

## SUMMARY

### Identity Negotiation among Indigenous Youth in Adelaide: Towards the Use of Both Essentialising and Hybridising Strategies

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In response to the weakening of ethnic identity under neoliberalism in addition to criticism of the essentialism underlying notions of ethnicity in the social sciences, recent studies focusing on urban Indigenous people have highlighted hybrid and dynamic aspects of the identity of 'mixed-blood' Indigenous people. However, hybrid identity has not necessarily produced positive social and cultural experiences for Indigenous youth.

Given this, the present study drew on Hall's theory of identity politics in order to examine identity negotiation among Indigenous youth in Adelaide. While 'mixed-blood' Indigenous youth articulated plural and hybrid identities in response to specific situations and for specific purposes, it was the difference represented by their Aboriginal cultural knowledge or their strategic deployment of an essentialised collective identity based on such knowledge that separated them from mainstream Australian society in terms of socioeconomic success.

This study has suggested that the manipulation of hybrid identity paradoxically requires a primary or essentialised identity derived from 'authentic' cultural knowledge. In this sense, the use of both essentialising and hybridising strategies in identity negotiation may potentially enable Indigenous youth to counter racism and marginalisation and establish their own position in mainstream society.