Chapter 4
Immigration, Multiculturalism and the Changing Face of Australia

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I was born in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne Australia – sometimes known as the green belt, other times the white belt. By the time I was old enough to develop some kind of memorable social understanding I recall hearing that Greeks or Italians were sometimes referred to as Wogs. We would watch Acropolis Now, an Australian sitcom created by the writers of a hit stage show Wogs out of Work. Little did I know at the time that the term 'Wog' historically referred to an illness, insects or grubs and that it had been a derogatory label applied to Australian immigrants from Southern and South-Eastern Europe, a term that had been successfully reclaimed and was now owned by the very communities that it once targeted.

Some years before watching Acropolis Now, I vaguely recall visiting a Vietnamese refugee centre in Nunawading Victoria. We met a family whom we had been matched with to help them adjust to Australian culture. I remember they were all sick at the time from the boat trip to Australia. Not long after, the term 'Asian Invasion' became a popularised response to immigration from South East Asia. In 1996 Pauline Hanson pushed this agenda further claiming we were being 'swamped by Asians'. Apparently, to Hanson, multiculturalism was a failed ideology and we could never really live with other races in peace and harmony. Now in the twenty-first century as Australia builds stronger economic links to Asia, Asian Australians are considered no less Australian than anyone else and the Pauline Hanson's of this world have re-targeted their concerns onto Muslims and refugees from the Horn of Africa.

Over the past 200 years Australia has moved from its early immigration of white European settlers to incorporate new waves of immigrant groups (see http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/federation/ for historical immigration trends; see also Chap. 8, Pederson, Fozdar and Kenny in this volume). Each one has created a splash, a period of adjustment. But each one has finally found a way to the

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very interior of Australian society and Australian culture. Once limited to the humble meat pie or fish and chips, Australian fusion cooking is now world-renowned. Take-away generally consists of pizza, souvlaki and Thai or Indian curries, and there's nothing quite like the flavoursome chili goodness of a steaming bowl of Vietnamese soup noodles. Australia is now the destination of choice, housing some of the most liveable cities in the world and with immigration continuing to fuel strong cultural and economic growth.

The changing face of Australia is both a personal experience for many as well as an object of social and political contestation. As Australia opens its boarders to an increasingly diverse population, this also requires that Australians themselves open their minds to include new and diverse lifestyles, foods, cultural traditions and values. Barriers to change not only exist within policy, but also within individual responses to change. In this chapter I focus on both the micro and macro level of analysis to explore the various factors that have facilitated as well as inhibited the integration and acculturation of various immigrant groups to Australia's shores.

One factor on which I focus is how the Australian identity is understood. Identity is a multifaceted term and one which may be understood from many different perspectives (see Chap. 6, Louis, Barlow and Greenaway in this volume). I restrict my analysis of identity to how a particular social category is represented cognitively. That is, when someone says 'I am Australian' what do they think Australian means and who does it include?

I review research that addresses these issues both from the perspective of immigrant groups themselves as well as from that of the host culture, providing for reflection on future directions for multiculturalism within Australia. First, I reflect on the question of who is Australian, highlighting different ways that this identity is defined, restricted and extended. Second, I review research on immigration and acculturation reflecting on the process of becoming Australian and its implications for multiculturalism. Third, with the aim of drawing attention to the delicate balance needed to build a functioning multiculturalism, I review research that highlights when perceived differences between groups may become problematic. Fourth, I consider the opposite problem, when similarities are emphasised at the expense of distinctiveness. Fifth, I review work on intergroup contact, highlighting what factors might allow different groups to 'meet in the middle'. Finally, I outline what appear to be the necessary components for a functioning multiculturalism and how these apply to the Australian context. In doing so I also give reasons why I believe Australia is in a unique position to become an example of multiculturalism to the rest of the world, and why it is important to respect and understand the fragility of this position.

4.1 Who Is Australian?

The phrase 'spot the Aussie' has been regularly used within Australia to describe areas of high ethnic diversity, and perhaps more accurately, low-white representation. One does not need to refer to the White Australia policy (a policy lasting from 1901

to 1973 restricting 'non-white' immigration to Australia) to know that Australian=White. A recent study by Sibley and Barlow (2009) highlights that implicit within many Australians' thinking is the association between Australian and White, compared to a probably more accurate association of Australian and Aboriginal. As part of this study the same implicit associations were also tested in New Zealand, but the effect was not replicated. This is indicative of better cultural representation of Māori peoples within New Zealand society and that being a New Zealander and non-white is an easier feat.

The commonly held belief that White Europeans are truly defining of the Australian identity highlights two important points. First, had the early White European settlers formed better relations with Indigenous Australians, the Australian=White association would probably be weaker, allowing for greater diversity under the banner of what it means to be Australian. Arguably, this is an illustration of how Australia's treatment of its Indigenous peoples carries over into its problems accommodating new immigrants today (see also Chap. 3, Mellor, and Chap. 13, Leask and Philpot in this volume). Second, the fact that we can easily associate White Australians with their European Heritage underscores the point that Australia is still a very young nation-state. There are few Australians today (Indigenous peoples aside) who have totally lost touch with their 'other' cultural heritages. Even fourth and fifth generations can still easily trace their family tree back to other ethnic roots. This sets Australia apart from nations which are defined by long genetic and cultural heritages, such as, for example, England, Spain or China.

Power-elites may attempt to draw boundaries around any nation-state in terms of who is truly representative; however, when there are few genetic or cultural foundations on which to stake exclusivist claims, such enterprises are all the more fragile. Even so, in the case of young nation-states such as Australia, there are many factors that may lead to more restrictive understandings. One factor is the extent to which the psychological representation of the nation-state – the national identity – is racialised. When particular groups are held up as exemplars of the Australian identity it has the effect of likening it to notions of race. Another factor is the extent to which the national identity is represented by those in power as open to a broad spectrum of values and beliefs. This is, even when a national identity is not thought of like a race, it may still be constructed in ways that exclude particular values, beliefs or practices. I briefly outline how these concerns relate to the Australian identity below.

One prominent factor that promotes the Australian=White association and therefore acts to racialise the Australian identity is the current Australian flag. This symbol acts as a reminder that to be Australian one must have an affiliation with Great Britain. Of course this is true for the White European settlers who arrived from those very shores, but what of the Italian and Greek and post World War 11 diverse European refugee population who came to Australia or families from Vietnam, Malaysia and more recently Somali and Ethiopia. They don't necessarily identify with Britain but *do* identify themselves as Australian. The inclusion of the union jack on the Australian flag suggests that Australians who can trace their family origins back to Britain are the 'original Australians'.

Research within psychology demonstrates that people regularly view the differences between races in the same way that they view the difference between species (Hirschfeld, 1996; Rothbart & Taylor, 1992). That is one ethnic group may be seen as different from another ethnic group in the same way that tigers are different from lions. This thinking is largely erroneous as the mappings between genetic clusters and racial identities are far from accurate. However, people *do* tend to think about race in these ways and when they do differences between races are seen as deep, meaningful and generally unchanging. Explicitly linking Australia to its British heritage has the effect of racialising the Australian identity – underpinning the belief that Australian=White. The 'Cronulla Riots' is an illustration of the racialisation of the Australian identity. In 2005 hoards of young white Australians bearing the national flag and a swag of racially motivated placards descended on Cronulla beach front physically harassing anyone who looked to be of 'Middle Eastern appearance' (Poynting, Noble, & Tabar, 2001). Although this conflict originated between groups of young Lebanese Australians and young White Australians, the fact that the latter could claim the Australian identity as their own highlights that for some Australian=White is not only an association but a firmly held belief. No doubt this demonstration not only alienated those of Lebanese heritage, but all other non-White Australians also.

The notion that real Australians are white is not only a common implicit association, an explicitly held belief of some people, but has also been explicitly endorsed by government. The White Australia Policy, which was not fully eradicated until 1973, made it very clear who 'fit' into Australia and what kind of Australia was desirable. However, there are few who would explicitly or publically endorse such beliefs in Australia today. In truth the Australian identity cannot be easily associated with one particular ethnic group or another. That is to say that many Australians, even those who strongly identify as Australian, still may see their ethnicity as something quite separate. In my own research I often ask people to identify their ethnic or cultural identities. Although many will say Australian, many also make reference to identities such as Anglo-Saxon, White European, Italian, Greek, Polish, Chinese, Malay or Indonesian, even when they have lived in Australia all their life. Like other new world identities such as those of Canada or New Zealand, the Australian identity is not explicitly thought about like an ethnicity, and rather it is more easily defined by recent migration trends. That is, people identify as Australian but see this identity as incorporating their own ethnic backgrounds. This understanding has important implications for immigration and acculturation of new immigrants to Australia.

As noted, another way that people may attempt to restrict the inclusiveness of a particular national identity is by making claims about the kinds of beliefs, values and practices that are considered outside the scope of what it means to be a member of that identity. The term 'un-Australian' has been used to define values, beliefs or ways of life that do not 'fit' within the scope of what it means to be Australian. In many cases this term is employed when describing values or behaviours that are inconsistent with characteristically Australian notions of fairness and egalitarianism. In these instances it is possible to see that prohibitions may sometimes be employed in order to protect positive social values. However, the term has also been

employed in ways that restrict beliefs and practices that have little real implication for social harmony. One particular example is the recent controversy over whether the Burqa should be banned. The term 'un-Australian' has been used to characterise the practice of wearing a Burqa, pitting this particular cultural practice against what it is to be 'Australian'. In such cases, whether or not society decides for or against the banning of the Burqa, individuals who choose this particular way of life are excluded from feeling attached to the Australian identity.

Value distinctions that are highlighted as distinguishing between people who belong in Australia and those who don't are largely arbitrary and driven more by threat or prejudice than true value concerns. Choosing to wear a Burqa has little to do with characteristic Australian values, and there are many other people whose values many may disagree with, yet their 'Australianness' is not brought into disrepute. Values that are highlighted as incompatible with the 'Australian way of life' tend to be characterised in the same ways as the physical differences that define race. People see these kinds of values as natural or central to humanity, making value conflicts appear irresolvable and value tradeoffs inconceivable (Bain, Kashima, & Haslam, 2006). In cases such as these, people may see the values of certain groups as irreconcilable with the Australian way of life and thus those individuals as outside the scope of the Australian identity.

The question of who is Australian has changed significantly over the span of Australia's short history. At times this has been restricted on grounds of skin colour (e.g. White Australia Policy), other times on grounds of values and beliefs (e.g. 'un-Australian'). As we argue above, these restrictions have often represented palpable barriers to diversification, promoting a white, Christian and middle class characterisation of the prototypical Australian. Yet, even in view of these barriers, Australia has still managed to incorporate ethnically, culturally and ideologically distinct groups under the banner of 'Australian'. Although far from perfect, this diversification has occurred with little social conflict and a relative level of social harmony. In this way Australia is an example of a new world nation-state that, without a long genetic and cultural history and therefore little fertility for exclusivist claims, has managed to diversify its population with relative success.

Importantly, as global mobility increases, with people moving between countries for reasons of work, family and in some cases survival, national identities will be less defined along racial and ideological grounds and more on the grounds of choice and location. On the one hand this will mean that the question of who is Australian will be ever more open and flexible. However as Azlan (2009) observes, this will also likely mean that people ascribe their personal identities more strongly to racial and ideological markers. If national identities become indicative of little more than whether or not one holds a passport, people will begin to look for more meaningful foundations for self definition. As such, nation-states may be at risk of fracturing along ethnic, cultural and ideological lines. According to Samuel Huntington (1996), the future fault lines along which conflicts are likely to occur will be those of civilizations: people who are not only geographically close, but also culturally and religiously aligned. Nation-states whose populations fail to share common cultural values and ideals will easily fracture under the strain of global conflict.

Australia provides an interesting case study in how a nation-state that, compared to older nation-states, is relatively unattached to a particular ethnic and cultural heritage (except of course for its Indigenous history) can be cultivated to provide a common overarching identity for a number of diverse groups. If Australia is to continue to cultivate its multicultural identity while also preventing large-scale social division, then it must achieve two goals. It must celebrate the distinctiveness and individuality of cultural identities, while at the same time promoting common bonds between groups. We will argue that these two goals are the foundations of multiculturalism and understanding how they can be achieved requires insight into the process of immigration and acculturation.

4.2 Becoming an Australian

A short walk down Lygon Street in Carlton Victoria highlights the long heritage of Italian immigrants to Australian shores. Carlton has long been known for its Italian influences and is home to some of the best coffee anywhere in Melbourne. It has long been a show-piece of the city and even the criminal underworld has more recently developed a certain level of fame within popular culture – providing the basis for the popular television series 'Underbelly'. What is particularly interesting about Italian culture in Australia is that many people visiting from Italy comment on how Australian Italians are more Italian that those living in Italy. This tendency for cultural identities and values to be highlighted in the context of other cultures is not unique to Italians or even immigrants. One only needs to visit London to see the Australian identity in all its alcohol fuelled glory during the obligatory working holiday trip for young Australians, or to socialise with ex-patriot Australian employees in countries such as Dubai or Malaysia. Sometimes it is not until an individual leaves his or her own country that they develop a full appreciation of what it means to be from that country. More still, when confronted with a foreign culture and foreign people, one's values and traditions become important foundations for maintaining a sense of self and identity. In cases such as these it is all too common that the differences rather than the similarities between immigrants and citizens of the host country become apparent.

Understanding this interplay between identities is critical to understanding the immigration process. Berry (2001) has shown that how one thinks about oneself during the acculturation process is constructed along two dimensions. One dimension refers to the extent to which people identify with their heritage or ethnic culture, the other dimension refers to the extent to which people identify with the larger or dominant society. These two aspects of cultural identity have been referred to as the '*ethnic identity*' and '*civic identity*', respectively (Kalin & Berry, 1995).

From the perspective of these two dimensions four acculturation strategies emerge (Berry, 2001). Immigrants may adopt an *assimilation* strategy. This type of strategy involves distancing oneself from one's ethnic identity and emphasising one's civic identity. People begin to see themselves as Australian and fail to identify

with the ethnic cultural heritage they come from or their parents came from. Along somewhat similar lines, immigrants may adopt a *separation* strategy, which involves emphasising one's ethnic identity while failing to feel attached to ones civic identity. Immigrants may also fail to become attached to their civic identity while also losing touch with their ethnic identity; an approach which is referred to as a *marginalisation* strategy. Finally, immigrants may assert both their ethnic identity and civic identity – an approach which according to Berry underpins an *integration* strategy.

Importantly, the kinds of strategies that immigrants adopt also reflect the expectations and ideals of the dominant culture (Berry, 2001). As such, one might expect to see assimilation strategies when the dominant culture emphasises the importance of similar ideals and values. On the other hand, separation strategies may emerge in contexts where the dominant culture has a history of segregation between different groups. Marginalisation strategies will occur in contexts where the dominant culture actively excludes one's ethnic group, devaluing the ethnic identity while maintaining the exclusivity of the civic identity. Finally, integration strategies are more common when the dominant culture holds multicultural ideals. That is where individuals are expected to both maintain a connection to their ethnic cultures, while also adopting and valuing their civic identities.

What is clear from work on immigration is that effective acculturation is no easy feat, with any number of potential hiccups and failures along the way. Only integration and multiculturalism appear to have the capacity to maintain a strong sense of ethnic cultural heritage while also allowing for successful integration between different groups through a common set of practices, customs and values that define the civic identity. To put it simply, a failure of immigrants to maintain a strong ethnic identity would not only leave Australia bereft of cultural pockets where people love to visit, eat and shop, but would also reduce the richness of Australia's cultural diversity. On the other hand, a failure to develop a strong civic identity would leave Australia open to segregation, a failure of coordination and the potential for conflict between culturally distinct groups. Achieving this delicate balance is not easy and there are any number of factors that can inhibit or facilitate successful immigration and acculturation.

Below I discuss potential problems associated when there is an over emphasis on either the ethnic or civic identities. Specifically, I start with a discussion of problems that are likely to arise when different groups are viewed as highly unique and distinctive. This is followed by a discussion of problems that occur when this distinctiveness is overshadowed by a strong emphasis on shared similarities.

4.3 We Are All Just Different

High levels of immigration without adequate levels of integration into an overarching mainstream society can lead to separatism, marginalisation and cultural conflict. That is, differences rather the similarities become most obvious. One factor that contributes to a focus on differences, intergroup prejudice and conflict is a failure to

develop relationships with members of other groups. Intergroup contact is critical to achieving integration rather than segregation (e.g. Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), however adequate opportunities must be available if contact is to occur. When people already hold prejudiced attitudes towards members of other groups it is less likely that they or their children will have positive intergroup contact experiences. Reducing prejudice is clearly important. However, other less obvious beliefs also play a role in maintaining deep and un-crossable divides between groups. A study in the United States illustrates that even when explicitly expressed prejudice towards another group becomes rare (e.g. anti-Black attitudes) segregation within neighbourhoods, schools and churches is still clearly apparent (Massey & Denton, 1993). Simply reducing people's endorsement of negative sentiments towards other groups may not be sufficient to produce social integration of different groups within society. Rather, how people think about the nature of group differences remains an important factor.

In the last decade social psychological research has investigated the implications of believing group differences to be biological or natural. This kind of essentialist view of social groups leads to understanding them as rigid, fixed, exclusive and deep-seated. Psychological essentialism is an ordinary mode of representing categories in the natural world (i.e., *natural kinds* like tigers and gold), but it is also often applied to human groups. Viewing groups in this way leads to conceptualising them as if they were natural kinds. When this happens, people tend to infer that group members share deep essential qualities on the basis of their surface appearance, therefore exaggerating and deepening the perceived differences between groups. Essentialist beliefs have powerful social–psychological consequences (Prentice & Miller, 2007) and are critical to understanding group-based prejudice (Bastian & Haslam, 2006; Haslam & Levy, 2006; Haslam, Rothschild, & Ernst, 2000, 2002).

Focusing on the role of essentialist beliefs in acculturation processes (e.g. Bastian & Haslam, 2008; Hong et al., 2003, 2004), research has shown that these beliefs lead people to rely on their social identities in self-conception. That is, when people think about who they are, they rely heavily on attributes drawn from their social category memberships. Importantly, essentialist beliefs are also associated with the view that people don't move easily between social categories and that social category attributes don't change easily. People who view their own social category memberships in these ways are less likely to re-define themselves as members of new national identities and are also less likely to see themselves as sharing a common identity with people from other groups (Gaertner, Dividio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993).

Although, as already noted, the Australian identity may be relatively less attached to notions of biology and a distinct cultural heritage (i.e., aspects of essentialist thinking), viewing cultural group differences as deeply rooted, biological and immutable still plays a significant role in inhibiting successful immigration and acculturation within Australia. Focusing on these issues Bastian and Haslam (2008) demonstrated that when Australian-born citizens hold essentialist beliefs about the differences between groups (i.e., see them as biologically different, as unchanging, as clearly demarcated and as highly informative of person characteristics) such

beliefs are associated with viewing immigrants as different and as less likable, and a preference for immigrant groups to remain differentiated. Furthermore, where acculturation support was endorsed, individuals who held essentialist beliefs preferred support that aimed to assimilate immigrants into the dominant culture, while demonstrating a resistance to the integration of immigrant cultures into the Australian way of life. Furthermore, they tended to believe that it was immigrant's responsibility to form friendships with Australians and by extension it is the immigrant's fault if acculturation difficulties arise.

Importantly, in that study, Bastian and Haslam also surveyed recently arrived immigrants to Australia, demonstrating that essentialist beliefs were associated with resistance to adopting the civic identity. Critically this was in the context of a general reduction in attachment to the ethnic identity over time, suggesting an acculturation process best described by marginalisation. In short, when group differences are viewed as deeply different and un-crossable, members of host cultures resist integration of immigrant culture while members of immigrant groups are resistant to identifying with the civic culture, leading to marginalisation and segregation on the one hand or assimilation on the other.

Even in the context of low prejudice and few negative attitudes between groups, viewing group differences as deeply rooted, biological and immutable reduces the perceived similarities between groups. However, a failure for immigrant groups to maintain a distinctive and meaningful identity can also have negative consequences (e.g. Verkuyten, 2003). The 'melting-pot' approach which emphasises similarities at the expense of individuation comes with its own unique set of difficulties.

4.4 We Are All Simply the Same

Although the preceding section appears to indicate that maintaining distinctive and clearly differentiated ethnic or subgroup identities is problematic for multiculturalism, other work suggests that a failure to do so may be detrimental. In developing an integrative model of subgroup relations Hornsey and Hogg (2000) propose that minimisation of distinctiveness threat is a prerequisite for harmonious subgroup relations. That is, subgroups need to feel that they are recognised as having distinct ethnic identities that are not subsumed under the superordinate civic identity. Rather, for a superordinate identity to become a source of positive identity for members of subgroups, it must not conflict with subgroup identities. Members of ethnic subgroups must be able to feel capable of identifying with the superordinate identity in a way that does not diminish the meaning and distinctiveness of their ethnic identity (Gaertner, Rust, Dovidio, Bachman, & Anastasio, 1994; see also Chap. 6, Louis et al., in this volume).

One factor that may affect the extent to which members of ethnic subgroups can easily identify with the superordinate civic identity is the extent to which that identity is perceived to be inclusive. When people are confronted with explicit references to Australia's British heritage (e.g. the Australian flag), or told that their religious

practices are 'un-Australian' they will likely have difficulties feeling that they are included in the Australian identity. According to optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991, 1993; Brewer & Picket, 1999) if people feel overly distinctive or unique they will experience anxiety and dissatisfaction, resulting in the drive to achieve greater inclusiveness. This might mean that people look to increase their identification with the Australian identity. However if the superordinate identity is defined by assimilationist expectations, then people are likely to feel that their ethic identities are threatened, eliciting aggressive differentiation strategies such as prejudice and discrimination. In addition people may look elsewhere to satisfy their identification needs, potentially leading to the strengthening of subgroup identification.

Although overly exclusive superordinate identities may limit identification by members of diverse subgroups, so too may overly inclusive superordinate identities (see Chap. 6, Louis et al., in this volume). Belonging to overly inclusive groups activates peoples' drive to achieve greater distinctiveness. That is, if the Australian identity is ill-defined or not meaningful, it will hold little value for people's identification needs. This notion was supported by Hornsey and Hogg (2000) who showed that when superordinate categories are highly inclusive, superordinate identification weakens and people strive for identification at the subgroup level. In terms of immigration, extreme multiculturalism where all aspects of subgroup identity are preserved and enhanced while failing to provide a meaningful and coherent superordinate identity will again lead people to satisfy their identification needs at the subgroup level.

For multiculturalism to work in Australia, the importance of ethnic identities must be acknowledged, while also encouraging different ethnic groups to interact and coexist harmoniously. As has been shown, this requires a delicate balance between encouraging people to engage with a meaningful and coherent Australian identity and celebrating and valuing ethnic subgroup differences. Drawing the lines too tightly, as was the case with the White Australia policy leads to clear exclusion; however drawing them too loosely or over-inclusively leaves the Australian identity bereft of meaningful and coherent content. Although largely unpopular and poorly implemented the Australian citizenship test was introduced in 2007 to ensure that immigrants to Australia shared common knowledge of Australia's conventions and legal and parliamentary systems. While this does ensure that a minimum amount of shared knowledge exists, shared knowledge alone is not sufficient to create social integration. People need to feel connected to other members of a superordinate group to feel a sense of belonging. When these cross-cutting ties begin to emerge, members of ethnic subgroups feel a sense of personal connection to other Australians (as opposed to only ethnically similar others) providing a basis from which they can begin to engage and construct their own Australian identities.

What should be clear from the preceding sections is that people need to feel that they share important similarities, and only focusing on differences (particularly when those differences are viewed as natural and unchanging) leads to marginalisation and segregation. However, people also need to feel that they are distinctive and are not simply subsumed into a melting-pot where their ethnic heritage is not recognised or valued. As we argue, intergroup contact is indeed fundamental to the development of meaningful identification with a superordinate category and is instrumental in achieving this delicate balance.

4.5 Meeting in the Middle

If people are to gain a solid respect for cultural differences, while also exploring the similarities between cultures then it would appear that meeting in the middle is an adequate description of what is required. By using the metaphor of 'meeting in the middle' I am not claiming that there is some static midpoint we all need to find. Indeed as immigration and other cultural influences change the face of Australia, finding points of contact will remain a dynamic process. What the metaphor offers is the notion that people need to not only bring their own cultural ideals and expectations, but also develop an understanding of the culture and ideals of others. Through this process we may expect to find that both groups begin to value and adopt practices from the other, leading to cultural enrichment, integration and true multiculturalism. Practices, beliefs and lifestyles must been seen through the lens of complementarity. That is, the Australian values of egalitarianism may be seen as complimenting Chinese values of family and the Muslim values of faith and purity. Of course to achieve this integration people need to develop a grounded understanding of the other and the culturally distinct practices of various groups.

The idea that intergroup contact is a viable avenue for increased understanding, tolerance and reduced prejudice was first introduced by Gordan Allport (1954). Since then intergroup contact has received a great deal of attention within the psychological literature (see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Simply having a friend from another group has been argued to promote increased tolerance and reduced negative attitudes towards that group as a whole. However the context within which contact occurs plays an important role. Allport (1954) stressed that for contact to have the desired impact on prejudice the conditions of equal group status, common goals, intergroup cooperation and support of the goals of intergroup contact by external authorities, law or custom must be met. Although a recent meta-analysis has highlighted that these conditions are not essential for intergroup contact to have the effect of reducing prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp), other work has shown that negative contact experiences make ethnic differences more apparent in social perception, potentially contributing to ongoing intergroup conflict (Paolini, Harwood, & Rubin, 2010). In short, contact alone is not always enough to achieve better integration within society.

In a study focusing on contact between Muslim and non-Muslim Australian school students, Ata, Bastian, and Lusher (2009) found that a number of factors either facilitated or inhibited the link between contact and prejudice reduction. Although intergroup contact had a direct effect on reducing prejudice towards Muslims in Australia, intergroup perceptions as well as normative influence factors played a role. Perceptions of Muslims as threatening the Australian way of life inhibited the effects of contact, as did believing that the Muslim and Australian identities were incompatible or that a person could not be both a good Muslim and a loyal Australian. This illustrates the importance of viewing particular identities and their associated values, beliefs and practices through the lens of complementarity.

Importantly, beyond these perceptions, intergroup contact was also associated with a number of broader contextual factors. Specifically, having contact with Muslim students was associated with the belief that the media was not fair in its representation of Muslims. This finding indicates that having contact with other Muslim students increased understanding of their beliefs, values and cultural practices, and therefore increased indignation over the various ways Muslims are represented within the popular media. School environment was also important in predicting the extent of prejudice. Students who felt that their school was supportive of building better Muslim and non-Muslim relations reported less prejudice towards Muslims. Perhaps the most important contextual factor, however, was the role of parental approval of intergroup contact. Although direct contact was associated with the perception that parents would approve of having a friendship or marrying a Muslim person, parental approval was strongly associated with reduced prejudice. This indicates that for school children whether or not inter-ethnic contact reduces prejudice may be strongly affected by the prejudice of their parents, underscoring the generational effects of prejudice and the role of salient social norms in facilitating or inhibiting positive contact outcomes.

The role of social norms in maintaining prejudice is not only likely to affect the outcomes of contact, but also to reduce the frequency of contact experiences. A longitudinal study by Binder et al. (2009) provided empirical support to the notion that contact actually has a causal effect in reducing prejudice. However, as part of this study they also found that pre-existing prejudice also reduced the extent of intergroup contact. This suggests that where prejudice is high (and particularly when it is maintained by social norms) intergroup contact in not only likely to be negative, but may also fail to occur in the first place.

Even when contact does occur and the broader context is supportive and facilitative of this contact, the way in which contact aims to change identification remains important. Research on intergroup contact and social categorisation highlights the notion that effective intergroup contact transforms an individual's representation of two separate groups (*us* and *them*) to one inclusive, superordinate group (*we*). The common ingroup identity model (Gaertner et al., 1993) describes a process by which group boundaries are eclipsed by a more inclusive superordinate identity. Importantly, however this superordinate identity must not eclipse group boundaries entirely, and the mutual intergroup differentiation model (Hewstone, 1996; Hewstone & Brown, 1986) suggests that each group's area of expertise should be mutually recognised but equally valued. Intergroup contact then should lead to identification with a superordinate identity, while also facilitating an appreciation of group differences and a valuing of those differences.

Intergroup contact is critical to making multiculturalism work. Friendship networks that cut across group boundaries have the effect of diluting the significance of those boundaries in determining social structure, while also increasing appreciation and understanding of the meaning of those boundaries. In addition intergroup contact should have the effect of encouraging joint engagement in superordinate identification.

4.6 Making Multiculturalism Work

What should now be clear is that making multiculturalism work is a little bit like trying to walk a tightrope in a tornado. Not only does it require balance, but at any point there are a number of destabilising forces which may tip the balance one way or the other, ultimately leading to failure. We must remain open to diversity, although not get caught up in seeing differences between groups as unresolvable, incompatible, or un-crossable. We must maintain a coherent and meaningful sense of what it means to be an Australian, but yet not allow this to over shadow the valuing and appreciation of ethnic and cultural diversity. We must reduce prejudice, open up the possibilities for contact, and yet make certain that contact experiences remain positive through ensuring that critical factors are present within the context of intergroup contact. Multiculturalism is no easy feat, yet there are a number of things that can be done to improve our chances of success.

To make multiculturalism work we need to educate our children. Schools need to promote the understanding that the Australian identity is not just White, but inclusive of other cultures. Learning to understand and respect the differences between cultures, while seeing our similarity as Australians is fundamental. Research demonstrates that simply applying labels to ethnic groups increases how meaningful and useful children view these groupings in understanding their social environment. In the absence of such labelling, children may actually fail to visually recognise ethnic differences between people (Birnbaum, Deeb, Segall, Ben-Eliyahu, & Diesendruck, 2010). Supportive school environments that teach people to notice and understand cultural differences, while encouraging them not to use these differences as a basis for developing intergroup prejudice and discrimination is indeed a delicate task.

Children also need to be educated about what it means to be Australian. Australian Studies was introduced when I was in high school and this is indeed an important element in helping to understand and appreciate the history and context of what it means to be Australian. And yet this kind of education can all too easily get caught up in historical politics or ethnocentric perspectives, alienating the very people we are trying to engage. If we are to generate a view of Australia as truly multicultural then focusing on the foundation of Australia by the likes of Captain Cook, without also telling the story of the Aboriginal people, the early Chinese gold prospectors, the period of Southern European immigration and integration and the emerging connections between Australian and its Asian counterparts will do more harm than good. All of these stories are what makes Australia a great country and are at the very least equal in importance in a topic such as Australian Studies. Such a view of Australia will promote a broadened understanding of whom and what Australia is, while also making clear the similarities and values that all Australians share.

Educating children in these ways will have little benefit, if these values and perspectives are not also prevalent within the broader Australian society. Recent work by Paluck (2009; see also Paluck & Green, 2009) has demonstrated that social norms may be more predictive of behaviour that our own personal beliefs. As such changing what *we think others think* is critical to changing prejudiced intergroup

behaviour and if others, such as parents and caregivers, are explicit in their prejudice towards other groups then our children will also be. Indeed, there is plenty of prejudice regularly sent across the airwaves, subtly and not so subtly making intolerant attitudes normative. Alan Jones on 2GB was noted as playing a central role in inciting racial hatred through his talk show prior to and during the Cronulla Riots. 'Current affairs' programs such as Today Tonight and A Current Affair shamelessly produce stories that not only grab people's attention but also incite intergroup tension within the community. Racism, racist attacks and vilification of various minority groups gets ratings – the raison d'etre of this kind of journalism. What is needed is journalism that seeks to promote balanced understanding rather than sensationalised headlines.

To make multiculturalism work Australia needs to promote understanding of the differences between its various inhabitants. However it also needs to provide a meaningful and coherent set of values that give all its inhabitants something to cling to and something on which to ground their own identities.

4.7 Conclusion

Australia is in a unique position to be an example of multiculturalism to the rest of the world. Understanding how to create inclusive and open national identities that are not grounded in long cultural and genetic histories will be an increasingly important task. As high levels of mobility make nation-states home to people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, understanding how to accommodate while also incorporating these differences will be critical if these geographical groupings are going to have any significance on the global stage.

Many might laugh at the idea of Australia being an example of multiculturalism to the rest of the world. Indeed Australia is still well known for its terrible treatment of its Indigenous peoples and it has a reputation for very poor management of asylum seeker issues (see Chap. 7, Haslam & Holland in this volume). However, Australia is also currently positioned between the East and the West. Our links to Asia mixed with our alliances with Europe and America make Australia a hotbed for multicultural growth and integration. Australian cities are some of the most multicultural cities around the world and it is this multiculturalism that has brought trade, tourism and wealth to Australian shores.

As we have noted there are many factors that could easily make Australia a warning rather than an example. Prejudiced politicians, ratings-hungry current affairs shows and a failure to distinguish our independent country from its British heritage could easily destabilise the tightrope of multiculturalism. During the preparation of this chapter more than 30 Asylum seekers perished when their boat crashed in rough seas on the rocky shores of Christmas Island. In response to this tragedy Arnold Zable writing in the Age Newspaper (2010) noted that in the later part of the nineteenth century 15 million people forsook the British Isles. Some wound up on Australian shores and many perished when their boats sank on high seas. His point

was that we are a nation of boat people. If we remember this fact, then the Australian identity will remain flexible, inclusive, but also deeply meaningful. If we forget this fact, and instead pretend that some of us have more right to be here than others, the Australian identity will become inflexible, defensive and grounded on prejudice and intolerance.

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