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Kooris adapting: An anthropological case study of the maintenance and reconstruction of the cultural identity of Aboriginal Australians in New South Wales, Australia

Maxey, Julian Dale, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University, 1991
KOORIS ADAPTING: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL CASE STUDY
OF THE MAINTENANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION
OF THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF
ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIANS
IN NEW SOUTH WALES,
AUSTRALIA

DISSERTATION
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
Julian Dale Maxey, B.S., M.Ed., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1991

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To My Parents
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Erika Bourguinnon for her guidance and insight throughout the research. Thanks go to the other members of my advisory committee, Drs. Richard M. Moore and Amy A Zaharlick, for their suggestions and comments. Gratitude is expressed to my Australian sponsors, Dr. Arthur Smith, Coordinator of the Aboriginal Education Unit, the University of Wollongong, Wollongong, New South Wales Australia; and Mr. Robert Morgan, President of the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, for their support and encouragement. To my wife, Andrea, I offer sincere thanks for her unquestioning faith in me. Her patience, insight and encouragement enabled me to hold on to the hope of seeing the fruits of my endeavors.
VITA

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PREFACE

My interest in cultural identity has been one of long-term duration. As a teacher in several multicultural settings, I observed how some groups seemed to hold on tenaciously to their identity. Later when I worked in a multicultural/minority education project at Kent State University, I had a chance to work with urban Native Americans who were trying to reconstruct and maintain certain aspects of their traditional identity. I vividly remember talking to Crow, Cherokee, and Seminole individuals. They talked of their individual tribal traditions, but they also talked of those things they shared in common as Native Americans trying to maintain and reconstruct their identity in an urban setting.

By this time, I had started working on a masters degree in Anthropology. My geographic areas were North America and Oceania. I was struck by the similarities between the identity dilemmas facing Aboriginal Australians and Native Americans. However, I was not able to pursue the comparison at that time.

When I began work on a doctorate in cultural anthropology at The Ohio State University, I had two different invitations to visit Australia. A former neighbor v
of mine had married an Australian nurse and had resettled in South Australia. On a trip back to the United States, he told me about his work as a corrections officer in Adelaide. He was very disturbed by the treatment of Aboriginal people within the Australian justice system. He felt part of the problem was the fact that many Aboriginal people were caught between losing a great deal of their own culture, and finding that their only place within the larger Australian society was at the bottom. Aboriginal people were viewed as inferior beings. Therefore, Aboriginal people were trying to find a positive identity to replace the negative one imposed by the dominant group. This negative identity sometimes led to frustration or hopelessness that was expressed in violence, crime, and alcoholism or problem drinking. He pointed out to me that what I was doing in the United States might have value in Australia. If I were able to make a two to three year commitment, he was sure I could find a job working with Aboriginal people in South Australia. I was seriously thinking about it; however, it would have entailed additional financial expenses in my doctoral work and a considerable amount of time.

Another Australian opportunity presented itself. I had a chance to work on a graduate course project with an Australian doctoral student. We found that we had similar backgrounds as former secondary school teachers and a mutual interest in the cultural survival of indigenous people. We
were both interested in how the school impacts on the cultural identity of students who come from backgrounds different from those of their teachers. He invited me to come to Australia and look at Aboriginal identity issues in New South Wales. He was a Lecturer in Education and Coordinator of the Aboriginal Education Unit at The University of Wollongong in Wollongong, New South Wales.

I was able to accept this offer, and I went to Australia in July of 1986 and returned May of 1987 to the United States. My friend and sponsor had said to be prepared to "hit the ground running." He was right. From my third day in Australia to my last day, I was actively involved in Aboriginal affairs.

My first involvement was as the First Visiting Fellow of the newly formed School of Policy and Technology Studies of Education in the Faculty of Education, The University of Wollongong. My responsibilities entailed reviewing and comparing indigenous peoples' education policy in Australia, Canada, and the United States.

My second area of involvement came as a lecturer in the Rural Aboriginal Education Program, the Aboriginal Education Unit, Macarthur Institute of Higher Education, Milperra, New South Wales. The students in the Rural Aboriginal Education Program were Aboriginal Teaching Aides, Commonwealth Aboriginal Education Officers, and other Aboriginal people interested in upgrading their formal educational
credentials. Most lecturers in the Program were faculty members from other Divisions of the Institute; however, since I was filling in for an Aboriginal lecturer, I spent my time in the Aboriginal Education Unit. I had the opportunity to talk to a number of people, and I was able to visit several of my students in their home areas in Western New South Wales between sessions of the Residential School. The Rural Aboriginal Education Program was designed as a residential school for students who lived in remote areas or had full-time jobs with limited time off for taking courses. The students come to Macarthur for several two week periods for exams and lectures. They did their research papers or projects when they were back in their home areas. Needless-to-say, the pace was hectic; however, between classes and on breaks for coffee, etc., the students and I were able to discuss identity issues.

I was also able to become involved with the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group as a consultant on the need for Aboriginal controlled schools. The President of the Consulting Group, and several other members, were convinced that the only way to make sure that schools respected, and were sensitive to, Aboriginal cultural identity was to have Aboriginal people develop the educational policy and structure of educational programs for Aboriginal students. I lived in the house of the President for approximately four and a half months while I was working
on the project. I was able to visit country towns, talk to a number of different Aboriginal people, and become actively involved with the Consultative Group's central staff and members of the NSW Department of Education's Aboriginal Education Unit in the Sydney area.

I was clearly an active participant and observer. The pace, and seriousness of the identity issue to Aboriginal people, made it difficult to find the time to do the background research on Aboriginal identity issues and Australian education. The Aboriginal people who befriended me simply did not have the luxury of allowing me to spend extensive amounts of time doing library or background research on identity issues. My report had to be finished before I left Australia.

I had the opportunity to be intimately involved in an important Aboriginal identity issue, such as the development of Aboriginally controlled schools, that Aboriginal people considered vital to the maintenance and reconstruction of their identity. I would have never been able to appreciate the intensity of feeling, the diversity of opinion, the common ground on which a pan-Australian Aboriginal identity is being built, and the importance of local Aboriginal community identity—in any other type of situation than the one in which I found myself.

For a number of years I have been interested in cultural identity; however, the Kooris, or Aboriginal
people, of New South Wales, introduced me to "the insider's view" of Aboriginal identity. They gave me the opportunity to view Aboriginal identity from the "center of things" where identity takes on a very personal importance as well as group importance. It was a chance to see people "act out" those things that were important to their identity, but at the same time, things that were hard to articulate in words.

The following case study examines events and issues, from the Aboriginal perspective, involved in the maintenance and reconstruction of the cultural identity of Aboriginal Australians in New South Wales Australia.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Background

As DeVos (1982) has pointed out, we are now witnessing a revolution in the recording of social and cultural history. Cultural minorities in pluralistic societies are not content to remain unknown or allow the dominant group an uncontested platform for defining minority identity within the larger society:

The defeated and the oppressed are themselves contributing to the writing of history, adding their own interpretations, and where facts fail, creating or deepening their sustaining mythologies. Social classes or pariah outcasts relatively invisible in earlier histories are emerging as figures in a larger history of conflict or as subjects in the historical approach that deals with stratification in societies. [DeVos 1982:7]

Too often when indigenous people become a minority in their own land, it is assumed that their cultural identity has little importance. DeVos (1982:7-8) suggests that this has been true of the writings of social scientists:

Social science theorists have until recently paid little attention to enduring ethnic or cultural identity as a primary social force comparable to nationalism or class affiliation. Its role in past and present conflicts within complex societies is often neglected by social scientists, who usually concern themselves with the relations between ethnically different but politically autonomous groups. Once a group has been conquered or absorbed politically, the
assumption seems to be that its existence . . . is of less concern. . . .

One area where social science theorists have been paying attention to enduring ethnic or cultural identity has been in recent studies of societies in Oceania. Linnekin and Poyer (1990:6) point out that the relatively recent colonial history of the various areas of the Pacific provides case studies of the interaction between indigenous notions of identity and the economic and political restrictions or impediments imposed by the intrusion of nation-states:

Colonization abruptly brought Pacific societies under the sway of metropolitan centers and imposed a uniform political and economic system over vast areas. . . . Contact with the West also introduced a competing theory of group identity as based wholly or primarily on common descent.

The important point being that the competing Western notion of group identity was fundamentally different from that of Oceanic views. Oceanic ideas of cultural identity place more importance on environment, behavior, and situational flexibility; however, Western views place more emphasis upon descent, innate characteristics, and unchanging boundaries (Linnekin and Poyer 1990:6). The Oceanic view allows people to voluntarily shift their identities and to maintain more than one identity simultaneously. Behavioral attributes, including residence, language, dress, and participation in exchange are significant markers of identity and also effective
determinants of identity. Additionally, fundamental Oceanic notions of cultural identity can persist in social relations even when faced by major changes in the political and economic arenas, and this also holds true with the introduction of Western-influenced ethnic categories (Linnekin and Poyer 1990:9).

Aboriginal Australians are an excellent example of an overpowered and oppressed indigenous minority in Oceania, who have persistently fought to maintain their own view of cultural identity in the face of major political and economic changes. They are adding their own interpretations to Australian history, and they are also creating or deepening their sustaining mythologies.

At present, state-level politics is the most powerful force in the continuing process of identity transformation in Australia and other areas of Oceania. As a result, cultural identity takes on a political importance. Since Aboriginal Australians, Hawaiians, and Maoris have become minorities in their own lands, their identity struggles take on a similarity to that of other minority groups fighting for their cultural survival against dominant majorities or colonial powers. They view themselves as part of the "Fourth World" and "start to turn Western notions of cultural boundaries to their own political advantage, often formulating an explicitly countermetropolitan identity" (Linnekin and Poyer 1990:12). This does not mean that
traditional notions of local-based identities lose their significance. As a case in point, it seems that in Australia, a pan-Aboriginal identity is forming, but it is being formulated along with the continued importance of local Aboriginal identities:

While Aboriginality is developing as a political force, local and regional Aboriginal identities continue to have salience and provide, though not exclusively, some of the content of Aboriginality. And there are reciprocal influences on local attitudes. The two forms of identity help to sustain each other and are therefore likely to coexist well into the future. Tonkinson 1990:214]

Nature of the Problem

A major challenge confronting Aboriginal people in modern Australian society is to define their own identity. First of all this definition has to have meaning in terms of maintaining and rebuilding a sense of positive group identity that will be significant to their own community, and secondly it must serve as a tool to change or challenge non-Aboriginal negative views of Aboriginal culture and identity. Aboriginal people have been developing a sense of political awareness; however, political awareness, by itself, does not provide the infrastructure for a sense of emotional security and belonging. On the other hand, Aboriginal cultural identity that provides the base for a sense of belonging and positive self-image, cannot be separated from political activism. They are interconnected:

That identity, whatever its outward manifestations, has political implications; and Aborigines are well aware
of these, as is the federal government. Within that picture is Aboriginal identity as a positive expression of a pride in being Aboriginal and having a common background, however far that may be removed from the actualities of the past. That identity must be seen in a dual sense, as having something to do with the traditional past and also something to do with the struggle for equality, against what have often appeared to be unsurmountable odds. Such an identity provides an underpinning for emotional security and a sense of belonging which, outside the traditional Aboriginal scene, has been sadly lacking. This is probably one of the most significant developments that have taken place over the years—much more important than the upsurge of political awareness, which, however, is inseparable from it (Berndt and Berndt 1988:528-529).

According to Berndt and Berndt (1988:529), if Aboriginal people are to be successful, their identity should symbolize, to some extent, two features:

(1) a distinctive contribution to Australian society and (2) a particular way of tackling their own problems and their own projects. By the last, we mean that so many projects which are being set up today are stimulated from the 'outside', and their organization and motivations are actually non-Aboriginal. Their aim is to achieve socio-economic viability in both short and long range terms. And that is what 'self-management' is about. But just because these may be run or operated by persons of Aboriginal descent, does not automatically make them 'Aboriginal'. They must also be fitted into a particular ethos, into a particular framework of ideas which could be defined as Aboriginal. Aboriginal identity, and what is meant by that label, could provide that ethos.

The challenge for Aboriginal people is to articulate the "ethos" that the Berndts have discussed and construct projects that deal with their needs from an Aboriginal perspective. In terms of making a distinctive contribution to Australian society, the Aboriginal value system based on cooperation and sharing might possibly provide an example of an alternative way of living in a future world with fewer
resources. Again, the positive aspects and uniqueness of Aboriginal culture must be communicated to the wider society. Most Aboriginal people do not believe it will be possible to be totally separated from the rest of Australian society (Tonkinson 1990). Therefore, their cultural identity must be as "Aboriginal Australians," a people with a unique cultural identity within a larger multicultural society. In New South Wales (NSW), Aboriginal people are trying to maintain and reconstruct an Aboriginal cultural identity within the context of multiculturalism as it has been defined by the state government of NSW and the federal government (which is also referred to as the Commonwealth).

The present study examines the ways Kooris\(^1\) have recently grappled with the challenge of articulating an Aboriginal cultural identity that would provide the ethos for (1) a particular way of tackling their own problems and their own projects and (2) how this ethos has been constructed from historical aspects of traditional Aboriginal culture, community and life histories of rural and urban Kooris, the work of Aboriginal writers, and events from the recent history of Aboriginal self-determination movements. All of this means that a study of the

\(^1\)Koori or Koorie are the Aboriginal terms used to refer to Aboriginal people in New South Wales and Victoria. There are a number of people in New South Wales who come from other areas where the local or regional Aboriginal term for Aboriginal people is different (for example in Queensland the term is Muri), but while in New South Wales, they use the term Koori.
maintenance and reconstruction of Aboriginal identity in NSW must: (A) explain how Kooris define Aboriginal identity, (B) examine how non-Aboriginal Australians define Aboriginality and what impact this has had on how Kooris view themselves, (C) observe how the bureaucracy has responded to Koori initiatives to define their own identity and what impact this has on Aboriginal policy in NSW, and (D) pay special attention to the important role anthropologists have played in helping to define Aboriginal identity.

Statement of the Research Objective

The research objective is to examine Aboriginality as an evolving force or ethos, and study its impact over time on the maintenance and reconstruction of Koori cultural identity in contemporary New South Wales. A history of Aboriginal social relations is, then, a key factor in understanding the politics of Aboriginal cultural identity in Australia. History is important in terms of understanding how the various types of Aboriginal communities developed, why Aboriginal people feel the way they do about their own heritage, how Aboriginal prehistory and the history of particular Aboriginal communities contributes to a positive self-image, why and how Anglo/Celtic institutions have impacted on Aboriginal identity, and how Aboriginal people have responded to the dominant group.
Factors Involved in Selecting New South Wales

There were a number of factors that were considered in the planning of a study on the maintenance and reconstruction of Aboriginal cultural identity. (1) The study area had to be one with a substantial and diverse Aboriginal population that illustrated the challenges of maintaining and reconstructing Aboriginal identity for a variety of Aboriginal people. In essence, an area that was representative of the situation of Aboriginal groups throughout Australia. (2) Local and regional groups of Aboriginal people had to be concerned with Aboriginal identity problems or issues. (3) The state or territory government had to be at least generally committed to or acknowledge Commonwealth policies toward Aboriginal self-determination and multiculturalism. (4) There had to be some dialogue between Aboriginal people and bureaucrats on the relationship between Aboriginal cultural identity and Aboriginal policy in such areas as education, health, legal issues, etc. (5) Materials and information had to be available on how non-Aboriginal views of Aboriginal culture and identity have continued to influence questions of Aboriginal identity. (6) I had to be able to establish contacts with Aboriginal people for the successful completion of the research project. New South Wales met all of the above qualifications.
The Aboriginal Populations in Present-Day Australia

The total Aboriginal and Islander\(^2\) population counted in the 1986 Australian Census was 227,645 or 1.43 per cent of the Australian population. This was an increase of 42.36 per cent over the numbers recorded in the 1981 Census (Aboriginal Australia 1988). What kind of reasons have been given for the significant rise in the Aboriginal and Islander population?

The Australian Bureau of Statistics attributes the sharp rise over five years to better Census procedures and also to a greater inclination by Aboriginal Australians either to be counted in the Census or to identify themselves as Aboriginals. [Aboriginal Australia 1988:1]

It should not be surprising to note that during this period there also has been increased activity and interest in the development of a positive Aboriginal cultural identity, increased government acknowledgement of the importance of Aboriginal identity, and extensive media attention to Aboriginal issues.

Not only has there been an increase in people who identify themselves as Aboriginal, but there has also been a trend toward urbanization. The 1986 Census figures indicate that approximately 66 per cent of Aboriginals and Islanders

---

\(^2\) Islander refers to the Melanesian people found on the Torres Strait Islands. The Torres Strait Islands are controlled by Australia. The state of Queensland has the major administrative responsibility for various programs on the Torres Strait Islands; however, great numbers of Islanders have moved to other areas of Australia. There are concentrations of Torres Strait Islanders in New South Wales.
were to be found in urban areas. However, there are still small but important pockets of Aboriginal people living a more traditional way of life. Aboriginal people in homeland centers or outstations and in other small groups make up around 6 per cent of the total Aboriginal population. Twenty-five per cent of the total Aboriginal population live in Aboriginal towns and settlements on Aboriginal titled land or reserves (Fisk 1982).

Of the total Aboriginal Australian population, 59,011 Aboriginal people live in New South Wales. This makes the Aboriginal population of New South Wales the second largest in Australia. New South Wales' northern neighbor, Queensland, has the largest Aboriginal population with 61,268 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people counted in the 1986 Census (Aboriginal Australia 1988). This means that 25.92 per cent of all Aboriginal people in Australia live in New South Wales (Aboriginal Australia 1988). New South Wales mirrors the national trends in terms of the Aboriginal population. Aboriginal people in New South Wales live in somewhat traditional, rural, and urban communities; however, the majority of Aboriginal people live in cities and towns:

In 1947 only 28 per cent of the State's Aborigines lived in towns and cities, but by 1976 this group accounted for more than 80 per cent of the total population. This degree of urbanization, exceeded only by Victoria, where, in 1976, more than 90 per cent of Aborigines were in towns, is close to that of the non-Aboriginal population of the country. [Young 1982:1]
While the urban trends indicate that large numbers of Aboriginal people live in cities, this does not mean that New South Wales Aboriginal populations are all the same:

It needs to be kept in mind that contemporary society consists of urban (major cities), rural and traditional Aborigines and that there will no doubt be groupings within anyone of these settings. In a rural community, for example, the group may consist of Aborigines living on missions; resettlement areas within towns (commission homes); Aborigines who purchase their own homes within the town; and Aborigines who live in makeshift dwellings on the periphery of town.

The diversity of Aboriginal society is not restricted to living conditions, but extends to all aspects of Aboriginal life, e.g. religion, political beliefs, ideas and history. [Burney, et al. 1982:4]

The diversity of the New South Wales Aboriginal population is increased by the fact that Aboriginal networks transcend the whole country; therefore, there are Aboriginal people from a wide variety of communities, groups, and states that may end up living in New South Wales for a period of time or permanently. They bring with them additional Aboriginal traditions and knowledge. Even Aboriginal people who have lived in NSW all their lives may have family links to Aboriginal groups in other states whom they visit from time to time. Aboriginal organizations also have links with similar Aboriginal organizations in other states.

Many Aboriginal people come to Sydney, the major city of Australia and New South Wales. Sydney is the center for a number of national Aboriginal organizations, Aboriginal support programs, and Aboriginal arts organizations. Added to the above, there are some 14,000 Aboriginal people living
in the greater Sydney area. The Sydney inner city suburb (Australian term) of Redfern is probably the best known urban Aboriginal community in Australia. Redfern's pubs, Aboriginal centers, and organizations provide places where Aboriginal people from different backgrounds and communities can meet socially and exchange information and ideas. The second Sydney area with a large Aboriginal population is La Perouse (Eagleson 1982). La Perouse has a long history of Aboriginal settlement. In fact, it reaches back before the British colonization of Australia. There is a core of Aboriginal people that have lived for generations in La Perouse where there used to be a church mission. New arrivals to La Perouse usually come from the south coast of NSW. On the other hand, new arrivals to Redfern come from all over NSW, and some come from other parts of Australia. Many of them are first generation city dwellers who maintain strong ties to their country areas (Eagleson 1982). As Eagleson (1982:113) points out: "Sydney alone holds some 10 per cent of the entire Aboriginal population, and possibly has the densest concentration of Aborigines within the Australian continent."

Aboriginal identity in New South Wales is based on local traditions and knowledge coupled with a wider sense of Aboriginality that spans the continent-wide diversity of Aboriginal Australia. To illustrate the point, I not only became acquainted with Aboriginal people born in New South
Wales but also met Aboriginal people who were originally from the Northern Territory, Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia.

On the surface, it might seem that the urban/rural trends of Aboriginal population movement in NSW would indicate a decrease in concern for Aboriginal culture and identity; however, this is not the case. Looking at trends related to town-based Aboriginal populations, an interesting picture begins to take shape. Studies from different areas of NSW have shown that the majority of town-based families traced their origins to rural areas in the adjacent territory, and they continue to operate with the support of a close-knit kin network:

This suggests that much rural-urban movement has taken place over comparative short distances. Through retention of links with family, and continued transmission of information about tribal customs, and sites and objects of religious significance, town dwellers have come to identify strongly with their current place of residence and have not responded readily to apparently superior attractions elsewhere, such as better job opportunities. [Young 1982:2]

Ties to the land of one's own Dreaming are also important to many Aboriginal town dwellers. This can be illustrated by data from a 1980 survey analyzed by Young (1982:9-10):

Further indications of identification with place come from information about knowledge of Aboriginal

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3 In the Aboriginal world view, "Dreaming" refers to the period of creation when the creator beings shaped the physical aspects of the world and when Aboriginal groups were given their creation myths and responsibilities for the world.
groups of origin and tribal country. Thirty percent of adults said that they knew the name of the Aboriginal group with which they were associated, and a higher proportion (51.2 percent...) claimed to belong to a special country. Of those now living away from the country, 90 percent said that they visited it regularly or occasionally. These indicators, ... have stressed the importance of maintenance of family ties and links with the land for town dwelling Aborigines.

Young was analyzing data on Kooris in New South Wales. The numbers of Kooris with knowledge of belonging to a special country, and knowing the name of their traditional group, is higher than in Victoria. The reason for this is that there are still pockets of Aboriginal people in New South Wales who have been able to maintain more of their traditional culture. They may have been in areas where non-Aboriginal settlement was not as dense, or they were in areas where non-Aboriginal settlement occurred at a later date. Language or tribal knowledge may have been lost but knowledge of one's country could still be known. This relates to the fact that tribal group refers more to a language group rather than to a socioeconomic group. Ties to "one's country" are based on traditions that have been passed down from one generation to the next through myths, etc. These oral traditions can be, and often are, passed on in English. This even occurs after tribal languages are no longer used (Maddock 1982). For example, I have met older Aboriginal people in Western New South Wales and the Far South Coast who have received traditional knowledge of their country or Dreaming place. This was after traditional
Aboriginal language had ceased to be used on a regular basis. Young's 90 percent figure refers to those people who had moved away from their traditional areas but still maintained knowledge of their traditional country. They either visited their "country" regularly or occasionally.

In regard to NSW Kooris (Aboriginal people) who live in country areas and urban centers, interest in maintaining an Aboriginal cultural identity seems to be strong. In attending meetings of the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and visiting Aboriginal communities in several regions of NSW, I was able to see firsthand the interests Kooris have in maintaining their Aboriginal cultural identity.

It is clear, then, that Aboriginal people in NSW are seeking ways to maintain their sense of Aboriginality. Even if the largest proportion of Aboriginal people are town dwellers, their intent is to maintain an Aboriginal identity:

Although many of these town dwellers could be said to have lost significant knowledge of their traditional customs and practices, along with knowledge of their language, they indicated that they wanted a greater emphasis on Aboriginal custom and learning in all components of their life - education, service, administration, etc. [Young 1982:25]

Nor should it be thought that the Koori people of NSW lack traditional knowledge. For example, on the mid-north and far north coast of NSW there are older people still living who went through tribal initiations (Kelly 1982). There has
been a revival of interest in Aboriginal languages. I had a chance to visit one tribal elder on the far south coast who has used traditional knowledge successfully as a basis for having a place important to his people declared as the first site of significance (Aboriginal Place) in NSW under the 1974 National Parks and Wildlife Act.

The maintenance and reconstruction of Aboriginal identity in NSW is addressed by a number of Aboriginal organizations funded by the Commonwealth government and the government of New South Wales. The Aboriginal Land Rights Act of 1983 was passed by the NSW government, and as a result of the Act, local land councils, regional land councils, and a state land council were organized. There are Aboriginal health and legal offices funded by Commonwealth money, and Commonwealth Aboriginal Education Officers to monitor and administer federal Aboriginal education funds and programs in NSW. There are local Aboriginal community culture centers. Some of the most active Aboriginal organizations are the Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups. In particular, the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group has been actively involved in a number of Aboriginal issues. The leadership of these organizations are in close contact. Many leaders move from one type of organization to another; therefore, there is a tendency to see issues as interrelated. These various organizations provide training grounds for Aboriginal
politics. Koori leaders learn how the bureaucracy works. It should also be noted that the Australian Capital Territory was carved out of a small section of NSW; therefore, Koori leaders and groups are in close contact with what goes on in Canberra, the Australian Capital. Since a number of important government offices, Aboriginal organizations, and Aboriginal support groups are located in Sydney, this provides an ideal environment for substantial media coverage for Aboriginal concerns on the State and national level. It also seems to provide Kooris in NSW with the potential for a strong Aboriginal identity based on local, regional, and Australia-wide Aboriginal cultural components.

New South Wales represents a case where non-Aboriginal views impacted on Aboriginal identity. The dominant Western views were formed during the colonial era. They continue today in moderated form in urban Australia and in a more strident form in rural areas. It must be remembered that Australian colonial history and frontier area conflicts continued into the early 20th century. Australia did not obtain its independence until 1902. The remote areas of Australia did not see extensive contact with non-Aboriginal settlers until the 1930s and 1940s. There were massacres of Aboriginal people as late as the 1940s that are still remembered by older Aboriginal people (Broome 1982), and violent confrontations between Aboriginal people and non-
Aboriginal groups, particularly in rural areas, have continued to the present. Rural areas of western NSW have been noted for a history of confrontations, often violent, between Aboriginal groups and non-Aboriginal settlers. [Cowlishaw 1989]

An Historical Overview of Anglo/Celtic Views of Aboriginal Identity

Beginning with the arrival of the First Fleet, the Anglo/Celtic colonizers/invaders assumed the right to define and classify Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people were defined as "others", a people that had neither the physical characteristics nor the cultural characteristics valued by Europeans:

Nineteenth-century European notions about culture and nature helped shape the whites' perceptions of Aborigines. It was believed that culture was carried "in the blood," that color was the external indicator of both biological ancestry and culture, and that cultural characteristics, hereditary and immutable, separated human groups from one another. According to this model, Aborigines were at the bottom of an hierarchical scale and Europeans, particularly those of British stock, were at the top. Although such notions have been rejected by scientists and scholars, they remain in popular theories to varying degrees and continue to be invoked. [Tonkinson 1990:191-192]

"Anglo/Celtic" will be used to denote the Anglo majority dominant culture of Australia. As Bullivant (1984) has noted, from the time of the arrival of the First Fleet, Celtic cultural traditions have played an important part in the British influence on Australian culture history. Much of the "country or bush culture" of rural Australia has been influenced by Irish and Scottish immigrants, and urban working class values were also influenced by Celtic traditions extensively well into the 20th century.
Traces of older notions of social race⁵ may even be found in conversations with some scholars and scientists in contemporary Australia, and they still exist among some bureaucrats in the Commonwealth and state governments. The issue of social race is further complicated by the distinctions made between so called "full-bloods," "half-castes," and "part-Aborigines." Anglo/Celtic Australians insisted that people with both Aboriginal and European ancestry could not be "real" Aboriginal people. The dominant group could not bring itself to accept these people as being "white" either; people of mixed descent were caught in a pseudo-biological void. They were accepted by the Aboriginal community, but the dominant group did not want them associating with Aboriginal kin. The government even took lighter skinned Aboriginal babies from their mothers and placed them in residential training programs. Males were taught manual trades and females trained in domestic service, and they were expected to accept their fate as low-paid servants of the dominant group. In New South Wales this practice went on into the 1950s (Read 1982). There is at present in Sydney a group called "Link-Up" which helps such adults, who were taken away from their families as young children, find their Aboriginal relatives. I had

⁵Following Wagley (1974) the term "social race" is used to refer to caste or class differences based on apparent physical differences. These are not groups based on biology but instead are socially based on cultural concepts of differences that have little to do with actual biological variation.
several discussions with one woman featured in a television documentary on Link-Up. She was taken from her Aboriginal family on the South Coast of New South Wales when she was a young child. She was not reunited with her Aboriginal kin until she was an adult. The psychological trauma and cultural disorientation caused by this policy of the NSW Aboriginal Protection Board is still a cause for bitterness and mistrust in white institutions. A vivid account of the protection era policies impact on Aboriginal lives is portrayed in the autobiographical story of Margaret Tucker (1977). She was snatched from her family and forced into domestic service as were thousands of other Aboriginal people. The restructuring of an Aboriginal cultural identity that includes the experiences of the "stolen generations" (Read 1982) has been one of the goals of Aboriginal organizations. From the Aboriginal point of view, the color of one's skin is not the main issue. Having Aboriginal kin, wanting to be part of an Aboriginal community, and accepting and following Aboriginal values are the important factors. Many non-Aboriginals either cannot understand the Aboriginal perspective on cultural identity, or they refuse to accept any criteria which are not based on notions of social race.

Questions of social race, Aboriginal identity, and non-Aboriginal views of Aboriginal people has been further complicated by several important changes in Australian
society. During the 1800s, Australian society increasingly became more pluralistic. First, large numbers of Chinese arrived during the gold rush years of the 1850s. They were in competition with white miners and business people, and they were treated in an increasingly hostile fashion by Anglo/Celtic Australians (Duffy 1986). Also, during the middle of the 19th century a number of Melanesian laborers were brought to Queensland to work on sugar plantations, and they also suffered from racist practices. All of this heightened racial antagonisms toward all non-Europeans, and it eventually lead to a series of exclusive measures referred to as "The White Australia Policy":

The success of these exclusive measures can be judged from the fact that only 1,785 Asians were allowed into Australia between 1940 and 1960. However, the policy was progressively opposed during the 1960s by churchmen, academics and other interested bodies. . . . The final demise of the policy occurred in 1975 with the passage through Parliament of the Racial Discrimination Act (Bullivant 1984:41).

Ideas of social race and ethnic hostility were also directed at the increasing numbers of migrants, particularly those from Southern Europe, coming to Australia during the first half of the 20th century:

The inflow of British and non-British migrants (especially Italians) resulted in competition with Australian labour and hence, the generation of considerable hostility. Tensions arose between Australian and overseas-born workers and between employers anxious to capitalize on cheap labour and employees (Foster and Stockley 1984:25).

By the 1970s and early 1980s, the federal or Commonwealth government had given official support to the
concept of multiculturalism. There has been an intense
debate on what multiculturalism means; however, it is clear
that Australian society is made up of a diverse population
including Aboriginal peoples, Anglo/Celtic groups, Southern
and Eastern Europeans, Asians, Melanesians, and Polynesians.
Members of these various groups have challenged views of a
monocultural Australia based solely on Anglo/Celtic values.
Aboriginal Australians find themselves trying to reformulate
their identity within what Foster and Stockley (1984) have
called "multiculturalism: the changing Australian
paradigm." Anti-Aboriginal feeling and racism still exist
in Australia, but it no longer exists as a force without
challenge.

Changing government policy toward Aboriginal people and
the bureaucracy that has implemented it have played a
significant role in creating the environment for present-day
attempts to maintain and reconstruct Aboriginal identity.
At first, there were the attitudes and policy decisions of
the British government in London, interpretations of those
policies by officials in Australia, state governments and
local governments who were influenced by powerful private
interests, and church mission groups. There never was just
one policy and one enactment of that policy, but rather a
series of contradictory policies at various levels of
government (Broome 1982). In fact, local Aboriginal policy
was controlled by whatever group was most powerful on a
local level. At times, it might be government officials, but at other times it was mission groups or local power brokers. The confusion continued even after Australia became an independent nation in the early 1900s (Tonkinson 1990). From the standpoint of Aboriginal people, things may have even gotten worse in some areas. At least officially, the British government had acknowledge some responsibility for preventing the complete destruction of Aboriginal culture. During the first half of the 20th century, Aboriginal people were directly under the power of state or territorial governments which were increasingly subject to local non-Aboriginal interest. Often local white groups saw Aboriginal people as barriers to white economic interests or as a burden on the tax payers. By the 1970s the Commonwealth or federal government had developed, at least in principle, a policy toward Aboriginal self-determination. Yet, some state and local governmental agencies have not reached the same conclusion about the importance of allowing Aboriginal people the right to determine their own affairs. They continue to question the policy of self-determination. It is in this context of changing attitudes and policies that contemporary Aboriginal people are fighting to define their cultural identity as Aboriginal Australians.

The Official Definition of An Aboriginal Person

The Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs (1988:1) provides the following definition:
An 'Aboriginal' is a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies and is accepted as such by his or her local Aboriginal or Islander community. Census figures do not differentiate between full-blood Aboriginal and Aboriginal of mixed descent, nor do government departments.

In general, Kooris and other Aboriginal people have had an active part in helping to formulate the official definition of an Aboriginal person. It is behavior, shared values, and place of origin that make up the important aspects of Aborignality. While questions of phenotypic variability are acknowledged, they are not the most significant factors. As one Aboriginal director of an Aboriginal youth hostel observed to me: "I am getting bloody damn tired of hearing about being mixed. What the hell does that mean? Is my right arm Gubb\(^6\)? You know what part of me they would say is Koori!" The problem remains that a number of non-Aboriginal Australians believe that the only Aboriginal people with "real" Aboriginal culture are the few traditional groups in isolated parts of Australia. On the other hand, they still insist that urban and "mixed" Aboriginal people are not really white—at least not as white as northern Europeans. The non-Aboriginal dominant group's view of Aborignality is still couched in terms of social race: "full-bloods" are the only Aboriginals that can have Aboriginal culture, and having some Aboriginal blood will limit your potential in non-Aboriginal society.

\(^6\)Gubbs or Gubbo is the Aboriginal term used in New South Wales to refer to a person of non-Aboriginal/European background.
In fact, the dominant non-Aboriginal group views Aboriginal culture as being restricted to a few areas of traditional Aboriginal public culture. Other Aboriginal people cannot "really be sincere" about having an Aboriginal identity. The challenge for Kooris, and other Aboriginal people, is not only to define their own identity, but also to prove to non-Aboriginal people that they have an Aboriginal identity. Kooris and other Aboriginal Australians have mounted an extensive campaign to ensure the cultural survival of an Aboriginal style of life. They are trying to convince the general Australian public and government officials who do not accept the official Commonwealth view of what it means to be Aboriginal. This shows that Aboriginal Australians must develop strategies of how they can convince other Australians of the legitimacy of their Aboriginal identity claim. As noted earlier, the Commonwealth government has an official policy of recognizing the multicultural nature of Australian society. The state government of New South Wales has also adopted a stance supporting multiculturalism.

**Aboriginal Diversity and Identity**

Aboriginal cultural identity does not rest on the assumption that all Aboriginal people are totally alike. The diversity of identities and lifestyles to be found in Aboriginal society can be illustrated by a model developed by the National Aboriginal Education Committee (NAEC) (1986). Two variables were used in designing the model:
(1) "Traditional orientation" which refers to the degree of observance of traditional institutions including kinship, ceremonies that act out the myths of the Dreaming, and Aboriginal law. (2) "Embeddedness" which relates to the degree of economic, social, and demographic connection with the larger or wider Australian society. When the two variables are considered, four general categories of Aboriginal communities can be ascertained:

(1) **Traditionally Oriented Communities.** Aboriginal people who live in these types of communities have the greatest geographic isolation and social separation from the rest of Australian society. They will follow Aboriginal law and maintain traditional ceremonies to a greater extent than other types of communities.

(2) **Rural Non-Traditional Communities.** These communities also have a great degree of geographic isolation and social separation from the rest of Australian society; however, they are not as highly traditional in their lifestyles as found in Category 1. Often these communities may be mixed remnants of several tribal groups. In the past, Aboriginal missions and reserves were set up with little, if any, concern for Aboriginal traditional culture.

(3) **Urban Communities.** People in these communities are extensively embedded geographically and economically into the wider Australian society; however, their community social organization allows for a considerable amount of
social separation. Urban communities are less traditionally oriented in terms of public culture\textsuperscript{7} than Categories 1 and 2.

(4) **Urban Dispersed.** The Aboriginal people in this group are the most socially, economically, and geographically embedded in the wider Australian society, and they are less inclined to follow Aboriginal traditions than any of the other groups.

The above categories were designed to give a general demographic break-down of the types of Aboriginal settlement patterns one finds; however, the National Aboriginal Education Committee (1986) felt that it was necessary to provide a more dynamic picture of how life goes on within Aboriginal communities. To this end, the NAEC has described seven types of living situations:

**Homelands Centers (outstations).** These are settlements to which Aboriginal people have moved as a result of their own decisions or initiatives. The settlements are self-governed by Aboriginal people. The important point is that homeland centers are decentralized communities established by kinship groups on land that has cultural, social, and economic significance to them. They illustrate the fact that a more traditional and independent lifestyle is important to Aboriginal people. Homelands centers or

\textsuperscript{7}Public culture is defined by Epstein (1978) as the rituals, myths, and other activities important to the maintenance of the formal aspects of a culture.
outstations are found in the Northern Territory, South Australia, Western Australia, and Queensland. The number of these communities is 588, with a total population of near 9500 people. While it is not possible for most Aboriginal people to live in homeland centers, the centers provide a powerful symbol of continuation with the past. They might be described as living history. The provide evidence that contemporary Aboriginal cultural identity is a living, changing force, but none-the-less, a changing force with links to past tradition. I attended a meeting of the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group where a video of one homeland center was shown to remind rural and urban Kooris that there were actual, living examples of Aboriginal people who were continuing to live a more traditional Aboriginal way of life. This lends moral support and justification for the maintenance and reconstruction of Aboriginal cultural identity.

Traditionally Oriented Communities. In these communities, one finds individuals with a great degree of commitment to the observance of traditional institutions; however, this does not necessarily mean that it is one tribal group. These communities of people are living together in settlements which have been established since the coming of Europeans to Australia.

Rural Non-Traditional Communities. This type of living situation involves communities of Aboriginal people living
in what were once state government reserves or missions and fringe dwellers. Fringe dwellers are Aboriginal people living on the edges of country towns, but not part of the towns. The experiences of Aboriginal people living on the fringe of Anglo/Celtic society has been powerfully portrayed in Bropho's (1980) *Fringedweller*.

**Metropolitan Urban Communities.** Included in these types of communities are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live within major cities in locations which have been identified as having large numbers of indigenous Australian people, or a closely associated group of dwellings in which large numbers of indigenous Australian people live. Redfern, the famous Aboriginal inner suburb of Sydney is an example.

**Rural Urban Communities.** These are communities that are similar to metropolitan urban communities but are located in smaller country towns. Several important examples of these types of communities in New South Wales are Bourke, Moree, and Dubbo.

**Metropolitan Urban Dispersed.** This type of living situation includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who live in suburbs or locations not identified as part of an urban indigenous community. However, they may have close ties and connections with people living in a metropolitan urban community.
Rural Urban Dispersed. These are Aboriginal people living in minor urban centers, but they are not living as part of a group.

The Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Australian Bureau of Statistics have provided the data on which the National Aboriginal Committee based their model. The census data is broken down into four categories: (1) Major urban: urban centers with a population of 100,000 or over. (2) Other urban: urban centers with a population of 1,000 to 99,999. (3) Localities: communities with population clusters of 200-999 people, and (4) Rural Balance: the balance of the state population which also includes migratory workers. The Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander population of New South Wales includes 22,000 people living in major urban areas. Other urban areas account for 27,500 Aboriginal residents. There are 2,600 people living in localities. The rural balance population category includes 7,500 Aboriginal people (Aboriginal Australia 1988:2).

The critical factors regarding Aboriginal identity are that Aboriginal values and lifestyles are important in each type of Aboriginal community and that Aboriginal people maintain contact with other Aboriginal people in a variety of living situations. As the National Aboriginal Education Committee (1986:10) has observed, Aboriginal identity is based on shared community experience:
In the main, Aboriginal society is structured around the community. There exist very strong kinship ties within each of the communities and within each of the categories. These kinship ties overlap the various categories thus forming very strong relationships among all Aboriginal people of this country. In a general sense, Aboriginal society tends not to be materialistic or competitive, rather it practices sharing of resources and co-operation.

The above interactions of Aboriginal people across various types of communities provides individuals with constant exposure to Aboriginal ways. They are not totally dependent on what Aboriginal leaders do or emphasize. Regardless of what formally happens in terms of Aboriginal cultural survival, on an individual basis, Aboriginal intimate culture is continued.

Aboriginal Views of Aboriginal Identity

Three Koori educators (Burney, Lester, and Riley 1982:4-5) from New South Wales have provided the following traits that impact on Aboriginal cultural identity: (1) Extended families. Many Aboriginal people find themselves living in an extended family situation. This may mean that individual importance is of less significance than responsibilities to the family group. (2) Language. Many Aboriginal people use their own languages or Aboriginal English. "Standard" Australian English, if used, is for many Aboriginal people a second language. (3) Sharing.

8Intimate culture (Epstein 1978) refers to expressions of ethnic behavior that are primarily revealed only in the ongoing life of the family and home, in the company of friends, or at ethnic or in-group gatherings.
Values of individual ownership are not stressed. What belongs to one person may be used by others without asking in many cases. (4) Past and present orientation. Aboriginal life styles focus on the past and the present. This view has its origins in the Dreaming which places the emphasis on "being" rather than "becoming." (5) Time orientation. Western emphasis on time is not always important to Aboriginal people. This reflects on the past and present orientation discussed above. As poverty is a major factor for many Aboriginal people, there may be a lack of clocks and watches in some households. Many non-Aboriginal people confuse this with the notion of Aboriginal "walkabouts." They may say Aboriginal people simply take off whenever the mood hits them. Aboriginals may leave school or jobs for a period of time, but in most cases it is done for a reason: family or community concerns demand their presence. For example, the funeral of an uncle or aunt may be just as important as the funerals of more immediate family members in Western families. An Aboriginal person may be expected to travel 500 miles or more to a funeral of a relative. (6) Group orientation. In traditional Aboriginal society people depended on group participation for moral, social, and physical support. This has carried over into contemporary Aboriginal communities. The Aboriginal community provides the sense of belonging. Leaving the Aboriginal community completely means losing
one's sense of Aboriginal identity. Aboriginal writers such as Bostock (1985), Davis (1985), and Walker (1970) have made this point. In reviewing a book on the history of a Koori family in Victoria, Barwick (1982:9) illustrates the importance of community to Aboriginal identity:

... that to many, perhaps most, Victorian Aborigines of Pepper's generation of people were primarily defined by place of origin and family membership. To "place" a new acquaintance they asked where he came from and which family he belonged to, not what jobs he did or what opinions he held. They viewed people as community members, shaped by their historic identification with a place and their loyalties to particular people, rather than as isolated individuals shaped by some chance combination of temperament, schooling, work, travel and political or religious experience.

It is not that any one aspect of Aboriginal culture or cultural identity is unique to Aboriginal people, but the grouping of certain ideas of sharing, cooperation, spiritual ties to a particular geographic location or some reference to "my Dreaming," and pride in the time depth of Aboriginal history that seems to be common to most Aboriginal communities and people. Pride in Aboriginal history means a sense of local history and of Aboriginal history in general. It is the belief that all Aboriginal people share a similar history of being part of a particular place—and having that sense of oneness with the land being upset by the invading Europeans—that unites traditional, rural, and urban Aboriginal people in land rights and other aspects of pan-Aboriginal activity. Each Aboriginal group is unique because, their Dreaming is related to a local area with
different families, communities, and histories. Many non-Aboriginal Australians do not understand that Aboriginal people base their identity on things happening in terms of national Aboriginal concerns and local Aboriginal communities. It is equally true that a great number of non-Aboriginal Australians do not understand the importance of Aboriginal intimate culture. Members of the dominant Western culture believe that once most aspects of Aboriginal public culture are destroyed, or no longer practiced, Aboriginal culture ceases to exist. For this reason, the strong intimate culture of rural and urban Aboriginal people in Southeastern Australia (New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, and the southeastern part of South Australia) is overlooked or ignored by many non-Aboriginal Australians.

The Procedure of Presentation

As was noted above, the purpose of this study is to examine Aboriginality as a sustaining force or ethos, and to study its effects on the maintenance and reconstruction of Koori cultural identity in New South Wales. The succeeding chapters will be organized in the following manner.

Chapter Two, "Theoretical and Methodological Considerations," reviews: (1) the pertinent literature on cultural identity, (2) the major theoretical considerations that are relevant to the study, (3) the role of anthropology in the formulation of Aboriginal cultural identity, and (4) the methodological strategies and
procedures used in the research. Under the heading of major theoretical considerations, particular attention will be given to the importance of choosing a psychological/cultural perspective for studying cultural identity. The section on methodological considerations focuses on the importance of a research methodology that combines participant observation with the analysis of archival materials (government documents, academic works, and newspaper accounts) and selected material from Aboriginal writers.

Chapter Three, "The Role of Education in the Maintenance and Reconstruction of the Cultural Identity of Aboriginal Australians," illustrates why education has been considered to be such an important area for identity formation by Kooris in NSW and Aboriginal people in general. The main sections focus on: (1) the institutions that make up the structure of Australian education, (2) Community involvement in Aboriginal education, (3) the issues related to Aboriginal identity and education, and (4) an analysis of Aboriginal identity issues in education.

Chapter Four, "The Role of Aboriginal Expressive Culture in the Formation of Aboriginal Identity," discusses the importance of Aboriginal writers, artists and designers, musicians, and actors in the formation of contemporary Aboriginal identity. The main sections include: (1) institutions and structural relationships, (2) institutional linkages, (3) forms and styles in Aboriginal
art, (4) issues related to Aboriginal expressive culture and identity, and (5) an analysis of the role of Aboriginal expressive culture in the formation of Aboriginal identity.

Chapter Five, "Aboriginal Identity and Its Relationship to the Fourth World," provides a discussion of the development of Aboriginal involvement in the World Council of Indigenous Peoples and other ties to various indigenous groups. The chapter centers on: (1) the background on how an Aboriginal identity as a Fourth World people evolved, (2) institutions and structural relationships, (3) international organizations and indigenous organizations in other countries, (4) issues, including the special issue of land rights, and (5) an analysis of Aboriginal identity and its relationship to the Fourth World.

Chapter Six, "Summary and Conclusions," consists of a review of important issues discussed in prior chapters and concluding remarks about the maintenance and reconstruction of cultural identity of Kooris as Aboriginal Australians in New South Wales. Important points of consideration include: (1) observations of where Kooris feel they are in terms of conceptualizing Aboriginality in a fashion that allows for actual use in developing programs from an Aboriginal perspective, (2) a discussion of how non-Aboriginal Australians have responded to Koori presentations of Aboriginal identity, (3) an evaluation of the extent that the bureaucracy has been influenced by Koori identity
building activity, (4) a discussion of how Koori views of Aboriginality relate to the anthropological study of cultural identity, and (5) concluding remarks which center on issues raised by the study and areas for future investigation.
CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction

Chapter two will address the theoretical and methodological considerations which are relevant to this study. Questions of cultural identity are serious human issues in a world where most societies are multicultural or plural in nature (Maybury-Lewis 1984). This is particularly important when studying plural societies which are experiencing periods of change. As Epstein (1978:100) points out, it is the very fact of being "thrust" into environments marked by ethnic heterogeneity, cultural diversity, and possible hostility that makes group identity so important. It provides a sense of equilibrium and security to Aboriginal Australians, who like other indigenous people, face the challenge of maintaining and reconstructing their identities in new plural settings.

These questions have an important political dimension. When one group dominates others within a plural society, those with less power do not always give up their cultural or group identity. They constitute what Spicer (1971:795) has called "persistent cultural systems." Certain groups create an environment that will allow them the possibility
of maintaining a separate identity, as an entity which provides a sense of values, belonging, direction, and self-worth. Kooris (and other Aboriginal Australians) view identity questions as being of major importance. By contrast, when governments and members of the dominant group become concerned about the future of indigenous minorities, that concern is directed primarily at economic development. However, even here, it is rarely based on input from the people themselves. It should not be surprising that many of these programs fail. Very little attention is paid to questions of feelings of self-worth and group identity. As a result of all this, there are increasing demands for social and behavioral scientists to direct their research toward providing a better understanding of human problems from several perspectives: not only that of policy makers but also that of people who are effected by policy decisions. Anthropologists can play an important role in the understanding of human problems from the perspective of group identity:

Because of their emphasis upon context, integration, and dynamism and their methodology of participant observation, . . . . [Howard 1986:428]

In Australia, anthropologists have been directly involved in the debate over Aboriginal identity and Aboriginal control of programs directed at meeting the needs of Aboriginal people.
Australian Anthropology and Aboriginal Identity

Australian anthropologists and departments of anthropology have taken a very active part in the debate on Aboriginal cultural identity. On the one hand, anthropologists have been involved in the maintenance and reconstruction of Aboriginal cultural identity, and they have also been the subject of a debate on their role in how Aboriginal identity should be defined.

Havighurst (1976) has studied the role of anthropology in the evolution of cross-cultural interaction in Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. He argues that anthropologists have played an important role in attempting to educate the political and intellectual leadership of each country by interacting not only with leaders of the dominant group, but also by maintaining contact with leaders of the indigenous minorities in each country. Anthropologists have accomplished this through their teaching and research, work with indigenous peoples' education programs, as government advisers, as administrators, and advocates for indigenous groups (Havighurst 1976:128). This is seen most clearly in Australia.

In Australia, anthropological concern for the identity and cultural survival of Aboriginal Australians began in earnest under the leadership of A.P. Elkin, the second
Professor of Anthropology in the University of Sydney¹.

Elkin began his fieldwork with Aboriginal people in 1927. In 1938, he published his famous work *The Australian Aborigines: how to understand them*. Elkin's leadership of the Anthropology Department at Sydney guaranteed that Aboriginal Studies would consider the concerns of contemporary Aboriginal people going through a period of drastic cultural change:

> It was interested in living Australian Aborigines, not only in their traditions but also in the changes taking place among them. . . . Elkin was quick to see the importance of this side of Anthropology, and among his many publications are those concerned with Aboriginal advancement. [Berndt and Berndt 1988:538]

Another important anthropologist interested in Aboriginal advancement was to commence his work in the 1930s and 1940s. W.E.H. Stanner began his work with traditional Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory. His worked included a number of articles, a monograph on Aboriginal religion, and the Australian Broadcasting Commission's 1968 Boyer Lectures entitled "After the Dreaming: Black and White Australians--An Anthropologist's Views". Stanner was considered the leading authority on the Dreaming; however, Stanner did not restrict his interests to the traditional Aboriginal groups of the Northern Territory. Stanner was

¹The Department of Anthropology in the University of Sydney was founded in 1925–1926. The first Professor of Anthropology was the well-known social anthropologist, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown. Radcliffe-Brown had been involved in some fieldwork with Aboriginal Australians; however, his main interest was general social theory.
also actively involved with the development of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (Berndt and Berndt 1988). The Institute saw its mandate as being concerned with studies of Aboriginal life in all settings. Stanner became concerned with the fact that many anthropologists seemed to focus on a traditional Aboriginal culture frozen in time. From this perspective, it seemed that Aboriginal traditional culture was such a fragile creation, that once Aboriginal public culture was no longer performed, the Aboriginal way of life would die out. This was particularly true of matters in southern Australia where Aboriginal groups had been in contact with Europeans since the early 1800s. It seemed that a number of anthropologists had written off southern Aboriginal communities as no longer having an Aboriginal identity. Stanner observed that Aboriginal culture was not dying out in southern communities, or any place else in Australia for that matter; it was simply changing within an Aboriginal perspective:

The one thing that seems to continue is the effort of the restless, if baffled, Aborigines to work out terms of the life they know how to handle. This is why they develop rather than alter, substitute rather than forgo, give in only to try to outwit. . . . It is plain as daylight that this system is still fundamentally Aboriginal in type. [Stanner 1979:62]

Stanner's observations regarding anthropologist's attitudes have been expressed more directly toward southern Aboriginal groups by the anthropologist D. Barwick, who had worked with them in the southeastern state of Victoria:
Except for a few students sent to study acculturation in the 1950s and 1960s, anthropologists virtually ignored the southern communities which had stubbornly preserved their identity despite the abandonment of rituals. When anthropological writing did filter into school textbook definitions of Aboriginal culture, these antiquarian preoccupations seemed to confirm popular belief that Aborigines who had lost their ceremonies had lost their culture. [Barwick 1982:12]

During the 1970s, there was an increasing involvement of Aboriginal people in political action, a growing concern about Aboriginal identity within many different types of Aboriginal communities, and a greater demand by Aboriginal people for the chance to control their futures. All of this activity was important as part of the renewed interest of Aboriginal people in their Aboriginal cultural identity. In 1972, a very important and dramatic event took place in southeastern Australia that would force non-Aboriginal Australians to take notice of a living and very forceful expression of Aboriginal identity. The event was the creation of the "Aboriginal Embassy". A group of young Aboriginal people erected a tent-encampment outside Parliament House in Canberra. It was a protest against inaction and neglect on the part of the Commonwealth or Federal Government in regard to Aboriginal grievances. The protest received extensive media coverage and support from traditional, rural, and urban Aboriginal groups from all over Australia. It was clear that there was some sort of shared Aboriginal identity that cut across all sectors of Aboriginal Australia. Members of the Labor Party visited
the Embassy and made a promise that they would push for Aboriginal self-determination when they won a national election. Winning a national election did not take long. Later in 1972, the Labor Party took power, and in 1973, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam announced that his government would give back to Aboriginal Australians their lost rights of self-determination (Broome 1982:181). The present Commonwealth Government has continued to endorse (at least in principle) the concept of Aboriginal self-determination.

During the 1970s, the land rights movement was also gaining momentum. Aboriginal people were saying: "What better way to show us that whitefellas mean what they say, than to give us back our land." At the same time, a number of anthropologists were becoming more actively involved in Aboriginal land claims and other aspects of the Aboriginal self-determination movement. This activity was not restricted to working with traditional Aboriginal groups of the north. In the south, Aboriginal activists/writers and academics were speaking out about Aboriginal identity and serving on government committees and with Aboriginal self-help organizations. Anthropologists were serving on some of the same government committees and also advising Aboriginal community groups. This was particularly true of anthropologists involved with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. The Institute had actively sought to increase the involvement of Aboriginal communities in
determining the goals of Aboriginal Studies and place more Aboriginal people in Institute staff positions. Thus, the issue of what was meant by Aboriginality or Aboriginal identity was increasingly becoming a major concern of Aboriginal people, academics, and government policy makers.

Anthropologists began to look at Aboriginal identity from the standpoint of maintenance and reconstruction. The reconstruction aspect of Aboriginal identity generated several questions: (1) If a pan-Aboriginal identity was evolving, was it based on something within the Aboriginal experience and culture history that could be shared by all Aboriginal people? (2) Was the only thing shared by all Aboriginal people, a response to non-Aboriginal dominance and racism? (3) Was there really such a thing as a pan-Aboriginal identity?

Some anthropologists saw Aboriginal identity as being solely couched in terms of reaction to outside forces, as did C.H. Berndt (1961:17). Tugby (1973:1) called Aboriginal identity a "looking class identity." It was an identity based on whites viewing Aboriginal people as distorted white images in a mirror. When whites saw Aboriginals, they saw them as white images with the "blemish" of Aboriginal ancestry. For von Sturmer (1973:16), the idea of a pan-Aboriginal identity was "a fiction which takes on meaning only in terms of white ethnocentrism."
Aboriginal writers and activists (for example Gilbert 1973, 1977, and Perkins 1973) were beginning to challenge social scientists' perceptions of Aboriginal people. They were particularly upset by the fact that Aboriginal people were only recognized as having an identity as a downtrodden minority in opposition to the dominant white group. Even traditional people seemed to be living on borrowed time, and southern rural and urban Aboriginal people were already doomed to be "outcasts in white society" (Rowley 1972). It seemed that Aboriginal people had no control over their own destiny. Aboriginal activist were not denying the existence of racism and poverty and the broken Aboriginal lives it produced. In fact, these topics were the subject of much of what Aboriginal writers wrote about, but they saw an identity and will that expressed itself in a fiercely Aboriginal way even in the most trying of circumstances. Nor were they trying to produce a romantic version of Aboriginal identity where traditional, rural, and urban Aboriginal people were all the same. What they hoped for was the maintenance and reconstruction of an Aboriginal identity that was flexible enough to include all Aboriginal people without denying the diversity of Aboriginal Australia.

R. Berndt is one anthropologist who has continued to view Aboriginal identity in terms similar to that of a number of Aboriginal writers and activists. He offered
suggestions on how the reconstruction of Aboriginal identity might take place, and he also focused on the concerns of southern Aboriginal people:

Firstly, southern Aboriginals are especially interested in their traditional Aboriginal antecedents. . . . What is possible, is the nurturing of a general idea of traditional Aboriginal life at two levels: (a) in terms of social relations, developing social links with all who claim to be Aborigines, and (b) selecting aspects of traditional or quasi- or pseudo-traditional Aboriginal culture which might respond to being revamped and placed within a different context. [Berndt 1977:11]

Was there a role for anthropology to play in this process? Berndt answered in the affirmative. It had been anthropologists who had recorded much of what was known of many traditional Aboriginal cultures:

Anthropological studies are therefore significant in helping to establish a tangible system of values and concepts which together could add up to contemporary 'Aboriginal' identification. [Berndt 1977:11]

However, present-day Aboriginal identity could not rest solely on the traditional Aboriginal past. There was a part of the Aboriginal heritage which was based on the painful years of contact and conflict with the European invaders/colonists. It is part of "an Aboriginal heritage which in that respect is just as significant, just as vital as traditional Aboriginal life" (Berndt 1977:11). The above combined heritage of traditional Aboriginal culture and the experiences of Aboriginal-European contact could be the basis from which "the real Aboriginal identity of today may be forged: not as a figment of the imagination, but
something which has a real basis, which has (or could have) a purpose, and which has meaning for all of the people concerned" (Berndt 1977:112). Both C. Berndt and R. Berndt (1988) have continued to call upon anthropologists to help Aboriginal people substantiate their identity claims.

As the few studies of acculturation among southern Aboriginal people started to be published, it seemed that the Aboriginal-European contact aspects of Aboriginal identity were starting to come into focus. Beckett (1978) points out that when his advisors sent him out to the western region of New South Wales (NSW) in the 1950s, they said he would find little left of traditional Aboriginal culture or identity. This did not turn out to be the case. He found that among Aboriginal people of both European and Aboriginal descent there was a good deal of traditional knowledge and the following of Aboriginal customs. Beckett became acquainted with the Aboriginal drover, George Dutton, and Beckett discovered that Dutton had gone through the traditional circumcision rituals as a young man. People had not bothered to ask Dutton or others of his generation about Aboriginal ways of life. It was assumed that they would neither know, nor value Aboriginal tradition. Perhaps it was the emphasis on public culture in a very limited perspective that helped to create the view that Aboriginal identity was no longer of importance.
However, some studies have put more stress on notions of intimate culture among Aboriginal communities in southern Australia. Barwick (1964) began her studies of Aboriginal people living in the Melbourne area and other parts of Victoria in the 1960s. After some twenty years of working on the anthropology and history of southern Aboriginal groups, she noted that Aboriginal people, including writers in their 30s and 40s, are beginning to point out things about Aboriginal identity that acknowledges differences but also an "Aboriginal world view" based on shared experience:

But because they find themselves at home in Aboriginal communities scattered across a continent, at ease with unrelated uncles and aunties who also share a heritage of loyalty to family and familiar territory, they recognize an Aboriginal 'world-view' based on common experience. [Barwick 1982:7]

Sansom (1982) has more recently reported on similarities in a number of different types of Aboriginal communities and regions. He has defined this as the "Aboriginal Commonality". It is based on Aboriginal ways of "doing business" or:

Widely appreciated ways of getting things in train, for dealing with the problems that whitefellas pose, for bringing the dispersed people of a region together for celebrations, for coping with financial difficulties in family life, make Aborigines of town and country continentally 'all same.' And this kind of similarity and the fellow-feeling that comes of it, while known to Aborigines, is largely unappreciated by members of the settler population. [Sansom 1982:118]

As anthropologists continue to devote some of their attention to Aboriginal identity and Aboriginal people in "settled areas" (Keen 1988), it does help to give an
academic legitimacy to the present-day importance of a changing, but still vital, Aboriginal identity quest. While there is at present no agreement on what makes up Aboriginality, in reviewing questions of Australian Aboriginal cultural identity, Tonkinson (1990:201) observes:

The question of what constitutes Aboriginality will not be resolved in the short term. Perhaps a definition will emerge from continuing research and debate among and between scholars and Aborigines. Similarities appear in aspects of Aboriginal culture throughout the continent, despite obvious variation in language, life-style, and socioeconomic circumstances.

The maintenance and restructuring of Koori cultural identity in New South Wales provides an interesting example of the continuing search for an Aboriginal cultural identity based on local traditions and a pan-Australian Aboriginal sense of identity.

Building a Theoretical Framework

Often, research that is intended to examine problems of culture change, is carried out from a perspective that is either limited to matters of material culture or stresses economic factors at the expense of questions of symbolic importance (Linnekin and Poyer 1990). This is not to argue that economic matters are of little importance. It is clear that the cultural survival of indigenous peoples depends on breaking the political and economic domination of outside forces (Bodley 1982). However, indigenous groups view life in symbolic terms that incorporates land, and other resources, that goes beyond material satisfaction (Burger
In an age of material development and with the triumphant domination of Western science and technology as the major human achievement, (a misleading theme in popular works on 'civilization') Aboriginality in European eyes is reduced to the immediately observable and the primitive. Where manifest Aboriginality in these terms does not exist, the people are perceived as empty vessels, drained of their content by European contact, and capable only of echoing the loud noises from European society. [Chase 1981:24]

What is at issue in the public domain of knowledge about Aboriginal people are various interpretations of "culture" and how it reflects the material conditions of life:

Are Aborigines today so destitute a human category that their culture can be given no credit beyond a highly romanticized past and a limited number of material artefacts? If they are so seen by many Europeans it goes part of the way towards explaining the avid interest in stone axes, long-deserted bora grounds, rock art, and 'genuine' Aboriginal names for houses (all the material remnants of bygone days -- including fragments of Aboriginal languages) and a steady indifference to the viability of a modern, distinctive Aboriginal society. [Chase 1981:124]

How, then, are we to understand views about Aboriginality today? Athol Chase (1981) has made some very important suggestions. Chase is an anthropologist who has worked with Aboriginal communities in the Cape York Peninsula and other areas for a number of years. He argues that some distinctions have to be made before we can get a clearer view of Aboriginal people. The first step is to define culture in a sense that will allow us to see the viability of a modern Aboriginal culture and identity based on an Aboriginal world view and ethos:
Firstly, we may define culture as a complex set of ideas and propositions about the nature of the world. . . . Culture in this sense, relates to the world of ideas and beliefs, not things. Secondly, we can distinguish socially approved pathways for doing things and arriving at particular goals: accepted ways of interacting with other people, converting natural materials into human resources, organising individuals and groups towards collective action and the like. [Chase 1981:24]

Aboriginal people all over Australia, regardless of whether in cities, country towns, or in the bush have an Aboriginal cultural identity at various levels of inclusiveness. Change has taken place in all types of Aboriginal communities. In all sorts of Aboriginal communities, changes at the material artifact level have been substantial; however, this does "not necessarily mean changes of the same order elsewhere in the social and cultural systems." (Chase 1981:27) One cannot automatically assume that drastic changes at the material artifact and technology level will result in changes at the group identity level; however, one has to define culture in a way that allows for the asking of the right questions.

Research pertaining to the study of the identity issues confronted by indigenous minorities should be structured from a holistic perspective, not a segmented one. As Wolf (1974:96-97) has pointed out, a segmentary model of human society has serious limitations:

Finally, we have asserted that what is worth studying is human experience; not economic experience, not psychological experience, not religious experience, cut into segments and studied separately, but human experience understood as the experience of life. . . .
These schemes have simplicity to commend them. . . . But the anthropologist, who has had occasion to confront the range of human possibilities, is committed also to an image of man that asserts both the variability and complexity of human life.

Wolf's observations certainly hold true when applied to Kooris and other Aboriginal Australians. Koori communities are both complex and varied. Kooris view themselves as being members of particular communities and also members of the larger group: Aboriginal Australians. Their communities and their identities are being challenged by the changes occurring in the larger Australian society. It is clear, then, that when studying the impact of change on the culture of a group of people, one needs a research model that accomplishes two things: first, the research model cannot assume that there is only one right or logical way to view the world, and secondly, the research model must take into account the complexity of what the people being studied may view as important needs—access to economic resources and political power may share importance with the need to maintain a sense of belonging or group identity (Linnekin and Poyer 1990:2). As a case in point, a number of Koori leaders have complained that some Anglo/Celtic government officials always want to put things in "bloody boxes." These "boxes" rarely include the importance of group identity as an aspect of economic, education, legal, and health programs, nor do they see these programs as interrelated. In fact, some of these same Aboriginal
leaders have complained that this is also a concern with some Aboriginal people who work for the government: "they start acting like Gubbs and forget how we see things."

In formulating the research model, we must first define cultural identity and develop a theoretical base for the appropriate methodology.

**Cultural Identity Defined**

Identity has been defined by Erikson (1964) as a psychological mechanism used by all humans in adapting to change. Identity has little objective reality independent of the contexts of the sociocultural environment; however, within the sociocultural environment, identity is a vital process. Group identity can be divided into two related but not identical processes. "Social identity" has been referred to as the general process by which an individual masters certain roles expected of him or her in particular social situations (Fitzgerald 1974). Goodenough (1965) has associated social identities with the rights and duties that go along with given social positions. Identity, in the social sense, provides the individual with a set of social bearings:

Identity in this sense helps to establish what and where a person is in social terms in any given situation. Hence social identities vary to suit the social setting. [Fitzgerald 1974:31]

In situations of cultural heterogeneity, it is important to have an identity at a group level in
relationship to other groups. It is "cultural identity" that provides the unifying principle of a sense of shared experience or commonality. However, this does not imply that every individual has to completely share all experiences. It is based on a distributive model of culture which views culture as an intricate arrangement of commonality and difference:

A distributive model of culture is one that is based on the distribution of a culture among members of a society (or over some field of persons, however bounded). Given that the relationship among the members of the society are socially structured, a distributive model of culture seeks to indicate the mapping of a cultural system upon a social system. The social structure itself, however, is a cultural artifact, having a distributive and variable base. Its substance is the relations among persons and groups. This substance is variously perceived and shaped, partitioned, labeled and manipulated like any artifact by the many participants of a society in accordance with their prior experience and adaptive needs. [Schwartz 1980:423-424]

Cultural identity can be further divided into identities based on past, present, or future orientations (DeVos 1982). For Aboriginal Australians, a past-oriented identity based on shared values, history, and/or ancestry has provided a most important focus for surviving as a unique people in a plural society. They see themselves as having a common set of traditions not shared by others within the larger society: the Aboriginal group's ideas, thoughts, feelings, or other aspects of culture are used to provide a symbolic or emblematic base for their identity as Aboriginal Australians. This means that one dimension of
Aboriginal identity is based on a response and reaction to others:

What this implies is that we are who we are by virtue of some common attribute or property we see ourselves as sharing as against those who are perceived not to possess it. The perception, that is to say, stems from within. Yet this view too inadequately represents the complexity of the matter, for what it overlooks is the way perception of the self takes shape in response to the presence and reactions of others. [Epstein 1978:101]

These reactions can be based on a continuum marked by positive and negative poles. Starting from the positive end, reactions range from pride in being of Aboriginal descent to anger with non-Aboriginal people who do not respect Aboriginal culture. Starting at the middle of the continuum, reactions range from an ambivalence about being Aboriginal to feelings of shame and anger at supposed Aboriginal weakness and inferiority at the negative end of the continuum. At the positive end, Aboriginal identity depends more upon the inner concepts of strength based on sharing values, trust, and the knowledge that you can depend on "your mates" within the Aboriginal community. At the other extreme, the identity rests on no, or only minimal, inner definition, and is essentially imposed from without.² In the case of Kooris and other Aboriginal people this means identities formed on the basis of outsiders or non-Aboriginal Australians' views of Aboriginal people and

²The discussion of positive and negative identity poles is based on ideas developed by Epstein (1978:102-103).
culture. Many Anglo-Celtic Australians view Kooris as lazy, dirty, inferior, child-like, etc.—people who have to have things done for them. For the Koori individual or group, it goes without saying that fighting to maintain the positive end of the identity continuum is paramount to cultural survival. It is crucial to note that the accent on negative identity, or lack of consideration for identity matters at all, appears in many government programs designed to address Aboriginal needs.

We also need to ask the question: "What is the difference between ethnic identity and cultural identity?" DeVos (1982:16) has defined a past-oriented group identity as "ethnic identity." He also refers to ethnic identity as a form of culture identity. Linnekin and Poyer (1990:9) have pointed out that Western assumptions about ethnicity may not apply in Oceania. This is particularly true when ethnicity focuses on assumed biological-genetic generational continuity. Oceanic views stress behavioral attributes—such as residence, language, dress, and participation in exchanges. This is certainly true of Aboriginal Australians. They may use ethnicity in the Western sense in terms of some Pan-Aboriginal activity, but they maintain a notion of shared values, place of residence, etc., as their underlying base for cultural identity. Regardless of physical appearance, if the community accepts you as
Aboriginal and you follow Aboriginal values, then you are Aboriginal.

However, if ethnic identity refers to the past-oriented identity described by DeVos (1982), it is certainly important to Aboriginal Australians. One of their identity markers is a shared sense of history.

What is the value of the identity perspective? When studying problems of cultural change, the identity perspective provides a basis for the investigation of the effect of disruptions on one or several identity dimensions and how this influences an entire identity structure as a member of a particular cultural group (Robbins 1973). From the standpoint of Aboriginal Australians and other indigenous people, this is a vital matter. Many Western social scientists and policy makers apparently see no future for the continuation of indigenous lifestyles in the modern world. It seems to be an "either or situation": either the indigenous group completely loses its cultural identity as it becomes submerged in a nation-state, or the group somehow remains so isolated that it can withstand Western impact. Aboriginal Australians do not accept the either-or scenario. From their perspective, there is the possibility of creating an Aboriginal cultural identity based on their history, modern interpretations of certain Aboriginal traditions, and a sharing of values related to such things as cooperation and shared resources. Social scientists need to examine the
reasons why the importance of maintaining and reconstructing cultural identity is so important to indigenous people and other cultural minorities.

Robbins (1973) has suggested that anthropologists have used three general models for viewing identity: the identity-health model, the identity-interaction model, and the identity-world view model.

The identity-health model deals with the relationship between identity and the mental health of an individual. According to Robbins (1973) anthropologists have used the work of Harry Stack Sullivan (1953), Carl Rogers (1959) and Erik Erikson (1968) in developing this model. The model certainly has significance for looking at questions of culture change. Doing periods of change, individuals and/or groups need to maintain some sense of a coherent feeling of self or sameness and continuity to function. Often when some notion of balance cannot be maintained, there are periods of maladjustment (problems with alcohol, abusive behavior, etc.). The work of Erikson (1968) has been of particular significance.

The identity-interaction model stresses the importance of the individual's concept of self as an important component to interactions with others as opposed to viewing identity as a source of individual personality adjustment. Goodenough (1965) and Goffman (1956) have provided are examples of the identity-interaction model. This model also
has significance for studies of cultural identity in plural societies, because the sense of group identity and how one relates to the group is a key issue in studies of the cultural survival of indigenous minorities in plural societies.

Robbins (1973) points out that the identity-world view model has been most deeply imbedded in anthropological interpretations of identity. Hallowell and Wallace have particularly interested in the world view model (Robbins 1973). World-view is based on cognitive assumptions held by a particular group of people about the world around them and how they symbolize the various aspects of the world:

Thus a world view is not merely a philosophical by-product of each culture, like a shadow, but the very skeleton of concrete cognitive assumptions on which the flesh of customary behavior is hung. World view, accordingly, may be expressed more or less systematically in cosmology, philosophy, ethnics, religious ritual, scientific belief, and so on, but it is implicit in almost every act. In Parsonian terms, it constitutes the set of cognitive orientations of the members of a society (Wallace 1970:143).

World view provides the structure from which the individual sees himself/herself in relation to every thing else (Redfield 1953). Hallowell (1959:76) argued that people entertain various views about the universe and the self:

The nature of the self, considered in its conceptual component, is a culturally identifiable variable. Just as different people entertain various variables...
beliefs about the nature of the universe, they likewise
differ in their ideas about the nature of the self.
For such concepts are the major means by which
different cultures promote self orientation in the kind
of meaningful terms that makes self-awareness of
functional importance in the maintenance of a human
social order.

Kooris and other Aboriginal Australians will point out to
anyone who will listen that they do view the world from a
different perspective than non-Aboriginal people. Teasing
out the conceptual components of that world view may be
difficult, but Aboriginal Australians have no doubt that
they do exist.

Various aspects of the above models can be combined;
however, the most important base for the study of the
cultural identity of Aboriginal Australians in the plural
society of NSW centers on the relationship of identity to
world view.

Robbins (1973) also suggests that there are several
identity processes that we must consider. Identity
formation and change deals with the issues of how one learns
her/his identity, what is a positive or negative identity,
to believe that one has become what he or she is supposed to
be or wants to be, or what other people want the individual
to be. According to Robbins (1973), the anthropological
concern with identity formation and change has forced
discussions of socialization away from a concern restricted
to early childhood. Identity formation and change also
occur in adolescence and adulthood.
From conversations with a number of Koori individuals, I found that questions of Aboriginal identity are major concerns of a number of Aboriginal adults. There are several reasons for this. First, in NSW, many middle age Aboriginal people were taken away from their Aboriginal families, and it is only in adulthood that they are able to create a meaningful Aboriginal identity. A second point concerns the fact that many Aboriginal people growing up on reserves, or as fringe dwellers, were constantly challenged to find something positive about being Aboriginal. Members of the dominant group constantly tried to force a negative identity on Aboriginal people.

Identity diffusion or dissolution is a term introduced by Erik Erikson (1968). The term concerns the process by which one's identity is split into several self-images, loses a center, or is dispersed. If one is concerned with the role of identity in the mental health of an individual, then, identity dissolution causes the individual to suffer from a lack of identity confirmation or become alienated. This has certainly been the case for a number of indigenous groups caught in periods of extreme culture change. Robbins notes that identity diffusion or dissolution does not necessarily denote a negative state:

However, when viewed from the perspective of the identity-interaction model, identity diffusion is a process that facilitates identity formation change (Robbins 1973:1212).
Robbins' point is well taken. If Koori cultural identity was based on a self-image with a rigid or non-changing center based in Aboriginal traditional culture, urban and rural Kooris would not have a chance of maintaining an Aboriginal identity.

Identity management or, to use Wallace's (1967) term "identity work," refers to attempts made by the individual to present a view of herself/himself that will elicit from other people responses that support the individual's self-view. There are several reasons for undertaking identity work:

Such identity work may be done for the purpose of confirming an already established identity, of rectifying a spoiled or stigmatized identity, or of defending an identity that has been challenged. [Robbins 1973:1213]

Kooris in NSW have found themselves trying to develop and confirm a recently established identity, rectifying a stigmatized identity, and defending their identity as Aboriginal Australians.

Wallace (1967) has also added another term "identity struggles." These are interactions or conflicts where one finds a discrepancy between an individual or groups' defined identity and the identity assigned to the individual or group by others. Many Kooris truly feel that there is a deep divide between how they view their identity and how many non-Aboriginal Australians view them.
Finally, there is the process of identity confirmation. This pertains to processes that provide ways of helping the individual attain some consistency between his/her self and her/his social and public identities (Robbins 1973). Identity confirmation presents challenges to Kooris, because they feel that they are still in the process of trying to develop positive social and public identities.

How can we summarize the approaches to identity and culture? Robbins (1973:1202) has identified five key propositions regarding identity that have been utilized by anthropologists: (1) The most basic proposition is that an individual's behavior and beliefs will have an effect based on the individual conception of self or identity. (2) The conception of self is the basis on which social life is built. The conception of self is the focal point from which the individual orients herself/himself to others and to his/her physical environment. It is the base for the world view model of identity which sees identity as being centered in the fundamental cultural orientations of the individuals forming a society. In fact, the identity of self becomes one of the requisite factors that allowed for the cultural adaptations of Homo sapiens. Hallowell (1959:50) has noted that world view provides the functional base for viewing a social system as a moral order, and this "implies a capacity for self objectification, self identification and appraisal of one's own conduct, as well as that of others, with
reference to socially recognized and sanctioned standards of behavior." The significance of world view cannot be overstated. (3) The individual's identity is formed and maintained as a result of interactions with others. (4) Individuals require information from others that ratifies, legitimates, or strengthens the individual's view of themselves. This is what Goldschmidt (1959) has called the need for "positive affect." This is the proposition that is the key concept for the identity-health model, because it argues that failure of identity confirmation has a deleterious effect on the individual's psychological well-being. (5) Individuals constantly strive to receive from others a confirmation or validation of the image or identity they envision as being a positive one. This is what Wallace (1967) has called "identity work." It is an attempt to get an acceptable testimonial from others about the individual's identity. A final point is that it is implied in all of the above propositions that there is an "assumption that an individual's identity is never static, that an individual's conception of self is in a constant state of flux" (Robins 1973:1202).

While the individual is important, it must be kept in mind that cultural identity implies that the important consideration is the relationship between the individual and her or his sense of belonging and viewing the world from the value system of a particular cultural orientation. In
addition to the propositions summarized by Robbins, Epstein (1978:111) has suggested several concepts that are important to a view of cultural identity. He talks about "cultural erosion" and how it relates to public culture and intimate culture. He maintains that researchers have focused on the extent to which particular customs tend to be followed or not. What such research shows is what important traditional practices have been abandoned, but those customs that have been abandoned are in the realm of public culture. Epstein goes on to point out that we have to consider two related and important observations. First, the kind of research cited above is based on the assumption that the continuance of custom is the base for the persistence of identity. However, "what would seem to be important in the transmission of identity is not practice in itself, but the meaning that attaches to it, and the way it is cathected". Such issues have rarely been the concern of sociological inquiry into ethnicity (Epstein 1978:111)." A second observation follows from the first one. If the importance of identity transmission is based on the actual meanings or

\[\text{While I cannot be completely sure of Epstein's reason for using the word "cathected", it would appear that he was searching for a word that would convey the intensity of feeling and importance of meaning often attached to one's group identity. Cathect comes from the Greek "kathexsis" which refers to concentrations of mental energy in one channel (The Concise Oxford Dictionary 1976:157). The most important aspect of identity is its retention, or way it is cathected, which in turn, is based on the value and meaning of the identity in question.}\]
value attached to a particular identity, then, Epstein (1978:111) notes that it would seem "that many of the subtler expressions of ethnic behavior that are revealed in the ongoing life of the home, in the company of friends, or at ethnic gatherings, expressions of what I have called the 'intimate' culture, similarly escape the sociologists net." Epstein's terms "public" and "intimate" culture direct our attention to why a particular group still attaches importance to their cultural identity even when their culture is continuing to change. If the group continues to display behavior based on common values and attitudes despite the abandonment of a great deal of public culture, they will still have a unique cultural identity. As one of my Aboriginal college students pointed out, "being Koori doesn't mean you have to run around naked, standing on one foot, and holding a boomerang." Following Epstein, the above example illustrates the fact that Koori identity is based on common values and attitudes that are transmitted as part of the intimate culture of Kooris and other Aboriginal Australians:

Rather than focussing on customs as such we are thus prompted to search for these values and attitudes as they are manifested in 'intimate' situations. In studying how they are transmitted to and experienced by the young we may hope to discover how the cognitive aspects of identity are buttressed by unconscious associations and identifications, and so come to a deeper understanding of the affective component of ethnic identity. [Epstein 1978:121]
While the above authors have made a number of important points related to the anthropological study of identity, Spicer (1971) has undertaken the most detailed attempt to formulate a model of cultural identity in relationship to identity systems that can adapt to contrasting environments. For Spicer (1971:795), symbols form the base of a collective identity system:

> What we are dealing with here are beliefs and sentiments, learned like other cultural elements, that are associated with particular symbols, such as artifacts, words, role behaviors, and ritual acts. Relationship between human individuals and selected cultural elements--the symbols--is the essential feature of a collective identity system; individuals believe in and feel the importance of what the symbols stand for.

Spicer (1971:796) sees the identity concept has having the advantages of stressing the fact that the elements of culture have form and meaning significant to individuals, emphasizes the importance of beliefs about historical events in the experience of generations of people, and brings individual motivation into the analysis through the image people build of themselves based on the meaning of identity symbols.

Spicer is primarily concerned with cultural identity systems that persist over time in plural societies. He argues that what he calls "the oppositional process" operates in all cases of persistent identity he has studied:

> I have emphasized that a persistent system is a cumulative cultural phenomenon, an open-ended system that defines a course of action for the people believing in it. . . . These may best summarized as
an oppositional process involving the interactions of individuals in the environment of a state or a similar large-scale organization. The oppositional process frequently produces intense collective consciousness and a high degree of internal solidarity. [Spicer 1971:799]

Spicer (1971:798) identifies what he considers important internal characteristics and maintenance processes of persistent identity systems. First, he thinks that the set of identity symbols and their configuration is characterized by some combination of land and language elements. By land, he means that there was at least at some point in time, a certain territory that had some symbolic significance to the group in question. Loss of territory may even reinforce group identity. This certainly is the case with the Land Rights Movement of Aboriginal Australians. It has united a variety of Aboriginal groups. For southern Aboriginal people, such as the Kooris of NSW, there is little hope that they will actually get back their original land, but many Kooris still identify with their traditional areas as powerful symbols of their Aboriginal heritage.

Language is a more complicated issue but of similar character. The important point is not that a particular language be spoken over time, but that in some way, a particular language provides a system to communicate the symbolic elements of the cultural identity in question. Even the names of places in the original language of a people can have significance, or the use of selected words
from the original language. Again, this has been important in Australia. A number of significant Aboriginal places have been changed back to their Aboriginal names. The most famous and recent example is the changing of "Ayers Rock" to "Uluru" in the Northern Territory. Another example is the demand by Aboriginal people in NSW and Victoria to be called "Kooris." Aboriginal organizations will often have a phrase from a traditional language on their letterhead or an Aboriginal phrase as their motto. As a case in point, the NSW Aboriginal Education Unit's newsletter for the Western Region is called "Parlku" which is the Barkindji word for news or language. There has also been a debate about Aboriginal English or the use of English in a particular way by Aboriginal writers. Traditionally, there were a number of Aboriginal languages in various parts of Australia. Many of these languages were local or regional, and many have been lost. In terms of pan-Aboriginal identity, English serves as the base for communication. Some Aboriginal writers have argued that the important point is how they convey the message to make sure it has a particular meaning to Aboriginal people (Davis 1985).

Other important constituents of identity systems are music, dance, and heroes. In fact, music and dance may be as important as land and language. There is no question that music, dance, and heroes have been important in the Aboriginal quest for a unique cultural identity. In 1972,
the Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre was founded. There are Aboriginal groups that perform traditional music and a number of Aboriginal groups who play contemporary music and songs from an Aboriginal perspective (examples would be Coloured Stone and the Pitjanjatjara Country Band).

Aboriginal heroes are also important. The newsletter of the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group is named Permulwoy after an Aboriginal leader who led Aboriginal fighters against soldiers and settlers in the greater Sydney area during the 1800s. There are a number of other individuals and groups that serve as symbols of Aboriginal resistance and identity.

Spicer (1971), thinks that symbolic systems are flexible in terms of the cultural elements that serve as identity symbols. For Spicer, the oppositional process is the important factor:

What becomes meaningful is probably a function of the oppositional process. Where pressures are focused in the cultural repertoire of the people, there the symbols and the meanings are brought into the identity system, and these pressures change as the interests of dominant people change. [Spicer 1971:999]

One of the most often cited references on ethnicity is Fredrik Barth's "Introduction" to Ethnic Groups and Boundaries (1969). Barth, a British-trained Norwegian anthropologist, defined ethnic groups in terms of "categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves": therefore they "have the characteristic of organizing interaction between people" (1969:10). From the
stand point of identity, ethnic identity is ascribed. Ethnic categories serve to classify an individual in regard to the basic and most general identity: "presumptively determined by his origin and background" (Barth 1969:13). Barth (1984:80) more recently has emphasized the fact that ethnicity is used most effectively as a concept of social organization, but it does not provide as effective a "framework for investigating the actual bodies of beliefs, values, and practices that are distributed in a population. . . ."

Recognizing the importance of the cultural dimensions of identity has meant that attention be given to symbols, meanings, and indigenous categories. One of the anthropologists who has been concerned with the ongoing symbolic maintenance and 'reconstruction' of the cultural identity of an indigenous minority in the present has been Blu. Her book, The Lumbee Problem: the Making of an American Indian People (1980), acknowledges Spicer's contribution to the study of cultural identity as being his view that symbols and their meaning are important and that they are to be found in a given people's world view.

However, Blu (1980) finds several problems with Spicer's model. She thinks that it is too comprehensive in that he tries to account for too many things at the same time. Blu also thinks the large number of variables in Spicer's model are tied together in a rigid manner. This
does not allow for the flexibility needed for a general model of cultural identity. Blu (1980) also finds fault with Spicer's insistence that all symbols be well-defined and notions related to identity be fully explained or articulated by the people in question. She does not think people can always do this, or they may not feel it is necessary.

Blu also finds Barth's views on ethnicity to be of limited value. She feels that he attempts to "include many aspects of behavior in a peculiarly rigid way" (Blu 1980:222). Blu argues that Barth does not deal with the possibility of ethnic identity being determined by context. What people think about their identities and that of others may provide interesting data.

For Blu, collective identity should be viewed from the perspective of how identity is felt—the meaning of a particular identity to those that share it:

Meaning cannot be reduced to a reflection of the social order nor can it be equated with a catalogue of symbols, however logically interconnected they are. Rather, meaning stresses the intimate interconnection of what people think, how they feel, and what they do. [Blu 1980:231]

Blu (1980:231) thinks that an identity model that is used to examine certain kinds of present-day indigenous minority identities, such as those of the Lumbee and other groups, is best understood from the perspective of, "a tangle, an irreducible, unorderly, intricate intertwining of strands." The strands cannot be separated, because they
would disappear. What does Blu see as the positive features of the tangled form of collective identity?

The positive features of such an identity are that it allows for flexibility, easy adjustment to innovations, and the perpetuation of a repertoire of multiple possibilities at the same time that a strong sense of continuity is maintained. [Blu 1980:234]

We have discussed the relevant theoretical considerations and the approaches used by various researchers looking at problems related to cultural identity. One of the most important considerations noted by Blu (1980), Epstein (1978), and Spicer (1971) has been that questions of cultural identity are best suited for study by participant observation. Epstein (1978) suggests that certain situations and research problems can be best understood when the researcher is part of the group. Formal interviews and questionnaires provide certain types of information; however, they may not reveal those important aspects of intimate culture which are expressed in actions but not necessarily words. Formal interviews and questionnaires may miss the point simply because the underlying assumption is that everything that is important is carried by the public culture. According to this premise, it is often assumed that, if certain cultural traits do not show up in the public culture, the culture is close to extinction.

One example may illustrate the point. I was excited to get an invitation from the Aboriginal principal of a new
Aboriginally controlled school in the Adelaide area of South Australia. I must confess that I looked forward to examples of Aboriginal public culture: a school full of rainbow serpent murals, Aboriginal dance and music programs, student essays on the Dreaming, and ecology lessons on traditional bush knowledge. To be sure, there were examples of Aboriginal artifacts and other aspects of public culture, and the Aboriginal flag was proudly flown in front of the school. There was clearly a feeling that there was something different about the school, but the emphasis was not on public display. Instead, the Aboriginality of the school was shown in how the community was involved in forming school policy, how teachers and students related to each other, and most important, how there was a spirit of sharing by all involved in the school. The principal pointed out that Aboriginality is a way of acting and doing things. Non-Aboriginal students and teachers were welcome in the school, but they would have to do things the Aboriginal way. They had to become part of the community as represented by the school. Of course knowledge of Aboriginal culture and history is important, but the key is acting on that knowledge in terms of relating it to the maintenance and reconstruction of Aboriginal identity. Public culture is important in a symbolic way: it represents the ideals of Aboriginal unity in terms of world view.
It should also be noted that areas such as folklore, drama, literature, and art play an important role in illustrating the relationships between public culture and identity (Bronowski 1965). This has certainly been true for Aboriginal Australians, as witnessed by the Aboriginal journal of opinion, Identity and the First National Conference of Aboriginal writers held in Perth in 1983 (Davis and Hodge 1985). There is an attempt to maintain and record as much of traditional culture as possible and develop concepts of Aboriginality based on a restructuring of traditional culture and modern Aboriginal life. Contemporary Aboriginal expressive culture has been an important source for the development of an Aboriginal cultural identity. Therefore, special attention will be given to the works of Aboriginal writers and artists in a following chapter.

Relating Theory and Methodology: The Development of an Analytical Model

McCay (1978,1981), Vayda and McCay (1977), and Lees and Bates (1984) have argued for a problem-oriented approach to anthropological research. While their work has been generally concerned with environmental problems, the above authors have outlined a general approach that can be effectively used to study problems related to cultural identity.
McCay (1978, 1981) and Vayda and McCay (1977) have suggested that when people are presented with problems, they marshal all their individual and group behavioral adaptations to either solve or reduce the problem. They point out that what people think and feel is important becomes clearly articulated when they have to deal with major problems. McCay (1978, 1981), in particular, has advocated a "people ecology." People as living beings with needs and wants, act out their personal quest for solutions to their problems and needs within the context of a local environment. There will obviously be factors that often impinge on local behavioral from outside, but even here, they will impact in relationship to the local situation. This can be related to Hallowell's (1959) idea of the social system functioning as a moral order. Unfortunately, many researchers do not pay attention to the importance of world view as a factor in cultural adaptations.

What is the importance of the above material in relationship to methodology? The researcher not only must spend enough time with a group of people to understand their local environment and problems, but also he or she must attempt to see what the local group feel are the most important priorities. It may be assumed that economic and political problems are the most important ones; however, in some cases economic and political issues may be secondary to cultural identity issues. Or, cultural identity questions
may be intertwined with economic and political issues to the point that the issues cannot be treated separately. The group may add new behavioral strategies that allow them to stay in their local area or maintain their sense of identity. Therefore, determining what the local group views as a "problem" is the starting point of the research.

Lees and Bates (1984) agree that the problems approach is important, but they feel anthropological research that the approach should be more finely focused. This can be done by looking at "events." By studying particular events and their consequences, a researcher is allowed to facilitate generalizations about response hierarchies. Humans order their behavior in terms of costs and risks. It gives a diachronic perspective to research, and it is an ideal point of entry to describe complex and changing relationships. An event does not necessarily have to be a problem, but simply the normal course of action for focusing on individual and group plans for dealing with particular situations. Lees and Bates (1984:14) also feel that the events approach has another important advantage related to theory building:

Events provide the circumstances for testing hypotheses having to do with immediate or proximate causality and thus take one beyond noting simple correlation or association.

The event or events results in a "case-study." A case-study is defined as a research method that focuses on a
specific instance or example. The anthropological case-study is based on participant observation:

A research method in which a researcher lives with a group of people and observes their daily activities, learning how the group views the world and witnessing firsthand how they behave. [Howard 1986:416]

The researcher is seeking information from the "emic" or insider perspective of the people who are the focus of the researcher's attention (Spradley 1980). This is of vital importance in looking at questions of cultural identity. In the case of indigenous minorities in plural societies, there are several "emic" views. There are the views of the indigenous group themselves and the views of other groups with which the indigenous group is in contact. In the case of Aboriginal Australians, they are attempting to not only define themselves, but also change the way other groups view Aboriginal people. In fact, outside views may also have an impact on how the in-group sees itself. My participant observation included involvement in Aboriginal groups and, where possible, non-Aboriginal groups.

One of the "events" that I was able to observe and participate in was the Aboriginal discussion of strategies and reactions to the Bicentennial Year of 1988. Aboriginal groups were beginning to plan reactions in the Summer of 1986 when I arrived in Australia and these plans continued in to the Spring of 1987 when I left. Many Aboriginal leaders and their non-Aboriginal supporters were afraid that after 1988 there might be a backlash of negative feelings
toward Aboriginal quests for self-determination and recognition of the validity of Aboriginally defined notions of cultural identity. Many Aboriginal activist saw the possibility of world-wide press coverage being given to the Bicentennial Year. There was a rallying cry "don't take the bait in 88" which was seen on t-shirts and in Aboriginal publications. The Australian Commonwealth Government for its part, had provided large sums of money and encouragement for Aboriginal involvement in the Bicentennial. The government had already been embarrassed by the World Council of Churches Report (1981), *Justice for Aboriginal Australians*, whose main conclusion was that there was not a great deal of justice for Aboriginal Australians. Therefore, a number of Aboriginal leaders and non-Aboriginal observers were afraid that the government may simply be trying to "buy" Aboriginal support without making any substantial commitments to Aboriginal communities. The debate was intense. Some Aboriginal communities applied for government Bicentennial grants, but the majority of Aboriginal groups remained critical and rallied behind the message of "not taking the bait in 88." Aboriginal groups hoped to force the government to make a stronger commitment to addressing Aboriginal concerns and at the same time take advantage of worldwide attention on Australia to educate the Australian public and an international audience. The international strategy had already been set in motion during
the late 1970's when Aboriginal Australians became active in the World Council of Indigenous People and had petitioned the United Nations about their grievances.

While most Aboriginal leaders certainly wanted to aggressively pursue their goals of maintaining an Aboriginal identity and self-determination in the political and economic spheres, they did not want to further erode their standing with the non-Aboriginal public in Australia. During the 1960's, there had been overwhelming support for giving Aboriginal people the right to vote. However, as Aboriginal people began to extensively exercise their political rights, public sentiment began to decline. This was particularly true as land rights activity, challenges to the Australian justice system, and the loss of patience of Aboriginal people with conservative politicians became more critical and vocal. During 1985, a research study report, commissioned by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, was issued. The report was entitled "Land Rights: Winning Middle Australia, An Attitude and Communications Research Study." The Report reached some very disturbing conclusions:

A campaign is needed like no government has ever attempted in Australia. Black rights generally, and land rights in particular, represent the most divisive and potentially explosive issues that we have ever dealt with -- and we suspect that this country has faced in the post war period. The Australian population can be thought of at the moment as roughly being in three camps regarding black rights: one quarter implacably opposed and unshiftable in the short term; one quarter firmly supportive; and half in the
middle leaning increasingly to opposition and prejudice through fear, ignorance, misinformation, and soft racism. [ANOP Market Research 1985:35]

In fact, the report was so disturbing to the government that access to it was made increasingly difficult as interest in it increased.\(^5\) There was some debate as to the reliability of the survey techniques used. Even some Aboriginal people were not sure the extent of anti-Aboriginal feelings were as strong as stated by the report. However, no one denied that the report illustrated how Aboriginal Australians were viewed by a number of non-Aboriginal people, and this certainly raised challenges for the maintenance and restructuring of Aboriginal identity. The "events" of 1985 and 1986 provided an ideal situation to examine questions related to Aboriginal cultural identity and cultural survival.

Finally, in trying to find a model for conceptualizing the data on the maintenance and reconstruction of the Aboriginal cultural identity of Kooris in NSW, I have found Schwartz's (1980:423-424) "distributive model of culture" to be of value.

There are several advantages to the distributive model of culture. First, it does not require some arbitrarily selected degree of homogeneity among members of the group.

\(^{5}\) I was able to get a copy of the report through an Aboriginal contact in the Commonwealth Government. It came in a brown envelope with no return address. I was told that allowing non-government people access to the report could cause one to lose their job.
It also provides a way of connecting cultural values or guides for behavior with individuals and social structure. Schwartz (1980:424-430) uses several important concepts to explain the relationship between culture, individuals, and social structure. Each individual's personal view of culture is based on the "idioverse." The idioverse is based on the individual's life history and new experiences which may be transformed or recombined as needs change. A "structure of commonality" exists where the various idioverses of the members of a group intersect. Within the structure of commonality there is a "social structure of commonality" which is made up of intersects of idioverses of sets of individuals who have some common function, attribute, identity, or accorded significance. Degrees of commonality at one particular level allows for the possibility of human communication at other levels. Thus there can be both heterogeneity and homogeneity within a cultural group.

The following example illustrates how Schwartz's model applies to Aboriginal identity issues. I had the good fortune to meet three Aboriginal men who were good friends and also, each in his own way, who were important people in the Aboriginal community of Redfern in Sydney. Each had an idioverse made up of individual life histories and new experiences. One individual was a former sports star who had become an important person in government. Another
individual was a community worker of Aboriginal/Malanesian background who had been to the United States. In the United States, he had met members of the Black Movement in Newark, New Jersey. The final person was an Aboriginal country and western singer who was considered by people in Redfern to be one of the best. There was a structure of commonality in the sense that all three had lived in one particular country town in Western New South Wales. They had grown up as "Aboriginals" with all the challenges and experiences that conveys. They shared a "social structure of commonality" in that all three accorded their cultural identity as Aboriginal people to be of vital importance. They shared certain common experiences, and each had a unique personal background that brought additional experiences to the reconstruction of Aboriginal identity. The individual with government connections had been able to travel widely to Aboriginal communities throughout Australia. The community worker had shared information with members of another minority in a different country on the importance of maintaining a positive group identity. The country and western singer had shared experiences with other Aboriginal musicians who were trying to express their identity through music.

Schwartz's model, with a few modifications, is ideal for the study of the maintenance and reconstruction of an indigenous minority's cultural identity in a changing,
plural society. It does not require any preconditions for its use, and it is designed to account for diversity and commonality. This is particularly true when the indigenous minority is made up of communities with a diversity of experience and different levels of knowledge of the traditional culture—some shared by many individuals and other experience and knowledge shared by only a few. If we add a division of the experience of individuals into domains of public and intimate culture, we have the formation of an Aboriginal identity. It is an identity that allows for diversity, but at the same time, commonality. This formation does not demand that people have exactly the same experiences. However, as long as experiences somehow intersect at some point, they can be shared with others. It is at these intersects that we can identify symbols and shared world views that make up a particular cultural identity and give it meaning for the group in question. It allows us to see how rural and urban Aboriginal people can build an Aboriginal identity based on some commonality with traditional Aboriginal groups. It provides a framework for a case-study of the events that highlight the Aboriginal cultural identity maintenance and reconstruction work of Kooris in New South Wales.

Research Strategies and Data Sources

The strategy applied in the present research centered on participant observation, interviews and discussions, and
readings dealing with questions of Aboriginal identity. I "talked" to 150 Aboriginal people. From an Aboriginal perspective, "talks" is a more accurate description of Aboriginal verbal communication among rural and urban Aboriginal people. Most Aboriginal people do not feel at ease discussing Aboriginal matters in a formal setting with outsiders. The talks or discussions were in English. I do not speak any Aboriginal languages, and Kooris in New South Wales speak either standard Australian English or Aboriginal English. Some older people still know the tribal languages, and some younger people are trying to learn a tribal language. However, English is the language that is used most often. My participant observation took place in meetings of Aboriginal community organizations, social interactions with Aboriginal people in private residencies in different communities, Aboriginal education units at two institutions of higher education, restaurants, pubs, trips undertaken with Aboriginal people to various places, and hostels. Interviews/discussions were undertaken with Aboriginal leaders in various types of organizations and Aboriginal units within government bureaucracies. The formal interviews/discussions were generally from forty-five minutes to an hour in duration; however, in a number of cases, more informal discussion continued over lunch or at a later social occasion. I also read a number of government policy statements and other materials dealing with
Aboriginal identity issues given to me by various Aboriginal leaders. As Blu (1980) has pointed out, when studying identity questions, one concentrates on those people who can best articulate what is involved in defining a particular group identity. Therefore, I concentrated on discussing Aboriginal identity with people who were willing to discuss it and could express what they felt it was that was important in being Aboriginal. Since group identity in a plural society is articulated in relationship to other groups, discussions were also held with non-Aboriginal people where possible. Library/document research in Aboriginal identity issues supplemented the participant/observation and interviews/discussions aspects of the study. Library/document research played an important role in providing historical background for present day Aboriginal identity issues. Interpretations of Aboriginal history, the history of culture conflict in Australia, and attempts at accommodation between Aboriginal Australians and outsiders are critical in the formation of Aboriginal cultural identity today. I was not able to do as much library/document research that I would have liked in Australia. This was because opportunities occurred where I was to be actively involved with Aboriginal people, but these opportunities meant that I had less time for reading documents, etc. Australian associates have continued to mail important materials, and I mailed several boxes of
material back to the United States before I left Australia.

The major involvement with Aboriginal groups came through my associations with: (1) The New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, (2) The Aboriginal Education Unit of The University of Wollongong, Wollongong, N.S.W., (3) The Wollongong Area Chapter of the N.S.W. Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, (4) The Illawarra Local Aboriginal Lands Council, (5) The Aboriginal Education Unit of the N.S.W. Department of Education, Sydney, and 6) The Aboriginal Education Unit, Rural Aboriginal Education Program, Macarthur Institute of Higher Education, Milperra, N.S.W. Through my associations with the above groups, I was able to interact with Aboriginal people in the Wollongong and Sydney areas (central coastal area) and visit Aboriginal people in Western NSW, the South and Far South Coast of NSW, and Northern NSW. My associations with Aboriginal people in NSW also generated contacts with individuals in the Aboriginal Education Sector, the South Australia Department of Education, Adelaide, S.A.; the South Australian Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Adelaide, S.A.; the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra, A.C.T.; and the National Aboriginal Education Committee, Canberra, A.C.T. When I first moved to Sydney in December of 1986, my wife visited me for a month. This was a most significant factor. She attended an Aboriginal conference with me and interacted
socially with staff members of the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group in Sydney. Aboriginal trust is based on personal relations. The very fact that my wife was interested in meeting Aboriginal people helped to provide legitimacy for me.

I was fortunate enough to be involved with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group as an informal consultant for the President of the NSWAECG. In return for preparing a study on the importance of Aboriginally controlled schools for positive Aboriginal cultural identity, I was given a place to live for part of my stay in Australia. I lived in Haberfield, NSW, in the house of an important Aboriginal leader. Being in Haberfield allowed me to spend time also in Redfern, one of the two major Aboriginal communities in the Sydney area. Haberfield was only a few minutes by train or car from Redfern. As a visiting lecturer in the Rural Aboriginal Education Program, the Aboriginal Education Unit, Macarthur Institute of Higher Education, I was involved formally and informally with a number of Aboriginal people. The students I taught were Aboriginal adults who came to the Macarthur Institute to upgrade their formal academic credentials. I was involved in the Residential School for 1987. The Residential School is designed for Aboriginal people who either have limited time because of jobs, or live far away from institutions of higher education and have limited time to spend away from
their home areas. They come to Macarthur several times during the school year for periods of a few weeks to attend lectures, take exams, and develop projects which they work on when they are back in their home areas. The program is open to all Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders. I was able to visit several of my students in their home areas in Western NSW between sessions. The Macarthur experience was also important from the standpoint of being able to interact with Aboriginal people from a variety of Aboriginal communities both in NSW and other parts of Australia.

The interview/discussion aspects of my data collection were based primarily on discussions or "talks" as described earlier. More formal interviews and questionnaires are simply not popular with Aboriginal people. There are several reasons for this. First, traditionally one did not ask direct questions, because this was a breach of Aboriginal etiquette. One still does not ask direct questions among contemporary Aboriginal people (Eades 1981).

A second problem is the question of trust. Aboriginal people have been interviewed and surveyed by countless researchers, and many times Aboriginal people feel they have been betrayed. This can be illustrated by a conversation between two Aboriginal women who gave my wife and I a ride to a restaurant where a group of Aboriginal people were
meeting. The one women told of befriending an Anglo researcher who told the Aboriginal women she considered her a friend. After the researcher got her information, she never contacted the Aboriginal woman again. The point was not that the Aboriginal person expected constant contact, but there was a sense that a false friendship had been created just to get information. Being accepted by Aboriginal communities takes time under the best of circumstances, but once accepted, you are part of the community.

Questionnaires are a particular sore spot with Aboriginal people. One Aboriginal activist told me: "You can shove those bloody questionnaires up your ass, love." She then pointed out that she was putting things mildly to me, because she thought I was a "decent bloke." Needless to say, I decided that informal discussions were more productive.

Even when I was doing some research for the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group on the importance of Aboriginally controlled schools, it was difficult to get surveys returned from students in the university Aboriginal Education Unit where I was lecturing. This was the case even though it was known that the survey might help in making the case to the NSW Department of Education for the importance of Aboriginally controlled schools. They were not convinced that surveys could really
be that significant. Students were happy to talk to me about Aboriginal schools in informal gatherings where one was not expected to say anything. Some people simply wanted to listen to what other people said. It should also be noted that Aboriginal cultural identity is a very emotionally charged subject and that most Aboriginal people are interested in it. However, they rarely articulate in detailed or precise terms. What they consider to be the important elements that make up Aboriginal identity are things that are deeply felt or sensed by Aboriginal people (Tonkinson 1990). As Blu (1980) has pointed out in her work with the Lumbee, cultural identity is best observed in the activities, behavior, and interactions of a group.

The Aboriginal people with whom I discussed various issues of interest to my study included: Aboriginal people with positions in higher (tertiary) education; several tribal elders; Aboriginal people in urban areas, country towns, and reserves; Commonwealth Aboriginal education officers; state Aboriginal education officers in New South Wales and South Australia; Aboriginal students in public schools and institutions of higher or tertiary education; members of state Aboriginal education consultative groups in New South Wales and South Australia; Aboriginal teachers; the Research Officer for the National Aboriginal Education Committee; Aboriginal health and police/community relations workers; Aboriginal people involved in the creative arts
fields (music, dance, drama, and poetry/prose writing); and members of an Aboriginal Lands Council.

Where possible, I also talked to non-Aboriginal people involved in Aboriginal affairs and individuals who were willing to offer their views on Aboriginal identity. This was an important aspect of the debate on Aboriginal identity. Aboriginal leaders were concerned about challenging non-Aboriginal peoples' negative views about Aboriginal culture. However, the fact that I was associated with several Aboriginal groups made me suspect in the eyes of some non-Aboriginal people.

The library/document research included policy statements on the importance of Aboriginal identity from the National government and the state governments of New South Wales and South Australia and policy statements on multiculturalism; books and articles related to the maintenance and restructuring of Aboriginal identity; materials on Aboriginal history and Aboriginal studies; the 1986 Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use by Aboriginal School Students in New South Wales undertaken by the N.S.W. Aboriginal Education Consultative Group funded by the Commonwealth Schools Commission; the 1985 ANOP study Land Rights: Winning Middle Australia, An Attitude and Communications Research Study commissioned by the Commonwealth Government's Department of Aboriginal Affairs;
and the creative works of Aboriginal writers, poets, and dramatists dealing with questions of Aboriginal identity.

I also had three important experiences related to Aboriginal contact and interactions with other indigenous peoples: (1) On the way back from Australia in 1987, I spent time in Auckland, New Zealand, in order to see how Maoris in New Zealand were dealing with questions of cultural identity. My activities included a discussion with Dr. R. Walker, Maori academic and journalist. Dr. Walker is one of the co-founders of the World Council of Indigenous People. I also observed Dr. Walker giving a lecture to public school history teachers on the importance of Maori history being incorporated into the teaching of New Zealand history. (2) From June 8-13, 1987, in Vancouver, Canada, I attended the First World Conference on Indigenous Peoples' Education entitled Tradition, Change, and Survival (Proceedings, 1987 W.C.I.P.E. published in 1988). I attended sessions and socialized with the Aboriginal people I had worked with in Australia. I also had a chance to talk to other indigenous people from a number of geographic areas about their attempts to maintain and restructure their cultural identity. (3) I was able to host a meeting for two Aboriginal educators on an Overseas Study Award Scheme. Their goal was to compare educational policy for minority students in the U.S., the United Kingdom, Canada, and Japan with that of
Australia. I introduced the two Aboriginal educators to staff consultants working for the State of Ohio's Department of Education's Division of Equal Educational Opportunities. The two-member Australian Aboriginal delegation included an Aboriginal education officer from the Aboriginal Education Unit, N.S.W. Department of Education and an Aboriginal teacher from the N.S.W. Department of Education, who was also a member of the National Aboriginal Education Committee.
CHAPTER III
THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN THE MAINTENANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION
OF THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF KOORIS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Introduction

Education has played an important role in the maintenance and reconstruction of the cultural identity of Kooris and other Aboriginal Australians. Education can act as an institutionalized means of effecting identity change or continuity. What determines the outcome depends on who controls the type of education under consideration. Traditional non-institutional Aboriginal education was "organized with deliberate planning to fulfil the specific purpose of cultural transmission and maintenance of tribal identity, such as initiation rites" (Harris 1984:20). Formal Western education has been controlled by members of the dominant non-Aboriginal society, and it has been used as a means to bring about identity change. The dominant group in Australia has defined certain academic skills as being essential for success in Australian society; therefore, formal schooling has been structured to meet these objectives. Thus, education has been designed to reflect a value system that will result in accepting academic performance as a way of sorting people in the society.
Those who accept the school's world view will be rewarded. These changes may result in identity conflict or views of one's identity outside of the formal school setting in a negative light:

For an individual it may be negative personally and socially, it may entail conflicts between identities within and outside of specific educational settings, and it may constrict or expand available alternative courses of action. [Hansen 1979:150]

Aboriginal education has certainly been both a stage for identity conflict, and in some recent cases, for expanding available alternative courses for reconstructing Aboriginal identity. It should also be noted that as more Aboriginals have actively voiced their pride in Aboriginal identity resulting from the self-determination movement, non-Aboriginal educators have been forced to become more sensitive to Aboriginal concerns about certain negative effects Western education has had on Koori culture and identity. All of this means that Aboriginal people now expect more from education. They are no longer passive participants in what they perceive to be the process of degrading Aboriginal identity and culture as being of little value in the modern world. This also means additional sources of conflict:

In multicultural societies, marked incongruence of identities and roles is particularly likely between culturally distinct domains. . . . The importance of congruence is in part a function of the differential distribution of power and influence in a society. This includes not only the authority commonly exercised by knowledge transmitters over
receivers but also the relative power and influence of educators across the spectrum of educational contexts. 

... with the growing politicization of socially stigmatized ethnic groups and their increasingly militant demands for community control of schooling this balance appears to be changing. ... [Hansen 1979:161-162]

If Aboriginals are to be involved in, and more importantly to determine, the establishment of Aboriginal educational policies and programs that positively affect Aboriginal identity, then, the control and formation of Aboriginal educational policy is a key question in the politics of Aboriginal cultural identity. Simply put, Aboriginal people feel powerless as long as outside groups have control over of their destiny. They see their lack of power as a major reason for continued dependency in an internal colonial or neocolonial situation. Control of education is a means of fostering a positive group identity, access to opportunities, and defining what is important in the continuance of an Aboriginal way of life. As Jordan (1986b:260) suggests:

History shows that it has been not only economic development pressures that have acted to destroy indigenous culture and substitute for a positive identity the negative traits with which indigenous people have come to be stereotyped. In addition to economic forces, one of the crucial destructive forces has been that of schooling.

While Aboriginal Australians have viewed schools in contemporary Australian society as continuing the destruction of Aboriginal identity, unlike the past, modern educational institutions are also seen as the potential
sites for the construction and reconstruction of Aboriginal identity:

Thus indigenous peoples' claim to control education are claims to control the construction of identity. [Jordan 1986b:260]

Aboriginal Australians have made it clear that they want to maintain their identities and lifestyles as unique peoples, but at the same time, they want access to the skills which will enable them to live in the wider society. Aboriginal people have argued that these are twin objectives. However, they have also made it clear that Aboriginal identity is the more important of the two. As Paul Hughes, Chairperson of the National Aboriginal Education Committee, told the Commonwealth House of Representatives Select Committee on Aboriginal Education:

The personal side of things we see equally as important as skills; currently they (Aboriginal people) are not getting either and so if we had to make a choice our community would go for people coming out as whole people, or at least that being a major priority. [Select Committee Inquiry 1985:38]

**Aboriginal Identity, Kinship and Family**

If Aboriginal people see "the personal side of things" as being equal to skills, then, the family and kinship group play a vital role in teaching those things that are important to maintaining and restructuring Aboriginal identity. In essence, this is a kind of community education; therefore, it is important to briefly discuss Aboriginal family and kinship structures. In present-day
Australia, the Aboriginal population can be divided into traditionally oriented Aboriginal people, rural Aboriginal groups, and those Aboriginals living in urban areas.

Traditionally Oriented Groups

No Aboriginal group has been able to totally avoid contact with Western society; however, some Aboriginal people still lead traditionally oriented lives. The only traditional oriented people in the southeastern area of Australia are found in South Australia. In the rest of southeastern Australia, Aboriginal people live in rural or urban situations. This was true for New South Wales, where my research was centered. However, traditionally-oriented Aboriginal people serve as symbols to other Aboriginal people of the living aspects of traditional Aboriginal culture.

In the past, traditionally oriented Aboriginal groups were divided into tribes which may have had between 100 to 1500 people. "Tribe" refers to a territorial and linguistic group. The tribes, or language groups, were divided into extended families or clans. They lived in a particular geographic area. They spoke a language or dialect distinctive to themselves. They either knew themselves, or were known by others, by a distinct name, and they had their own rites and beliefs (Maddock 1982). Peoples adjoining each other shared totems, kinship systems, similar languages, and a common mythology. Taken together, these
groups formed a loosely structured community or nation. Groups regularly came together for social and ceremonial occasions. The elders of the various groups served as an informal council. They discussed and decided matters of common interest. It is interesting to note that modern transportation (land rovers, etc.) has allowed Aboriginal people to attend more distant ceremonial gatherings; therefore, some traditional groups are now more actively connected than in the past (Chase 1981).

Aboriginal social organization was complicated and balanced in terms of its various parts (Maddock 1982). The extended family was the basic unit for political, social, and economic matters. This family group was usually made up of a male and his descendants in the male line or patrilineal line; however, in some areas, family membership was traced through the female line or matrilineal line. The members of a particular group married outside their local unit. Thus marriage was exogamous. Children belonged to the country and spiritual group of the father, but they also belonged to the social group or totem of their mother (Berndt and Berndt 1988). The kinship system allowed people to meet group obligations without confusion. Kinship rules provided guidelines for what should be done and what should not be done. Rules related to marriage arrangements; food gathering, distribution, and sharing; the sharing of other items or goods; particular trading relationships with
individuals in other communities; and educational responsibilities involving parents and other kin people.

As Western society has impinged on even traditional societies, it has created challenges for the role of young people or adolescents:

Traditionally oriented and rural communities are very concerned about the place of adolescents in their society. Boys, after initiation, often drop out of school, as do girls at marriage, because in their own society these persons are considered to be adults. Unemployment in this age group is chronic and so they get into trouble. In the past, these teenagers would have been working hard; girls as co-wife and boys as initiates learning cultural lore and how to survive in the bush. . . . Many of the less isolated reserve communities have had trouble also with pre-pubescent boys in particular, with manifestations of classic but dangerous juvenile problems, such as outbreaks of petrol sniffing. [Healy, Hassan, and McKenna 1985:311-112]

Rural Aboriginal Kinship and Family

Although many aspects of traditional Aboriginal culture have been destroyed, families and kinship groups have maintained a place of importance as the basic unit of social organization. People depend on relatives for support in terms of economic matters, child rearing, and care during illness. The extended family unit is not as large as traditional clans, but grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins still constitute a strong support group. Traditional kinship terms have been replaced by Aboriginal English terms. The terms "aunt" and "uncle" serve as terms defining certain kin, but they also have a wider use as terms of respect for certain adults. The strength of
traditional marriage practices varies widely, and it depends on the degree of involvement in non-Aboriginal society.

Child rearing is of particular importance:

As in traditional life, child-rearing patterns stress affection and the security of the kinship system and expect early independence, rather than stressing direction of the child and material provisions. Arrangement for children of the dissolved marriages are worked out by the families concerned. Generally, the mother or her relations care for the children. The Aboriginal community does not however, regard the children as socially fatherless. It is common for children to be reared for long periods of time by kin. . . . [Healy, Hassan, and Mckenna 1985:317]

Even though the Aboriginal kin group has been able to fulfill an adaptive function in the changing world of Aboriginal Australians, change has produced stress:

One report (New south Wales Task Force on Domestic Violence, 1981) found that wife beating is a problem in Aboriginal communities, as it is in Australian society generally. The suggested cause for domestic violence in the Aboriginal community is that, in a patriarchal society, oppressed men will take out their powerlessness upon women. The situation for Aboriginal women is even more grim because recourse to white institutions, particularly the police, is regarded as community betrayal. [Healy, Hassan, and McKenna 1985:315-316]

Urban Aboriginal Families

Aboriginal people still form a distinct group within white urban communities. They are linked by a sense of belonging to a particular geographic area and an extended family. There is a third bond which has increasingly linked urban Aboriginal people together. This is a the sense of pride in Aboriginality:

Growing social acceptance means that new Aboriginal social and political groups have formed that are not based wholly on kin and regional associations. The
battle for land rights and a resurgence of interest in Aboriginal traditions has heightened a sense of cultural and political identity which has not been recognized by non-Aboriginal society. [Healy, Hassan, and McKenna 1985:320]

The child-rearing patterns of urban Aboriginal people are similar to that of the more traditionally-oriented and rural Aboriginal groups. Aboriginal children are encouraged to be co-operative rather than competitive. Aboriginal children's play and learning is directed toward people, not things. Aboriginal children may often move with some ease among the homes of their extended kin. Barwick (1978:205) suggests that because of the sense of community and extended family situation, Aboriginal children may suffer less from marriage breakdown:

Children usually remain with their mother, whatever subsequent unions she and their father contract, but in these closed communities an Aboriginal father does not lose touch with his children... and the father's relatives will have an enduring interest in their welfare.

**The Institutions That Make-up the Structure of Australian Education**

A dominant characteristic of early Australian society was that bureaucratic control was felt in all aspects of social life. This was certainly true in education. Colonial Australia was both a penal colony and a frontier society; therefore, authority in the new settlement was legitimized by laws and regulations which were designed to develop discipline and provide order. This pattern of government by bureaucracy was followed throughout the
colonial period, and it continues today. At present, the dominant theme in Australian education is bureaucratic control over education (King and Young 1986). However, it must be noted that now state bureaucracies have replaced the Commonwealth bureaucracy in terms of constitutional responsibility for the provision of education. The Commonwealth still has some financial responsibilities and does continue to publish educational research designed to direct changes in educational policy.

**The Structure of Primary and Secondary Education in Australia**

In Australia, each state has its own system of education. These are bureaucratic, politically controlled, and for the most part, centralized. A State Minister of Education executes the educational policy of the government in power. This is done through a Director General of Education appointed by the Cabinet to head the State Department of Education. The system is based on rules, regulations, and precedents as interpreted by the Minister of Education for each state. The Director General makes sure the rules, regulations and precedents are carried out. There is a strict hierarchy where authority and control moves from the top down to lower levels (King and Young 1986). There have been attempts to reform the system to encourage more innovation and responses to individual needs at the school level. One reform being considered is the development of school councils made up of various people in
the local areas who would help to determine local school policy. However, this would not replace the State policy. It would only make it more flexible.

The Educational Structure of New South Wales

The New South Wales State System of Education is a centralized bureaucracy with a Minister of Education. The schools are organized into a Primary section including grades 1-6 and a Secondary Section including grades 7-12. There is an additional kindergarten or preparatory year prior to year 1. Secondary education is based on a series of exams. Only students with "high passes" are eligible for admittance into the university system.

Looking at school retention, Australian participation rates in education remain comparatively low above the compulsory age of sixteen. Rates in NSW, and other parts of Australia, are particularly low for Aboriginal students. In 1983, only 11.2% of the Aboriginal students in secondary education were still in school by grade 12 (National Aboriginal Education Committee 1986b:58). In 1985, the number of New South Wales Aboriginal students who had even managed to stay in school long enough to take the High School Certificate Exam was not substantial:

In 1985 only 111 Aboriginal students sat for the New South Wales HSC. Out of this 79 achieved 25 per cent or less of the aggregate mark and only one student achieved a mark above seventy per cent of the aggregate. [Fowell 1986:20]
In New South Wales, the number of Aboriginal students completing secondary education is only 14 per cent compared to 41 per cent of white students (Burger 1988).

In comparison with the non-Aboriginal population, Fisk (1985:11) found that the number of adult Aboriginals holding a degree or diploma was 0.5%, based on Australia-wide census data from 1976. Of the non-Aboriginal population, 6.1% had a degree or diploma. Among Aboriginals, 83.7% had no special qualifications; whereas, 65.9% of the non-Aboriginal population were lacking special qualifications.

There are also independent or non-government schools. These include Protestant Elite Schools (patterned after British Public Schools), Catholic school systems, and other types of independent schools. In most independent schools, the school head mistress, head master, or school executive has greater authority than the head of a government school (King and Young 1986). In government schools, the local school administrators are more subject to the direct authority of the Department of Education in Sydney through visits or school inspections and the State curriculum which must be followed. Most Aboriginal students in school, attend public schools. A small number of Aboriginal students are enrolled in Aboriginal independent schools, and the Catholic schools are beginning to attract more Aboriginal students as they revamp their programs to be more sensitive to the needs of Aboriginal students. Both public
and private schools in Australia have school fees. For most Aboriginal people, the small costs of even the government schools is extremely taxing. While I do not have any figures, I was told that private schools can be very expensive. In some cases, private organizations, Aboriginal government agencies, or others may be able to help pay the educational costs for Aboriginal students who have the background to do well in school.

Tertiary Education There are three systems of higher education in Australia: (1) Colleges of Advanced Education (CAE's), (2) Technical and Further Education (TAFE), and (3) the University System. The CAE's have traditionally provided primarily teacher training; however, they are beginning to expand their programs. TAFE has had as its major concern preparing young unemployed school-leavers and retraining older workers caught in a changing economy which no longer needs their original skills. TAFE is concentrating more on adult or further education. They are providing bridging courses or preparatory experiences for people whose prior educational levels were not sufficient to gain admittance to new courses of instruction. A number of these activities have been aimed at Aboriginals and recent migrants to Australia (King and Young 1986). The University System has been the slowest to change, but recent attempts have been made to allow a wider section of the population access to university education. However, the course work is
still structured in such a way that students must be able to write well and read and comprehend material at a fairly abstract level. Not all schools provide the kind of preparation demanded by the Australian universities. Some students are caught in a "no win" situation where teachers do not see them as university material or where students find themselves in schools that simply do not have the resources or teachers to provide special preparation for doing well on the High School Certificate Exam. Doing well on this exam determines who gains admittance to university programs.

Community Involvement in Aboriginal Education

While the states have the constitutional power over education, the issues is more complicated in regard to Aboriginal education. Following the 1967 Referendum, all states, except Queensland, concurred that the administrative responsibility for the coordination, planning, and development of Aboriginal affairs should be placed at the national level. The Commonwealth has accepted that responsibility (Select Committee Inquiry 1985).

The Commonwealth's activity in regard to Aboriginal education is directed at helping to remove educational disadvantages Aboriginal people have suffered as a result of past neglect. These are special funds and programs related to additional Aboriginal education services not provided by the states. Several Commonwealth departments and
authorities have some responsibility in this area. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs is the coordinating department for all Commonwealth Aboriginal programs. It also has special Aboriginal education assistance funds. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Affairs promotes Aboriginal studies through research and publications. They have promoted the teaching of Aboriginal studies at the tertiary level as their main response. However, they also have done some things for the primary and secondary school level. The Institute's present Education Officer has been interested in doing more for the primary and secondary schools. The Commonwealth Department of Education acts as a consultant or advising department to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. They base a good deal of their advisement on information they obtain from the National Aboriginal Education Committee. The Department of Education also administers three special programs of student assistance including the Aboriginal Secondary Grants Scheme, the Aboriginal Study Grants Scheme, and the Aboriginal Overseas Study Awards Scheme. As was noted earlier, there are modest fees and expenses involved in public education. These may be beyond the means of some Aboriginal people. Even more importantly, Aboriginal people may not live near secondary schools or institutions of higher education; therefore, their living expenses become a major problem. Aboriginal Hostels provide the possibility for housing in
some cases, but other expenses such as travel to school, and books and school materials are still a concern.

The National Aboriginal Education Committee

From the standpoint of Aboriginal input into Aboriginal educational policy, the National Aboriginal Education Committee is most important.

The National Aboriginal Education Committee was established in 1977 to provide advice to the Commonwealth Minister of Education and the Department of Education, it consists of people with knowledge concerning Aboriginal views on the educational needs of Aboriginal people and how to meet those needs. In 1977, the Minister of Education informed the government departments that the National Aboriginal Education Committee was to be accepted as the principal advising source to the Commonwealth in regard to educational matters. This included the Department of Education, Commonwealth Schools Commission (which deals with academic standards, school needs, etc.), and the Tertiary Education Commission (Select Committee Inquiry).

The NAEC provides the link between states, regions, and local Aboriginal communities on the direction of Commonwealth or Federal Aboriginal Policy. This is important, because the Commonwealth has provided a substantial amount of the funding for Aboriginal education and served as a force to prod certain states into making
more of a commitment to Aboriginal self-determination in education.

There has been a concern that a Nation Committee may end up as an isolated Aboriginal elite who spend most of their time in the Australia Capital doing the bidding of the Anglo government. This has not been the case. Members of the Committee spend a great deal of their time traveling to meetings held in Aboriginal communities throughout Australia. Members of the National Aboriginal Committee (NAEC), have advocated that members of the state and territory consultative groups should be elected from within the Aboriginal populations they represent. Most consultative groups do have an elected membership (Select Committee Inquiry 1985:72).

As to the NAEC, the members are appointed by the Commonwealth Minister of Education; however, the Chairpersons of the South Australian, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Tasmanian, and Western Australian Consultative Groups are also members of the National Aboriginal Education Committee (Select Committee Inquiry 1985:72). These individuals come from organizations that have been put in place by Aboriginal communities; therefore, the State leaders on the NAEC do have direct responsibilities to--and contact with--a variety of Aboriginal communities. This means that any concern or successful program in one Aboriginal community
becomes shared information in a variety of Aboriginal communities.

The State Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups

The state consultative groups advise the state departments of education and ministries of education. This general structure applies to the New South Wales Consultative Group. The State Department of Education is made up of the educational bureaucracy that carries out educational policy. The Ministry of Education is the political and policy center for whatever government is in power (Labor Party, Conservative, Country/Liberal Party, etc.). While I was in New South Wales, the Minister for Education was not supportive of the idea of Aboriginally controlled schools. This was interesting, because the Labor Party controlled the state government. Most of the time, Labor has been, at least vocally, very supportive of Aboriginal self-determination.

The Consultative Group also works closely with the Aboriginal Education Unit of the State Department of Education. This cooperation consists of helping to develop curriculum materials, address social or human issues that impinge on education such as health and economic issues, and help to resolve conflicts between Aboriginal students, Aboriginal communities, and the schools. Consultative Groups and Aboriginal Education Units work well together. I observed this in New South Wales and in South Australia.
This is really not surprising. Aboriginal members of the Education Units come from Aboriginal communities. They have social, and in some cases kin ties, with people who are part of the Consultative Groups. Often times when people, who are members of Consultative Groups, obtain formal education credentials, they work for the Aboriginal Education Unit's main office staff in Sydney, work in a regional curriculum center, or in a school. Sometimes, they move back and forth. Since much of Aboriginal business is conducted informally on social occasions, people associated with Consultative Groups and both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Staff members of the Aboriginal Education Unit all spend time together. In both New South Wales and South Australia, the Consultative Groups are given office space in the same buildings where the Aboriginal Education Units are located. A great deal of time is spent together by members of the two groups. Non-Aboriginal people, as well as Aboriginal people, worked for both the Consultative Group and the Aboriginal Education Unit in New South Wales.

The Issues Related to Aboriginal Identity and Education

One needs to get a sense of how Aboriginal identity issues are being played out in educational institution. In order to understand how education serves as a major arena for the politics of Aboriginal identity, I was given a copy of a major Commonwealth Aboriginal education study
undertaken by the Select Committee Inquiry of the House of Representatives completed in 1985.

The study was based on hearings conducted in important Aboriginal communities throughout Australia, Inquiry staff evaluations of a number of programs and reports issued by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups, and testimony in Canberra by Aboriginal leaders and educators and non-Aboriginal education specialists. The six thousand pages of data were summarized by the Inquiry staff in a 203 page report. The conclusions of the Select Committee Inquiry provided an interesting starting point for the debate over the "Aboriginalization" of Aboriginal education or the role of Aboriginal identity as an important base for Aboriginal education:

The conflict and tension between the objectives in Aboriginal education can be reduced by building one objective on the firm basis of the other. By recognizing Aboriginality as the firm basis for the lives of Aboriginal people and attempting to build Western knowledge and skills from it, a way of overcoming some of the conflict which exists between objectives in Aboriginal education may be found. [House of Representatives Select Committee Inquiry 1985:38]

The Issues of Aboriginal Diversity, Identity, Control, and Education

The Aboriginal identity maintenance and reconstruction challenge is compounded by the fact that New South Wales, and the rest of Aboriginal Australia, is made up of a diversity of groups. Not all Aboriginal people have exactly the same needs. I have heard some non-Aboriginal educators complain that the Aboriginal diversity issue is hopeless.
They argue that there is too much diversity of needs between groups and that urban Aboriginal people cannot have any common identity with traditional Aboriginal people. The Select Committee Inquiry (1985:35-36) came to a somewhat different conclusion:

While diversity exists, the statements of Aboriginal educational needs made to the committee almost universally grouped educational needs under two broad fundamental objectives. These objectives were that Aboriginal people be able to acquire knowledge and skills to enable them to live in the wider Australian society but also that they be able to retain their Aboriginal identity and lifestyle. These twin objectives of Aboriginal education were expressed in Aboriginal communities as the need to teach 'both ways' in schools, i.e. the European way and the Aboriginal way.

The Select Committee Inquiry (1985:43-44) concluded and recommended that Aboriginal people must define their own educational needs and select programs to meet those needs:

The Committee believes that Aboriginal people are best equipped to define their educational needs. Much of the failure of past educational programs can be attributed to the fact that Aboriginal people have had their educational needs defined by others with the consequence that these needs have not replaced the aspirations of Aboriginals. To the extent that there is conflict in objectives in Aboriginal education, it should be Aboriginal people who decide on how this conflict should be overcome and where priorities should lie.

I was advised by my Australian sponsor that the select Committee Inquiry was probably the best guide for looking at the issues for the 80s and 90s in Aboriginal education. For my purposes, it also defined the significant relationship between Aboriginal identity and Aboriginal education. My objective was to ascertain how the situation in New South
Wales illustrated the identity-education relationship. Since the Select Committee Inquiry\(^1\) had been widely circulated and generated a great deal of debate, I was able to use it as a base for discussion and observations on the important relationship between identity and education. It should also be noted that I was met a number of people who provided testimony or data for the Inquiry, and I became involved with groups that provided information for the Inquiry.

As noted above, the Select Committee Inquiry concluded that Aboriginal people are best equipped to define their educational needs themselves. In terms of Commonwealth Policy, and the policy of New South Wales, Aboriginal people have the right of self-determination. From a Koori perspective; however, the state educational bureaucracy has not always felt that Kooris should be determining, or sharing as equal partners, the direction of Aboriginal educational policy. For a long time, the state educational bureaucracy has had the power over all educational policy in the State, and they are most reluctant to give up that power. For the most part until very recently, the policy was not designed to allow for the maintenance of Aboriginal

\(^1\)Unfortunately the recommendations of the Inquiry were tabled or not acted on by House of Representatives. However, several of the recommendations have served as a basis for some policy changes in Aboriginal education since I left Australia (personal communication from Dr. Arthur Smith, Co-ordinator, Aboriginal Education Unit, The University of Wollongong, Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia).
identity, and it certainly was not designed to allow Aboriginal people to determine what the educational programs should include. I was told that the New South Wales Ministry of Education was one of the largest educational bureaucracies in the World. Teacher and administrative placements and curriculum are determined in Sydney. Assuming this is true, it would seem that some educational change could come about only if the State Department of Education were committed to it. Now, the official policy is clear: Koori people have a say in their own affairs and government programs that affect them. However, official policy and what actually happens are not always the same. Koori community people have been given the opportunity, and funding, to provide their opinions on what should be included in Koori education and how educational programs should be structured. In New South Wales, Kooris have taken this opportunity to involve themselves actively in Aboriginal educational matters. I had the opportunity to observe this process, and the promise and conflicts it has generated, in a number of settings. The Role of Aboriginal Consultative Groups

The major involvement of Aboriginal community people in education comes through the network of Aboriginal education consultative groups. The consultative group network includes the National Aboriginal Education Committee (NAEC), state, regional, and local level Aboriginal education
consultative groups. I was able to meet several people associated with the NAEC, work with the New South Wales State Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, attend meetings of one local Aboriginal consultative group, and talk on several occasions to the President of the South Australia Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. From my observations and participation in the activities of these groups, I was able to confirm the importance of identity issues. I was also able to see how a pan-Australian Aboriginal network keeps various types of Aboriginal groups in contact. The amazing thing is that even though many of these groups are at great distances from each other, and in some cases in remote areas, they do maintain contact. People visit each other on official business and in terms of kin relationships or friendships.

During my stay in Australia, New South Wales had two people serving on the National Aboriginal Committee. Not only did they have the Chairperson of the NSW state consultative group on the National Aboriginal Education Committee, but also an Aboriginal teacher from New South Wales, who was appointed to the NAEC.

The NAEC's Education Research Officer had a number of contacts in NSW. The importance of this cannot be overstated in terms of identity questions. The majority of NSW's large Aboriginal population were rural and urban people who were in the process of centering their attention
on the restructuring of their identity. Keeping in close contact with what was going on nationally, and in other states, helped to build a sense of shared Aboriginal identity. Koori people were already beginning to take pride in the fact that New South Wales Aboriginal people had been active in the self-determination movement and national Aboriginal politics for some time.

I had the opportunity to get to know the two New South Wales members of the National Aboriginal Education Committee (one very well), and the NAEC Research Officer. I also had discussions with the Chairperson of the South Australia Aboriginal Education Consultative Group on the NAEC, and I met the former Chairperson of the National Aboriginal Education Committee from Queensland.

Each of the above individuals was concerned about identity issues in education. Some were more hopeful that they could convince Anglo educators of the importance of the need for the restructuring of Aboriginal education. Most seemed convinced that the "Aboriginalization" of Aboriginal education was the only way that Aboriginal identity and Western academic skills would be treated as equally important subjects.

Questions of Identity and the Control of Knowledge

One very sensitive issue concerned the question of Aboriginal people being in the best position to know what kinds of programs and methods fit within an Aboriginal world
view. I have heard this idea voiced in terms of: "Who controls knowledge?" and "Who has the right to determine what will be called knowledge?" From an identity perspective, the answers to the above questions are important. Many Anglos do not understand that in traditional Aboriginal societies there were very clear rules about information. Some information was for everyone, but there were also bodies of knowledge that could be only known by a certain sex or people who had earned the right and responsibilities to use that knowledge. However, regardless of the kind of knowledge, it was related to the well being of the community. Long standing community traditions dictated who was in charge. While rural and urban Aboriginal communities do not follow traditional law (knowledge), they do maintain a sense that the community has some rights over what is defined as knowledge. I heard Kooris in a number of situations speak angry words about how some "gubb educators" just do not respect Koori rights or abilities to define knowledge. It seems to be part of the idea of narrowly defining education as certain academic skills as opposed to seeing education as the acquisition of skills that will allow one to survive in the larger world and the knowledge that will allow one to act in an "Aboriginal" or "Koori" way. Even members of the National Aboriginal Education Committee became frustrated over this issue. Several people have referred to the fact that
"sometimes even our friends seem to forget what self-
determination means."

One instance comes to mind where the Research Officer for the NAEC was enraged. We had been to the National Institute of Aboriginal Studies to talk to staff members. I was introduced to an Aboriginal historian who was working on the impact of a particular missionary group on a small tribal community in the Central Desert. As he put it, he was "looking at what happened to the poor bastards and their identity after encountering whitefella religion." I noticed that the Research Officer was exchanging angry words with a well known Anglo specialist on Aboriginal politics. When we left, he said "sometimes I just can't understand gubbs." My sponsor and I ask him what was the matter. He said that the Aboriginal historian we had talked to was in danger of losing his job. The Institute wanted him to decide whether he was an anthropologist or an historian. The Research Officer said "you first tell us that we have to have bloody academic credentials to know our own knowledge. We do that, and you tell us we can't study Aboriginal things as Aboriginal things." The Research Officer was of Pitjantjatjara descent from Western Australia. He prided himself on maintaining traditional knowledge and language, but he was also proud of his academic credentials as an anthropologist and historian. He was just expressing the point that he felt there was a time and place for organizing
knowledge from a Western perspective and at other times from an Aboriginal viewpoint. Aboriginals should have the right to determine how knowledge should be organized when it concerned Aboriginal issues.

The Perspectives of Consultative Groups on Aboriginal Education Issues

Publications of the National Aboriginal Education Committee have continued to press for the "Aboriginalization" of Aboriginal education and how this must always be related to the needs not just of individuals but also of communities. In the Preface to the NAEC Policy Statement on Tertiary Education for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (1986:vi) Errol West, Chairperson of the NAEC, notes that the report was intended not only to advise the Commonwealth Government; it was designed also "to provide a framework for Aboriginal communities in each State to assist them to determine specific approaches and projects appropriate to their circumstances and needs." If an Aboriginal group identity is to survive, it has to be one based on a community perspective, and it has to be one that recognizes that different types of Aboriginal communities exist with different needs. The National Aboriginal Education Committee has constantly reminded people of this fact.

It should also be noted that Aboriginal consultative groups have not been afraid to voice their displeasure at either the Commonwealth Government and/or state governments
when they have not acted on Aboriginal self-determination. In the NAEC Policy Statement cited in the previous paragraph, Errol West points out that the NAEC was "extremely disappointed at the lack of response" given to the National Aboriginal Education Committee's proposals by high ranking Commonwealth education officials (NAEC Policy Statement 1986:vi).

The Aboriginalization of Education and the Role of Non-Aboriginal People

While Aboriginal groups want "Aboriginalization" in Aboriginal education, this does not mean that all programs and policies have to be totally designed by Aboriginal people. The important point is that the programs and policies meet the needs of local communities, as they see them, and are consistent with what Aboriginal people feel are Aboriginal ways of doing things. The following three examples illustrate the point.

I had been observing the on-going debate about the development of an Aboriginal Education Unit at one particular University. The plan for the Unit had been developed by my sponsor who was an Anglo educator involved in Aboriginal education. He had very strong ties to the local Koori community. The Unit Program he had designed did not please an Aboriginal administrator brought in to run the Unit also, the Unit Program was not in favor with certain Anglo academics. They felt that my sponsor's plan included too much involvement from the local Koori community and
input from students. It just did not run the way it should in terms of the University hierarchy. After I returned to the United States, I had a chance to visit with a member of the National Aboriginal Education Committee who was looking at minority education programs in Canada and the United States. I told her that my sponsor felt he really let the local Kooris down because there was so much controversy about his program design. The NAEC member looked surprised. She said they thought his design was the most detailed and relevant Aboriginal Education Unit Plan the NAEC had reviewed. This was the second member of the NAEC who had remarked on the fact that Kooris are interested in ideas that help to meet Koori needs, not just ideas of Kooris. My former sponsor has now been appointed as the Co-ordinator of the Unit, because he works well with the local community.

A second example cited also illustrates that there is a place for non-Aboriginal people who respect and understand Aboriginal ways of doing things. The Research Officer for the New South Wales Consultative Group was non-Aboriginal. When someone asked the President of the Consultative Group why they had a gubb Research Officer, the President responded, he is good at his job and gets along well with Kooris. Non-Aboriginal people were welcome in Aboriginal communities or organizations if they were willing to fit into the community by acting in Aboriginal ways. The Research Officer told me he took the job for two reasons.
First, his academic credentials qualified him for the job and its good salary, and second, the people were a delight to work with. Instead of the usual constant panic of getting reports finished that no one reads, the Consultative Group worked on "Koori time" which means you do not rush things for the sake of the clock. You get things done, but you only worry about the important things that impact on real people. The Consultative Group has turned out a number of impressive reports, but no report was done in relationship to an exact time table. People just seemed to sense what was important to Koori communities and concentrated on those issues. Some Aboriginal people who have become more accustomed to working as government bureaucrats seem to lose patience with the Koori system until they remember that things get done that need to be done. This is part of the Koori identity pattern.

A third incident illustrates the point that the key is not just being of Aboriginal descent, but being in tune with Aboriginal values and ways of doing things within a particular Aboriginal perspective. I was witness to a very heated debate at a New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group meeting. An Aboriginal Cultural Training Center had been established in Sydney by two people who had a national reputation in Aboriginal affairs. They wanted an endorsement from the State Consultative Group which would be needed to obtain Commonwealth funding for their Center. The
debate centered around two points. First, one Koori man became very angry, because the two co-directors of the Center had not been very interested in New South Wales Aboriginal people before now. It was almost as if they had accepted the gubb notion that Kooris were no longer Aboriginal people. It was pointed out that the Co-directors had not bothered to consult with logical Koori people when they set-up their Center. A second more damaging point involved land rights. The co-directors were accused of, at one point, making a deal with a mining company that was not in the interest of Aboriginal people of the area in question. The incident had not occurred in New South Wales, but there was a feeling among Kooris that they should support all Aboriginal groups in their quest to regain control of their land. The co-directors hotly denied this accusation. The Center may have eventually gotten support after I left Australia. However, they would only do so after convincing the members of the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group that their program did maintain a commitment to what local Kooris felt were important Aboriginal issues.

I asked the Head of the New South Wales Department of Education's Aboriginal Education Unit about the role of non-Aboriginal people in Aboriginal education. He said for some time to come, Aboriginal people would need help. They would welcome people who had certain skills. However, the key was
the willingness to do things in an Aboriginal way and understand that Aboriginal people "were the bosses now."

There is a similar pattern that researchers must follow in obtaining permission to do research in Aboriginal communities. It may not be formally spelled out, but there are procedures. First, one should talk things over with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. Then, one should consult with various Aboriginal organizations and Aboriginal communities. One may be accepted on all the higher levels, but it is the local community that has the final say. This pertains to urban, rural, and traditional communities.

Leadership Roles in Consultative Groups

There are Aboriginal leaders who obtain power in the "whitefella's world" who do not maintain close contacts with their Aboriginal communities and therefore they will never be able to count on support. The individuals I talked to on the National Aboriginal Education Committee all made note of the fact that "you cannot put yourself above the community." People may complain about you, and in most cases they do; however, they will support you as long as you are behaving in what is perceived as an Aboriginal way.

The President of the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, who was also a member of the National Aboriginal Education Committee, provided proof of this point on several occasions. This individual had the
longest service on the NAEC, and had also maintained leadership of the NSWAECG for some time. I had been attending meetings of the local AECG in one city. They were unhappy about certain things pertaining to the Aboriginal Education Unit in a local university, the local Koori community, and an Aboriginal oral history project. The local lands council leader said the State Consultative Group President had become too much of a whitefella. He did not care about local Kooris. The Co-ordinator of the local university's Aboriginal Education Unit also suggested that the State Consultative Group President was acting like a white bureaucrat. Everyone agreed that they should write to him again. At the next meeting, much to many peoples' surprise, the State Consultative Group President showed up. He was dressed causally, not like a "gubberment fella." He addressed their issues one by one, and he asked what should be done about them. He wanted to know what would make them feel satisfied. No one felt like complaining. The issues were addressed, and he seemed perfectly comfortable among the local people. Later I would end up working for the State Consultative Group President and living in his home. I had a number of chances to see him mingle and work with various types of Koori groups and discuss policy matters with senior Anglo academics. The President seemed equally comfortable playing pool and joking with urban Kooris in Redfern in Sydney, sitting on the ground drinking beer with
old friends in the country town where he grew up in Western New South Wales, or articulating Koori educational objectives for higher education in a luncheon meeting with a university official. Not all the Aboriginal leaders I met had this individual's skills for dealing with problems, but most of them never lost their ability to be at home among a variety of different Aboriginal groups and communities.

Not all the Koori, or other Aboriginal leaders, I talked to expressed their Aboriginal identity in the same way, but it was clear that they expressed it. For some, it was being able to socialize and share Aboriginal experiences with other Aboriginal people. For others, it was maintaining contact with Aboriginal tradition. They all had ample occasions to interact with Aboriginal communities, because even the National Aboriginal Education Committee schedules a number of its meeting in various regions of Australia so they can look at local Aboriginal education programs. Some of these meeting are in more remote areas of Australia, other meetings are in country towns, and there are meetings in major urban centers; therefore, members of the National Aboriginal Education Committee do have first-hand knowledge of Aboriginal educational needs.

State Aboriginal Consultive Groups

My work with the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group involved observation and extensive participation with the central staff of the NSWAEU. I was
present at discussions about a survey of drug use among Aboriginal students and what to make of the results of the study. I was more actively involved in an update of research on "Black Schools" or Aboriginally Controlled Schools. As a result of this work, I was able to get a sense of what State AECG's feel about the importance of Aboriginal identity.

The 1986 Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use By Aboriginal School Students in New South Wales

This was an example of a project that was considered important by the New South Wales Aboriginal Educational Consultative Group. I had an opportunity to discuss the Survey's results with the Project Co-ordinator and an Aboriginal Counselor for a university Aboriginal Education Unit and observe a discussion of the Survey and recommendations at a State AECG meeting. Identity questions were certainly part of the problem and the solution. The most common reasons given by students for drug and alcohol use were: feeling depressed, peer group pressure, and because there is nothing exciting to do (Williams 1986:24).

These reasons were similar to those of other Australian students on drug and alcohol surveys. However, other responses pertain to not only low personal esteem, but also low community or group esteem and racism. Many students seemed to sense that being Aboriginal was viewed by non-Aboriginal people as being a negative or problem condition. When students looked around in their communities, they often
saw adults abusing drugs and alcohol. As adults became obsessed with their own problems, traditional responsibility for directing children and leading by positive example seemed to decline. In its place, a peer group culture became the source of self-esteem and need to belong. At a very emotional session in December of 1986, members of the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group confronted the results of the Survey. A young Aboriginal woman and man chaired the session along with the Coordinator of the Survey. The young man and woman both admitted to having abused various drugs and alcohol. The young woman pointed out that she had found her "Dreaming" as an urban Aboriginal person. Her identity and pride in being Aboriginal was making her whole again. She felt this needed to happen to Aboriginal communities. The young man was an actor, he too had found himself in trying to "get back" into his Aboriginal identity. He was leading a crusade to get drug pushers out of the urban Aboriginal community of Redfern. Other people from a variety of types of Koori communities in NSW also seemed to agree that they had a responsibility as Aboriginal people to rebuild their self-esteem and show their young people that they belonged to a group with a long and proud heritage. It was also clear that students wanted more from the schools: not only information, but information presented from an Aboriginal perspective. The Survey was funded by the Commonwealth
Schools Commission. The Consultative Group clearly felt that they had to help the schools develop programs related to alcohol and drug abuse, and Koori communities had to provide ways of starting to act as Aboriginal communities again where adults taught by example and gave direction in terms of involvement in a "moral community".

The New South Wales Consultative Group's Stand on Aboriginally Controlled Schools

While progress was being made in getting public schools in New South Wales to provide more of a "Koori" perspective on the educational programs designed for Aboriginal children, the progress was not judged as being satisfactory. Increasingly, Kooris were becoming impatient with the pace of educational change. School officials still seemed reluctant to share power with Aboriginal communities, and

2 It is interesting to note that the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs has recently set-up Life Education Units in Central Australia and rural New South Wales. The units are designed to provide preventive education related to substance abuse. The information is presented in an Aboriginal perspective using Aboriginal English or Aboriginal languages and traditional ideas and methods of communication. The programs directly involve Aboriginal community people (Aboriginal Australia 1989).

3 The Berndts (1988) have noted that traditional Aboriginal communities were moral communities in the sense that the community set rules through the Dreaming or law for right behavior. The spiritual well-being of the community depending on individuals maintaining a well-ordered world by behaving properly. Following on that point, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs feels that since traditional Aboriginal society was not, for the most part, a drug-using society, they "lacked specific social controls over the use of introduced drugs such as alcohol" (Aboriginal Australia 1989:5). Therefore, Aboriginal groups have to develop "new " cultural means for recreating moral communities.
they did not seem to see the connection between social issues and community issues in regard to the cultural survival of Aboriginal people. The importance of this to Kooris in the New South Wales State Consultative Group was illustrated by their increasing interest in "Black Schools" or Aboriginally controlled schools.

At the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group's triennial conference at Dubbo (in Western New South Wales), 6-10th March 1986, the Vice-President of the AECG, Margaret Campbell-Buck presented a discussion paper entitled "Aboriginal Schools - Pipedream or Necessity." The paper pointed out that there were already a number of Aboriginal schools throughout Australia. They were to be found in both urban and rural areas serving traditional and non-traditional communities. While they served a diverse selection of Aboriginal communities, they were all established for the same reason:

Almost all have been established because of community dissatisfaction with the education being provided by existing school systems. Further evidence of this dissatisfaction is indicated by the establishment of a number of institutions which provide post-school education often in an attempt to remedy the failings of the conventional schools. [Campbell-Buck 1986:39]

Funding for these schools has constantly been a problem. The ones that have survived, have done so because of Aboriginal community support. Campbell-Buck pointed out that all of the schools and colleges (college means secondary and post-secondary education) had two basic
themes. "Firstly all recognise that the school has an important role in reinforcing the Aboriginality of their students" (Campbell-Buck 1986:40). A second theme concerns the fact that all recognized that Aboriginal students (children and adults) needed certain formal academic skills to survive in modern Australia (Campbell-Buck 1986).

The New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group continued its discussions of Aboriginal schools throughout the period of time I was in Australia. The President of the NSWAECG became increasingly disillusioned with the situation for Aboriginal students in the public education system. He suggested, along with the Head of the NSW Department of Education's Aboriginal Education Unit, that I concentrate my investigation on the relationship of education and cultural identity on the issue of Black Schools. They were particularly interested in a new Aboriginal School that had been opened in Elizabeth, South Australia. I had also talked to a member of one of the local Consultative groups who had been on a New South Wales Consultative Group study tour of Aboriginal schools in South Australia. She was very excited about the school. This particular person had a strong interest in Aboriginal identity. Her daughter had been a member of the Aboriginal and Islander Dance Troupe.

The Kaurna Plains School in Elizabeth, South Australia, had been set up as a result of Aboriginal community people
wanting a school that aimed to help young urban Aboriginals understand their culture and history. Not only was it important because it was designed for students from non-traditional communities, but it was also important in the sense that the SA Department of Education was funding the school and supporting it as an alternative school within the State system. For Aboriginal people in New South Wales, the logic was: something that works for urban Aboriginal students in SA, should work in New South Wales.

I had already been to South Australia once. While there I had met the President of the State Consultative Group. I had showed my letter of introduction from the President of the NSW Consultative Group; however, he was reluctant to have me visit the school. On returning to NEW South Wales, I told the Consultative Group President what had happened. The NSW Wales President was not happy. When I went back to South Australia I was invited to the Kaurna Plains School. The SA Consultative Group President explained to me that he was reluctant to have people visit the school, because people want instant success by whitefella standards. Anglos opposed to the school are hoping for it to fail. He laughed and said that if Kooris feel that intensely about the importance of the school, that was a different matter. Before setting up my visit, he carefully went over all the political strategies that they used to get the government's support. He noted that while
the State Consultative Group had played an important role, it was the local Aboriginal community that had pushed for the school and continued to set policy for the school. From an Aboriginal perspective, the school belonged to the community. I will say something in detail about Kaurna Plains School, because it embodies all that Aboriginal people feel should be in the relationship between identity and education.

The Kaurna Plains School is located on the same grounds as Elizabeth High School. The Aboriginal flag flies in front of the school. The building was built with the idea of expanding the school as enrollment increases and educational levels are added. Older students also take some academic classes at the high school. There were 43 students attending the school, but the school could manage up to eighty students. One of the underlying Aboriginal rules of the school is that it will never be allowed to get so big that it loses its sense of community or extended family atmosphere. The principal of the school was an Aboriginal person, the support staff was Aboriginal, and several of the teachers were Aboriginal. The School Council of Aboriginal Parents set policy, and they are not afraid to take issue with the professional staff: it is a community school. Students have ample positive role models of Aboriginal people in control. Added to this is the fact that the school is visited by famous Aboriginal people in government,
the arts, and other areas. The program stresses Aboriginality and basic skills. The School Council insisted on that. When I asked what was Aboriginal about the school, I was told there were several things. First, various Aboriginal people share myths and traditions, including language, with the students. The staff presents Aboriginal cultural traditions from the two Aboriginal missions that are not too far from the school. Some of the students have relatives still living at the missions. Teachers, who are of Aboriginal descent, share information with students on the groups they represent, and this becomes part of the curriculum. Aboriginal studies is part of each grade level.

The second way the school is Aboriginal relates to Aboriginal intimate culture. Students call teachers by their first names, or in cases where the teacher or other adult has special Aboriginal experience, the term "Aunti" or "Uncle" is used. Children are taught to share. Older children are given responsibilities and encouraged to help young children. Teachers hug children, children hug teachers, and children hug each other. Learning becomes a "tactile" activity, and "caring and sharing" become the watch words for the approach. However, students are expected to accomplish learning tasks. The students work together and alone, but they do not work in a sense of competition. There are always many adults present, because
that is how Aboriginal society is structured—children grow up around adults—groups are not separated.

I was told that children want to stay around—you have to chase them out, not in. When I wandered around classes, students came up to me. They shared their work with me, asked me questions, and asked me for help. Students worked at tables, sat on the floor, and wandered around, but they were always near adults.

The school was also open to non-Aboriginal students whose parents where willing to support an Aboriginal community approach to learning. Among the junior high age students, an Anglo student had been elected class representative, but he had lost his position because of some sort of behavior problem. He kept insisting that he was still the class representative, but an Aboriginal mate informed him that he was not. They debated the issue in a joking way; however, the Anglo student was begrudgingly starting to realize that Aboriginal leadership means responsibility. A teacher came by, the teacher wondered if they should be some place else. The students decided that perhaps they should be doing some work, and they did leave.

There have been enormous pressures on the Kaurna School. The local Member of Parliament was against the concept of Aboriginal schools. Local non-Aboriginal people were not happy about having an Aboriginal school in their neighborhood. It was difficult for students to get to the
school, but Aboriginal parents have responded by taking responsibility for getting students to and from school where needed. The high school principal, and some high school teachers, support the Kaurna Plains School. The two principals meet regularly to discuss concerns.

I was also able to talk to members of the Aboriginal Education Sector of the South Australian Department of Education about the Kaurna Plains School. They were trying to help with the development of curriculum materials, field trips, and any other activities that would serve the school's needs. It was hoped that the successes of Kaurna Plains would convince the SA Department of Education to set up other Aboriginally controlled schools. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff members thought that Aboriginal community people and Anglo educators could work together once Anglos accepted the fact that Aboriginal people had the right and knowledge to develop programs to meet their needs. It was also clear that maintaining and restructuring Aboriginal identity was one of those needs.

Perhaps the only major difference between New South Wales and South Australian Aboriginal communities is that South Australia still has traditional communities with title to their land and a good deal of their traditional culture intact. These communities serve as a rich source of living tradition; however, there are still some areas of NSW where traditional culture has survived to some degree. The
important point is that the State Consultative Groups in both New South Wales and South Australia have recognized the fact that contemporary rural and urban Aboriginal communities also have "Aboriginal traditions," and these traditions must make up part of any restructuring of Aboriginal cultural identity. For this reason, the Kaurna Plains school is still a model of what future Aboriginally controlled schools might be able to accomplish in urban areas.

How Much Aboriginal Control is Enough?

There is one debate among some Koori leaders about control, identity, and Aboriginality. The President of the NSW Consultative Group believes that Aboriginal schools can only have a real Aboriginal identity if Aboriginal people control the policy and philosophy of the school. For example, there is a famous Aboriginal college in the Sydney area that tries to make Aboriginal identity a base for the way it is structured. Aboriginal people are involved, but a non-Aboriginal Board still controls the school. This arrangement may have been acceptable in the 1970s, but now, by the late 1980s, increasingly larger numbers of Aboriginal people felt that the identity/education issues must be resolved by Aboriginal people who are in a position to formulate policy.

When I attended meetings of a local Aboriginal Consultative Group, I was made aware of local frustration
with certain teachers and administrators in schools in the area. People complained of the fact gubb educators neither respected Aboriginal culture nor were sensitive to the needs of Aboriginal students. In some cases they thought it was racism, but in most it was just an unwillingness to see the importance of community and group identity to Aboriginal people. Most people were interested in the development of Aboriginal Schools. The local President was an Aboriginal school principal. He clearly felt that schools should respect Aboriginal culture and the importance of a positive Koori identity for students; however, he also felt that sometimes Kooris got carried away with "teacher bashing." Instead of blaming everything on teachers, they needed to do things in their own communities that create better environments for learning. The President had grown up in Queensland, and he still took pride in knowing about his culture. When I went to visit him at his school, we talked about identity questions. He still believed there was a chance of Kooris and Anglos working together, and he was not convinced that replacing Anglos with Kooris, would automatically mean more attention to Aboriginal culture and identity. I am not completely sure of the reasons, but he resigned as area local Consultative Group President before I left Australia.
ANALYSIS OF ABORIGINAL IDENTITY ISSUES IN EDUCATION

Koori and other Aboriginal leaders are well aware of the fact that trying to maintain and reconstruct Aboriginal identity and develop educational skills needed in the wider Australian society is an ongoing process. This process carries with it a number of challenges that must be met to satisfy the needs of a diverse Aboriginal population. A number of questions must be answered: (1) Are the two twin goals of Aboriginal identity and the development of Western skills compatible as long as non-Aboriginal people control Aboriginal education programs? (2) Will it be possible to convince non-Aboriginal educators that Aboriginal knowledge related to identity formation is just as important as Western knowledge? (3) Can there actually be a sharing of educational policy formation between Kooris and non-Aboriginal educators? (4) Can English literacy and mathematical knowledge be taught simply as skills to be used when convenient, as opposed to a value system that requires total commitment, with a cost in terms of a devaluing of Koorie knowledge and identity? (5) Can ideas of group sharing of knowledge and feelings of commitment to the kin group and friends be reconciled with Western ideas of individual competitiveness? (6) Will ties to the land of one's own Dreaming restrict mobility and access to more advanced Western education programs which are only found in urban areas? Will there be ways of overcoming this? (7)
In regard to Aboriginal studies, will Koori groups be consulted or given a major part in developing curricular materials? (8) If non-Aboriginal educators and Kooris cannot share control over education, is it feasible to develop Aboriginally controlled educational programs and schools? (9) Will Koori leaders and communities have different challenges in working with elementary, secondary, and higher or tertiary education programs? (10) Will academic programs have to be redefined in terms of Aboriginal community development education?

In answering the first question about non-Aboriginal control of education, there seems to be agreement among Koori educators that Aboriginal people need more control over educational programs. However, how much control is still open to debate. Of the Aboriginal leaders with whom I have discussed education and identity issues, most seemed to worry more about actually creating the environments for the twin goals of maintaining Aboriginal identity and gaining Western skills, than worrying about absolute control. However, it is clear that Aboriginal people have to have a greater involvement on the policy and administrative level in order to be able to structure programs that are based on an Aboriginal perspective. Sharing power with people outside the bureaucracy has not been a common trait of bureaucratic organizations; however, the example of the Aboriginally controlled school in South Australia
illustrates that it may be possible to obtain control for individual schools. Beyond this point, power sharing is still an unresolved issue.

Questions two and three can be answered together. Aboriginal people have convinced a number of non-Aboriginal people about the importance of Aboriginal identity. Some of these people are in positions of power. If things keep going well in South Australia (such as the Kaurna Plains School) where Aboriginal people have become more involved in directing their own education, it will certainly have some impact in New South Wales and Victoria. It also seems that the New South Wales Federation of Teachers is committed to helping to involve more Aboriginal people in education. At least in regard to the development of Aboriginal studies programs, there is a beginning of real involvement and power sharing between Kooris and non-Aboriginal educators in NSW. The process is even further along in South Australia. However, there still is substantial reluctance among many people within the educational bureaucracy in general, and some senior level administrators in particular, to allow real Aboriginal involvement in educational policy beyond the point of some curriculum development activity. The partnership may eventually take place, but it would probably be with Aboriginal people as "junior partners" in New South Wales. It also would probably require the replacement of some senior level administrators with Aboriginal people, or
at least non-Aboriginal educators who believed in power sharing.

Questions regarding English literacy and mathematical knowledge being taught simply as skills is a difficult question to answer. I would agree with several Aboriginal educators that this is an area where Aboriginal community people, Aboriginal educators, and non-Aboriginal educators all have to agree that this can only take place within an educational environment that is linked to the Aboriginal community. In most Australian schools, the idea of merit and learning English and mathematics are part of a value system. This system is really at odds with Aboriginal approaches about knowledge being shared and related to the community and not being an individual thing. This also pertains to question five about group importance and 'sharing versus individual competitiveness. Aboriginal leaders who are committed to Aboriginal values do not believe one can talk about sharing in an environment based on competitiveness. Some Aboriginal writers have argued that whitefella knowledge can be used in an Aboriginal way if it is kept in a community context. It should also be noted that many Australian non-Aboriginal educators are convinced that the present educational system, based on individual competitiveness, is not serving the needs of increasing numbers of Australian students. The Australian economy simply does not have the range of good job opportunities
that it once had for people without formal educational credentials. Students, who are not being served, include Aboriginals, women, migrants, and working class individuals. I had a number of discussions about social issues and education with education faculty members in several universities, and the questions of access and educational reform seem to be increasingly topics of faculty meetings and informal conversations. This does not mean that the educational status quo is without its defenders. There are still many academics and government officials who do not think the system needs to be changed. Some of these same individuals say the fault is having a labor government in power at the national level that gives special treatment to minorities and women.

In regard to access to education related to geographic areas, this question is being examined by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Some feel it is really an issue of commitment of human and material resources. Since I left Australia, there have been attempts to provide more educational services for Aboriginal teenagers and adults in rural areas. I would argue that this really has to be done within a framework of Aboriginal rural development, rural development planned in conjunction with local communities. I would also agree with some Aboriginal leaders who point out that there has to be a commitment to urban Aboriginal community development. Again this must be planned in
consultation with local communities. Community development means that educational, economic, and health concerns all have to be accounted for in both urban and rural Aboriginal communities. It means that education must be directed to helping all students and/or adults who need to enhance their English and mathematics skills, but it also means coordinating academic programs with health, mental health, and other community based programs.

In regard to the development of curricula materials for Aboriginal studies with an Aboriginal perspective, this is already taking place. The Consultative Groups have worked with the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Unit and the Parks and Wildlife Service in developing a number of materials. There are increasing numbers (but still too few) of Aboriginal people specializing in history and anthropology with the goal of working in Aboriginal studies. However, the critical question is: "How many—and in what way—will non-Aboriginal educators use the materials that are being developed?" A number of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal educators involved in Aboriginal studies feel that there has been very little planning devoted to this concern, and it still has not been resolved.

Questions nine and ten relate to control of education and challenges that might be unique to particular levels of education. There are different challenges on the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.
In terms of primary education, Aboriginal people themselves see this as a critical area from the standpoint of Aboriginal identity. The Consultative Groups and the State Aboriginal Education Unit in New South Wales are starting to make headway in primary education. The Head of the State Aboriginal Education Unit is particularly interested in primary education.

There is much more work to be done in terms of secondary education, but some progress has been made in curriculum development. However, I think there is less inclination to allow what is viewed as community interference at the secondary level. Secondary school people also feel uneasy, because of the high drop out or push out rates. Aboriginal secondary students are not passive, and they do challenge the system. These challenges may involve confrontations with school staff and non-Aboriginal students. Therefore, there is a need not only to ease tensions, but also to provide educational programs that do not make students and teachers enemies. The President of the State Consultative Group was very much interested in "push-out" rates. He managed to graduate from high school in a country town in Western New South Wales where some of the school personnel told him he should not try. He would just end-up on the corners drinking with the other Aboriginals. He said it made him angry, but he had a supportive kin group that helped him. Many Aboriginal
students do not have this kind of support because their families have had such bad experiences with education. Parents, aunts, and uncles may feel so unwelcome and uncomfortable in schools that they cannot be positive advocates for Aboriginal students with school administrators and teachers.

Clearly, the tertiary system will be the most difficult challenge. This is particularly true of the University System. Some universities have Aboriginal Education Units and Enclaves, but they are not always supported with enthusiasm. I observed several situations where senior members of university faculties of education said they were opposed to Aboriginal studies and support programs for Aboriginal students in universities.

If Aboriginal people continue to meet opposition, they will continue to develop more of their own alternative educational programs. However, there is a difficulty. Money continues to be a problem. Communities have to be behind the schools or programs to help raise money when needed. They also have to have a staff committed to an Aboriginal perspective in the education program.

The maintenance and reconstruction of Aboriginal identity in educational settings has been taken seriously by Aboriginal leaders and community groups. The idea that educational institutions must be changed to provide a more positive climate for expressions of Aboriginality has been
evolving for some time, and I believe it is getting stronger. This does not mean it will be easy to develop beyond what has been already accomplished. On occasion, the problems of diversity within the Aboriginal community have caused factions or splits among local Aboriginal groups, but the commitment to finding some sort of general Aboriginal identity seems to—at some point—bring people back together. In fact, in 1986, the National Coalition of Aboriginal Organizations was founded to give Aboriginal people a collective voice (Fowell 1986). Some non-Aboriginal people were not convinced that the diverse groups of Aboriginals could come together. They have. If this works out, educational concerns will be addressed from an Aboriginal perspective. This means from the perspective of all issues being related in terms of their impact on Aboriginal identity. Education means skills in community development—Aboriginal knowledge, such as concern for the land of one's Dreaming, Western education skills, willingness to share, concern for health, and other factors must all be part of the curriculum.

Any discussion of Aboriginal identity and education issues has to consider the question of Aboriginal language use. There are language factors related to most of the questions under consideration. While in Australia, I was able to attend a conference on Aboriginal language use at the University of New England in Armidale, New South Wales.
A number of important language issues were discussed (Smith 1986). They included: (1) Use of English and Aboriginal language maintenance. Most Aboriginal people are now using English as the medium for the transmission of Aboriginal culture. Key elements of Aboriginal culture are still passed on using English. There are English words that transmit notions of the importance of resolving family problems, obligations to friends and family, and group welfare above self interest. Non-Aboriginal educators often assume that speaking the same language means placing importance on the same values. This is not always the case. (2) Bilingual Programs may not always go according to plan. Certain attempts to set up bilingual programs in traditional Aboriginal communities have not always been successful. Often times there was no real consultation with the community. The programs were really assimilationist in the sense that the goal was to have Aboriginal students make a transition to English. There was little emphasis put on the importance of the Aboriginal language and culture. Finally, the program developers did not realize that there were Aboriginal cultural and clan differences expressed in Aboriginal language. This could result in offending traditional elders by using the Aboriginal language in an inappropriate manner. (3) Questions of who owns language. Aboriginal people may have life experiences that they do not own. Instead, the experience belongs to the group;
therefore, individuals cannot always relate experience through language. Non-Aboriginal educators rarely think of authorization to express experience in language. Teachers often ask students to write stories about themselves or their families without realizing that the Aboriginal student may have to get permission from their kin group before relating the stories. (4) Is English an Aboriginal Language? When an Aboriginal person uses English as the language of cultural expression, then English, in essence, becomes an Aboriginal language. The important point to remember is that the symbols expressed in language are the keys to cultural literacy. As long as these symbols are expressed, then, the cultural information is communicated. It is for this reason that several Aboriginal writers are convinced that they can express Aboriginal identity in the English language.

It has been stressed that Aboriginal views of education are community based rather than centered on the individual. This means that the role education plays in Aboriginal culture is directed toward applying knowledge to community issues. Major Aboriginal community problems such as suicide and other stress related deaths, are areas for the application of knowledge (Cawte 1990). Aboriginal control of education is considered by many to be a way of developing community programs that simultaneously address health issues, give adults an opportunity to regain their self-
esteem, and provide interpersonal and educational skills necessary for creating new opportunities for an Aboriginal perspective in contemporary Australian society.
CHAPTER IV
THE ROLE OF ABORIGINAL EXPRESSIVE CULTURE IN THE FORMATION
OF ABORIGINAL IDENTITY

Introduction
Expressive culture refers to the creative use of the human imagination to interpret, understand, and enjoy life. In terms of cultural identity, the expressive elements of culture provide insights into a peoples' world view. Expressive culture may convey what are considered standards for acceptable behavior, transmit and preserve customs and values that are essential to a particular identity, and contribute to the cohesiveness or solidarity of group identity (Haviland 1983).

The expressive culture of Aboriginal Australians has been intricately connected to their world view and identity. Aboriginal art or expressive culture has been a continuous tradition of great antiquity, and it is finally being accepted as one of the great living artistic traditions.

The connection between identity and Aboriginal expressive culture is a complex one. All traditional Aboriginal expressive culture—including music, song, dance, painting, verbal arts, and the construction of costumes—were connected to ceremonial life. It was a collective
vision of experience: the experience of being tied with the land that in turn was tied into the work of the great Spirit Ancestors of the Dreaming. Aboriginal expressive culture was difficult for Europeans to understand. Nineteenth Century European art was often expressed in the tradition of realism; however, a great deal of Aboriginal art was abstract. Aboriginal geometric forms were often not interpretable without further information about their meaning. Aboriginal art was primarily religious in the sense that it was tied to the myths of the Dreaming. Some of it was supposed to only make sense to those who had gained the right to know all of the meanings. The relationship between the patterns, design and imagery, symbolism, beauty, and meaning were all interconnected. You had to understand and sense that this was a totality of expression which permeated all aspects of Aboriginal life.

As Aboriginal artist, James Simon has explained:

All Aboriginal painting is based on symbols. It represents things in each area, what's happening. It's dance or life, life in that individual's area from the coast or desert. Instead of just painting it's symbolic, it's symbols, it's a story. [Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1988:1]

It can be said that Aboriginal Australian expressive culture "can be read, because it communicates ideas and beliefs, it has been called a kind of visual literacy" (Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1988:1).

It should also be noted that in traditional Aboriginal culture there was no word for "art" or "artist", and there
was no real distinction made between, what we refer to in Western society as "arts and crafts." In this sense, "expressive culture" is a more appropriate term to explain what art and craft meant to traditional Aboriginal societies. It was also a participatory experience where everyone took part; however, people with special talents were recognized and encouraged. The participatory aspects should be stressed, because the involvement in Aboriginal expressive culture was how the individual exhibited her/his feelings of group identity. This is also illustrated by the fact that a good deal of Aboriginal art was temporary work. It consisted of body painting, sculptures in sand, things made of bark, string, and feathers. These examples of expressive culture were either destroyed or disappeared within hours, or perhaps days, from the time that they were created (Isaacs 1984).

Since 1788, traditional Aboriginal communities in many parts of Australia have been devastated by European settlement. From the beginning of contact, Europeans looked on Aboriginal art and artifacts as "primitive" and of little value. What art that was preserved by Europeans was placed in the ethnographic collections of museums. It was assumed that these were relics of a dying society (Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1988). From the Aboriginal perspective, it was a stroke of luck—in an other wise dismal and destructive history—that in parts of northern and central
Australia, remote Aboriginal communities had limited contact with European society. They were able to keep alive their expressive culture as it related to their religion and land. They worked, and still work, in artistic traditions that are at least thousands of years old.

Positive changes have occurred in the way Aboriginal expressive culture is viewed, and these changes have had an important impact on Aboriginal identity:

The last two decades have seen great changes in the way Aboriginal art is regarded. It is now prized by collectors around the world both as art in itself and as expression of a unique and sophisticated culture. This increased interest in Aboriginal art is especially shared by Aboriginal people, in both rural and urban areas. [Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1988:2]

It can also be said that in a number of Aboriginal communities Aboriginal expressive culture is flourishing. These renewed activities has taken on a very important function:

They have acquired a new and urgent emphasis— that of reinforcing Aboriginal identity and asserting traditional values. Art is, and always was, a way of teaching children the stories of their culture. The arts and crafts industry also offers economic benefits to rural and remote communities [Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1988:2]

Traditional art forms have been expressed in new ways or adapted to new media. Traditional abstract designs have been reproduced on textiles through silk screen printing. Women in communities in central Australia have been producing striking batiks. Perhaps the most publicized recent change in Aboriginal expressive culture, is
represented by desert Aboriginal artists who have taken the symbols and motifs of ceremonial ground paintings and "translated them on to canvas or board using acrylic paints. The desert painters are producing stunning contemporary works of art that have their roots in an ancient tradition" (Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1988:2).

New forms of Aboriginal expression are being produced by Aboriginal writers, poets, playwrights, and actors. They clearly have played an important role in the reconstruction of Aboriginal identity, but even here, their work comes out of traditional forms of Aboriginal verbal art. The Aboriginal playwright, Robert Merritt (1986:vii) expresses the point well:

Theatre for us, the offspring of a once proud people who bred great artists, dates back to our rightful place in time, before our dreaming was shattered some two hundred years ago. It was part of the natural way. We inherited it from the womb and relied on it to reflect our spirit because it gave continuity to our existence. It told us all we needed to know, that there was no beginning and thee was no end. It molded our identity and carried our culture from generation to generation. From it we took for granted the fact that we belonged.

In 1971, Identity, a new magazine of the Aboriginal Publications Foundation was created to give Aboriginal people a chance to express their feeling, concerns, and share their creative work. It was another illustration of how Aboriginal cultural is still a vital force. Dr. H. Coombs, Chairperson of the Australian Council for the Arts observed:
Let me assure you that Aboriginal culture is still a living thing, nor merely among remote and lonely people. Echoes—strange and significant echoes of it—can be recognized not merely on the fringes of country towns but seen in Redfern and Carlton [Coombs 1971:11]

Aboriginal music and dance were a vital part of traditional Aboriginal culture. According to the ethnomusicologist, Cath Ellis (1986), Aboriginal "song cycles" were a sophisticated form of cultural literacy. Traditional forms of music and dance are still performed, but there are also new forms. There is modern tribal music, evangelical, folk, country and western, and rock and pop music that all have a role in the reconstruction of Aboriginal identity. The new forms have all been generated form Aboriginal traditions (Ellis 1986).

The institutions, structures, forms and styles, and issues related to the relationship between Aboriginal expressive culture and the maintenance and reconstruction of Aboriginal identity need to be examined in some detail.

Institutions and Structural Relationships
The institutions that impact on Aboriginal expressive culture are probably most significant on the Commonwealth level, because the Commonwealth still has the major responsibility for coordinating Aboriginal affairs. There is a significant education function related to Aboriginal arts, and this is also probably most significant from a Commonwealth perspective. There are also state institutions that play a role in relationship to Commonwealth activity.
Aboriginal Arts Board

The Commonwealth Government provides funding for The Arts through seven boards which make up the Australia Council. Each board is responsible for policy and grant allocations within its mandated art form. The Aboriginal Arts Board has its main efforts directed toward providing three functions: "first, supporting the practice of traditional Aboriginal culture; second, disseminating knowledge about it among Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals, by exhibitions, performances and the sale of artefacts; and third, by providing means by which those Aboriginals who have lost touch with traditional ways can re-establish contacts with them" (Select Committee Inquiry 1986:53).

Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, and Training

As was noted in the Introduction to the Chapter IV, Aboriginal expressive culture has provided a vehicle for the maintenance of identity and a way of helping to economically support an Aboriginal way of life. DEET helps to provide training and other forms of assistance to Aboriginal people who want to develop Aboriginal arts and crafts programs.

In 1987, the Aboriginal Employment Policy (AEDP) was introduced by the Labor Government. It was a response to the findings of the Committee of Review of Aboriginal Employment and Training Programs. The Committee was chaired by Mr. Mike Miller, an Aboriginal, and the Committee's findings were based on input from Aboriginal people. The
new policy has been based on earlier policies or taken them over, and it has tried to build on earlier achievements. It is a plan to help Aboriginal people take control of their own lives and achieve some sort of economic independence. Programs that result from the Policy include such things as subsidies of wages, training assistance, grants for study, low interest loans and other help with the cost of capital equipment needed to start a business. A number of the ventures and training programs sponsored under the Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP) have been directed toward Aboriginal arts and crafts. The Policy is administered jointly by the Department of Employment and Training (DEET), the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAAF) and the Aboriginal Development Commission (ADC). Programs sponsored under the Policy "involve the cooperative efforts of the Federal and State Governments, councils, statutory authorities, small businesses, large corporations, and academic institutions" (Department of Employment, Education and Training 1989:6).

Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies

As a depository for Aboriginal materials, the Institute has materials pertaining to traditional Aboriginal arts and information on the rebirth of interest in Aboriginal expressive culture. The Institute has staff members who are knowledgeable about various aspects of Aboriginal culture
and society, and this goes together with the Institute's commitment to helping to promote Aboriginal Studies.

The National Aboriginal Education Committee (NAEC)

The NAEC has an interest in Aboriginal expressive culture being part of Aboriginal education programs for two reasons. The first reason pertains to the fact that Aboriginal art forms were used as means of educating people in traditional culture. It fits in with the idea of educating for involvement in a community. The second reason involves the importance of expressive culture in developing positive feelings of Aboriginal identity.

State Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups

The state consultative groups have the same interest in the role of expressive culture in maintaining and reconstructing Aboriginal identity and in Aboriginal education as the National Aboriginal Education Committee.

State Aboriginal Education Units

Since one of the functions of Aboriginal Education Units is to develop materials for Aboriginal studies, the Units spend time putting together material on Aboriginal expressive culture as it was traditionally practiced, information on the continuation of traditional art forms, and developments in contemporary Aboriginal expressive culture.
Museums

The major museums have collections of Aboriginal materials on display, and they also have education officers who work in Aboriginal studies. Museum education plays an important part in Aboriginal studies. They also develop materials to be used by students.

Regional and Local Aboriginal Community Organizations

Within states, there are regional and local Aboriginal community groups who have received funding to develop cultural centers and culture camps. They usually work in conjunction with other institutions; however, their special role is to identify local people who still have some knowledge of traditional art forms or work with local Aboriginal artists. These individuals are used as resource people for setting up displays, demonstrations, and educational programs.

Universities

Universities that have Aboriginal education units and individual faculty members interested in Aboriginal culture may develop their own programs or become involved in joint ventures in Aboriginal arts education. An example of a new program is one offered by The National Centre for Cultural Heritage Science Studies at the University of Canberra (formerly the Canberra College of Advanced Education) in Cultural Heritage Management (CHM). Students can combine a major in museum studies with Aboriginal studies,
anthropology, art, design, or any relevant elective subject. Students can elect to pursue an Associate Diploma in Applied Science (Museum Studies) which is a two year program. The advantage of this type of approach is that involves a number of different academic departments in forming programs that are particularly important to Aboriginal people. A Bachelor of Applied Science, Graduate Diploma in Applied Science, and a Master of Applied Science are also offered. There are support services and funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The Aboriginal novelist, Colin Johnson has developed a program in Aboriginal Literature at Murdoch University in Perth, Western Australia.

Dr. Arthur Smith, Coordinator of the Aboriginal Studies Program at The University of Wollongong, has been interested in developing a program in Aboriginal Studies that involves the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Humanities. Dr. Smith is a former art educator who became involved in Aboriginal studies as a result of his work in incorporating Aboriginal art into an art education program.

Individuals

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal individuals may develop Aboriginal arts programs either on their own or as part of other programs. I know of cases where non-Aboriginal crafts people have become interested in Aboriginal arts and crafts. They may help Aboriginal crafts people financially or help
Aboriginal students learn about certain traditions. Many Aboriginal people with particular talents, knowledge, and interest are usually active in community affairs. Some are members of Aboriginal Consultative Groups, and several well known Aboriginal artists have set up their own programs in Aboriginal expressive culture. For example, the poet Kath Walker runs her own Aboriginal culture camp.

**Institutional Linkages**

The Commonwealth and state institutions I have mentioned have both formal and informal linkages. Formal channels of activity are based on stated responsibilities in institutional guidelines. I have reviewed a number of department and committee guidelines for Commonwealth agencies involved in Aboriginal affairs and state guidelines for agencies and departments involved in Aboriginal affairs in New South Wales and South Australia. All seem to have at least an official statement on the importance of cooperation with other agencies and departments. Aboriginal consultative Groups have stressed the need for better coordination and active cooperation of the various Commonwealth and state agencies working in Aboriginal affairs.

Informal contacts are probably even more important. Aboriginal people, themselves, conduct their most important business in social settings. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Commonwealth and state bureaucrats attend
conferences. Outside of formal meetings, people have time to discuss matters on an informal basis. They share information, and they sometimes agree to act on certain programs or information. I had the opportunity to attend several conferences where I observed interactions as described above. I have also discussed these matters with state and Commonwealth bureaucrats with whom I worked in my capacity as a lecturer in an Aboriginal education unit and as a consultant for a state Aboriginal consultative group.

While I cannot speak for situations in northern or western areas of Australia, I can say that in Southeastern Australia, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people involved in Aboriginal affairs seem to know each other fairly well. They also seem to have contacts in other parts of Australia.

**Forms and Styles in Aboriginal Art**

There were a number of traditional forms and styles of Aboriginal art. Some were found throughout Australia, but there were others that were unique to particular areas. A number of the styles and forms are still practiced today in some parts of Australia. Even those that are practiced in remote areas have significance for all Aboriginal Australians as part of their identity as Aboriginal people. Urban Aboriginal artists have combined what they have learned about symbols and values in traditional art with their conventional Western art education to produce work that illustrates the diversity of Aboriginal identity.
Examples would include Trevor Nickolls, Lin Onus, and Sally Morgan. Some forms and styles have a particular significance to questions of Aboriginal identity. Nickolls talks about his art as a combination of Aboriginal and Western influences: "My painting is a marriage of Aboriginal Culture and Western Culture to form a style called Traditional Contemporary--from Dreamtime to Machinetime" (Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1988:4).

**Rock Art**

Aboriginal Australians have been engraving and painting on rock for thousands of years. The oldest surviving examples are rock engravings found in the Olary region of South Australia. They be over 30,000 years old (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1990:1). In some parts of Australia, such as Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory and Central Australia, rock art is part of a living tradition. The images represent the present peoples' ties to the land of their Dreaming. The rock images personify the actual energy of the Creation Beings. To maintain that flow of energy, Aboriginal people still retouch the images for specific ritual objectives.

In Southeastern Australia, including New South Wales, the history of the last 200 hundred years resulted in the loss of land and tradition, but the rock engravings and paintings are still important:

Nevertheless, the rock paintings and engravings have great symbolic significance to Aboriginal communities.
They are regarded as a major link with the past, a part of Aboriginal heritage, a record of Aboriginal history, and a source of identity to present generations of Aboriginal people. [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1990:5]

**Bark Painting**

Bark painting is the most widely practiced type of traditional Aboriginal art form. Sheets of cured and flattened eucalyptus bark serve as surfaces. Natural colors are used and the brushes used are made from hair or twigs. Artists sell some of their work, but they give an explanation with it. The explanation is limited to what an uninitiated child would be told. The buyer is expected to be responsible for the care of the work. From the Aboriginal perspective, the important thing is the traditional knowledge that gives a particular item its meaning. The bark painting should be treated with respect, because of the traditional knowledge on which the painting is based. If you do not respect the item, then, it is assumed that you do not respect the knowledge and tradition.

**Carvings and Sculpture**

As was mentioned above, Aboriginal people carved on rock for thousands of years, but they have also used other materials such as wood, clay, and fibre. These materials do not survive over long periods of time; however, much of Aboriginal art was not meant to be permanent. The actual act and designs were the important factors. Like other forms of Aboriginal art, carvings and sculpture were
expressions of the Aboriginal world view: the land along with all living things form a vast network of relationships set in motion by the great Spirit Ancestors of the Dreaming. Sculptures of ancestral spirits or beings and totemic creatures are still produced as part of ceremonial use in the northern areas of Australia (Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1989:1).

In Southeast Australia, the actual practice of carving and sculpture has not continued, but there are important examples of engravings on rock, carved trees, carved and incised sacred objects of stone, and everyday implements that display carvings. They are preserved in various museum collections. The carved trees are only found in Southeastern Australia (Isaacs 1984). The items of everyday life included coolamons (carrying dishes), spear throwers, boomerangs, and shields. It is thought that the designs pertained to information about the "country" of the users. Even in everyday life one's identity with a particular area was reinforced. Aboriginal people of today in Southeastern Australia take pride in these remains of their past before the arrival of the Europeans. On the North Coast of New South Wales, some Koori people have "strenuously held on to their cultural identity; some elders still speak the Bandjalung language, which is being revived and taught to the young" (Isaacs 1984:22). In Victoria, the Museum of Victoria has employed Aboriginal people as keepers of museum
artifacts, because officials have recognized the importance of these items to the maintenance and restructuring of Aboriginal cultural identity in Southeast Australia.

As with other arts in northern and central areas of Australia, people who practice a traditional/semi-traditional way of life also sell wood carvings to help support themselves. Carved animals from the central desert area are particularly popular with individuals interested in Aboriginal art. Even here, there is a link with Aboriginal people in Southeastern Australia. The Commonwealth Government has centers for the sale of Aboriginal art in major cities such as Sydney and Melbourne. However, Aboriginal people, themselves, are increasingly getting involved in developing their own outlets. Since there are Aboriginal networks that tie traditional, rural, and urban people together, this type of activity will continue to grow.

There is also a form of urban Aboriginal sculpture. Most urban Aboriginal artists use literature and painting as their means of expression, but a few are beginning to use sculpture as an expression of Aboriginality:

One exception is the work of Fiona Foley, who is both a painter and a sculptor. Her composite construction _Annihilation of the Blacks_ starkly expresses the deep fears and anxieties felt by Aboriginal people as a result of the past 200 years of genocide and repression. [Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1988:10]
Fiberwork

Aboriginal fiber constructions have included the use of bark, human and animal hair, palm leaves, and a number of vines roots. These materials were utilized to make both ceremonial items and items for everyday use. In the northern areas of Australia, women sell baskets, string bags, and a variety of mats. In the southeastern areas of Australia, this is one aspect of traditional arts where there are still Aboriginal people who have maintained the skill and knowledge of the past. A group of mostly elderly women have continued the tradition of fiberwork:

In South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales, these women cherish their skills and seek to pass them on to younger generations. The main items produced are coiled baskets and mats. (However, recently the Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Trust acquired a large eel trap made by a craftswoman from western Victoria using the traditional coiling method.) [Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1989:10]

Verbal Arts

The traditional oral literature of Aboriginal Australia included a range of material. There were sacred myths that recounted important aspects of the Dreaming. There were stories that overlapped the functions of sacred myths. They dealt with some of the same issues, but in stories the themes might be viewed from a humorous stance. There were stories dealing with female-male relations, "just-so" stories that explained how things came to be, the fate of souls, the land of the dead, and tales of humans confronting malignant spirits. Some stories both amused and taught
particular lessons to children. Some myths dealt with title to land. They served as documents of bonds to the ancestral territory (Berndt and Berndt 1988).

There were certain people who became better story tellers than others. These individuals were of particular importance in reinforcing concepts of group identity. However, this was done in relationship to strict rules of restriction based on sex, age, territory, or other forms of ownership. There were no written copyrights, but their were strict rules governing the use of oral literature (Berndt and Berndt 1988).

The traditional Aboriginal oral literature has been an important part of the reconstruction of identity among rural and urban Aboriginal people. Some traditional stories and myths have been translated into English or recorded in tribal languages. They form what might be called an Aboriginal "classics" education. It might be expressed as "people who have no past, have no future." Some traditional story tellers, like Paddy Roe of Western Australia, have recorded Aboriginal stories on tape in Aboriginal English.

Aboriginal writers of written literature see their craft has being a continuance of the tradition of Aboriginal oral literature. Novels, poetry, drama, and autobiographical accounts provide links with the past and descriptions of the present. Aboriginal writers have expressed anger, frustration, and determination to maintain
an Aboriginal identity despite the domination of Europeans (Shoemaker 1982). A number of Aboriginal writers see their work as political in two senses. First, they are trying to say that Aboriginal people, of all sorts, have a right to maintain an Aboriginal identity. They may be traditional, rural, or urban, but they share a history and continued Aboriginal way of doing things. There have been attempts to destroy Aboriginal people physically, and where this failed, attempts to destroy their cultural identity. A second sense of the word "political" refers to the fact that Aboriginal writers are involved in the struggles of their communities. They have played a role in the land rights movement, education consultative groups, the development of Aboriginal health centers, and raising awareness of the need for Aboriginal legal services (McGuinness and Walker 1985).

**Music and Dance**

Traditional music was a very important aspect of Aboriginal identity. Music and dance expressed the lessons of the Creation Myths, dramatized the myths in ceremonies of renewal, and generally reminded people of their identity with the land of their Dreaming. It was an exciting and dramatic way to teach children the ways of the people (Ellis 1986).

Today in the northern and central areas traditional dance and music are still performed as part of the living tradition. Dance groups from these regions travel to other
parts of Australia to take part in Aboriginal cultural events. They provide rural and urban Aboriginal people with a sense of their shared history. Aboriginal music has been recorded and is also part of Aboriginal "classics" education in Aboriginal studies programs.

As was noted in the Introduction, music has also played an important part in illustrating the contact history of Aboriginal Australians. Aboriginal church music, folk, country and western, and rock music either maintain Aboriginal styles or elements of traditional music, or they dramatize identity concerns of modern Aboriginal people. This can be illustrated by the songs of the Aboriginal educator/folksinger Bob Randall:

Some of his best compositions—Red sun, black moon and Red sun keep shining overhead on the bodies of my people lying dead—are about the suffering of the Aboriginal people during the early decades of white settlement. The Mix up man is about cultural identity: am I black or white? My brownskin baby reflects the feelings of the Aboriginal people who were taken away from their parents to be schooled at missions preparatory to being sent to work for white settlers. [Aboriginal News 1989:7]

Issues Related to Aboriginal Expressive Culture and Identity

The issues related to Aboriginal expressive culture and identity can be summed up under four headings: (1) Issues related to the ownership and respect of Aboriginal expressive culture. (2) Issues related to arts and crafts as means of economic survival, but means that do not compromise Aboriginal identity. (3) Issues related to the
control of knowledge: What gets taught in Aboriginal studies and who determines how it should be taught? (4) Issues related to how Aboriginal expressive culture can be best used in the maintenance and reconstruction of Aboriginal identity.

The Ownership and Respect for the Ownership of Aboriginal Knowledge

As was pointed out earlier, much of what is important in traditional art relates to religious matters. The term "ownership" refers to the fact that certain individuals and clans have a right to use and know about certain symbols that appear in Aboriginal art. As Aboriginal people became more acquainted with Western culture, they were able to see how Aboriginal art works were treated. First, they would either see museum catalogs or art books displaying Aboriginal art. This could be disturbing in that some of the work was only to be viewed by certain people. Traditionally, some things could only be seen by women, others by men, or in some cases, certain items could only be seen by those who were initiated. Other art items could be displayed, as long as certain knowledge about particular designs, etc., was not revealed.

Traditional Aboriginal artists can sell their creations, but they give instructions to the buyer. They give a general explanation to the buyer about the items significance in Aboriginal tradition. This is what any uninitiated person is allowed to know about it. The buyer
is expected to take good care of the item, and respect it. When an Aboriginal artist sees her/his designs copied, it is a moral and ownership violation. One famous central desert artist saw his design on a hand towel. He quit working, because his Dreaming had been violated. A copyright suit was filed to prohibit the further use of the design. The artist began to work again (Isaacs 1984).

Aboriginal people have been upset when they have seen Japanese boomerangs with exact copies of symbols. These symbols represent the ownership of particular clans to certain territory. No one else has a right to use those designs.

In 1989, a Review Committee was appointed by the Commonwealth Government to study the Aboriginal Arts and Crafts Industry. The Committee was headed by Dr. Jon Altman, an economic anthropologist. The Committee Report stated that it was most important to deal with cultural issues for two reasons:

First, the Aboriginal arts and crafts industry is not just any industry; its products are cultural and in many instances embody the living heritage of producers. Second, there needs to be a fuller understanding of cultural and copyright issues in the general Australian arts community, not just the Aboriginal arts community. [Aboriginal News 1989:5]

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (AIAS) has advised "that safeguarding the integrity of Aboriginal artistic expression can most effectively be achieved by empowering individual artists, local communities and
organizations of Aboriginal artists to control their own arts and crafts as far as possible" (Aboriginal News 1989:5).

**Issues Related to Arts and Crafts as a Means of Economic Survival, but Means That Do Not Compromise Aboriginal Identity**

Problems of this type are related to the question of ownership and respect for Aboriginal knowledge; however, here, I am referring more to the educational aspects of the issue. Clearly, more attention has to be given to questions of copyrights and educating the art community and the general public about how Aboriginal people view ownership of knowledge and art. Aboriginal people I have talked to see a need for Aboriginal people themselves to become more knowledgeable about problems related to the display and selling of Aboriginal art.

Aboriginal leaders agree with the findings of the Committee on Aboriginal Arts and Crafts that there is a need for Aboriginal art centers. These centers are to be community based. However, a number of Aboriginal leaders have advocated for Aboriginal "cultural" centers. These are places where art is viewed in relation to other aspects of Aboriginal culture. They educate both younger and older Aboriginal about their heritage. They show a continuity between traditional, rural, and urban people. Traditional and urban/rural people both benefit from such a perspective. Not only do urban/rural people have to
"reconstruct" their identity, but traditional people have to "maintain" their identity. As one young urban Aboriginal women pointed out: "We need each other. The people in remote places give us something we lost, but our history can remind them of what Western ways will do to them in a few years." The lesson has not been lost on more traditionally oriented Aboriginal people. One Elder on the Far South Coast of New South Wales pointed out to me that he wanted young people in his community to understand that knowledge was needed from both cultures to survive. He said that he could not prevent Western intrusions, but he also knew that it would be better if he had some control over those intrusions.

A second issue involves the question of how best to provide education for Aboriginal people who are trying to work in the Aboriginal arts and crafts industry and those who will work for museums, etc. One school of thought is that Aboriginally controlled culture centers would best guard cultural integrity and teach business skills, etc. Another school of thought argues that Western academic institutions can develop programs to do both, but they would be better able to handle the skills education. Both points of view do agree that Aboriginal involvement is essential. This means not just hiring a few Aboriginal people, but it also means direct and continuous involvement with Aboriginal communities in terms of reviewing the programs.
Since I left Australia, a large Cultural Center was opened in Adelaide with government funding. The Center is intended to "foster the culture of the Aboriginal people, their languages, mythology, crafts, visual and performing arts" (Aboriginal News 1989:16). The facilities include a large exhibition hall, a theater, a gallery, and retail sales outlets (Aboriginal News 1989).

Issues Related to the Control of Knowledge in Aboriginal Studies

One issue related to the control of knowledge concerns what is taught about Aboriginal expressive culture. My Australian sponsor pointed out that there are some problems in art education. There were non-Aboriginal art teachers who were using books, photographs, and other material that had not been cleared by Aboriginal communities. The teachers were using material that was restricted by Aboriginal custom from being seen by all people. From the standpoint of local Aboriginal groups, it was clear that any use of Aboriginal expressive culture needed to be cleared with Aboriginal communities and other knowledgeable authorities. If it was a question of simply pointing out that particular art books or collections of pictures of Aboriginal work had not been cleared by copyright procedures, any source of Aboriginal knowledge would do. However, if it was a question of local ownership, no one but local Aboriginal groups had the right to give or refuse to give permission. It might be argued that in the
southeastern areas of Australia it should not matter, because traditional culture is not actually practiced. From an Aboriginal perspective, this is a false assumption. As long as Aboriginal people who have some relationship to the Aboriginal people who created particular works of art—or who still know the traditional knowledge on which a work of art is based—are still living, they have certain rights of ownership.

A second issue involves what periods of Aboriginal history are portrayed in Aboriginal studies and what kinds of expressive culture are used to illustrate the periods. Jordan (1986) has argued that if one concentrates on the period of colonial times, Aboriginal people are viewed as an impoverished minority with a dying culture. Aboriginal prehistory and the modern period of self-determination both present more positive views of Aboriginal culture. A number of non-Aboriginal people, involved in Aboriginal studies, feel uncomfortable with the self-determination period. I have talked to museum education officers in two of Australia's larger museums. The three people I talked to felt that it was best to have Aboriginal people talk about modern Aboriginal life. An education officer for the National Parks and Wildlife Service told me that he felt anyone involved in Aboriginal studies had a responsibility to deal with modern Aboriginal issues such as land rights. Aboriginal educators in Aboriginal Education Units in New
South Wales and South Australia seem to agree that modern Aboriginal issues need to be addressed; and, they think this is a subject area that is the ideal place to involve local Aboriginal people as resource consultants. Aboriginal adults have lived through the important periods of Aboriginal self-determination. There is some disagreement among Aboriginal educators about what you do with the Colonial Period. One militant Aboriginal educator/poet told me that "white Australia has to face up to its crimes." Several other Aboriginal educators felt you should not ignore the Colonial Period, but Aboriginal resistance should be stressed rather just white violence. The works of a number of Aboriginal writers do attempt to present examples, fictional and historical, of how Aboriginal people maintained their identity in the face of great challenges. Examples of two novels would be Colin Johnson's (1979) *Long Live Sandawara* and Monica Clare's (1979) *Karobran*. Johnson's work deals with two periods of Aboriginal history. First, there is Sandawara, an Aboriginal freedom fighter. Sandawara is an Aboriginal person from the Kimberleys region of Western Australia who fought to maintain Aboriginal traditional culture during colonial times. The second character, Alan is an alienated young urban Aboriginal in modern-day Perth (the major city of Western Australia). He has become involved in a life of crime. He finally, rediscovers the roots of his culture and
identity. The two characters present represent Aboriginal identity issues in different periods of history. Clare's Karoban is about a young Aboriginal woman of Aboriginal/European background, who is taken from her father by the Child Welfare Board. The young woman finds out about racism as she is moved from various institutions and private homes. As a young urban working women, she becomes involved in Aboriginal issues and trade unionism. She then goes from Aboriginal reserve to Aboriginal reserve speaking to Aboriginal people. In terms of plays, Robert Merritt's The Cake Man (1978) is an excellent example. The play deals with life on an Aboriginal mission in New South Wales, and the problems Aboriginals face when they are forced to move to cities in search of work. Like the work of many Aboriginal writers, a good deal of Merritt's own experience serves as the basis for the play.

A final issue is related to two types of Aboriginal studies. The Education Officer of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies argues that one has two different audiences for Aboriginal studies. The first audience is non-Aboriginal students. The goal here is to try and get them to understand Aboriginal people and their culture. Expressive culture is used in a way that suggests that there is a complex and exciting dynamic to Aboriginal culture. It is something "all" Australians should value. The second audience is Aboriginal students who are either trying to
maintain or reconstruct their identity. Here there should be an emphasis on aspects of expressive culture that deal with identity issues, and also works that try to resolve identity problems. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers need to be trained to deal with both types of Aboriginal studies (Alex Barlow, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, personal communication).

**Issues related to How Aboriginal Expressive Culture Can be Best Used in the Maintenance and Reconstruction of Aboriginal Identity**

Here the issue is mainly the fact that Aboriginal people feel they must be the ones who determine how Aboriginal expressive culture can be used in dealing with identity issues. There may be non-Aboriginal people involved in the resolution, but Aboriginal people have to define the issue. This is where the diversity of Aboriginal communities also comes into play. A number of Aboriginal people feel that local communities are in the best position to judge how one deals with identity issues in a local setting. It also means that individual Aboriginal people may view their contributions from their own individual perspective. As an example, the Aboriginal playwright Robert Merritt has opened his own drama school in Sydney. He uses Aboriginal expressive culture to help young Aboriginal people get "a sense of themselves."
Analysis

A number of identity issues are certainly related to Aboriginal expressive culture. It seems that many Aboriginal people, who come from diverse backgrounds, feel that Aboriginality should be "expressed" in a variety of artistic ways. There is a sense of "shared history" in looking at the creative works of traditional/semi-traditional people. In Southeastern Australia in general, and New South Wales in particular, rock art plays a special role in expressing a tie to the past. I have been with a lands council president on a trip through the Royal National Park looking at various types of Aboriginal rock art found in the Park. This individual had been referred to as "a wild man" because of his younger days when he had gotten away from Aboriginal culture. He had done time in jail, and he said that just trying to find himself in his culture had brought him back.

Of course expressive culture means different things to different people, but I did not meet any Aboriginal people who thought Aboriginal expressive culture was insignificant. One of my students told me being Aboriginal is something you are and you express. It may not be words, just feelings. However, when you experience being in touch with Aboriginal things, it makes the individual feel a part of the Aboriginal way. One non-Aboriginal education officer, in South Australia, made a similar observation. She had worked
with high school Aboriginal students in a creative writing venture. She said "white academics always want to formalize Aboriginal identity, but one cannot always do that. People feel and sense certain things, and that is what makes them Aboriginal." She was not talking about some "special genetic" quality. It seems to be something that intimate culture brings out. Aboriginal people are community oriented. They grow up among other Aboriginal people who reinforce a sense of belonging. Aboriginal people, who lose contact with the group loose that expressive feeling of Aboriginality. They may be knowledgeable of many Aboriginal facts, but it is "being" Aboriginal that counts. This is still a very difficult thing to communicate to non-Aboriginal people.

From conversations with Aboriginal people, I would also say that the importance of feelings, and a sense of community is what is meaningful in Aboriginal programs in education or any other area. This means that these programs will never have a "perfect fit" in any government departments or educational institutions. It is a different kind of structure. No matter how sincerely whites are in wanting to empower Aboriginal people, they will defeat their purpose if they insist on making the programs fit into a Western scheme of things. Either Western institutions have to be restructured, or Aboriginally controlled programs must truly be allowed the flexibility to fit into Aboriginal
patterns. From the Aboriginal side, there are also problems. Community involvement means things will never go on an exact schedule, and it means that community problems may have negative impacts on programs. It means that community leaders have to be fully aware of the fact that community factions can destroy programs. It is rare to find any community where everyone always gets along, but there are communities where people can put aside their differences in the interest of the betterment of the community. Community leaders have to have the foresight and ability to make sure everyone understands the importance of particular issues, and they also have to be able to involve various groups within the community in solving problems. People who are involved are less likely to create difficulties that would destroy a particular program.

Funding is another challenge. Community control means one has to be committed to a large number of smaller localized programs. This means that the economic resources will have to be available to run a larger number of programs. As of now most Aboriginal ventures are dependent on outside money, and they often end up being under financial stress. This can create disharmony among community people when choices have to be made about dropping various aspects of a program. Several leading Aboriginal leaders I talked to were very much aware of the problems that a lack of money creates. One really cannot talk about
complete self-determination when someone else economically determines what can be done. I would argue that this is certainly true in relationship to Aboriginal expressive culture. It has been pointed out that Aboriginal expressive culture serves as a basis for Arts and Craft ventures and a base for the maintenance and restructuring of Aboriginal identity. Therefore, it deserves particular consideration as an important aspect of Aboriginal self-determination.
CHAPTER V

ABORIGINAL IDENTITY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE FOURTH WORLD

Introduction

This chapter begins with a brief historical sketch of why the concept of "indigenous peoples" has an important relationship to the maintenance and reconstruction of Aboriginal identity. A discussion of the institutions and structural relationships that have been utilized in defining Aboriginal Australians as indigenous people follows. I will, then, define the issues involved in the consideration of Aboriginal identity as that of an indigenous people. A case study of Aboriginal land rights will be presented as an illustration of the important relationship between self-determination and identity as an indigenous people. Examples will be given of how Aboriginal Australians people have been interacting with other indigenous groups through the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples' Education, and individual contacts made between Aboriginal individuals and other indigenous people. The Chapter will end with an analysis of how this political process has impacted on Kooris and other Aboriginal Australians.
The Background

Traditionally, one might say that Aboriginal people defined themselves in terms of being "indigenous": they were part of the land of their Dreaming. Of course, this was a localized definition in that every Aboriginal group belonged to a particular geographic area. However, each Aboriginal groups' Dreaming touched the edges of those of other groups, as the Creative Spirits moved across the land giving it shape.

When Aboriginal people came into contact and conflict with Europeans, their traditional identity was not only challenged, but also contact with the Europeans meant the enforcement of a new identity on Aboriginal people as a primitive, inferior minority. The Europeans did not understand the complex relationship Aboriginal groups had with the land, even disposessed Aboriginal people would often hold on to some feeling for the land of their Dreaming.

Europeans may have unconsciously played a part in helping Aboriginal people develop a pan-Australian Aboriginal identity. Different groups of Aboriginals were placed on missions and reserves with other Aboriginal people who, were strangers or even traditional enemies. Although this lead to conflict and further disorientation, it also forced Aboriginal people to see their "common" identity as "dispossessed people." The term "dispossessed" is important
because, it implies that something was taken from them. They once owned or belonged to something, but did not give up their claims. The key aspect of their "belonging" was a relationship with the land of their Dreaming.

By the 1930s, Aboriginal people began to share information on their similar experiences, and the idea of the "first Australians" as a dispossessed indigenous group was starting to take form. In 1932, William Cooper, an Aboriginal elder from the Cumerooguna Reserve in Southern New South Wales, formed the Australian Aborigines League. The League's goal was to obtain equal rights for Aboriginal people. Cooper organized a petition to King George V., and thousands of people signed his petition (Broome 1982).

Cooper's work influenced other Kooris. In 1937, Bill Ferguson, an Aboriginal shearer, formed the Aborigines Progressive Association in Dubbo, New South Wales. The Association made skillful use of the press, and was able to draw attention to the conditions in which Aboriginal people lived. They challenged the authority of the Aboriginal Protection Board, attempted to organize meetings and develop chapters on Aboriginal reserves throughout NSW. In 1938, The Association observed the 150th anniversary of European occupation by establishing a Day of Mourning and Protest against the years of killing of Aboriginal people, being dispossessed from the land, and subjected to the policies of the Aboriginal Protection Board (Broome 1982).
In 1946, Aboriginal stockmen of the Pilbara region of Western Australia organized a long lasting strike for better wages and conditions.

In 1958, the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) was founded. Two indigenous groups joined forces. The leadership included Faith Bandler, a writer/historian of Islander background, and Kath Walker, one of the best known Aboriginal poets.

The fact that two of the founders were women was not an accident. Traditionally, Aboriginal women had their own secret women's rituals which were respected by men as private, great economic importance, and a vital role in ceremonies related to Aboriginal/land relationships (Poiner 1984). Women have continued to play an important role in Aboriginal affairs. The point can illustrated by a report given at the "Three Nations Conference and Workshop" held in Christchurch, New Zealand, November 16, 1980. The Conference/Workshop was held as a meeting of "Fourth World" peoples of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand on common problems facing Native Canadians, Aboriginal Australians, and Maoris. Maori women at the Conference asked about the role of Aboriginal women in the self-determination movement:

The Aboriginal women were asked to speak of women's rights in Australia. They explained that Aboriginal women do not contest for the same rights as the Aboriginal men but find equality in their roles as women. Aboriginal women have their own ceremonies, relationships with the land, and power within clan
groups. Women are particularly active in urban areas and in many cases surpass the men in skills and organizational authority. They seek to combine the strength of Aboriginal women with the strength of Aboriginal men. [Langton, et al.] 1981:4]

During the 1960s, Aboriginal people continued to walk off cattle stations in the northern part of Australia, but they were beginning to talk of more than wages and working conditions. They were starting to articulate their concerns as being dispossessed from their land.

In 1964-65, Charles Perkins, influenced by the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, organized freedom rides through country towns in northwestern New South Wales. This became well publicized, and Perkins, and others, continued to press for positive government responses to Aboriginal grievances.

In 1970, Aboriginal people in New South Wales organized a protest during the bicentenary celebrations of Cook's arrival in Australia. Aboriginal people came together on the shores of Botany Bay and placed a wreath in the water to remember all the Aboriginal people who had died from the violence of the Europeans and had been dispossessed from the lands of their Dreaming.

Probably the most creative protest was one by Paul Cole and Cecil Patten. In 1976, they landed a small boat at Dover, where they planted the Aboriginal flag and claimed possession of all of England (Lippmann 1981)!
In the 1970s an international movement was founded. The Federal Council of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) had emerged in the 1960s (originally called the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement) as an Aboriginal organization to pressure the Australian labor movement to support Aboriginal workers and land rights issues. However, they began to see that Aboriginal problems of self-determination were similar to those of other minorities

International interest had grown during 1969 and 1970 over the Land Rights Issue, with visits by various black Americans, Māoris and Papua New Guineans and the secretary of the British Anti-Slavery Society. By 1971 financial support was being received by FCAATSI and the National Tribal council (an all-Aboriginal body) from the World Council of Churches. [Lippmann 1981:50]

In 1975, the World Council of Indigenous People was founded, and the first general assembly was hosted by the Nootka on their tribal lands on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Aboriginal people were one of the groups in attendance:

Fifty-two delegates representing indigenous organizations from 19 countries attended. In addition to the numerous Indians from North and South America, there were also indigenous peoples from Australia, New Zealand, Greenland, and Scandinavia. [Bodley 1982:187-188]

There were also individual Aboriginal activists who were establishing international ties. One of the most outspoken activists was Kevin Gilbert (1985) He wanted Aboriginal people to act as a "First Nation." This meant that Aboriginal people should contact individual Third World
governments and anyone else who would listen or be willing to help. Gilbert had become unhappy with the results of working with certain international organizations:

We tried England, Geneva, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, the churches and the World Council of Churches, but to no avail, for even the churches won't part with any pieces of land, which they stole from us and hold a nefarious title to. [Gilbert 1985:37]

Key elements in the self-determination movement were land-rights, the right to maintain one's cultural identity, rights to equal justice, access to meaningful health care, and education that would result in useful skills and knowledge and positive self-identity.

Even the Commonwealth Labor Government has slowed down its actions in regard to land rights; therefore, there is a great deal of frustration within Aboriginal communities. However, land rights still plays an important part in the identity struggles of Aboriginal people. In the case of New South Wales, the State Lands Rights Act, even with all of its problems, has served one useful purpose. It has given a legitimacy to the claim of Aboriginal identity for urban and rural Kooris. The Act acknowledges the fact that dispossessed urban and rural Aboriginal people do have a connection to past Aboriginal inhabitants of New South Wales who were in NSW before the invading Europeans.

Aboriginal people have also continued to get support from other indigenous people. An International Indigenous Conference was held in Sapporo, Nibutani, and Kushiro on
Ainu-Moshiri (Hokkaido), Japan from August 7th to 14th, 1989. The Conference was sponsored by the Ainu, who are the indigenous people of Japan. A set of resolutions was drafted, and Resolution V. dealt with issues in Australia. Support was given to Aboriginal Australians rights to land and self-determination. It is also interesting to note that the Resolution made mention of Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. Several reports have been published on the alarming number of Aboriginal people who die in police stations or Australian prisons (Lippman 1981). It is one of the major issues of the Aboriginal self-determination movement.

Institutions and Structural Relationships

There are institutions within Australia that have provided avenues of involvement for Aboriginal people in indigenous peoples' activities from the 1970s to the present. There are also international organizations, such as the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, that have provided a forum for Aboriginal concerns, and there have also been linkages established between Aboriginal individuals and organizations from indigenous peoples' organizations and individuals in other countries. In Australia, institutional and person links overlap, because a number of Aboriginal individuals have membership in various organizations and government bodies.
The Department of Aboriginal Affairs

As the coordinating Department for the Commonwealth Government on all matters pertaining to Aboriginal people, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs plays an important role in publishing information that deals with Aboriginal self-determination. The Aboriginal members of the Department have understood the importance of establishing a claim to indigenous identity. Self-determination, or even self-management, makes little sense unless it can be justified on some grounds that Aboriginals have a unique status. Aboriginal leaders know full well that "the heat" has to be kept at a high level to get the Commonwealth Government to act on matters relating to self-determination. As a case in point, during the Pope's visit to Australia in November of 1986, he travelled to Alice Springs in the Northern Territory. The Roman Catholic Church has had a rather long interest in Aboriginal affairs. Catholic clergy from the earliest times of European settlement, have supported Aboriginal rights. Archbishop Polding had opposed the legal fiction "terra nullius" that Australia was no one's country. Pope Paul VI spoke to Aboriginal people in 1970. Pope John Paul II's 1986 speech to Aboriginal people was published by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in a pamphlet with a number of pictures of Aboriginal people. One picture shows Aboriginal women with traditional body decorations, and other pictures show a variety of different kinds of
Aboriginal people together. Important references made by the Pope to Aboriginal culture and Aboriginals as Australia's original people are highlighted. The Pope made a special reference to Aboriginal peoples' closeness to the land:

Through your closeness to the land you have touched the sacredness of man's relationship with God, for the land was the proof of a power in life greater than yourselves. You did not spoil the land, use it up, exhaust it, and then walk away from it. You realized that your land was related to the source of life. [Pope John Paul II 1987:3]

The Commonwealth Department of Education

The Department of Education administers the Aboriginal Overseas Study Awards Scheme. This program is designed to allow Aboriginal educators and community people to visit other countries. These visits not only allow Aboriginal people to see what kinds of programs are available to other indigenous people and other cultural minorities, but also more importantly, it allows them to meet and establish ongoing relationships with other indigenous groups. The Department's official intent has been to provide Aboriginal people with the opportunity to see how indigenous peoples' education is handled in other countries. I have talked to three people who have received Overseas Study Awards. They said that there was no political pressure on them to restrict their activity to looking at programs or talking to people that were not representative of the status quo. In
fact, one individual actively sought out information on indigenous peoples' alternative programs.

The National Aboriginal Education Committee

The Committee is made up of State Aboriginal Consultative Group presidents and individuals appointed by the Minister of Education. They are constantly looking at the kinds of educational programs that are available to indigenous people in other parts of the world—e.g. Native Americans in the United States and Canada. This is particularly true of those programs that spotlight the importance of maintaining cultural identity and indigenous control of the programs.

The Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies

Increasingly, the Institute is becoming interested in publishing data which compares Aboriginal Australians to other indigenous groups. The Institute has continued to add Aboriginal researchers to the staff, and they have concentrated, in many cases, on topics that accent the perspective of Aboriginal Australians as indigenous people.

The Aboriginal Legal Service

The Service receives government funds, and it has seen its role as highlighting the problems Aboriginal people face with the Australian Justice System. It has also been concerned with land rights issues. Aboriginal people working for the Service have provided information to international bodies on the kinds of discrimination
Aboriginal people have suffered at the hands of the Australian justice system. Increasingly, Aboriginal members of the Service have called attention to the fact that Aboriginal people should be afforded the same human rights that international organizations, such as the United Nations and the World Council of Churches, have mandated.

State Aboriginal Groups and Individuals

In some cases, certain indigenous people from other parts of the world have visited Australia and met with various Consultative Groups. Or in other cases, Consultative Groups have sought information and contacts with indigenous groups in other countries. As a case in point, I had a chance to observe how the New South Wales Consultative Group went about setting up their study on drug and alcohol abuse among Aboriginal students. They wanted to know what other indigenous people had done about similar problems; they were particularly interested in how Native Canadians and Americans had addressed these issues. The Coordinator of the study made contact with several Native American groups. She obtained the names of organizations and individuals from other Aboriginal people and government officials who had contacts in Canada and the United States.

Individuals also make contacts. This is particularly true for Aboriginal writers and activists. However, it should be noted that it is hard to categorize Aboriginal people by interest. Many Aboriginal individuals in
government, creative arts, community development, sports, and other areas see themselves as having responsibilities for questions of Aboriginal identity and rights as an indigenous group. Aboriginal people in certain fields have more of an opportunity to travel, and some have more money which allows them to do things on their own. As a case in point, I was talking to a community organizer in Sydney, who was of Aboriginal/Malanesian background. We were talking about African-American arts and politics, and he causally mentioned that he had been in Newark, New Jersey. While there, he had talked to a famous African-American writer/activist. They compared notes on their peoples' struggles. I knew several other Aboriginal people who had visited indigenous groups in other countries, and I talked to Aboriginal people who mentioned that they had met indigenous people from Canada and the United States who came to visit Australia.

The idea that Aboriginal identity is an indigenous identity, is constantly reinforced through institutional and individual activity. There are also international and national organizations that provide part of the structure for Aboriginal identity as an indigenous people.

**International Organizations and Indigenous Organizations in Other Countries**

The international organizations may be broken down into two types: First, there are indigenous peoples'
organizations and second, there are international organizations that have supported indigenous rights. I will only deal with those that have had some direct and important involvement with Aboriginal groups. In terms of national indigenous groups, mention must be made of groups in Canada and New Zealand, because they had some impact on Aboriginal organizations.

World Council of Indigenous Peoples

The WCIP was founded in 1975 by a Native Canadian and a New Zealand Maori. The World Council has met in Australia, and Aboriginal leaders have become active in the organization. From an identity standpoint, acceptance and active involvement in an international organization of indigenous people certainly reinforces the legal aspects of the claim to indigenous status. I had a chance to meet the Maori co-founder of the WCIP in New Zealand. He emphasized the fact that indigenous groups have to become visible on an international level.

International Indigenous Peoples' Education Association

This organizational came into being in 1986. It came about as the result of a session held at the 1985 Multicultural and Native Indian Education Conference in Vancouver. Both indigenous and non-indigenous people came to the conclusion that the most successful route to cultural survival and educational success was "in applying traditional values and beliefs to contemporary educational
practices" (Proceedings, World conference: Indigenous Peoples' Education 1988:6). Aboriginal educators were actively involved in the 1986 World Conference on Indigenous People's Education held in Vancouver. This was very significant from the standpoint of identity issues. The Conference established the objective of educating indigenous students about their own culture and the things it shared with other indigenous groups. Since 1986, there have been two other conferences, one held in New Zealand (hosted by Maoris) and one held in Norway (hosted by Sami). I was able to attend the 1986 VanCouver meeting with several Aboriginal educators. In the future, Aboriginal Australians would like to host such a meeting.

International Support Groups

There are several international groups that are important for either general statements about indigenous peoples' rights or actual involvement in activity in Australia, such as the Anti-Slavery Society (listed below in order by year of first important involvement with Aboriginal Australians).

(1) The World Council of Churches The World Council of Churches has published a statement on the rights of indigenous peoples; it conducted its own study of the conditions of Aboriginal Australians. The 1981 Report was not flattering to the Australian government. In fact, the well publicized report criticized the government and
supported the Aboriginal claim as the first Australians who held a spiritual claim on the land of their Dreaming.

(2) The United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations This Working Group was established in 1982. The working Group has produced a draft of a universal declaration on indigenous rights. Among those rights of indigenous peoples are the right to preserve their cultural identity and rights of ownership and possession of lands they have traditionally occupied (Alfredsson 1989).

(3) The Anti-Slavery Society The Anti-Slavery society, based in London, was asked by Aboriginal groups in 1986 to come to Australia and report on the conditions of contemporary Aboriginal people in traditional areas, country towns, and cities. The Report of the Society's findings was written up by Julian Burger, who has written extensively on indigenous peoples and Fourth World issues. The 1988 Report was entitled Aborigines Today: Land and Justice. It found human right abuses, particularly maltreatment of Aboriginal children by the police. The Report supports the Aboriginal claim for being a dispossessed indigenous people:

While the majority society often attempts to divide Aboriginal people into traditional and urbanised, that sense of difference is not accepted by Aborigines themselves. They feel themselves as one people with a common history, culture and sense of identity and shared experience of discrimination and injustice. Their land has been illegally occupied and their nationhood denied (Burger 1988:13).
The Issues

There are a number of issues related to question of Aboriginal people and indigenous identity; however, three have particular importance for this study.

From discussions, reading, and observation in Aboriginal meetings, one topic that surfaced on numerous occasions was the question of minority or Black identity as opposed to an indigenous identity. From the standpoint of fighting Australian racism, there was no doubt that Aboriginal people shared an experience and history with other "people of color" who had been the subject of British or other European forms of colonization. It has already been noted that there were "freedom rides" patterned after those of African Americans. Aboriginal groups invited a Black British sociologist, of West Indian background, to look at the situation of Aboriginal Australians during the 1970s. However, some people have worried about what this would do to land right issues. The anthropologists, the Berndtts (1988) have argued that Aboriginal Australians are best off by accenting their identity as an indigenous people. Aboriginal people share the fate of all victims of racism, but Aboriginal history is that of a "dispossessed people" who just happen to have dark skins. Even earlier, the Aboriginal activist, Bobbi Sykes made the same point. She argued that the real comparison is with other indigenous people: "Parallels can be drawn in virtually all phases of
the take-over of the land by the white man, and the subsequent events almost destroyed the native people and culture in both Australia and America, and to a lesser extent, we can also consider Alaska and South Africa (Sykes 1971:31).

Some Aboriginal leaders are worried about the Government's multicultural policy for the same reason. If Aboriginals are viewed as simply another ethnic group, their justification for land rights and identity as an indigenous group will be challenged. Others feel that multiculturalism may offer the best hope of cultural survival—as long as Aboriginal people are viewed as Aboriginal Australians or the first people of Australia.

Definitions of Indigenous Peoples

As Burger (1987) points out, there has not been universal acceptance of any one term to describe the peoples categorized under the terms "indigenous" or "Fourth World". However, the term "indigenous" seems to be the most generally accepted term by the peoples defined as indigenous, and it has been adopted by the United Nations and other international organizations.

The World Council of Indigenous Peoples has suggested that:

Indigenous people are such population groups as we are, who from old-age times have inhabited the lands where we live, who are aware of having a character of our own, with social traditions and means of expression that are linked to the country inherited from our ancestors, with a language of our own and having
certain essential and unique characteristics which confer upon us the strong conviction of belonging to a people, who have an identity in ourselves and should be thus regarded by others. [WCIP quoted in Burger 1987:8]

The term "Fourth World" has also been used by indigenous peoples themselves as well as some Western writers. In the early 1970's, George Manuel,¹ the founder and leader of the National Indian Brotherhood of Canada, and Michael Posluns wrote a book entitled The Fourth World (1974). They defined Fourth World Peoples as groups who maintained non-modern, sustain-yield relationships to the land where they had traditionally lived and who had been denied their traditional rights by the dominant groups that incorporated them into nation states (Prince 1991). If one sees indigenous minorities and/or tribal peoples as caught in a political and economic power struggle between the First World (Western industrial capitalist nations), the Second World (industrialized socialist countries), and the Third World (former colonies in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Pacific which are politically independent but still have an economic and technological dependence on the Western industrialized nations), then, the Fourth World is a term which describes the situation. It highlights the fact that Fourth World peoples are dispossessed from the land that was

¹Manuel is a Shuswap from British Columbia. Even though he is confined to a wheelchair, he maintains a speaking schedule on Native Canadian and Indigenous People's issues. He spoke at the Indigenous Peoples' Education Conference which I attended in Vancouver in 1986.
once theirs, and it emphasizes the fact that they are victims of structural inequality. However, Burger (1987) strikes a cautionary note: that "Fourth World" is being used by some writers to mean any poor group of people suffering from structural inequality.

Having looked at a number of definitions of indigenous people, Burger (1987:9) has drawn up a set of elements based on overlapping criteria. His points include the facts that indigenous people are: (1) the descendants of people whose original territory has been overcome by conquest, (2) groups who practice subsistence patterns that produce little surplus and have low energy yields, (3) are organized at the level of the community and make decisions on a consensus basis, (4) in possession of all the characteristics of a national minority, such as having a common language, religion, culture, and other identifying factors. They also have a relationship to a particular territory, but they are controlled by a dominant society, (4) peoples who have a different world-view which includes "a custodial and non-materialist attitude to land and natural resources," and they "want to pursue a separate development" from the one followed by the dominant society, and (6) are organized around groups who "consist of individuals who subjectively consider themselves to be indigenous, and are accepted by the group as such." Aboriginal Australians, in general, represent all of the elements of Burger's overlapping
criteria; however, Kooris of New South Wales, and Victoria, do not follow traditional subsistence patterns. Traditional languages are not spoken in most of New South Wales, but English is used in a fashion that gives it a character that is clearly based on an Aboriginal perspective.

**Aboriginal Australians as People of Color**

The term "Black" is used in Australia by Aboriginal people; however, it is not used in exactly the same sense as by whites. Aboriginal people clearly identify themselves as being victims of racism, and they acknowledge the fact that they have this in common with other people of color. They have been influenced by the American Civil Rights Movement and visited by African Americans. In fact, an African American has been the Director of the Aboriginal-Island Dance Company. I have talked to an African American working with Aboriginal groups in Sydney. The Aboriginal organization in Sydney, that reviews and sells Aboriginal material, is called BLACKBOOKS. Aboriginally controlled schools are called Black Schools. However, Aboriginal usage of the term implies all people in Australia who are the victims of white racism. This includes Torres Strait Islanders, Maoris, Tongans, and other South Pacific peoples who now live in Australia. One might say that in this sense "Black" means "Fourth World." All of these groups have in common what subordinate groups have had throughout history: a position where open, organized political activity would
not be successful. According to Scott (1985) even where formal, organized political activity has been undertaken, it has been limited to the middle class and intelligentsia. The ordinary members of subordinate groups pursue "every day forms of resistance" or "weapons of the Weak" (Scott 1985:xvi). These tactics include "foot dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on" (Scott 1985:xvi). Scott sees everyday forms of resistance as having the advantage of requiring no major coordination or planning, the use of informal networks, and the avoidance of direct, symbolic confrontation with authority. This certainly has characterized certain aspects of Aboriginal resistance. Cowlishaw (1988) has looked at race relations in country towns in Western New South Wales. She has argued that, in these areas, Aboriginal people have developed an "oppositional culture":

One of its manifestations is the ironic humour which reinterprets events which threaten to engulf Aborigines' lives. Another part of it is the direct attacks on property. It is also manifested in the black power vocabulary which has been adopted by some of the young people, and in defiant public emphasis on values that are known to upset the dominant whites. [Cowlishaw 1988:282-283]

Oppositional culture and being Black are part of the Aboriginal identity; however, there are other important elements. It has already been mentioned that Aboriginal leaders are concerned with the fact that simply being Black and oppressed does not emphasize the Aboriginal position as
a First Nation who has been wrongly driven from their land by the invading whites. The key term to emphasize is "dispossessed," not "oppressed." Indigenous people seems to symbolize the most important aspect of Aboriginal identity. The groups Aboriginals most clearly identify with are the indigenous peoples of North America. This is true not just of leaders in the urban centers. For example one member of the South Australian Aboriginal Education Sector pointed out to me that she has found that Aboriginal students are most interested in learning more about Native Americans or Indian Peoples. Students feel that they share a similar worldview. I found that Aboriginal community people wanted me to talk about the kinds of things that Native Americans and Canadians were doing in terms of identity issues and self-determination.

A second issue concerns the role of expressive culture in reaffirming Aboriginal identity as an indigenous identity with special ties to the land, sharing, and living as cooperative communities. At the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples' Education, Aboriginal Australians, Native Canadians, Maoris, Inuit, and Sami educators spoke of the importance of the verbal arts, dance and music, painting, and sculpture as being vital to identity and cultural survival. It is through these media that young people, and even adults, will learn what it means to be an indigenous person. As one Native American leader pointed
out, not only would an indigenous identity allow for cultural survival, it might also provide an alternative lifestyle for saving the world. Instead of destroying the earth, its resources and living creatures, people have to learn to get back in tune with nature. Indigenous artists at this same conference expressed the same view that their role was to provide images of indigenous identity through their art. This is also what many Aboriginal artists have said. They were talking about art that represents subjects such as harmony with nature and cooperation rather than competetion.

The Special Issue of Land Rights

The question of land rights plays a vital role in the identity quest of indigenous people. In every statement of indigenous peoples' identity, there is something to do with relationships to the land. At the 1987 World Council of Indigenous Peoples' Education Conference in Vancouver, Canada, I heard indigenous people from Australia and North America express their feelings about the importance of land rights in relationship to identity issues. Land was not viewed in the sense of land as a resource to be exploited, but it was viewed as part of one's identity. It meant a spiritual oneness with the earth.

In the case of traditional Aboriginal people this has certainly been the case. Local group identity and associations with the land were interconnected. There were
two important kinds of associations. One was the group or clan's "estate." This was traditionally recognized as one's country or Dreaming place. The second area was the "range" which was normally used for foraging and hunting. The members of the local group were primarily related as a clan. Clans had their own totems or representative forms of the Creative Beings of the Dreaming who gave each area its unique heritage. The range was shared with other local descent groups or clans (Berndt and Berndt 1988).

The estates or Dreaming places of the local groups were tied together by Dreaming paths. The Creative Beings may have performed a certain rite at each Dreaming place or they may simply have rested at a particular spot. In this sense, the landscape was part of a cognitive map which was individualized for each Aboriginal person. This was further complicated by the fact that rituals had to be performed to maintain the structure of the world. One particular clan or group may "own" a particular ritual or aspect of it, but other groups would have to "perform" it. Therefore, smaller social groups were tied to larger groups in an interlocking network (Berndt and Berndt 1988).

In the land rights cases in Australia, the relationship between land and identity keeps coming up where traditional or semi-traditional groups are trying to regain control of their land. One of the problems has been that this world view is totally foreign to the European view of
relationships with land. For Europeans, land ownership means exploiting the resources of the land or using it in some economic sense.

In Australian states where most Aboriginal people have been removed from their land, land rights laws pertain not just to land claims, but also the protection of Aboriginal sites of importance. Aboriginal people, and their supporters, make the case again and again, that there are special ties to the land that go beyond just land as something to be exploited. Critics are often heard saying "They won't stop till all of Australia is a sacred site"! Most Aboriginal groups realize that the Australian Commonwealth, and certainly some states, will never go that far, but Aboriginal people seem to be saying that "We do have special rights as people who never gave up our land."

While the situation has not been resolved, to date, the Australian government has probably looked at land rights for indigenous people in a more serious light than any other Western government. Land has been given back in Canada and the United States, but neither government has spent much time on developing a comprehensive land rights position.

New South Wales is a good example of what has been done in a state where most Aboriginal people have been dispossessed from their land for some time. The NSW Land Rights Act of 1983 created a three-tiered structure of local land councils, regional land councils, and State Aboriginal
Land Council. Land formerly held under the Aboriginal Land Trust was transferred to Aboriginal Lands Councils. There have been a number of complaints about the Act. From an Aboriginal perspective, there is simply not much land open to be claimed by Aboriginal people. The former Land Trust consisted of 171 square kilometers. This is not very impressive for a state that is approximately 500 miles across and with a north-south coast line of a thousand miles. New South Wales has the second largest Aboriginal population in Australia. Crown lands may be claimed if they are not lawfully used, occupied, or needed. As one local lands council president pointed out "when you look at what is left from being used, occupied, or needed, it doesn't leave much." However, the Act does provide for some revenue for Aboriginal Land Councils to buy land on the open market:

The Act also provides for payment into a fund of 7.5 per cent of gross State Land Tax revenue annually up to 1998 inclusive. Half of this fund is set aside as capital for future years, with the balance meeting the costs of Land Council administration and land purchases. [Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1988:11]

I have pointed out that the New South Wales Land Rights Act has not been as strong as many Aboriginal people had hoped it would be based on the evidence came out of the testimony and suggestions made to the NSW government. Aboriginal people view land rights in relationship to self-determination, and they do not feel the Act provides for this:
The Land Rights Act does not encourage the development of self-governing Aboriginal communities on their own land, although local land councils could develop health and education as well as housing services if funding were adequate. The intention of the Act, however, is that land councils should be organisations to hold title to land and to be responsible for developing it, but neither they nor any other Aboriginal organisations are in a position to develop into broader governmental-type organisations. In Canada, by contrast, Indian tribal governments often have the status of local government councils in respect of their reservations. [Wilkie 1985:158]

From an identity standpoint, there continues to be a difference of world view. Non-Aboriginal people see land rights as solving the "Aboriginal problem" in an economic sense, but Aboriginal people see land in a much broader perspective:

The 'solution' is perceived to be land: but land as an economic base only, and not as a cultural asset and a social necessity. The 'problem' is seen to be an economic one, and the 'solution' posed is an economic one. Yet the economic aspect of land rights is only one of many aspects and may even be counter-productive if isolated from the social and cultural aspects. [Wilkie 1985:158])

The 1988 Anti-Slavery Society Report on the present state of Aboriginal demands for land and justice makes a similar observation about the importance of land from the Aboriginal perspective:

The right to land is the most clearly articulated demand of the Aboriginal people. There is no disagreement about the primacy of land as an economic base and as a spiritual homeland. Land is a vital starting point for the revitalisation of Aboriginal culture; it is a symbol of the struggle for Aboriginal dignity. [Burger 1988:33]

It can be argued that the main difficulty in solving land rights questions relates to world view: how Aboriginal
and non-Aboriginal people view nature and how humans interact and use nature. It is what Godelier (1986:1) has called the "mental and material:"

The fact is this: human beings, in contrast to other social animals, do not just live in society, they produce society in order to live. In the course of their existence, they invent new ways of thinking and of acting—both upon themselves and upon the nature which surrounds them. They therefore produce culture and create history (or History).

Aboriginal people see themselves as part of nature, but this is a nature they have created through their Dreaming. Natural forms and Dreaming creations are both part of a cognitive map that sees both worlds as being one in-the-same. The non-Aboriginal view of nature is no less mental. It is just that nature is made up of things to be used. Title and rights to nature are based on a particular type of use: natural resources are extracted, the land is cleared for planting, or the land is to be used for grazing cattle or sheep. Being on the land and being part of it are not considered to be sufficient for ownership.

Even though the Commonwealth Government and the New South Wales government have recognized an Aboriginal claim to land or compensation for land taken, it is a conflict that will not be easily resolved. Maddock (1983:195) has argued that the issues are viewed differently at different times; therefore, government policies on Aboriginal land rights need to be reviewed on a continuing basis:

Moreover, showing that adaptation to Aboriginal demands is feasible leaves unresolved the area and the
locality of land to which Aborigines should have special rights. In the nature of the case this question cannot be finally answered. Each generation will give answers of its own as it struggles with an issue that is both permanent and insoluble.

However, some non-Aboriginal Australians do not see why the State should give "special favors" to Aboriginals. They do not accept the fact that present-day Kooris represent a dispossessed indigenous people.

Analysis

While no one can completely predict the future for indigenous people in terms of cultural survival and land rights, there has been a remarkable flurry of activity in the last fifteen years. Both Aboriginal organizations and urban/rural groups have developed contacts with other indigenous organizations and groups in other countries. They have seen the potential of using international bodies such as the United Nations. Of course the United Nations does not have power to enforce decisions on anything unless the super powers find it convenient. But the UN and other international bodies can generate information and attempt to highlight issues. Australia has certainly been concerned about bad public press. Public opinion also helps to reinforce identity claims.

On another level, Aboriginal Australians, and other indigenous people have seen the need to maintain and restructure their identity through the abilities of their artists, musicians, writers, educators, and historians.
They have to create a feeling of oneness on one level, and a respect for diversity on another to form a sense of local community. Both have to come together. Expressive culture probably has the greatest potential for doing this. It may also play a role in showing outsiders that many indigenous people may have a changing culture, but it is one based on the past. They have to show a continuity with the past, at least morally or philosophically, to justify an identity as First Nations, etc.

The above tasks will not be easy. Very few indigenous groups, or any other for that matter, are ever in complete agreement over all issues. Aboriginal Australians certainly are not; however, I think increasing numbers of Aboriginal leaders are seeing that they have to mold an identity that expresses those things that Aboriginal people feel are most important. There are things that one must accept to be considered a member of an indigenous group, to be an Aboriginal Australian, and things that make one a member of one's local Aboriginal community.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSIONS

The present study has raised several important issues:
(1) What happens to indigenous peoples' cultural identity after years of change and forced adaption to Western industrial culture? (2) What role do non-indigenous people, such as anthropologists, play in the reconstruction and/or maintenance of the indigenous group's cultural identity?

The first question centers around the adaptive dimensions of the indigenous culture. Too often it is assumed that the Western impact is so great that an indigenous culture has no staying power. Once people are moved from their traditional settings into rural or urban environments, the old cultural patterns no longer have any value. Or, it is thought that once traditional peoples start using Western technology, the traditional culture disappears. There is no question that Western technology and forced assimilation by the dominant group do destroy many aspects of the traditional culture. However, as Spicer (1971) has pointed out, some cultural systems are persistent over time. Even though the traditional culture may have
drastically changed, there is an evolving cultural identity with at least some recognized ties to the group's past cultural history and a continuing sense of identity.

Koori Culture in New South Wales as a Persistent Cultural System

The case study presented here has shown that the Aboriginal cultural identity of Kooris in New South Wales has been evolving, or being reconstructed, in line with Aboriginal identity in other parts of Australia. The reasons for this are related to the fact that some key elements of traditional Aboriginal culture have not been destroyed. They have served as an historical base for the evolving or reconstructed identity. It has also been assumed that, following Schwartz's (1980) model of personality as the distributive locus of culture, there will be continuity and diversity within any cultural model. Each individual, or group, has a unique history and set of experiences. Where these experiences cross-sect is where one finds the social structure of commonality, and it is at these intersects that the group identity is formed. The addition of Epstein's (1978) concepts of "intimate culture" and "public culture" allows us to examine the social structure of commonality in finer detail. We find that it is made up of experiences and knowledge related to both the public and intimate sphere. It is the intimate sphere where important cultural elements may be carried on from one
generation to the next: therefore, "cultural education" through enculturation processes continues to provide elements of the group's world view. Important lessons on such group values as sharing and cooperation, importance of community and family, and elements of group history are continued. This occurs, even though much of the public culture, such as public rituals, may be discontinued, or continued in isolation as ritual without real ties to everyday behavior. The elements of cultural identity carried by the intimate culture are further strengthened by the fact that expressive culture is often used as a vehicle for passing on certain aspects of identity. By expressive culture, we mean areas such as music, folktales, the work of indigenous writers, and the plastic arts. Expressive culture provides powerful and vivid examples of what the group values. It reminds the individual of her/his ties to the group. The point is that as long as intimate culture is expressed, the group identity will persist.

Koori Intimate Culture, Social Structure of Commonality, and Identity

This case study has shown that Kooris have maintained their intimate culture in a variety of environments including country towns and urban areas. It has been further strengthened by the fact that elements of Aboriginal expressive culture have been kept alive. Contemporary Aboriginal writers, artists, and musicians have used
elements of their own personal Aboriginal experience and elements from traditional Aboriginal culture in their work. They have also felt that they have a responsibility for "keeping the culture alive." Their own personal experiences include growing up on reserves, in semi-traditional communities, country towns, and urban areas. These experiences cross-cut the experiences of other Koori people in New South Wales, and these experiences are similar to those of Aboriginal people in other areas of Australia.

This study also illustrates the importance of formal education as an arena for identity formation. Aboriginal people have seen the need for Western education in contemporary Australia. Western education provides certain skills that allow one to survive. However, it has also become clear to Aboriginal people that the setting for formal schooling can be a threat to those things valued by the indigenous group. They argue that they must have control of the educational setting so that it reinforces traditional values rather than challenges, or belittles them. Aboriginal people have been advocating for self-determination in education as a way of protecting their cultural identity. They need some control over educational policy, including the materials found in the curriculum. One way of doing this is to have elements of Aboriginal expressive culture as part of the school curriculum. It
would seem that this would be a positive factor in helping Kooris establish their identity as Aboriginal Australians.

The multicultural policy of the Commonwealth Government and state governments, such as New South Wales, would appear to provide a climate where Aboriginal identity claims could be developed. In actual fact, the potential advantages of the multicultural policy remain to be demonstrated. Will Aboriginal Australians loose their claim to special status as the indigenous people of Australia? Will they simply become a hidden or forgotten minority among a variety of ethnic groups? Or, on the other hand, will the multicultural policy provide a chance to show that Aboriginal identity is as important as any other cultural identity in Australia and deserves equal respect? As the Koori writer Kevin Gilbert (1985) has pointed out, even when a national Labor government was elected, which was committed to Aboriginal self-determination, little changed. For the most part, the bureaucracy on the national, state, and local level was still wedded to either a very negative view of Aboriginal people or one that did not consider Aboriginal people to be qualified to control or direct programs affecting Aboriginal people. To add insult to injury, when Labor lost control of the national government things began to move backward in terms of Aboriginal self-determination. When Labor came to power again during the 1980s, the new Prime Minister was a Labor politician who was not as
sensitive to the problems of Aboriginal people. So the struggle to maintain and reconstruct an Aboriginal cultural identity throughout Australia continues.

If Kooris and other Aboriginal Australians are successful in gaining control of educational programs that affect them, they have a chance to use formal Western education as a means of fostering a positive group identity. However, this depends on the control of both curriculum and educational environments. Higher education continues to be the most formidable challenge.

The Role of Anthropologists in Identity Reconstruction

Anthropologists have been directly involved in the process of defining Aboriginal identity. The general public and the government have looked to anthropologists as experts on Aboriginal identity. Anthropologists have played a role in Aboriginal land rights cases, and in general, they have been supportive of traditional or semi-traditional Aboriginal people. However, when it comes to viewing Aboriginal peoples of southeastern Australia, they have not been as helpful to rural and urban Aboriginal groups. For example, Kooris of New South Wales and Victoria have not been of that much interest to anthropologists. In fact, there has been a debate between anthropologists as to whether there is (a) a pan-Aboriginal identity, and (b) whether rural and urban Aboriginal people can maintain any kind of Aboriginal identity.
The process of developing a pan-Aboriginal identity has been referred to as "ethnogenesis" by Jones and Hill-Burnett (1982:214-246). They define ethnogenesis as a political process whereby a common culture is constructed out of an environment of cultural diversity. They argue that this process has been retarded in Australia because of a tension which results from a lack of continuity between an elite group of politically motivated leaders and the rest of a culturally diverse Aboriginal population in traditional areas, country towns, reserves, and cities. Since the time when the article was first published, Aboriginal leaders and organizations have actively sought to keep lines of communication open between various groups.

Even though Sansom (1982) noted that there was an Aboriginal commonality, he also felt that these same commonalities were built on a narrow range of persons who were personally known and could be counted on. This caused individuals to maintain boundaries between groups, and as a result, he felt it impeded the development of a pan-Aboriginal identity movement. I have talked to several Aboriginal leaders about the potential barriers between groups; however, they are not convinced that one has to chose between a local identity and a wider Aboriginal identity. In her work with the Lumbee, Blau (1980) found that local factions have a positive impact. They constantly force regional or national leaders to involve local
communities, if they want their support.

The question of the potential for a pan-Aboriginal identity was intensely debated as a result of an article in the April 1984 issue of *Mankind*. The journal published an article by S.J. Thiele (1984) entitled "Anti-intellectualism and the 'Aboriginal Problem:' Collin Tatz and the 'Self-Determination' Approach" (Thiele 14:165-178). Thiele was questioning the validity of advocate social science as practiced by Tatz (a political scientist who actively works with Aboriginal groups and anthropologists involved in the development of mechanisms and programs that will give Aboriginal people more control over their affairs). In the process of attacking Tatz, Thiele raised the question of whether a pan-Aboriginal identity exists. *Mankind* published a furious reply by Tatz (1984) in December. The editorial staff of *Mankind* felt that the debate had taken on enough significance to ask a number of anthropologists, who specialized in Aboriginal studies, to comment on the views expressed by Thiele and Tatz. In the April 1985 issue, five anthropologists responded in "On the Notion of Aboriginality: A Discussion" (Anderson 15:41-55). The anthropologists were Christopher Anderson, Ian Keen, Tim Rowse, J.R. Von Sturmer, and Kenneth Maddock. Thiele and Tatz also replied to the above five commentators at the end of the article. Most of the authors pointed out that they felt they should restrict their responses to the Thiele
article and Tatz's response. Tatz's view was that "Aboriginality" was an accurate description of an Aboriginal reality that is at least emerging. He also felt that how Aboriginality is defined should be left to Aboriginal people. For his part, Thiele (1985:54) maintained that he was not talking about Aboriginality but instead—Tatz's theoretical stance. Of the five commentators, Rowse (1985:45) argued that Aboriginality has had value in the mobilization of Aboriginal people as a group with some common identity. Tatz (1985:51) in his reply wondered why his notion of Aboriginality had upset some social scientist, but not any of the leading Aboriginal articulators of Aboriginal identity. Anderson (1985:42) probably made the most useful commentary:

the more important task to undertake is not merely to state whether 'Aboriginality' in any real sense exists, but rather to account for the fact that people think it does, argue that it does and act as though it does. . . . Furthermore, to assert the existence of 'Aboriginality' is not to assume that Aborigines form a wholly coherent, unified body, nor is it to presume the impetus or source for such identity or aspects thereof.

A number of Aboriginal activists have not viewed the above kind of academic debate as having positive consequences for Aboriginal people. I have talked to several Aboriginal leaders who see this type of debate as providing excuses for government officials and politicians to delay self-determination for Aboriginal people in southeastern Australia.
It seems that anthropologists also realize that academic debates can be used as evidence for starting or stopping government commitments to Aboriginal self-determination; however, the anthropologist has to maintain a commitment to objectively reporting research findings. I think this is where the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies has played an important role. It has served as a sounding board for Aboriginal concerns and a source for researchers to explain their work and responsibilities. I have discussed this problem with one social scientist who is associated with the Institute. He feels that, for the most part, that the Institute and Aboriginal communities have both benefitted.

A second issue is very important in Southeastern Australia. This involves the question of Aboriginal identity among urban and rural non-traditional Aboriginal people. Now more anthropologists are redirecting their research strategies toward looking at cultural identity in rural and urban Aboriginal communities (Keen 1988). I think this has been healthy both for anthropology and for Aboriginal people. It has been healthy for anthropology, because anthropologists have been forced to confront their own theoretical assumptions about culture and culture change. It has forced, at least in Australia, anthropologists to accept the fact that in the modern world all societies are basically plural and have been touched to
some extent by Western industrial culture. There really are no completely isolated tribal cultures in the world, but there are a variety of changing tribal cultures that are trying to survive as culturally distinct peoples in an evolving world order dominated by industrial societies (Maybury-Lewis 1984). Culture continues to be our species' most important adaptive strategy; therefore, it would seem that the cultural anthropologist's role in looking at the way human groups continue to meet the challenges of changing environments through cultural adaptations is an important area of research.

From the point of view of Aboriginal Australians, they are not afraid of what anthropologists might find out. They simply want anthropologists to frame their questions in ways that help Aboriginal people deal with matters of both cultural and economic survival. Most Aboriginal leaders realize that anthropologists may discover things that could impede Aboriginal survival, but they also realize that these are issues that must be faced. Therefore, there can be a positive working relationship. Both groups may have to be willing to renegotiate the arrangements, but the process of conflict resolution, or group dynamics, has always involved some sort of compromise.

Areas for Future Research

Based on the conclusions of the present study, there are several important directions future research might take:
A study of a group of Aboriginal writers, artists, dramatists, actors, and musicians who have actively contributed material for the Aboriginal studies curriculum. It is clear that one of the major ways of using schools as environments for the development of positive Aboriginal identities—is using Aboriginal expressive culture. In southeastern Australia, there are a number of Aboriginal individuals, involved in various aspects of expressive culture, who have been actively involved in Aboriginal studies. I already know some of these individuals, and it would be valuable to observe and participate in a more direct way in their activities. The role of expressive culture in the maintenance and restructuring of Aboriginal identity cannot be over emphasized.

A second area of future research would be a study that centered on the Far North Coast of New South Wales. It is this area where there is more of traditional culture left to use as a base for the restructuring of Aboriginal identity. Recently, Aboriginal groups on the Far North Coast have been actively trying to develop cultural centers, etc. This would be an ideal area for a more detailed case study of how various Aboriginal groups of a particular region have gone about the task of maintaining and reconstructing Aboriginal identity. The fact that I have worked for the State Aboriginal Education Consultative Group would provide a possible recommendation and introduction to community groups
in the region. I already know some of the people who were active in the State Consultative Group.

A third possibility involves working with a local lands council president. The local land councils have an important role to play in educating younger Aboriginal people about their cultural identity. It has been noted that land rights, and relationships to the land, are vital components of Aboriginal identity. Lands councils are linked from the local level to regional councils which in turn are associated with the State Land Council in New South Wales.

Finally, I was given an invitation to come back to the new Aboriginal school in South Australia, that I discussed in some detail in Chapter Three. This school had just started when I was in Australia. It has now been in operation for several years; therefore, it would be possible to critically evaluate its success in providing a positive environment for urban Aboriginal students to maintain their Aboriginal identity and learn Western knowledge—needed to survive in contemporary Australian Society.

Cultural identity and survival activity has continued throughout Australia. Kooris, in New South Wales and Victoria, have been active participants in this activity, and it appears that they will continue to insist on their identity as Aboriginal Australians in Australia's plural society.
APPENDIX
I would like to take this opportunity to introduce Mr Dale Haxey, a visiting American academic who is in Australia to undertake a study in Aboriginal education.

Mr Haxey's study proposal relates to the concepts of Black Alternative Education, cultural survival, identity and change in contemporary Aboriginal society.

It is paternly obvious that existing educational services have and will continue to fail Aborigines and there is a degree of urgency involved with the need to investigate and develop possible alternatives which may serve as options to Aborigines and our attempts to provide meaningful educational programs and improve outcomes for Aboriginal students.

As Mr Haxey says in his study proposal, "Increasingly, Indigenous peoples throughout the world are taking an active stance towards self-determinations. Australian Aborigines, Inuits, Native Americans, Indian People and other Indigenous groups have been formulating their own educational objectives for meaningful educational programs. Clearly, we need a number of case studies for cross-cultural comparison of how successful present day programs in various parts of the world can provide examples for use in a number of different societies".

Mr Haxey's study is one that potentially could have major implications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' education in this country, and I would ask that you or your organisation assist in whatever manner you are able to in ensuring the success of this study.

I would be pleased to respond to any further queries or provide additional information upon request.

I strongly support Mr Haxey's Study.

R V Morgan
President
NSW NEED
APPENDIX B

Aboriginal Education Newsletter

N.S.W. ABORIGINAL EDUCATION CONSULTATIVE GROUP

PEMULWY

No 9

PO BOX R 213
ROYAL EXCHANGE
2000 NSW.

Telephone: (02) 240 8810
240 6277

NEWSLETTER
MARCH 1987

"Appropriate education will assist in providing young, active, developing minds, Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal with a basis from which to grow cultural awareness, understanding and respect."

PEMULWY pronounced: "Pam-ool-we."

The newsletter has been called PEMULWY in honour of one of the first Aboriginal people known to have received the freedom of Australia.

Pemulwy and his son, Dullaway, were both outlawed while hunting rabbits to the native for 20 years after 1805. They led a band of guerrilla warfare right around the area of modern Sydney and were pacific the first Aboriginal people to resist attacks on their culture and identity.
APPENDIX B

To Pemulwy:

"Why does the Government think it
 can outsmart us any longer?
 People in so called Power are
 only guarding their positions as
 tenously as you or I ... and we
 supposedly put them in those
 positions of power,... We can do
 something about it. Even if you're
 not registered to vote ... this is
 a so called Democratic country;
 and well ... Koories were here first.
 We have a right to speak out...
 clearly and strongly ... encourage our
 kids to do the same when faced with
 setbacks in their daily lives... at
 school and on the streets...
 in the words of one of our poets:
 Walk tall my child ... walk proud...
 Our ancestors are with us still
 in the very Earth and air around us
 never forgetting us, reminding us of
 our Heritage, our Culture, our Roots.
 As we near the Bicentennial ... white
 Australia's 200th Birthday party...
 let us reflect on our strength and
 our Race's courage ... We Have Survived
 and will continue to move forward into
 a brighter and more positive Future.
 Don't let these Fat Cats out there get
 us down ... stand together and stand proud.
 Let us Celebrate , together as one
 Aboriginal Nation, as rich and as varied
 as we are, celebrating our struggle for
 survival ... and our cultural roots.
 No one can take away from us.

 Think about this, my friends, as 1988
 moves in and rolls on ...
 The Future belongs to all of us.

 A Proud Koori Woman...
 Sydney.

 LAND IS LIFE
 SUPPORT ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS
PLEASE NOTE

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237-248, Appendix C - Example of Aboriginal Studies Material

University Microfilms International
APPENDIX D

MAP OF STUDY AREA

The cities, towns, and other places indicated on the map are the primary places I visited while conducting my research. Wollongong was my home base from July 1986 through the first part of December 1986. The Sydney area served as my home base from the latter part of December, 1986 through May 1987 when I left Australia.
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