build an aggregate account of history located both in the past and the present through the corporeal entity of my personal story.

To write from such a position proposes a disruption to the methodological norms of the discipline of history. As Mark Donnelly and Claire Morton write, there are generally accepted processes in 'writing history':

> Historians work in the present, and from there they can look only at traces left behind from the past (like documents, objects, buildings, films and so on), talk to people about their memories of past events or look at other people's versions of what they

[33] E. R. Moore, letter to Rev. & Mrs G Martin, 22.12.58. Received January 2017
[34] John Henderson and Veronica Dobson (compilers), *Eastern and Central Arrernte to English dictionary,* (Alice Springs: Institute for Aboriginal Development, c 1994).
[35] Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies.* http://aiatsis.gov.au/research/ethical-research/guidelines-ethical-research-australian-indigenous-studies
[36] Mark Donnelly and Claire Norton, *Doing History* (Routledge: New York, 2011), 59.

> imagine the past might have been like (usually in the form of books, films or documentaries). History looks at surrogates of the past, not the past itself.[37]

In the course of employing some of the traditionally accepted aspects of analysing primary documents ("surrogates of the past") through the lens of the present, the techniques applied in the writing of the thesis challenge the stance that "we cannot use the past as a foundation for historical knowledge because we cannot directly access it in order to check whether there is a correspondence between this past and our historical narratives".[38] As the time frame being examined falls mostly within my lifetime, by looking at those "traces left behind" this thesis *can* and *does* provide "the foundation for historical knowledge" because it does "directly access it" and brings to light the "correspondence" between the past and contemporary narrative.[39]

The epistemological basis and methodological processes of the thesis are grounded in the personal story where the *fundamentum* of the history is the story. I am both the subject of and the central primary source for this thesis. The empirical history has emerged through research of the personal history; it would otherwise be unfound and therefore unknown. As such, some might define the theoretical approach that I am taking as being reflective of Pierre Nora's *Ego-Histoire* which seeks "To explain, as an historian, the link between the history you have made and the history that has made you."[40] Nora identified that

> The exercise was; to try to apply to oneself, each with his or her own particular style and methods, the same cool, encompassing and explanatory gaze that one so often directs towards others.[41]

While Indigenous academics have both contributed to writings on and applied *Ego-Histoire* to their own scholarship, it asks the author "to clearly set down one's own story [histoire] as one would write someone else's".[42] My view is that using this approach in the thesis would result in an academic 'softening' of a harsh history and the suppression of the first-person voice into an acceptable non-Indigenous academic framework. The intent of my identified methodology is to reduce the application of techniques that muffle the power of the personal experience. This thesis comes from a place of anguish and is written in the raw voice.

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[37] Donnelly and Norton, *Doing History*, 5.
[38] Donnelly and Norton, *Doing History*, 48.
[39] Donnelly and Norton, *Doing History*, 48.
[40] *Ngapartji ngapartji, in turn, in turn: ego-histoire, Europe and Indigenous Australia* eds., Vanessa Castejon, Anna Cole, Oliver Haag and Karen Hughes (Canberra, ACT: Australian National University Press): 6.
[41] *Ngapartji Ngapartji*, 6.
[42] *Ngapartji Ngapartji*, 6.

Indigenous scholars recognise that they face an inherent difficulty in that we are writing from an Indigenous life-informed space into a non-Indigenous empirical documented and defined space. There is a dichotomous relationship between Aboriginal ontologies and non-Aboriginal ontologies which means that the representations of Aboriginal peoples by Aboriginal peoples, and representations of Aboriginal people by non-Aboriginal people are based in two differing world views and power-based positions.[43] Western academia is situated within western sovereignty and, as Wendy Brady states, "Sovereignty as internationally recognised Western nationhood does not exist in a formal context for Indigenous Australians".[44] As Torres Strait Islander academic Martin Nakata notes

> To speak broadly about scholarly and intellectual practice in the field of Indigenous Studies from the Indigenous perspective is to speak about it quite differently from non-Indigenous academics who speak from within the disciplinary intersections where their knowledge production and practice takes up issues about us, our historical experience and our contemporary position.[45]

While grounded in the discipline of history, the thesis is theoretically informed by standpoint analysis. Although generated out of gender studies as a rule, Nakata writes that as an academic form, standpoint theory

> encourages diversity in Indigenous scholarship by providing a framework by which the fissure between . . . Indigenous knowledges and western knowledges can be negotiated. [46]

Nakata identifies that it is a complex space in "which Indigenous people interrogate their realities" and where

> as a rigorous scholarly enterprise, Indigenous standpoints accommodate the diversity of Indigenous intellectual positions and expand the investigative possibilities open to Indigenous scholars.[47]

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[43] Veronica Arbon, "Knowing from where?", in Andrew Gunstone (ed), *History, politics and knowledge: essays in Australian indigenous studies*, (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2008), 134-146.

[44] Wendy Brady, "That sovereign being: History matters" in Aileen Moreton-Robinson ed., *Sovereign Subjects: indigenous sovereignty matters*, (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2007), 143.

[45] Martin Nakata, "Indigenous Australian Studies and Higher Education," The Wentworth Lectures –. (AIATSIS, 2004): 1. http://aiatsis.gov.au/publications/presentations/indigenous-australian-studies-and-higher-education

[46] Michelle Carey & Michael Prince, "Designing an Australian Indigenous Studies curriculum for the twenty-first century: Nakata's 'cultural interface', standpoints and working beyond binaries," *Higher Education Research & Development*, 34(2) (2015): 270-283. Viewed 23 March 2015. http://www.tandfonline.com.proxy.library.adelaide.edu.au/doi/abs/10.1080/07294360.2014.956691

[47] Carey & Prince, "Designing an Australian Indigenous Studies Curriculum", 272.

Decolonising methodologies: research and Indigenous peoples by Maori academic Linda Tuhiwai Smith is recognised by Indigenous academics as the definitive work which articulates the ways in which Indigenous people encounter writing and how the impact of colonisation continues to contemporaneously affect the ways in which and the places from which Indigenous authors write.[48] Writing into the Indigenous academic space, Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson states "Indigenous women's life writings are testimony to colonial processes that shaped subjectivity and they illuminate the pain and loss of dispossession in many forms".[49] While not aligning the methodology of this thesis with the emergent positions of historian Marcia Langton's 'anti-colonialism' and Indigenous educationalist Lester Irabinna Rigney's 'Indigenist' research methodology, there is agreement from both academics that feminist standpoint theory and methodology provides a 'best practice fit' for Indigenous scholars.[50]

In the thesis, primary documentation from a number of archival sites is interrogated. They range from government Welfare records, M.O.M. sources and the University of Sydney Fisher Library records of A. P. Elkin. All of these sources are interrogated by and through the personal narrative - a process which could be defined as postmodern non-fiction "self-referentiality".[51] While the personal history is employed as a countercheck to the 'document history', the information from the differing range of sources is pulled together through the process of *bricolage.* As sociologist Norman Denzin writes, *bricolage*

> is qualitative research which is messy, performative, poetic, political, and reflexive. It is auto ethnographic inquiry shaped by the call to social action, by a commitment to undo pedagogies of oppression.[52]

In applying *bricolage*, my approach to this thesis is that of a qualitative researcher utilising personal life story as the conduit to a specific historical occurrence. Critical researchers, Joe Kincheloe, Peter McLaren and Shirley Steinberg write that "the bricolage highlights the relationship between a researcher's way of seeing and the social location of his or her personal history" and that "the critical researcher-as-bricoleur abandons the quest for some

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[48] Linda Tuhuwai Smith, *Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1.
[49] Aileen Moreton-Robinson, *Talkin' up to the white woman* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2000), 3.
[50] Lester-Irabinna Rigney, "Internationalisation of an Indigenous AntiColonial Cultural Critique of Research Methodologies: A Guide to Indigenist Research Methodology and its Principles," *Wicazo San Review*, 14:2 (1999): 13. Marcia Langton, "Well, I heard it on the radio and I saw it on the television --, " (Australian Film Commission: North Sydney, circa 1993).
[51] Marcel Cornis-Pope, "Self-Referentiality" in Hans Bertens, Douwe W. Fokkema eds., *Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages: International Postmodernism: Theory and literary practice*, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1997), 256.
[52] Norman K. Denzin, "Performing methodologies," *Qualitative Social Work* 12 (2013): 392.

naïve concept of realism, focusing instead on the clarification of his or her position in the web of reality."[53]

Throughout the research, the discovery of archival documents filed under my name brought the realisation that I had been under observation by the Northern Territory Department of Welfare from between the ages of three and eighteen. This also entailed detailed record-keeping of my whereabouts and events in my life. This realisation brought an unforeseen element to the 'knowing' of my life, ineluctably transforming the topography of the thesis baseline. What I thought I knew, I still 'knew' but it was a more complex form of knowingness. The writing then became more complex: as Alison Ravenscroft articulates

> In this case the autobiographical act becomes not only a matter of memory and its failure, it is more a matter of the selection and arrangement of elements to cohere into a narrative, it is also the introduction of new elements and, significantly, ones written by others.[54]

As the thesis presents "a pieced-together set of representations that is fitted to the specifics of a complex situation" it sits well within the methodology of *bricolage.*[55] Sociologist Douglas Harper states that "Indeed, the *bricoleur's* life history, or biography, 'may be thought of as bricolage'".[56]

While the approach employs a combination of those outlined above, either singularly or enmeshed, they have only provided a point of ingress to the methodology of this thesis. Cora Thomas writes "There is a general inadequacy of published research on the historical specificity of Australia's culturalist or assimilation policies as they directly affected Indigenous people".[57] It is within this gap that the thesis sits. The thesis engages in a process where in some instances, primary sources are positioned *below* the personal story. Those sources are then interrogated *through the story.* In other instances the personal story is positioned as the core from which the primary sources emanate, and the sources are again cross-examined. Rather than situate the primary documents as having the greater historical authority, the intent is to position the personal story as holding precedence.

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[53] Joe L. Kincheloe, Peter McClaren and Shirley Steinberg, "Critical Pedagogy and Qualitative Research: Moving to the Bricolage" in Shirley R. Steinberg & Gaile S. Cannella eds., *Critical Qualitative Research Reader* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2012), 21.
[54] Alison Ravenscroft, *The Postcolonial Eye, White Australian Desire and the Visual Field of Race,* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012), 92.
[55] Norman K. Denzin, Yvonna S. Lincoln eds., *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, c2005), 4.
[56] D. Harper, *Working Knowledge: Skill and community in a small shop* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1987), 75.
[57] Cora Thomas, "From 'Australian Aborigines' to 'white Australians'," *Australian Aboriginal Studies* (2001): 21.

In particular, the approach of the thesis is to position the assimilated voice both *over* and *under* the dominant white voices which prevailed in this period of Australian history. The imperial notions of a white nation were firmly entrenched in the processes of assimilation, where, as Tuhuwai Smith writes

> [the] collective memory of imperialism has been perpetuated through the ways in which knowledge about indigenous peoples was collected, classified and then represented in various ways back to the West, and then, through the eyes of the West back to those who have been colonised.[58]

Just as half-castes were subjectified by the western scientific 'gaze' through studies by anthropologists in particular which had the direct consequences discussed in this thesis, I am turning my Aboriginal 'gaze' back onto the main actors in the field. This is the lens reversed, I look at you looking at me through clouded lens, and I return the gaze. But I am not a singular entity – I am both the adult woman I have become and I am the child that you took away. WE return the gaze - both the child that I have protected and the adult that I am. Holding the child has not been a burden – it has been an act of protection, of validation that she was real, a product of her parents and a being who would not succumb to the devastations imposed on her. While never ceding that ground, the progression of the thesis invites you to follow my gaze away from the adult who was the child destined to be classed as a success story of assimilation and focus on those who took the child. Then in the closing pages of the thesis, I invite to you listen again to the woman I am.

The Literature

For many informed Australians and academics the publication which comes to mind when speaking of the Stolen Generations is the 1997 *Bringing them home: report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity National Inquiry into the removal of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their families*.[59] Perhaps this is because it was so widely publicised through the media, and perhaps because there were visions of the tears of then leader of the Opposition Kim Beazley in parliament at the tabling of the Report.[60] Whatever the reason, it is a readily accessible, easy to read document which details the policies of assimilation and records personal narrative histories of those impacted by

[58] Smith, *Decolonizing methodologies,* 31.
[59] *Bringing them home,* 1997.
[60] The Honourable Kim Beazley, http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Parliamentarian?MPID=PE4

removal. Although aspects of the Report have been hotly debated, the importance for the Stolen Generations of both the entire process and the resultant publication cannot be downplayed.[61] For those members of the Australian community, the report tapped "into the core of the trauma resulting from a forgotten historical past in Australia, one brought forth in story, in memory".[62] Di Bretherton and David Mellor say that it also provided discussion on how

> structural violence, grounded in the geohistorical context of the invasion of Australia by Europeans, play[ed] itself out in the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.[63]

Carmel Bird's 1998 book *the stolen children and their stories* is a compilation of both new oral histories, and some of the stories from the *Bringing them home* report. Its significance is not only that members of the Stolen Generations were able to see their life histories in print, but importantly "the greater part of the royalties [was] paid to the people whose work appears in the section 'Stories'".[64] Writing for a more general, public audience as well as into the academic space on Aboriginal histories, Henry Reynolds and Anna Haebich have published works on the Stolen Generations from the historical/sociological perspective. While Reynolds includes a chapter on genocidal intentions of assimilation in *An indelible stain?: the question of genocide in Australia's history*, his 2005 book *Nowhere People* focuses on the dislocation of Aboriginal people as a result of colonisation, twentieth century policies and the removal of half-caste children.[65] Haebich's work is invaluable in any study of the Stolen Generations; *Broken Circles: fragmenting Indigenous families 1800-2000; Many Voices*: *reflections on experiences of indigenous child separation* (Haebich and Mellor eds.) and *Spinning the dream: assimilation in Australia 1950-1970* can be considered definitive works in the field of research into the Stolen Generations.[66] In *Imagined Destinies* historian Russell McGregor writes extensively on early to mid-

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[61] See Keith Windschuttle, "Why There Were No Stolen Generations," *Quadrant*, 54 (2010).
Robert Manne, "In Denial: the Stolen Generations and the right," Australian quarterly essay, QE 1 (2001).
[62] Kay Schaffer, "Stolen Generations Narratives in Local and Global Contexts," *Antipodes* 16 (2002): 5.
[63] Di Bretherton, David Mellor, "Reconciliation between Aboriginal and Other Australians: The Stolen Generations," *Journal of Social Issues* 62 (2006): 81.
[64] Carmel Bird ed.,, *The stolen children: their stories: including extracts from the Report of the National Inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their families* (Milsons Point, N.S.W.: Random House Australia, 1998).
[65] Henry Reynolds, *An indelible stain?: the question of genocide in Australia's history* (Ringwood: Viking, 2001).
Henry Reynolds, *Nowhere People* (Camberwell: Penguin, 2005).
[66] Anna Haebich, *Broken circles: fragmenting indigenous families 1800-2000* (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2000).
Anna Haebich and Doreen Mellor eds., *Many voices: reflections of experiences of indigenous child separation*, (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2002).
Anna Haebich, *Spinning the dream: assimilation in Australia 1950-1970* (Fremantle: Fremantle Press, 2008).

twentieth century systemisation of 'race' in proto-nationalist and nationalist discourse, and the ways in which the ideal of a 'white Australia' impacted on Aboriginal Australians.[67] Building on from that, McGregor's *Indifferent Inclusion* provides concrete information on the ways in which Aboriginal Australians were relegated to the periphery of the emerging body politic, creating a socio-political arena where the removal of half-caste children could occur without too much disruption to the national conscience.[68]

Academics Colin Tatz and Robert van Krieken (among others) extend the discussions on the Stolen Generations into the discourse of genocide.[69] For example Robert van Krieken,

> examines the systematic removal of indigenous Australian children from their families, largely for the social engineering purpose of the gradual and systematic annihilation of Aboriginal cultural identity.[70]

Those views/positions were strongly challenged by social commentators and historians such as columnist Andrew Bolt and historian Keith Windschuttle. In particular Windschuttle writes that "The argument of *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History, Volume Three, The Stolen Generations 1881–2008* is that Australia does not deserve this reputation".[71] Windschuttle goes further, stating: "My conclusion is that not only is the charge of genocide unwarranted, but so is the term "Stolen Generations".[72] Social commentator Andrew Bolt weighed in on the conservative (badly informed) side when he crowed that elder statesperson and former Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Lowitja Donoghue "was not stolen".[73] Bolt and Windschuttle are representative of those who called for the end of the "black armband view" of Australian history as coined by historian Geoffrey Blainey, and taken up by the then prime minister, John Howard.[74] Through *In Denial, The Stolen Generations and the Right,* professor of politics Robert Manne responded to those conservative views, writing "Andrew Bolt's article and John Howard's response were . . . the most recent moves . . . to change the

[67] Russell McGregor, *Imagined Destinies: Aboriginal Australians and the doomed race theory, 1880-1939,* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1997).
[68] Russell McGregor, Indifferent Inclusion: Aboriginal people and the Australian Nation (Acton: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2011).
[69] Colin Tatz, *With intent to destroy; reflecting on genocide* (New York: Verso, 2003), 67-106.
[70] Robert van Krieken, "the barbarism of civilisation: cultural genocide and the 'stolen generations.' (forcible removal of indigenous Australian children)," *British Journal of Sociology* 50 (1999): 297.
[71] Windschuttle, "Why there were no stolen generations," 8.
[72] Windschuttle, "Why there were no stolen generations," 8.
[73] Andrew Bolt, "I Wasn't Stolen: Aboriginal Leader's Shock Admission," *Herald Sun* (2001): 1.
[74] Manne, "In Denial," 75.

moral and political balance with regard to the issue of the stolen generations".[75] Manne's paper became the definitive response to those debates within social and academic circles.

While all of those works and others are important references for the thesis, in terms of Aboriginal 'reality', academic publications and social commentary sit outside of the real world of members of the Stolen Generations – people who knew what had happened in their lives, and were finding their own ways to articulate their experiences. Therefore, none of the works by academics, or the recordings of personal stories should be read in isolation to the narratives captured in the *Bringing them home report,* and exclusive of the growing number of first person accounts from members of the Stolen Generations. It could be said that the underlying purpose for Aboriginal people in writing their lives is not just to inform, but to perform a role in social change. As Denzin writes "If we do not do this, history [will] go on behind our backs . . . our project is to change society, not just interpret or write about it".[76]

Novels, biographies, autobiographies, autohistories/ethnographies written by and for people who were removed command their own theatre in the overarching genre of 'Stolen Generations'. These works can be seen as constituting a "'community of memory'" where "collective identity is based on the elective processes of memory, so that a given group recognises itself through its memory and common past".[77] As Susan Barrett writes:

> Telling, or writing their stories, becomes for Indigenous women [people] a way of repossessing their lives and positioning themselves as subjects instead of objects: a way of challenging white Australia's politics of identity by taking responsibility for defining themselves.[78]

This was apparent in Margaret Tucker's 1977 first person life narrative *If Everyone Cared* where Susan Barrett says "Tucker became the first Indigenous woman to publish her own experience of being removed as a child in a full length book".[79] There have been several publications by Aboriginal people, particularly women, recounting their experiences as members of the Stolen Generations, whether it is in their own person or as part of their family history. One of the first which attracted a wide reading audience was Sally

[75] Manne, "In Denial," 4.
[76] Denzin, "Performing methodologies," 390.
[77] Eric Ketelaar, Sue McKemmish and Anne Gilliland-Swetland, "Communities of memory': pluralising archival research and education agendas," *Archives and Manuscripts* 33 (2005): 150.
[78] Susan Barrett, "Reconstructing Australia's Shameful Past: the Stolen Generations in Life-Writing, fiction and film," *lignes* 2 (2005): 3.
[79] Barrett, "Reconstructing Australia's shameful past," 3.

Morgan's *My Place.*[80] While *My Place* was both critically acclaimed and critically analysed, Michelle Grossman writes that:

> Morgan's book remains significant for what the debates that surround it have to tell us about the politics and positioning of Aboriginal women's writing over the last two decades.[81]

Ruth Hegarty's *Is that you, Ruthie?,* and its sequel *Bittersweet Journey* give accounts of life on Cherbourg Mission in Queensland, and *Too Many Tears* by Heather Vicenti and Deborah Dickman is an autobiographical rendering of life on a West Australian mission as a member of the Stolen Generations.[82] There are other well-known stories such as Doris Pilkington-Garimara's *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence,* the basis for the highly successful film *Rabbit Proof Fence.*[83] In her acclaimed novel *'Mazing Grace,* Kokatha woman Dylan Coleman ties the impacts of mission life to family life and existence employing an interweaving of Kokatha and English.[84] This book is an example of the ways in which Aboriginal women writers are reshaping the Australian novel genre. Then there are the less well known, but nonetheless equally important published stories such as Lorraine McGee-Sippel's *Hey mum, what's a half-caste?,* and Claire Henty-Gebert's account of her time on Croker Island, *Paint me black.*[85] The recording and publication of Aboriginal peoples' life stories has been crucial for changing the debates in Australia about the Stolen Generations. They also precipitated works by scholars such as Peter Read and Anna Haebich. All the above works could be categorised in a range of genres – that of academic publications for academics, publications underpinned by academic research aimed at a broader public audience, family histories rendered through novel form, and heartbreaking life portraits captured in autobiographies. Although each publication by members of the Stolen Generations is critical for the recording of history, life-stories do not generally explore the archives or analyse state policies with regards to Aboriginal people and the mining of the archives has generally been an enterprise separated from the writing of Indigenous life stories.

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[80] Sally Morgan, *My Place* (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1987).
[81] Michelle Grossman, "Out of the Salon and into the Streets: contextualising Australian Indigenous women's writing," *Women's Writing* 5 (1988): 169.
[82] Ruth Hegarty, *Is that you, Ruthie?; Bittersweet Journey* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2003).
Heather Vicente and Deborah Dickman, Too Many Tears; an autobiographical account of stolen generations (St Albans: Meme Media, 2008).
[83] Doris Pilkington-Garimara, *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2002).
Rabbit Proof Fence, directed by Phillip Noyce, screenplay by Christine Olsen (Miramax Films: 2002).
[84] Dylan Coleman, *'Mazing Grace* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2012).
[85] Lorraine McGee-Sippel, *Hey mum, what's a half-caste?* (Broome: Magabala Books, 2009).
Claire Henty-Gebert, *Paint me black* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2005).

However, among the range of works of Stolen Generations' stories by Stolen Generations people, Mary Terszak's Master's dissertation, *Orphaned by the Colour of My skin: a stolen generation story* where Terszak "critically examines her own life experiences in the context of the racist assimilationist policies that shaped them", is the closest in form to this thesis .[86] While Terszak utilises her own life and history as a case study, she also includes a range of stories from others. My thesis only employs the one case study. While this thesis also positions the personal history within the sociological, anthropological and policy arena, it differs from other renderings, including Terszak's, in that there are several streams of alignment and juxtaposition between and of twentieth century policies, with a range of primary documents from various institutions and archival repositories government records specifically relating to the single case study all interwoven, examined and read from above and below.

These are then interrogated through the recollections of an extant life which has been impacted by the three pronged secular, scientific and religious attempts to fit Aboriginal Australians into the Dream Phantasy illusion of 'the nation', the result of which was the Croker Island Mission.

[86] Jedda Graham, "Orphaned by the Colour of My Skin - A Stolen Generation Story," (Book Review) *Journal of Family Studies* 15 (2009): 107.
Mary Terszak, Orphaned by the colour of my skin, a stolen generations story (Maleny: Verdant House, c2008).

CHAPTER ONE: Protestants, Policies and Professors: Key players in the formation of the Methodist Overseas Half-caste Mission of Croker Island.

The following are the contents of an email received from Reverend Jack Goodluck, former Superintendent of Croker Island Methodist Mission which came as a response to my contact in 2010.

To Jenni Caruso,

Good morning, and thanks for your letter re your research into the of [sic] child-care scheme originated by E.W.P. Chinnery. First let me make clear that I had been accepted for the position of Director to bring the Croker Homes to Darwin before I heard about Mr Chinnery in Melbourne. In 1963, I visited him at Black Rock. I was the Methodist Director of Youth Work (Vic-Tas) then, and had been Assistant Director of Orana Homes for Children. I had maintained an interest in the Croker Island Homes for a decade or more. What I heard from Mr Chinnery made me seriously reconsider whether or not I could allow myself to work within the existing system. Obviously, I went ahead, aware that another approach was needed.

What I saw at Mr. Chinnery's house was his first draft of the scheme by which "Native" and "Half-Caste" children would be transported to settlements where they could be assimilated into the modern Australian democratic society. I questioned him about how he could agree with separating children from their mothers, and at such early ages, since parental deprivation was one of the most severe causes of emotional trauma, including schizophrenia,.

His reply was one of political principle. He smiled as he explained to me,

> "Half-castes grow up to be citizens, but their mothers will never be citizens, and we could not allow non-citizens to raise future citizens, could we? They wouldn't be able to teach them how to vote."

I thought he was making some kind of joke, but he wasn't. It made some sort of sense according to "Assimilation", the new, enlightened policy authored by Hon. Paul Hasluck.

Mr Chinnery had been a senior public servant in Papua New Guinea, and got the job in NT of making a plan for placing "natives" and "half-caste" children into appropriate care. The organization chart he showed me consisted of two lined foolscap sheets stuck together with

yellowing cello tape. When I was leaving he gave me that old original chart, apparently happy to still be contributing to the on-going work! I have put it away amongst many other old papers and couldn't find it for you.

At the top of the double page was a heading referring to a range of places where "natives" and "half-caste children" could be placed in care. Under that an organisation chart began with the top-line referring to the Department of Native Affairs, the next line had two boxes, "Native" on the left and "Half-Caste" on the right.
In the final line was a row of boxes naming locations for homes for half-caste children. These included Melville Island, Croker Island, Darwin (Retta Dixon), Groote Is? (temporary?) and Alice Springs (St. Mary's) .

And it all came to pass. The Churches with mission programs amongst Aboriginal people were enlisted and funded to care for the children. That was it. A man in a position of influence wrote something on a couple of foolscap sheets and it changed the way things happen! I would never forget that, when I had a chance to write something that needed to be said. So we went to Croker in 1964 and made a contribution, and made some life-time friends, before moving into adult education and community development in the Top End.
The "Croker Scheme" is a term referring to the Methodist Church's response to the challenge of the Federal Government to conduct a child-care centre on Croker Island. I know that Croker Islanders (the Marrku people) had been wanting a mission station on their island with all of the services that their relatives on Goulburn Is[land] enjoyed. (This makes more sense when we realise that several clan remnant groups were living there and not inclined to give up clan powers to be one community group, but at Goulburn, and other places they had agreed to all co-perate [sic] with one central co-ordinator, "the Mission".
Many places today are still yearning for that co-ordinating presence).
So, the Government and Methodists asked the Islanders if they "agreed". They said, Yes. Where? At Minjilang Bay. But no-one made it clear that the new Mission Station would not be for local inhabitants, but for imported children. But that's another story. . . .

Sincerely, Jack Goodluck[1]

This thesis is the 'other story.'

[1] Jack Goodluck, E-mail correspondence with author: 27 January 2010.

> White people have never been able to leave Aborigines alone. Children particularly have suffered. Missionaries, teachers, government officials, have believed that the best way to make black people behave like white was to get hold of the children who had not yet learned Aboriginal lifeways.
> Peter Read, *The stolen generations: the removal of Aboriginal children in New South Wales 1883 to 1969*.[2]

The Myth of Saving the Children.

On 20 November 2012, the A.B.C. aired the documentary *Croker Island Exodus* which depicted the 1942 evacuation of "95 Aboriginal children from the Stolen Generation, along with their missionary carers", who "were trapped on Croker Island, 200 kilometres off the Northern Territory coast".[3] Reporting on the event, Adam Fulton of the *Sydney Morning Herald* quoted the Governor-General, Quentin Bryce, as saying that *Croker Island Exodus* represented "one of the greatest of all Australian stories of love and compassion".[4] In reality, that representation submerges a deeper story of decades of trauma experienced by half-caste children from the mission: a story which was missing from the original telling by former Croker Island cottage mother, Margaret Somerville.

The documentary was based on Somerville's 1999 book, *They Crossed a Continent* which, while telling the story about the evacuation of Croker Island, crowds the half-caste children out of the frame.[5] It becomes a story about Somerville's determination to 'protect' the children, and as such is an example of the ways in which white stories dominate in Australian history. In the story, Somerville placed herself in the context of mission to the Aborigines, saying "I really believe the Lord called me there. I was having a quiet time of devotion one morning and was praying for people to go out and the Lord said to me, 'you go'".[6] This time of reflection and decision making by Somerville followed a national call in July 1939 from the Methodist Overseas Mission (hereafter referred to as M.O.M.) for

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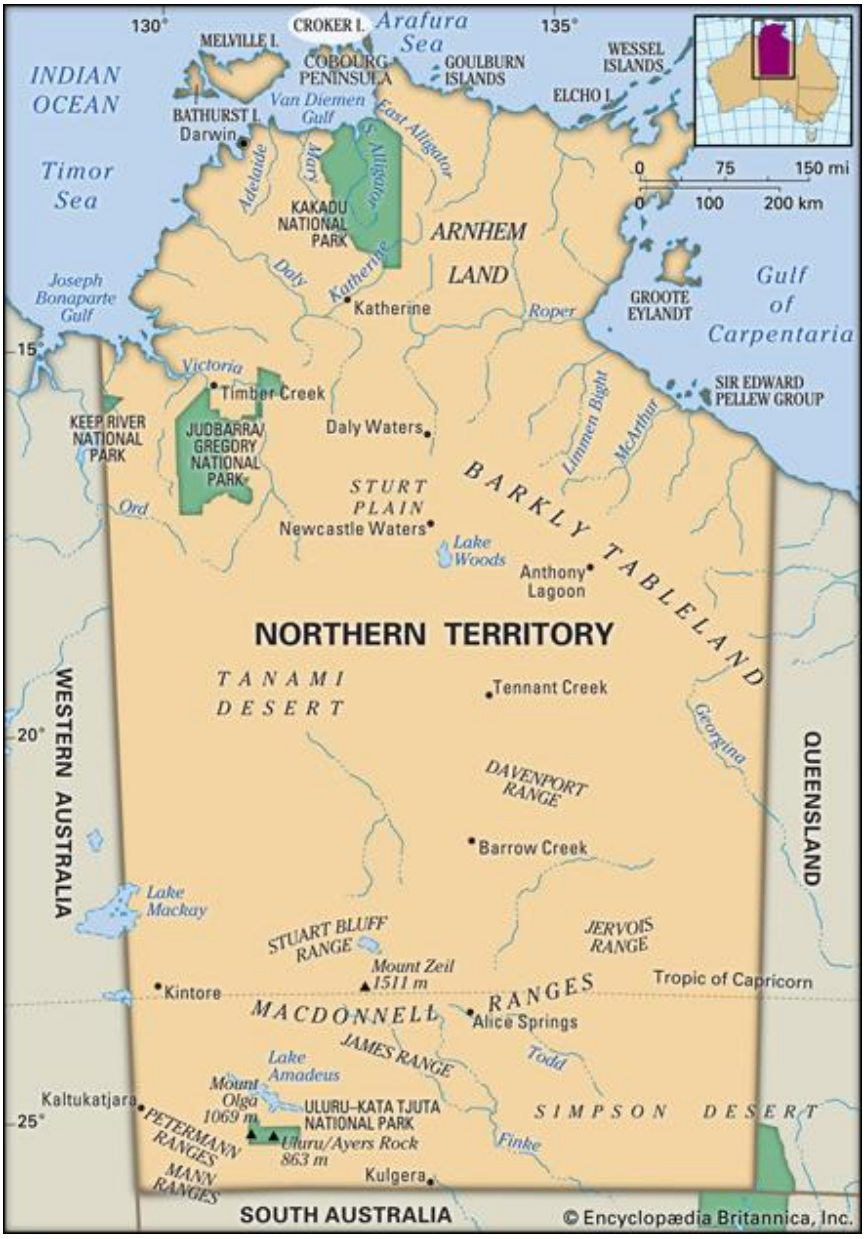
[2] Peter Read, *The stolen generations: the removal of Aboriginal children in New South Wales 1883 to 1969*, New South Wales Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs: Aboriginal Children's Research Project, Series: Occasional Paper no. 1 (Sydney: Govt. Printer, 1982).
[3] A.B.C., *Croker Island Exodus*, screened 20 November 2012. http://www.abc.net.au/indigenous/programs/croker_island_exodus/
Clare Rawlinson, Kate O'Toole, *Margaret Somerville reflects on exodus 71 years ago,* 105.7 ABC Radio Darwin, April, 2012. http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2013/04/09/3733088.htm
[4] Adam Fulton, "Barefoot childhood odyssey ends with world premiere, 70 years on," *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney), 14 June 2012. http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/movies/barefoot-childhood-odyssey-ends-with-world-premiere-70-years-on-20120613-20aky.html
[5] Margaret Somerville, *They Crossed a Continent* (Darwin: Colemans Printing Pty Ltd, 1991).
[6] Somerville, *They Crossed a Continent*, 5-6.

teachers to go into the mission field.[7] This led to Somerville's decision to take up the role of a cottage mother on the newly established mission on Croker Island.



Croker Island: Northern Territory.
https://www.britannica.com/place/Croker-Island

Croker Island is located close to the Australian mainland at the meeting place of the Arafura and Timor Seas. Many Aboriginal people acknowledge Croker Island as the birthplace of the Rainbow Serpent – one of the most important spiritual beings in the

[7] General Secretary of the Overseas Mission, *Australian Christian Commonwealth* (SA: 1901–1940), 7 July 1939, 9. http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/215146846?searchTerm=&searchLimits=l-title=1166|||dateFrom=1939-01-06|||dateTo=1940-06-28

Dreaming.[8] Aboriginal people also know that it is the island where hundreds of half-caste children from the Northern Territory were sent after a Methodist mission was set up there. In 1940/1941 the island became the site where, "as part of the move of children from government-run institutions to missions, many children [were] moved from The Bungalow (the government run half-caste home in Alice Springs) to Croker Island".[9] Somerville was one of the first missionaries to take up the call to go to Croker Mission and the children involved in the evacuation detailed by Somerville were the 'first wave' of the hundreds of half-castes 'kids' taken to the mission over two and half decades.

Somerville is credited with playing a significant role over the life of the mission and beyond, with particular focus on her part in the 1942 evacuation.[10] Somerville's memories are that in the lead up to decampment from the mission, a message was received "on the 13th February 1942" from the M.O.M. offices asking "How soon can you be ready to leave?", but that "days and weeks went on [with] still no news".[11] Writing that after waiting, planning, packing and preparing in general, Somerville records that "Finally official Government word came that any women could leave . . . Missionaries' wives were compelled to go, but we three sisters, [Jess] March, [Olive] Peake, and I decided to remain with the children".[12] The "44 day" trek from Croker Island, first by "boat to Barclay Point, then across Arnhem Land by foot, canoe and truck" covered "almost 5000 kilometres", before the children and missionaries reached the final destination, a Methodist farm just south of Sydney.[13]After the end of the war, the children were transported by boat back to Croker Island which, for most, became their 'home' over the following years.

Along with dignitaries and the press, a number of the remaining children from the original evacuation were invited to attend the Darwin premiere of *Croker Island Exodus*. Somerville, who was about to celebrate her 100th birthday, was the special guest at the film's debut.

[8] Croker Island, http://www.about-australia.com/destinations/croker-island/; Map of missions in the Northern Territory, http://guides.naa.gov.au/records-about-northern-territory/gallery/image023.aspx
[9] N.A.A., *Children's homes and missions located in the Northern Territory.* http://guides.naa.gov.au/tracking-family/chapter4/4.1.aspx
[10] Somerville, *They Crossed a Continent*.
[11] Somerville, *They Crossed a Continent*, 7.
[12] Somerville, *They Crossed a Continent*, 8.
[13] A.B.C., *Croker Island Exodus*, 2012.

The celebrations surrounding this first screening can be seen as less a recognition of the adversity faced and overcome by the children and more an event to honour Somerville's life of self-less dedication to the mission enterprise, and her heroism during the evacuation. Reporter Tony Barlass of the *Sydney Morning Herald* was so enthused by the documentary that he felt compelled to compare the events portrayed in the film with the escape from Austria of the Von Trapp family, dramatically proclaiming that the story was "the Australian equivalent of *The Sound of Music*".[14] This naive interpretation of events completely obliterated the reality that, while the Von Trapps were escaping *as a family* from the Nazi threat, the children represented in the film were victims of policies where they were only on the mission because they had been removed from their mothers and fathers, often forcibly and often without due reason beyond their classification as half-castes. As a consequence they had been "sent to a mission or a child welfare institution, or [could] be fostered with a white family if sufficiently light-skinned".[15] None of the children were there through any form of choice either by themselves or their parents, and they were far away from their country and their families with no means or hope of return to either. Very little correlation can be made between this history and the romanticised story of the *Sound of Music*.

The only tenuous connection that could be made between the von Trapp family and the Croker kids is on the matter of music. A contemporary of Somerville's, cottage mother, Daisy Ingram recalled in her memoirs of Croker Island that

> All the children loved singing and music. They would just sing naturally, alone or together, harmonising and humming on all occasions. On [one] occasion a little group of small girls were playing "church". The 'leader' announced, "Now we will stand for the benediction", upon which all the girls stood and began to sing
>
> "Irene goodnight
> Irene goodnight,
> Goodnight Irene, goodnight Irene
> I'll see you in my dreams".[16]

Although amusing, this reminiscence exemplifies rebellion on the part of the children whose power could not be diminished even though they were in a situation over which they had no control. By effectively "transform[ing]" the benediction "from one form to another", the girls displayed a resistance to religious indoctrination and to the teachings of

[14] Tim Barlass, "Mission to the mainland," *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney), 18 November 2012. http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/tv-and-radio/mission-to-the-mainland-20121117-29iqy.html
[15] Robert van Krieken, "The barbarism of civilization: cultural genocide and the 'stolen generations'," *British Journal of Sociology*, 50:2 (1999): 306.
[16] Daisy Ingram, *A Distant Harmony* (Fullarton: Denis White, 2004), 111 & 113.

the mission.[17] It also shows that not everything on the mission was sunshine and roses, and, for some of those 'girls' who were present at the opening of the film, those same memories would have been recalled with an hilarity which masked a bitter pain. But the point of the gathering was not to explore or put that pain on display, it was to celebrate Somerville.

One of the children who was in the original evacuation party, Aunty Connie Cole (dec.) said of Somerville that "She was the most wonderful woman that I ever come across".[18] Peter Forrest, biographer for Claire Henty-Gebert's *Paint me Black: Memories of Croker Island and other journeys,* writes that, for Claire, Croker Island represents a "happy time", and that

> It is overwhelmingly clear from Claire's own words . . ., that despite the harsh official policies, the missionaries on the island were full of compassion and practical concern for the children.[19]

These recollections cannot be derided or dismissed – this is their truth, their own individual ways of managing or attempting to control decades later, the tragedy of their young lives.

Given the growing body of work documenting the trauma experienced by members of the Stolen Generations, there is often incredulity that people impacted by removal express the relationships with those who held total control over every aspect of their lives in such a positive way, and maintain that those people were caring. Today we would classify these sentiments as being symptomatic of Stockholm syndrome, a condition which "had been recognized many years before" the term came into use in the 1970s.[20] One of the components of this syndrome is where people who have been in situations where "physical and psychological threats have been employed as a means of controlling them", often display "gratitude for any form of affection from those in authority".[21] Joseph Carver writes that "In the final analysis, emotionally bonding with an abuser is actually a strategy for survival for victims of abuse and intimidation", especially where those on the

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[17] Gillian Cowlishaw, "Introduction: Representing Racial Issues," *Oceania,* 63:3 (1993): 183.
[18] "Margaret Somerville, leader of World War II child exodus from Croker Island, dies aged 101." 105.7 ABC Radio Darwin, 1 August 2014. http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-08-01/margaret-somerville-croker-island-exodus-leader-dies-aged-101/5639626
[19] Claire Henty-Gebert, *Paint me Black* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2005), xii.
Note: Peter Forrest also assisted Somerville in the writing of *They Crossed a Continent*.
[20] Joseph M. Carver, *Love and Stockholm Syndrome: The Mystery of Loving an Abuser,* n.d. http://counsellingresource.com/therapy/self-help/stockholm/
[21] Carver, *Love and Stockholm Syndrome.*

receiving end have no other point of reference.[22] The situation faced and lived by the children on Croker Island meant that there were no other 'mother' role models with which to compare the missionaries' treatment of what was, in reality, a captive group who were targets of a range of methods of punishment.

The reality is that punitive discipline carried out by missionaries was not uncommon on Croker Island; according to former cottage mother, Una Clarke "corporal punishment was commonplace on Croker Island" and that she herself "considered the smacking to be normal".[23] This is evidenced in the stories from a greater number of past Croker Island residents who recall and record that their time on the mission was an experience of being closer to hades than to heaven.

In his 1993 oral history interview, B. Randall (dec.) who was on Croker both as a child and a young adult, said of the missionaries:

> They just kept flogging on you. I don't know why. It seemed as though they had a joy to beat the living daylights out of you, to almost kill you. When you're nearly half dead then they'd stop beating you.[24]

Edna Oosting nee Simson (formerly Walker), clearly recalls the experience of being captured and taken to Darwin. Edna says "We were waiting to be sent to Croker Island. One of the worst things that happened to anyone was Croker Island . . . they could do anything they wanted with us".[25] Edna also recalls that "Violence and sexual assault was routine. Girls would run away, they'd get caught, their hair would be shaved off, they'd get a flogging and then they'd be locked up".[26] These personal stories from the children's experiences serve to counteract the 'good missionary' rhetoric that underpinned not only the documentary, but also the lauding of missions as healthy, happy sites aimed at the reconstruction of expatriated children. It is an example where "the goals of the original Christian 'civilising mission' had deteriorated into a travesty of Christian humanitarianism", and the creation of a situation from which the children had no form or

[22] Carver, *Love and Stockholm Syndrome.*
[23] Una Clarke in Anna Haebich & Doreen Mellor eds., *Many Voices*: *reflections on experiences of indigenous child separation* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2002): 123.
[24] Northern Territory Archives Service, Randall, Bobby, NTRS 226, Oral History Interview, TS 779, Interviewer: Tony Austin, Adelaide, December 1993.
[25] Beatrix Campbell, "The Stolen Children of Croker Island," *The Guardian UK*, 16 April 2001. http://www.nsdc.org.au/documents/item/92 accessed June 24, 2013.
[26] Campbell, *The Stolen Children*.

hope of escape.[27] There are those for whom the abuse was so horrendous, they as adults, can never re-visit Croker Island Mission.[28]

My inability to reconcile the christian notions of the gospel values and the teachings of Jesus lies within this history. As John Harris writes "The more restricted institutions were sometimes run by churches. Among these missionaries were people who acted with compassion and whom Aboriginal people recall with affection".[29] The problem, says Harris, was that "these people are often remembered as exceptions, as a ray of light among otherwise dark memories".[30] Harris also states, "Many of these institutions were staffed by people with a conservative fundamentalist theological outlook" and that he

> has no hesitation in criticising the way in which such theology was so often associated with a harsh emphasis on a narrow set of strict behavioural principles, which were inculcated by many missionaries to the point where their behavioural demands obscured the Christ whom they thought they were preaching.[31]

This then was the situation faced by a good number of the children on Croker Island mission. Through their own stories, they continue to counteract the trope of the good white missionary.

The story of Croker Island was presented and represented as one that focuses upon white people such as Somerville who is portrayed as a wonderful heroine. In the Uniting Church, New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory newsletter *Insights,* Lyndal Iron titled her article on the Croker evacuation "She [Somerville] crossed a continent".[32] Iron writes that "Margaret Somerville's story is one of courage and human endurance - 44 days crossing Australia by foot, boat, truck and train to get to Sydney." [33]

What about the children? Where in this adulation of the trials and tribulations faced by Somerville are *the children*? If this sounds angry – it is. It is seventy-four years on, and this event has been mythologised as a feat of heroism by white people who have been

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[27] Elizabeth Nelson, Sandra Smith and Patricia Grimshaw eds., *Letters from Aboriginal women in Victoria, 1867-1926,* Series: University of Melbourne history research papers 11 (Melbourne: University of Melbourne Press, 2002), 11.
[28] Tony Cassidy, brother of the author, suffered beatings at the hands of the male missionaries so severe that he had to be housed in the Superintendent's quarters to heal his wounds. It was felt that if he had been taken to Darwin hospital, the extent of his injuries would have led to investigation of the incident. He was not yet 10 years of age when this occurred.
[29] John Harris, *One Blood* (Sutherland, N.S.W.: Albatross Books, 1994 rev.), 589.
[30] Harris, *One Blood,* 589.
[31] Harris, *One Blood,* 589-590.
[32] Lyndal Iron, *Insights,* Uniting Church, New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory Synod, 14 October 2012. http://www.insights.uca.org.au/features/she-crossed-a-continent
[33] Iron, *Insights.*

credited with saving the children. Every month over the past year, one or more of those original children passes away. And every month all of the Croker kids mourn collectively for our lost ones. We are collectively angry, but also collectively dubious about the story of the evacuation because we know that there is a different/untold version of the events immediately prior to the flight from Croker, one which does not sit well with the sanitised adaptation portrayed in the film. Somerville's words that she and the others "decided to remain with the children" indicate that there was an addendum to the account of the exodus which took the shine off the entire episode, a story which was not included in the glowing narrative that became the accepted version of events. The backstory shows that the focus was on ensuring that the white people were safe and that the half-caste children were not an evacuation priority.

M.O.M. Board Minutes show that by 16 January 1942 "the authorities had ordered evacuation of women and children from Darwin".[34] While Somerville may have received warning on 13 February, the Board Minutes do not record any communication regarding the evacuation of Croker until 17 February, when "the Department of the Interior had been given a message from the Administrator of the Northern Territory" saying "please inform Mr. Burton (the Secretary of the Board of Missions) that I am bringing his people in from the out-stations".[35]Apparently this "seemed to mean that all wives and children, with the Croker Island Sisters and children would be evacuated to some safer area".[36] As indicated by Somerville, the order to evacuate applied only to the white people on the mission. It was deemed by the Northern Territory Director of Welfare, E. W. P. Chinnery that the half-caste "children at Croker Island" were "probably quite safe," and initially the determination was made that those children could be left on the island in the care of the 'native' helpers.[37]

To gain an understanding of how this *feels*, think of the scene from Baz Lurhmann's film *Australia,* where, during the bombing of Darwin, the character 'Drover' bursts into the pub and demands to know what happened to the half-caste children on the islands, and the barman says "They left them there".[38] As Connie Cole recalls,

> The message came over from Darwin to all the mission islands, and the message we received at Croker Island that the European children were to be evacuated down

[34] Methodist Church of Australasia – Department of Overseas Missions: Board & Executive Minutes M.O.M.: July 1939 – May 1943, 451 339 CY 3775, 16 January 1942.
[35] M.O.M.: 451 339 CY 3775, 17 February 1942.
[36] M.O.M.: 451 339 CY 3775, 17 February, 1942.
[37] M.O.M.: 451 339 CY 3775, 24 March, 1942.
[38] *Australia,* Director Baz Lurhmann, screenplay, Stuart Beattie 2008, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0455824/

> south and the half-caste children were to remain . . . that's us Croker Island children.[39]

It was not until 24 March following the insistence and determination of the Director of the M.O.M. North District Len Kentish, that arrangements were made for the Methodist mission lugger *The Larrapan* to collect the children from the mission and transport them across the strait to Barclay Point. Len Kentish (later captured and beheaded by the Japanese in 1943), is the real hero of the story. It was he who refused to abandon the Croker Island children.[40]

Like most Australians, Methodist parishioners had no idea of just exactly where the mission was and there was no knowledge of the background to the mission. Details on the extent of the negotiations and discussions which took place in the period 1939-1941around the establishment of the Croker Island mission site are not generally known. Also not known are the twists and turns of bureaucratic actions and anthropological theories which underpinned the foundations of this mission settlement. To fully comprehend this we must understand the affiliations between people of the M.O.M. (formerly the Methodist Missionary Society of Australasia [hereafter M.M.S.A.]), the Methodist Inland Mission [hereafter M.I.M.], the federal government and A. P. Elkin the Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney. Alliances between those parties led directly to the formulation of government and Methodist mission policy, the outcome of which was the Croker Island Half-Caste Mission (Settlement).[41]

While Croker was promoted as an exemplar in mission activity, the reality is that there was a huge impact on the lives of the children involved and their familes which later saw many of them moved once more to be absorbed into Methodist foster homes in the south. This final step, aimed at obliterating knowledge of their own background which also irrevocably tore asunder any connection to the childrens' country and families, was the result of decisions made by (particularly) men in 'authority'. It was they who had the power and the authority to make the decisions which brought about the policies of experimenting with these half-caste children to satisfy a nationalistic ideal. White people, chiefly white men in academia, government and Methodist missionary circles, must be the focus for some parts of this thesis, particlulary in relation to the writing of the Northern

[39] A.B.C. Radio Darwin, 1 Aug 2014.
[40] *Australia's War 1939-1945,* http://www.ww2australia.gov.au/vevp/warcrimes.html
[41] Methodist Inland Mission (1926 - 1977).
https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/nt/biogs/YE00189b.htm

Territory 1939 *Half-Caste Policy* and the resultant Methodist Board of Missions Northern District Policy on Aboriginal people – the 'Croker Island Scheme'.

Developed in 1940/41, The 'Croker Island Scheme' was the M.M.S.A./M.O.M. policy which provided the guidelines for the social and religious advancement of Northern Territory half-caste children who came under the classification of 'being Methodist'. It was the document which was referred to in 1955 by Minister for the Territories, Paul Hasluck, following a request from the Adelaide Central Methodist Mission to the federal government to relocate children from the mission to the southern states.[42] Hasluck recognised the 'scheme' as being the 1940 M.O.M. blueprint for the exercise of placing children into Methodist institutions or homes of Methodist parishioners.[43]

While the church's agenda at the time of the writing of the 'scheme' was driven by the dual aspirations of the social and christian saving of the children, the government was engaged in protectionist welfare for Aborigines and half-castes, and those with the 'science' were cultivating the emerging theoretical credo of 'socio-cultural assimilation'. During this period of time, there were "two divergent" systems of socio-anthropological thought which "reflected two quite different visions of the future of Aborigines", and in the late 1930s these ideological theories crashed head-on. [44] On one hand Dr Cecil Cook, Chief Protector in the Northern Territory, advocated the miscegenation program of 'breeding them out [of half-castes] by breeding them in'. On the other, Elkin was hard-selling his own version of socio-cultural assimilation through a 'positive policy' aimed at training Aboriginal and half-caste people as a pathway into white society as the most humane way forward. Mission bodies and government agents were influenced by both schools of thought and were actively engaged in the discussions around the best socio-scientific theory to back. Therefore, the debates became more about the validity of the socio-theo-anthropological approaches on how to deal with the half-caste collective than about the care of the children.

[42] Uniting Church, Adelaide. Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2 accessed 2010.
[43] Uniting Church, PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2 accessed 2010.
[44] John Summers, *The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia and Indigenous Peoples 1901-1967,* Research Paper 10 (Parliament of Australia: 2000-01), 30-31. http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp0001/01RP10

Chronological interrogation of the discussions, deliberations and disputes between the interested parties shows that, while all the children of the Stolen Generations were the subjects at the centre of the storm, Croker Island Mission is a site which provides explicit testimony to the social engineering philosophies of assimilation which pervaded policy development in the early decades of the twentieth century. The following discussion traces a particularly diabolical train of events leading up to a new government policy for the Northern Territory which created a situation where the mission's half-caste child captives would serve as an anthropological 'experimental control group'.

The evolution of half-caste policy in the Northern Territory.

The development of policy for half-caste children in the Northern Territory can be traced back to 1911, when administrative control of the Northern Territory was transferred from South Australia to the Commonwealth government. After inheriting the *Northern Territory Aboriginals Act 1910* (S.A.) in 1911, the Commonwealth enacted its first piece of legislation relating to Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory.[45] Titled the *Aboriginals Ordinance Relating to Aboriginals 1911* the statute, which was to be read in conjunction with the 1910 South Australian Act, placed Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory under the direction of a Chief Protector.[46] A significant amendment incorporated into the 1911 Ordinance was that the "Protector was . . . entitled at any time to undertake the care, custody or control of any aboriginal or half caste".[47] This power was enacted over and over thousands of times - indeed to the point where half-caste people or parents of half-caste children in particular knew that there was a high percentage chance that their children could be removed under that particular legislation.[48]

While this ordinance was superseded by the *Aboriginals Ordinance Relating to Aboriginals 1918*, (which went through a number of amendments until being repealed by the Welfare Ordinance 1953), the powers vested with the Protector of Aborigines in the 1918 Ordinance regarding the control and movement of Aboriginal and half-caste people

[45] Northern Territory Legislation, *Northern Territory Aboriginals Act* 1910 (S.A.) (Act no. 1024/1910) short title. http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/sa/num_act/tntaa1024o1910436/
[46] Northern Territory Legislation, *Aboriginals Ordinance 1911* (short title). http://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/catalogue_resources/52396.pdf
[47] Tony Austin, *I can picture the old home so clearly: the Commonwealth and 'half-caste' youth in the Northern Territory 1911-1939* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1993), 205.
[48] Many Northern Territory Stolen generations people identify the 1911 Ordinance as the legislation under which they were removed.

were, to the most part, retained.[49]Aside from these amendments, historian Tony Austin writes that there was a hiatus in policy making for Aboriginal and half-caste people. Austin writes that following the transfer of administration from South Australia to the Northern Territory, the government was less effectual in policy making and direction than it could have been, and there were no significant changes in policy for Northern Territory Aborigines in the years immediately following.[50]

Anxiety around the increase in numbers of half-caste people particularly in the Northern Territory, coalesced in the mid to late 1920s into the oft repeated term of 'the half-caste problem'. That angst reflected concerns that the increasing population of half-castes would swamp that of the white, with Cecil Cook stating that

> If aborigines are protected physically and morally, before long there will be in the Northern Territory, a black race already numbering about 19,000, and multiplying at a rate far in excess of that of the whites.[51]

This was a scenario which was untenable in a nation which had defined its foundations on the premise that its citizenry should be of Anglo Saxon, or at least European, descent only.[52] Everybody from protectors and social scientists to police and missionaries, through to organisations supporting Aboriginal suffrage used the term to describe what was in reality, classification of Aborigines by racial 'blood' percentage.

Austin writes that there were "two distinct phases in the control of young Aborigines of mixed descent" where, in the early stages there was a "reasonably auspicious start with the policy recommendations of Baldwin Spencer", who had been appointed as the first Chief Protector in the Northern Territory.[53] The second phase occurred when there was a slight shift in the status of Aboriginal policy and affairs in "the period 1927 to 1939", where Austin notes that "policy development was much more purposeful".[54] While during this time Aboriginal policy as whole appears to have been approached "with official disdain", half-castes became the focus of policy, more so than "other Aboriginal people".[55] John

[49] Northern Territory Legislation, *Aboriginals Ordinance 1918* (short title). https://www.foundingdocs.gov.au/resources/transcripts/nt5_doc_1918.rtf
Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 205.
[50] Summers, *The Parliament of the Commonwealth*, 17.
[51] H. S. Bailey, *Aboriginal welfare: Initial conference of Commonwealth and state Aboriginal authorities held at Canberra, 21st to 23rd April, 1937* (Canberra: Commonwealth Government Printer, 1937), 14.
[52] Russell McGregor, *Indifferent Inclusion: Aboriginal people and the Australian Nation* (Acton: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2011), xx.
[53] Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 44 & 205.
[54] Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 205.
[55] Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 206.

Summers wrote that in 1939, when the Minister for the Interior, John McEwen, delivered a new policy titled the *Northern Territory: Commonwealth Government's Policy with Respect to Aboriginals* which became known as "A New Deal for Aborigines", there was a "shift in the stated objectives of Government".[56] Although the thrust of the policy was sociological in nature, it was devised at a time when racial discourse on the worth of Aboriginal people and in particular half-castes, was going through transition, and, if anything, gaining greater traction with those in bureaucratic decision-making positions. The descriptors around the degrees of capacity of half-castes included in the policy were couched in racial terms which had flowed across from the nineteenth century.

Andrew Markus writes that "the period 1890-1940 marked the high point of racial determinism in western culture" where anthropologists, especially "Social Darwinists of a physical anthropological persuasion" were engaged in the analysis and classification of the natives in colonised domains.[57] The application of Darwinian theory to the human race created a condition where non-white peoples were measured by their physical appearance, and where they were allocated degrees of 'humanness' along the lines of evolutionary development and " capacity for civilisation".[58] The notion of 'caste' classification was a refinement of the ethos of racialised 'native' inferiority. When applied to Aboriginal Australians the term 'mixed-race' transmuted into the designation of 'half-caste' and took on stronger meaning as a specific category of Aboriginality. Grounded in enlightenment discourses on the capacity of native races for progression, those race-based categories informed anthropological research, mission endeavour, policy development and government oversight for Aboriginal people in the late nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century.

Embedded in the body of race dialogue were concerns around the inherent danger of the possibilities of 'degeneration' of half-castes. This Social Darwinist evolutionary and eugenicist theory posited that some races could return to primitive forms of existence and being.[59] Across the 1920s and 1930s, those engaged in Aboriginal affairs were attempting to create controls around Aboriginal people which would reduce the incidence of "the

[56] Summers, *The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia*, 30-31.
[57] Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 10.
[58] Andrew Markus, *Australian race relations, 1788-1993* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1994), 1.
[59] Russell McGregor, *Imagined Destinies – Aboriginal Australians and the Doomed Race Theory, 1880-1939* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1997), 9.

blood call" to prevent half-castes from 'drifting back to the aboriginal'".[60] An example of these concerns was highlighted in 1928 by Queensland's Chief Protector, J. W. Bleakley, whose assessment of half-castes was that their "Heredity meant their 'Aboriginal temperament' was likely to reassert itself . . . that the 'colour of the mind' was more influential than the colour of the skin".[61] It was considered that whatever strategies were applied, such a return to 'native' ways would occur. Therefore it was incumbent on the administration to devise policies to stem the growth in numbers of half-castes, and where possible, prevent circumstances which would make such degeneration possible. Aligned to this was the need for the government to develop mechanisms for managing the half-caste population with the aim of reducing the cost of governing this cohort.[62]

Hand in hand with the fears about the increases in numbers of half-castes was the argument as to whether or not the federal government deemed that states and territories were eligible for financial backing for administration of half-castes. In 1928 in an effort to address these 'problems', and in response to negative sentiment regarding the effectiveness and "burden" of expenditure on Aboriginal reserves, Prime Minister Stanley Bruce announced a government inquiry into the conditions of 'half-castes' and Aborigines in North and Central Australia.[63] As a result, Bleakley was appointed to "investigate the 'status and condition of aboriginals, including half-castes' in central and northern Australia", following which he was to report back to the government with recommendations for possible future policy direction.[64] Bleakley's ideological position in undertaking the inquiry was problematic because, as Austin notes, what Bleakley believed of the half-caste person was that "what they inherited of the 'superior intelligence and tastes of the whites is generally nullified by the retarding instincts of the blacks".[65] These views would certainly influence both his approach to the task, and the nature of the recommendations of his 1928 Report.

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[60] J. W. Bleakley, *The aboriginals and half-castes of Central Australia and North Australia.* Series: Parliamentary paper (Australia. Parliament): no. 21 of 1929 Govt. Printer, 1929. http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-52836352/view?partId=nla.obj-99908445#page/n30/mode/1up

[61] Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 23.

[62] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 27.

[63] Coral Dow and John Gardiner-Garden, *Overview of Indigenous Affairs: Part 1, 1901-1999*, Source: S Bruce, House of Representatives, Debates, 6 December 1927, 2708. 2011. http://www.aph.gov.au/about_parliament/parliamentary_departments/parliamentary_library/pubs/bn/1011/indigenousaffairs1

[64] Raymond Evans, *Australian Dictionary of Biography: John William Bleakley*, 1879-1957 (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1979). http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/bleakley-john-william-5272

[65] Tony Austin, *Never Trust a Government Man – Northern Territory Aboriginal Policy 1911-1939* (Darwin: Northern Territory University Press, 1997), 130.

Bleakley's main conclusion was that, given the magnitude of the problem and the projected costs to the Commonwealth government for the administration of peoples for whom he held no real current or future prospects, missions would serve half-caste children better than reserves.[66] Contrary to the positions of other Chief Protectors, particularly Cook, who "was furious about the imposition of Bleakley's ideas . . . [writing that] 'the publication of this report is to be deplored'", church and ad-hoc groups "not directly concerned with Aboriginal welfare" gave their general endorsement for the report.[67] As a consequence, as Austin identifies

> Subordination [of half-castes] in [government] institutions was consigned mainly to Christian missions . . . There was little pretence that the children were European, but they would still be taught not to be Aboriginal.[68]

During these discussions, the idea of a remote mission for half-castes was raised. Having included several mission sites held under the auspices of a range of religious denominations in his inquiry, Bleakley expressed a particular interest in the M.M.S.A. site on Goulburn Island which had been in operation since 1916. He listed what he considered to be "the advantages of a home on the mission" including that, if such a site was built, "the [government] administration would be relieved of the burden of management".[69] The recommendation that missions be given greater responsibility for half-castes was scrutinised at a gathering that Bleakley described as "an informal conference . . . with representatives of the missions concerned" but which was in fact a very formal conference which had been convened by the Minister of State for Home Affairs, C. L. A. Abbott.[70] Among the attendees was "the Rev. Webb, the Chairman of the [M.M.S.A.] Mission Committee" whose view of half-castes was less than favourable, declaring that they constituted a "menace" to society.[71] Given that Webb had responsibility for mission to all Aboriginal people in the M.M.S.A. Northern District, this position was more than unfortunate, it is downright chilling, especially as Webb was in a position to influence the decisions made by the M.M.S.A in regard to Aboriginal and half-caste people. Those opinions would have had a direct impact on the lives of Aboriginal people, especially half castes, who were already under the care of Methodist missionaries on their first mission site of Goulburn Island.[72]

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[66] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 21.
[67] Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 214-215.
[68] Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 214-215.
[69] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 15.
[70] Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 214-215.
[71] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 21.
[72] J.W. Bleakley, *Conference of Representatives of Missions, Societies, and Associations interested in the Welfare of Aborigines to consider the Report and Recommendations submitted to the Commonwealth*

Although Bleakley made a positive assessment of the workings and viability of Goulburn Island, visiting American anthropologist W. Lloyd Warner considered that the mission station was "the most pernicious influence one could fashion for social destruction".[73] While the M.M.S.A. was considering abandoning their efforts on Goulburn, Bleakley thought that the geographical situation of the mission was favourable for ministering to half-castes, and counselled Webb and the M.M.S.A. against its closure and proposed that:

> The half-caste children in Darwin Home, with 50 per cent. or more aboriginal blood . . . be divided between Bathurst Island and Goulbourn Island Aboriginal Missions to be trained.[74]

The M.M.S.A. was reluctant to abandon the Goulburn Island site, but all the indicators at the time pointed to closure as the best resolution. That is, until Bleakley discussed the suggestion for the establishment of a "Half-caste Colony".[75]

Bleakley roundly rejected the idea of a satellite mission on the grounds that, no matter the efforts made by missionaries, there was a high likelihood that the half-castes would "drift back" [degenerate to native state] and that such an outpost would "create a second colour problem likely to prove troublesome in later years".[76] Although not specifying exactly what he foresaw, Bleakley made clear recommendations on the ways in which the half-caste population should be audited and overseen.[77] Circumventing Bleakley's criticism of "a separate mission or colony for all crossbreeds of aboriginal blood", the idea of an island half-caste settlement appealed to both Webb and the M.O.M.[78]

While shifting responsibility of care of half-castes to the mission field, the Bleakley Report also provided the federal government with the mandate for future half-caste policy direction. Two specific recommendations made by Bleakley are of note: that for the "formation of an Aborigines Advisory Board" which should be "composed of persons with expert scientific knowledge", and the "Employment of Trained Anthropologists for Scientific Study of Race".[79] The outcome of the implementation of these recommendations would create a situation where a triumvirate of state, science and church was sanctioned.

Government by *J. W. Bleakley*. Convened by C.L.A. Abbott. Melbourne: 12 April 1929. http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/569234

[73] Geoffrey Gray, *A cautious silence: the politics of Australian Anthropology* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2007), 129.

[74] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 25.

[75] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 17.

[76] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 17.

[77] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 17.

[78] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 17.

[79] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 25.

As the federal government was the body which developed policy and disbursed funds to action the recommendations, it was able to maintain a position from which it could monitor the two other sectors to ensure that, whatever their differences, they adhered to the policy agenda. To a large degree those factions, while holding fast to their own singular agendas of religious ideology and anthropology, worked in unison to exert influence and control over the 'what to do with the half-castes' space.

In 1932, the new Lyon's government announcement that "the Cabinet would continue its existing policy for the welfare of the Aborigines" meant that there would be no legislative changes made to policy for the rest of the decade. [80] Within this framework, reciprocal agreements were made around the substance and nature of future Aboriginal and half-caste policy direction and formulation, and relationships between the three were cemented across the decade until a new significant policy was developed and ratified. This remained the state of play for Aboriginal policy in the Northern Territory until the 1937 *Aboriginal Welfare: Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities* and the subsequent ratification of the 1939 *Commonwealth Government's Policy with Respect to Aboriginals*.[81] Both the Conference and the new policy focused on possible new endeavours aimed at managing and monitoring Aboriginal and half-caste people and both employed the by now accepted racial categories of 'Aboriginal' and 'half-caste'.

While it is clear that the recommendation for missions to take up responsibility for half-castes was an economically expedient rationalisation, Bleakley's designations of caste "signals the start of a period in which degrees of 'whiteness' become a major preoccupation of policy makers".[82] An outcome of the focus on percentages of Aboriginality was that it created a wedge in policy formation wherein anthropology could consolidate its authority as the site of race-based knowledge. This 'science' was then pushed by its proponents (especially Elkin) for inclusion in government and church policy.

[80] A. P. Elkin, "Development of Aboriginal Policy, 1930-50, typescript, APE. E.P.", in Tigger Wise, *The Self-Made Anthropologist: a life of A. P. Elkin,* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), 119.
[81] Bailey, *Aboriginal welfare: Initial Conference Canberra*.
J. McEwen, *The Northern Territory of Australia Commonwealth Government's policy with Respect to Aboriginals* (Commonwealth of Australia: Department of the Interior) http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/121755
[82] Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 102.

The growing influence of science in shaping policy.

By the late 1920s, science was becoming increasingly influential in the shaping of policy and by the time the Conference of 1937 delivered its recommendations, 'race-science' had come to dominate formal discussion. 'Race-science' became the central reference point for any future direction in policy making on Aborigines and half-castes by government, secular and religious bodies. Regardless of Bleakley's suggestion that the federal government should formally seek anthropological advice, evidence that church and anthropology found themselves to be incompatible at that time can be found in the "addresses delivered by Dr W. Lloyd Warner, Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and Rev. F. W. Burton (sic)" to the Australian Geographical Society, 1928.[83] In his role as General Secretary of the M.M.S.A., Burton had a very long association with mission policy development and decision making for native peoples.[84] According to Christine Weir, Burton was a strong advocate of "the ideals of the League of Nations", particularly Article 22 which stated that the care and "tutelage of peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world should be entrusted to advanced nations".[85] Embedded in this was "the assumption that modern Western European society epitomised the pinnacle of human achievement", and Burton's ideological position was grounded in the "commonly-held belief in an evolutionary hierarchy of human beings".[86]

These positions would undoubtedly inform the stance taken by Burton between 1920 and 1950, and signals that he would agree that mission endeavour required a socio-anthropological approach which would be achieved by working with anthropologists. Although the view expressed by Radcliffe-Brown, the inaugural Chair of Anthropology at the University of Sydney in the 1928 address was that "the field of the ideal anthropologist, and that of the missionary, do not really touch", Burton stated that "there should be no friction or mutual jealousy between the missionary and the anthropologist". [87]

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[83] W. Lloyd Warner, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, F. W. Burton (sic), "Some Aspects of the Aboriginal Problem in Australia – Notes on addresses delivered to the Society," *Australian Geographer*, 1:1, (1928): 67-69.

[84] A. W. Thornley, *Burton, John Wear 1875-1970*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University. http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/burton-john-wear-5438

[85] The Avalon Project, *The Covenant of the League of Nations (Including Amendments adopted to December, 1924)* (Yale Law School: Lillian Goldman Law Library). http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/leagcov.asp#art22

[86] Christine Weir, "An Accidental Biographer? On Encountering, Yet Again, the Ideas and Actions of J. W. Burton," in Brij V. Lal & Vicki Luker eds., *Telling Pacific lives: prisms of process* (ANU E Press: 2008), 215 & 218. http:epress.anu.edu.au/tpl_citation.html

[87] Warner et. al. "Some aspects," 67-69.

In the record of discussions at the 1929 conference around Bleakley's suggestion that the half-caste children from the Darwin home be relocated to either Bathurst or Goulburn missions, Burton is recorded as saying "It requires careful and scientific thought by the missionary societies and, I would say, by anthropologists".[88] Minister Abbott is recorded as saying that he had "discussed this point with Professor Radcliffe-Brown and I have arranged, as far as I can do it, for all officials to take a course in anthropology" to which Burton responded "All missionaries ought to take a similar course of study".[89] It seems as though the mission bodies had reached a form of *modus vivendi* with anthropology whereby each found a useful compromise with the other while maintaining their separateness in core business. Fortuitously, there was a suitable candidate to undertake the training of M.O.M. missionaries.

In October 1929, anthropologist and Anglican minister Elkin, who had been thrust into the national limelight through his publications in the diocesan newsletter the *Morpeth Review* and pieces which had been published in papers on the disappearance of the plane the *Southern Cross*, received a written request from the Secretary of the Australian Board of missions for him "to write articles on either 'Anthropological Study and Missionary Methods' or 'Aboriginal Customs and Christian Civilisation'".[90] As Burton felt that missionaries should have formal qualifications, he introduced training programmes for missionaries which included language study and a course in anthropology devised by Elkin.[91] In April 1933, the Australian Board of Missions newsletter stated

> It is acknowledged by most that instruction in anthropology is useful, if not essential for all missionaries . . . working amongst native peoples" and, to facilitate this training, "the Sydney University gives lectures at the Department of Anthropology".[92]

Initiated in 1926 by Radcliffe-Brown, this course was carried on into the 1930s where "The Rev. Dr. Elkin . . . is giving a course of lectures . . . dealing with the social anthropology of the Australian Aborigines".[93] This is an indication that the M.O.M. was

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[88] A. P. Elkin, *Papers dealing with relations between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginal Australians*, "Commonwealth Conference of Representatives of Missions, Societies, and Associations interested in the Welfare of Aboriginals to Consider the Report and Recommendations Submitted to the Commonwealth Government by J. W. Bleakley," E.P. Collection of the University of Sydney, Series 12, E.P.: 130/12/2, 1929.
[89] E.P.: 130/12/95, 1929.
[90] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 87-89.
E.P.: 130/12/2.
[91] Thornley, *Burton, John Wear*.
[92] E.P., *A.B.M. Review* April, 1933, 1/12/99.
[93] E.P.: 130/12/99.
E.P., *A.B.M. Review*, 1933.

beginning to frame its Aboriginal and half-caste policy planning around the 'new science.'[94]

In late 1933, following the exit of both Radcliffe-Brown and his replacement Raymond Firth, Elkin was appointed to the position of Chair of Anthropology at the University of Sydney, giving him the power to advance his own particular brand of anthropology and, as Chair of the Australian National Research Council which was funded by the federal government, to build considerable influence in the field of Aboriginal affairs.[95] Like Radcliffe-Brown before him, Elkin was lecturing missionaries and others on 'social anthropology', moving away from the previous ideas of people such as Cecil Cook of interbreeding of Aboriginal people and half-castes. This is an important indicator of the significant shifts in ideological thinking away from notions of miscegenation towards socio-cultural assimilation of Aborigines and half-castes. It also shows that missionaries were being inculcated with a socio-scientific dogma that, in the 1930s, reflected international trends in thought adjustment around people who were problematic in national landscapes. Critically, they were also being indoctrinated with Elkin's philosophy of assimilation, a theoretical framework which Elkin sought to have incorporated into national policy.

During this period anthropologists such as Radcliffe-Brown asserted that they did not hold a role in influencing policy, and that the anthropologist's task was simply to apprise governments on the state of affairs regarding Aborigines and half-castes. In the earlier 1928 address, Radcliffe-Brown had stated that "the task of the anthropologist is to get knowledge, not to advise others as to what they should do", but soon after that pronouncement, there was significant change in the discipline which also created a shift in the ways in which anthropology was applied at the policy level.[96] Tigger Wise, Elkin's personal secretary and unofficial biographer, and anthropologist Geoffrey Gray (among others) comprehensively detail the alliances, misalliances and calumny that were occurring in the discipline of anthropology across that period of time. These included claims of misappropriation of funds by Donald Thomson, the sidelining of and withholding of funds to Daisy Bates and Elkin's attacks on Cook's credibility.[97]

[94] E.P.: 130/12/95, 1929.
[95] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 110.
[96] Warner et. al., "Some aspects," 1928.
[97] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* (1985).
Gray, A cautious silence, (2007).

Anthropologists were among a number of collectives of people who, in their own idiosyncratic ways, advocated for Aborigines. At the end of the 1920s and across the 1930s, the power of anthropology and the influence of anthropologists was so strong that the language of 'race-science' became the method by which those who were in positions of influence articulated their plans. Across those decades, the federal government appointed a number of medical doctors and anthropologists as Protectors of Aborigines, and anthropology was the means of gathering statistics and artefacts for the government on and about Aboriginal people who it had been determined was a dying race of people.[98] An example of this was the appointment of anthropologist Donald Thomson who as "the first patrol officer for the Northern Territory" had been commissioned in 1938 by Minister Paterson (Minister for the Interior) "to prepare an interim report" as a precursor to and foundation for discussion on future policy.[99] Because of the gap in defined policy for Aborigines, the writing of such a report was an important step towards future thinking and policy development regarding Aboriginal people. Although Thomson saw his report as "the essential basis for an enlightened policy" for Aboriginal welfare, recognition of his report would not come until 1939, and it was not granted any great consideration in the deliberations by the association of Chief Protectors.[100]

Considered the leading authorities in Aboriginal affairs, this group formed a core of high-level advisors invited to attend and have input into the *1937 Aboriginal welfare: initial Conference of Commonwealth and state Aboriginal Authorities* held in Canberra.[101] Austin provides a comprehensive outline of the Conference attendees, including Cook, West Australian Commissioner of Aboriginal Affairs A. O. Neville, Bleakley along with Professor J. B. Cleland (Chairman of Advisory Council of Aborigines, South Australia) and J. A. Carrodus (Secretary, Department of the Interior).[102] This cohort of men were considered to be the authorities on the Aborigines and half-castes - not just because of their appointed positions, but also for the perceived knowledge they had gained while overseeing the Aborigines in their charge.

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[98] Russell McGregor, "Breed out the colour or the importance of being white," Australian Historical Studies 33 (2002): 292.
[99] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 131.
Donald Thomson, *Donald Thomson in Arnhem Land* (Victoria: The Miegunyah Press, 2003), 5 & 114.
[100] Thomson, *Donald Thomson*, 118.
[101] Bailey, *Aboriginal welfare: Initial Conference Canberra*.
[102] Bailey, *Aboriginal welfare: Initial Conference Canberra*.
Austin, *I can picture the old home*, Ch. 5.

According to Keith Windschuttle, on the basis of his 1928 report, Bleakley was considered "The obviously dominant policy maker" and that "the conference of 1937 deferred to his reputation in the field, allowing him to be the first of the protectors to address" the gathering.[103] This did not sit well with everyone in attendance, nor with those who were not invited, such as Elkin.[104] Wise writes that the Conference "drew the particular disapproval" of Elkin who, by this stage was vociferously inserting himself and his opinions into policy discussions through every avenue available to him.[105]

Wise notes that while the Conference "had been called as a gesture in the direction of Commonwealth control", it "turned into an unofficial consensus that absorption was probably the hope for Australia's racial future", an approach which drew condemnation from the Sydney school of anthropological thought.[106] Although the Bleakley Report "included proposed amendments to the Northern Territory Aboriginal Ordinances" which advocated segregation rather than miscegenation, the delegates spent a good deal of the Conference time discussing absorption as the most efficacious method for dealing with half-castes.[107] Given that in the 1920s, W. Lloyd Warner (who had been gathering information "on the surviving Aborigines of Australia"), was of the view that "Their future is to have a little of aboriginal stock absorbed into whites of a higher class", arguing that it was 'the best thing the authorities could do to help the blackfellow'", the idea of interbreeding in order to 'outbreed' as a solution to the half-caste problem was not a new or revolutionary socio-political approach to the discourse.[108] Gray writes that while at that time the idea of absorption "was a radical proposal", it "would find support in the 1930s from administrators such as A. O. Neville in Western Australia and Cecil Cook in the Northern Territory".[109] Even though "in the early twentieth century both expert and popular opinions vehemently opposed miscegenation", in contradiction, it was actively pursued by those who held influence.[110] Austin identifies that the 1930s was a time when "authorities developed an astonishing concern for degrees of colour and racial mix as the latest eugenics research caught up with the North".[111]

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[103] Keith Windschuttle, "Why there were no stolen generations,"; "J. W. Bleakley's defence of segregation" in "the introduction to "The Fabrication of Aboriginal History, vol. 3" Quadrant 54 (2010).
[104] Windschuttle, "Why there were no stolen generations,".
[105] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 142.
[106] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 142.
[107] Bailey, *Aboriginal welfare: Initial conference Canberra*.
[108] Gray, A cautious silence, 130.
[109] Gray, A cautious silence, 130.
[110] Henry Reynolds, *Nowhere People* (Victoria: Penguin Group, 2005), 6.
[111] Austin, *I can picture the old home*, 130.

Cook had long proposed new policy directions, but had approached the half-caste problem in particular with the

> Advocacy of a program of biological engineering . . . in the belief that over time these relationships would produce whiter and whiter children, eventually leading to the disappearance of the race.[112]

As Robert Manne describes, this was underpinned by the eugenicist ideology of miscegenation where "the channelling of half-castes or Aborigines of mixed race parentage into relationships with non-Aboriginal Australians" would result in reducing the 'degrees' or percentages of Aboriginality until the racial heritage became either so insignificant as not to count in the heredity of people.[113] The aspiration was to reach a stage where an entire generational break in the line of blood heritage would occur. This would then signal the success of the eugenicist program of miscegenation, where, according to Cook, Australia "shall have no problem, apart from dealing with those pangs of conscience which must attend the passing of a neglected race".[114]

Cook and others who promoted the absorption argument were working from the biological evolutionary premise that Aboriginal peoples were not racially prone to genetic 'atavism'. This aspect of racial science dictated the idea that physical "traits expected to be lost in the evolutionary history of a species occasionally reappear apparently out of the blue" could lead to the possibility of the re-appearance of Aboriginal features generations later.[115] McGregor writes that "Cook drew heavily of the anecdotal observation that apparent Aboriginal features faded rapidly with successive accessions of European blood", a 'characteristic' which was core to Cook's proposition of 'breeding them out'".[116] Although disguised as socio-cultural uplift, this belief became a central plank in the assimilation discourse, especially when it was applied to half-caste children. After removing those children from their families, followed by forced resocialisation into white communities, the intent was that half-castes would, in time, 'breed' with non-Aboriginal people, thereby diminishing the degrees of Aboriginality with each successive generation. At the time

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[112] Robert Manne, "In Denial: The Stolen Generations and the Right," *Quarterly Essay*, 1 (2001): 1-113. https://www.quarterlyessay.com.au/essay/2001/04/in-denial viewed 26 March, 2014.
[113] Manne, "In Denial," 17.
[114] Bailey, *Aboriginal welfare: Initial Conference Canberra,* 14.
[115] Nenad Tomić, V. B. Meyer-Rochow, "Atavisms: Medical, Genetic, and Evolutionary Implications," Perspectives in Biology and Medicine 54 (3) (2011): 332.
[116] McGregor, *Imagined Destinies*, 161.

Elkin, advocating for socio-cultural assimilation, was pushing at the boundaries of these beliefs. The two different views formed the basis of contest between the different ideological positions, but at the time of the Conference, the miscegenation debate held the upper hand.

While the Conference resolution on 'Education' was couched in terms of social advancement where "efforts of all State authorities should be directed towards the education of children of mixed aboriginal blood at white standards", with the outlook that half-castes would be able to take "their place in the white community on an equal footing with the whites", the most telling resolution of the conference was the first recommendation which embodied eugenicist ideology.[117] Under the heading "Destiny of The Race" there was general consensus that:

> That this Conference believes that the destiny of the natives of aboriginal origin, but not of the full blood, lies in their ultimate absorption by the people of the Commonwealth, and it therefore recommends that all efforts be directed to that end.[118]

This recommendation clearly demonstrates the place of eugenics in decisions being made to administer for Aborigines. As Thomas Adam writes

> Proponents of eugenics saw humans as a product of their genes and not of their environment. Social reforms this had to start with the improvement of the gene pool, and not with the improvement of the social environment.[119]

No history of Australia and of Aboriginal peoples can afford to ignore both the intercultural transfer of academic and socio-national discourse on the application of broad-spectrum eugenics and its influence on the formulation of native policy between federation and the onset of the Second World War.[120]

Adam's identification "that eugenics all too easily embraced biology as a means to solve social problems" is borne out through the delegate's approval for 'absorption'.[121] That this deliberation was readily endorsed by those present is not surprising, as this was a period where global discourses on the nature of various populations were adapted and reworked to suit the individual national circumstance. Those determinations were not made in a

[117] Bailey, *Aboriginal welfare: Initial Conference Canberra,* 3.
[118] Bailey, *Aboriginal welfare: Initial Conference Canberra,* 3.
[119] Thomas Adam, *Intercultural Transfers and the making of the Modern World, 1800 – 2000: Sources and Context,* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 60.
[120] Adam, *Intercultural Transfers,* 7.
[121] Adam, *Intercultural Transfers,* 7.

vacuum; nor were they ahistorical. They were a culmination of the perpetuation and refinement of race-science from the nineteenth century.

The socio-scientific belief that the quality of a race of peoples could be biologically improved by controlled breeding practices was a theory related to Darwinism. At the same time that Charles Darwin was developing his theories on evolution, his cousin, Francis Galton was formulating his doctrine of eugenics. Galton's nineteenth century eugenics, which was "the science that dealt with all the influences that improved the 'inborn qualities of a race' and developed them to the utmost advantage", was the theoretical framework which provided the scaffolding for the arguments put forward by Cook and others at the 1937 conference in support of interracial breeding. [122] "Eugenics" writes Jacqueline D'Arcy "occupied three spaces: the scientific or academic space, the popular or social space, and the nationalistic or political space".[123] Australia's ideological positions about 'race' were informed by global discourses on eugenics and race relations which were then adapted in each of those "spaces" to the Australian platform. The impacts of international, particularly European, discourse on eugenics are discussed in greater detail in chapter two.

While the recommendations of the 1937 Conference were clearly grounded in the principles of eugenics, the different academic positions in the arena of racialised science were engaged in a battle where miscegenation as a formal approach was losing ground to ideologies of social and economic assimilation. The advocates from the different schools of thought were clashing heads in a socio-intellectual contest to have their particular type of science validated through the 'next', 'new', federal policy, but only one of those positions was given credence at the Conference. Although the delegates were specifically chosen for the insights they might give for the progression of policy, they did not necessarily hold the power to action those resolutions into concrete governance.

Keith Windschuttle describes the Conference as a tiger without teeth, saying that "the 1937 conference of Aboriginal administrators was a combination of the prospects of assimilation and a conservative reaffirmation of established policy".[124] He goes on to state that "none of the delegates had the resources to implement anything new at all" and that

[122] F. Galton, "Eugenics: Its Definition, Scope and Aims," *The American Journal of Sociology* 10 (1904), 1.
[123] Jaqueline D'Arcy, "The Same but Different': Aborigines, Eugenics, and the Harvard-Adelaide Universities' Anthropological Expedition to Cape Barren Island Reserve, January 1939," Tasmanian Historical Studies 12 (2007): 60
[124] Windschuttle, Quadrant, Jan-Feb, 2010.

due to lack of legislative legitimacy, the "resolutions were more about hope than actions".[125] Therefore, writes Windschuttle, there was not any real capacity to either develop or implement programmes which progressed either miscegenation or socio-cultural assimilation.[126] While this may have been the case, the Conference resolutions coalesced into formal pre-policy development and the discussions led to action on the part of the federal government, specifically in the writing of the 1939 Half-Caste policy which is discussed later in the chapter.

Austin considers that "between 1927 and 1939" Cook was the lead "architect of Aboriginal policy in the Northern Territory" and that the whole "sorry business of child removal" can be attributed to Cook alone.[127] Admittedly, while Cook was prominent in these discussions, it needs to be acknowledged that he was sharing the miscegenation/assimilation space with a number of other people. Austin identifies that

> While there were plenty of minor players, three men dominated the Aboriginal welfare debate in the period to 1939 – Chief Protector Cecil Evelyn Cook, Canberra Bureaucrat John Aloysius Carrodus, and Anglican priest-anthropologist Adolphus Peter Elkin.[128]

Elkin in the ascendency.

According to Wise, "to Elkin, the thought of an official policy of absorption was an affront" mainly because "Elkin's outlook was sociological".[129] Elkin represented the 'new' socio-cultural school of thought which focussed "on compelling Aborigines - particularly half-caste children "into thinking and behaving like white people . . . a view which he made known through every avenue available to him" and when he felt his views were being ignored, he complained "particularly vociferously to federal ministers".[130] That Elkin pursued any opening which would allow him to influence policy is clear. Wise writes that Elkin, "increasingly . . . became convinced that his policy was the only possible policy'" and that "since 1934, Elkin doggedly pursued his personal, one-man lobby".[131] Therefore, after close to a decade of political canvassing, Elkin was quick to take to take up residence in the policy development space created by the shifts and reshuffles in the federal government in the late 1930s. Since the late 1920s Elkin, without

[125] Windschuttle, Quadrant, Jan-Feb, 2010.
[126] Windschuttle, Quadrant, Jan-Feb, 2010.
[127] Austin, Never trust a government man, 142.
[128] Austin, Never trust a government man, 142.
[129] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 113.
[130] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 142.
[131] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 141.

any official standing until his appointment as Professor of Anthropology, "watched the government like a hawk, pulling them up whenever he thought they were wrong" and in doing so endeavoured to influence both societal and political views on Aborigines.[132] By 1937, Elkin "was considered the absolute expert on the Aborigines", but, not having been invited to attend the Initial Conference, he had no official platform from which to launch his own particular brand of policy thinking.[133]

The opportunity for the conversion of Elkin's anthropological-sociological beliefs into policy arose with the appointment of John McEwen as Minister for the Interior. Following the 1937 federal election, Lyons "allocated the Interior portfolio to John McEwen" and as a consequence "Cook's policy of biological absorption was displaced by economic and social assimilation", which would be taken in the direction of a new policy.[134] In 1939, the architect of the 1937 Conference, conservative Prime Minister Joseph Lyons died while in office.[135] In the months prior to Lyon's death the sitting Minister for the Interior Thomas Paterson, "had failed to take up [Donald Thomson's] 1936 recommendations and develop a meaningful policy" mainly because its focus was on full bloods and segregation in order to preserve Aborigines.[136]

After his ministerial appointment in 1938, McEwen toured the Northern Territory in the company of E. W. P. Chinnery, an anthropological colleague of Elkin's, and "returned to Canberra [where] he set his department to work on the task of developing a white paper" which would form the basis for a new policy on half-castes.[137] Wise states that Elkin and McEwen shared "identical political philosophies", foreseeing a future where training in domestic or labour skills would lead Aboriginal people into fiscal engagement with the nation's economy.[138] Elkin, wanting a clear field in which to operate, engaged in a

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[132] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 142.
[133] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 113.
[134] Peter Golding, *Black Jack McEwen: political gladiator* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1996), 68.
Ronald Wilson (Commissioner), National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families *Bringing them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*, (Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission), April 1997. Section 2, Chapter 9. https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/bringing-them-home-chapter-9
[135] P. R. Hart and C. J. Lloyd, *Lyons, Joseph Aloysius (Joe) (1879–1939*), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.
http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lyons-joseph-aloysius-joe-7278
[136] Austin, *Never trust a government man*, 303.
[137] Golding, *Black Jack McEwen*, 100.
Geoffrey Gray, "'Mr Chinnery Should Be Given The Recognition He Deserves': EWP Chinnery In The Northern Territory", *Journal of Northern Territory History*, 15 (2004): 21.
[138] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 144.

campaign of maligning Cook, and Wise says that "McEwen joined with Elkin in scapegoating the Chief Protector".[139] In 1939, disgusted and dismayed at the direction in which the government was moving in regard to Aboriginal affairs and finding himself unable to escape the personal and professional attacks being levied towards him, Cook resigned.[140] This left Elkin free to "further canvass his policy and have it passed into legislation", a task to which he had unwaveringly dedicated himself.[141]

over the previous decade Elkin had established a relationship with the Secretary for the Interior Carrodus, finding that it was easier and probably a more effective way of influencing the then Minister,.[142] Therefore it is not surprising that on the eve of new policy development Carrodus advised McEwen that:

> the only worthwhile policy advice was to be gained from 'sensible' anthropologists who had 'actual experience of Aboriginals' . . . And the sensible, practical anthropologist was to be Elkin.[143]

Evidence that Elkin exerted decision-making influence on McEwen in the writing of the 1939 policy can be found in the transcript of his paper to the 1948 *Conference of Mission Authorities and the Northern Territory Administration.* [144] Elkin says he, along with McEwen and Carrodus "drew up the general outlines and aims . . ." of the policy being developed.[145] To bring this into reality, Elkin and McEwen developed

> [A] long range policy realising that to transform people from a nomadic tribal state to take their place in a civilised community will certainly take not only many years, but many generations.[146]

As I have written elsewhere, "in order to counteract criticism", and so that McEwen "could assure members of Cabinet that it was not only a Professor Elkin plan", the Minister asked Elkin to seek feedback from other interested parties.[147] While Thomson's earlier recommendations which were intended to form the basis of policy were

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[139] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 144.
[140] Austin, *Never Trust a government man,* 303.
[141] Austin, *Never Trust a government man,* 303.
[142] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 141.
[143] Cora Thomas, "From 'Australian Aborigines' to 'white Australians'," *Australian Aboriginal Studies* (2001): 21.
J. A. Carrodus, See Carrodus' later letter, which referred to Elkin as 'not a purely academic anthropologist, but was very realistic in his outlook', Carrodus to Driver, 15 July 1946, AA, CRS F1 1946/767.
[144] E.P.: 130/12/6, "Conference of Mission Authorities and the Northern Territory Administration, Darwin, 1948, Subjects for Conference".
[145] E.P.: 130/12/6.
[146] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 144.
[147] Jennifer Caruso, "Turn this Water into Wine," *Australian Feminist Studies,* 27:73 (2012): 283.

acknowledged in "McEwen's major policy pronouncement in 1939", Wise writes that the policy "was a document that was pure Elkin".[148] It was the culmination of and reward for many years of politicking and gate-keeping by Elkin. Whether Elkin's policy was truly a break "from past practices", was yet to be seen, but Elkin too was a creature of his time, and his view of Aboriginal people was informed by the same social Darwinist/eugenicist schools of thought as those whom he had deposed. This is borne out in the McEwen paper, where there are indications that although the policy would seek social advancement of Aboriginal people, the levels of achievement of full-bloods and half-castes would never equal those of non-Aboriginal Australians.[149] To the layperson, though, McEwen's policy held great promise.

Mrs Maisie McKenzie's recollection of events in 1939 is evidence that the badging of and subsequent marketing of the policy as 'A New Deal for Aborigines' was a socio-political success.[150] In her detailed account of missionary efforts in the Northern Territory from the mid-to-late 1930s, she wrote that of three momentous events in 1939, the most significant (in her view) was the "new policy".[151] To McKenzie, the import of McEwen's paper was that "it was a positive one . . . the Government realised that the Aborigines were not a dying race".[152] With the proposed outcome of more inclusive levels of social and political franchise for half-castes framed within citizenship, it was seen that the policy provided forward looking direction. Gray notes that

> Full citizenship was the aim not only of McEwen and the government but also of humanitarian and church groups, including anthropologists such as A. P. Elkin, professor of anthropology in the University of Sydney. [153]

The policy, informed by "functionalist social anthropology", was seen as revolutionarily reformist where "a commonality of values reflected the desire to 'uplift' and modernise indigenous people".[154] Half-castes, by the grace of god (intelligent design) and evolution (Social Darwinism), were halfway there. Therefore secular and religious bodies embraced any federally ratified approach which envisioned Aborigines and half-castes as lesser race of peoples, while stating that its aims were for inclusion into the national population body.

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[148] Caruso, "Turn this Water into Wine," 283.
[149] Glen Ross ""Dreamtime", who's time?: A. P. Elkin and the construction of aboriginal time in the 1930s and 1940s", *Journal of Australian Studies* (2009): 55.
[150] Mrs McKenzie was the wife of the Rev Doug McKenzie, Anglican missionary in the Northern Territory.
[151] Maisie McKenzie, *Mission to Arnhem Land* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1976), 105.
[152] McKenzie, *Mission to Arnhem Land*, 105.
[153] Gray, "'Mr Chinnery should be given the recognition he deserves'," 22.
[154] Gray, *A cautious silence*, 3.

McGregor says that both "prewar absorption and postwar assimilation sought Aboriginal inclusion in the Australian nation," and that

> the change from a biological to a sociocultural model entailed more than . . . a change in the mode of assimilation; it entailed a shift in how the Australian nation was imagined.[155]

In showcasing the McEwen paper in such a way, it can be said that the policies around 'Aborigines' and half-castes were constructed to serve the nation state of Australia both internally and abroad. While Australia was intent on showing the rest of the world that its new policy directions were aimed at preventing the demise of its people who existed on the fringes of the national polis, it was also a time when Australia needed to declare its affiliation with other western nations. The titling of the 1939 policy as "A New Deal" was reflective of President Roosevelt's 1930s interwar depression economic policy for the United States.[156] While the core business of the Roosevelt policy was "a series of economic measures designed to alleviate the worst effects of the depression, reinvigorate the economy, and restore the confidence in banks and other key institutions", and the 1939 policy was on the future of half-castes (although it could be argued that economics performed a correlating basis between the two), the bold title proclaimed Australia's alliance with and allegiance to the United States.[157]

In terms of nation creation, the timing of the public announcement of the 1939 policy was significant because in real terms, while the western world was increasingly aware of eugenicist approaches to Jews (and other 'undesirable' peoples) in Germany, Australia was able to distance itself internationally and locally from Nazi ideology. The naming of the policy was an effort to demonstrate that there was no imaginable connection to Australia's treatment of Aborigines to the determinations in Europe about Jewish people and that this country was seeking a more humane way to deal with its 'problem' population. The rejection of 'biological absorption' in favour of the new 1939 policy of 'assimilation' was considered a very strong delineation between past and new policies and supposedly heralded a national move away from eugenicist practices.[158] Russell McGregor writes that within Australian borders,

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[155] McGregor, *Indifferent Inclusion,* 14-15.

[156] America's Great Depression and Roosevelt's New Deal Relief Programs http://dp.la/exhibitions/exhibits/show/new-deal/relief-programs

[157] 'The New Deal' The Roosevelt Institute http://rooseveltinstitute.org/policy-and-ideasroosevelt-historyfdr/new-deal

[158] Adam, *Intercultural Transfers*, 7.

> the 'New Deal' was . . . 'epoch making' since it envisaged 'a common citizenship, without postulating genetic changes' and expressed ' a long-term objective for policy that was other than some kind of social engineering . . . taking the emphasis off miscegenation.[159]

With the 'new' approach outlined in the McEwen paper, the Australian public was able to feel better about the way in which it treated its Aboriginal and half-caste people, particularly because at that time the world was becoming aware of what was emerging in Europe.

The reality was that the social and political discourse in Australia leading into the writing of the policy perpetuated the core ideologies of evolutionary biological determinism which underpinned the notions that Aborigines would behave certain ways simply because they were Aboriginal. The 1939 policy resolved that the only way to hasten the full transition of Aborigines and half-castes to modernity was through policies which advocated, albeit silently, the dilution of social, physical and racial markers of Aboriginality through socio-cultural methods: eugenics in disguise. This could only occur through aggressive state, secular and mission intervention through the socio-cultural processes of assimilation, and the M.O.M. under the directorship of T. T. Webb and J. W. Burton, guided by Elkin, was preparing to develop its own assimilation scheme.

The birthing of the Croker Island Methodist Mission.

As with any new policy, government funding was made available for organisations and institutions to deliver the policy outcomes. Immediately following the ratification of the 1939 *The Northern Territory of Australia Commonwealth Government's policy with respect to Aboriginals,* M.O.M. decision makers "corresponded with the government about the establishment of a Home for children of Methodist faith on Croker Island".[160] As a result, the M.O.M. North Australia District drew up its 1940-41: *Statement of Aims and Policy Regarding Croker Island* (which became known as 'The Croker Island Scheme').[161] The mission was "specifically for part-Aboriginal children" and was to "be established,

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[159] Russell McGregor, "Nation and Assimilation," in eds., Julie T. Wells, Mickey Dewar, Suzanne Parry *Modern frontiers: aspects of the 1950s in Australia's Northern Territory* (Darwin: Charles Darwin University Press, c2005), Ch. 2, 18.

[160] Find and Connect: History & information about Australian orphanages children's Homes and other institutions http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/nt/YE00021

[161] E.P.: 130/12/113, *The Missionary Review: Methodist Overseas Missions – North Australia District. Revised Statement of District Policy 1944.*
McEwen, *The Northern Territory of Australia Commonwealth Government's policy with Respect to Aboriginals*.

separate from any of the missions for Aborigines generally".[162] Whilst the ideals of the new mission were grounded in christian ethics and morality aimed at the care of the half-caste, the business model of the mission was to deliver training, civilising and christianising transformations of predominantly Northern and Central Australian half-caste Aboriginal children congruent with the 1939 Commonwealth policy.[163]

In 1939, both Webb and Burton held senior positions in the M.O.M.. As both Burton and Webb had been appointed to the Overseas branch of the Methodist mission in the late 1920s, by the time the new policy was delivered their relationship was well cemented. Therefore, each knew and had an understanding of the position which would be taken in any new M.O.M. policy. When Webb retired in late 1939, M.O.M. discussions for a new mission site were well under way. M.O.M. records of minutes show that in May of that year, Webb communicated with Burton stating that "the essential need" for dealing with "the most backward of all races" was "an entirely new outlook and policy on the part of the Mission Board", words which reflected Elkin's position.[164] As mentioned earlier, in his 1928 Report under the heading *Proposed Half-Caste Colony,* Bleakley had strongly advocated against the setting up of a satellite mission or reserve.[165] At that time, neither Burton nor Webb accepted Bleakley's opposition to the suggestion, and it can be seen that as early as the late 1920s, for Webb and Burton, the notion held potential for future M.O.M. policy direction.

Soon after his retirement, Webb outlined the first clearly articulated policy aimed at giving new direction to the work of the M.O.M. in Arnhem Land which entailed the setting up of a new mission site on Croker Island. In 1940, in *An Address delivered to the Young Women's Missionary Council of Victoria* titled 'A Future for the Half-Caste', Webb's less than complimentary views of Aborigines and half-castes were on display when he said:

> I should imagine that there can be few more pathetic people in all the world than these: few who are more woebegone; few for whom life holds less; few whose outlook is more hopeless. Their position is one utterly without social and cultural privilege, and almost without economic security.[166]

[162] Henty-Gebert, *Paint Me Black,* xii.
[163] Caruso, "Turn this water into wine," 280.
[164] M.O.M.: 451 339 CY3775 (67), letter from Burton to Webb 22 May1939.
[165] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 17.
[166] T. T. Webb, "A Future for the Half-Caste", *An Address delivered to the Young Women's Missionary Council of Victoria.* The Methodist Overseas Mission (Sydney: Spectator Publishing, 1940), 2.

Webb then followed this with a remonstrance to the parishioners stating that they needed to recognise that there could no longer be justification for "an attitude of arrogant racial contempt for them"; a confusing utterance considering he himself can be charged as being guilty of holding Aboriginal people in very low regard.[167] Nevertheless, Webb was attempting to bring the audience to an understanding that the new M.O.M. scheme would give Aborigines and half-castes the opportunity "to demonstrate their ability and worthiness to occupy a place of equality with us".[168]

Reading the transcript of Webb's address is shocking. While it was known that there would be aspects of 'race' aligned to the target group of half-castes, it was assumed that this would be secondary motivator in the development of mission policy. Since this was a christian organisation, there was a presumption on my part that somewhere, somehow, the ideologies underpinning the policy would be theological and grounded in gospel values and the ideas of oneness in Christ. This was a false presumption. The statements that were made focused on the deficit of people in relation to their degrees of Aboriginality, a situation which Webb considered was only possible for them to overcome due to the ascendency of their white ancestry and through the assistance granted by white people. That help was proffered not because they were Aboriginal, but because they were half or more than half white. Webb wrote "It must not be forgotten that they are the sons and daughters of our own race", and that

> While some of them have the character and outlook of their aboriginal mothers, and are to that extent handicapped . . . it is also true that they have inherited something of the character and outlook of their white fathers.[169]

Therefore, says Webb, half-castes "are, in some measure fitted for inclusion in our communities".[170]

In his talk, Webb referred back to the 1928 Lloyd Warner and Radcliffe-Brown address mentioned earlier. He focused on the comments made by Burton regarding the previous misguided nature of mission where "the earliest missionaries often had too much power, and they overstepped even those limits".[171] Webb made the statement that for the processes of re-racialisation to be successful, such "domination by staff" cannot be a part of future undertakings "even though it be the kindly domination of Christian

[167] Webb, 1940, 2.
[168] Webb, 1940, 2.
[169] Webb, 1940, 3.
[170] Webb, 1940, 3.
[171] Warner et. al. "Some aspects," 3.

missionaries".[172] If such practices were to continue Webb considered that "there can be no real progress toward racial emancipation".[173] Of course, Webb's focus was not on creating change in the system to successfully bring about the 'emancipation' of half-castes as members of the body politic - it was on teaching half-castes ways in which to emancipate themselves from their Aboriginality under the domination of missionary staff.

When "referring . . . to the half-caste children, who have been committed to our care by the Federal Government", Webb considered that the approaches to be taken were not just those which were aimed at "showing kindness and affection", nor about just skill training and education.[174] Rather, Webb considered that the imperative was to "carry out a policy of racial development and stabilization".[175] While blaming half-caste girls for their sexual exploitation, Webb then expounded on the need to protect half-caste girls from the vagaries of a "certain type of white men", and that Croker Island would be a locale where such protection could be implemented.[176] This shows that the North District's new policy was a wolf in sheep's clothing, it was pure anthropological socio-racial ideology swaddled in the cloak of christian endeavour. Although the language use perpetuated the 'less than us white folks' and 'they'll never make the grade' trope, Webb was making a momentous announcement to the national Methodist community.

In response to questions "concerning a site for the carrying out of this work", Webb stated that a site had been selected and that "the question of location was exhaustively considered and debated" with the final decision having already been made.[177] He wrote that "after the responsible Government department" had consulted with "its own experienced officers and other competent men", the M.O.M. was authorised to establish a mission station for half-caste children of the Northern Territory on the "north coast site" of Croker Island.[178] It was a statement outlining a new direction for Methodist missionary endeavour in the Northern Territory, and that through its Croker Island Scheme, the M.O.M. had devised a solution to the half-caste problem.

In the lead-up to the development of the Scheme, M.O.M. decision makers were in regular communication with the office of Director of Welfare Chinnery. In August 1939, Burton

[172] Webb, 1940, 3.
[173] Webb, 1940, 3.
[174] Webb, 1940, 5.
[175] Webb, 1940, 5.
[176] Webb, 1940, 6-7.
[177] Webb, 1940, 7.
[178] Webb, 1940, 7.

noted that he and Webb had held "lengthy and cordial interviews with the Administrator . . . and Mr. E.W.P. Chinnery".[179] At that meeting, "Chinnery had mapped out his programme and drawn up a detailed plan of operations" (reflective of the outline written about by Goodluck) which had been formulated in line with the recommendations of the 1939 policy, and as such, was a corollary to Elkin's assimilation proposition.[180] As anthropological colleagues, Elkin and Chinnery had a long established relationship, and Elkin had championed the appointment of Chinnery for the position of Director of Welfare in the Northern Territory. Immediately after the announcement of the 1939 policy, Elkin wrote to McEwen saying "Dear Mr McEwen, Hearty congratulations on having the Policy adopted! I hope you can cap this with the appointment of Mr. Chinnery".[181] At the same time that the M.O.M. was consulting with the government, Webb and Burton were also recognising Elkin as a key figure in the training of missionaries with the Board minutes of September 1939 noting that "The thanks of the Board be presented to Professor A. P. Elkin for interest he has taken in our Missionaries who have taken the Course in Anthropology".[182] These then are the crucial months when the government, the M.O.M. and Elkin were working collaboratively towards the advancement of a half-caste mission policy. This is testament to the individual power that Elkin held, and reflects the influence he was able to wield over the M.O.M. and the government. His position on the direction that Aboriginal policy should take has been recorded by Wise, and analysed by academics such as McGregor, Haebich, and Gray to name a few.

While Elkin was utilising a range of avenues in advocating for new directions and thinking about Aboriginal people and half-castes, his campaigning did not include the views of Aboriginal people involved in the nascent Aboriginal activism of the period led by activists such as Fred Maynard, Pearl Gibbs and William Cooper.[183] In writing to the Editor of the *Melbourne Herald* in 1934, Elkin responded to comments which had been attributed to him where he was recorded as advocating "a special administrative department, composed of aborigines to control the health, employment and education of Australian natives" and that Elkin had also "urge[d] the appointment of native magistrates".[184] Elkin strongly denied these claims, stating emphatically that "I have not

[179] M.O.M., 451 339 CY3775, August 1939.
[180] M.O.M., 451 339 CY3775, August 1939. (I wonder if this is the 'map' that J. Goodluck wrote about?)
[181] E.P.: 130/12/47, 9 February 1939.
[182] M.O.M., 451, CY3775, September 1939.
[183] John Maynard, *Fight for Liberty and Freedom: The origins of Australian Aboriginal Activism* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2007).
[184] E.P.: "Natives Welfare," *Melbourne Herald*, October 1934.

advocated any such thing, nor I hope would anyone else".[185] With this response, it can be seen that Elkin was working towards protecting his own patch in the socio-anthropological and bureaucratic field by denying the place of the very people for whom he was supposedly promoting social justice. Therefore, "Elkin sought national unity through the eventual assimilation of the Aboriginal people", the outcome of which would be the "strengthening of white Australian culture" - a land where the Aboriginal and the Aboriginal voice had no concrete reality.[186] This is evidence that in Elkin's world, Aborigines were sub-altern peoples about whom he could construct an 'uplift' discourse.

In his exposition of Aboriginal activism, Aboriginal historian John Maynard notes that government positions were not the only threat to Aboriginal people's push for social, political and economic equality in the 1930s in that "there was a new, detrimental voice of the horizon, one that would ultimately hold centre stage on Aboriginal issues and direction – that voice was the voice of white academia".[187] Maynard specifically identifies that the white academic voices were those of Michael Sawtell and A. P. Elkin "both of whom were intent on promoting their own narrow views, profiles and positions of eminence" which would result in the submergence of the Aboriginal political voice.[188] In a 1977 interview by J. Fletcher with Mr A. C. Pettit, secretary to the N.S.W. Board of Protection of which Elkin was a member and later Chair, Fletcher makes the comment "[Elkin] tends to think that all the changes that occurred in the 30s were the result of his pushing" to which Pettit replies "Well I don't know what he was doing behind the scenes as it were".[189] Reading Elkin's own notes one can be assured that he was indeed very busy, but one wonders whether it was for the betterment of Aborigines or for the consolidation of himself as the anthropologist with the science about race. In her 1982 conference paper "An Intelligent Parasite: A. P. Elkin and White Perceptions of the History of Aboriginal People in New South Wales", Heather Goodall writes that

> Just how great such a power can be, in a political and "interpretational sense", is graphically demonstrated in the rise of A. P. Elkin, which occurred at the expense of the Aboriginal people he claimed to be "helping".[190]

[185] E.P.: "Natives Welfare".
[186] Ross, '"Dreamtime", who's time?" 56.
[187] Maynard, *Fight for Liberty and Freedom,* 131.
[188] Maynard, *Fight for Liberty and Freedom*, 131.
[189] J. Fletcher, 'Transcript of an interview with New South Wales Aboriginal Protection Board Secretary Mr A.C. Pettit in June 1977' PMS 5380 in Maynard, *Fight for Liberty and Freedom,* 101.
[190] Heather Goodall, "An Intelligent Parasite: A. P. Elkin and White Perceptions of the History of Aboriginal People in New South Wales", Conference Paper: Australian History Association Conference NSW (1982).

That Elkin had entrenched himself in government and mission adjudications on half-castes is indisputable.

In October 1939, members of the M.O.M. North Australia District Board held discussions on the population of half-caste children in the Northern Territory with the resolution that there needed to be a new "scheme" to forward the work with this group of children.[191] The first time discussions were held by the Board which specifically refer to a "new half-caste scheme" was in May, 1940.[192] It was only a matter of weeks later that the plan began to be referred to as the 'Croker Island Half-Caste Scheme'.[193] Following a report being lodged by the Rev. L. N. Kentish, who had been commissioned with the task of locating a suitable site for the new mission events began to move very quickly. The Kentish report included a hand drawn map of Croker Island indicating the best possible location for the mission station.[194] Commenting on the recommended site, Burton wrote to Webb to discuss the "proposed half-caste" scheme and where the mission might be established.[195] Burton replied, saying "The General Scheme, I am convinced that this work should be started as a separate institution . . . Personally I think Croker Is[land] offers the best that we are likely to discover".[196] Webb described the site in glowing terms painting a picture of an idyllic tropical environment which he considered most suitable to the task at hand.[197]

Conversations on the plans for the new mission were not only being held between mission authorities and the government, but also between Burton and Elkin. In July1940, Elkin penned a letter to Burton where he said he was "very interested in the policy being worked out for the care and development of half-castes in the Northern Territory".[198] Elkin was particularly strong in his support for a mission station on Croker Island, writing

> I . . . favour strongly the selection of a site in the north . . . I also favour the idea of having a [polocy] of peoples of mixed blood. [199]

[191] M.O.M., 451 339 CY3775, October 1939.
[192] M.O.M., 451 339 CY3775, May 1940.
[193] M.O.M., 451 339 CY3775, May 1940.
[194] M.O.M., 451 339 CY3775, July 1940.
[195] M.O.M., 451/5053, CY3775 9 May 1940.
[196] M.O.M., 451/5053, CY3775 9 May 1940.
[197] Webb, "A Future for the Half-Caste," 8.
[198] E.P.: 130/12/110, 1940.
[199] E.P.: 130/12/110: {Elkin's word, but does he mean policy the 'i' and the 'o' being next to each other on the keyboard} or {is he trying to formulate a new collective word}. I believe that Elkin was trying to devise a new word which would encapsulate the intentions of the work with half-castes on Croker. The word 'policy does not fit in the discussion, and he would be very cautious about using the word 'polity' as it assumes a body politic which had the power to make decisions for itself outside of the structures of Australian politics and society. Elkin's word "polocy" is discussed in the following chapter.

Such declarations are an indication of whose 'side' Elkin would be on in the ensuing fracas between the executives of the M.O.M. and the Methodist Inland Mission (M.I.M.) who were also preparing a submission to the Federal government with plans of extending their work in Central Australia.

Apparently, the M.I.M. were fully aware of the development of the M.O.M. half-caste proposal. This is not surprising given that the M.O.M. deliberations and conversations were taking place in a circumscribed arena. As the focus of the proposal was on the half-caste children from Central Australia who had been classified as being 'Methodist", the M.I.M., being situated as it was in Central Australia, considered that it had more to offer than the M.O.M.. In strongly believing this, the M.I.M. attempted to position itself and its own proposition as being the more suitable body for carrying out the work of the 1939 policy. Strangely, it appears the M.O.M. were unaware of the M.I.M.'s intentions until the M.O.M. Board received communication from M.I.M. Director, Rev. T. C. Rentoul, indicating that the M. I. M. was preparing a proposal to submit to the Minister.[200]

To forestall the M.O.M. project, Rentoul wrote to Burton on 5 July 1940, enclosing the "report of the recently held (informal) Inland Mission Synod".[201] Rentoul informed Burton that the

> Executive of the Federal Inland Mission Board earnestly requests the Overseas mission board to defer any further action that they might contemplate taking in the matter of the establishment of any kind of Institution or Compound for half-caste children in the Northern Territory.[202]

After making this request of the M.O.M., Rentoul went on to write that

> This Synod further affirms its judgement that the half-caste children . . . in the Northern Territory could be more effectively handled by the Methodist Inland Mission than by the Overseas Mission. [203]

These were the opening salvos in what was to become a battle of the mission boards, where there could only be one body deemed the more suitable for fulfilling the 1939 policy requirements.

The battle of the mission boards.

[200] M.O.M., 451/ 6795, CY3775 5 May 1940.
[201] M.O.M., 339 CY3775, 5 May 1940.
[202] M.O.M., 339 CY3775, 5 May 1940.
[203] M.O.M., 339 CY3775, July 1940.

Following the reading of Rentoul's declarations the M.O.M. minutes reflect an almost patronising tone recording that, as far as the M.O.M. was concerned, *they* had been commissioned by the Administration to carry out the work of caring for "the half-castes" from Central Australia.[204] This was in spite of the fact that there were not yet any formal agreements between the M.O.M. and the government. The M.O.M. seems to have been confused in that an 'approach by the Administration' did not constitute an agreement or final decision on the part of the government. It was also an indication of the level of confidence that the M.O.M. assumed. After all, they had spent years associating and collaborating with people who had influence with the commonwealth government, and others who were in decision making positions. The Board was also surprised by Rentoul's comments on the intentions of the Inland mission, as they claimed that they "had no knowledge that the M.I.M. had any thought of undertaking the care of the Methodist children" from that region.[205] In response to Rentoul's petition, the M.O.M. called a special meeting of the Board. Held on 25 July a resolution was made that "the Board resolves to defer further action in the matter until the next meeting of the Board".[206] It appears that the M.O.M. was also unaware that the M.I.M., close to finalising their proposal, was preparing to lodge it with the Minister.

On 23 August 1940, Rentoul wrote to the new Minister for the Interior, Senator H. S. Foll informing him that

> I have the honour to submit herewith through the Overseas Mission Board a proposal for the care of some of the half-caste children of the Northern Territory by the Federal Methodist Inland Mission (Rentoul's underscore).[207]

Rentoul went on to stay that the M.I.M. had well established facilities "for the spiritual welfare of the half-caste children there who are recorded as Methodists".[208] He stated that of the number of children in their "care", the half-caste children made up "50% of the Methodist total in the Territory", and that with existing mechanisms in place, the M.I.M. proposal should be given serious consideration.[209]

Those with administrative control of the M.O.M. immediately campaigned to gain support for their Scheme from people with whom they had already had extensive dealings, and

[204] M.O.M., 339 CY3775, July 1940.
[205] M.O.M., 339 CY3775, July 1940.
[206] M.O.M., 451/ 6795, CY3775, 25 July.
[207] M.O.M., 451/ 6795, CY3775.
[208] M.O.M., 451/ 6795, CY3775.
[209] M.O.M., 451/ 6795, CY3775.

who they felt would put their support into their program. Burton also contacted Elkin who, on seeing the M.I.M. proposal, wrote back to Burton stating "'I know Central Australia fairly well . . . In my opinion it is not suitable for an institution such as is projected'".[210] Elkin's argument was that previous methods for dealing with the half-caste problem had failed and he asked "Let us try a new experiment such as the establishment of a colony for training purposes".[211]

In order to have their Scheme be the proposal that was ratified by the government, Burton read out to the M.O.M. Board "a number of telegrams that passed between Mr. Chinnery, Rev. L.N. Kentish and Rev. T.C. Toft [of the M.I.M.] and himself, stating that

> Mr. E.W.P. Chinnery, Director of Native Affairs, sent . . . the following telegram: - 'In view misunderstanding regarding my views do not care to express official opinion until have studied both schemes in full detail . . . Prefer North if on Croker Island'.[212]

This is an indication that the M.O.M. was determined to gain support not just within their own ranks, but from those who held the power to make decisions which would be favourable to them. It also shows the ways in which the M.O.M. exercised political power in the battle to win the approval for the Croker Island Scheme, and effectively position their proposal over the M. I. M. submission. Although the Croker Island Scheme was the M.O.M.'s flagship proposition for housing and assimilation of half-caste children, there were considerable protests made by others in the Northern Territory.

The Chief Medical Officer of the Northern Territory W. B. Kirkland, was appalled that the M.O.M. would propose a "scheme to establish a station for half-castes on Croker Island" saying that it was "a fantastic supposition".[213] In a memorandum to the Board on the Northern Districts, Padre W. S. Chaseling, Superintendent of Yirrkala mission in north-east Arnhem Land, wrote that

> it is a...delusion...we were unseemly in our haste to rush in to this dream-phantasy of a Utopia on isolated Croker Island.[214]

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[210] E.P.: 130/12/110.
[211] E.P.: 130/12/110.
[212] M.O.M., 451/5053, CY3783.
[213] M.O.M., 541/6795.
[214] M.O.M., 541/6795; Yirrkala Mission had been set up by the M.O.M. with the aim of providing a safe haven for Aboriginal people following the event known as The Caledon Bay Massacre; Cole, *The Aborigines of Arnhem Land,* 114.
McKenzie, *Mission to Arnhem Land,* 79.

The Rev. H. Griffiths, federal director of the M. I. M. made condemning comments on the decision to go with Croker Island, writing to the Methodist newsletter *The Spectator* saying that the Croker Island proposal was

> some insane scheme by some unthinking person [who] sent these little children more than 1000 miles from their own country, from their own friends and associates and placed them on islands off the north coast of Australia . . . Someone has made a frightful blunder, which time will prove if the Japs [sic] don't.[215]

That Elkin was the "unthinking person" is evidenced in the reactions by the M.O.M. through a flurry of responses stating that he was "a splendid Christian man and actually a clergyman of a sister church".[216] This defence shows the level of esteem that some held for Elkin, and the depth of commitment to the Croker Island proposal, with the M.O.M. remarking that it was "utterly absurd then to talk of some mad, some insane scheme by some unthinking person".[217] Chaseling retired soon after, but Griffiths and Kirkland became targets in the battle of justification for the M.O.M. Scheme with their reputations tarnished through a series of communiques between Elkin, Burton and the government, along with letters published in Methodist newsletters.[218] In direct response to the denunciations made, the Executive Committee of the M.O.M. put forward to the Board, that

> While recognising the sincerity of Mr. Chaseling [the Executive] points out that the proposals submitted by Mr. Chaseling and . . . Dr Kirkland are not in harmony with the expert advice given to the Board at the inception of the plan by Prof. Elkin, Mr E. W. P. Chinnery, and the Rev. T. T. Webb.[219]

With such support, Elkin would have been confident both in his relationship with M.O.M. Board member and in that his long held desire for a specific, isolated mission site for half-castes would be realised.

Nevertheless, the dispute between the M.O.M. and the M.I.M. still needed resolution. At the special meeting on the 25 July, the M.O.M. Board had "requested the General Secretary Mr. J. W. Kitto and Rev. T. T. Webb to attend, and submit the Overseas Mission Board's views to a meeting of the Executive Committee of the M.I.M. in Melbourne".[220] The discussions at that meeting led to the resolution that

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[215] H. Griffiths. "A Unique Demonstration" *The Spectator and Methodist Chronicle*, March 18 (1942): 172 & 167. State Library of Victoria accessed 12/03/2014.
[216] M.O.M., 541/6795.
[217] M.O.M., 541/6795.
[218] M.O.M., 541/6795.
[219] M.O.M., 541/6795.
[220] M.O.M., 339 CY 3775, 25 July, 1940.

> the Board is gratified to know that the M.I.M. Executive by a unanimous vote, has left to the Overseas Board, all negotiations with the Administration of the Northern Territory in respect of work among the Half-castes.[221]

Elkin, who was not a representative of any the bodies involved in the resolution discussions (but certainly may have been present as an invited guest of the M.O.M.), was at the decision-making table. Keith Cole states that when the deliberations stalled, that "The final arbiter in the dispute was Professor Elkin, who opted for an island settlement".[222]

Of importance to the argument made later that Croker became Elkin's site for testing his theories on assimilation of half-castes is that, prior to success of the acceptance of the M.O.M. proposal by the federal government, Elkin was so determined to secure a remote island site that he wrote to Burton in July 1940, stating that for various reasons he "was not in favour of the training and education facilities for half-castes being set up in Central Australia".[223] It is apparent that the setting up of an 'island' half-caste situation either by the mission bodies or by the government was an imperative for Elkin. Between the time of Chinnery's appointment and the settling of the M.O.M. /M.I.M. contretemps, Elkin made the note that he "had come to the conclusion that the Missions" should be funded to care for Northern Territory half-caste children on a remote island site, and that

> If this is not approved, or an agreement cannot be made with the Missions, I will recommend that . . . the Government select a suitable island in Northern Australia . . . for the accommodation of all part-aboriginal children [from] the Institutions of Alice Springs and Darwin.[224]

Therefore, when the two bodies were brought together to decide which proposal would be successful, Elkin would opt for the M.O.M. proposal, not only because he had a long-standing relationship with them, but also because the M.O.M. scheme suited his own anthropological agenda.

This shows that Elkin had successfully managed to manoeuvre both government and church bodies, and mould their deliberations on half-caste policy to fit his own agenda of having a specific isolated site whose core business was the re-socialisation of half-castes by people he had trained in his anthropological method of assimilation. Given that he had

[221] M.O.M., 541/6795 24 March 1942.
[222] Keith Cole, *The Aborigines of Arnhem Land*, citing M.O.M. 130.
[223] Letter from Webb to Burton, July 1940
[224] E.P.: 130/12/110.

already identified that he would do all in his power to have such a site to be established, Elkin must have been secretly elated. Although the M. I. M. must have considered that the Melbourne meeting would provide a strong opportunity to argue for their proposal, with Elkin at the table, the game was lost before the first salvo.

That the M.I.M. submission would not win the support of the federal government is not surprising. Firstly, the M.I.M. did not propose anything *new* - it sought to simply expand on the work that was already being done in the region. In doing so, the M.I.M. would continue to provide services to both Aboriginal people and half-castes *in situ*. This was not in line with the thinking around the new assimilation drive as outlined in the 1939 policy, which required the segregation of half-castes from full-bloods, then separation by distance from family and culture. On the other hand, the position of the M.O.M. and Webb and others was that the "children . . . be placed in an institution sufficiently remote from white settlement", and that the

> institution be also entirely apart from work among full-bloods. This is necessary in order that the danger of developing the native side of their character, and of thrusting them back to that race, may be avoided.[225]

The M.I.M. representatives were out-gunned by both the M.O.M. delegates for several reasons, some of which related to ill-feeling between Webb of the M.O.M. and Rentoul of the M. I. M..

In October 1937 Rentoul, responding to recent comments in print made by an "anonymous person", wrote to the editor of the *Spectator*, with Rentoul's comments then being published in the *Northern Standard.*[226] In the second half of the letter, Rentoul wrote that he and "Mr Webb are close personal friends and have been for 25 years" writing that their views "about the care of the native race by Church and State . . . are practically identical", and that although those views might differ in some aspects, "it makes no difference to our friendship".[227] Here, Rentoul is joining forces with Webb in the face of external attack, and Rentoul asserts that "we are not particularly in need of rebuke on the one hand, or championship on the other".[228] To all intents and purposes it would seem that, as Rentoul appeared to align himself with Webb, it would be natural that as colleagues in the same mission space, Webb would afford the same level of support for Rentoul when and if needed. These disclaimers lose their impact in the face of the first half of the letter,

[225] Letter from Webb to Burton, July 1940.
[226] T. C. Rentoul, Letter to the Editor, 1 October, 1937, quoted in the *Northern Standard*, http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article49443216
[227] Rentoul, Letter to the Editor, *Northern Standard*, 9.
[228] Rentoul, Letter to the Editor, *Northern Standard*, 9.

where Rentoul clearly reproaches Webb following comments the latter made regarding the effectiveness of protectors and police officers in the Northern Territory in the *Northern Standard* in July of the same year.[229] It appears that, regardless of their previous long friendship, Rentoul had effectively made an enemy of Webb, and this would have an a negative impact for the M.I.M. in the discussions around both proposals where Webb would have personal as well as professional reasons to disqualify the M.I.M. program.

Over the previous decade, Webb had also made friends with people who had power in high places. Aside from the regular discussions he and Burton were having with Chinnery and the Administrator of the Northern Territory, Webb was engaged in collaborations with Elkin who, as well as engineering the 1939 policy, was in the process of providing anthropological expertise to the M.O.M. for their proposal. Therefore, with Elkin at the table, Rentoul and the M.I.M. submission really had no chance of being successful. The M.O.M. Board minutes record that the final resolution of the Melbourne gathering was that the

> Conference decided [that the] Overseas Board alone negotiate with Administration concerning Half-caste children hence definitely (sic) and officially undertake on behalf of Methodist Church accept responsibility for primary vocation and domestic education of our children on Croker.[230]

The result was twofold. First was the granting by King George VI to the Methodist Overseas Mission Trust "all that . . . piece of land known as Croker Island".[231] The second outcome was that the half-caste children who were being housed in government installations in the Darwin area and in Alice Springs were moved from those sites to Goulburn Island as the first step to cottage boarding on Croker Island.[232]

What must be noted here is that the Croker Island Mission as an example of an institution which was set up explicitly for the protection of half-caste children did not make any reference to the provision of pastoral care related to assisting the children in overcoming the trauma which they were perceived to have suffered from the allegedly undesirable, unsafe and supposedly dangerous living conditions from which they had been removed. The "Statement of Aims and Policy Regarding Croker Island" outlined the purpose of the Mission was to be a place where the half-castes could be "trained in as wide a range as

[229] Rentoul, Letter to the Editor, *Northern Standard*, 9.
[230] M.O.M., Report of Visit of Delegation to the M.I.M Committee in Melbourne; 451/5053 14 August 1940.
[231] M.O.M.: 451 574/575.
[232] Cole, *The Aborigines of Arnhem Land*, 130.

possible of trades" for the children "committed to our care by the Government into a Christian community at Croker Island".[233] The nature of "the work" to be undertaken by the M.O.M. on Croker was, as discussed earlier, focused on the assimilation of the half-caste children who would be housed there as per the primary elements of the 1939 policy. These were the 'children' who later endured the evacuation from Croker and the march across the Northern Territory as depicted so glowingly in the A.B.C. documentary, *Croker Island Exodus.* They also constituted the group that I call the 'first wave' of children who were placed on Croker Island, with many more following over the decades until the late 1960s.

At this point it could be said 'and the rest is history', except that a specific situation arose in the mid-1950s that had direct connection to a specific family of children who were placed on Croker Island after their removal from their family in Alice Springs. Of significance to the removal of those children in the 1950s is that in the 1930s, the 'Methodists' aligned themselves with 'the Presbyterian' church. This inter-church relationship has its roots in hundreds of years of the development of the Protestant church, and as such this thesis does not explore the background to those relationships. The relevance to this thesis is the identification by the M.O.M. in 1939 that the Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church in the Northern Territory needed to

> work together in the closest harmony as colleagues and make mutual arrangements regarding the conduct and oversight . . . of . . . the Church . . . co-operating in any work as a united task.[234]

Under the auspices of John Flynn, the Presbyterian Church had established the Australian Inland Mission (A.I.M.) which did not provide services specifically for Aboriginal people, and had no capacity to house half-caste children. Instead, the Presbyterians would direct any half-caste children who had been removed from their families in Central Australia who they deemed suitable for assimilation (i.e. 'neglected') to the Methodists to be accommodated on their mission.

In the mid-to-late 1950s, the State Children's Council of South Australia (S.C.C.) was actively engaged in the removal of children from their families. The Rev. Archibald Grant who was the first appointed cleric (and director of the A.I.M.) of the newly established Presbyterian Church in Alice Springs was also a member of the S.C.C.. There is evidence

[233] E.P.: 130/12/110, *Copy of the Statement of Aims and Policy Regarding Croker Island*.
[234] M.O.M.: 451 339 CY 3775 13 October 1939.

that on at least one identifiable occasion in 1956/1957, when advocating for the removal of half-caste children from a specific family, Grant would employ his authority as Presbyterian minister, director of the A.I.M. and membership of the S.C.C. over and above the dictates of the Northern Territory Welfare Department resulting in those children being sent to Croker Island.

This situation (probably repeated many times over) did not raise any concern for those people in power and decision making positions; it would have been seen as the expected outcome because those individuals were also aware of the purpose of that mission and the earlier negotiations that had taken place between McEwen, Burton, Webb and Elkin to establish the site.

Elkin's determination.

By fair means or foul, Elkin was delivered of his 'island settlement'. In Elkin's papers is a copy of *The Missionary Review, Methodist Overseas Missions – North Australia District. Revised Statement of District Policy 1944*, which is the only amendment to the Policy during the time of Croker Island station as a children's mission.[235] Across the document, Elkin has made notations of his own - crossing out the heading of the Statement of Aims and Policy Regarding Croker Island, and adding "half-castes" and 'Half-Caste' Settlement (Elkin's underscore).[236] The following chapter analyses Elkin's writing and positions to determine why he was so adamant about the establishment being named a "settlement", rather than a mission. The discussion will demonstrate that, as a social scientist, Elkin had developed an hypothesis in the mid to late 1920s on the most efficient way to expedite assimilation of half-castes, which he refined only slightly throughout the 1930s. The thesis asserts that Elkin's manipulations of people and situations across that decade presented him with an opportunity to test that hypothesis through a self-contained field research 'group' - the children of Croker Island.

[235] E.P.: 130/12/113, *The Missionary Review, Methodist Overseas Missions – North Australia District. Revised Statement of District Policy 1944.*
[236] E.P.: 130/12/113.

CHAPTER TWO: A. P. Elkin's anthropological solution to the half-caste dilemma and its relationship to the inmates of Croker Island.

While there are elements of autobiographical nature in the thesis, it must be made clear that this is not simply an autobiographical work. The following discussion may appear to create a disjuncture in the commentary by disrupting the 'sorry narrative' through which the history of the Stolen Generations is most often read, but, as Martin Nakata states, there is also the risk that audiences will expect more from the storyteller. Nakata writes:

> I am not comfortable talking about myself, precisely because marginalised people are often called upon to do a kind of public confession. The others say, 'If you speak to us about your personal experiences we can better understand your position'.[1]

Nakata also states, he has

> come to the view that there is some value in inserting the personal, as this can bring home very powerfully the implications and effects that flow on to people's lives from institutional and governmental practice."[2]

This chapter works from the premise that, while there is truth and power in the personal story, it is vital to consider the nature and origins of related government, anthropological, and mission practices which led to the placement of the children on Croker.

As noted in chapter one, A. P. Elkin emerged as a significant figure in the development of the Northern Territory 1939 Half-Caste policy. His influence is also seen in the creation of the Methodist Board of Missions 1941 Northern District Policy on Aboriginal people which led to the establishment of the Croker Island Mission. To fully understand the impact of his 'leadership' in anthropology and Aboriginal affairs during that period of time, gaining an understanding of how Elkin arrived at his assimilation propositions is pertinent to the discussion on Croker Island.

In this chapter I will argue that Elkin began to develop his assimilation hypothesis in the late 1920s which was not fully articulated until the publication of his 1951 paper "Reaction and Interaction: a Food Gathering People and European Settlement in Australia".[3] Also, following an investigation of the development Elkin's 'science', I will show that he then

[1] Martin Nakata, "Better" in *Blacklines: Contemporary Critical Writing by Aboriginal Australians,* ed., Michele Grossman, (Melbourne: Melbourne UP, 2003). 132-44.
[2] Martin Nakata, "Better" in *Blacklines: Contemporary Critical Writing by Aboriginal Australians,* ed., Michele Grossman, (Melbourne: Melbourne UP, 2003). 132-44.
[3] A. P. Elkin, "Reaction and Interaction: A Food Gathering People and Australian Settlement," American Anthropologist 53:2 (1951): 164.

dedicated the 1930s to establishing and progressing relationships with government and church bureaucracies with the aim of engineering the creation of a half-caste reserve for the housing of a 'control[led] group' of half-caste children which would over time, provide observable 'proof' of his early assimilation theories. Finally, I will argue that Croker Island and its transported half-caste child residents became the experimental site for actualising Elkin's assimilation premise.

To make my case I will begin by examining Elkin's 1951 paper "Reaction and Interaction: A Food Gathering People and European Settlement in Australia".[4] I will show how aspects of Elkin's position on 'pauperism' and the 'parasitism' in the 1951 paper was aligned with the global interwar discourse on eugenics as mentioned in the previous chapter. The discussion will show the ways in which Elkin's 'model' as outlined in "Reaction", signals the ideas that he had already developed and which became the foundations for the 1939 policy.

Helping to inform my analysis will be Heather Goodall's 1982 conference paper "An Intelligent Parasite: A. P. Elkin and White Perceptions of the History of Aboriginal People in New South Wales", which discusses the inadequacies of Elkin's model. Goodall analyses "Reaction" and the ways in which the concepts of 'pauperism' and 'intelligent parasitism' were applied to Aboriginal people in farming/pastoral areas in New South Wales.[5]

My critique will also draw on Russell McGregor's "Intelligent Parasitism: A. P. Elkin and the Rhetoric of Assimilation".[6] In this paper McGregor writes that Elkin's "Reaction" was "the most comprehensive study of what Elkin termed 'culture contact' that he had yet published, and remained probably the most detailed and best-known of his many articles on this topic".[7] McGregor concludes his analysis of "Reaction" with the observation that

> Throughout Elkin's long career, he had insisted that assimilation entailed intellectual changes which were ultimately epistemological, and that these changes were best made by 'building upon' rather than jettisoning, the indigenous intellectual heritage. 'Intelligent parasitism' offered an explanation for the observed lack of shift in values

[4] Elkin, "Reaction," 164.
[5] Heather Goodall, "An Intelligent Parasite: A. P. Elkin and White Perceptions of the History of Aboriginal People in New South Wales," Conference Paper: Australian History Association Conference NSW (1982).
[6] Russell McGregor, "Intelligent Parasitism: A. P. Elkin and the Rhetoric of Assimilation," *Journal of Australian Studies*, 20 (1996).
[7] McGregor, "Intelligent Parasitism," 118.

> and understandings on the part of the Aborigines. At the same time, it held promise of the progress on which Elkin pinned his hopes.[8]

As noted in the introduction, the importance of McGregor's paper to this thesis cannot be overstated. As one of the first papers I came across in the very early stages of research, it highlighted why Maisie McKenzie felt that Elkin should be named as being involved in the writing of the 1939 policy. It also channelled my focus onto Elkin as having a major role in the assimilation debate between the late 1920s and the mid-1950s. McGregor's analysis of Elkin's 'parasitism' provided the foundations for my own research on Elkin's explanations on the need for and the methods through which to assimilate Aboriginal people, particularly half-castes. As such it is core to the arguments this chapter makes on the possible reasons why Elkin cast his vote in favour of the M.O.M. proposal for the establishment of the Croker Island Half-Caste Mission.

Although he did not appear to openly claim credit for the establishment of the Mission, Elkin regularly referred to a range of achievements undertaken in his role as Anglican minister and Professor of Anthropology, constantly writing to newspapers, church administrators and government officials not only telling them what they should do, but also reminding them what he had done for Aborigines.

Elkin's self-promotion.

As discussed earlier, from the late 1920s to the mid-1950s Elkin emerged as an active agent in Aboriginal affairs and his name was synonymous with everything 'Aboriginal'. Included in Elkin's portfolio of work on Aborigines are the publication of his ethnographic research in the sociological-cultural anthropological journal *Oceania* of which he was editor from 1931 to his death in 1979.[9] His published works can also be found in his letters and submissions to government officials and departments, and in 'policies' written as sole author, or in collaboration with mission authorities such as J. W. Burton.[10] Over the decades, Elkin regularly drew attention to his achievements. The 1944 book *Citizenship for The Aborigine* provides a clear example of the ways in which Elkin constantly spoke about his achievements as Professor of Anthropology. This position gave

[8] McGregor, "Intelligent Parasitism," 128.
[9] A. P. Elkin, *The journal of Oceania: 1930-1970 a history*, (Sydney: University of Sydney, 1970).
[10] A. P. Elkin, *Wanted – A Charter for the Native Peoples of the South-West Pacific,* (Sydney: Australasian Publishing Company, 1943).

him both authority, and a structured environment in which to consolidate his already devised theories on assimilation for and of Aboriginal people.[11]

Elkin was a 'company man'; his life was firmly grounded and supported by the scaffolds of social and church institution: he had adhered to the dictates of the bank in which he was first employed, and the church, both as parishioner and as priest and, in time, to the rules of the university both as a student and an academic. This adherence to institutional authority would impact on the directions anthropology would be taken in during his management of the University of Sydney Department of Anthropology. The Chair of Anthropology, established in 1925 following the resolution of the 1921 Congress of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, was made possible by "a massive injection of research funding" by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation.[12] D. J. Mulvaney writes that "the same congress inaugurated the Australian National Research Council (A.N.R.C.)" and that the "chair at Sydney" was created "when the Commonwealth and State governments consented to contribute to the costs of staff and establishment".[13] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown was the first anthropologist appointed to the Chair.

The finances of the Department had not been served well under Radcliffe-Brown's stewardship, and at the end of 1931, Radcliffe-Brown resigned the Chair and left for Chicago.[14] Although Elkin had begun his tutelage under Radcliffe-Brown and had held him in high regard, his respect for the former Chair dissipated when he returned from field work in South Australia at the end of 1931 to find that, "the Professor had resigned [and] the Department was not expected to survive another year".[15]

On Radcliffe-Brown's departure, the university appointed Raymond Firth as "Acting Head of Department".[16] In late 1932, after a year in the position, Firth took a leave of absence, and on Firth's request, Elkin took up the Chair as a temporary measure.[17] At this stage the view of anthropologist Grafton Elliot Smith (who had been instrumental in setting up the Chair) regarding the future of the Department was that "What we have to do is try and

[11] A. P. Elkin, *Citizenship for the Aborigines: A National Aboriginal Policy,* (Sydney: Australasian Publishing Co., 1944).
[12] D. J. Mulvaney, "Australian Anthropology: Foundations and Funding," Aboriginal History (1993): 118 – 119.
[13] Mulvaney, "Australian Anthropology," 118 – 119.
[14] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 102.
[15] Tigger Wise, *The Self-Made Anthropologist: A life of A. P. Elkin* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1985), 96.
[16] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 102.
[17] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 103 & 108.

rescue the wreckage and patch up the ship".[18] Disaster was averted when "In late 1933, the Commonwealth Government . . . granted a five year subsidy to the University" thus ensuring continuation of both the Department and to "advertise the Chair of Anthropology".[19] This was the situation which faced Elkin when he was formally appointed to the Chair in late 1933. It was also an event which Elkin often refers back to many times, and which he loosely frames as his rescue of the Department from financial ruin.[20] Importantly it was the point in time when Elkin, in order to guarantee continued Commonwealth funding for the Department, would draw anthropology into the service of government.[21] As Heather Goodall writes: "Elkin . . . had a strong interest in convincing Governments that anthropologists were essential to both the present and future administration of Aboriginal people."[22] This was counter to the position held by Radcliffe-Brown who had stated in 1928 that "the task of the anthropologist is to get knowledge, not to advise others as to what they should do".[23]

It is arguable that Elkin felt that the only source for long term funding to ensure the continuation of the Department, its teaching capabilities and research through the A.N.R.C., would be through consolidating the bond between the Australian government. Therefore it could well be that Elkin did not consider this shift from maintaining a body independent from (and therefore in a position to be critical of) government bureaucracies as anything untoward.

With ongoing funding for the Department (and his Chair) secured, and given the power that came with the Professorship, Elkin considered himself as setting the standard for the body of work on Aborigines, including taking the kudos for the research undertaken by anthropologists under his tutelage.[24] As such, it is not inconceivable that Elkin gave himself credit for any and all of the work that flowed out of anthropology at Sydney University over the period of his tenure. As Elkin wrote in 1944,

> Since 1926 . . . there have been nearly thirty expeditions. The results of these investigations . . . are filed in the Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney [and] the chief means of publication is the . . . Anthropological Quarterly Journal,

[18] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 109.
[19] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 110.
[20] Elkin, *Citizenship*, (1944).
[21] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 97-103.
[22] Goodall. "An Intelligent Parasite," 6.
[23] W. Lloyd Warner, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, F. W. Burton (sic), "Some Aspects of the Aboriginal Problem in Australia – Notes on addresses delivered to the Society," *Australian Geographer*, 1:1 (1928): 69.
[24] Goodall, "An Intelligent Parasite," 6.

> *Oceania*, edited by the Professor, who is also the Council's (ANRC) Director of Anthropological Research.[25]

The majority of that research would have been undertaken through Elkin's auspices as Chair. Generally speaking, while he continued to publish in *Oceania*, Elkin's 'research' publications tended to be based on the field work undertaken by people.[26] After building an extensive body of work by means of appointing ethnologists and anthropologists who met with his approval and were of his own school of thought, then drawing their research together under the umbrella of his authority as Professor, Elkin would be able to internationally advance his own reputation as the greatest authority on Australian Aborigines. The publishing of "Reaction" in the *American Anthropologist* in 1951 is an example of Elkin extending his work into the international arena. But since the 1920s, Elkin's constant point of reference was the need for a new policy.

The following passage from Elkin's 1938 book, *The Australian Aborigines* shows that he had begun to think about and plan a 'new policy' as early as the late 1920s.[27] Referring back to that time, Elkin wrote

> an old native at Beagle Bay, . . . asked me in 1927 why I wanted to know so much about his tribe's customs and beliefs, . . . I answered: "in order to understand native life and thought and to pass my understanding on to Government men, missionaries and employers in the hope that they would appreciate your people.[28]

Elkin expanded on his thinking of the time, stating

> My own anthropological investigations from 1927-1930 in north-western, central and southern regions of the continent, followed by close contact with missionary organizations (sic) . . . convinced me that we must substitute for the protective and really negative policy, a truly positive one.[29]

While in 1931 Elkin had not yet articulated exactly what form "a truly positive" policy would take, Wise states that "he did have a political philosophy towards the matter: it was a pragmatic one: 'The Aborigines must adjust to us. There is no escape from that'".[30]

The seeds for the development of Elkin's policy which entailed 'adaptation' to white society on the part of Aborigines can be found in his reading of George Henry Lane-Fox

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[25] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 69.
[26] Goodall, 'An Intelligent Parasite," 7.
[27] A. P. Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 5th Ed 1974).
[28] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines*, v.
[29] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines*, v.
[30] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 107.

Pitt-Rivers' *The Clash of Culture and the Contact of Races; An Anthropological and Psychological study of the Laws of Racial Adaptability, with special reference to the Depopulation of the Pacific and the Government of Subject Races.*[31] According to Wise, Pitt-Rivers' argument that a "human group's" [natives] ability to adapt to non-native culture was crucial to their survival as a theory, it appealed to Elkin powerfully".[32] Pitt-Rivers wrote that "The influence of miscegenation brings about a change in the adaptability of a stock, the hybridised stock being more adaptable to changed conditions".[33] This statement led Elkin to an apparently scientific understanding of why half-caste Aboriginal people 'adapted' more easily to non-Aboriginal cultural ways.[34] Importantly, "Elkin felt it was at least a working hypothesis" and that "If one accepted his [Pitt-River's] theory, then his management plan also made sense".[35] Within this lies the genesis of Elkin's 'positive policy'.

As noted in chapter one, Elkin's tenacity for a 'new policy' was rewarded with the ratification of the 1939 Half-Caste policy which was also a demonstration of the influence that he had on government at the time. Over time, Elkin regularly referred back to that influence to reinforce the degree of authority that he held in knowing what was best for Aborigines. Evidence for this can be found in Elkin's words where in *Citizenship* he wrote

> before long [McEwen] did me the honour of asking me to assist the permanent head of the Department and himself to draw up the principles of a new policy for the Northern Territory.[36]

In this two points are important: firstly, the fact that he had been able to influence government policy; secondly, in becoming a constant refrain it can be read as Elkin singing his own praises, especially when it came to talking about the need for a 'positive policy'.

Elkin repeated the words 'positive policy' *ad infinitum,* and his use of the catchphrase can be found as late as the 1960s in his chapter "The Background of Present Day Aboriginal Policies" in the *Proceedings of Conference on Welfare Policies for Australian Aborigines*

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[31] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 85.
George Henry Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers, *The Clash of Culture and the Contact of Races; An Anthropological and Psychological study of the Laws of Racial Adaptability, with special reference to the Depopulation of the Pacific and the Government of Subject Races* (London: G. Routledge, 1927).
[32] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 85.
[33] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 85.
[34] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 85.
[35] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 85.
[36] Elkin, *Citizenship,* 20.

in Armidale.[37] In "Reaction", while talking about assimilation without using the word 'assimilation' [the term he applied was 'intelligent adaptation'], Elkin stated that at the end of the 1920s "the only hope" of achieving a balance for Aborigines where they could bridge the chasm between being Aborigines or being Australian citizens "lay in drawing up . . . a positive policy".[38] Again, in 1957, when referring to his "record of . . . personal association with the development of opinion and policy on Aboriginal affairs since 1930", Elkin wrote that at a meeting of the Association for the Protection of Native Races he "pointed out that Protection Policies did not really protect and then spoke of the need for a 'positive policy'".[39] Discussing his attendance at a 1931 meeting of the A.P.N.R., Elkin says that he "urged the Association to press for a positive policy".[40]

The purpose of re-stating Elkin's words here is to show how often Elkin himself said them. Given that the 1939 policy is clear evidence that Elkin was a compelling force in Aboriginal affairs, after all his promotion of what he regarded as his 'positive policy' in a range of different public and government forums had borne fruit in the form of the 1939 policy, his ongoing references to his own influence begs the question of 'why the need for continued self-promotion?'. It can be seen as a way of not only reminding himself, but also of telling as many people as would listen to him that he had played a major role in helping Aborigines. Elkin's repetition can also be read as an ego-driven pursuit aimed at maintaining ascendency in the field of anthropology, framing the 'Aboriginal' as his metier over and above the levels of expertise of anyone else in the arena. As Wise writes, in the period 1934-1939,

> a new air of infallibility began to pervade Elkin's manner . . . He began to take on the bearing of a man who sees himself as incontrovertibly right on every issue [and] he began to believe any activity in which he took part had to be ruled completely by him.[41]

Having survived the political lives of a number of Ministers for the Northern Territory, Elkin could have seen himself as keeper of the history of the advancements in Aboriginal policy affairs. As such, Elkin would consider that it was his responsibility to pass that knowledge (framed within his own beliefs) on to whoever new was appointed in those positions. Embedded in this was the imperative that people knew that those advancements

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[37] A. P. Elkin, "The Background of Present Day Aboriginal Policies," *Proceedings of Conference on Welfare Policies for Australian Aborigines,* (Armidale: University of New England: Adult Education Dept., 1960).
[38] Elkin, "Reaction," 184.
[39] A. P. Elkin, "Aboriginal Policy 1930-1950: Some Personal Associations," in *Quadrant,* ed., James McCauley, 4 (1957): 27-24.
[40] Elkin, "Some Personal Associations,"
[41] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 137.

were a result of his domination of the field. But, as Wise notes, it was more likely to be because Elkin was prone to self-glorification which was articulated in the form of self-promotion.

According to Wise, over time, Elkin's self-importance deepened ". . . into egotistical arrogance".[42] By 1934/35, Elkin began to brook no question of or challenges to the opinions he espoused. Wise writes that this was an "attitude that built his image as an arch conservative in later years".[43] This an assessment which did not seem to faze him, nor deter him from pursuing his assimilation campaign. It can also be read that it was a device that Elkin employed to show others that because of the moral strength of his character evident in the regard that people such as the minister held for him, he was able to influence people in high places.

Elkin's reputation.

While the perception of Elkin held by quite a number of individuals and organisations across the decades are positive, there are also records which show that these acclamations were not shared by all who had dealings with Elkin, or who somehow unwittingly found themselves in contention with him.[44] One of those was anthropologist Donald Thomson whose view was that there were times when "Elkin acted as the government's apologist".[45] Geoffrey Gray's *A Cautious Silence: The politics of Australian Anthropology* discusses the ways in which Elkin engaged in smear campaigns against other anthropologists aimed at discrediting not just their work, but also besmirching their character, while at the same time concealing aspects of himself to those with whom he came into contact.[46]

Wise records an instance in 1934 where Elkin's disingenuousness was in play in the mission sector when Elkin – while presenting himself solely as an anthropologist – raised the indignation and displeasure of R. J. Schenk, the superintendent of Mount Margaret Mission.[47] Wise writes that Schenk wrote to Elkin saying "It was some time after you left that we heard you were a minister of the gospel and that you hid that fact while here.

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[42] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 141.
[43] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 121.
[44] Geoffrey Gray, *A cautious silence: the politics of Australian anthropology* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2007).
[45] Donald Thomson, *Donald Thomson in Arnhem Land* complied by Nicolas Peterson (Carlton: Miegunyah Press, rev. ed. 2003): 17.
[46] Gray, *A cautious silence,* (2007).
[47] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 134.

Anthropologist, minister or layman could not think that was honourable" and that "Schenk's resentment of Elkin's two-faced attitude to missions was deep".[48] Such behaviours seemed to have underpinned many of Elkin's interactions. Gray identifies Elkin's manipulation of bureaucratic and missionary bodies, and looking at the evidence of Elkin's undermining and professional subversion of those who may have opposed him or with whom he did not agree, it could also be said that he was not as deserving of the breadth of accolades as might be believed.[49]

Nonetheless, there is no doubt that Elkin's contribution to 'new' methods of providing for Aborigines is well recognised and often lauded. McGregor's view is that "A. P. Elkin . . . was Australia's most notable anthropologist of the mid-twentieth century".[50] Tigger Wise expands on that position, stating that Elkin was

> virtually in total charge of anthropology in Australia, he was an adviser to governments, editor of *Oceania* and director of field-research through the Australian National Research Council (chairman of its anthropological committee, 1933-42, executive-member, 1942-55, and chairman, 1954-55).[51]

Supporting this view, former Prime Minster Paul Hasluck wrote:

> Academically, in Australia, it is only a slight exaggeration to say that in the 1930s, anthropology was Professor A. P. Elkin and Elkin was anthropology so far as the laymen were concerned.[52]

Although Elkin's interventions in Aboriginal affairs were across the period of Australian history when Aboriginal people were managed through punitive social and political approaches ranging from segregation through to protection and assimilation, his advocacy for Aboriginal people was regarded as forward thinking and humanitarian.[53] Contemporary academics hold the view that Elkin's considerable work for Aboriginal people was highly commendable. Anthropologist Peter Sutton has written that:

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[48] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 101 & 134.
[49] Geoffrey Gray, ""I was not consulted": A. P. Elkin, Papua New Guinea and the Politics of Anthropology, 1942-1950," *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 40 (1994): 197.
[50] Russell McGregor, "From Old Testament to New: A. P. Elkin on Christian Conversion and Cultural Assimilation," *The Journal of Religious History* 25 (2001): 39.
[51] Tigger Wise, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 14, (Melbourne University Press: 1996). http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/elkin-adolphus-peter-10109
[52] Paul Hasluck, *Shades of darkness, Aboriginal affairs 1925-1965* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1988), 12.
[53] Russell McGregor, "Assimilation as Acculturation," in *Contesting Assimilation,* ed., Tim Rowse (Perth: Curtin University of Technology, 2005), Ch. 10.

> However he is judged, Elkin acted with political nous, more interested in results than martyrdom or symbolism. He worked both for policy reform, within his own lights, and for positive changes in public attitudes to Indigenous Australians.[54]

In terms of this thesis, and as an Aboriginal person, in many ways, Elkin's relationships with and behaviours towards people whether they be bureaucrat, anthropologist or missionary, is of lesser import than the direct outcomes of his actions and influence. Investigation of Elkin's cleverness provides some of the answers for the Northern Territory half-caste children who ended up on Croker Island where the results of his 'leadership' can be seen in the traumatic experiences they have suffered. A tangible consequence of Elkin's domination in the field of anthropology and construction of the 1939 policy and subsequent influence in the writing of the M.O.M. Croker Island Scheme is that he became the 'invisible hand' behind the events of the lives of multitudes of Aboriginal people. The circumstances faced by my parents, my brothers and sisters, and myself leading up to and following our removal, can be drawn back to that point in time when Elkin was all powerful in Aboriginal affairs, and his shadow hangs heavy over the past six decades of my life.

Close examination of Elkin's work shows that his work was very much grounded in an ongoing binary discourse of the inadequacies of Aboriginal people *as a race* measured against the benchmark of the superiority of white Australia. Glenn Ross observes that "despite his rhetoric of equality, both his sociological and anthropological work reveals Elkin's inability to come to terms with the black presence in a white Australia".[55] As a result, the decisions that were made about Aboriginal people and half-castes based on Elkin's input would impact on Aboriginal people, not just socio-culturally, but also in terms of their race.

While Elkin spoke and wrote about 'culture' and 'race' as two separate concepts that needed to be addressed in different ways, in positioning Aboriginal 'culture' over Aboriginal 'race', he set up a binary oppositional dilemma with 'race' on one side of the dance card, and 'culture' on the other. But he could never truly surmount the reality that neither was extricable from the other. In his attempts to promote 'assimilation' as a socio-cultural process, Elkin kept tripping over the 'race' aspect of 'adaptation'. This is evident

[54] Peter Sutton, "Australian Anthropologists and Political Action 1925-1960," Review Article, *Oceania* 79 (2009): 203.
[55] Glen Ross ""Dreamtime", who's time?: A. P. Elkin and the construction of aboriginal time in the 1930s and 1940s", *Journal of Australian Studies* (2009): 55.

in his rhetoric and particularly notable in his writing, and has made it difficult to clearly evaluate Elkin's work.

The ambiguities of Elkin's work.

Many academics have found that Elkin's writing is at times confusing and inconsistent, making it difficult to extract exactly what he was proposing, or to determine the theories underpinning his actions and socio-political stances on Aboriginal Australians. A prime example which demonstrates such confusion is Elkin's policy/assimilation descriptors outlined in *Citizenship.*[56] While McGregor writes that there were "congruencies between his recommendations on missionary methods in the early 1930s and his later arguments for the socio-cultural assimilation of Aborigines", Elkin's assimilation narrative was difficult to ascertain in clear non-ambiguous terms.[57]

The ambiguities of Elkin's work have resulted in many articles, papers and books which endeavour to make meaning out of his myriad positions and approaches. Each of the investigators of Elkin's work have interrogated his archival files and published works from their own discipline position. The result is that critiques of Elkin (both positive and critical) can be found in publications across the breadth of colonial history, race history, mission history, genocide, linguistics, stolen generations history and social anthropology, to name a few. The individual mindset I bring to the examination of Elkin's archive sets it apart from that of other scholars who bring an abstract approach to his work. In many ways, inhabiting the academic space as an Aboriginal person who has been directly affected by his actions has meant that I have been able to 'read' Elkin's work differently, and because of this I feel that I have possibly been less caught up in trying to unravel the complexities embedded in Elkin's body of work.

In discussing "the ambivalences in [Elkin's] work", Ross writes that the "contradiction in Elkin's work was, in the main, divided through a clear distinction between his anthropological and sociological texts".[58] These 'contradictions' have resulted in a multitude of assertions by Elkin, across the breadth of public, policy and academic domains which seemed to lack consistency. Goodall writes that

[56] Elkin, *Citizenship,* (1944).
[57] McGregor, "From old testament to new," 40.
[58] Ross ""Dreamtime," 55.

> when Elkin himself became aware of an inconsistency in his work – especially in the later years of his command – he sought to immediately rectify his position, often resulting in even greater confusion.[59]

Due to the nature of the thesis, rather than attempting to decipher the switchbacks in Elkin's work, my research focus has on been investigating his thinking on assimilation and the role that missions should play in those processes. That investigation in itself was fraught with double backs and contrapositions which led me to contemplate whether Elkin engaged in creating an academic smoke-screen to deter deep examination of the principles underpinning his assimilation discourse. This observation came from noticing that, over a period of three decades, Elkin actually contributed very few 'new' insights to his pronouncements. The lack of inclusion of new knowledge to either reinforce his earlier views or to inform future social and policy direction on Aboriginal people meant that his narrative did not undergo any substantial shifts and changes.

This has also been noted by Goodall who writes that "Elkin had done no historical research during the 1930s", an indicator that Elkin did not seem to accumulate any advancement in knowledge to corroborate his earlier socio-academic position on the need to change policy direction.[60] It also meant that there was no apparent effort on Elkin's part to extensively ground his commentary in up-to-date social anthropological terms for carrying his ideas forward as viable options for future direction in Aboriginal policy.

Although Elkin's work had an element of mélange, both to people of the time and to current day researchers, it did have at its core a number of consistent themes. The early constants of 'positive policy', 'adaptation', 'mission intervention', 'culture clash' were added to over time to include 'pauperism' and 'parasitism'. McGregor suggests that the reason for Elkin's continued application of terms which were losing traction could have been that these concepts were "items of intellectual baggage inherited from an earlier anthropology and not yet subjected to adequate disciplinary scrutiny by the new generation of scholars".[61] Another interpretation is that Elkin's consistent employment of these terms over the period of his prominence in Aboriginal affairs is an indicator that he did not sway very far from the ideas that he had developed very early in his career.

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[59] Goodall, "An Intelligent Parasite," 10.
[60] Goodall "An Intelligent Parasite," 10.
[61] Russell McGregor, "The Concept of Primitivity in the Early Anthropological Writings of A.P. Elkin", *Aboriginal History* (1993): 95.

One explanation for Elkin's apparent lack of advances in anthropological and sociological arguments about assimilation (which would in part explain the inconsistencies of his work) could be that he was constantly referring back to his 1922 Master's thesis 'The Religion of the Australian Aborigines'. According to Wise, Elkin had written this thesis without having contact with Aboriginal people, and both his Masters and his unpublished Ph. D. (1927) were the result of library research rather than anthropological field work.[62] As such the academic work that was available to him was couched in anthropological and ethnographic terms popular in the late 1910s and early 1920s and aligned to ideas and theories posed by those who came before him. It would also explain the absence of variation in Elkin's assimilation vocabulary which in itself is an indication that there was no academic expansion in Elkin's thinking around assimilation which would in turn generate a change in terminology. The lack of modification in Elkin's writing over the decades indicates the possibility that the 'theories' underpinning Elkin's opinions were mostly drawn from other peoples' concepts and ideas from the late 1920s and early 1930s. The following section explores whether this is a viable supposition.

Elkin – socio/anthropological philosopher or intellectual pretender?

I argue that Elkin devised his adaptation/assimilation template by gathering the ideas of academics and others from the period of his first contact with anthropology and Aboriginal affairs into one site – his 'positive policy'. I advance the suggestion that there was no change in Elkin's core terminology from the late 1920s through to the end of his academic career because his constant themes were drawn from the ideas of others. Upon reading and re-reading Elkin's work I came to the realisation that the 'banner headings' under which he wrote and spoke about the roles of government, anthropology and missions in the lives of Aboriginal people were the same as those used by Radcliffe-Brown, W. Lloyd Warner and J. W. Burton in the "addresses delivered to the [Australian Geographical] Society" in 1928.[63] The record of the address identifies that, in responding to the "Aboriginal Problem", the key matters were "Political, Missionary and Cultural", an indication that the speakers considered these three components all had a direct bearing on the future of Aborigines.[64] Elkin's writing also adheres to the notion that those three constituent aspects formed the 'body politic' from which all aspects of Aboriginal affairs should emanate. As discussed later in the Chapter, with his incorporation of 'culture potential' of Aborigines

[62] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 34.
[63] Warner et. al. "Some Aspects," 69.
[64] Warner et. al. "Some Aspects," 67.

and half-castes, Elkin's work and terminology was also reflective of the socio-anthropological positions held by George Pitt-Rivers.

In regard to the continuity of Aboriginal cultural traditions and the recognition that 'culture contact' was the site wherein lay the danger of irreparable damage to those systems, the paper records that Warner stated

> The aboriginal has a well-understood code of community laws so finely constructed and balanced that any touch destroys that balance and carries destruction to the people themselves.[65]

Warner then states "the fundamental principle is based on kinship".[66] Both of these factors feature in Elkin's work and were central to his assertions that the core to maintaining pre-contact Aboriginal lifeways was to ensure the protection of kinship systems.[67] In the same address, Burton commented that any "hope of reconstruction [of Aboriginal ways of life] is slender" adding that "any reconstruction must be built on old foundations, and must use old material".[68] Both Radcliffe-Brown and Warner express concerns about the destructive influence that missions and missionaries had had on Aboriginal cultural maintenance.[69] As far as the relationship between missionaries and anthropologists was concerned, Burton stated that missions and the work of missionaries had so far been detrimental to Aborigines (another of Elkin's tropes when marketing the need for a 'new policy'), adding that now "science, in the figure of the anthropologist, has come to the aid of the missionary" and that "It is obvious that the anthropologist and the missionary must join forces".[70] Elkin used these same arguments when talking and writing about the introduction of christianity to Aboriginal people. As McGregor writes

> Elkin repudiated both the prevalent missionary conception of Christian conversion as a total abandonment of indigenous culture, and official assimilationist strategies premised on the effacement of an indigenous socio-cultural order.[71]

This position can be seen as being in line with the more progressive missionary thinking that emerged out of the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 where "the most thoughtful advocates believed that the time had come for the application of the rigorous methods of modern social science to the challenges and problems which

[65] Warner et. al. "Some Aspects," 67.
[66] Warner et. al. "Some Aspects," 69.
[67] Elkin, *Citizenship,* (1944).
[68] Warner et. al. "Some Aspects," 69.
[69] Warner et. al. "Some Aspects," 67.
[70] Warner et. al. "Some Aspects," 69.
[71] McGregor, "From Old Testament to New," 40.

missionaries faced in the field".[72] Elkin's decade's long campaign on the imperative that missionaries be anthropologically trained was another of the constant themes of his assimilation endeavours.[73] Here, Elkin's arguments on the importance of the maintenance of Aboriginal cultures as the 'foundations' for any future "reconstruction" reflect Burton's 1928 comments. In this can also be seen the seeds of the relationship between mission and anthropology that Elkin pursued across the thirties and forties. It is also the jumping-off point for the later Elkin/Burton collaborations around Croker Island.

While Warner signalled the notion of adaptation by Aborigines to post-contact existence and to white society, "adaptation" became an essential aspect of Elkin's science of assimilation.[74] In "Reaction" Elkin expresses the need for "adaptation" by Aborigines in order to survive in the Darwinian sense of 'survival of the fittest'.[75] When discussing the future of the Aborigine under the heading 'Economic Re-Adaptation Inevitable for a Food-Gathering People', Elkin states that in the face of pastoral settlement "the native fauna must go, including the Aborigines, unless they change their way of living and adapt themselves to the white man".[76] While these comments are made in 1951, they can also be found in Elkin's early work and the development of his anthropological approaches to policy. Wise writes that in 1929, "Elkin's personal philosophy could be summed up in four words: 'adaptation to the system' the problem was, how to fit the Aborigines into this basic framework."[77]

Radcliffe-Brown had challenged the generally accepted biologically deterministic view of Aboriginal people as intellectually deficient, saying "the aboriginal is not inferior racially to many of our own people".[78] Soon after these statements were made, Elkin "compose[d] a letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald"* titled "The Aborigine; Is he Unintelligent?".[79] The fact that Elkin put into print the same points raised by Radcliffe-Brown, and so soon after Radcliffe-Brown made the comments, is an interesting coincidence. Over the decades, the argument that Aborigines possessed degrees of intelligence (although not equal to that of whites) was embedded Elkin's advocacy for Aborigines. Aboriginal racial intellectual

[72] Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 2009), 3.
[73] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 135.
[74] Wise *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 85.
[75] Elkin, "Reaction," 166.
[76] Elkin, "Reaction," 166.
[77] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 81.
[78] Warner et. al., "Some Aspects," 68.
[79] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 82.

capacities were core to his 1951 paper "Reaction".[80] The capacity for intelligent cognition (in white terms) on the part of Aborigines from a range of categorisations across the spectrum of full-blood and half-caste became a pillar in Elkin's assimilationist rhetoric. An important feature of the address is that Burton, while lamenting the "difficult task" of "saving" the Aborigines, states that "a dole pauperises them."[81] Elkin expands on the term "pauperism" in "Reaction" and it makes up one half of the arguments he puts forward in the form of a schema regarding the processes required for assimilation.[82] Of note is that in Elkin's schema outlined in "Reaction", the devastation of pauperisation was more likely to be experienced by the range of categories of full-bloods rather than half-castes. While Elkin blames the provision of welfare-type protection by non-Aboriginal people as a cause for "pauperisation", he also frames the argument in biological deterministic terms in that Aborigines would inevitably be forced to "pauperisation" because of an inherent racial tendency to engage in "parasitic adaptation".[83]

Notions on the supposed hereditarian and socio-cultural tendencies towards parasitism of groups of 'different people' were not new. In 1888 "the minister of the Indianapolis Congregational Church" and social reformer, Oscar C. McCulloch, published his thoughts on the reasons why a group of people living in the region who he named 'The Tribe of Ishmael', were living in seemingly inescapable cycles of poverty and welfare dependence.[84] In order to explain his determinations, McCulloch presented non-scientific findings in terms of innate parastitic heredity by framing his approach through description of a "minute organism . . . known as the Sacculina" which attaches itself parasitically to the hermit crab.[85] McCulloch wrote that, like the 'sacculina', this 'Tribe' "is living as a parasite, or pauper". McCulloch went on to state that the "pauperism" of this group was a result of social welfarism.[86] Whether or not Elkin read McCulloch's work is not known, but correlations are seen in Elkin's views that the aptitudes and attitudes of Aborigines

[80] Elkin, "Reaction".
[81] Warner et. al., "Some Aspects," 68.
[82] Elkin, "Reaction", (1951).
[83] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines*, 362.
[84] Oscar C. McCulloch, *The Tribe of Ishmael: A Study in Social Degradation*. Fifteenth National Conference on Charities and Correction: Buffalo July, 1888.
https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/1048/McCulloch_Tribe%20of%20Ishmael%20-%20OCR.pdf?sequence=1
Nathaniel Deutsche, *Inventing America's "Worst" Family Eugenics, Islam, and the Fall and Rise of the Tribe of Ishmael*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009),
https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/imh/article/view/12561/18792
[85] McCulloch, *The Tribe of Ishmael*, 1888.
[86] McCulloch, *Tribe of Ishmael*, 1888.

which, along with white 'welfare', led to post-contact practices of parasitism and pauperism, and as noted earlier stated that "a dole pauperises them".[87]

While this is an example that is set in the Australian domain, Elkin's work also reflects a connection to the theorising on native populations in the work of influential British anthropologist, George Pitt-Rivers. Discussing what he considered to be the inherent nature of natives, Pitt-Rivers wrote

> The general culture level of a people . . . is conditioned by three factors; by their heritage of *culture forms* traditions, art-forms, beliefs, customs and social organization... *culture-accessories*, implements, weapons, the products of art . . . and by their *culture potential*, a term applied to innate constructive ability; the capacity to develop, under suitable conditions, artistic, scientific, or technical skill; and temperament.[88]

Elkin's narrative instructions to non-Aboriginal Australians on "how to understand [Aborigines]" closely followed that of Pitt-Rivers'.[89] When writing about adaptation of Aboriginal people, Elkin stated that the "three aspects of the Aborigines' adaptation" were "systematic knowledge of the environment [culture forms]; skill in making and using the equipment needed in the food quest [culture accessories]; and 'personal' relationship with the land [temperament]".[90] While this is another example of the ways in which Elkin incorporated other peoples' views and theories into his own writing and policy deliberations, it must be kept in mind is that Elkin was in a positon to influence bureaucratic and missionary policies which were underpinned by his own form of 'science'.

Elkin's Science.

Wise notes that "Elkin was a scientist" and that "in terms of theory, he was a functionalist, a diffusionist, a Darwinist".[91] As discussed below, as far as Elkin's theorising was concerned, it is interesting to note that two of those 'scientific forms' were in direct contrast to the third. Darwinist evolutionism was based on the premise that "culture generally develops (or evolves) in a uniform and progressive manner" and "Evolutionists,

[87] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines*, 362.
[88] Pitt-Rivers, *The Clash of Culture*, 3.
[89] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines*, 47.
[90] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines*, 47.
[91] Tigger Wise, "Elkin, Adolphus Peter (1891–1979)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press 1996): v. 14.
http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/elkin-adolphus-peter-10109

building from Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection, sought to track the development of culture through time".[92] Heather Long and Kelly Chakov write that in social evolutionism, "just as [primitive] species were thought to evolve into increasing complexity, so too were cultures thought to progress from a simple to complex states".[93] In this can be seen Elkin's discussions on the 'primitivity' of Aboriginal people, the combination of 'race' and 'culture' of Aborigines, and his belief that embedded within Aboriginal cultures was the 'potential' signalled by Pitt-Rivers for rapid progression from a 'simpler evolutionary' state to a higher 'civilised' state if the right impetuses were applied.

As a science, 'diffusionism' sought to determine, and therefore understand, "the nature of culture in terms of the origin of culture traits and their spread from one society to another".[94] Here we have two of Elkin's schools of thought, and Elkin's efforts to apply an amalgamation of the two is evident in his theories on 'parasitism' outlined in "Reaction" as a culturally embedded characteristic of Aboriginal 'societies'. For assimilation to be successful, Aboriginal people needed to be disconnected from the cultural source of parasitism (Aboriginal communities and families) in order to a) prevent any further generational spread of the practice, and b) create a 'cultural void' which could be re-populated with non-Aboriginal cultural practices in line with assimilation.

A slippage point which appears in Elkin's work is that the theoretical approach and research framework that was being applied by others in the field of anthropology at the time he was both studying and working in the Sydney school was 'functionalism'.
Eric Porth, Kimberley Neutzling and Jessica Edwards write that

> Functionalism was presented as a reaction against what was believed to be outdated ideologies. It was an attempt to move away from the evolutionism and diffusionism that dominated . . . British anthropology at the turn of the century.[95]

Porth et.al. also contend that "Functionalists presented their theoretical and methodological approaches as an attempt to expand sociocultural inquiry beyond the bounds of the evolutionary conception of social history". [96] Therefore 'functionalism' sat in opposition to

[92] Heather Long and Kelly Chakov, "Social Evolutionism," (the University of Alabama: Department of Anthropology). http://anthropology.ua.edu/cultures/cultures.php?culture=Social%20Evolutionism
[93] Long and Chakov, "Social Evolutionism".
[94] Long and Chakov, "Social Evolutionism".
[95] Eric Porth, Kimberley Neutzling and Jessica Edwards, "Functionalism," (the University of Alabama: Department of Anthropology): 2. http://anthropology.ua.edu/cultures/cultures.php?culture=Functionalism
[96] Porth, Kimberley Neutzling and Jessica Edwards, "Functionalism," 2.

the theoretical forms of 'evolutionism' and 'diffusionism' that Elkin was applying, and both these forms had been deemed 'outdated ideologies'.

Goodall writes that "evolutionism as a theoretical basis for . . . anthropology had been facing an increasing challenge from both Alfred Radcliffe-Brown and Bronislaw Malinowski since the mid-1910s", and that Elkin's work was reflective of an academic framework that was fast becoming outdated.[97] It is interesting that Elkin continued to apply obsolete theoretics to Aboriginal people at a time when Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski were not only two key figures in anthropology both here in Australia and in Britain, but were also active agents in the development of the emerging anthropological practice of 'functionalism'.

Long and Chakov write that "Functionalists believed the reality of events was to be found in their manifestations of the present", leading to "some to interpret functionalism as being opposed to the study of history altogether".[98] Responding to the criticism that anthropology had moved into a phase where the history or 'prehistory' of native races was no longer deemed a viable source of accurate academic/research information

> Radcliffe-Brown . . . stat[ed] that functionalists did not believe that useful historical information could be obtained with respect to primitive societies; it was not history, but "pseudo-history" to which functionalists objected.[99]

Working from a non-native perspective Porth et.al. state that "in the primitive societies that are studied by social anthropology, there are few written historic records" and that

> Anthropologists, thinking of their study as a kind of historical study, fall back on conjecture and imagination; they invent 'pseudo-historical' or 'pseudo-casual' explanations.[100]

The example given of the ways in which this 'invention' has occurred is that there have been "innumerable and sometimes conflicting pseudo-historical accounts of the origin and development of the totemic institutions of the Native Australians".[101] As can be seen in *The Australian Aborigines,* Elkin's focus was almost entirely on pre-contact 'totemic institutions'. This raises the question whether much of Elkin's work on pre-contact Aboriginal 'history' could be assessed as situated in the field of 'pseudo-history'.

[97] Goodall, "An Intelligent Parasite," 2.
[98] Porth, Neutzling and Edwards, "Functionalism," 2.
[99] Porth, Neutzling and Edwards, "Functionalism," 2.
[100] Porth, Neutzling and Edwards, "Functionalism," 2.
[101] Porth, Neutzling and Edwards, "Functionalism," 2.

The discussion above also adds to the commentary around the difficulties in reading Elkin's work. In "The Concept of Primitivity in the Early Anthropological Writings of A. P. Elkin", McGregor footnotes that "particularly in his earliest articles . . . [Elkin's] arguments are notable more for their confusedness than their clarity".[102] The explanation for this could be that Elkin himself was not able to make a clear delimitation between the fading evolutionary concepts and the 'new' socio-cultural approaches to anthropology.

The combination of two contending forms of anthropology practiced by Elkin provides some explanation for why he continued to use academic language that did not fit with the emergence of 'new' global anthropological thinking. Regardless of academic and social advancements in race thinking, Elkin built an assimilation platform for the future of Aborigines based on fast disappearing theories. This point is significant given that across the period of his domination in framing the 1939 policy, and his subsequent engagement with Burton during the development of the M.O.M. policy for Croker Island, Elkin worked from a theoretical platform that was informed by eugenicist solutions to 'problem' populations. While it is widely recognised from the post-World War Two position that eugenics was a fundamental driver in Nazi efforts to produce ideal racial populations leading to the annihilation of millions of people, in the interwar period discourse on eugenics was commonplace. As Rob Watts writes, "historians now accept that the international eugenics movement occupied an important position in Western societies up to the 1930s" and states that "without hyperbole we can see the first half of the twentieth century as "the age of eugenics"."[103] 'Eugenics' as a socio-scientific discourse was also commonplace in Australia. According to Watts:

> Eugenics in Australia was an attractive, persuasive and credible aspect of a wide-ranging progressivist and professional culture in the years both before and after 1939. All shared a preoccupation with administering and managing a stable, well-ordered, healthy and intelligent citizenry able to contribute to the growth and development of the economy and to the defence of the nation.[104]

Therefore it is no surprise that the development of Elkin's theoretics around policy approaches to Aboriginal Australians, while framed within socio-cultural anthropology, was underpinned by eugenicist ideology.

[102] McGregor, "The Concept of Primitivity," footnote 19, 99.
[103] Rob Watts, "Beyond Nature and Nurture: Eugenics in Twentieth Century Australian History", Australian Journal of Politics & History, 1994, 40(3) (1994): 318-319.
[104] Watts, "Beyond Nature and Nurture", 323.

Commenting on the ways in which Elkin appeared to 'borrow' 1920s terminology and concepts from others in the academic field both locally and internationally, the emergence of his discourse on the racially embedded cultural practice of 'parasitism' of Aboriginal people brings in to play the probability that in his assimilation discourse which was embedded in both the 1939 policy and the Croker Island policy, he adapted aspects of interwar European discourse on the parasitism of Jews. While discussing the racial/cultural categorising of Jews in Europe (especially in Germany) alongside the emerging 1920s-1930s race thinking about Aborigines is often not well received, Paul Bartrop writes

> Jews, Aborigines, Australians. Many find the juxtaposition of images distasteful, even unfair. Others see this range of concepts as a fundamental *non sequitur*. Yet there is a legitimacy to be found in aligning the situation of the Aborigines with that of the Jews.[105]

Adding weight to the view that there were connections between race science as applied to Jewish populations and Aboriginal populations, Mulvaney writes "Significantly, the thirties ushered in the racial evils of Hitlerite Germany, with which these sentiments were in accord".[106]

The 'parasitism of Aborigines', and the 'parasitism of Jews'.

There is evidence that Elkin connected Aboriginal parasitism with at least some of the descriptive aspects of the ways in which Jews were believed by German theorists (among others) to be a drain on German society.

During the years 1925 and 1926, Elkin undertook his Ph. D. study at the London School of Economics.[107] Leading up to his departure for London, Elkin "taught himself German", presumably so he could either converse with German anthropologists, or at the very least understand the writings of German academics.[108] According to Wise during his time in London, Elkin also "deliberately set out to get to know the men who made the international scene in anthropology".[109] It was a heady time when highly regarded men in academia were meeting and sharing their expertise. It was also a time when ideas about eugenics and the alleged parasitism of Jews were in free-flow across the Atlantic and the English Channel.

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[105] Paul Bartrop, "The Holocaust, the Aborigines, and the bureaucracy of destruction: an Australian dimension of genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research,* 2(1) (2001: 85.
[106] Mulvaney, "Australian Anthropology," 112.
[107] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 44.
[108] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 44.
[109] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 44.

At the time that Elkin was writing his doctorate under the auspices of Elliot Grafton-Smith, British academics, in conjunction with their German counterparts, were engaging in the international discourse on eugenics as a solution to the improvement of races with a focus on colonised natives and the Jewish population of Europe (specifically in Germany). As Raphael Patai writes in *The Jewish Mind,* "the sentiment of parasitism was echoed from across the English Channel by the founder of biostatistics, Sir Frances Galton" who wrote "The Jews are specialized for a parasitical existence upon other nations".[110] Decades after Galton's comment, British mathematician Karl Pearson, stated

> They [the Jews] will not be absorbed by and at the same time strengthen, the existing population; they will develop into a parasitic race.[111]

While recording the ways in which Jewish people were vilified and reviled by academics in Europe during the interwar period, Patai quotes 19th century philosopher, Proudhon who wrote that "The Jew is by temperament an anti-producer, neither a farmer nor an industrial".[112] Embedded in this is the notion that, rather than being seen as creators of 'industry' in either the economic or social sense, Jewish populations were viewed as engaging in inherent parasitic practices by appropriating the resources that were available to them.

In line with pre-Darwinian Mendelian principles which posited "the modern view that [genetic] characters are transmitted unchanged from one generation to the next and cannot be influenced by changes in the parent's body" Oscar McCulloch stated in 1888 that "this tendency to parasitism was transmitted to [their] descendants, until there is set up an irresistible hereditary tendency."[113] A connection can be made here with Elkin's view which was that 'parasitism' was an inherent and inherited trait of Aboriginality which was passed down from one generation to the next.[114] It is also reflective of the anthropological/eugenicist views of Pitt-Rivers. In *Clash of Culture,* Pitt-Rivers stated that for native peoples

> Culture-forms [traditions, art-forms, beliefs, customs and social organisation] are not simply bequeathed to a people and in turn handed on by them intact, but are evolved and modified by successive generations.[115]

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[110] Raphael Patai, *The Jewish Mind* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977):456.
[111] Patai, *The Jewish Mind,* 457.
[112] Patai, *The Jewish Mind,* 456.
[113] McCulloch, *Tribe of Ishmael,* 1888.
Peter J. Bowler, *The Mendelian Revolution: The Emergence of Hereditarian Concepts in Modern Science and Society,* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 3.
[114] Caruso, "Turn this water," (2012), "Turn this Water into Wine,"
[115] Pitt-Rivers, *The Clash of Culture,* 3.

To Elkin two of the greatest pitfalls or impediments to successfully drawing and subsuming Aboriginal people into the nation as a whole were in the first instance, that even though full-bloods and half-castes might appear to be showing signs of adaptation to white society, there was the belief that Aboriginal people would revert back to pre-colonial cultural practices (degenerate). The term Elkin employed to describe the racial and cultural possibilities of this occurring was "a return to mat".[116] The second concern was the possibility of evolutionary modification of culture-forms by new generations of Aborigines into a more refined form of parasitism. If this occurred, then the process of the desired adaptation by Aboriginal people to non-Aboriginal ways of living would falter, and assimilation in the form that Elkin defined it would not occur. 'Parasitism' as a culture form began to feature in Elkin's conversations in the late 1920s.

On his return to Australia, Elkin began to apply the term 'parasitic' to Aboriginal people in earnest. When writing about "cultural and racial clash" in *The Morpeth Review* in 1932, he grounded the source of "parasitism" as both pre and post contact systems of Aboriginal mutuality with the local environment.[117] This thinking can be seen as being derived from Pitt-Rivers' "culture potential".[118] The definition of "culture potential" was that it was

> a quality arising from a human group's prior adaptation experiences. As a theory, it was never thoroughly defined, but seemed to consist of a combination of physiological, psychological and cultural factors which either inhibited or enhanced a human group's adaptation ability.[119]

The significant point here is that Pitt-Rivers was indicating that in order to progress native peoples as a human group through the processes of adaptation towards white cultures, it was necessary to understand the ways in which natives had adapted to their environments prior to contact and clash. Having been deeply influenced by Pitt-Rivers' theorising on culture potential, and with his own developing theories after his time in England, Elkin's Australian version of Aboriginal 'parasitism' began to take a more concrete form. In 1926, Elkin had determined that the most effective means to assimilate Aborigines was "to break through the stalemate of a parasitic adaptation".[120] While this thinking that had a different application when assigned to Aborigines, it was reflective of the global spread of eugenicist ideas.

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[116] Elkin, "Reaction," 178. (this concept is discussed further later in the chapter)
[117] Caruso, "Turn this Water," 281.
[118] Pitt-Rivers, *The Clash of Culture,* 3.
[119] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 85.
[120] A. P. Elkin, *The Voice of the North,* (1926). http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/title/457

Elkin believed that full adaptation could only occur through separation of Aboriginal people from pre-contact practices. In his "Education of Native Races in Pacific Countries", Elkin stated that

> The adoption of Western civilisation is not necessarily essential for primitive or backward races, nor is it necessarily their own line of progress: yet it is a fact that they must more and more come into contact with, and be modified by elements of that civilisation.[121]

Aspects of the required 'modification' were that psychologically and culturally transmitted generational dependency would have to be fractured. This included breaking the post-contact transference of "parasitic, non-reciprocal engagement" between Aboriginal parents and their children where the parents "transmitted to their children subconscious practices of living off the resources provided by white society".[122] Added to Elkin's theorising was Pitt-Rivers' conclusion that "although culture-form is conditioned by culture-potential, the heritage of culture-potential must be correlated with *racial* history".[123]

Here lies the conundrum in Elkin's work – although most of his socio-political work discussed the 'culture' of Aborigines, in terms of his theorising, 'race' held the centre ground. The conflict in Elkin's thinking arose not only because he (unsuccessfully) attempted to separate the two, it was also because of the dilemma in working out how a socio-cultural change policy for the future of Aboriginal people could be formulated without knowing and referring back to the pre-contact past in order to determine their adaptation capacities aligned to their 'culture potential'. If the 'historical', 'racial', 'culture-form' of parasitism were to continue, all attempts to facilitate the transition of Aborigines into full citizenship in the nation would fail. In applying Pitt-River's ideas of 'culture potential' to sociocultural adaptation through assimilation of Aborigines, Elkin could not escape the eugenicist belief that the Aboriginal 'gene pool' also had to be altered.

In looking at the connections between the development of Elkin's 'parasitism', which grew partly out of the writings of Pitt-Rivers and were adjusted by Elkin to fit the Aboriginal Australian typology, there is an interesting but important extension to Pitt-Rivers' theorising. In the 1930s, Pitt-Rivers became increasingly known for his 'sympathetic'

[121] A. P. Elkin, "Education of Native Races in Pacific Countries," *Oceania,* 7 (1936).
[122] Caruso, "Turn this Water," 281.
[123] Pitt-Rivers, *The Clash of Culture,* 3.

views on some of the ideological race positions of the Nazi regime, which included Jewish parasitism as a 'scientific' basis for the racial concerns around Jews in Germany.[124]

David Renton writes that George Lane-Fox Pitt Rivers was an "author, anthropologist".[125] Bradley W. Hart writes that Pitt-Rivers was also a "right wing anthropologist who joined the Eugenics society in the years after the First World War and rose to prominence as . . . the group's representative to the IFEO [International Federation of Eugenic Organisations]".[126] Hart says Pitt-Rivers' *The Clash of Culture* "was generally well received in British academic circles" and that it was seen as giving solid scientific reasoning to "native decline in the Pacific".[127] As a consequence Bronislaw Malinowski – one of the founders of 'functionalist anthropology' of which Elkin was a student, "became a strong supporter of Pitt-Rivers and used him as an external examiner for doctoral theses he had supervised at the London School of Economics."[128] Included in the list of academics who admired Pitt-Rivers' work was Raymond Firth, who referenced the former's work in his own thesis.[129]

The point must be made that the relationships between Malinowski, Firth and Pitt-Rivers were by *academic association*, not by alliance through the I.F.E.O.. I am not arguing that either Malinowski, Firth or Elkin were in any form Nazi sympathisers. The argument I am making is that Elkin, young and open to the ideas that were being discussed in England and Europe by people he considered to be authorities, absorbed the information on Jewish parasitism, and incorporated his fledgling notions on Aboriginal parasitism into his emerging theories on Aborigines as a race and how best to hasten Aboriginal transition into mainstream Australia. Therefore, we are presented with a situation where at the very time that the maelstrom of eugenic theorising, which included Jewish parasitism, was operating between Europe and Britain (and elsewhere), Elkin, the progenitor of the notion of parasitism and deviser of policy for Aborigines, was in a prime seat to listen to the conversations and deliberations of powerful academics. Not only that, two academics who were influential in Elkin's immediate sphere were also engaged in those interwar discourses.

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[124] Bradley W. Hart, "Watching the 'Eugenic Experiment' Unfold: The Mixed Views of British Eugenicists Towards Nazi Germany in the Early 1930s," *Journal of the History of Biology* 45 (2012): 36-37.
[125] David Renton, 'Rivers, George Henry Lane Fox Pitt- (1890–1966)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, first published 2004: online edn., May 2005.
[126] Hart, "Watching the 'Eugenic Experiment'," 36-37.
[127] Hart, "Watching the 'Eugenic Experiment'," 43-44.
[128] Hart, "Watching the 'Eugenic Experiment'," 44.
[129] Raymond Firth, *Primitive economics of the New Zealand Maori* (London: G. Routledge, 1929).

Elkin's references to Aboriginal peoples' perceived levels of 'culture potential' reflected the work of Pitt-Rivers, and the application of parasitic behaviours echoed the definitions of Jewish parasitism. Remembering that Elkin spent time in Britain at the time when discussions and debates on the place of Jews (and other 'undesirable races') were reaching their zenith, it would come as no surprise that his increased demand on return to Australia for a 'new policy' grounded in a 'new experiment' was framed from a discourse of improvement of the Aboriginal in racial as well as cultural terms. While developing his ideas on assimilation which incorporated both those aspects, Elkin also brought to bear the categorisation of Aboriginal people by perceived degrees of 'race'. These categories provided a template for capacity for assimilation.

Categories of Aboriginality as indicators for Assimilation in Elkin's work.

Notions of 'caste' categorisation of Aboriginal people aligned to blood quanta was embedded in Elkin's overall approach to 'the Aboriginal problem'. The practice of categorising Aborigines aligned to their states of existence and modes of living, whether on pastoral stations or on missions had previously been discussed in Bleakley's 1928 Report.[130] When writing about and proposing policy for assimilation of Aborigines, Elkin applied that 'science' as a means to determine which 'groups' of Aboriginal people would be best suited for the assimilation endeavour.

Through investigating Elkin's writing, it appears that when he spoke of 'assimilation' he was not referring to a singular assimilation method, nor to a singular group of Aborigines as the targets for assimilation. That 'assimilation' itself is a contested term which could be interpreted and reframed to the 'best fit' of specific situations is identified by a number of academics. McGregor writes that assimilation "was a dispersed and conflicted discourse" where Elkin's assimilation followed the lines of "cultural syncretism" which entailed the 'blending' of European with Aboriginal elements".[131] The conflict here is that while Elkin's approach was to look at identify points of similarity as a way of developing avenues for assimilation, such a 'blending' was never going to be possible because on one hand 'white' equated to 'civilised', and on the other, 'Aboriginal' equated to 'primitive'.

[130] J. W. Bleakley, *The aboriginals and half-castes of Central Australia and North Australia.* Series: Parliamentary paper (Australia. Parliament): no. 21 of 1929 Govt. Printer, 1929, 3. http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-52836352/view?partId=nla.obj-99908445#page/n30/mode/1up

[131] Russell McGregor, "Assimilationists Contest Assimilation: T. G. H. Strehlow and A. P. Elkin on aboriginal policy", Journal of Australian Studies, 26(75) (2002): 45.

In his early research field trips, while Elkin thought that the study of Aborigines was "an interesting field," he had already determined that having been subjected to "different types of White influence . . . the natives were in 'various stages' of civilisation".[132] In December, 1926 Elkin's descriptions of Aboriginal people in the Newcastle newspaper *The Voice of the North* were couched in terms of 'primitive' and 'childlike', reinforcing his belief that "here is a primitive people representing the type from which all modern divisions of mankind could have sprung".[133] Elkin set himself the task of racially and socially elevating Aborigines out of the 'primitive' state. To Elkin, the marker of possible success of social adaptation of Aborigines was that an individual's or group's capacity to adapt (and therefore assimilate) was directly connected to their degrees of Aboriginality, and the classificatory group into which they fitted.

Gillian Cowlishaw argues that anthropologists were the architects of the classification of Aborigines, applying those calibrations as though they were indisputable truths.[134] Given the strength of Elkin's reputation in the field of Aboriginal affairs, his representations of the people who he was studying were, as Cowlishaw writes, "significant in determining how the category of Aboriginal Australians has been defined and reproduced for most of this [the twentieth] century".[135] While during this period, there "had been a conflation of the racial with the cultural, the biological with the social", there was never a clear separation between the two, and both were core to the assimilation debate.[136] As Cowlishaw notes "the very vocabulary of "caste" and "blood" with which such groups were described relied on biological ideas of race . . . and on the reification of race".[137] It is well known that those anthropologically constructed definitions of Aborigines became common parlance across the twentieth century for all of Australian society and were particularly brought into play in decision making by government bureaucracies, protectors of Aborigines and missionaries. This is apparent in the terminology of the Report of the *Aboriginal Welfare: Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities* which was held in Canberra in 1937.[138]

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[132] Geoffrey Gray, "'The natives are happy' A. P. Elkin, A. O. Neville and anthropological research in Northwest Western Australia," *Journal of Australian Studies* (2009): 110.
[133] Elkin, *The Voice of the North,* (1926).
[134] Gillian Cowlishaw "Aborigines and Anthropologists," *Australian Aboriginal Studies* (1986): 3.
[135] Gillian Cowlishaw, "Colour, Culture and The Aboriginalists," *Man* 22 (2) (1987): 221.
[136] Russell McGregor, "The Concept of Primitivity," 97.
[137] Cowlishaw, "Aborigines and Anthropologists," 3.
[138] H. S. Bailey, *Aboriginal Welfare: Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities* (Canberra: Commonwealth Government Printer, 1937).

While the discussions at the 1937 Conference did mention the "Supervision of Full-Blood Natives" the main focus was on the 'half-caste populations' in each state and territory.[139] J. W. Bleakley's 1928 Report, *The Aboriginals and half-castes of Central Australia and North Australia* was often the reference point for the attendees.[140] Cecil Cook, Chief Protector of Aboriginals for the Northern Territory, referred to Bleakley's report specifically in relation to the various 'categories' of Aborigines stating "In respect of aborigines, the Commonwealth recently adopted a policy somewhat analogous to that detailed by Mr Bleakley. It divided the aborigines into three classes".[141] The Bleakley Report comprehensively categorised Aboriginal people based on caste and living conditions using such terms as "half-castes . . . quadroons and octoroons", "station myalls" and Aborigines in "indigent camps – other than on stations".[142] In "Reaction", Elkin sets out a schema for assimilation in the form of a grid. McGregor notes that in this schema, Elkin "set out the phases through which the relations between Aborigines and Europeans had supposedly passed since the first colonisation of this country".[143] While reflective of the descriptors of 'different types' of Aborigines set out in the Bleakley report, Elkin's 'phases' were designed to predict the probable futures of full-bloods and half-castes.[144]

Both McGregor and Goodall examine the various 'categories' of Aborigines as defined by Elkin in "Reaction". This includes discussion on Elkin's determinations of the possible capacities of 'intelligent' progression and acculturation (socio-cultural assimilation) of Aborigines depending on which of the categorising spaces they were doomed to occupy. My view is that the two main classifications presented in Elkin's schema as shown below are "full-bloods" and "half-castes".[145] While both McGregor and Goodall have undertaken a deep examination of the paper and determined that Elkin was endeavouring to articulate Aboriginal people's interaction with the pastoral industry, it can also be read as a model which explains what he thinks is likely to happen to Aborigines as they are engaged in a forced process of assimilation. Analysed from this perspective, Elkin presents categories of Aboriginality aligned to assimilation and how successful the process is likely to be based on the anthropologically determined capacities of 'natives' for 'adaptation'. In "Reaction"

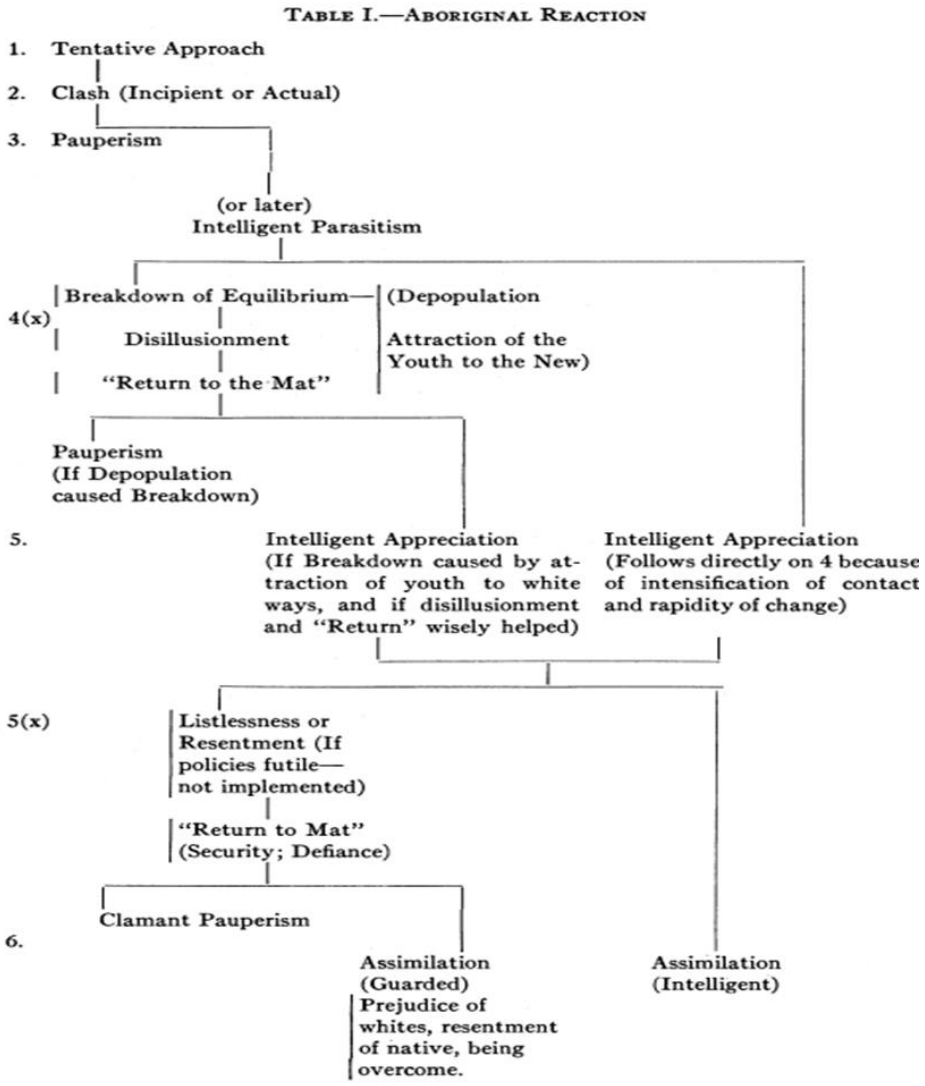
[139] Bailey, *Aboriginal Welfare: Initial Conference*, 3.
[140] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, (1929). http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-52836352
[141] Bailey, *Aboriginal Welfare: Initial Conference*, 13.
[142] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, 3.
[143] McGregor, "Intelligent Parasitism," 118.
[144] Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and half-castes*, (1929).
[145] Elkin, "Reaction," 178.

those systems of codification of Aboriginal people were classified by 'like' and 'unlike' groups of 'Aborigines' and presented as a matrix from which the 'future of the Aborigines' could be determined.

In Elkin's descriptors in "Reaction", full-bloods were slotted into sub-categories which were defined by their specific living situations. Full-bloods on missions belonged to one sub-set who required the application of specific assimilation methods.[146] Other sub-sets were: full-bloods who were still tenanting 'traditional' landspaces that had been colonised but not yet occupied by white people; and full-bloods who were attempting to maintain some form traditional contact and cultural control over traditional lands which the pastoral industry had laid claim.[147] Elkin's view of the "station blacks" was that unless they engaged in the process of 'adaptation' they "were on the road to extinction".[148]

Then there was a sub-category which Elkin believed required specific attention and that was half-castes. Within this grouping, the sub-sets consisted of half-castes whose fringe-dwelling existence trapped them in "the almost a-moral type of life" and who displayed an "absence of moral and spiritual purpose".[149] This then made them unsuitable subjects for successful assimilation. The sub-set who *did* present as being eminently suitable were half-castes who had not yet been tainted by transmission of Aboriginal cultural practices [*parasitic adaptation*] which Elkin deemed were detrimental to successful inculcation into white society. While categorisation of Aborigines was accepted by the 1930s, Elkin worked towards devising a singular model for the full range of sub-sets of 'Aborigines'.[150] Along with descriptors of Aboriginal classifications, that 'model' included here was presented in "Reaction", with the table outlined in the paper being divided into two sections.[151]

[146] Elkin, "Reaction," 4.
[147] Elkin, *Proceedings of Conference*, 17.
[148] Elkin, "Reaction," 166.
[149] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 41.
[150] Elkin, "Reaction," 177.
[151] Elkin, "Reaction," 177.



McGregor and Goodall have assessed this table through application of the descriptors provided by Elkin. I contend that in order to 'explain' the right kind of racial aptitude for social assimilation, the table should be read as placing full-bloods on the left side of the table, and half-castes on the right. What needs to be taken into account is that most of Elkin's discussions were on full-bloods because, to him, half-castes were not 'Aborigines'. As Cowlishaw writes "In popular parlance as well as in anthropological writings there is a division of Aborigines into two kinds".[152] In particular, says Cowlishaw "The popular view that the 'non-traditional' or 'half-castes' are not "true" Aborigines is widely recognised, but anthropologists' complicity in such judgements is less obvious".[153] Elkin writes that "Full-bloods . . . still have their own living culture to give them firm and well-known ground on which to stand and face the future", but half-castes occupied a space of "cultural

[152] Cowlishaw, "Aborigines and Anthropologists," 2.
[153] Cowlishaw, "Aborigines and Anthropologists," 2.

non-existence".[154] In broad terms, Elkin's work shows that half-castes occupied a lot of his socio-political work, but in anthropological terms this group seemingly held little space in his discussions on Aboriginal cultural practices and transmission.[155] For Elkin, the basic racial nature of being half-caste meant that there was an immediate excision from everything cultural. The very act of being born a half-caste, in Elkin's view was that

> the Aborigines themselves could be perceived as so different racially and culturally as to preclude any analysis that encompasses both categories.[156]

To Elkin, the predominant bio-cultural driver was that while half-castes were not fully Aboriginal - if Aboriginal at all *in the cultural sense* - they were certainly not racially white according to anthropological classifications.[157] Nevertheless, because of the perceived levels of white blood (the bio determinant) of half-castes, Elkin told the rest of the country they should view half-castes as being white people. The addendum to this was that he believed that half-castes would not be considered by full-bloods as authentic inheritors of 'traditional knowledge'.[158] To him, half-castes were not only biologically displaced, we were culturally, cosmologically and spirituality displaced existing in a shadowy "cultural hiatus".[159] In *The Australian Aborigines (how to understand them)* Elkin writes that for half-castes,

> Their knowledge of Aboriginal language, customs, beliefs and sacred places is fragmentary [and that] Aboriginal culture for them is no longer 'a lantern unto their feet and a light unto their paths'.[160]

As such, half-castes were prime subjects for assimilation. Therefore, having half-castes (in particular children) placed in religious/mission environments where christianisation was a fundamental principal underpinning in their re-socialisation, did not give Elkin pause for thought. He would have believed that relocating half-caste children was a not only merciful act for a 'lost strata' of Aborigines, but would also better situate them for accelerated socio-racial evolution. Elkin was adamant that in order for half-castes to be considered to some degree as equal by white people, such 'uplift' had to occur, and to take place rapidly. Elkin shows that in his mind the bio-deterministic nature of full-bloods meant that they would never really 'move up' the evolutionary scale as demonstrated in "Reaction".

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[154] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines*, 381.
[155] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 41.
[156] Cowlishaw, "Aborigines and Anthropologists," 2.
[157] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 41.
[158] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines*, 379.
[159] Elkin *The Australian Aborigines*, 379.
[160] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines*, 379.

Racial and cultural binaries in Elkin's "Reaction and Interaction: A Food Gathering People and European Settlement in Australia".

In 1926, in the *Voice of the North,* Elkin posed the question "is there any way of helping such a people jump centuries".[161] This indicates that he had well and truly begun to contemplate mechanisms that would result in Aboriginal people being forced to leapfrog over several evolutionary phases in order to arrive at a socio-cultural level whereby their levels of racial development rendered them more capable of attaining socio-racial equality, 'sameness', with white people.[162] It was also at this time that Elkin began to talk about the need for a 'positive policy', and to declare that he knew what form such a policy should take.

Elkin's unrelenting confidence around his policy being "the only possible policy" was rooted in the belief that he had devised the most suitable mechanism through which evolution of Aboriginal people could be accelerated.[163] In the prologue of *The Australian Aborigines,* under the heading "Positive Policy", Elkin writes

> Observations during field-work in 1927-1930 convinced me that the only way to break through the stalemate of a parasitic adaptation was to work out and implement [new] policies.[164]

The significance of that statement is that although McGregor writes that he cannot find Elkin's use of the term until 1933, Elkin was seeing Aboriginal people through the lens of 'parasitism' in the late 1920s.[165] Importantly, Elkin was also making it clear that the success of any form of policy was dependent on the rupture of "parasitic adaptation".[166] In the 1944 publication *Citizenship for the aborigines: a national aboriginal policy,* Elkin again stated that within the contact zone "Aborigines were made parasites".[167] When Elkin stated that the bureaucracy needed to move away from the biological 'breeding them out' thinking, he nevertheless maintained a biological determinist structural framework. Although he endeavoured to shift the dialogue towards focussing on 'culture' rather than race, he continued to reference 'race' as a determining factor, and his work "shows a confusion of culture with racial categories".[168] This is certainly apparent in the table set out in "Reaction". A significant feature of the schema is that, despite all good efforts, there

[161] Elkin, *Voice of the North,* (1926).
[162] Elkin, *Voice of the North,* (1926).
[163] Caruso, "Turn this water," (2012).
[164] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines,* 368.
[165] McGregor, "Intelligent Parasitism," 119.
[166] Elkin, *The Australian Aborigines,* 368.
[167] Elkin, *Citizenship,* 14.
[168] Cowlishaw, "Colour, Culture and the Aborigines," 230.

was a high level of risk that full-bloods would "return to mat" - a much more palatable term that 'go back to black', even though it meant the same thing.[169] On the other hand, half-castes were less likely to encounter the same levels of difficulty while being assimilated, and the path towards "intelligent parasitism" would be less fraught.

My review of the table "Aboriginal Reaction" is that it shows the ways in Elkin attempted to distinguish between the two categories without actually articulating a clear demarcation between culture and race. My reading of the table is that Elkin was bringing into play his decade's long contemplation on how to explain to white people the difficulties they should expect to face in their efforts to draw Aboriginal people into white society. Although the table is accompanied by a detailed explanation of the sections, my analysis is that the 'split' after "3. Pauperism" and "(or later) Intelligent Parasitism" is an indicator that 'full bloods' and 'half-castes' occupy two parallel components of the matrix. This included the 'range' of classifications of Aborigines, from full-blood to half-caste and lesser percentages. I argue that there is less information on the destructive forces of culture clash on the right of the table because it applies to half-castes who, in the Darwinian sense, had been automatically and unquestionably 'uplifted' on the scale of humanity through miscegenation. As Cowlishaw writes, this was "a confusion stemming from the static and mentalist notion that drew the same kind of boundaries that the concept of race had previously justified".[170] In the schema, half-castes, simply by the power of non-Aboriginal lineage which were, as noted earlier changes to the 'gene pool', were automatically less likely to suffer from "breakdown", "disillusionment" and "clamant pauperism".[171]

The text accompanying the Table provides a cautionary description of the difficulties faced by Aborigines on route to achieving limited equality with white Australians through "cultural blending". Although Elkin's public narrative was that "cultural blending ensured continuity in processes of cultural change", and he insisted "that change must build upon, not obliterate, the existing cultural heritage", his classifications provided evidence that his assimilation models were certainly grounded in degrees of race.[172] Although McGregor contends that

> the outcomes of the assimilation [Elkin] promoted would seem significantly different to those of assimilationist programs premised on the dissolution of Indigenous cultures,

[169] Elkin, "Reaction," 178.
[170] Cowlishaw, "Aborigines and Anthropologists," 2.
[171] Elkin, "Reaction," 176.
[172] McGregor, "Assimilationists Contest Assimilation", 45.

he also states that Elkin never "proclaimed a commitment to the preservation, in perpetuity of Indigenous social orders or cultures as a deliberate goal of policy".[173] Importantly, McGregor identifies that Elkin did not seek to protect Aboriginal ways of living and being *in policy form*, even though the conservation of those traditional frameworks was firmly embedded in his social and anthropological communications.[174] Indeed, Elkin continually insisted that Aboriginal cultures should not be destroyed.

Examination of Elkin's positions around Aboriginal people shows that he considered that there were aspects of pre-colonial Aboriginal cultural organisation which had, to some extent, survived the ravages of colonisation. Elkin is recorded as saying that "in the second half of last century [anthropology] had shown that the Aborigines possessed a very complex social organisation and totemic system" and that in the 1920s there arose "the urgency of studying and recording all we could about the Aborigines before it was too late, for contact altered their culture and indeed caused them to die out".[175] Elkin considered that those lifeways be treated at least as immutable and - at best - as providing the foundations for the implementation of civilising and christianising practices. In the *Report and Recommendations of the National Missionary Conference of 1937*, the secretary of the Aborigines' Friends' Association, John H. Sexton, records that

> Professor Elkin of the Sydney University is . . . an anthropologist with the desire to retain native customs and culture as long as possible . . ., for it is thought that Missionaries going out to work among aborigines should have some appreciation of native customs and culture and try not to destroy them.[176]

Under the heading "General Principles" in *Citizenship*, Elkin writes "Group – or community life – is of fundamental importance to persons of Aboriginal descent. This factor operates and must be reckoned with whether the region is isolated, marginal, or closely settled; whether the Aborigines be full-blood or mixed blood and even light caste".[177]

For Elkin, respect for, recognition and the maintenance of deeply embedded seams of cultural transmission of Aboriginal lifeways which ensured generational continuity of those 'ancient' social organisations was crucial to the prevention of the disappearance of

[173] McGregor, "Assimilationists Contest Assimilation", 43.
[174] McGregor, "Assimilationists Contest Assimilation", 47.
[175] Elkin, *Proceedings of Conference*, 9.
[176] J. H. Sexton, *Aborigines' Friends' Association National Missionary Council Recommendations, Secretary's Report.* (Aborigines' Friends' Association: No. 376 State Library of South Australia, 1937).
[177] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 22.

the race. While Elkin shied away from employing miscegenist terminology - "I don't like the word "absorption", as it has a biological inference" - he did warn Australians of the possibilities of the total demise of Aboriginal Australia, but his forewarnings were couched in terms of 'culture' rather than 'race'.[178]

As far as Elkin was concerned if the 'culture' of Aborigines was destroyed, the race would be destroyed. Elkin asserted that socio-cultural foundations of Aboriginal life provided the springboard for incremental adaptive assimilation by Aboriginal people into Australian society. In his doctoral thesis *Anchorage in Aboriginal affairs: A. P. Elkin on religious continuity and civic obligation,* J. A. Lane writes that "Elkin supported an idea of Aboriginality as consciously continuous with its own past, and retaining its distinctive arrangement of reverence, authority, and sanction".[179] Elkin wrote that one of the requisite conditions of assimilation for both full-bloods and half-castes, was "the maintenance of the tribe as a community".[180] Aligned to this was the requirement that

> There must be the functioning of community life through the native language, with its aspect of continuity and of common heritage . . . with their knowledge and custodianship of the moral and social sanctions – the mythology and "Dreamings".[181]

This can be seen as a continuation of the work of Elkin's 1922 Master's thesis on Aboriginal spirituality which was a "a library thesis rather than a piece of field research", in which he "intended to synthesise information on religion pan-tribally and to delineate an Australia-wide pattern".[182] Even though Elkin was fully aware of the diversity of Aboriginal language groups, through constructing a collective 'singular' when it came to talking about Aboriginal spirituality it appears that he had no real consideration for the loss of individual group identity and cultural expression as a result of assimilation. But the situation did hold concerns for him when others (particularly missionaries) worked to impose christianity on those language groups. It is evident from Elkin's writing that his view of missions was that although he considered them indispensable for the continued protection of Aborigines, he was firm on the conviction that missionaries needed to have some form of anthropological training.

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[178] Elkin, *Proceedings of Conference*, 23.
[179] Jonathon Lane, *Anchorage in Aboriginal affairs: A. P. Elkin on religious continuity and civic obligation*, Unpublished Thesis, University of Sydney (2008): 210. http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/3691
[180] Elkin, "Reaction," 173.
[181] Elkin, "Reaction," 173.
[182] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 34.

"Awkward bedfellows": Elkin's judgements on the role of missions in the 'acculturation' process.

In discussing Elkin's view on training for missionaries, I argue that Elkin used his church affiliations to further his anthropological agenda. Although Wise writes that "Elkin and missions had been awkward bedfellows" and that "he was ambivalent about missions", she also states that "missions he considered especially his territory".[183] Elkin's relationship with overall mission endeavours, particularly with the M.O.M., is clear, but they were not newly formed alliances. Missionary practices and efforts had been on Elkin's radar since the early 1930s when he "published a series of admonitory articles on missionary methods," which as McGregor notes, followed his visits to Forrest River Anglican mission.[184] Anthropologists Ronald and Catherine Berndt to whom Elkin devoted a considerable amount of support and protection, wrote in their *festschrift* to Elkin that he "was a pioneering scholar of Aboriginal religious belief and ritual whose work was inspired by a devout Christian faith".[185] In McGregor's view "Elkin's religious thought was progressivist in that he considered Christianity a "higher" faith than traditional Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and observances; but he was adamant that the latter were genuinely religious".[186] In identifying the ways in which Elkin contended that there had to be recognition of Aboriginal spirituality, and the maintenance of spiritual expressions in the face of religious colonialism, McGregor writes that

> As well as the need for cultural and religious continuity, Elkin argued that the "preservation of the community" was of far greater importance than the mere "attachment of souls to the mission church".[187]

Accordingly, Elkin argued against the prevalent practice of focusing proselytizing work upon the young, a process he claimed caused social dislocation and individual alienation".[188]

Although Elkin had worked alongside missionary bodies for many years, he sustained the belief that missions should not engage in converting Aborigines completely into

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[183] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist,* 133.
[184] McGregor, "From Old Testament to New," 41.
[185] Ronald Berndt and Catherine Berndt, "A. P. Elkin - the Man and the Anthropologist," in *Aboriginal Man in Australia: Essays in Honour of A. P. Elkin,* eds., R. Berndt and C. Berndt (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1965), 13–14.
Geoffrey Gray, "'You are my anthropological children': A. P. Elkin, Ronal Berndt and Catherine Berndt, 1940-1956," *Aboriginal History* 29 (2005): 77-106.
[186] McGregor, "From Old Testament to New," 42.
[187] McGregor, "From Old Testament to New," 41.
[188] McGregor, "From Old Testament to New," 43.

christianity. Elkin saw that this practice had already had a ruinous impact on the preservation and future transmission of Aboriginal spiritual practices. As Elkin wrote in 1944,

> The principle that the spiritual life of the Aborigines and those of Aboriginal descent should be respected presents both a warning and a task to the Missionary organizations (sic) and churches, and to any other bodies who might venture into this field. If the approach and methods be . . . not based on knowledge of the psychological and social functions of Aboriginal religion, much harm must follow.[189]

This view is supported by McGregor who wrote "Equally apparent is Elkin's commitment to the principle of socio-cultural continuity: change, if it is to be successful, must articulate with the past, building upon that past rather than demolishing or denying it".[190]

My reading of Elkin's work is that he employed the avenues provided to him through his ecclesiastic associations to further his social science endeavours. For Elkin, the church became a means to an end, not an end unto itself. It is also the reason that the central plank of his work was the 'science' rather religion. But he needed to develop, strengthen and maintain relationships with church and mission bodies and people in order to synchronise the connections between mission and bureaucracy to determine how, when and where to consolidate those affiliations around the nexus of his 1939 policy. The fact that this convergence did occur is evidence both of Elkin's contrivance and unyielding determination to actualise his own methods of assimilation.

While the combination of working from a position of science at the same time as working from a place of religious ideology could be seen as an irregularity, Elkin intertwined both narratives in his portfolio. McGregor proposes that Elkin's "assimilationist proposals were preceded by analogous arguments on missionary policy".[191] I would flip that statement and contend that Elkin's *arguments on missionary policy were preceded by his assimilationist hypothesising.* The evidence for this lies in Wise's recording that it was in 1909 that Elkin "picked up for a shilling an edition of Hutchinson's Popular Classics: Darwin's *The Origin of Species*", the result of which was that "Elkin was spellbound" by the theories put forward. [192] According to Wise, Elkin himself identified "In later years . . . [that] this moment was the 'fons et origio' of his anthropological career".[193] Elkin did not commence

[189] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 42.
[190] McGregor, "From Old Testament to New," 42.
[191] McGregor, "From Old Testament to New," 42.
[192] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 12.
[193] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 12.

his clerical studies until 1912 when he "came down to St Paul's College", the Anglican residential college associated with the University of Sydney.[194] Furthermore, Elkin's "first venture into print" was a paper delivered in 1909 to the Church of England Men's Society in Uralla titled "'The Implications of Evolution'".[195] Therefore, while Elkin was indeed an ordained minister, he was first and foremost dedicated to anthropological investigation of Aborigines, and the recording of the states of living and being of Aborigines on the edges of the contact zone.

Lane writes "Elkin made religious themes a central concern in Australian anthropology".[196] However, I would argue that Elkin transfigured his religious qualifications into a christian/scientific persona in which *science* held the ascendency. Whilst engaging the general public and missionaries in particular in anthropology, either through his parish/civic talks or through training, Elkin presented himself as a cleric, but spoke as an anthropologist. This is not to infer that Elkin was not a man of faith - "After all" writes Wise, "who could doubt but that he was a devout Anglican?".[197] Alternatively, given that he "ceased regular clerical duties in 1925", I would advance the view that Elkin was more a man of science than he was a man of god.[198]

This is corroborated by comments by Wise who wrote that on attending the second Pan Pacific Conference held in Sydney in 1923, "Elkin was beginning to suspect that science was the only profession to be in in this modern world".[199] It is possible that Elkin also viewed himself in this way. I argue that when Elkin talked about religion in an effort to 'protect' Aboriginal spirituality, especially as a means to minimise missionary influences on Aboriginal belief systems, he was also endeavouring to preserve that facet of Aboriginal life so that it could be further recorded for the annals of history.

Although a number of academics identify that there were "congruencies between his missionary and his assimilationist policies", from early in his career, Elkin sought to relegate efforts to christianise as being of secondary importance to what he saw as the driving need to apply scientific knowledge.[200] If Elkin could achieve the curtailing of

[194] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 16.
[195] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 12.
[196] Lane, *Anchorage in Aboriginal affairs,"* 1.
[197] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 14.
[198] Tigger Wise, A. P. Elkin in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/elkin-adolphus-peter-10109
[199] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 40.
[200] McGregor, "From Old Testament to New," 39.

mission practices of inculcating particularly full-blood Aborigines with christianity (a practice which most often entailed the eradication of tens of thousands of years of traditional spiritual and cultural transmissions), then anthropologists, led by and including Elkin, could continue to record Aboriginal lifeways in their most unsullied form. A clear example of the double-bind present in Elkin's work was that he saw that christian 'conversion' without the inclusion of Aboriginal traditional life 'stories' would sound the death knell to a whole body of research and work. This body of work would be available to anthropologists who could carry forward knowledge of a people who had passed into extinction.[201] In this can be seen that while he was presenting concern for the protection of Aboriginal culture for the sake of Aboriginal culture, he was also protecting it for the sake of anthropologists. He also considered that missionary methods would have to change significantly in order to be classified as a practice that was of socio-spiritual benefit to Aborigines.

As Elkin's 'new policy' was generally accompanied by the need to move away from earlier practices, it can be seen that Elkin worked from the position that the intertwined incorporation of both 'science' (in the form of anthropology) and religious instruction as the base components of the apparatus of assimilation. To attempt to execute an assimilation system utilising only one of those elements would doom the enterprise to failure. According to McGregor, Elkin also rejected "official assimilationist strategies premised on the effacement of an indigenous socio-cultural order".[202] From that it would seem than Elkin would not agree with removal processes that would separate Aboriginal people, whatever their caste, from 'traditional' learning and teaching. Indeed, Wise writes that one of the principle statements made by Elkin in a public lecture in 1931 was that "children should not be taken away as it undermined the cohesion of the tribe".[203]

Given these philosophies, why then would Elkin support an assimilation proposal in the mid-1950s which meant that children from Central Australia would be transported "1000 miles away" from family, community, land and cultural continuity when – in just about everything he wrote – he presented the view that the decimation of Aboriginal cultural

[201] In this sense, Elkin should be given credit with understanding/knowing that Aboriginal 'stories' were not merely a copy of Western styles of storytelling, but were all encompassing forms of communion with and between both the 'real' world and the spiritual/cosmological universes determining and determined by Aboriginal lifeways.
[202] McGregor, "From Old Testament to New," 40.
[203] Wise, *Self-Made Anthropologist*, 107.

lifeways would lead to the destruction of the race?[204] In arguing for his position on the establishment of Croker Island Mission in the face of controversy and condemnation, Elkin must have felt that he held a supportable position. The following discusses the factors which supported Elkin's decision.

The answer to that question can be found in three places. Firstly, given Elkin's position that Aborigines were the people who had to adapt to whiteness culturally, he, as professor, needed to devise an action framework that would externally impel Aborigines along the evolutionary spectrum. An outcome of this would be that greater numbers of Aboriginal people (particularly half-castes) would engage with white society in ways which white people recognised as white ways of living. The next phase hopefully would be that because 'they' were behaving like them, white people would then accept Aborigines. Then Aboriginal people would be seen to be Australians rather than Aborigines, therefore achieving social levels of citizenship, even though they were not eligible for legal citizenship. This final outcome would in Elkin's mind, be total justification for such an action.[205]

The second site of justification is that Elkin did, with defined parameters, support the removal of children. In *Citizenship* under the heading "Just and Democratic Administrative Methods", Elkin wrote

> it is sometimes necessary to remove Aborigines (full-blood or other) or their children" [because] "it . . . prepares the "Aborigines" for . . . citizenship.[206]

This is despite his own recognition that "Aborigines, and, in particular, mixed-bloods, are perturbed by this method of action . . . (Especially do they object to their children being taken away from them)".[207]

The 'preparation' not only required resocialisation to white of Aborigines (whether they were full-blood or half-caste) but full citizenship could not become a reality unless there was a complete rupture of the transmissions of cultural systems of knowledge from one generation to the next. In *Citizenship,* Elkin's designation of the pre and post-contact

[204] Elkin, *Proceedings of Conference*, 9.
[205] Elkin, *Voice of the North*, 1926.
[206] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 15.
[207] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 15.

practices that Aboriginal people engaged in for the continuation of the race was "parasitic adaptation".[208] This concept is core to his paper "Reaction".[209]

This paper is the third analysis locus for discussion on Elkin opting for the M.O.M. proposal, and I contend that in "Reaction", Elkin was revealing to the readers - anthropologists, missionaries, bureaucrats - the full extent of the hypothesising that he had been engaged in for decades. Goodall identifies that Elkin did indeed develop a theory, and that in the paper "Reaction",

> Elkin's theory contained a mechanism for dealing with Aborigines from a European administrator's viewpoint. While the actual category of "clamant (sic) pauperism" has seldom been taken up in any use of Elkin's theory, the potential value of the mechanism was not overlooked. What Elkin had done was to produce a purportedly "academic" theory.[210]

In "Reaction", that 'theory' was laid out in the form of the diagram which, while employing the visuals triggered by words such as "pauperism" and 'parasitism', mapped his trajectories for Aboriginal assimilation.

If, as McGregor writes "There was nothing new in the idea of gradually weaning the young from savagery, . ." and that savagery was couched in terms of the generational transmission of "intelligent parasitism", then it should not be a surprise that for Elkin,

> there was nothing novel about separating child from parent, so that the former could grow into civilisation without the retarding influence of the latter.[211]

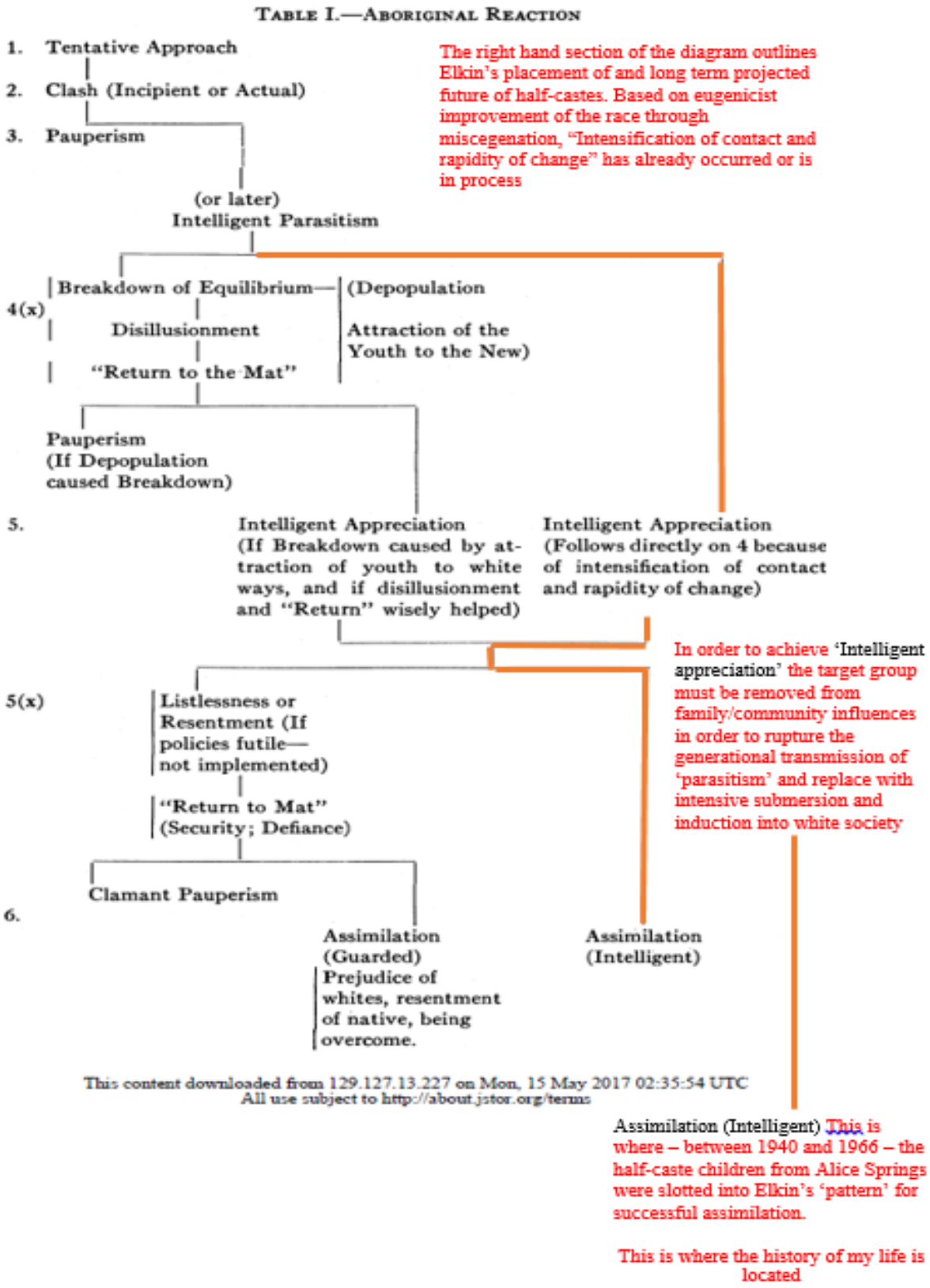
Therefore, to Elkin, there was nothing inherently unethical, *or unjustifiable* about actively pursuing a reserve or mission which would become a site where half-caste children who had already been removed presented the best available source for creating a control group. While missions and settlements had operated for generations as places for re-socialising Aboriginal people, Croker Island as a site which Elkin had been instrumental in bringing into existence, provided a cohort of children whose 'minds' (and therefore cultural behaviours) had not yet been irretrievably impacted by 'parasitic' or other negative socio-cultural practices. In social anthropological terms the mission was a 'trial site' for new mission practices where the combination of the insular geographical location of the mission, and the collection of half-caste internees who were deemed suitable for socio-

[208] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 31-54.
[209] Elkin, "Reaction".
[210] Goodall, "An Intelligent Parasite," 21.
[211] McGregor, "Intelligent Parasitism," 86.

cultural salvage furnished Elkin with what could be called a *tabula rosa* setting that met his criteria for "a new experiment".[212] The missionaries were 'new' and had undergone anthropological training through the University of Sydney; the children were half-caste and as such were already higher on the evolutionary scale than full-bloods; most of them had been removed at an 'early age' and were quarantined from family influence by distance from the mainland and as such were deemed less prone to 'parasitism'. In such a setting, evolution could be expedited because the children had been removed from the possibility of 'catching' parasitism. And therefore assimilation could be accelerated.

In order to fully respond to the question why Elkin would feel justified in opting for the Croker Island option, I have reworked the Elkin Table (below) and applied my own explanations. When writing about policy and how it must be applied, Elkin wrote "The methods must be related to the types of regional contact . . . as well as to facts and degrees of detribalization and miscegenation".[213] Working from this position, the table below is read from the approach that the future prospects of the full-bloods subjected to different degrees of tribalization occupy the left side of the table, and the half-castes who are the descendants of miscegenation, are on the right. The orange lines represent the socio-cultural possibilities of the race of half-castes, and the text boxes on the right side are my descriptive comments.

[212] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 21.
[213] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 21.



My statement in the lower right-hand corner of the document about the Alice Springs half-caste children is in line with Elkin's belief that for half-castes

> Their future is best served by being formed into communities in inalienable and inviolable reserves, where they can become self-supporting, develop family, village and community life, receive practical, technical, moral and general education.[214]

In Elkin's plan, the creation of such a settlement would be for the purpose of assimilating non-tribal half-castes on a site that he deemed the most suitable for carrying out both missionary and assimilation work.

The connections between Elkin's schema and the Croker Island Mission.

The following 1940 communication from Elkin to Burton shows that Croker Island became the 'model community' for Elkin. It confirms the argument that Croker Island was Elkin's site for observing whether half-caste children from Central Australia who, because they had been removed from the possibility of acquiring 'parasitism' from their families would thrive under the provision of assimilatory and christianising practices. As such, the children of Croker were prime candidates as a 'control group' for observation by Elkin whereby he could determine whether his theories on how to assimilate half-castes were proved. Below are the full contents of a letter in 1940 from Elkin to the Secretary of the M.O.M. J. W. Burton. This communication was sent after the ratification of the 1939 policy, and at the time of the writing of the M.O.M. Northern District Policy on the Croker Island Methodist Half-Caste Mission, both of which as noted in chapter one, Elkin was instrumental in devising.[215]

> 24th July 1940
>
> To Burton
>
> I am very interested in the policy being worked out for the care and development of half-castes in the Northern Territory and of the part which missionary bodies are being asked to play in this. I understand that there is some difference of opinion regarding the value of establishing a station with training and educational facilities in Central Australia, and that some favour the idea of having such a project established in the north of Arnhem Land. I know Central Australia fairly well . . . In my opinion it is not suitable for an institution such as is projected. . . It is not only a drought stricken area but very often is almost desert. . . at best the training of half-castes in Central Australia in an institution which was mainly concerned with cattle gives the half-castes very limited opportunities in the future.
>
> We do need half-castes to be trained and helped to become citizens of the Commonwealth, able to contribute to their capacities. I therefore favour strongly the selection of a site in the north where rainfall is regular and water supplies good, and where the possibilities of training are much greater, namely in agriculture, fishing industry, saw milling, boat

[214] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 47.
[215] A number of short quotes from this letter have already been used earlier in the thesis.

> building. I also favour the idea of having a [polocy] of peoples of mixed blood which could be self-contained and perhaps in time self-supporting. [216]

Reading that letter in conjunction with the following pages from the appendices of *Citizenship for The Aborigines*, there is a clear indication that my argument that in seeking a site for the testing of his hypotheses on half-caste assimilation, Elkin's commentary in these documents show that Croker Island fulfilled all the requirements that he deemed necessary for a successful "inviolable" half-caste assimilation training ground. The title of the appendix is "A Modern Missionary Policy for Aborigines", and the first line states "the Methodist Overseas Mission Department . . . issued a "Revised Statement of District Policy . . .".[217] Elkin then outlines the "convictions" that the "policy is based on", which includes christianisation as well as socialisation.[218]

[216] E.P., Elkin to Burton, 130/12/110: 24th July 1940{Elkin's word, but does he mean policy the 'i' and the 'o' being next to each other on the keyboard} or {is he trying to formulate a new collective word}. I believe that Elkin was trying to devise a new word which would encapsulate the intentions of the work with half-castes on Croker. The word 'policy does not fit in the discussion, and he would be very cautious about using the word 'polity' as it assumes a body politic which had the power to make decisions for itself outside of the structures of Australian politics and society.
[217] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 107.
[218] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 107.

Appendix 4

A MODERN MISSIONARY POLICY FOR ABORIGINES

Early this year, the Methodist Overseas Mission Department, Australia, issued a "Revised Statement of District Policy" for its work in the Northern Territory. This is a good example of the present-day, and comparatively new, approach to missionary work amongst Aborigines and part-Aborigines adopted by the major Church Missionary organizations.

This policy is based on a number of convictions; (1) That the explanation of the present primitive condition of the Aborigines lies mainly in the fact of their isolation and of their "lack of challenge and opportunity, and not in the absence of inherent qualities necessary to development."

(2) That they are capable of understanding Christian teaching and of "*very considerable social and economic development.*"

(3) That years of experience have shown that under the care of the mission they are definitely increasing in numbers.

(4) That their contact with white culture is unavoidable, and that they are capable of taking, and will take, their place without injury to themselves, in our civilized communities—particularly in Tropical Australia.

(5) That their real development requires several generations of training, the creation of independent, self-supporting communities as a necessary stage, and, during this period, protection from undesirable influences.

The means by which the goal is to be reached are: (1) The establishment of Mission Stations for (a) Christian evangelism and instruction; (b) education—primary, technical and domestic, adapted to local requirements, both in

the vernacular and in basic English; (c) medical work, both preventive and curative, and (d) agricultural and industrial work, both in the development of indigenous arts and crafts, and in training the Aborigines for a more settled mode of life.

(2) By endeavouring to develop the personal character of the Aborigines—

(a) By not allowing them to become debased by dependence upon the Mission, but rather encouraging their acceptance of responsibility for their own life and development.
(b) By aiming to elevate the status of women in the community.
(c) By encouraging and fitting them to engage in social and religious service amongst their own people.

(3) By recognising the great gulf between Aboriginal and European culture, and hence striving to make the necessary transition slowly and carefully, avoiding a rude disruption of existing safeguards and sanctions, and allowing changes to come, not by the imposition of external authority, but by inner conviction on the part of Aborigines themselves.

(4) By cordially co-operating with the Government Department of Native Affairs in the fulfilment of our national duty to improve the lot of the Aboriginal people.

The policy for the work amongst "half-castes" is equally well based. The aim is to build up those committed to the Mission's care into a Christian community at Croker Island, "where the people shall be settled on the land in pastoral and agricultural pursuits, trained in as wide a range as possible of trades, handicrafts, and domestic work, and established in marine industry." To foster the development of personality, and to educate the people to European standards of life, so that they may become citizens," and ultimately be assimilated into the general life of the Commonwealth.

The staff of this Mission Station is to include, in addition

to the superintendent, an agricultural expert, a technical instructor, certified school teachers, a nursing sister, and one or more trained social workers.

(For the full text of this Policy, see *The Missionary Review*, April 5, 1944, pp. 10-11. The Church Missionary Society of Australia and Tasmania has prepared a statement of principles of its work amongst the Aborigines, which are for the most part identical with those summarized above.)

219

[219] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 107-109.

While the contents at first do not determine whether the policy is aimed at full-bloods or half-castes, towards the bottom of page 108, the document states "The policy for the work amongst "half-castes' is equally well based".[220] The most telling comment in Elkin's published statement on the same page is Elkin's statement that "The aim is to build up those committed to the Mission's care into a Christian community at *Croker Island*" (my emphasis).[221] In Elkin's files in the Fisher Library at the University of Sydney, a copy of the 'Revised Statement' can be found in its own folder. On this copy, Elkin has crossed out "Mission" and replaced it with "Settlement", indicating that his focus lay in the anthropological outcomes rather than with the mission endeavour.[222]

Due to its geographical location, the children on Croker could only be brought to and leave the mission by plane or boat. While this can be read as providing an isolated situation which would protect the children from negative aspects of white people, in reality the children were quarantined from their families - who also had no ingress or egress to and from the mission – thereby rupturing the generational practices of parasitism. It also resulted in the tearing apart of families, separation from family and parental love and any form of kinship and culture that we belonged to. One component of the Croker Island policy was that while some of the children would hopefully stay on the mission and build its own 'polocy' and community, it was determined that those children who were considered suitable to be fostered or adopted into white families would be sent 'down south'.

The Deutsher family in Melbourne was one of the families who fostered girls from Croker Island and the story of the 'rescue' of these "mixed-blood aboriginal children" was run in the *Australian Women's Weekly* in 1957.[223]

[220] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 108.
[221] Elkin, *Citizenship*, 108. My emphasis.
[222] E.P.,130/12/113, *The Missionary Review: Methodist Overseas Missions – North Australia District. Revised Statement of District Policy 1944.*
[223] *Australian Women's Weekly*, "Mission to Mansion," 12 June, 1957.

MISSION TO MANSION

Brand-new family for three girls from Arnhem Land

HAPPY FAMILY. Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Deutsher on the stairs in their Melbourne home with their children Trevor (left) and Lorraine (third from right), their foster children Christine and Faye (held by Lorraine), and 19-year-old aboriginal girl Doris Simpson.

● Two little dark-skinned girls from Arnhem Land, well wrapped up against winter winds, have joined the group of children who gather after school to play in Hurlingham Park, opposite their homes in East Brighton, Victoria.

By SHEILA MacFARLANE, staff reporter

TREVOR DEUTSHER, aged 12, who is thrilled with his new sisters, lets Faye push an outsize cane hat off his head. The girls will later go to the school Trevor attends.

Sheila McFarlane, "Mission to Mansion", *The Australian Women's Weekly* (Wed. 12 June: 1957). http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/47119935

The story records that one of the children was "taken to the Methodist Mission at Croker Island, where unwanted children of mixed blood are cared for and educated."[224] Although my story of being sent 'down' is not unique, each and every one of those children would have suffered the same pain that I am working from in this thesis. While Christine and Faye (names they were given when fostered) were fostered to the Deutsher family in 1957, and I was fostered to the Martin family in 1958, the movement of children was set into the 1942 M.O.M. policy which Elkin was instrumental in devising.

The fact that Elkin included the M.O.M. policy as the template to which other mission organisations should work, and that he identified Croker Island as the most perfect embodiment of the combination of anthropological and mission endeavour, is validation of the arguments made in this thesis that Croker Island was a mission situation unique in its establishment.

All of the above are clear indicators that Elkin had a *sub rosa* agenda to the work that he did and the directions he took through his associations with government and mission bureaucracies which led to both the 1939 Half-Caste Policy and the Methodist Overseas Mission Croker Island Half-Caste Mission Policy. The outcomes of Elkin's plotting and planning aimed at creating a policy environment whereby a dedicated site or can be found

[224] "Mission to Mansion," 1957.

in the life stories of the children from Croker Island mission. Applying an analytical lens, and with a focus on the ways in which the socio-political environment created the conditions whereby anthropological framing of the ‘Aborigine’ contributed to the removal of half-caste children, the following chapter presents the outcomes of the M.O.M. Croker Island policy.

CHAPTER THREE: The Personal aspect of the Croker Island ideal of assimilation

In order to demonstrate the ways in which government, anthropological and mission discourse and decision making impacted directly on the target group of half-caste children in the Northern Territory, this Chapter draws together the information from the preceding chapters into a discussion on the ways in which non-Aboriginal Australians were drawn into the assimilation endeavour.

The discussion then draws down from the broader account to a specific case of child removal in Alice Springs in the mid-1950s, exposing the power held by welfare officers and members of the State Children's Council of South Australia. The history revealed in this Chapter is captured from primary source documents located in the National Australian Archives in Darwin, and provides indisputable evidence of interference and intervention by government agents in Aboriginal lives.

The final section sets out in detail the arrangements for my placement with my potential foster family in Adelaide.

The national marketing of assimilation to Methodist Church parishioners by the Methodist Overseas Mission.

An overwhelming community response to the Australian Human Rights Commission *Bringing them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families* published in 1997, was that people said they just did not know that Aboriginal children were being taken from their families in circumstances that could only be considered inhumane, or that they were being placed in very large numbers with non-Aboriginal families all across the country. [1] However, writes Anna Haebich:

> the genuinely felt tears and apologies expressed by many shocked Australians who responded with the heartfelt words, "I'm sorry**,** I just didn't know." The claim not to have known was puzzling. The extent and systematic nature of the practice may not have been widely understood previously, but the public should have been alerted by

[1] Ronald Wilson (Commissioner), National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families *Bringing them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*, (Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission), April 1997. http://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/bringing-them-home-report-1997

> the fragmentary evidence that circulated openly from early colonial times to the present.[2]

Given the circulation of newsletters and pamphlets by the M.O.M. about Croker Island and the assimilation of the children from that mission, those of the Methodist congregation could not claim that they were unaware of the role the church was playing in the lives of Aboriginal people.

This chapter will show that while a concentrated campaign for the resettlement of Croker Island children from the mission to Methodist homes and institutions 'down south' began in 1955, records from 1941 indicate that the Methodist church was already engaged in arbitrary movement of half-caste children and babies much earlier. As Susan Barrett states,

> White people were actively involved in the removal of the children, newspapers advertised for foster parents and ran stories both on the poor conditions in some children's homes and on the 'happy' lives adopted Aboriginal children led with their 'new' white families.[3]

The girls who were sent to the Deutsher family discussed in the previous chapter are a case in point.

This chapter examines the calls from the Central Methodist Mission in 1955 for Methodist families in Adelaide to bring Croker Island children into their families. As the children who were identified for re-relocation were 'wards of the state' or under the guardianship of the Northern Territory Director of Welfare, approval for their interstate transplantation was sought from the Minister for Territories (Sir Paul Hasluck) or the Minister for the Interior in earlier decades. In 1955, Hasluck's response to those submissions from mission authorities reveals awareness on his part that the intent of the 1941 Croker Island Scheme was to, where possible, re-relocate the children from the mission to other states. Hasluck's sanction for the transfer of those children was to have long lasting negative impacts for those children and their families.

In particular, Hasluck's approval had direct consequences in the lives of six children from the Cassidy/Sultan/Ellis family in Alice Springs. Subsequent to Hasluck's endorsement

[2] Anna Haebich, "Forgetting Indigenous Histories: Cases from the History of Australia's Stolen Generations," *Journal of Social History*, 44 (2011): 1034.
[3] Susan Barrett, "Reconstructing Australia's Shameful Past: the Stolen Generations in Life-Writing, fiction and film", *lignes* 2 (2005): 2.

some of the children of that family then resident on Croker Island were placed in various Methodist situations, either in homes for children or in Methodist families. In presenting the information extracted from personal records and documents from the Alice Springs Welfare Department in the years 1956-1957 which detail the step by step processes which led directly to the removal of those children in May 1957, the focus of the thesis shifts from broad policy and academic discussion into personal narrative. And the mother's voice begins to emerge.

The Methodist church as an organisation would have seen taking on the responsibility for the half-caste children on Croker Island as part of their existing and ongoing involvement in the lives of Aboriginal people. An example of earlier collaborations by the church with the South Australian Aborigines Protection Board is that in 1941 there was a "Request for permission to bring two Aboriginal Children from Alice Springs".[4] The Board minutes detail that

> The General Superintendent of Home Missions in the Methodist Church requested the permission of the Board to bring two infants with a slight admixture of aboriginal blood from the half-caste institution at Alice Springs for training in the Methodist Babies' Home.[5]

One of those infants in the report was Alice Hale, "aged approximately five years", who "was granted unconditional exemption from the provisions of the Aborigines Act. A.D. 45/41".[6] The request states that Alice was "the illegitimate daughter of Tilly Hale and a white man".[7] The 'exemption' meant that the individual was no longer under the Aboriginal Ordinance 1939 as it related to the Northern Territory, and that full legal, welfare and protector responsibilities were transferred to the receiving state.[8] The words "slight admixture of aboriginal blood" iterates the everyday terminology applied to Aboriginal people "not of the full-blood".[9] According to Anthony Moran this nomenclature defined cohorts of people who had become 'problematic' in the continuing desire for white homogeneity of the nation.[10] Whether for the preservation of the national

[4] Series 16 – Aborigines Protection Board Minutes 1940-5, 1954-7, 1960-3. – RESTRCTED – Permission received Inaugural meeting of the Board, 27 February 1940. Received from family member 2014.
[5] Series 16, 118.
[6] Series 16, 118.
[7] Series 16, 118.
[8] N.A.A.: A1573, 1918/9, An Ordinance relating to Aboriginals Northern Territory *Aboriginals Ordinance No. 9 1939* (amendment to the *Aboriginal Ordinance 1918)* Executive Council of the Commonwealth. http://foundingdocs.gov.au/item-sdid-62.html
[9] H. S. Bailey, *Aboriginal welfare: Initial conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal authorities, Canberra, 21-23 April 1937* (Canberra: Commonwealth Government Printer, 1937).
[10] Anthony Moran, "White Australia, Settler Nationalism and Aboriginal Assimilation", *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 51, 2 (2005): 169.

ideals of a white Australia or for "the preservation of cultural homogeneity, as the source of national cohesion and national progress", such records provide evidence of the role of the Methodist Church in interventionist solutions for Aboriginal children with non-Aboriginal parentage.[11] The Methodist church had a long history of providing 'mission activity' to native peoples, both in the Pacific, and in Australia to Aboriginal people.

Through the auspices of the M.M.S.A./M.O.M, the church had previously established the Goulbourn Island Mission for Aborigines.[12] Therefore espousal for the development of a new mission site specifically set up for half-caste children would be a natural step in the expansion of the current Methodist evangelical provisions. Consequently,

> The Methodist Overseas Mission Board . . . resolved that a new Methodist mission, specifically for part-Aboriginal children, should be established; separate from any of the missions for Aborigines generally.[13]

As discussed in chapters one and two, this resolution led to the selection of Croker Island as an ideal location.[14] Former Croker Island cottage mother Una Clarke wrote that

> The mission started in 1940. At that time the Government requested the churches to care for children who were on government reserves. The Methodist church together with the Church of England, Catholic Church and the Australian Inland Mission accepted the challenge.[15]

Clarke stated that the first wave of children came from the "government run, Half-Caste Home 'The Bungalow'" in Alice Springs, but as building on the Croker Island Mission was not yet completed "The Methodist church soon found itself with lots of children and no accommodation".[16] According to Clarke the 'Bungalow Children' were relocated in the first instance to Goulbourn Island, where,

> As a temporary measure the children were placed in shelters under huge mango trees . . . In the meantime the Mission hastily built cottages on Croker Island. The cottages were little more than glorified aboriginal camps – four fibro walls, a tin roof and dirt floors.[17]

The lack of habitable accommodation was not the only concern; it soon became apparent that the ratio of missionaries to children was hugely inadequate and that when the

[11] Moran, "White Australia," 169.
[12] Goulburn Mission, https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/nt/YE00015
[13] Maisie McKenzie, *Mission to Arnhem Land* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1976), 105-107.
[14] Claire Henty-Gebert, *Paint Me Black*, (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2005), xi.
[15] Una Jean Clarke, *Things are so much better than they used to be: My Memoirs* (Self-published, 1992), 113.
[16] Clarke, *My Memoirs*, 113.
'The Bungalow', https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/nt/YE00019
[17] Clarke, *My Memoirs*, 113.

Methodist church first accepted the children, it was thought that the older ones could look after the younger ones. For this reason initially only three women missionaries were employed to care for 95 children.[18]

In one of the very few comments made recognising the trauma of the children, Clarke wrote that "it was soon discovered that it was not a viable proposition as the older children had many emotional problems".[19] However, this realisation did not translate into strategies to ameliorate the distress or trauma experienced by the young half-caste women who were expected to step up as carers; rather "the older children were left to their own devices with one of them doing the cooking, washing and general household duties".[20]

Given that the children who were moved to Croker Island Mission were deemed motherless, Clarke's instructions were that she:

> shall be considered as the 'Mother' of these children, and shall do her utmost to provide real family life, identifying herself as completely as possible with the normal lives of the children. It will be her task to create an atmosphere of refinement and so train the children that they will be fitted to establish and maintain a healthy Christian home life in the future.[21]

Seeing her role as a "surrogate mother who would raise indigenous children properly in more wholesome environments" would have suited Clarke: it was the reason she and other missionary women were there. [22]

Through parish newsletters and news stories, the M.O.M. actively broadcast to its congregations the work being done in the christianising and civilising of the half-caste children on Croker Island. In April 1949, a double-paged spread in the *Australian Monthly* carried the headline "One Approach to Our Color (sic) Problem".[23] The article specifically referred to placing children on the "model Croker Island mission station" and included a series of photographs taken in 1948 by now acclaimed photographer, Axel Poignant.[24] The text accompanying the first image states that

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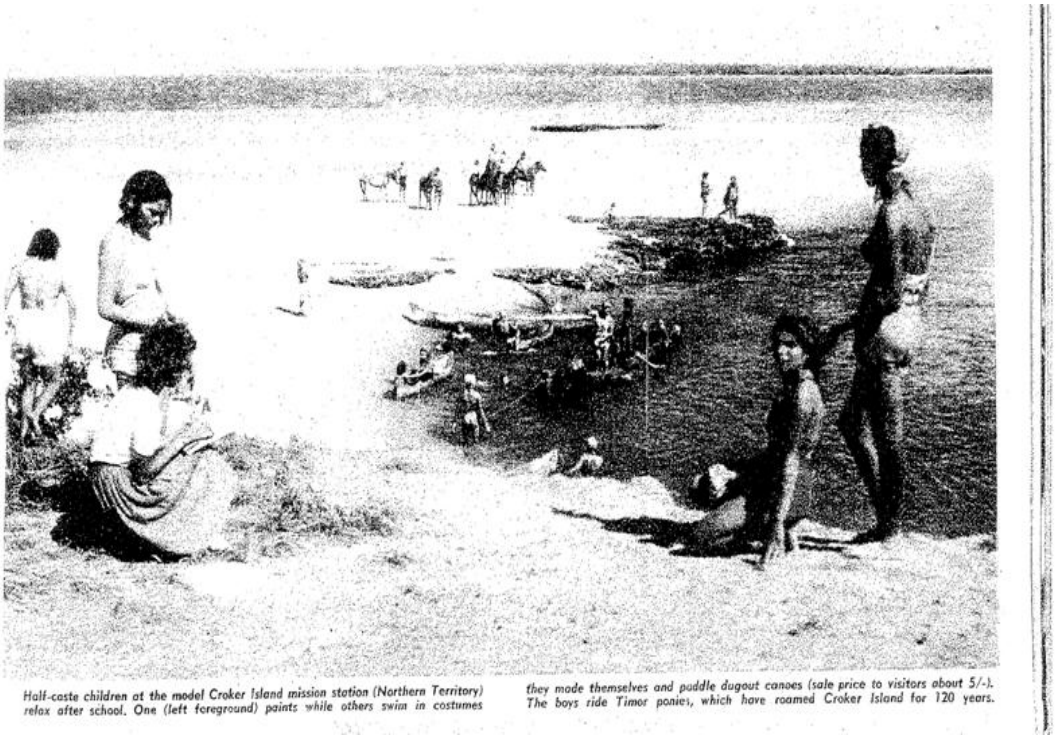
[18] Clarke, *My Memoirs*, 114.
[19] Clarke, *My Memoirs*, 114.
[20] Clarke, *My Memoirs*, 114.
[21] Tony Austin, *I can picture the old home so clearly: the Commonwealth and 'half-caste' youth in the Northern Territory 1911-1939* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1993), 216.
[22] Margaret Jacobs, *White mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 88.
[23] Uniting Church Archives, Gilles Street Adelaide, Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2, "One Approach to our Color Problem", *Australian Monthly* (April, 1949), 25-27. Author unknown, Accessed 2010.
[24] M.O.M., *Australian Monthly*.

> In the Northern Territory, two model mission stations, Croker Island . . . and Melville Island . . . are trying to reclaim half-caste children and turn them into respected Australian citizens. . . The Department of Native Affairs, *with the consent of the parents* [emphasis added] has sent 80 children to Croker Island.[25]



Half-caste children at the model Croker Island mission station (Northern Territory) relax after school. One (left foreground) paints while others swim in costumes they made themselves and paddle dugout canoes (sale price to visitors about 5/-). The boys ride Timor ponies, which have roamed Croker Island for 120 years.

The second photograph titled "From bush humpy to happy cottage" is the largest in the two page spread and is surrounded by smaller images of children at play and missionaries at work on Croker Island. The intent to rationalise the church's involvement in the removal of half caste children by tapping into the humanitarianism of the readers is evident in the assertion that the "*half-caste children are taken from conditions like these to mission stations*".[26]

[25] M.O.M., *Australian Monthly*.
[26] M.O.M., *Australian Monthly*.

This is followed by the statement that:

> Native Affairs patrol officers pick up most of the children in towns, cattle stations, and native camps where no one is interested in them. Neither white man nor black accepts them as his responsibility, and some live little better than wild animals.[27]

This comment, stated as 'fact', not only reflects the *zeitgeist* of the time, it also corresponds with the trending anthropological theorisation about half castes mooted by individuals involved in Aboriginal Affairs. For example, A. P. Elkin wrote:

> The mixed blood people, however, have been in the unfortunate position of possessing no social life worth the name. Dotted about in small groups on Reserves and Settlements, on the outskirts of, or in towns, they have not shared in the general community, nor have they any traditional or spontaneous life of their own . . . the almost a-moral type of life that many of the mixed blood live can be attributed to the absence of moral and spiritual purpose.[28]

As noted in previous chapters, Elkin was widely acknowledged as the singular authority on Aborigines; his academic work and 'expert' opinions carried gravitas and were constantly referred to by the media. It is not surprising therefore that the author of the mission newsletter article reiterates the same attitudes as the anthropologist. [29] In 'blaming' the Aborigines and half-castes for their 'pauperism', Elkin's representations

[27] M.O.M., *Australian Monthly*.
[28] A. P. Elkin, *Citizenship for the aborigines/ a national aboriginal policy* (Sydney: Australasian Publishing Company, 1944), 3.
[29] Tigger Wise, *The Self-Made Anthropologist: A life of A. P. Elkin* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1985), 87-88.

clearly omit recognition of the extended impacts of colonisation, dispossession and resultant cataclysmic disruptions to Aboriginal Australia.[30] Elkin's influence can be seen in the phraseology employed by the writer of the newsletter piece, and the ways in which such representations served as justification for saving the children through removal.[31]

While Raymond Evans, Kay Saunders and Kathryn Cronin recognise the ways in which depictions of Aboriginal and half-caste degradation "did . . . contain a degree of *visual* accuracy . . .", they also contextualise those visuals within the paradigm of racism.[32] The racist aspect of the images and the depictions lies in "the assumption that the desitution and hopelessness described were features *inherent in* Aboriginal nature" as opposed to being "explainable by the powerless and oppressed position into which Aborigines were thrust by European conquest".[33] Further to that, Evans writes that "most writers . . . preferred to see in the miserable and degraded condition of the vanquished natives and their surroundings further evidence of their utter and unalterable inferiority".[34] Extending Evan's point, Heather Goodall notes the way in which such anthropological and sociological dynamics played out in the theatre of assimilation for Aboriginal families, writing:

> Social relations were usually represented as minimal in 'nomadic' 'hunter-gatherer' groups because, it was argued, the pressures of daily survival, particularly in harsh environments like much of Australia, allowed few complex social and emotional bonds to develop.[35]

Core to those narratives was the rhetoric around female Aborigines' alleged lesser capacity for emotional/parental symbiosis with their children. These stereotypes were complex and multi-faceted and, as Goodall states, "Symptomatic of this, it was assumed, was the alleged 'promiscuity' of hunter-gatherer women".[36] This typology was scaffolded by fears that the fate of the child would be negatively impacted by the supposedly inherent character of the Aboriginal female as possessing no sexual 'moral' compass by which to guide intimate relations. Correspondingly, states Goodall, "A corollary was that

[30] A. P. Elkin, "Aboriginal Evidence and Justice in North Australia", *Oceania*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (March 1947): 173-210.
[31] M.O.M., *Australian Monthly*.
[32] Raymond Evans, Kay Saunders, Kathryn Cronin, *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination: Race Relations in colonial Queensland,* (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co., 1975), 90.
[33] Evans, Saunders and Cronin, *Exclusion, Exploitation*, 90.
[34] Evans, Saunders and Cronin, *Exclusion, Exploitation*, 88.
[35] Heather Goodall, "Assimilation Begins in the Home: The State and Aboriginal Women's Work as Mothers in New South Wales, 1900s to 1960s," *Labour History*, Aboriginal Workers, No. 69 Nov., (1995): 75-101.
[36] Goodall, "Assimilation begins in the home," 78.

'family' relationships were tenuous and short-lived, and that extended nurturing and complex social education of children was not practised among 'hunter-gatherers'".[37]

Such beliefs about Aboriginal women were not a twentieth century phenomenon, but they took a more deeply insidious form from the 1920s to the 1970s. During that period the scrutiny of Aboriginal women's lives was couched in terms which transmitted presuppositions around lack of capability for child rearing/nurture and in particular their lack of capacity for 'cleanliness'. Both sub-narratives became accepted points of validation for removal of half-caste children.[38] The contradistinction of these portrayals of Aboriginal women was the white female archetype – the woman who perfomed satisfactorily to the gender norms of the time.Francesca Bartlett notes that while

> white women were also constrained by narratives of domesticity . . . an hierarchy of race divined through degrees of 'caste' was supported . . . by these 'domestic' and 'feminine' values.[39]

Employment of the 'family group' photograph re-enforced in white Australians' minds a portrayal of Aboriginal life which "made strong associations between poverty, idleness, nomadism, vagrancy, degeneracy and social chaos". [40] It also reiterated the conflation of 'Aboriginal' with dirt/dirty.

Cleanliness aligned to housekeeping, markers of housewifely skills, were not only indicators of being a good housewife, they were visible signs of a woman's capabilities in white society.[41] Feminist scholar Ann McClintock calls this "the cult of domesticity" and identifies how social substance was measurable through "emergent middle class values" where

> monogamy ("clean sex", which has value), industrial capital ("clean money" which has value), Christianity (being washed in the blood of the lamb), . . . and the imperial civilising mission (washing and clothing the savage).[42]

That "cult of domesticity" pervaded the assimilation ideal and, according to Bartlett, "assimilation of indigenous Australian girls . . . positioned them as foremost targets of a

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[37] Goodall, "Assimilation begins in the home," 78.
[38] Jacobs, *White mother to a Dark Race,* 88.
[39] Francesca Bartlett, **"**Clean, White Girls: Assimilation and Women's Work," *Hecate,* 25, No. 1, 10-38, (1999): 11.
[40] Anna Haebich, "Imagining Assimilation" *Australian Historical Studies* 33 (2002): 63.
[41] Ann McClintock, *Imperial Leather: race, gender, and sexuality in the colonial contest* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 208.
[42] McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 208.

social engineering project, enacted and legitimated by domestic training".[43] When held in comparison to white women, the contrast shifted from comparing human with like human, to comparing female/womanly attributes of black women to those of white women. As Aileen Moreton-Robinson writes "the existence of those who can be defined as truly human requires the presence of others who are considered less human".[44] 'Ghosting', or rendering Aboriginal mothers invisible, was an essential aspect to the removal of their children, and a century of western social science theories, examinations and determinations had already declared any contest between white women and Aboriginal women as unwinnable for Aboriginal women because

> white Australians had no interest in sacrificing their position of privilege and the racial discourse of Aboriginal Otherness that had been maintained and institutionalised over two hundred years of colonisation.[45]

The child in the photograph is described as being "filthy" and, as Bartlett states, "Aboriginality was conflated with 'dirtiness'" and that "to be dirty was a moral, social and economic sin".[46] McClintock writes "the poetics of cleanliness is a poetics of social discipline" and that

> missionaries and . . . anthropologists in Australia used the rhetoric of lack of hygiene and a 'proper domestic life' as legitimation for their enforcement of cultural and economic social values.[47]

The young women featured in the article on Croker Island were hailed as burgeoning assimilation success stories. Described as young women who "paint" and "swim in costumes they made themselves" they are held up as exemplars of the ways in which their removal had benefitted them by introducing them to skills deemed essential to white society.[48] As Bartlett notes, the narrative portrays "the Christian missionaries' benevolent raising of an obedient, feminised people . . . condones practices such as the removal of indigenous children from their parental homes".[49]

In the article, the child is referred to as being half-caste – incontrovertible evidence of inter-racial breeding /miscegenation. Hannah Robert discusses the power that lies in the

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[43] Bartlett**,** "Clean, White Girls", 19.
[44] Aileen Moreton-Robinson ed., *Whitening race: essays in social and cultural criticism* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2004), 77.
[45] Stefan Haderer, "Biopower, whiteness and the Stolen Generations: The arbitrary power of racial classification", *Critical Race and Whiteness Studies,* 9:2 (2013): 1. http://www.acrawsa.org.au/files/ejournalfiles/208Haderer201328.pdf
[46] Bartlett, "Clean, White Girls," 13.
[47] McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 226.
[48] M.O.M., *Australian Monthly*.
[49] Bartlett, "Clean, White Girls," 19.

discourse of miscegenation, how "'miscegenation' reveals a disciplinary process through which inter-racial sex was placed firmly in a context of sex and vice rather than of reproduction and family".[50] Robert also identifies that the rhetoric of miscegenation amplified the assimilation trope "making Aboriginal women and their children targets of disciplinary intervention by the state" and that "the discourse of 'miscegenation' justified interventions into Aboriginal women's, and their children's, lives, continuing a process of colonisation from Aboriginal land to Aboriginal bodies".[51] According to Goodall, nineteenth century white perceptions

> assumed that Aboriginal women were far more sexually active than white women. Whether the wilful seductresses of white men or as pathetic victims of Aboriginal and white men, Aboriginal women were still irretrievably 'fallen'.[52]

While the prevailing belief in the incapacity of Aboriginal women for mother-nurture was presented as a discrete and justifiable reason to remove their children, it was in fact one of the bilateral elements of what Raymond Evans identifies as "the outlines of the black woman's burden – that double back-pack of racism and sexism they have been forced to carry".[53] Evans writes "Aboriginal women were progressively reduced to a position of extreme dehumanisation in white eyes and into the lowest ranking position in the white social hierarchy" with the result that

> Aboriginal women, being both female and black were subjected to dual patterns of oppression and to the intense, derogatory stereotyping which accompanies the interplay of racist and sexist ideologies and practices.[54]

All of those discourses were in play in the newsletter article which was not only a marketing strategy targeted at the national Methodist congregation, it was a call to arms.

The article had *purpose* – image and word choice were deliberate because, as Laurel Richardson and E. Adams St. Pierre explain "Language is a constitutive force, creating a particular view of reality . . . (which) always involves value".[55] In contrasting the "bush humpy" family with the lighter skinned young half caste women who had achieved some level of white domestic 'norms', the language of the article established a pattern of racialised distinction between the colour of the half-caste girls' skin and that of the

[50] Hannah Robert, "Disciplining the Female Aboriginal Body: Inter-racial Sex and the Pretence of Separation," *Australian Feminist Studies* 16:34, (2001): 70.
[51] Robert, "Disciplining the Female Aboriginal Body," 70.
[52] Goodall, "Assimilation begins in the home," 78-79.
[53] Raymond Evans, "Don't You Remember Black Alice, Sam Holt? Aboriginal Women in Queensland History," *Hecate,* 8/2.1 (1982): 7.
[54] Evans, "Don't You Remember Black Alice," 7.
[55] Laurel Richardson, E. Adams St. Pierre, "Writing: a Method of Inquiry" in *The Sage handbook of qualitative research,* eds., Norman K Denzin, Yvonna S Lincoln (Thousand Oaks: Sage, c 2011), 960.

Aboriginal woman's skin. In doing so it framed the dichotomy of the girls' mission trained capacity for childrearing against the 'traditional' woman's *in*competence as a mother, as an Aborigine.

While government and mission authorities assigned the socialised deficit 'norms' of Aboriginal mothers and motherhood as one of the mandates for authority to assume control of the lives of half-caste children, race classification and categorisation must be read as primary determinants, especially in relation to the ideals of white nationhood. McGregor comments on the connection between skin colour and the nationalistic ideal of a predominantly white Australian population writing,

> twentieth-century Australians maintained that nationhood, equality and democracy could flourish only in a society whose members were drawn from a common stock, the outward sign of which was similarity of complexion.[56]

Lightness of skin colour was an essential element in the campaign of assimilation where the broad dissemination of palatable stories and images illustrated the potential of 'lighter skinned' half-caste children as having more chance of successful adaptation to white homes and ways of living. Newspaper and magazine articles employed differentiations of 'colour' and "news reels depicting smiling Aboriginal children living with white people in white domains" provided "an alternative road to assimilation".[57] Most often those children were pictured in black and white photos where "the sepia tones worked to minimise the difference in skin tonings . . . producing correspondences that may not exist in full colour".[58]

An important emotional 'hook' was that the children were depicted as being disconnected from "their own families and communities".[59] Built into these representations was the subtext that they had been either neglected by their mothers and fathers, or more insidiously, abandoned by their mothers because they were half-castes. In this way, writes Denise Cuthbert,

> Non-Aboriginal Australia is invited to view an image of Aboriginality mantled by the mediating presence of the white woman as mother . . . and Aboriginal mothers

[56] Russell McGregor, *Indifferent Inclusion* (Acton: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2011), xxi.
[57] Haebich, "Imagining Assimilation," 64.
[58] Denise Cuthbert, "Holding the baby: Questions arising from research into the experiences of non-Aboriginal and adoptive mothers of Aboriginal children", Journal of Australian Studies Vol.22 59, 39-52 (1998): 39.
[59] Anna Haebich and Jackie Huggins, *Who Will Look After The Children?* ed., Richard Nile, editorial advisers, Anna Haebich and Jackie Huggins, Series: Journal of Australian Studies Special issue no.59 (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, c1998), 64.

> and fathers "were rendered silent and invisible by the processes of child removal".[60]

'Disappearing' the child's family was not only central to the marketing of children to families who were encouraged to foster or adopt a half-caste child, it also maintained the "crimson thread of whiteness" which was core to the continued creation of the nation as a white person's land.[61] As most Australians had never had any one-to-one interaction with Aboriginal people, these news features constituted a contact zone between the wider society and their understandings of the situations faced by the Aboriginal population. Whilst the presented narratives conveyed an unfavourable value laden view of Aboriginal life, the stories carried great emotional power. As Haebich writes

> The strategic importance of the pamphlets was in their carefully constructed layout, text and images and the powerful interplay between imagination, desires and effects in their depictions of the narratives . . . of assimilation.[62]

Such techniques were not only utilised to mark 'difference', but also to highight the 'sameness' of half-caste children to whites.

In his public talks and publications around this time, Elkin was campaigning for the elimination of *difference* - a process he considered fundamental to the success of assimilation.[63] This was problematic because, as Patrick Wolfe writes "the differences within them were smaller than the differences between them".[64] In socio-scientific terms, through the introduction of non-Aboriginal blood, the half-caste was ascending the '*scala naturae'* reducing the previously easily defined variances between Aboriginal and white.[65] The most obvious marker of difference was skin colour.

Catriona Elder applies a framework of "calculuses" to the processes of assimilation writing "One calculus is organised in terms of colour" and that "Indigeneity comes to be represented mathematically through curious quantities of colour".[66] 'Sameness' was located within the half-white body – 'difference' was located within the skin colour of the

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[60] Cuthbert, "Holding the baby", 31.
[61] McGregor, *Indifferent Inclusion,* xvii.
[62] Haebich, "Imagining Assimilation", 63.
[63] Patrick Wolfe, "Nation and MiscegeNation: Discursive Continuity in the Post-Mabo Era," *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice,* 36 (1994): 100.
[64] Wolfe "Nation and MiscegeNation", 94.
[65] Cuthbert, "Holding the baby", 31.
[66] Catriona Elder, "Gender, Bodies and Desire: Imagining Assimilation in Mid-Twentieth Century Australia," in *Feminism and the body: interdisciplinary perspectives,* ed., Catherine Kevin (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), 136.

half-white body. This is seen in the artful contrivance of the girls on the beach which advances a setting whose purpose is to highlight 'sameness'. It also articulates a site of 'difference' where as Elder writes "difference is presented as desirable; difference is in many ways what makes an Indigenous woman desirable".[67] Critical analysis of the beach idyll shows that the photograph of the young women can be "premised on a visual system that incites non-Indigenous people (in particular non-Indigenous men) to look at and crave a range of desirable Indigenous femininities".[68]

The photographic beach representation is one of a "small number" of pictures taken by Axel Poignant in 1948 when the photographer "made a brief visit to the Methodist Mission on Croker Island".[69] In a 2006 article in *Art Monthly Australia* titled "As citizens of the world", Nigel Lendon discusses this specific collection which included the following image titled *Young Women, Croker Island*.[70]

The people in the photograph are (left to right): Rita Simken (deceased), Nancy Schmidt (nee Cameron), Nida Lowe (nee Wilson), and Queenie Farrar (deceased), Ruby Rose (nee Braun). Lendon, 2006, 25.

[67] Elder, "Gender, Bodies and Desire", 143.
[68] Elder, "Gender, Bodies and Desire", 143.
[69] **Nigel** Lendon, "As Citizens of the World", *Art Monthly Australia*, 214 (2008): 20-26. http://search.informit.com.au.proxy.library.adelaide.edu.au/documentSummary;dn=194771430175985;res=IELLCC> ISSN: 1033-4025
[70] Lendon, "As Citizens of the World", 20.

In discussing the style of the photography as being at "the foremost of a modernist realist mode of practice in Australian", Lendon identifies that "historical evidence suggests that the location of this photograph was part of one of the darker chapters of Australian history".[71] Lendon writes that this is particularly relevant because the young women were "subjects of a photograph – in 1948, on the most northern rim of Australia, in what some have described in the same terms as a detention centre".[72]

Captured in Lendon's article is that the young women are presented as, and are to be 'read' as, sensual beings:

> Small accents activate the ensemble created by the five figures – the droplets of water on the skin, the bobby pins, the popped button, the bathing cap cord wound around a finger, the ragged costume on the girl in the left foreground – all of which reinforce the photograph's realism.[73]

Lendon then interrupts his own analysis of the picture as being of significance to the world of photography to situate the image within a broader social framework stating "it seems to say to us, this is as it was. But perhaps these young women were also conscious of their 'otherness', their mixed descent identity".[74] He also writes that

> We must admit the possibility that their reality is being represented and misrepresented in the one moment – that a complex contextual reality is more than being portrayed in the moment captured by the shutter.[75]

Lendon admits that the image "itself may [be] subjected to a critique that argues that the photographic subjects (of colonised cultures, of Stolen Generation policies) are inevitably the product of an instrument of subjugation".[76] Through projecting young nubile bodies on the brink of womanhood into the visual theatre of assimilation it can be argued that "the bodies of these girls were also publically displayed as domestic commodities".[77] Anthony Paul Farley argues that "the black body is a fetish object" and that within the discourse of skin colour "the sensual aspects of colorlined space reveals the racialized body as a form of pleasure".[78] As McClintock notes such images allow the viewer "to stand at the intersection of two worlds, trespassing across race, class and gender

[71] Lendon, "As Citizens of the World", 21.
[72] Lendon, "As Citizens of the World", 22.
[73] Lendon, "As Citizens of the World", 21-22.
[74] Lendon, "As Citizens of the World", 23.
[75] Lendon, "As Citizens of the World", 23.
[76] Lendon, "As Citizens of the World", 24.
[77] Bartlett, "Clean, White Girls", 16.
[78] Anthony Paul Farley, "The Black Body as Fetish Object," *Oregon Law Review* 76 Or. L. Rev. 457 (1997), 459 & 461. HeinOnline: https://ssrn.com/abstract=1518415

boundaries in a way that no other medium provided".[79] While Lendon talks about the differentials of power between the young women and the photographer and through his own analysis hints at the sexualisation of the 'girls' through pose and production, the study fails to acknowledge that these photographs re-fabricated the women into a 'new' image which attracts a voyeuristic gaze – that of white males through which the 'girls' become objectified and sexualised subjects. An aspect of the 'complex reality' is that the image elicits a response from the observer, and for the white male an element of visual reaction to the display of the female black body is "desire" in which "is inscribed an imbrication of 'race', 'gender', and 'sexuality'".[80] Alison Ravenscroft writes that "it is this nexus that is the condition of the subject's appearance – as raced, as gendered, as sexually desiring".[81] This is not to imply that there was either cognisant intent on either the part of the newsletter editor, nor the white male readers of the article to present and see the young women as sexual objects, it is to highlight that the article uses the bodies of the half-caste female to draw the white male reader/observer into a space where he/they can attach a social currency 'value' to bringing one of the Croker children into his house.[82]

As with any marketing strategy, the campaign had to evoke for the target audience an attraction for the 'product'. Rhetoric about 'cleanliness', 'dirt', and the discourse of domesticity underpinning the insufficiencies of Aboriginal mothering was employed in persuading the white women reading the article that if they brought a half-caste girl into their homes, they could be active agents of change. For white decision making males, a contradistinction was brought into play where

> the idea of assimilation of mixed raced Indigenous peoples is produced . . . through the repetition, and representation of ideas and connections between Aboriginality, colour, femininity and sexuality.[83]

This phrenic reading of the article shows that the performance use of the image of the 'girls' acted as a subliminal enticement to white males. White women were easier to cater to – they could 'see' themselves engaged in the socio-moral tutelage of the 'girls',

[79] McClintock, *Imperial Leather***,** 131.
[80] Alison Ravenscroft, *The Postcolonial Eye: White Australian Desire and the Visual Field of Race* (England: Ashgate, 2012), 94.
[81] Ravenscroft, *The Postcolonial Eye*, 94.
[82] Neither is it to imply that there was any thought in the development of missions per se that they would countenance or imagine that their inmates would suffer such levels of abuse as recorded in *Bringing them home*.
[83] Catriona Elder, *Dreams and Nightmares of a White Australia: Representing Aboriginal Assimilation in the Mid-Twentieth Century*, Series: Studies in Asia-Pacific "mixed race", 3 (Bern: Peter Lang, c2009), 177.

moulding them into being 'proper' females.[84] As Victoria Haskins writes not only did "the white women provide their home as the locale for the implementation of public policy" but that the "role prescribed for white women under this system was, in rhetoric at least, the traditional role of maternal guardian and protector of Aboriginal girls".[85] The white male in the decision-making role might well see the social and economic advantages for his domicile in having someone to help out the wife, or to be known as an active agent in ameliorating the abject lives of half-castes: the sticking point was how to bring the men on board. Recruiting white males to the campaign meant than an addendum to the "appealing to a humanitarian impulse" required also a "tapp[ing] into the machine of fantasy and desire".[86]

Although there have been a number of publications investigating frontier-colonial black/white relationships, and scrutiny of sexualised representation of the Aboriginal female in such films as *Jedda,* there has been no identifiable academic work that specifically analyses media images used by mission bodies or organisations as merchandising propaganda for assimilation. Discursive examination of Poignant's photographs unmasks the sensualisation of the young women through purposeful *mise-en-scene,* evoking for the beholder the Lolita-style coquettish ingénue who can be "inscribed by the euphemism 'Black Velvet'".[87] Indeed the young women in the photograph represented "a type of Aboriginality that conformed to the notions of feminine passivity" but who "operate[d] as the eroticised object of the film gaze".[88] As Rose Lucas writes, such images of "'Native exotica" were "displayed salaciously and naively for the voyeuristic *frisson* of a white audience".[89] So often this parading of young women had dire consequences over decades for many, many half-caste children placed in care. As noted in the Link-Up (NSW) publication *In the Best Interest of the Child?*

> The danger to which Aboriginal children were exposed by removal from their parents and relatives and placement with non-Aboriginal strangers was ignored. This was particularly true of the sexual harassment and assault of Aboriginal girls.[90]

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[84] Jacobs, *White mother to a Dark Race*, 39.
[85] Victoria Haskins, "On the Doorstep: Aboriginal Domestic Service as a 'Contact Zone'," *Australian Feminist Studies*16:34 (2001): 18.
[86] Jacobs, *White mother to a Dark Race*, 39;
Robert J. C. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in theory, culture and race,* (London: Routledge, 1995), 98.
[87] Liz Conor, "Black velvet' and 'purple Indignation': Print responses to Japanese 'poaching' of Aboriginal women," *Aboriginal History* 37 (2013): 70.
http://search.informit.com.au.proxy.library.adelaide.edu.au/fullText;dn=762817765888664;res=IELIND
[88] Rose Lucas, "Jedda," *Metro Magazine,* 184 (2015), 102.
[89] Lucas, "Jedda", 102.
[90] Tikka Jan Wilson and Link-Up N.S.W., *In the Best Interest of the Child? Stolen children: Aboriginal pain/White shame,* (Link-Up (NSW) Aboriginal Corporation 1997), 37.

Evidence of such abuse can be found in submission after submission to the 1997 *Bringing them home Report.* [91] One example is confidential submission #788:

> I led a very lost, confused, sad, empty childhood, as my foster father molested me. He would masturbate in front of me, touch my private parts, and get me to touch his. I remember once having a bath with my clothes on 'cause I was too scared to take them off. I was scared of the dark 'cause my foster father would often come at night. I was scared to go to the outside toilet as he would often stop me on the way back from the toilet.[92]

In some instances, white women condoned what was going on by keeping silent, often ending up hating the child she had committed herself to 'saving', and blaming them for any overt/covert/ attraction/sexualised attention that their husbands displayed to this person they had brought into their home. They themselves then often became perpetrators of mental, physical and emotional abuse on both girls and boys in their care.

To be blunt, many white women carried out such violence on the children in their 'care' without any motivating cause. Cultural violence was also inflicted through the iteration and reiteration of comments such as "you were taken from your mother because she didn't know how to raise children because she's Aboriginal." Such actions were in play in the homes of good white christian people where half-caste children had been placed because

> Exposure to white society was meant to regulate the behaviour of Aboriginal children, a group who were . . . in requirement of moral reform. The space of the family was meant to serve as an environment where Indigenous children could be reconstructed as useful citizens.[93]

That abuse in a range of forms was inflicted during the process of 'reconstructing' half-castes. If not a common occurrence, it was definitely an identifiable and often well-known outcome of placement of children in institutions and with non-Aboriginal families. Shirleen Robinson makes the statement that

> Research on Aboriginal children in European environments, including missions and reserves and European homes in the twentieth century, suggests that emotional, physical, and sexual abuse was also widespread.[94]

[91] Wilson, *In the Best Interest of the Child?*, 37.
[92] *Bringing them home*, confidential submission 788: woman removed at 3 years of age in 1946, 164.
[93] Shirleen Robinson, "Regulating the race: Aboriginal children in private European homes in colonial Australia," *Journal of Australian Studies*, 37 (2013)*:* 312.
[94] Robinson, "Regulating the race," 312.

The huge body of evidence available in such reports as *Bringing them home* shows that this was indeed the case, and is therefore relevant to the examination of the Methodist newsletter article.

It can be argued that the article deliberately appeals to the emotions of the readers. McGregor suggests that while one outcome would have been acute expressions of sentimentality "driven by the emotional need to experience an intense feeling" without entailing "a commitment to do anything", the aim would have been for a more profound response of "compassion".[95] The second is, according to Patrick West, "driven by the emotional capacity to act for others entails a commitment to alleviate a problem".[96] Indeed the September 1996 resolution of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church stated:

> that fact that although it was the intention and policy of the church to provide children who had been separated from their parents with a loving, secure environment in which they were encouraged to develop their gifts and graces, and although faithful women and men who worked in the institutions often provided such an atmosphere, there were also times when the reality contradicted the intention and goal, and where children even met violence and abuse at the hands of some of the very [people] whom they should have been able to trust.[97]

Whatever the personal reaction to the newsletter story was, the collective common element for the readers was that they were invited to bear witness to the deprivation of black people. By stating "Under mission training they become as intelligent as white children and as good citizens" the M.O.M. article conformed to the contemporary social, political and anthropological orthodoxies that half-castes had the capacity to turn into something different in the future.[98] It also justified and legitimised the mission's socialisation approach. As Haebich writes

> In a climate of . .. national aspirations for peaceful uniformity, images of Aboriginal domesticity and conformity had the power to appeal to audiences entranced by their own dreams of suburban family life.[99]

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[95] Russell McGregor, *Imagined Destinies – Aboriginal Australians and the Doomed Race Theory, 1880-1939* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1997), xxi.
[96] Patrick West, *Conspicuous Compassion: Why sometimes it really is cruel to be kind,* CIS Occasional Paper 91, (St. Leonards: Centre for Independent Studies, c2004), xviii.
[97] *Statement by the National Assembly of the Uniting Church to National Inquiry into the Removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children (Bringing them Home),* September 1996, https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/bringing-them-home-chapter-14#Heading112, viewed 2 August, 2016.
[98] M.O.M., *Australian Monthly*.
[99] Anna Haebich, *Broken Circles: Fragmenting Indigenous Families 1800-2000* (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2000), 424.

The national call through the article underscored the imperative for action by parishioners and sought to impel the broader Methodist community towards assuming a long term role as assimilation agents, an element crucial to the success of the Croker Island enterprise.

It also ensured that the M.O.M. continued the provision of services to Aborigines on Croker during the years of the Second World War when there was an absence of any new or real policy administration at the federal level. Paul Hasluck, who held the position of Minister for the Territories from 1951-1963, wrote that "Ministerial statements from October 1941 onwards "ha[d] a five year silence on aboriginal policy" and that "immediately post war the policies referred to by the then Minister for the Interior were pre-war policies".[100] He noted that "in the comprehensive planning undertaken in the Department of Post-War Reconstruction no plans or proposals were prepared for the future of Aborigines in Australia".[101]

While Hasluck identifies this lapse in government policy making for Aborigines, Mickey Dewar writes that "At the same time, the pre-war policy was continued for those Aboriginal children who had non-Aboriginal kin, so called 'half-castes', who were separated from their Aboriginal families".[102] In line with this, the Croker Island M.O.M. Scheme with its "Statement of Aims and Policy Regarding Croker Island" was adhered to from the time of its inception till the closing of the Mission in 1968.[103] Between 1939 and 1968 there was a strong predetermined focus by the M.O.M. on the children living in Central Australia, including Alice Springs and surrounding areas. As discussed in chapter one, in the 1940s and 1950s a significant number of children were dis-united from their families and communities and subsequently deported to Croker Island Mission.

The families of a number of those children were living in Half-Caste Housing in Alice Springs. An indication that the housing provided for those families was substandard is documented in the Records of *Residences for half-castes – Alice Springs* where it is stated that

> Inspection of dwellings occupied by the half-caste peoples . . . revealed that these people are housed under extremely bad conditions . . . It is believed that His Honour the Administrator was cognizant with this fact and had caused the Commonwealth

[100] Paul Hasluck, *Shades of Darkness: Aboriginal affairs, 1925-1965,* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1988), 74-75.
[101] Hasluck, *Shades of Darkness,* 75.
[102] Mickey Dewar, *Darwin - no place like home: Australia's northern capital in the 1950s through a social history of housing* (Darwin: Historical Society of the Northern Territory, 2010), 5.
[103] Uniting Church Archives, Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2 Methodist Overseas Missions: North Australia District, Revised Statement of District Policy: *The Missionary Review,* 5 April, 1944. Accessed 2010

> Government to set aside a sum of money to build suitable dwellings for these half-caste peoples.[104]

It was widely known that half-caste housing was not maintained to a level considered to provide safe living abodes, and that necessary repairs or access to water and electricity impacted on the state of the houses themselves. In the same vein of McClintock's 'cleanliness is next to godliness', responsibility for the whole gamut of an acceptable standard of 'house' and 'keeping house' was apportioned in the greater part to the residents. Rosalind Kidd writes that:

> Although documents clearly expose gross underfunding as the root cause of defective living conditions, an analysis of procedures introduced from the mid-1940s indicate an intensification of policing at the level of individual practices.[105]

This then was the environment faced by the majority of Aboriginal families in Alice Springs across the 1940s and 1950s. The following section demonstrates how the implementation of these policies impacted on one individual family.

The Ellis/Cassidy/Sultan Family: Alice Springs 1956-1958.

In Alice Springs in 1955, one of those homes and families which was open to such 'policing' was the Cassidy family. Resident at number 2 Gap Road were Jock and Gladys and their children Denise Sultan, Fay Sultan, Anthony Ellis, Jennifer Ellis, Terrence Cassidy and little Jock Cassidy.[106] Father Jock was also recorded as having the surname 'Ellis' and at the time was "employed by Hastings Deering as a driver and as such is in constant employment. He clears approx. £15 per week".[107] Born on Creswell Downs Station in 1929, Jock's registered birth name was Duke Ellis. Although a 1944 *Individual Report on Halfcastes* lists his father's name as 'Cassidy', other documents show his father was George Ellis – sometimes listed in government records as George Lowe - who was a stockman on the Station and described as 'white'.[108] Jock's mother is named as Julia Ngun du gah, a full-blood woman from the "tribe of Wan-yee".[109] The Aboriginal Language Group map of Australia shows that Creswell Downs Station is located on the

[104] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1 Item: 1952/245 Part 2: Alice Springs Half-Caste Housing Scheme.
[105] Rosalind Kidd, *The Way We Civilise: Aboriginal Affairs – the untold story* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1997), 174.
[106] N.A.A. (Darwin), Alice Springs Half-Caste Housing Scheme.
[107] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 – State Children's Council Cassidy (18), 28 March 1957.
[108] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series f 984, (9).
[109] N.A.A. Darwin, Series f 984, (2), July 1932.

land of the Waanyi in the Gulf Country, making this Duke's matrilineal traditional language group. [110]

Gladys Helen Sultan was one of eight children. Her father, Abdul-Guffar Sultan was the son of Sultan Mohammed who is recorded as being one of "the relatively wealthy owners of many camels and employers of many newly arriving cameleers".[111] In December 1952, the passing of Gladys' mother was recorded in an obituary tribute published in the *Centralian Advocate* under the heading "A Territorian Passes: Death of Mrs Guppa Sultan".[112] Described as a good citizen, the obituary recognised that "She was widely known for her kindness and generosity to many people, as well as a good mother to her eight children". Mrs Guppa Sultan was an Eastern Arrente woman, daughter of "Minnie" – a full blood woman from Arltunga north east of Alice Springs, and "Dan Pedler – prospector Alice Springs area".[113] These comments show that it was considered that my mother Gladys was seen as coming from a good and loving home.

However, this family had already suffered under state policies of child removal. Mrs Guppa Sultan who was referred to in such glowing terms and especially described as "a good mother", was Tilly Hale – the same woman referred to in the 1941 minutes of the meeting of the Aborigines Protection Board as being the mother of 'Alice' who had been taken away from her and for whom permission to bring down to South Australia was being sought.[114] This demonstrates the fickle nature of judgements made on Aboriginal women as mothers, and Tilly was, in the end, seen as a very good citizen. Government assessment of my father's full-blood mother Julia Ngun du gah, was that she had no right to her children, and they were removed from her care in the early 1930s.

On my father's side, Jock and his brothers and sister were taken from their mother by government agents while their father was out on Station work. Documents from the National Archives in Darwin show a notation which states that the son of George Ellis and Julia Ngun du gah Duke (Jock Cassidy) was "admitted H/C July 1932".[115] It is said that on hearing that the children were gone, their father George Ellis went to the Half Caste home to 'get his kids back', but was told that there were no children of that name

[110] Note: the language group as named on the map of Aboriginal Australia is 'Waanyi' – Creswell Downs is situated on those traditional lands. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cresswell_Downs
[111] Christine Stevens, *Tin Mosques and Ghantowns: A History of Afghan Cameldrivers in Australia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1989), 76.
[112] *The Centralian Advocate*, Alice Springs, 19 December 1952.
[113] Family Tree: provided by Terrence Cassidy.
[114] Series 16 - Aborigines Protection Board Minutes 1940-5, 1954-7, 1960-3. Note: it is not known what happened to Alice, nor whether Gladys was aware of her at all.
[115] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series f 984, Item: Cassidy D., (13) 17 April 1947.

registered in the institution. This is because during the seizure and relocation, Duke's name had been officially changed to Jock Cassidy. At some time after that Jock and at least one of his brothers, William, were relocated again to Groote Island (sic) Anglican Mission.[116]

Contrary to the common narrative that half-caste children were not wanted or accepted by either the white or black communities, my grandfather George Ellis kept track of where his children were, and once the children were reaching the age where they would be expelled from the mission, he petitioned to have his sons come and work with him on the station. In August 1941 the Secretary for Aborigines V. J. White, from the Native Affairs Branch in Darwin, wrote to the Protector of Aboriginals at Anthony's Lagoon stating:

> Some years ago, the then Chief Protector of Aboriginals, indicated to G.H. Ellis that Half-castes Willie and Duke Cassidy would, if he desired, be returned to him after their discharge from the Alice Springs Half-caste institution . . . [now] that the boys could be discharged Mr. Ellis was requested to advise whether he desired to undertake the custody of the boys. He replied in the affirmative.[117]

This was in response to a hand written letter dated 21 July 1941 addressed to the Director of Native Affairs, Darwin from Jock's father, George Ellis saying:

> Re half caste boy Willie Cassidy: Send him over I can find them work here also Duke Cassidy. I can look after those boys here. Can you get him exempt from the Abo's?[118]

A 1946 memo to E. W. P. Chinnery, Director of Welfare in the Northern Territory, records that the Secretary of Aborigines had "received a letter from Jock Cassidy" where "Jock expresses the urgent wish that we arrange for him to join his father George W. Ellis".[119] This is in clear contradiction of the established narrative accounts as depicted in the Methodist Mission newsletter that half castes had no place in either the white nor the black world and where "Neither white man nor black accepts them as his responsibility".[120] While these records substantiate the family story that George always fought to get his kids back through whatever means he could, they also background that Jock and his brothers and sister suffered substantial trauma at their removal as children.

This is a documented example of the ongoing interference and intervention by government agents in this family. Over three generations of my family were impacted by

[116] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series f 984, Item: Cassidy D, (13).
[117] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F 984, Item: Cassidy D., 16 August 1941.
[118] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F 984, Item: Cassidy D., 21 July 1941.
[119] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F984, Item: A. F. Bush, 2 July 1946.
[120] M.O.M., *Australian Monthly*, 1949.

child removal: my grandmother Tilly 'lost' her daughter (which meant my mother and her sibilings lost their sister), my father Jock was a direct victim of removal, and the trauma already endured echo across another generation, directly impacted the lives of Jock's children.

In 1950s Alice Springs, Jock and Gladys were listed as 'exempted' meaning that, as they were over the age of twenty-one they were no longer considered wards of the state, rather than an indication that they had been formally granted exemption from the Aborigines Act and 'white citizenship'.[121] As half-castes they were still targets of intervention and surveillance by government agencies in all aspects of their lives where discipline as a means of regulation was imposed. The invasiveness of government agencies extended to entering the homes of Aboriginal people where they "were liable for inspection and report on cleanliness and hygiene, bedding could be checked, and the state of cutlery, crockery, food storage and washing facilities was recorded".[122] Evidence of white interrogation of the Cassidy home can be seen in notations that the living conditions of the family were recorded as "reasonable" with no indication that there should be any reason for 'flags' to be raised with the Welfare department about the family or the well-being of the children.[123] Following a January 1956 note that J. Cassidy was in rent arrears and authority was given by Jock "for deductions for rent to be deducted from wages or salary" there is a silence in the records until November of that year.[124]

From November 1956 the files contain a series of reports lodged by Territory Welfare Officer, Mrs M. I. Archer documenting her involvement with the family. As was the norm of the time, most often the government agents who had responsibility for assessing and reporting on the lives of Aboriginal people were white women. As Margaret Jacobs writes

> in the intimate realm of indigenous communities and families' white women – as moral guardians of this intimate [domestic] domain – had a particularly valued role.[125]

Often, comments Jacobs, "for these white women . . . their ultimate goal was . . . to transform them religiously, socially, culturally and economically" and under the auspices of their employing agency white women were granted "greater political authority" to engage in practices where "white women's convictions converged with official policy

[121] Northern Territory, *Aboriginals Ordinance*, 1939 (1939-1953) http://www.foundingdocs.gov.au/item-sdid-62.html
[122] Kidd, *The Way We Civilise*, 176.
[123] N.A.A., Half-Caste Housing Scheme.
[124] N.A.A., Half-Caste Housing Scheme.
[125] Jacobs, *White mother to a Dark Race*, 194.

goals".[126] In particular "government entities, reform organizations, and missionary societies regularly enlisted white women to carry out child removal".[127] Close examination of the reports and commentary made by Archer shows that she was a major protagonist in the removal of the Cassidy children.

Archer refers to a report dated 9 August of 1956, writing "I have to report that there has been some improvement in Mrs. Cassidy's home making and care of her children over the last 3 months".[128] It is clear Gladys was aware of the presence in particular of Mrs Archer, and also that there was the threat of removal of the children. Archer noted that:

> Mrs. Cassidy called at the Hostel on Saturday morning, the 24th November, and enquired whether her children were to be brought before the children's court.[129]

The indication given to Gladys was that although Archer "felt that she had made some effort to improve the family's standard of living", conditions were not yet of "acceptable standard".[130]

This is "another instance of a white woman justifying the removal of an Aboriginal child on the basis of whether its mother conformed to white women's standards of keeping house and caring for children".[131] As Catherine Kevin writes:

> The vision of the assimilated Aboriginal home was produced in the arguments of non-Indigenous women committed to the improvement of conditions for Indigenous peoples. However, ultimately the perceived failure of Aboriginal women to live up to the narrow maternal image this entailed was used to justify the displacing of Indigenous mothers' relationships with their children.[132]

Embedded in the roles of white women as controllers was the reporting against Aboriginal families to those with authority in the field. Although Archer was an officer of the Northern Territory Department of Welfare, it is clear that her endeavours included utilising other administering agencies that were charged with protection of children. Archer had built a politically expedient relationship with the State Children's Council

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[126] Jacobs, *White mother to a Dark Race*, 89 & 194.
[127] Jacobs, *White mother to a Dark Race*, 193.
[128] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 – State Children's Council Cassidy Council (10), 26 November, 1956.
[129] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 (10).
[130] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 (10).
[131] Jacobs, *White mother to a Dark Race*, 211.
[132] Catherine Kevin, "Solving the 'problem' of the motherless indigenous child in *Jedda* and *Australia:* white maternal desire in the Australian epic before and after *Bringing them home*'," *Studies in Australasian Cinema* 4: 2 (2010): 149.

(S.C.C.) and she suggested that the "Council be advised on this family".[133] Archer's report and recommendations were noted at the meeting of the S.C.C. on 20 December 1956 with the recommendation that "the Council ask for deferment of three months on this matter to enable the parents to improve their home conditions".[134] Although the Council had received this directive, the influence of Archer's report was considerable with police officers being sent by the S.C.C. (not the Welfare Dept.), to assess the living conditions in the Cassidy house. The subsequent police report dated 29 January 1957 describes the conditions of both the children and the house as being

> very dirty, the bathroom was untidy, there were no sheets on the beds, only old blankets, and Jock Cassidy until recently was continually in the hotels and drinking heavily, so it was doubtful Mrs. Cassidy was receiving any money, from my observations I consider the children are not getting enough attention and care that they should.[135]

The comments showed no recognition that Jock had suffered "emotionally, spiritually, intellectually and psychologically" due to his own separation from kin and subsequent institutionalisation - instead Jock's levels of alcohol consumption became another validation for the removal of his children. [136] As a disempowered, culturally dislocated person, Jock's drinking can be seen as "an experience and expression of [his] personal power, it creates the conditions for people to enact their images of personal power".[137] Peter Read writes "other products of separation can also be recognised" and that "the alcoholics too tell a story without words".[138] The representation of Jock brought into play a one dimensional figure whose alcohol consumption was aligned to his Aboriginality rather than it being "immediately obvious that [Jock's] need for alcohol release was directly proportional to the . . . intolerability of [his] existence".[139]

Although such assessments were in line with Archer's thinking, the content of her reports lacked consistency, vacillating between condemnation and reasons for restraint. This is demonstrated in a February 1957 document where Archer writes

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[133] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 (10).
[134] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 (11), 20 December, 1956.
[135] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 (12), 29 January, 1957.
[136] Peter Read, *A Rape of the Soul so Profound: The Return of the Stolen Generations* (St Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1999), 58.
[137] Ernest Hunter, *Aboriginal Health and History, Power and Prejudice in Remote Australia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 98.
[138] Read, *A Rape of the Soul so Profound*, 67.
[139] Raymond Evans, Kay Saunders, Kathryn Cronin, *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination: Race Relations in colonial Queensland*, (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co., 1975), 92.

> Further to my report dated 26th November, 1956, I have to report that the situation with regard to this family has not deteriorated and . . . some improvement in standards has been maintained.[140]

Included in the report are a number of notable points: firstly that the children are attending school regularly and that Mr. Cassidy is controlling his drinking habits. Archer felt that although "Mrs. Cassidy will never reach a very high standard with regard to her homemaking" she "would suggest no further action is taken by the State Children's Council".[141] Archer's reports were also lodged with her employing agency, the Department of Welfare and on 27 March 1957, Acting District Welfare Officer W. McCoy wrote

> I agree with the recommendation made by Mrs. Archer. . . Some continuity of progress by Mrs. Cassidy in caring for her family is in evidence and under these circumstances I consider action by the State Children's Council is not required.[142]

The day after this (28 March) the minutes of the S.C.C. meeting recorded that the police officer's report had been read to the Council, and that the Chairman of the Council had visited the home and left with a very poor view of conditions.[143] S.C.C. documents state "After some discussion it was felt that a report could be called for from Rev. Grant" and that "the chairman had seen Mrs. Cassidy and considered her very unpreposing (sic)".[144] Grant was the newly appointed minister for the John Flynn Presbyterian Church in Alice Springs, as such he was also responsible for the Australian Inland Mission (A.I.M.) of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in Alice Springs, but his role in the discussions was purportedly as a member of the S.C.C.. Although the determination for Grant to visit the home had been made by the S.C.C., on the 7th of April, Director McCoy wrote made the decision that, "I feel that so long as there is hope of rehabilitation we should stay our hand".[145] McCoy's directive was not adhered to, and Archer continued to pursue avenues to have the children removed.

Substantiation for Kidd's point that welfare officers "acted as a further policing agency" is made on 13 June when Archer submitted a four page report to the Department of Welfare on the Cassidy family stating "that the situation with regard to this family has seriously

[140] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011, (13), 20 February, 1957.
[141] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011, (14), 20 February, 1957.
[142] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011, (15), 27 March, 1957.
[143] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011, (29), 17 June, 1957.
[144] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011, (16), 28 March, 1957.
[145] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011, (18).

deteriorated over the past two months".[146] Contradicting those comments, Archer wrote that "on the inspection on Friday, June 7th it was seen that a reasonable effort had been made to clean the house".[147] While the report then lists twenty seven points as to why the children should be taken into the care of the State Children's Council – number 1 (b) belies all the others as it is not focused on the care of the children, nor on the condition of the home. Archer states that

> *The children of the marriage are fair skinned with the exception of Terry who is of a very light tan in colouring and all these children could be accepted as European children.*[148] [emphasis added]

This report clearly shows that race, skin colour and assimilationability were strong factors in the removal of half caste children – if they weren't there would have been absolutely no need to include such descriptors and possibilities in a document which is supposedly focused on the welfare of the children. While twenty six points can be read as rationalisation for the taking the children of these children they are merely window dressing. Statement 1 (b) indicates the direction planned for these children, and the intent is assimilation.

Continuing to work hand in hand with the S.C.C., Archer's report was tabled at the Council meeting. On 17 June, Grant wrote to the Secretary of the State Children's Council stating:

> The situation in this home has not improved. I enclose a report by Mrs. Archer. I would therefore recommend that application be made to the children's Court for the care and custody of these children.[149]

The S.C.C. also determined that the Chairman of the Council, the "Rev. Archibald Grant, should visit the home and assess the conditions".[150] Although Grant's 'inspection' of the Cassidy home was undertaken as a member of the S.C.C., his report to the S.C.C. was submitted on A.I.M. letterhead, and signed in his role as Presbyterian minister not as member of the S.C.C.. Although members of the S.C.C. were holding these discussions, the power for removal interventions of Aboriginal and half-caste children lay with the office of the Northern Territory Department of Welfare, where

> As late as the 1950s the Northern Territory's Director of Native Affairs, a Commonwealth public servant, did not have to obtain a court order to separate an

[146] Kidd, *The Way We Civilise*, 174. N.A.A. Darwin, Series F1- 62/3011, (21), 13 June, 1957.
[147] N.A.A. Darwin, Series F1- 62/3011, (21), 13 June, 1957.
[148] N.A.A. Darwin, Series F1- 62/3011, (22), 13 June, 1957.
[149] N.A.A. Darwin, Series F1- 62/3011, (29), letter from A. W. Grant, Australian Inland Mission to the State Children's Council, 17 June 1957.
[150] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 (31) 18 June 1957.

> Aboriginal child from his or her mother . . . The director simply had to decide whether, in his own opinion, it was necessary or desirable to place a part-indigenous child in care.[151]

Although Grant was intent on having the Children's Court enact an order for removal of the Cassidy children, a motion made at the S.C.C. meeting of June 18 was "that a warning be given to Mrs. Cassidy that if she does not improve the living conditions of the children, the Council will take action to have the children taken from her".[152] From this it can be expected that Gladys would receive formal notification of intent to remove the children if conditions did not improve over the next period of months. Grant's recommendation was that "This family be kept under supervision and a warning be given that unless the improvement continues the Council will be forced to take action to secure the custody of the children".[153]

Soon after receiving Archer's report, McCoy wrote to the Director of Welfare informing him:

> that at the last meeting of the Council on 18th June a report from Rev. Grant was tabled which was to the effect that no action as yet to be taken, but that a warning be given thro' (sic) St. Ch. Council . . . Mrs Archer who knows the family intimately reported that matters at the time were improving.[154]

The records show that notification from the Department of Welfare to Gladys and Jock Cassidy did not take place.[155]

In contradiction, in the same report Grant also went on to recommend that: "Application be made to the children's Court for the care and custody of these children".[156] Below the typed record is a handwritten note from the Secretary of the S.C.C. dated 28 June saying "Letter [of warning] not written, as action taken by the Crown Law on the advice of Rev. Grant to have the children charged".[157] The next document shows that regardless of the recommendation by McCoy that while the family continue to be investigated the children were not to be taken; the S.C.C. "under the State Children Act 1895, of the State of South

[151] Rosemary Neill, *White Out: How politics is killing Black Australia* (Crows Nest, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 2002), 7.
[152] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 (31) 18 June 1957.
[153] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011, (18).
[154] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011, (18).
[155] N.A.A. Darwin, Series F1- 62/3011 (32), 28 June, 1957.
[156] N.A.A. (Darwin) Series F1 – 62/3011 (29).
[157] N.A.A. Darwin, Series F1- 62/3011 (32), 28 June, 1957.

Australia" instigated the process of removal.[158] A memorandum from the S.C.C. dated 1 July 1957 stated

> For: - The Officer-in-Charge, Alice Springs: Neglected Children: Cassidy Family. Would you please institute proceedings under the State Children Act for the six above named children to be charged with neglect.[159]

The legality of these orders is open to question particularly as the government office which had the power to remove half-caste children was the Northern Territory Department of Welfare, not the South Australian State Children's Council. Also, the Act that we were removed under was colonial legislation which "was amended several times, and repealed by the Maintenance Act 1926".[160] It is therefore interesting that the legislative powers for our removal were drawn from an Act which had been superseded.

S.C.C. file number 46 records that on 15 July, Denise and Fabian Sultan "were found guilty of being neglected children. On the following day Anthony Ellis (Cassidy), Jennifer Ellis, Terance (sic) Cassidy and Jock Cassidy were also convicted before Mr. Lemaire S. M. coroner and magistrate of being neglected children".[161] The *Northern Territory State Children's Council Report of 1958* records that

> A total number of twenty-six children were charged [with neglect] during the year 1957/58, fifteen of which were from the Darwin area and the remainder from Alice Springs.[162]

The process of 'charging' 'neglected' children involved summonsing them to court and charging the children with neglecting themselves. As shown in the successful South Australian case of Bruce Trevorrow, the State as legal guardian of the child as a ward of said State was *in loco parentis* and as such could not charge itself with neglect.[163] Therefore the Cassidy children were charged with their own neglect. Gladys said they (she and Jock) had no idea that their kids would be taken away. She said

> The police came and told us we had to go to court to change all of the kid's names to the same surname and we had to leave without you.[164]

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[158] N.A.A. Darwin, Series F1- 62/3011 (30 & 37), n.d., 1 July 1957.
[159] N.A.A. Darwin, Series F1- 62/3011 (30 & 37).
[160] South Australian Legislation, *State Children's Act: 1895* (short title).
http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/sa/num_act/sca641o58a59v1895239/
[161] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 (46).
James Lemaire S.M. http://www.artsandmuseums.nt.gov.au/ntas/research/guides/police
[162] N.A.A. (Darwin), *Commonwealth of Australia: Report on the State Children's Council for The Northern Territory for Year 1957/1958.* Series A452, Item 1959/785 [Folio 1].
[163] J. Gray, Supreme Court of South Australia *Trevorrow vs State of South Australia [No 5]* 1 August 2007 http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/AILRev/2007/70.pdf
[164] Personal conversation with Gladys Cassidy.

Given the records show there was no formal process of 'warning', this was more than likely the case.

Following our removal a request was made to the Administrative Officer (General) for accommodation for the Ellis/Cassidy children at the "Receiving Home" in Darwin.[165] A State Children's Council Placement record documents that of the "Children Charged During 1957/1958, Council Terence (sic), Jennifer, Antony (sic), Fabienne (sic) and Denise had been sent to Croker Island Mission".[166] Given the prior agreed relationship between the Methodist church and the Presbyterian church as discussed in chapter one, the fact that the an influential member of the S.C.C. was also a Presbyterian minister, and also that they were 'light skinned enough' for assimilation, it is no surprise that they were sent to Croker Island.

The disempowerment of both Gladys and Jock Cassidy at the hands of the white welfare officer is in stark evidence in these letters. They are an indicator that as, Ann Curthoys writes

> White women were . . . always already in situations of power in relation to Aboriginal peoples. White women inherit 'agency' and 'empowerment' as part of a triumphant colonial process of historic dispossession of indigenous peoples.[167]

The following documents show the continued intervention by Mrs. Archer in the lives of Gladys and Jock Cassidy and their desire to regain their children. It also testifies to the assertions made by Jackie Huggins and Thom Blake that "Aboriginal women were subjected to quite brutal treatment by white women" and that "when the complex factors of race and gender are considered white women's activities have to be seen as part of the oppression of black women".[168] The following correspondence by Gladys Cassidy to the Director of Welfare speaks for itself. The Director merely responded saying that he would have enquiries made.[169]

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[165] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1, Item: 1962/3101, Title: *State Children's Council – Children admitted to the receiving home – Darwin*, July 1957.
[166] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1, Item: 1962/3101, Title: *State Children's Council – Children admitted to the receiving home – Darwin*, July 1957.
[167] Ann Curthoys, "Identity Crisis: Colonialism, Nation and Gender in Australian History," *Gender & History* 5:2 (1993): 174.
[168] Jackie Huggins and Thom Blake, "Protection or Persecution? Gender Relations in the Era of Racial Segregation," in *Gender Relations in Australia: Domination and Negotiation,* eds., Kay Saunders, and Raymond Evans (Sydney: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 2004), 54-55.
[169] N.A.A. (Darwin), Series F1- 62/3011 (46).

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51

27th May 1958.
for S.
for 100.

Mrs Gladys Cassidy
Gap Road
Alice Springs

Dear Sir

I am writing to you regarding the House we are living in. We have been told we must Vacated the house because of the rent owing & supposed condition of the place. Mrs Archer has been handling all our money for the last 11 months & she was suppose to have been paying our rent. We have been living on £3-0-0 a weeks for that time & I used to book down to that amount & Mrs Archer used to pay it so— you see we have not been able to see what was paid & or not. it is not our fault as the rent was enclosed with the others to be paid by the before office. So would you please re-consider ~~on~~ your orders & let us have a chance of pay it up I can pay £70-0-0 into the a' Alice Springs office as soon as you let the tenant & the Amount of £6-0-0 per week until it is cleared up. the reason why I ~~wont~~ want this house. is I intented to sight for my family in time, there has been no real damage in this house other them a few broken louves. not like the houses on the East Side with Doors hanging off & walls all broken in. Why present they told to Vacate the houses. Please let me know ~~what~~ if you are going to let us know if we can keep the house as soon as possible. Please send a Telegram to Gap Store as I am working there I will do everything possible to pay all we owe.

Faithfully
Mrs Cassidy

49 ~~63~~

Mrs J. Cassidy
Gap Road.
Alice Springs
31/7/68

Dear Sir

We have been instructed by the welfare officer in Alice Springs to Vacate the premises we are living in. The reason why no Rent has been paid is because Mrs Archer has been handling all our money to clear up our accounts we have not had any money ourselfs. but now that we have finished with Mrs Archer we have only the rent to consentrate on so will you please give us a chance to pay it as we dont want to leave the house. My husband is willing to sign all of his wages over to the Administration office in alice Springs to get it cleared up. So would you please consider it as we need the house urgently be as soon as the rent is pay up. we intend to apply for our Children to be returned to us from the State Childrens Council. All reports put in from Mrs Archer

are only personall feelings between her & I as there are homes a children here in worst condition than mine ever were. So I beg you to consider giving us a chance to fisc it all up. as every one else is getting a fair go. So will you let me know as soon as possible My husband has a good permanant job & will be able to clear it all up in a few months if we are giving a chance to do so. as I said before we have not handled the money to be able to do anything. Mrs Archer was collecting all my husbands pay from the Manager of Hasting Deerings so will please consider our plight

Faithfully

Mrs Gladys Cassidy

56/1803

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Dear Madam,

Your letter dated 31st July, 1958, reached me this morning.

I will need to have some inquiries made into the circumstances of the matter about which you write and this may take me a little time.

I will, however, complete these inquiries and write to you further as soon as I can.

Yours faithfully,

(J. C. ARCHER)
Administrator.

Mrs. G. Cassidy,
Gap Road,
ALICE SPRINGS.

1 Despatch
2 D/ Welfare
Is this in your hands pls: If not please refer the papers to D.S.S.
5/8

Mrs G Cassidy
Post Office
Alice Springs

Mr Guiney

Dear Sir

I have written to you about the house we are in & before. I want to let you know I have paid £20-0-0 to the Women Office for Rent arrears. Also I have paid a fortnights Rent in advance. I written a letter to His Honor the Administrator also & I have enclosed the receipts I ~~wonder~~ believe you are a fair person concerning your work, so I ask will you please considering giving me a chance to pay what we owe & I want to stay in the house. For the sake of having our children, if we are evicted we will have to live in tents some where as I am defenetly not go to live in the slums in the old cottages where Mrs Archer wants me to go because they Fitchy & Drunk & fighting each other every night. We are trying our best to better ourselves & not going back among people like that. I beg you to let us live in this house. We have only the Rent to consentrate on & we will have that ~~from~~ paid in a few months. My husband is going to sign a paper today for his wages manager to pay so much of his wages to the Admin Office. The house is in good condition compared with others all walls are washed & kept cleane the yard is cleaned & have a garden going I am planting in Fruit Trees at the weekend. So it is not like & camps as Mrs Archer seems to think So please give me a chance to stay in the house. We have replaced Louvres & other damages at our esopense & will continue to do so in future. so please give me a last chance to prove. that we can straighten every thing up & I promise I wont fail you.

Thanking You.

Mrs G Cassidy

Meanwhile, down in Adelaide.

A Commonwealth file dated 12 November 1952 contains inter-departmental communications between the Director-General of the Department of Social Services in Melbourne (F. H. Rowe) and the Director of Social Services in Adelaide. It reads that:

> the Department of Territories has approached me concerning the transfer from the Northern Territory of light coloured children who have no strong family ties to suitable homes and institutions in southern States, as a means of assisting with the policy of assimilation.[170]

The communique determines that "it is desired that a recognised procedure for transfer, placement, inspection, after-care . . . should be adopted . . ." and that as "a preliminary measure it is proposed to make a study of the placement prospects for these children in South Australia".[171] Accompanying the directive was a copy of the *Draft: A study of the Possibilities for Placement of Light Coloured Children from the Northern Territory in Institutions and Homes in Southern States* outlining the criteria for the study and detailed Department expectations.[172] In 1955 the Rev. Mathieson, Superintendent of Peace Memorial Homes for Children in Melbourne, investigated the re-placement of children on Methodist missions in the Northern Territory situations 'down south'.[173] The resultant *Summary Report concerning proposition to bring Mixed Blood Children from Croker Island and other Isolated Settlements to Southern Institutions* provided the impetus for the relocation of half-caste children from Croker Island to southern institutions and private homes. [174] Interstate movement of children, particularly of half-caste Aboriginal children, was permitted under legislation of the time. Embedded in the *1953 Welfare Ordinance* which "repealed the 1918 Aboriginals Ordinance and its later amendments" held the power for the Director of Welfare "or a welfare officer, 'to take a ward from a place in the Territory to a place outside the Territory'".[175] While "The Welfare Ordinance 1953 . . . made the Director the legal guardian of all 'wards' - the term used to define Aboriginal people in this legislation", the legislation also stipulated that although the interstate movement of children "did not apply to children under 14", this proviso could be

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[170] N.A.A. (Adelaide), Series D678 (A82 Part 1), *Part coloured Children transfer from Northern Territory, 1952-1958*. Received 17 January 2011.
[171] N.A.A. *Part coloured Children transfer from Northern Territory, 1952-1958.*
[172] N.A.A. *Part coloured Children transfer from Northern Territory, 1952-1958.*
[173] Uniting Church Archives, Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2, Letter from Rev. C. F. Gribble to Rev A. E. Vogt, Superintendent of Methodist Children's Homes in Adelaide 17 October, 1955 date the Report as August 1955.
[174] Uniting Church Archives, Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2, Original copy of unofficial report "Compiled by Rev. J. K. W. Mathieson, Superintendent of Peace Memorial Homes for Children in Melbourne." August 1955.
[175] Northern Territory Legislation, *Welfare Ordinance 1953-1960* (short title). http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nt/reprint_ord/wo19531960137/

"overridden".[176] It was under these legislative auspices that church and secular organisations could develop their programs for the relocation of half-caste children from the Northern Territory to other states, and provided the mechanism through which the M.O.M. could move children from Croker Island.

In the mid-fifties, the continued pursuit by the Methodist church in Adelaide to provide 'safe' environments specifically for Croker Island children gained momentum. In 1952 the Rev. Erwin Vogt was appointed Superintendent of the Adelaide Central Methodist Mission and Adelaide Methodist Children's Homes, and it was under his leadership that negotiations with the federal government, the Welfare Department of the Northern Territory and the M.O.M. took place, resulting the in first relocations of half-caste children (girls) from Croker Island to Adelaide.[177] The minutes of the Executive Meeting of the Methodist Children's Homes on Friday 3 June 1955 record that

> Mr Vogt reported that a top-level conference [presumably Synod] had been held at which it was suggested that these children from Croker Island . . . gradually be transferred into the Children's Homes of the Churches and into houses where possible.[178]

The minutes of 4 November 1955 of the same Executive noted that "arrangements to bring some of these children south have now been confirmed by the Dept. of the Interior and Native Affairs and the Missionary Societies".[179] This confirmation came as the result of several communiques between the then Northern Territory Director of Welfare H. C. Giese, the Rev. C. F. Gribble (General Secretary and Treasurer of the Methodist Overseas Missions Sydney), and the Rev. A. E. Vogt, requesting approval to move children from the Croker Island to other states.

On 16 August 1955, Giese responded to the request from Gribble regarding the transfer of half-caste children from Croker Island to Adelaide. Giese had forwarded the request to the then Minister for Territories, the Honourable Paul Hasluck. Hasluck's response in Giese's letter indicates that he had knowledge of the history of the M.O.M. policy in regard to half-castes, and makes a clear connection between that policy and Elkin's 'Croker Island Scheme' through the use of the term 'scheme' when he states "You make your "scheme"

[176] *Welfare Ordinance 1953 (1957-1964).*
[177] Ivor Bailey, *Mission Story* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1987).
[178] Uniting Church Archives Adelaide, Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2 "Indigenous Children at Magill Children's Home," compiled Jan 2004 – accessed 2010.
[179] "Indigenous Children at Magill Children's Home".

or schemes because you already know why you want it".[180] This is a direct reference to the 1944 M.O.M. policy 'scheme' which had its genesis in 1940 when the term "half-caste scheme" arises in the minutes of the M.O.M. Executive Committee.[181] A number of stipulations by Hasluck are recorded, and he states unequivocally that the power for final decision making lay with Giese. Hasluck makes it clear that "The responsibility for the "selection" (of the children) lies on the Director of Welfare" and

> It then becomes the responsibility of the Director to arrange for the employment of whichever of them (sic) methods – adoption, foster parents, school orphanage or other institution – will suit the case.[182]

In a letter dated 17 October 1955 to Vogt, Gribble wrote

> You will notice from Mr. Mathieson's report that he thinks the younger ones will benefit most by this scheme. However, it may be that our people at Croker will consider that some of those entering adolescence, whose conduct could be vouched for.[183]

In 1956 F. H. Rowe, Director-General of the Department of Social Services issued a memorandum to the Director of Social Services in Adelaide stating "Arrangements for the care and accommodation in foster homes . . . are made through the missions regarded by the Director as appropriate" and then sets out a number of requests that are to be attended to by 'departmental social workers'.[184]

With the rubber stamping by the Minister for Territories for the arrangements between the M.O.M., and the Northern Territory Director of Welfare, the Adelaide Central Methodist Mission began to carry out the final stages of the 1941 Croker Island Scheme of relocating children from the Mission to private homes and church orphanages in Adelaide. Reverend Bernie Clarke, who worked at the Croker Island mission, described the selection of foster families in South Australia in the following way:

> [T]here was an active program of fostering children in which the government elicited the support of the churches ... The churches would provide the Northern Territory Welfare Department with lists of names of people willing to be foster parents. Children from the age of four upwards would then be placed in a foster

[180] Uniting Church Archives Adelaide, Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2, Commonwealth of Australia Welfare Branch: Letter from H. C. Giese (Director of Welfare NT) to C. S. Gribble (General Secretary and Treasurer, M.O.MM.O.M.) relaying the response from P. Hasluck Minister for Territories 16 August 1955.
[181] M.O.M., 451 574/575.
[182] Commonwealth of Australia Welfare Branch, 16 August 1955.
[183] Uniting Church Archives Adelaide.
[184] Uniting Church Archives Adelaide.

> placement here in South Australia ... [I]t was a direct arrangement between the church and the Welfare Department in the Northern Territory.[185]

The first two girls brought down under the Scheme were adopted by Vogt in 1955.[186] In a 1958 "extract from *The motherless and the orphan – Central Mission Homes for Children Vested in Mission Concern*", Vogt writes

> They Came South: This year our doors were opened to the first part-aboriginal children from North Australia. ***X*** and ***Y*** arrived from Croker Island a few weeks ago. They are delightful girls and full of promise. They are living evidence of the gracious character-forming influence of Christian Missions in Australia's North.[187]

During the year 1957/8, "eleven State Wards were placed with private families on a foster parent basis under the terms of "Agreement for Placing out a State Child".[188]

On the 13 November 1958, Geise wrote to C. G. Atkinson, Director of Social Services, Adelaide saying:

> In August, we received a request from a Reverend and Mrs. George Martin, 3 Stone Street, Blair Athol, S.A., to foster a part-coloured child from the Northern Territory. The family has indicated a preference for a particular child at Croker Island (Jennifer Lorraine Ellis) and I would appreciate if you could arrange for one of your social workers to visit this home and provide me with a report . . . Mrs. Martin is expecting a child in January of next year and would like, if possible, to have the foster child settled in to the home before the arrival of the baby.[189]

Atkinson forwarded the details of that request to the Director General in Melbourne on 24 November 1958.[190] The request was further progressed on 1 December with the arrangements for a social worker to visit the Reverend & Mrs. Martin for assessment of suitability.[191] On 9 December, a full report made by social worker Margaret Ramsey was submitted by Atkinson to the Administrator of the Northern Territory Administration Welfare Branch. The report makes comment on the condition of the house "From the look of her home she (Mrs. Martin) would seem to be a meticulous housekeeper, and her husband spoke highly of her abilities in her home".[192] Under 'Reasons for Fostering a Child' the social worker recorded that "Mrs. Martin was said to be the prime-mover in the

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[185] Bernie Clarke, *Bringing them home, evidence 119.* https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/bringing-them-home-chapter-9
[186] Bailey, *Mission Story*, 1987.
[187] Uniting Church Archives, Adelaide, Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2
[188] Bailey, *Mission Story*, (1987).
[189] N.A.A. *Part coloured Children transfer from Northern Territory, 1952-1958* (96).
[190] N.A.A. *Part coloured Children transfer from Northern Territory, 1952-1958* (101).
[191] N.A.A. *Part coloured Children transfer from Northern Territory, 1952-1958* (102).
[192] N.A.A. *Part coloured Children transfer from Northern Territory, 1952-1958* (106)

plan for fostering a child" especially since she had lost her own mother at a very young age, therefore "she felt she could offer care to a needy child and in her opinion the part-coloured children stood most in need of home life and parental affection".[193] The report gathers a range of information from both the Reverend and Mrs. Martin and reveals that:

> They had hoped to adopt a very young child, but after enquiries through their church they found that Jennifer Ellis was the youngest girl available. They have also been in touch with Sister Una Clarke of the Croker Island Mission, who showed them slides of the child and this definitely decided them on applying to foster Jennifer.[194]

The following photograph below was one dozens of pictures of half-caste children from Croker Island who were eligible for fostering or adoption by non-Aboriginal families. According to my foster mother, Attached to the photo sent to them was a note saying 'We think this child will fit in well with your family'.

As a result of the social worker's assessment, arrangements were made for me to be fostered by the Martin family, and I was sent on a plane from Darwin to Adelaide on Christmas Eve, 1958.

The Report tends to focus mostly on Mrs. Martin and does not record that the Reverend Martin was not only seeking to foster a child within his own family, but had initiated a whole of parish drive encouraging his parishioners to also consider fostering or adopting children from Croker Island.

[193] N.A.A. *Part coloured Children transfer from Northern Territory, 1952-1958* (106)
[194] N.A.A. *Part coloured Children transfer from Northern Territory, 1952-1958* (106)

I was not the only child who was new to this parish on that Christmas Day. There were some seventeen girls sent down south during over the final months of 1958 till the beginning of 1960, either to be adopted or fostered or placed in the Magill Orphanage (later renamed Lentara) even though they were not orphans, showing that the thinking was that placement in an orphanage was preferable to leaving children with their families.

Cleric set example for happy home life

Five part-aboriginal girls from Croker Island, off the coast of the Northern Territory, near Darwin, are living with families in the Blair Athol district because of the example set by the Rev. George Martin and his wife.

Mr. Martin is minister of Blair Athol and Kilburn Methodist Churches.

When he and Mrs. Martin decided to adopt a child from Croker Island Methodist Mission Mr. Martin told his congregations and suggested other families should do the same.

Three families responded—Mr and Mrs. Donald Ward, of Lily street, Blair Athol; Mr. and Mrs. Ken Roberts, of Montgomery avenue, Kilburn; and Mr. and Mrs. S. Worsley, of Brunswick street, Kilburn.

Mr. and Mrs. Ward already had four children, three boys and a girl ranging from four to 12.

Mr. and Mrs. Roberts had four boys aged 11, 10, 8, and 2½, and Mr. and Mrs. Worsley a grown son and daughter, both working away from home.

The Martins' foster daughter Jennifer, now 6, arrived on Christmas Eve, 1958. She travelled alone by air and arrived early.

Her new parents found her, rather forlorn, standing alone and hugging a doll.

At first, Jennifer used to life without a father would not go near Mr. Martin.

She really became acquainted with him several weeks later when Mrs. Martin went to hospital to have her first baby.

Settling in

Today, Jennifer is very fond of her foster brother, Brian, 20 months.

Mrs. Martin said today: "I never think of Jennifer except as our own daughter. When people talk of her as an outsider I get a shock."

The Wards' foster daughter, Josie, aged 10, is a bright girl, doing well at school.

Valerie, who came to the Roberts family, was quiet until they brought her sister, Dianne, Croker Island. Now both girls are settling in their new home.

April Claydon, the eldest of the girls, is 15. Her foster parents are Mr. and Mrs. Worsley.

Mr. Martin said: "All Croker Island the young children have a free, happy life, but there is no future for them there. When they leave school they go back to the mainland."

All the children here go to different schools. In this way they are more easily assimilated. All have settled down happily with the other children.

The children are brought south through the Central Methodist Mission Children's Homes, Magill. If eventually the girls do not fit "into the foster homes, they can live at the homes.

Five other children have come down from Croker Island and are living at the Methodist Homes at Magill and three others are with private families.

HERE ARE THE FIVE part-aboriginal girls with some of their foster-brothers and foster sister. From left—Neil Ward, 4; Ken Ward, 8; Bruce Ward, 9; Josie Ward, 10; Lorraine Ward, 13; April Claydon, 15; Brian Roberts, 15; Dianna Roberts, 11; Valerie Roberts, 9; and Jennifer Martin, 6."

[195]

At the age of five, I adapted to life with my new family, and came to believe that the reason why I had to be there was because my biological father was white, therefore I had to learn to be white and put aside any other memories or feelings of association I had for my family.

[195] Valerie Carrol was also sent down to Adelaide, she is standing next to me in the newspaper clipping. She passed away when she was thirty-three from a brain haemorrhage, leaving a husband and three children.

On the eve of Christmas 1958 the child was delivered to Adelaide. The flight from Darwin had not been pleasant, airsickness welling up in waves of bitter spittle. Or was it surges of fear? Or was it uncontainable grief?

Airline attendants brought the child into the small terminal. In the midst of the spilling over of arrivals and the draining of greeters and travellers out of the building [excited chatter, happy faces] she stood, back to the check-in counter gripping her black and white school case bag dressed in pinny and cardigan, her purse in the shape of a black and white dog hanging on its red strap from her shoulder.

The terminal cleared and the child waited. And waited. Fifty-five years later the adult still clearly remembers the little one's thoughts: "they've made a mistake. The people who said they wanted me to live with them have realised they have made a mistake, that they don't really want this girl - they really wanted a boy"; "they think I am no good, they will put me on the plane and send me back." The child was not told that the plane had arrived early - so the man and the woman were not aware that she had arrived. And so she waited and began to teach herself to do whatever it was that was asked, that from now on she had to be a <u>good</u> girl (after all she must have been very bad to have ended up in this situation, hey?). A very good girl.

A pale blue Morris - is that what the car was? Rundle Mall was still Rundle Street and it was Christmas Eve. Decorations strung like magic from building to building and across the street. The bright sparkly lights the like of which she had never seen twinkled and flashed - music from who knows where (from angels maybe) filled the air. A magical mystery ride away from all that she had known - mother, father, brothers, and sisters, home - thrust into a new and unknown world.

Awakening on Christmas morning to an unfamiliar throb of silence: at the end of the bed hung a pillow case with a fair-haired, blue eyed doll sitting on the top. The child sat stared, unmoving until the woman came in, sat on the edge of the bed and said "yes it's for you, they are all for you."

They all went to church, the man, the woman and the child, and the man stood at the front of the church and spoke to everyone, telling proudly, happily that their daughter had arrived. And after church, outside so many people came to see and greet the new member of their congregation all smiling all happy to share in this joyous occasion. And the child clung to the woman's dress, hiding in the folds of her skirt seeking the protection that only the woman could now provide - one of the only two people in existence she could connect to - the stranger (a motherless daughter herself, heavy with her own child) who was now her mother.

The bold print article headline (circa 1961, author unknown) heralds "Cleric set example for happy home life". The child appears in the photo - very end, right. The story announces that "Five part-aboriginal girls from

Croker Island, off the coast of the Northern Territory, are living with families in the Blair Athol district." In total four families had responded to the call from the Methodist Overseas Mission to adopt or foster, to provide for these anonymous child souls -identification of the most promising made through hand written (who's hand? the welfare officer's, the mission's housemother's one knows not) notes attached to a compilation of photographs. A simple but determined direction made easier - "we think this child will fit in well with your family." No history, no synopsis of family - no indication of sisters or brothers. The image is that of the child - a being who is no longer a single child entity, but a 'half-caste', a bitzer (the child who was a kid but they made her a colour) sitting alone in the shallow waters around Croker Island. A wise choice, the child (the children) rescued from the denizens of deprivation, squalor and poverty. Or so the story goes. - The reality far different, insidious and unchristian, unspoken but tacitly understood and collectively agreed.

Also apparently she was "fair enough to pass." seemingly benign comments - protected by the faithful therefore approved of by god -

"On Croker Island the children (i.e. the child) live a free, happy life" free? Trapped on an island with no means of leaving, surrounded by seas filled with sharks and other nasty bitey things that will cause you a painful death? Free to ask if they could go back to Darwin on the Larrapan -

Back to their mother
Back to their father
Back to their sister
Back to their brother
Back to their people
Back to their land? [196]

"all the children here go to different schools" translated means 'we must keep them apart so they cannot keep their identity - know themselves as being Aboriginal, cannot share memories, cannot talk about home and family and mothers - unrecalled memories slip away and can be replaced with another (albeit false) reality'. "In this way they are more easily assimilated". Assimilated: "The process in which individuals or groups of differing origins take on the basic attitudes, habits and lifestyles of another culture".[197]

[196] Archie Roach, *Took the Children Away.*
http://www.lyricsmania.com/took_the_children_away_lyrics_archie_roach.html
All about Archie Roach: http://www.musictory.com/music/Archie+Roach
[197] Macquarie Dictionary,
https://www.macquariedictionary.com.au/features/word/search/?word=assimilation&search_word_type=Dictionary

Fifty years later in 2008, the child once again went to church with the man and the woman. Now a grown woman the child no longer believes in christian things. All too well she knows of the suffering of those kids gathered into this system of protection - stories of the shushed night-time [breakfast, lunch and teatime] bedroom to bedroom shuffles of decent christian men; she imagines the horror of the rape, the pillage, the bestial grunting and the terror of the gentled non-threatening threat of illicit observation - whispers and secrets. Mothers gone; unable to help - where are the welfare people, the protectors of these kids who are now a colour?

Jesus loves the little children
All the children of the world

Once again the man stood at the front of the church, but on this day he said Saying sorry was about respect. Legislation that took part Aboriginal children away from their families may have been well intentioned, but it was racially based and directed towards assimilation. (17 March 2008).

CHAPTER FOUR: Travelling back.

> There is a distinction between 'assimilation' and 'assimilationism' - '. . . assimilation refer[s] to a particular policy . . . whereas 'assimilationism' refer[s] to a particular ideology. The hallmark of assimiliationism is that it enacts an unrequitable colonial desire to transform the colonised into what the colonists imagine themselves, at their best, to be. To the colonised, assimilationism means never quite being good enough, for their transformation is ever imperfect . . . The reproduction is to be a partial transformation, a mimicry. Assimilationism desires a colonial subject who is *almost the same, but not quite.*
> Cathryn McConaghy, *Rethinking Indigenous Education: Culturalism, Colonialism and the Politics of Knowing,* (Flaxton: Post Pressed, 2000), 151[1].

In this chapter, I interrogate official documentation through personal reflection; it records my memories and experiences as one those who it was assumed would 'fit in well' with both the fostering family and the general white community. The discussion draws the events outlined in chapter three down into a focus on discoveries made in the mid-1990s about myself as a half-caste 'subject'. As Susan Barrett states

> Writing about their past enables Indigenous people to position themselves as subjects and not as objects of other people's discourse, be they anthropologists, missionaries, government officials or historians.[2]

The time frame is post July 1957 through to 1970, with an extension past the documents into the current day. My lived experience and the ways in which the revelations from welfare and government documents impacted on me are particularised and shows that neither critique nor narrative on or about the Stolen Generations can be "periodise[d]",in other words cannot be seen as having a beginning time and an end time in Australian history.[3]

The importance to the discourse on the Stolen Generations is that in co-relating the personal experience *and* the documentation, the narrative counteracts claims by pundits such as Keith Windschuttle who argue that:

> The problem with the Stolen Generations thesis is that childhood recollections constitute the only credible evidence its adherents have provided to make their case.

[1] Cathryn McConaghy, *Rethinking Indigenous Education: Culturalism, Colonialism and the Politics of Knowing,* (Flaxton: Post Pressed, 2000), 1.
[2] Susan Barrett, "Reconstructing Australia's Shameful Past: the Stolen Generations in Life-Writing, fiction and film," *lignes* 2 (2005): 5.

> But no amount of childhood anecdotes can establish the argument's central thesis that the intentions of the authorities were both criminal and racist.[4]

It also effectively offsets comments made by social commentator Andrew Bolt such as "too many Aboriginal children have been sacrificed to the myth of the 'stolen generation'".[5] The reality is that half-caste children were sacrificed to the myth of a white nation.

Growing up, the central point for positive reinforcement of my half-castedness was my perceived 'degree of whiteness'. Conversely, all the negative connotations of my parentage were framed around my 'degree' of Aboriginality. The extent of my isolation from all aspects of Aboriginal life and culture led to my ignorance of the issues relating to Aboriginal people. The reinforcement of the 'badness' of Aboriginal people was so effective that, in 1993, I still believed that the reasons given for my removal from family and placement with my foster family in Adelaide were those were told to me on a regular basis, mainly that we had been taken away because, as an Aboriginal woman, my mother was incapable of caring for us. It was only later, through my own study and research, that I learned about the underlying policies and practices of separating half-caste Aboriginal children from their families which carried the desired outcome that the children would irrevocably be cut off from all that was Aboriginal and grow up being trained to be white citizens**.** During this time I began to learn more about the collective narrative of 'neglect' aligned to the purported child rearing inadequacies of Aboriginal mothers. The *Bringing them Home Report* found that the assignation of 'neglect' as a justification for removal carried greater impact when applied to Indigenous children stating

> Under the general child welfare law, Indigenous children had to be found to be 'neglected', 'destitute' or 'uncontrollable'. These terms were applied by courts much more readily to Indigenous children than non-Indigenous children as the definitions and interpretations of those terms assumed a non-Indigenous model of child-rearing and regarded poverty as synonymous with neglect.[6]

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[4] Keith Windschuttle, "Why there were no stolen generations," *Quadrant Magazine*, (2010): 11. https://quadrant.org.au/magazine/2010/01-02/why-there-were-no-stolen-generations/

[5] Andrew Bolt, "Betrayed by a black Myth", *Herald Sun* (Melbourne), 5 December, 2007. http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/opinion/andrew-bolt-betrayed-by-a-black-myth/story-e6frfifo-1111115031483

[6] Ronald Wilson (Commissioner), National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families *Bringing them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*, (Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission), April 1997, 33.

The power of the term ‘neglect’ was so strong that the possibility of being charged with neglect of my children loomed large with me. When my first child was born, I cried, for myself, for my mother from whom I was taken, for my baby, because to me there was the unquestionable possibility of him being taken from me. Their father would say ‘no-one will take our kids’, and I would reply “how do you know, they didn’t take children from Italian parents.” In attempts to minimise that risk, my house was the cleanest in the street; because we did not have a high income I would sew and knit my children’s clothes (not very well, I might add). I diligently went to every appointment made with the baby health nurses at Mothers’ and Babies and made sure that my kids and I were ‘socially presentable’. I spent nearly every day of my children’s primary schooling at their school - not only to be a good involved mum, but to guard against the possibility of my kids being taken. I had such an intense fear of the ‘welfare’ that I had to be wherever my children were, and I needed to able to grab my kids and run if there was any perceived threat, or if I had felt that anyone questioned the way I was raising them or providing for them. I now know that many, many Stolen Generations people have had the same fears for their own children, and that felt there was a high risk that they too would be faced with the charge of ‘neglect’ towards their kids.

The dogmatic repetition of the trope of ‘neglect’ by the individuals and families involved in the ‘care’, whether through fostering or adoption, of the children from missions had a lifelong impact on many of those children. It projected to them that their mother was seen to have to have “somehow failed her child in being neither strong nor protective enough irrespective of her actual circumstances, to have kept her baby (child) with her”.[7] As Anna Haebich writes this thinking was aligned with legislation and welfare practices where

> the broad definition of ‘neglect’ was open to culturally biased or ethnocentric interpretation an application on the part of individual officers . . . child care circumstances that were culturally acceptable to Aborigines could be determined as unacceptable by non-Aboriginal officials working from the perspective of their ideals.[8]

While women like my mother Gladys continued to be “frequently . . . judged by the impossibly high standards of maternalist ideology in other words, not a sufficiently good mother,” the counterpoise narrative applied to white women was a “celebratory

[7] Denise Cuthbert, “Holding the baby: Questions arising from research into the experiences of non-Aboriginal and adoptive mothers of Aboriginal children”, Journal of Australian Studies 22 (1998): 40.
[8] Anna Haebich, *Broken Circles: Fragmenting Indigenous Families 1800-2000,* (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2000), 37.

acknowledgment of a type of mothering".[9] As such, fostering/adoptive mothers' roles in teaching and training particularly the girl children, were seen as crucial in moulding them into 'proper' housekeepers and mothers who would never be charged with neglecting their own offspring. The reiteration of 'neglect' created a deep fear that people in authority would believe that I had inherited a prevailing disposition to be neglectful of my own children, therefore there was a high possibility that I too would be targeted for child removal. It was this state of fear and disempowerment that led to the conviction that the best way to counteract any risk of losing my kids was to learn and understand 'authority speak' by gaining an education.

The point made by Tony Austin that "the common view about the childlike Aborigine of limited intelligence found a place in (general) attitudes" was borne out in the 1955 Mathieson report to the M.O.M. [10] Outlining the guidelines for fostering/adoption of children from Croker Island, the report stated that: "Education. It was widely held that mixed bloods would find their best level in non-academic education".[11] This indicates there was certainly a concrete belief that the children of the mission would never rise to great academic heights. This was one of the points about my Aboriginality that was reinforced time and time again, to the point where I began to believe it.

Regardless of this, maintaining a determination to achieve my Year 12 South Australian Certificate of Education, I returned to school in 1989 at the age of thirty five. During my study in classes with sixteen and seventeen year olds, I was encouraged to apply for university – an exercise I believed would result in a disaster which would reinforce to me that I didn't have the intelligence for such a high level of education. Nevertheless, I sat the mature-age university entrance test, gaining entry into a Bachelor of Arts, which I successfully completed after thirteen years. Undertaking study had its immediate benefits in my employment prospects, enabling me to apply for positions I would not have previously seen as possibilities. In 1993, I won a position as an Aboriginal Education Worker with Catholic Education in South Australia (C.E.S.A.). Through my employment I began to develop a more consolidated understanding that there were many 'part-Aboriginal' children who had been adopted or fostered. Before this, I had had no

[9] Cuthbert, "Holding the baby", 40.
[10] Tony Austin, *I Can Picture the Old Home So Clearly: The Commonwealth and 'Half-caste' Youth in the Northern Territory 1911 – 1939,* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1993), 35.
[11] J. K. W. Mathieson, *Summary of Report concerning proposition to care for Half-Blood children from Croker Island and other Isolated Settlements Southern Institutions,* unofficial report, August 1955. Uniting Church Archives, Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2, Gilles Street Adelaide: Accessed 2010.

knowledge of the extent to which half-caste children were placed on missions and that non-Aboriginal families were actively sought to foster or adopt those children. I also became aware that I had come very close to morphing into a 'successful' assimilation example because all I really knew of my Aboriginality or my family's history I had learned in the house of white people.

I could not remember what my mother looked like (after all I was only three at time of removal), and on the basis of the repeated comments about my mother's supposed lack of worth, I had screened her out of my life. Even though I had a 'new' set of brothers, I never ever forgot my brothers and sisters and, throughout the years, I would walk down the streets looking at any Aboriginal person I saw and think "do you know me?", "do I belong to you?" Soon after starting work with C.E.S.A., I discovered that there were indeed people who knew where I fitted into the Aboriginal family and kinship systems.

The C.E.S.A. Aboriginal Education team was housed in the same building as the Department of Education Aboriginal Education services, and for the first time in my adult life, I had contact with other Aboriginal people. Within months of beginning work, some of those people began to say to me that they knew my family and where I was from and I was given the name of a person at Link-Up – the organisation set up to assist Stolen Generations people to reconnect with their families.[12] Not having any understanding of Aboriginal kinships systems or family identification methods, I was highly sceptical.

Putting aside my scepticism, I decided to take action, so I rang Link-Up. I spoke to the Aboriginal caseworker on a Monday, telling her the small amount of information that I had. When I said, "my father's name is Jock Ellis", the caseworker said, "Ellis, I know that name from somewhere". I kept talking, saying I thought that he was probably non-Aboriginal because it was believed my father was white, and went on to say, "And my mother's name is Gladys Sultan". On the other end of the phone, the caseworker exclaimed "Oh my God"! I asked her if she knew anything, thinking that she had recalled where she knew my father's name from. Her response was "no", but could I meet with her, because she was sure that Link-Up could help me. Subsequently, I made a time to meet with her in two days' time.

[12] Peter Read, *A rape of the soul so profound: the return of the stolen generations* (St Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1999), 70-72.

When I arrived at the Link-Up offices on the Wednesday, I met the caseworker and told her again the information that I had, showing her my birth certificate and the newspaper clipping from c1960. I had a growing sense of discomfort as she did not take any notes, nor create any files while I was talking to her. This became heightened when, after reading the documents I had brought with me, she suddenly stood up and - without any explanation - started to leave the room. At the door she turned back and said she 'would be back in a minute'. After a good twenty to twenty-five minutes had passed and I was wondering whether to go looking for someone, she returned. I asked her if she knew anything to which she replied "No", but again reinforced that she was sure Link-Up could help me. Two days later the caseworker rang, saying it was imperative that she speak with me, so we made a time to meet that afternoon. At the appointed time the caseworker's daughter rang to say that her mother was unwell and would not be able to make the meeting. By this time I began to feel uncomfortable with the process, and made up my mind not to pursue any further enquiries.

The weekend passed, and for the first two days of the new week I was out of the office. On my return on the Wednesday (just nine days after my first contact) there were a half a dozen phone messages from the caseworker. As I had already determined not to proceed, I felt I should notify her, so I rang. The first thing caseworker said to me was that she had some information and could I meet with her. I have to say I was very reluctant, but decided to go just in case there was some real progress. Once again I was sitting in her office, and again there were no notes taken or files opened – there was no evidence at all of any search for information. As if to confirm my suspicions that it was all a waste of time, no documents were produced to show that there was any real information available. I vividly recall her sitting there, shoulders hunched (she is actually taller than I recall from this meeting) as though she wasn't quite sure what to say next. What she did say will stay with me with absolute clarity for the rest of my life.

She leaned forward, hands clenched tightly in her lap and said "I have some information for you and I hope you understand why I did not tell you before." Well, by this time I was prepared for anything - or nothing - so I said, "I'm sure I'll understand". She looked at me and said "I'm your mother's sister, you are my niece and your mother has been looking for you for years and years. She's been asking me to help get you kids back".

During the previous week, after sighting the documents I had presented to her which confirmed my parent's names, my Aunty had immediately approached her line managers about the situation and her desire to inform my mother about my return, and myself of our connection. Because of the closeness of the relationship, permission was denied, and Aunty was instructed to place the case with a non-Aboriginal staff member, and to withdraw. After days of arguing with her line managers, Aunty had made the Friday appointment to see me, but in her distraught state, had had a minor vehicle accident. When she sought medical treatment after the accident, she related the situation to the doctor whose response was "the government stuffed their lives up once, don't let it do it again". In defiance of orders, Aunty rang my mother Gladys in Port Hedland to tell her that I was back, then she rang me.

The initial contact with my family was through phone calls and letters where I discovered that after we were taken four more children were born. It seems that the two boys, Tony and Terry had remained on Croker and were sent to Darwin when they were sixteen. They had reconnected with our mother and father – but what happened during that time is theirs to tell. The whereabouts of our two sisters and the youngest boy, Jock was unknown.

The following year, Link-Up arranged for the family to come down to Adelaide to meet me. It did not have a good beginning. On the day my mum, brothers, sisters and their families arrived at the Keswick train station, I was sick. I vomited every time I moved. So I did not get to meet my family face to face for several days. When we did meet, conversation was difficult, I didn't know what to say, nor could I judge how I was being received, and it seemed as though my fears – particularly that they would think I was 'too white' - were becoming reality. Then, on the last day of their trip, my mother and I were walking together in company with one of my newly met nieces, and conversation was very thin. In desperation, I threw a cheeky comment to my mother and, for the most fleeting of moments out of the corner of my eye, I caught a grin on her face, and bang!, the connection was there.

In 1995, my then five-year-old daughter and I travelled to Port Hedland where I spent Mother's day with mum for the first time in forty-one years. Everyone was there to meet me brothers, sisters, brothers and sisters in law, nieces and nephews.

I was still nervous, but had no reason to be. The best way to describe this meeting was that it was as though there was a place set for me at the table – that I had been included in conversations in absentia, and that there was always an expectation that I would one day sit at that table and join in the talk and laughter and love.

Buddy (left back), Terry, Tony, Mum, me, Mitzi and Judy.

From my mother's oral account, when my sister Mitzi was little and she was expecting another baby, the 'black telegraph' reported that the Welfare was about to visit the family again. Friends and family gathered everything they could together, curtains, food, blankets, and sheets and brought them around to my parents' house. When the Welfare officers arrived, they inspected the house, and in my mother's words said, "Well, it looks like you have learned to live like a white person – we won't take the child". The most important discovery that I made was that my father was Aboriginal. He passed away in Darwin just before Cyclone Tracy.

Jock Cassidy/Duke Ellis (date unknown) photo from Terry Cassidy

When I met by brother, Tony, the one who I had hoped would be the person who would recognise me, he asked continually “do you remember me”? He asked the question again and again, as though his whole future existence depended on it. And I knew what he meant. Up until that point I had had no one who remembered me, remembered where I came from or remembered to whom I belonged. In fact, the importance for Tony was that his whole past existence depended on me remembering him.

My brother Tony

Tony had carried a feeling of guilt that he did nothing to stop us (Denise, Faye and myself) from being sent off the island with him for nearly forty years. He apologised to me for not preventing my leaving, that as the eldest boy he had seen it over the years as his responsibility to keep us together. He was eight years old, what power did he have?

Mum had scant information on the whereabouts of the others – Faye, Denise and Jock, but had managed to determine that Jock had been adopted and that the girls had been sent to a children's home in Sydney. The Darwin Link-Up office had contacted mum in 1997 to say that Faye had made contact with the offices in New South Wales and was trying to reconnect. Both Denise and Faye made the trip to Pt Hedland to meet mum and all the family there, so gradually we were all making our way back.

I met Denise and Faye in the year 2000 when I travelled to Sydney for a conference and gathering for the members of the Stolen Generations. For one day we sat and shared photos of our families and skirted around the edges of our lives. Their time in the children's home was traumatic and has left them both with deep issues to resolve. I took Denise with me to the conference and we attended a session on the removal of children. Sir Ronald Wilson (Commissioner of the 1997 Inquiry into the removal of Aboriginal children) was present and we introduced ourselves to him, saying that this was the first time we had seen each other for many decades.

In late 2000 after listening to and reading about the ways in which other members of the Stolen Generations had been able to recover some of their histories through the National Archives, I requested that South Australian Link-Up staff search for any documents relating to myself or my family (by this time Aunty had left the organisation and I had a new caseworker). Conversations with my Adelaide family at that time led me to believe that there would possibly be a few references to me up until I was about six or seven, but that "there had not been contact with any welfare officers for years", therefore not to expect too much in the way of records.[13] In October, I received a call from the Link-Up office saying that they were unable to locate any records relating to me. They apologised, and explained that this happened often because many of the records relating to Aboriginal child removal and placement had been destroyed. With this in mind, I was shocked by a phone call in February 2001 from my Link-Up caseworker, who rang to tell me that records relating to me had been located in the National Archives in Canberra. There was a compilation of documents sourced under the *Bringing them home* government Memorandum of Understanding, and the she needed to confirm they were mine. Believing the information trail would end when I was about six or seven, I said to her that I didn't expect that was there was much in the way of documentation. I was quite distressed when

[13] Personal conversation.

she read out a list of records with dates and places of residence and reports and letters from my foster father to the welfare department up until 1970.

It was then that I discovered that I was a 'ward of the state' and that the Director of Welfare had *in loco parentis* authority. I also realised that the agreements for fostering had a sunset clause which meant that when I turned eighteen, government funding for fostering me ceased, and my 'place' in the family seemed to have come to a close. Which, as far as the Martins' were concerned it certainly had. I had believed that *this was my family* – that a commitment had been made which bound us by trust into perpetuity. It was then that it hit home that my situation was the same: that *I* was the same as those hundreds of other Aboriginal children been assessed as redeemable because I was half white.

Documents from the National Australian Archives in Darwin received in 2001 show that between 1959 and 1970, direct contact by way of visits by welfare officers to myself and my foster family was minimal.[14] I was pretty shocked by the revelation that such records not only existed but were so extensive and that my life had been accounted for in numerous communications between my foster family and the Welfare.

The following is a letter from 1970 addressed to a Senior Social Worker in Adelaide from C. Clague, in the Alice Springs Welfare branch regarding an application on my behalf for my birth certificate:

> Re: Jennifer Ellis (State Child) (Your ref. WB/102/21)
> Enclosed is Jennifer's Birth Certificate as requested by you in your memo dated 28.7.70. Jennifer was committed to the care of the State Childrens' (sic) 28.7.57 in Alice Springs and transferred to the Receiving home Darwin 16.7.57. [15]

The above document represents the end date of my personal files. The following document represents the beginning date of my personal files from 1957.

> Date of Committal: 15.7.57
> Reason for Committal: Neglected.[16]

As I was only three and a half years old when I was sent to Croker, my memories of people and activities on the mission are few, but those that I have are vivid and indelible. I can recall being chased by scrub cattle, learning the trick of turning the eggshell over

[14] N.A.A., (Darwin), In Conjunction with Nunkuwarrin Yunti of SA Inc. SA Link-Up Program, Caseworker Vickie Dodd, Released 7 August 2001
[15] N.A.A., (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item: WB 102, CA 7112, (25), 6 August, 1970.
[16] N.A.A., (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item: WB 102, CA 7112, (29), 16 June 1964.

when you had eaten your boiled egg to make out that you had been given another (which was very unlikely), possums in the roof, the shipwreck in the bay and swimming in what I now know as Japanese Creek. Bread 'n butter pudding (the thought still makes me gag!!). But we had turtle eggs: I remember a small group of us discovering tracks on the beach and following them to the nest, digging up a couple and cooking them in coals. Cottage mother, Una Clarke, wrote that on the mission "there was always some difficulty regarding the food supplies [and so] the diet stretched to include turtle eggs . . . turtle eggs are a useful substitute for hens' eggs".[17] I have eaten one in my life, and the taste rises in my mouth every time I think of the mission.

The 'boys' on the mission had the responsibility of the stockyards, and the rules were that you did not venture any further from the mission than the dipping sheds. I recall that on one particular day my friend and I wandered out to the yards and climbed through the fence to 'pat a cow' which turned and charged towards us. Well, we scrambled back through the fence as fast as we could, but I cut my knee on the barbed wire – I still bear the scar today and take pleasure in remembering that little episode. One day when there must have been a supply delivery, a group of girls of all ages carried empty boxes to a big tree. We swept the ground clear and set up 'house'. Small memories I know, but in every recollection I am not alone, but part of a group, girls and boys – some smaller than me, but most are older. And the laughter – there was so much laughter. We lived together all the time, and we were never alone, all the children were family to each other.

At the time of removal, my brothers and sisters Denise Sultan, Faye Sultan, Tony Cassidy, Terry Cassidy and Jock Cassidy were also taken. Jock was the youngest, born in 1956. I often wonder; had my foster parents been shown the following photograph rather than the black and white image of a solitary child, and had they been told that some of the other children were my brothers, sister and cousins, would they have made a different decision?

[17] Una Clarke, *Things are So Much Better Than They Used to Be: My Memoirs* (Self-published, 1992), 119.

Tony Cassidy (approx. 5 yrs. of age), Jennifer Ellis (approx. 3 yrs. of age), David Clancy, Harold Furber, Eddie Horrell, Terry Cassidy (approx. 2 yrs. of age), Christopher Horrell, Patricia Furber (Circa 1956).
Source: Link-Up SA from Una Clarke Collection

Jennifer (nearly 5 yrs. of age, Fay (approx. 8 yrs. of age)
(Circa 1959)
Photo received January 2006, Source: Link-Up SA
From Una Clarke Collection

I was resident on the mission with my brothers and sisters until December 1958, when I was put on a plane and sent south to Adelaide to a family I knew nothing about. It wasn't until adulthood that I gained an understanding of the role of the churches in the placement of children, and the extent of policy and decision-making within the Methodist church in particular which impacted on the lives of so many who, sixty years later, know ourselves as 'The Croker Kids'. Files received from the Adelaide Uniting Church offices on 25 February 2006, outline the process taken to place 'part-European children' who were residents of Croker Island into homes – private and institutional – in the southern states. Correspondence on 17 October 1955 from Rev. C. F. Gribble, General Secretary and

Deputy Treasurer in the Sydney head office of the M.O.M.s to Rev. A. Erwin Vogt of the Central Methodist Mission in Adelaide says:

> I was not surprised to receive your letter of 13th October enquiring as to the position at Croker Island and the bringing of young people south to our children's homes . . . It seems that the Government is prepared for selected young people to be taken into approved homes of the Church and is willing to pay travelling expenses and to make a grant of [pounds] 200 p.a. per child. The Rev. Keith Mathieson visited Croker in August and made full enquiries into the position.[18]

As noted earlier, Mathieson had made a trip to assess the situation on Croker Island in 1955. Following that visit, Mathieson compiled a report "concerning the proposition to bring Mixed Blood children from Croker Island and other Isolated Settlements to Southern Institutions".[19] In this report, Mathieson wrote that:

> The Aim of work with part-Europeans . . . appears to be to aid them to achieve social competence in a society which is predominantly European and nominally Christian, thus requiring training in: Religion and Ethics; Health and Hygiene – personal and social.
> Age. It was generally accepted that the earlier a child could be moved south the better would be the chance for successful assimilation.
> Control. The Director of Welfare will be the legal guardian of these children; until they reach the age of 18 years.
> Colour. Where possible, children should be not less than half white and "fairness" should be a criterion of selection. It was held that at 10+ colour becomes important in the child's thinking and "fair" children might have a better chance.
> Education. It was widely held that mixed bloods would find their best level in non-academic education.
> Assimilation. There is little colour consciousness in lower school grades, but it often increases later owing to parental bias. Cause of backwardness in coloured folk is not colour; causes have been stated as home background, lack of parental guidance, too many late nights, drunken parents, unbalanced diet, lack of books and recreation. Mixed blood does not necessarily mean decadence and inferiority, but the poor environment often leads to that impression. Hence it is necessary to bring children South as early as possible – before colour consciousness arises. [20]

Is not surprising that the terminology of this report had changed from 'half-caste' to 'part-Europeans'. By this time the categorisation by percentage had become normalised in the catalogue of descriptors of Aborigines, but re-positioning the focus away from degrees of

[18] Uniting Church Archives, Gilles Street Adelaide: Transfer number PR 2, Box Number 1 / 2 Letter from Rev. C. F. Gribble to Rev A E Vogt, Superintendent of Methodist Children's Homes in Adelaide 17 October, 1955, accessed Feb, 2010.
[19] Mathieson, *Report.*
[20] Mathieson, *Report*.

Aboriginality became a means to show the 'sameness' to white people of half-castes. In 1951 the Acting Director of Native Affairs, C. R. Stahl, responding to a request from A. P. Elkin "requesting population data from full-blood aborigines and mixed-bloods in the Northern Territory", made clear distinctions between both groups, writing

> We have no separate census figures for mixed-blood, those with 50 per cent or less aboriginal blood are included in the white census, and those with more than 50 per cent aboriginal blood are included in the aboriginal census.[21]

In response to a query by Elkin, Stahl also informed Elkin that

> An estimated number of mixed-blood of 25 per cent to 75 per cent aboriginal blood would be: - Croker Island Mission 100 (children).[22]

For the mission body, 'fairness' became a visual marker of higher degrees of *whiteness.* The use of the term "part-European" created a shift in focus from the dualism in Australian society of 'Aboriginal' and 'white' where it was perceived that the two groups existed in non-compatible spheres, to a pluralistic view. The notions of pluralism generated assumptions that although 'white' and 'Aboriginal' were autonomous of each other, due to their white parentage, the children would be granted greater social and political franchise and be privy to an equal share in all that white society had to offer. It sent the message to those 'down South' who were contemplating fostering or adopting the children that, after all, as Chair of the M.O.M. Board, T. T. Webb wrote, "the half-caste is the white man's child", indicating that the task of assimilating the children would be more easily achieved.[23] The protection provided for the families who chose to foster rather than adopt was that, if things did not go well or as planned, the legal responsibilities lay with the Director of Welfare, rather than with them.

In April 1957, the office of the Minister of State for Territories (Paul Hasluck) made amendments to the *Regulations Under the Welfare Ordinance (1953-1955) Act*, which related directly to all Aboriginal children and youths as wards of the state. [24] Section 5 of the Ordinance states: "Form 3 in the Schedule to those Regulations is the prescribed form for the purpose of section 21 of the Ordinance".[25] Form 3 is the *Authority to Transfer Ward*, and posited with the Director of Welfare or Welfare Officer the power to move

[21] C. R. Stahl [Acting Director of Native Affairs], Letter to Professor A. P. Elkin, 22 November, 1951. http://N.A.A.12.naa.gov.au/scripts/Imagine.asp barcode 340479,
[22] Stahl Letter to Professor A. P. Elkin, 22 November, 1951.
[23] T. T. Webb, "A Future for the Half-Caste", *An Address delivered to the Young Women's Missionary Council of Victoria*, The Methodist Overseas Mission (Sydney: Spectator Publishing, 1939).
[24] Northern Territory of Australia, Welfare Ordinance 1953-1955: Schedule, Welfare Ordinance, Register of Wards *Regulations Under the Welfare Act*, 1957.
[25] Northern Territory of Australia, Welfare Ordinance 1953-1955.

wards of the state from "Reserves, Institution, District" within the Northern Territory to "a place outside the Northern Territory".[26] Applying those amendments, on 4 November, 1955 the Executive of the Methodist Children's Homes Committee ratified the decision to bring children 'south' from Croker Island.[27] This activated the final stages of the original Croker Island Scheme where it had been resolved that in order to move towards full assimilation, the children would be sent out across the country. It also provided the mandate under which I was sent from the mission to Adelaide.

Documentation has shown that there were numbers of adoptive/foster families who knew of the processes and intended outcomes of the absorption of 'part' Aboriginal children into white society. Those families came from all sectors of the community, but the churches played a significant role in the placement of Aboriginal children who were residents of church missions. The young inmates were then sent out to parishes across the country. While the welfare department had a specific agenda of assimilation, the churches had the added aspiration of teaching christian beliefs to the children in their care. As then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said in the 2008 Parliamentary Apology

> the children would be handed over to the missions to be cared for by the churches. But which church would care for them? Those on the left were told that they had become Catholics, those in the middle Methodists and those on the right Church of England. That is how the complex questions of post-reformation theology were resolved.[28]

As chapter one has shown, while there was much more to be taken into account regarding Croker Island as a Methodist Mission, the religious denomination of the child/children was relative to which mission site they would end up on. Rudd's statement is reinforced by McKenzie's comment that with the half-caste children from "Alice Springs and Darwin homes" being brought to Croker "There were about ninety Methodist children involved, "Methodist" by reason of their not being either Roman Catholic or Anglican".[29] When I was preparing to marry in a church ceremony, I made the comment to my foster father that I should look at getting baptised, his response was "Oh . . . no – you have already been baptised. All the children on Croker were baptised as soon as they got to the mission".

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[26] Northern Territory of Australia, Welfare Ordinance 1953-1955.
[27] Uniting Church Archives Adelaide, "Indigenous Children at Magill Children's Home", compiled January, 2004 – accessed 2010.
[28] Kevin Rudd, *House of Representatives Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples Speech,* Wednesday 13 February 2008. http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/our-country/our-people/apology-to-australias-indigenous-peoples
[29] Maisie McKenzie, *Mission to Arnhem Land* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1976), 112.

From the age of five my name, as far as I knew, was formally Jennifer Lorraine Martin. Although I had never seen my birth certificate, my foster parents always told me that my 'original' surname was Ellis, but I assumed that as I was called 'Martin' at school and by everyone who knew me, that there had been some process of formal induction to the Martin family. In line with the family (and era) norm, and certainly not having any understanding of the anthropological and political narratives around Aboriginal people, I identified as being 'part-Aboriginal', especially as it was believed that my father had been white. I grew to know this was a 'good thing': that having white heritage somehow made me a better being and it was this designation that would provide protection. The explanation given to me by my foster family for calling me by their family surname was that it would make things easier for me.

In what appears to be a considerate and empathetic decision, my foster mother told me that formal adoption would require searching for my mother and seeking her signature for adoption. Although documents show that my mother and father were living in Darwin by this time and very easy to find, it was considered that to ask that would be too heartbreaking for my mother and they had not wished to put her through such a traumatic situation.[30] These conversations showed that there was no consideration for the devastation of my mother's and father's lives that had already occurred because of our removal. Not really knowing that there was a distinct legal difference between fostering and adoption I always trusted this as the truth, and I was taught to believe that fostering rather than adoption came from a place of 'goodness concern' for my mother, and I was grateful. I also only referred to myself as Jennifer Martin.

Post-note: a letter that came into my possession in January 2017 is on M.O.M letterhead. The letter, dated 22.12.58, is addressed to Rev. & Mrs. G. Martin and it is from the then Superintendent of Croker, the Rev. E. R. Moore. I only gained access to this letter after the death of my foster father, the Rev. George Martin. While congratulating the Martins on my arrival, it states that "the only thing we are not happy about is she is not fully adoptable." Rather than being on the basis of 'not knowing where my mother was' or not wanting to cause my mother distress, this situation is more likely to be a result of administrative dereliction at the time of our removal where processes of taking us away were not through the auspices of the Welfare Board, and not validated by the Director of Welfare.

[30] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS: D4082/1, Item: WB 102, Letter from Harry Giese to George Martin, (17), 23 April 1969.

At the age of seventeen, the issue was raised by my foster mother about the need to change my name. By this stage, I really believed that there would be no contact from my mother – and, as strange as this might seem, I felt it was alright to change my surname, because I reasoned that if anyone were looking for me they would call me *Jennifer* – the name on my birth certificate because that name had not changed.

In 1970, the Department of Welfare granted permission for me to undergo a name change:

> Re: JENNIFER ELLIS (W. 37/SC.20/65 in response to your WB/102/21)
> I have arranged for termination of payment of maintenance for Jennifer to Mr. and Mrs. Martin in accordance with your letter of 28th July. The Director has given his approval for Jennifer to change her name to Jennifer Martin.[31]

Prior to this, through reports made by my foster father, the Welfare Department was informed of my progress. A 1969 letter from the Northern Territory Welfare branch to the Vocational Guidance Section of the Department of Labour and National service records that "this family has not been visited by an officer of this department since Jennifer was placed with them".[32] In in a letter to the Welfare Officer in Adelaide in 1966 Giese wrote

> it is not recommended that you visit this family, and particularly the child herself . . . no regular contacts or reports from you will be required.[33]

Three years later Giese wrote directly to George Martin saying "As you will recall [Jennifer] is in my legal care until she reaches the age of seventeen in 1971".[34] Over the years comments such as "18th Aug 1966 – Mrs Martin contacted as per above, will ring if any help required", Jennifer Ellis is with a Methodist Minister at Broken Hill. It just seems a long way to go for one case" and "never visited on AOGW's [sic] instruction" is a clear indicator that the Welfare abrogated its fiduciary care.[35]

Welfare agents were not only not present as a regulating body, but they left me without protection. The only indicators that they had about my wellbeing came through the reports from my foster father. Nevertheless, the Director of Welfare accepted and enforced the dictates of my foster parents without asking the question whether the Martins had put these stipulations in place because there were things happening that they didn't want the welfare authorities to know and the possibility they were afraid of what I might report.

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[31] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102, CA: 7112 Atsic (sic) N.T. State office – portion relating to Aboriginal people, Released to Link-Up SA August 2001, Received February 2002, (28).
[32] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102, CA: 7112, (18) 5 May 1969.
[33] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102, CA: 7112, (16) 20 April 1969.
[34] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102, CA: 7112, (17) 23 April 1969
[35] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/4, Item SAI – 1, CA: 7112 (54) 9 June 1970.

Therefore with the doors to official scrutiny closed, my foster father continued to send regular updates to Welfare.

In a 'report to the N. T. Director of Child Welfare in April 1969', George Martin wrote that

> On the social side, Jennifer is able to mix freely with others and has a very friendly manner . . . Now and then reference is made to her colour at school but she does not seem to get upset about it: or if she does, it is not in evidence by the time she comes home.[36]

In reality this is an indication of the ways in which I did not talk about my colour or my Aboriginality. Based on the family conversations in which 'Aboriginality' always equated to 'undesirable', I came to understand that it was preferable for me not to identify as Aboriginal. I recall that whenever I behaved in a way that was difficult to cope with or understand, the comment, both private and public, would be that "that's just Jennifer being Aboriginal". Therefore I only ever identified as being 'part-Aboriginal' when questions about my skin colour were raised.

Skin colour was not an issue for me – but skin colour as determined by welfare, anthropology, church and society generally was an issue or point of comment for other people. An example of this is found in a school report of 1961 where the teacher commented that I was "A light skinned, hazel-eyed child".[37] While, to the teacher, this would most likely be a statement that carried no malice or prejudice, it was not free of 'race value'. In that situation, the tones of my skin, and the colour of my eyes (i.e. not the same as Aborigines [brown]) were indicators of positive social currency: these 'attributes' made me I more acceptable to white society. There are countless numbers of Aboriginal people whose 'fairness' of skin has led to the comments "but you're only part Aboriginal aren't you"? In these moments, as Bonita Lawrence writes, "indigeneity is presumed to cease to exist with racial mixing"; half-castes are being petitioned "to embrace [their] mixed-blood hybridity", which in effect "is to be asked to celebrate one's own extinction as a Native person".[38] Of course, while analysis of such terms shows that one's Aboriginality/Indigeneity was relegated to the shadows, none of this deeper level understanding would have been in play at the time the teacher was making her report. All she saw was a young half-caste girl to whom she applied already established descriptors.

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[36] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102, CA: 7112 (16).
[37] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item WB 102, CA: 7112 (2) 28 June 1961.
[38] Bonita Lawrence, "Legislating Identity: Colonialism, Land and Indigenous Legacies", in *The SAGE Handbook of Identities*, eds., Margaret Wetherell & Chandra Talpade Mohanty (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2010), Chapter 27.

The report went on to note that I was "alert and intelligent" and it seemed important to note that I was "Tidily dressed".[39] The rest of the report is a confusing mix of commentary, that I had an "appealing manner", was "affectionate" while being "boisterous" - "easy going and destructive in a careless but not malicious way".[40] Apparently I "was far happier playing with boys rather than girls" which reads like a dire warning that there was the future possibility that I would enjoy the company of boys when I was older, buying into that notion that by their biologically determined nature Aboriginal females were 'promiscuous'.[41]

The comment which elicited the greatest reaction to me was about my foster mother where it was noted

> Mrs. Martin is young and sensible, but admits she finds it difficult to treat Jennifer equally with her own 2 ½ year child.[42]

I experience distress every time I read this because even as a seven year old, I knew it.

At the age of forty-seven I finally admitted that I carried deep and significant pain because at the age of seven and a half I knew that I had become a problem. I then spent the next forty years writing letters thanking the Martins for taking me, apologising for not being whatever they wanted to me, praising them for their commitment to this child who was not theirs. This sadness has exponentially increased after realising that because I was fostered, not adopted, the Martins were in receipt of government funding from the time of my arrival, which in 1959 was "£200.00 per annum".[43] Therefore between early 1959 and the end of 1969, monies were paid from the Northern Territory Welfare Department for my upkeep, but the funding from this source would cease when I turned seventeen.

At the beginning of 1970, I had another year of schooling to attend, and so arrangements were made by the Welfare department for payments to the Martins to be issued from the "Part-Aboriginal Education Scheme".[44] The April 1969 letter also included comments on my educational abilities stating

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[39] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item WB 102, CA: 7112 (2) 28 June 1961; CRS D4082/1 Item WB 102, CA: 7112 (16).
[40] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item WB 102, CA: 7112 (2).
[41] Raymond Evans, Kay Saunders, Kathryn Cronin, *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination: Race Relations in colonial Queensland,* (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co., 1975), 90.
[42] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102, CA: 7112 (2).
[43] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS Item: 1958/1936 CA: 8618, Department of Transport and Regional Services Central Office (13) 16 April 1959.
[44] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/4, Item: SA 1-3/CL 7112 (12) 17 January 1963.

> Jennifer repeated first year and is now doing third year. Results from the recent mid-term tests indicated that she is doing fairly well in Art and English . . . this is consistent with assessments of her aptitude in primary school.[45]

According to a 1963 report, my primary schooling records showed that "Jennifer is well above average" and that "Jennifer made much more progress than the average student", but it appears that by the age of seventeen, I was not fulfilling that earlier potential.[46] In order to determine the best way forward for my future employment, Vocational Guidance testing was organised in May 1969. The report from Senior Social Worker M. J. R. Haeusler states "At primary school Jennifer was considered a bright student and it was expected that she would proceed to University".[47] Haeusler went on to say "Her Secondary Schooling has been a disappointment to her foster mother".[48] The Vocational testing analysis showed that

> test performance indicates the capacity for skilled to highly skilled practical work and training. From these results Jennifer would seem to have potential for Matriculation level studies. However, her achievement at school so far and her lack of motivation would seem to make it unlikely that she could ever reach that scholastic level. [49]

Given that I was not going to make the grade for academic pursuits, it was decided to find another career option for me. At the end of 1969, just before I turned eighteen, the Martins assisted me in being enrolled in nursing. Having gained a place in the 1970 May nurse intake at the then Children's Hospital in North Adelaide, I began pre-intake training at Estcourt House, in Tennyson. At that time the family residence was half-way between the Semaphore and Largs jetties on the Esplanade. Although Estcourt house was only a fifteen minute bus ride away, I found that I had to move out and into the Nurses Quarters of the hospital and I never understood why. It was in 2001 that the realisation came that I had to move out because the government funding ceased: I was no longer a funded ward of the state, and seemingly I was no longer the responsibility of or a member of this family.

[45] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102, CA: 7112 (16).
[46] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102 CA: 7112 (12).
[47] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102, CA 7112 (18).
[48] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102, CA 7112 (18).
[49] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1, Item WB 102 7112 Dept. Labour and National Service (20) 30 May 1969.

In the 1969 letter from Rev. Martin to the Director of Child Welfare, it can be seen that my Aboriginality was not in evidence at a youth camp where "It was not until the camp was nearly over that it was realised by leaders that Jennifer was part-aboriginal" but George Martin felt that

> This may prove to have consequences later on as it is most unlikely that Jennifer could identify with aboriginals and she runs the risk of rejection by a section of the white populace at least.[50]

Haeusler's report around the same time said that "Jennifer apparently expresses little interest in her natural family and it is considered unlikely that she will wish to return to the Northern Territory".[51] G. Martin wrote to Giese that "As things stand now, Jennifer has been assimilated rather than integrated into the community".[52] In stark contradiction to these evaluations Haeusler reported in July 1970 that Mrs. Martin had stated that:

> During the past two years Jennifer has expressed an increasing interest in her Aboriginal descent, and has wished to know more about her brothers and sisters.[53]

Giese's response was extraordinary: while making the definitive statement that he "would certainly see Jennifer's future in South Australia rather than returning to the Northern Territory" he revealed that "Her parents are in Darwin" but made no suggestion that efforts be made to reunite me with my family.[54] Giese justified this position by writing "that family standards are very poor and as she has lost all contact with her mother, I see little point in renewing their relationship".[55] This shows that not only were my parents locatable, it was known that I was their child. This raises the question of whether this was always known and if so, why were my foster parents never informed of this especially when they were apparently seeking for her permission to adopt me? As far as I knew there was no purpose in attempting to find my family. Apart from not knowing where to start, I believed that I would not like what I found and I also had a strong feeling that I did not want to be seen by the Martins as being ungrateful or to damage the fabric of this 'family'.

[50] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item WB 102, CA 7112 (16).
[51] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item WB 102, CA 7112 (18).
[52] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item WB 102, CA 7112 (18).
[53] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item WB 102, CA 7112 Letter from Haeusler to Giese (22) July 1970.
[54] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item WB 102, CA 7112 (17).
[55] N.A.A. (Darwin), CRS D4082/1 Item WB 102, CA 7112 (17).

Return to Croker.

In 2004, staff at the Adelaide Link-Up branch contacted me with the news that there was to be a Croker Island reunion organised by the Croker Island Association in Darwin in conjunction with the Minjilang community. They made the arrangements for my daughter and I to attend, and we flew into Darwin to be met by those who had arrived earlier. People looked at us and asked "who is this one" – then with the realisation that I was Terry's sister, the exclamation was without fail "Ahh, its little Jenni Wren", and we were brought into the embrace of the group. A couple of days later we all boarded small Cessna planes that would fly us out to Croker Island, where we would stay for two nights. Everyone was excited, but my brother Terry was very nervous about the size of the plane and the upcoming flight – but he came. The photograph below is of my sister Faye, my brother Terry, and my daughter and myself waiting at Darwin airport to board the small plane to Croker Island. Because of the trauma he suffered, Tony has never been able to bring himself to go back to the mission.

Low flying out of Darwin in an eight seater twin engine plane, the pilot skims the craft over the Coburg Peninsula. The beauty of the lands below is both silencing and exclamatory. The excitement and anticipation of the passengers is palpable – some have made this journey before, but it is the first return for me. The noise of the engines attempts to defeat much of the conversation, but there is nothing man-made that can smother the squeals of delight, gasps of recognition of the landscape and memories which flow from those on board. At 13 the youngest is my daughter, the eldest is goodness knows, nearly 80? But chronological age has no meaning here –those who are returning are no longer Aboriginal adults, they are all half-caste children again, returning to a place that they all occupied at some time in their lives.

The pilot points through the cockpit window, directs our attention to the small island sitting in the Arafura Sea, separated from the mainland by the Bowen Strait to the west and Mountnorris Bay to the south. The air is electric – all eyes are taking in the 7km wide, 8.5km long formation - "There! Look there, that's it – that's Croker!"

In all the flurry and seesawing emotions, I was taken aback with the realisation that it was a prison!!! There is no way off except by boat or by plane – how could the kids who were stabled here ever escape. The sea is full of deadly things, any attack would be fatal. It was a bloody prison. An internment camp; a konzentrationslager for kids who were kids but who were now a colour.

With respect, after seeking permission from Minjilang elders to roam at will, the group of returning kids splits and regroups, meandering in a paddock of reminiscences. Gasps of remembrances, gathering fruit from the trees, pointing there to the cross where one of their own was laid to rest those many years ago. Laughter and good natured bickering, solidarity forged in shared experience.

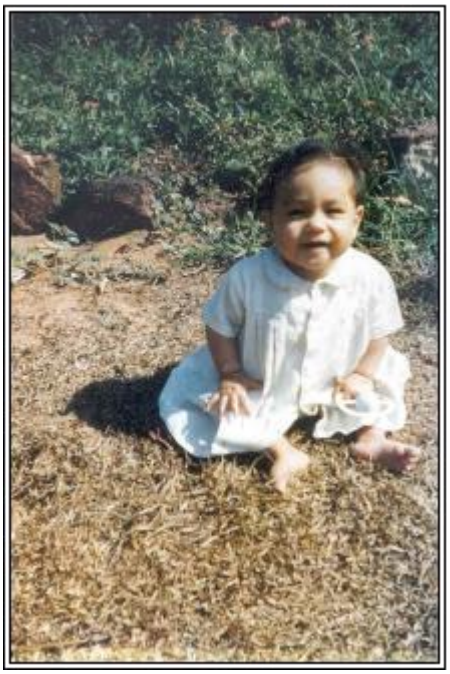
Although I had been an inmate for just a comparatively short while memories rose to the surface: there Jap's Creek (Japanese Creek so named because of pre-war visits from Japanese fishers) where I – too little to swim – clung to my sister's neck as they crossed the narrow inlet. The screams at the appearance of wild cattle on the farther shore – even then they roamed the island. The tropical jungle at the edge of the compound – forbidden territory inhabited by all kinds of monsters and bad men, as children daring each other to go closer, closer! With quickened heartbeat I recognised the tree where the girl kids swept a clear space, and with the boxes from the supply deliveries created a house. And those defining moments when memory became reality -the barbed wire fence where my memory told me that I had scarred my knee; watching the young woman who was returning for her grandparents, finding a heart engraved with their initials; when at the ruins of the cattle dipping shed the boys (now men) - hands in pockets, scuffing the tropical ivy growth with the tips of their shoes uncovered their names scratched into the cement block. 50 or more years on and memory(ies) no longer figments of childhood imagination as deemed by some ("The problem with the Stolen Generations thesis is that childhood recollections constitute the only credible evidence its adherents have provided to make their case").[56] And they know that the point will be missed, that being not proving that they were there – that will be accepted without question. The point is that most of these kids ended up here – on this island, this mission, this prison through white subterfuge. They know they were there for reasons different from those institutions for white kids, and they know it because there were no cottages for white welfare kids in this place. And I know that race was the deciding factor because a) of my personal documents from the National Archives in Darwin b) for most of my life other people have described- categorised – called me part-Aboriginal.

[56] Windschuttle, "Why There Were No Stolen Generations," 8-21.

On the last evening, strolling along the pristine beach at dusk with my brother and sister, the sound of the waves just a whisper on the breeze and the chatter muted, I woman stopped and gazed back. I had heard the sound of the mission children laughing gleefully, splashing and larking about. But the beach was empty – the children now adults returning to this prison island paradise searching still for that laughter, that family that we had formed, adapting as kids will do to the maladaptive situation of having been disappeared from their natural lives. I turned to my daughter, and without touching drew her into an embrace that stretched across known time, with its beginnings and endings in the Alcheringa.

Baby Jock.

At the time of my reconnection, my mother and my brothers and sisters had been searching for our 'baby' brother Jock. Baby Jock Cassidy was listed as having been "boarded out".[57] For decades the family had assumed that he had been sent to Croker Island at the same time as his brothers and sisters, until reading the self-published memoirs of Croker Island cottage mother, Una Clarke who wrote in the chapter *Baby Jock* that "Jock Cassidy was the youngest of three boys. Baby Jock came to us. I will never forget being handed a baby boy by the Welfare Officer. She did not know the child's name or how old he was"![58]



Clarke also wrote "The fact that he had been unable to sit up was due to malnutrition".[59] These claims were extremely distressing to Gladys who vehemently stated that it was a "bunch of bloody lies, none of my kids were ever malnourished and I always looked after my kids".[60]

Logically, with all the children being taken away at the same time, and with no comment on the other five children being in deprived state, why would Jock alone have been malnourished? What was clearly at odds was that Jock arrived at the mission months after we did, and the notation that he was 'boarded out' raises the possibility that his physical

[57] N.A.A. Darwin, Series F1, Item: 1962/3101.
[58] Clarke, *My Memoirs*, 143.
[59] Clarke, *My Memoirs*, 144.
[60] Personal conversation with Gladys Cassidy

condition had deteriorated as a result of being placed somewhere else between his removal and his arrival at Croker.

The information my family had been able to find was that he was adopted out to a family in Darwin without signed consent from our mother. The names he was now known under were Jock Cassidy, David Goldsworthy, or David Atkinson. My brother Tony in Broome, and his wife Heather applied for a national search through the Australian Tax Office, which has such a service available. In 2001 letters were sent out to all people with those names listed on the Australian Taxation Records stating that there was family who wished to meet him, and if he was interested then he could make contact himself. Jock rang as soon as he read the letter. He had known he was adopted, but had grown up with the understanding that he was Indian/Irish background, and had no knowledge of his Aboriginality until he made contact with our brother Tony. He applied for and gained a Confirmation of Aboriginality from Newcastle Link-Up, regaining his status as an Aboriginal person.[61] In an email dated January 2002 after his first reunion with the family, Jock writes:

> You may have heard from mum or the others that the meeting up [here] went very well, they were all at the airport waiting for me. .things went well I think because I wasn't carrying any emotional baggage as to why we were taken away. . . I'm not bitter and twisted. . Terry and I think to some degree tony (sic) are very emotional about it possibly because they stayed on the island, they were older and knew that ther (sic) was someone out there, and they were treated poorly on the island as well, terry got very emotional and seems to need to blame someone especially the "system" for what they done and from my view it all seemed so easy to do, to rip apart a family, I believe mum is also deeply hurt by it all and just does not want to talk about it, but now the circle is complete as she says and I have been found, I think that she should sit down with terry and tony all of us actually and explain what happned (sic), all terry wants to know is why, and it is tearing him apart emotionally.[62]

I spoke with Jock in February, 2006, asking his permission to write about him which he gave unconditionally. In conversation he has told me that his upbringing was a good one, and, while his adoptive mother has passed away, he has the deepest love for her. If anything, he said, he did not have a father, certainly not one who nurtured him or developed a strong father/son relationship with him, "that's why I am with my boys," he said. "I needed that, and now I'll make sure that I am a good father to my boys". The

[61] A confirmation of Aboriginality from the community in which an Aboriginal person lives is required for access to study and other services available to Aboriginal people.
[62] Jock Ellis/ Jock Cassidy/David Goldsworthy January 2002.

following poem was written by Jocks' daughter Casey during the time that Jock and his family stayed with my family in December 2001,

Damage Done
Across the other side of the great brown land
I long for the touch of my grandmother's hand
For the story she shares or the fact that she cares
I can't wait to finally meet her!
Years ago my father was taken
He was moved away his heart was aching
Now as we discover the facts
We see the results of the treacherous acts
With many tears we've found each other, there's lots of life, love and laughter
Now as we become one
We will put behind us the damage done.

One of the most regular comments made to me is that didn't I feel that I had benefited from being placed with a non-Aboriginal family? People who make these statements are generally unaware that they are saying "well hasn't it been for the better that you were taken away from your mother'? My response is that all my siblings who remained with our parents finished their schooling through to year 12, they were all employed and had always been in employment. All of my nieces and nephews had completed their schooling, and all had jobs and places to live. As recorded in the *Bringing them Home Report,*

> A national random survey of Indigenous people allows us to compare the life circumstances of the people who had been separated as children against those rosed by their families and communities. It shows no significant difference between the two groups with respect to their educational achievements. . . Neither are people removed . . . significantly more likely to earn higher incomes in adulthood.[63]

Therefore, why would anyone assume that things would have been any different if those of us who had been removed had remained with our parents? And the role models for working, persisting and gaining an education leading to employment were our father and mother, especially Gladys – who continued to work at the Port Hedland Aboriginal Health Service into her seventies.

[63] *Bringing them home*, 14.

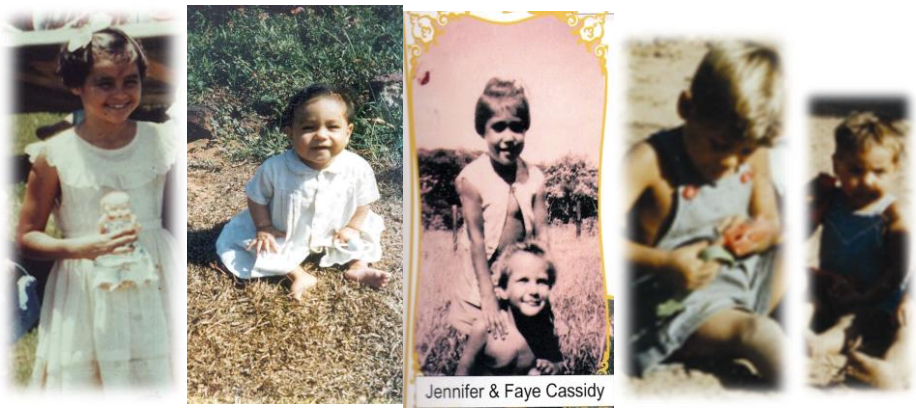
Port Hedland 2010 and 2011.

After seeing mum a total of four times over the intervening seventeen years, I made the decision to fly to Port Hedland in May 2010 just for the weekend to attend her eightieth birthday. Even though I was incredibly busy and it costs so much and takes so long to get there, it was a significant milestone that I wanted to be a part of, even though a couple of us Croker six would not be there.

While my sister Denise and brother Tony were not able to make it, most of the rest of the family were there to celebrate. My sister Fay is at the far left of the front row, with mum in the centre and sister Mitzi sitting down. Judith is the youngest sister standing to the left the second row, with my brother Jock standing next to me, then my husband Tony. Then surrounding mum are all her sons-in-law and her daughters-in-law, most of her grandchildren (my own children could not make it), and her great grandchildren. I have to admit that I felt bad that I had bought mum what I considered to be a relatively cheap gift of a watch from Big W. Mum loved it! She took it out of the box and put it on going around and exclaiming to everyone "look what Jennifer gave me", sticking out her arm with the too big watch hanging off that skinny wrist of hers.

I will always remember that and I am so relieved I made the effort as the next visit in May 2011 was to attend her funeral.

This photograph was taken on the day of the funeral of Gladys Helen Cassidy – our mother. It was the only time all six of us who had been taken away were in the same place at the same time.



Over that time we as a family were aware of the investigation into the removal of half-caste kids that had been undertaken by the federal government which resulted in the *Bringing them home Report***.** None of us had our stories recorded, but I do know that my foster parents were approached to make a submission: at that stage they declined to be involved.

Given that my story is repeated time and time again from people of the Stolen Generations, how can the country reconcile this history?

The National Apology

In 1997, Recommendation 3 of the Components of reparations for the *National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families* stated

> 3. That, for the purposes of responding to the effects of forcible removals, 'compensation' be widely defined to mean 'reparation'; that reparation be made in recognition of the history of gross violations of human rights; and that the van Boven principles guide the reparation measures. Reparation should consist of,
>
> 1. Acknowledgment and apology.[64]

A decade later on the 13 February 2008, the then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd delivered what has become known as The Apology to Australia's' Indigenous Peoples. As Tony Barta wrote:

> It was a day of high emotion, as it had to be. Tears, joy, tension, relief. For more than two centuries Aboriginal people in Australia have been subject to relentless pressures of family destruction; for more than two decades they have actively sought recognition of the pain inflicted on those called "the stolen generations.[65]

Most interestingly, in March 2008, Robert Manne wrote:

> Like very many Australians, I was shocked, moved and ashamed when I read its account of the systematic, decades-long practice of separating Aboriginal children of mixed descent from their mothers, families and communities, and of the physical and psychic suffering so many had endured, as a consequence, for the remainder of their lives. This was a chapter of recent Australian history I had not taken the trouble to understand.[66]

Like Manne, many Australians did not have a grasp of the fullness of the removal of Aboriginal children, never-the-less what they did know - or what they came to understand - underpinned the reaction from much of the population who acknowledged that

> The words deserved to be received with acclamation, and they were – the house and the crowds all round the country burst into spontaneous applause, embraces, and tears.[67]

However, writes Haebich, responses from the general public were mixed, there were the instances where "The apology was swept along in the acrimonious debates and vigorous

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[64] *Bringing them home,* Appendix 9, https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/bringing-them-home-appendix-9-recommendations

[65] Tony Barta, "Sorry, and not sorry, in Australia: how the apology to the stolen generations buried a history of genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research* 10:2 (2008), 201.

[66] Robert Manne, "Sorry Business: The Road to the Apology," *The Monthly* (2008): 22.

[67] Barta, "Sorry, and not sorry, in Australia," 201.

personal attacks and counter-attacks that clouded public understanding of the issue".[68] In variance to generally celebratory reaction, there are many people, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, for whom the apology held little or no significance. A.B.C. commentator, Scott Stephens took a particularly pertinent position writing: "I thought it was an overblown PR exercise . . . that it verged on pandering to latent racist feeling in this country", and that ". . . I don't think that this apology means what they think it means".[69]

While I personally saw the Apology as a watershed moment because it was "an extraordinary display of how a government can change the national agenda by mobilising the media", I also have my reservations about it.[70] I concur with Barta's statement that

> the true, moral, intellectual and historical disaster [is that] there is a deeply seated impulse in Australian society to separate problems of Aboriginal life and death in the present from the European attitudes to Aboriginal life and death in the past.[71]

Stephens saw the apology as a means of assuaging white Australian guilt, writing

> The reason that Kevin Rudd had to reiterate that this apology "does not attribute guilt to the current generation of Australian people" is not because we don't believe we are complicit in the misery of indigenous Australians, but because we know that we are and don't want to have to admit as much. As a nation, we have a pathological aversion to guilt precisely because of the objective guilt we all share.[72]

Adding to that Stephens articulated some of my own concerns and misgivings about the Apology. He said

> While "we hope and pray that this "sorry" acts as a catalyst for the grieving and healing process - the beginning of the cathartic "sorry business" for which indigenous Australians have waited for so long there needs to be a much deeper appreciation that the Stolen Generations was not and is not an 'event', it is an outcome. Understanding this is core to any processes of reconciliation undertaken by non-Aboriginal Australians.[73]

[68] Anna Haebich, "Forgetting Indigenous Histories: Cases from the History of Australia's Stolen Generations," *Journal of Social History*, 44:4 (2011): 1033.
[69] Scott Stephens, *The apology and the moral significance of guilt,* ABC News, 2 May 2008 http://www.abc.net.au/news/2008-02-25/the-apology-and-the-moral-significance-of-guilt/1053240
[70] Barta, "Sorry, and not sorry, in Australia", 209.
[71] Barta, "Sorry, and not sorry, in Australia", 209.
[72] Stephens, *The apology and the moral significance of guilt*.
[73] Stephens, *The apology and the moral significance of guilt.*

CHAPTER FIVE: Reports, Reparations and Revelations.

Reports.

For a number of reasons, 2017 holds significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This year we are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the 1967 Referendum which saw centralised responsibility for the administration of Aboriginal affairs being transferred to the Commonwealth, and when "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were fully included in Census results for the first time".[1] It also marks twenty-five years since the success of the Mabo native title case which led to the 1993 *Native Title Act.*[2] Significantly, for the Stolen Generations, this year also marks twenty years since the tabling of the Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families *Bringing them home*.[3] While this Inquiry was the result of demands by Aboriginal Australia to address the issue of removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the 1991 Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody had identified that such removals severely impacted the adult lives of those who were removed.[4] There are contemporary connections made between findings of the Deaths in Custody, the removal of Aboriginal children and the current rates of self-harm amongst Aboriginal youth.

In detailing suicide rates among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the 2015 Australian Bureau of Statistics stated that in 1991, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody:

> Drew attention to the links between substance misuse and mental health disorders in the years and months before most of the deaths that it investigated. It also highlighted the disproportionate number of these deaths (over three-quarters) where there was a history of having been forcibly separated from natural families as children.[5]

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[1] Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Marking 50 years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in population estimates". http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs%40.nsf/mediareleasesbyCatalogue/E31B62F372FC7BCECA2581320029DC01?OpenDocument

[2] Federal Government of Australia, *Native Title Act 1993* (short title). https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00178

[3] Ronald Wilson (Commissioner), National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families *Bringing them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*, (Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission), April 1997. https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/pdf/social_justice/bringing_them_home_report.pdf

[4] Elliot Johnston (commissioner), *National* Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, (Canberra: Australian Govt. Pub. Service, 1991). http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs112.aspx

[5] Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Causes of Death in Australia 2015: Intentional Self-Harm of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.*

The 1997 Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families *Bringing them home* comprehensively details the personal histories of hundreds of members of the Stolen Generations.[6] As mentioned in earlier chapters, the Report discussed the removal of half-caste Aboriginal children as being consistent with the United Nations 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.[7]

> The Inquiry's process of consultation and research has revealed that the predominant aim of Indigenous child removals was the absorption or assimilation of the children into the wider, non-Indigenous, community so that their unique cultural values and ethnic identities would disappear, giving way to models of Western culture. . . Removal of children with this objective in mind is genocidal because it aims to destroy the `cultural unit' which the Convention is concerned to preserve.[8]

Harm to others and the self are consistent themes which thread their way through *Bringing them home.* The stories are not just those of personal devastation, but of the generational impacts on whole families and communities which are evidenced today in the high rates of Aboriginal youth suicide. In a recent article in *The Conversation,* Professor of Politics, Colin Tatz asks the question 'Could there be a link between genocide and suicide'? Tatz observes that in Australia, "The social, political, legal, geographical and historical contexts have led to violent behaviour towards others – and, more particularly, towards selves. Aboriginal youth are taking their lives at extraordinary rates" and that "After 25 years of studying Aboriginal suicide, mainly that of youth, my conclusion is that much of it is "political" – that is, an exercise of power over the one thing they possess: their bodies."[9] The Australian Department of Health *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy 2013* identifies that:

> The interconnected issues of cultural dislocation, personal trauma and the ongoing stresses of disadvantage, racism, alienation and exclusion were all acknowledged by the Commission as contributing to the heightened risk of mental health problems, substance misuse and suicide (Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice; 2010).[10]

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http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/3303.0~2015~Main%20Features~Intentional%20self-harm%20in%20Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20people~9

[6] *Bringing them Home*, (1997).

[7] *Bringing them Home*, Chapter 13.

[8] *Bringing them Home*, Chapter 13.

[9] Colin Tatz, "Could there be a link between genocide and suicide?" *The Conversation*, 30 June, 2017. http://theconversation.com/could-there-be-a-link-between-genocide-and-suicide-80071

[10] Australian Department of Health *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy 2013* (Reviewed, 2014). http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mental-pub-atsi-suicide-prevention-strategy

Unfortunately, while holding promise, reports and social commentary on Aboriginal Australians do not alleviate the ongoing and often renewed grief and trauma of the Stolen Generations. If anything the consequences anguish of our removal are seen in our continued everyday existence. As Judy Atkinson has recorded in her research on trauma experienced by Aboriginal people who were removed from their families as children, the "thoughts and feelings" of participants in her study identified that as a result, they contend with a myriad of negative emotional and social experiences as a part of life.[11] Some of the outcomes were:

> being black which meant never feeling good enough; feeling anxious, nervous, sad, angry, hate, jealousy, suspicious, sick, seesaw of fear (taking over whole body); anger; the need to punch, stab, kill; flooding with feelings; flashbacks (like a movie all in front of you happening again and again); not being part of anything; numb; never feeling happy, contented, loved or love; feeling depressed, bad, stupid, dirty, shame, ugly, useless, worthless, of no value; totally isolated; desolation is unbearable; stranger with family but part of the drinking group; wanting to die; constant feelings and thoughts around suicide.[12]

The evidence for this is shown in the continuing disadvantage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as shown in documents such as the Australian Government's Productivity Commission *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage; Key Indicators 2016.*[13] This Report which "provides a high level view of the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians" states that

> To understand the information in this report, it is important to consider the factors that have affected the outcomes being measured. Disadvantage may have both immediate social and cultural determinants, and deeper causes. Many readers will be familiar with much of the history of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples since European settlement, and will be conscious of the importance of seeing the information in this report in the context of that history."[14]

While the Report recognises that the history of the nation needs to be included in the considerations of current levels of Indigenous disadvantage, it also states that the current cycles of deprivation are an accumulation of unbroken generational sequences of injury and suffering. The Report identifies that

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[11] Judy Atkinson, *Trauma trails, recreating song lines: the transgenerational effects of trauma in Indigenous Australia*, (North Melbourne: Spinifex Press, 2002).
[12] Atkinson, *Trauma trails,* 147.
[13]Australian Government, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Key Indicators 2016*, Source: Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision. (Canberra: Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2016.
http://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/overcoming-indigenous-disadvantage/2016
[14] *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage*, Chapter 1.2.

> a number of researchers also suggest that deeper underlying causes include 'intergenerational trauma' resulting from the ongoing and cumulative effects of colonisation, loss of land, language and culture, the erosion of cultural and spiritual identity, forced removal of children, and racism and discrimination (Bryant 2009; Clapham, Stevenson and Lo 2006; HREOC 1997).[15]

Given the above information serious consideration must be given to the methods employed by governments and organisations with responsibility for ensuring that the impact of removal on the Stolen Generations and their families and communities. During Reconciliation Week this year, The *Healing Foundation* (national) launched its Report *Bringing Them Home 20 years on: an action plan for healing.* Recognising that there is a decided gap in the implementation of the *Bringing them home* Recommendations, the Healing Foundation stated

> The anniversary presents an opportunity to reset—to secure sustainable support to help reduce the impact of trauma. This report makes three key recommendations:
>
> 1. A comprehensive assessment of the contemporary and emerging needs of Stolen Generations members, including needs-based funding and a financial redress scheme.
> 2. A national study into intergenerational trauma to ensure that there is real change for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the future.
> 3. An appropriate policy response that is based on the principles underlying the 1997 Bringing Them Home report.[16]

Over the past six months, Reconciliation S.A. has worked towards writing a 'Score card' reflecting the state of implementation of the 54 Recommendations of the *Bringing them home* Report. As shown in the Reconciliation S.A. postcard below, research shows that in South Australia, 21 have been implemented in full, 23 have been partially implemented, 9 have not been implemented at all, with 1 of not identified status.[17]

[15] *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage; Key Indicators 2016*, Chapter 1.7.
[16] Healing Foundation, *Bringing Them Home 20 years on: an action plan for healing.* https://healingfoundation.org.au/app/uploads/2017/05/Bringing-Them-Home-20-years-on-FINAL-PRINT.pdf
[17] Reconciliation S.A., http://www.reconciliationsa.org.au/20-years-since-bringing-them-home

Approximately the same numbers can be found at the national level.

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[18] Art work by Patrick Caruso – son of Stolen Generations member. The images depict the child in the cover photo of the original report – now as a grown woman with a child of her own still seeking full recognition of the trauma through the full implementation of the Recommendations.

Reparations.

In the lead up to this 20 year anniversary, in 2015 the State Government of South Australia launched its *Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme* which provided $11 million for two different categories of compensation. Six are for direct compensation to Stolen Generations, five are for community programs which have a focus on the Stolen Generations.[19] The South Australian Scheme follows that of the Tasmanian Scheme – with the main difference that the Tasmanian Scheme is underpinned by the *Stolen Generations of Aboriginal Children Act, 2006,* while here in South Australia, the program is only under 'policy'.[20]

Under the auspices of the S.A. Scheme, the eligibility criteria states that applicants need to be able to show that there was no Court Order which generated their removal from their families. Apparently if a Court Order was in place, then the application will be deemed ineligible (sometimes there is a lack of clarity around eligibility). There are a number of aspects of and questions about the Scheme by community members such as if a member of the Stolen Generations was registered as present at the community discussions where the Assessor announced and discussed the Scheme, but which were held prior to the formal launch by the Minister, and then that person passed away, what would be the status of an application made by their children? Although each eligible applicant can apply for $1000 to go towards legal fees, the onus is placed on the victims of Aboriginal child removal to prove they were stolen. Envisaging that there would be approximately 300 applications, the Scheme also stipulated that the individual had to be resident in South Australia at the time of their removal.

Having undertaken the extensive research for this thesis, I was in possession of the Northern Territory documents which stated that my brothers and sisters and I had been removed under the *State Children's Council Legislation, 1895 of* South Australia. With those documents in hand, I had a meeting with then Opposition Spokesman for Aboriginal Affairs here in South Australia Dr Duncan McFetridge. On seeing the documents, McFetridge realised the enormity of the revelation – which was that the Reparations

[19] *Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme* (Government of South Australia: Department of State Development, 2016). http://statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/aboriginal-affairs/stolen-generations-reparations-scheme

[20] Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of the Stolen Generations Assessor Tasmania. *Report of the Stolen Generations Assessor*, 2008. http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/53770/Stolen_Generations_Assessor_final_report.pdf

Scheme would have to cater for many, many more Stolen Generations than originally believed (or financially catered for).

On McFetridge's recommendation, I wrote to the South Australian Parliamentary Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs who, on receipt and reading of my letter, approached Federal Minister Nigel Scullion. The outcome was that the eligibility criteria were changed to include those who could show that they had been removed under the auspices of South Australian agents, or South Australian legislation. How many applicants have the skill, resources and strength to uncover that information?

At this point in time, the application process has closed with the receipt of some 420 applications. To date, the Scheme is meant to be finalised by December this year, but as yet the Independent Assessor - former State Government Minister Mr John Hill – has yet to complete interviews with those applicants who wished to speak of their history.

I submitted my personal application early in the process, and I am aware that three of my siblings have submitted their documents along with an excerpt from this thesis which details our removal.

I also met with John Hill, and for the first time in my life, I divulged the secrets that I had guarded for my foster-parents, George and Leonie Martin, especially for George, M.B.E., A.O. and social change maker. That is a story that I am not yet fully able to articulate.

Revelations.

Late November last year, I received a call from my foster father, saying that he was very unwell and needed to go to hospital. As he had full-time carer responsibilities for my foster-mother, he did not want to leave until she was being attended to, so I made my way to their house. George needed to be hospitalised, and as a consequence I arranged for the treatment he needed and over the next few weeks, cared for my foster-mother. George passed away only days later, leaving the need to ensure good and appropriate care for my foster-mother.

Because none of their children live in Adelaide, it fell to me to arrange residential care for Leonie in a very short space of time. Recently I have been told that the only formal 'duty' I have is to 'have a relationship with mum'. *Their* mum – the woman who only a couple of weeks ago asked me if I wish I had been born white? The woman who had neither love nor

affection for me since I was seven years of age, and the person who believes that I hold the position I do because people 'felt sorry for me' and gave me the job. Still, I will go and visit her and make sure she has all her needs met. After all, I am the only constant remaining connection to the life that she once knew and for me to anything other would not sit well with my spirit.

Many years ago my foster mother had told me that my mother had either "written letters" or had "someone write letters" to her, asking how I was. When I asked her where they were, her response was "Oh, I didn't keep them"! After George passed away, my foster brothers found some letters dated December 1958 from Una Clarke – my house mother on Croker – and the then Superintendent of the Mission, Rev. E. R. Moore.

It will be interesting to see what legal standing the letter (on mission letterhead) from Moore to the Martins will have. Moore makes the statement "The only thing we are not happy about is that she [Jennifer] is not fully adoptable".[21] I will hazard a guess that this was the case not, as Leonie used to say, because they couldn't find my parents to get permission to adopt, but because our removal was not sanctioned by the Northern Territory Director of Welfare, and therefore there is no Court Order.

Evidence for this is that in February, 2012 I received documents from the National Archives of Australia (Darwin). The covering letter from Reference Officer, Ben Heaslip states that

> I have been unable to locate a copy of the court order . . . I have searched through our files from the Crown Solicitor's Office but have been unable to find any documents.[22]

In all probability, this is because the processes for our removal were initiated and carried out by the State Children's Council of SA, not under the auspices of the Department of Welfare, wherein the Director of Welfare had full guardianship over myself and my brothers and sister. This would explain Moore's comments about my not being able to be adopted.

While this may lead to questioning the validity of comments earlier in the thesis around having to leave the Martin home when I was seventeen due to cessation of government

[21] E. R. Moore, letter to Rev. & Mrs G Martin, 22.12.58. Received January 2017.
[22] N.A.A. (Darwin), F1 – 62/3011 – State Children's Council Cassidy Council, received (February: 2012).

monies for fostering, there are three points to be taken into account: firstly, this was a christian family who had made a commitment to a five-year-old that, because her mother was not capable of knowing how to raise children because of her Aboriginality, they had committed to providing me with all that had been previously lacking in my life. Secondly, why was there a 'sunset clause' as far as this family was concerned? The third is the reality that, as mentioned earlier, my foster mother had no vested interest in me from the time I was seven. All the events of my life which were aimed at diminishing me as a person can be sourced back to that time. On his death bed, my foster-father George told me that he wanted to make sure that I received equal shares in the estate as my foster-brothers. I told him that my continued association with the family had nothing to do with money. I also said to him that this was the time when he needed to reconcile his own actions. Although George returned home for a short period of time, he passed away in mid-January. It is so unjust that within the christian faith, as said at his funeral, he would be granted forgiveness and therefore enter heaven with a clear soul.

Knowing all that I do now after having done all the research for the thesis, I am acutely aware that if Elkin were to appear he would consider that I am one of the shining examples of the success that he envisioned for the half-caste kids on Croker Island. But would he be prepared to listen to and recognise that the policies that he was instrumental in developing have led to immeasurable grief for half-caste kids. Would he find that there was justification for the use of the terms 'deplorable conditions'; 'unfit living conditions'; 'malnourishment'; 'gambling'; 'drunkenness'; 'parental inability' and neglect to debase our mothers in order to have us taken away? They are a cover up for unchristian acts perpetrated by white men in power, white women in duty - agents of god -costumed and disguised in the white finery of christian rhetoric. Too long have those proclamations been relentlessly hammered into and onto Aboriginal Australians - enforced through and by language use, policies, churches, police, teachers, doctors of medicine and doctors of social science and all the myriad streams of society with a focus only on uniformity with white.

This thesis is my way of writing back to the catalogues of lies about my family. While sections of the thesis present a history of this nation which should be known and owned by all Australians, this is *my* story, my history. I own it – it does not belong to the stories of others who would see me as their success. I am my own success.

In the final irony of 'discovering' the letters earlier this year, the 1958 letter from Una Clarke demonstrates clearly that I was loved by my family, and I loved my family. Clarke wrote to my foster mother saying

> Jennifer used to cry for her daddy when she first came.[23]

[23] Una Clarke, letter to Leonie Martin, 20 December, 1958. Received, January 2017.

CONCLUSION

The above thesis has investigated the twentieth century socio-political national environment which created and provided the frameworks that led to what was considered the justifiable removal of half-caste children. Working from the initial questions of a)what was the 1939 policy; b) who was Elkin, and c) what did either or both of them have to do with Croker Island Mission, my research has focused on finding the answers to those questions.

In doing so, I have interrogated government, mission and anthropological primary sources on the establishment of the M.O.M.: Croker Island Half-Caste Mission through the lens of my personal primary sources, and my lived experience. First and foremost, in the above investigation, the personal history and documentation sit in precedence to government, mission and anthropological primary sources. In doing so, I have applied the methodological dynamic of *bricolage* to the conventions of academic writing in the discipline of history. This approach is grounded in the premise as this is my story, that the Aboriginal 'voice' carries precedence in the recording of this history.

I have discussed the 1941 evacuation of the mission from the view of the silencing of the half-caste children from the mission in favour of story of the white missionary, and positioned that suppression as being intrinsic to the telling of Australian history.

Utilising primary documentation from the archives of the M.O.M., the A. P. Elkin archives and aligning the discussion with the 1928 J. W. Bleakley Report, the 1937 *Aboriginal Welfare: Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities* and the 1939 *Northern Territory Half Caste Policy,* the thesis has uncovered the alliances between government authorities, mission agents and anthropology which led to the writing of the 1940-41 M.O.M. *North Australia District: Statement of Aims and Policy Regarding Croker Island*.

In those investigations, Elkin came to the fore as a key player both working with M.O.M. authorities, but also in the writing of the 1939 policy. Further research showed how, as professor of anthropology at the University of Sydney, Elkin intervened in the national discourse around assimilation of full-blood and half-caste Aboriginal people from his earliest days in the anthropological arena. In the process of detailing his relentless pursuit

for a ‘positive policy’, the thesis has outlined Elkin’s rise in the theatre of Aboriginal affairs, and discussed his emerging ‘scientific’ theories on assimilation which included his rhetoric on the ‘parasitism’ of Aborigines, particularly as they related to Croker Island. In this, the thesis has analysed the inter-war international transmission of eugenicist theories, and argued that Elkin’s calculations for assimilation were informed by that discourse. Given the role and influence of A. P. Elkin, both on the broader national scene and in the establishment of the mission, the thesis has drawn on Elkin’s work to build a detailed critique of his pre-eminence in and engagement with the field of anthropology, politics and the theatre of mission endeavour. In truth, who Elkin was is not important. What is of significance to the thesis is that his involvement in the writing of the 1939 policy and his influence in the development of the M.O.M. led directly to the establishment of Croker Island Mission.

While set up for the provision of care of half-caste children, the M.O.M. utilised a range of media to show the good work they were doing on Croker Island. There is discussion on the ways in which a campaign to market both the good work the mission was doing, and to encourage parishioners to become foster or adoptive parents to the children, the projection of images of ‘girls’ from Croker Island can be read as sexualised representations has been examined. Portrayals of Aboriginal women were couched in terms of deficit evidenced by their apparent inescapable tendencies towards ‘dirtiness’, which was seen as a valid argument for child removal.

All of the above has been consolidated in the discussions around the Ellis/Cassidy/Sultan family from Alice Springs. Research uncovered sources in the National Archives Australia (Darwin), and the Northern Territory archives that revealed the ways in which Welfare bodies kept track of half-caste families and made determinations around the removal of their children. The revelations of those documents were unexpected, and heartbreaking. They showed the ruthless determination of white men and women in positions of authority to remove us from our family. The powerlessness of my mother and father is evident in the letters written to the Director of Welfare

Following those discussions, the thesis uncovers the activities of mission in my placement with a non-Aboriginal family in Adelaide. Those details are juxtaposed with my own recollections, and then flows through to my reconnection to family, revisiting Croker Island, the incongruencies around the narrative of ‘neglect’ as applied to my brother.

There is discussion on the National Apology which was delivered in 2008 by Kevin Rudd, and whether any form of compensation could be deemed enough?

In this the 25th anniversary of the tabling of the *Bringing them home* Report, there is much yet to be done in regard to the actioning the 54 Report Recommendations. The thesis discusses that all reports to date including the *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* and the Australian Department of Health *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy 2013* recognise and make comment on the effects and continued impacts of the removal of parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles on the current state in Indigenous disadvantage, and on our youth of today. The final stages of the thesis makes comment on the effectiveness and nature of the various State Reparations schemes

In the end, this thesis which gained a life of its own could not be completed till now. I had to wait for the discovery of sixty-year old letters, hidden away in a dusty photo album and which had never been shared with me.

While in candidature terms, this has been a ten year 'project', in personal terms this thesis has been sixty years in the making. Originally I had set out to write my personal history as a member of the Stolen Generations. In my final analysis of the thesis, although the research has taken me in unexpected directions, I think I have done just that.

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