

Whitefellas and Wadjulas: Anti-colonial Constructions of the  
non-Aboriginal Self.

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This thesis is submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2008

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution

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## **Abstract**

In this thesis, I argue for anti-colonial constructions of the non-Aboriginal self. I take as my starting point that members of the invader/settler society in Australia must place them/ourselves in “an embodied awareness of ‘being in Indigenous sovereignty’” (Nicholl, 2004: 17) and name them/ourselves accordingly. An anti-colonial construction of non-Aboriginality formed within the locus of Aboriginal Sovereignty undermines the potency of ‘post-colonial’ processes of identity formation, which privilege the colonialist centre, and the concomitant marginalised position of Indigenous people. Thus, an anti-colonial construction of non-Aboriginality constitutes a radical recentring for processes of identity construction within invader/settler societies.

This work responds to critical whiteness studies and post-colonial discourses of ‘belonging’. I acknowledge both whiteness studies and work on invader/settler belongings have gained traction in recent years as a means to problematise the whiteness of the settler/invader group and the legitimacy of their/our belongings. However, I argue they continue to operate within colonialist paradigms and perpetuate (neo)colonial power relations.

In this thesis, I argue anti-colonial constructions of non-Aboriginality are constructed in dialogue with Aboriginal people. I conceive non-Aboriginality as a political identity that rejects ‘race’ and ‘colour’ as markers for identity. ‘Non-Aboriginality’ enables members of invader/settler societies to articulate support for Aboriginal Sovereignty and Aboriginal claims for social justice and human rights.

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## Acknowledgements

Foremost amongst those I must thank is my supervisor, Dr Kathryn Trees. Kathryn's commitment to seeing me through this process repeatedly rose far and beyond the call of duty. Thankyou does not scrape the surface. Kathryn, it has been an absolute privilege to know and work with you.

I also thank those solid Aboriginal women, who have played such a critical role in teaching, advising and supporting me in the years preceding this thesis, and the time it has taken to write it. There are too many people to name here, but specifically, I thank my friend Christine Ross and her family, Ashleigh, Braeden, Jasmine and Cody-Dylan.

My thanks to Murdoch University, which awarded me a Murdoch University Research Scholarship in 2002. Without this financial support, this project would not have been possible. I also thank those who offered me collegial and moral support throughout this process. Specifically I thank Sean Gorman and Linda Delaney. In addition, to the many other friends I have made at Murdoch, thankyou for your time, energy, interest and comradeship.

I also thank my colleagues at Curtin University's Centre for Aboriginal Studies for their support and allowing me the time to complete this thesis.

I also thank my family for their ongoing support. Specifically, I thank my sister Katrina. I also thank Aunty Shirl for her indefatigable interest in my progress. Most of all, I acknowledge my nieces and nephews, Matthew, Sjaan, Zachary and Anika. If we do not undertake such tasks without imagining the futures we desire for the children in our lives what is the point of doing it at all?

Importantly, I also offer my profound thanks to my best mate, Julie Burke. Thankyou Julie, for your unstinting faith in me.

Finally, I offer my love and gratitude to my Grandparents, Frank and Heloise. I lost you both six months before I started this project. Not a day goes by when I don't miss you more than words can say. I dedicate this to you both, in honour of your life and your memory.

Michelle Carey  
2008