“I Didn’t Even Know That There Was Such a Thing as Aboriginal Games”:
A Figurational Analysis of How Indigenous Students Experience Physical Education and School Sport

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to find out how Indigenous students from Year 7 to 10, at three government funded schools in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), experience physical education (PE) and school sport. The study also sought to gain insights into how this meaning came to be, and the key processes and events over time that were most influential. The research was undertaken in the context of a national curriculum for Health and Physical Education (HPE) being recently introduced into the ACT. Justification for the research is that no study of this kind has ever been undertaken in ACT schools. Therefore, there is no empirical data about how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport. It is argued that this gap in the research facilitates fantasies, assumptions and stereotypes about Indigenous students.

There were three research questions in this study which were: How do Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research? How did these Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport come to be? What events and long-term processes have influenced Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport at the three high schools? Figurational sociology incorporating racialization theory, was used as the theoretical framework for this study due to its usefulness in interpreting social problems processually. In figurational sociology the notion of process is central and is the study of long-term practices and occurrences for understanding social phenomena. Along with process, the idea of the figuration or configuration is also fundamental to figurational sociology and is used to represent relationships of individuals, systems and processes.

An accompanying methodology sympathetic to figurational sociology was adopted that involved reconstructing three inter-related levels of the figurations studied: the macro, micro and sociogenesis levels. The macro level depicts the contemporary social structure or
‘rules’ of the figurations; the micro level the individuals that exist within those social structures, and the sociogenesis being how the respective figurations came to be. Websites, photos, a school plan and current documents were used as data sources at the macro level as they were deemed as being most suitable for answering the first research question. Interviews and archive documents were used for the micro and sociogenesis levels respectively.

This research found that a single figuration for PE and school sport existed that interconnected the PE and school sport figurations at each of the three schools. Within this single figuration, Eurocentric PE and school sport was almost exclusively programmed. Indigenous students were found to experience PE and school sport within what was almost entirely a European frame of reference that lacked acknowledgment of their own culture. Another main finding, consistent with the literature about adult Indigenous sport, was that the students were stacked towards football codes of rugby, and Australian Rules. Stacking in the context of this study means that Indigenous students were encouraged by HPE teachers and non-Indigenous students to play only certain sports based upon racialized perceptions. The main long-term processes found to have influenced the single figuration were ‘invented tradition’, HPE teacher and student predispositions towards certain values and beliefs, a form of civilizing process and racialization.
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<tr>
<td>ACT DET</td>
<td>Australian Capital Territory Department of Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT ETD</td>
<td>Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate (the name changed in 2010 from ACT DET to ACT ETD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT SSSA</td>
<td>Australian Capital Territory Secondary School Sports Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>AEC</td>
<td>Australian Educational Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>AEO</td>
<td>Aboriginal Education Officer</td>
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<td>AFL</td>
<td>Australian Football League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIATSIS</td>
<td>Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASC</td>
<td>Australian Sports Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSRGWA</td>
<td>Department of Sport and Recreation Government of Western Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
<td>Essential Learning Achievement</td>
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<tr>
<td>FMS</td>
<td>Fundamental Movement Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPE</td>
<td>Health and Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>International Baccalaureate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBMYP</td>
<td>International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEO</td>
<td>Indigenous Education Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICF</td>
<td>Indigenous Critical Friend</td>
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<tr>
<td>KLA</td>
<td>Key Learning Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCEETYA</td>
<td>Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MYP</td>
<td>Middle Years Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAIDOC</td>
<td>National Aborigines and Islander Day Observance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>PETA</td>
<td>Physical Education Teachers Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>PETE</td>
<td>Physical Education Teacher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBCD</td>
<td>School Based Curriculum Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSSA</td>
<td>Secondary School Sports Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCHERC</td>
<td>University of Canberra Human Ethics in Research Committee</td>
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## Key Terms

<table>
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<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black Americans</strong></td>
<td>People of the United States of America who have African ancestry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charisma</strong></td>
<td>Used in a group context to describe the shared virtuous beliefs that members hold about themselves that distinguish them from groups that they consider to be inferior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Subject/Unit</strong></td>
<td>A compulsory subject/unit of work that students undertake according to their year of study. PE was a core subject in Years 7 and 8 at each school in this research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Corroboree</strong></td>
<td>Used in here as an Aboriginal term for an informal gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curricula</strong></td>
<td>Used as a plural of curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early Adolescence</strong></td>
<td>Refers to a band of development for Year 7 and 8 students in the <em>Every Chance to Learn</em> (ACT DET, 2007) curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elective Unit</strong></td>
<td>A unit of study that students can choose. In years 9 and 10, students at the three schools in this research could elect sport and fitness related units instead of PE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Learning</strong></td>
<td>The learning that students are expected to have completed within set stages of the <em>Every Chance to Learn</em> (ACT DET, 2007) curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Executive Teacher</strong></td>
<td>A teacher who has leadership and management responsibilities typically at a faculty level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiences</strong></td>
<td>Describes how Indigenous students encounter physical education and school sport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Australians</strong></td>
<td>Refers to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-service Teacher</td>
<td>A teacher who is qualified and working in that capacity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>The term used to describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Traditional Games</td>
<td>Games that were played in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities prior to British colonization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later Adolescence</td>
<td>The term given to describe a band of development for Year 9 and 10 students in the <em>Every Chance to Learn</em> (ACT DET, 2007) curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 Teacher</td>
<td>The name given to classroom teachers including HPE teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mainstream Sports</td>
<td>Refers to the most popular sports played in a given nation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>The practice of compulsory teacher transfer in ACT government schools. Usually teachers are allocated five year placements with continuation at the discretion of the relevant school principal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-activity Curriculum</td>
<td>A PE curriculum comprised of sports or physical activities taught as units of work typically lasting two or three weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Node</td>
<td>The term used in NVIVO computer software for a data code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-service Teacher</td>
<td>Someone who is training to be a teacher by attending a university education degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set Curriculum</td>
<td>A curriculum that is fixed by policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Sport</td>
<td>Competitive sport in which ACT government secondary schools participate, on a term by term basis organized by the ACT SSSA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Level</td>
<td>Where documents, processes or practices are in widespread use.</td>
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</table>
across a number of schools.

**Zone** The term given for regional competition for school sport within the ACT.
Conferences and Journal Articles During Candidature

During his candidature the researcher presented at the following peer reviewed conference:


The researcher also published the following peer reviewed journal article:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction to the research and includes the aims and objectives, research questions, background to the study, the research context, and an overview of physical education (PE) and school sport. The remainder of the chapter outlines the methodology adopted, the benefits and risks of conducting the research and finally a summary of each of the thesis chapters.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The main research aims were to investigate how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport, the meaning that they associate with their participation or lack of participation, and to what extent those students are able to influence their engagement in PE and school sport. The term ‘Indigenous’ is used in the thesis to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Within the context of this thesis, ‘experiences’ is taken to mean how Indigenous students encounter PE and school sport, and includes varying levels of participation, enjoyment and dissatisfaction for example. A further aim was to investigate the attitudes and beliefs of Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate (ACT ETD) staff, including HPE teachers about Indigenous student involvement in PE and school sport.

The main objective of the research was to find out what the key characteristics of the figurations of PE and school sport were at the three schools and how those figurations came to be. A main aspect of this objective was to gain an understanding of the nature of the power relationships that exist. A final objective of the study was to identify and examine the processes responsible for the creation of those contemporary figurations for PE and school sport. From the broad aims and objectives of the study, research questions evolved over time and more detail on the manner in which they were refined is discussed in Chapter 4.
1.2 Research Questions

This study investigated how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at three government funded high schools within the ACT as well as the factors that have historically shaped this experience. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. How do Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research?
2. How did these Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport come to be?
3. What events and long-term processes have influenced Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport at the three high schools?

It is argued that how Indigenous students encounter PE and school sport is the result of the intended and unintended actions of individuals who share a single figuration of interdependent relationships with those Indigenous students. A characteristic of this figuration for PE and school sport are social power differentials favouring ACT ETD principals and HPE teachers as an established group that decide the kinds of physical activities programmed in the respective schools involved.

The main individuals at each school who share the figuration with the Indigenous students are the school principals, executive and Level 1 HPE teachers and Indigenous Education Officers (IEOs). The executive teachers are promoted HPE teachers who have managerial responsibilities for PE and school sport. The Level 1 HPE teachers, are the teachers who have the main responsibility for student teaching and learning. The IEOs are teaching support staff, typically one if any at a given school, who have a specific remit for the pastoral care and support of Indigenous students. Furthermore, the research took into account PE professionals and curriculum writers who exerted influence from outside the physical boundaries of the school.
In addition to the forementioned participants, it is recognized that families of the Indigenous students, as well as their local community and culture are also included in the figuration within which these students experience PE and school sport. However, the influence of family, community and culture is not addressed in this research because the main focus of the study is PE and school sport as it takes place within the school context. Nonetheless, the bearing of families, community and culture on the PE and school sport figuration is acknowledged and discussed in Chapter 3.

To date there has been no sociology-based research carried out within the ACT about how Indigenous students participate in PE and school sport. The issue of participation is important, because it is argued that participation is a central aspect of Indigenous students’ experiences PE and school sport. Because no empirical research has been undertaken it is impossible to determine the suitability of current programs regarding content and pedagogy. It is contended that suitability can be measured by examining what is taught, compared with what should be taught. Consequently, the extent to which Indigenous students like or dislike PE, or what it means to them is unknown. This research was limited to Year 7 to 10 Indigenous students and data was collected for the study over a two year period between 2011 and 2012. In ACT government schools PE is compulsory from Year 7 to 10.

1.3 Background to the Study

The researcher is a non-Indigenous Australian citizen who emigrated to Australia from Scotland in January 2009 and settled in Canberra. Soon after arrival, I commenced teaching at an ACT public high school as an HPE teacher, and worked continuously in that role for four years. However, from 2013 I have been on secondment to the University of Canberra where I teach primary and secondary pre-service teachers HPE. The ACT high school where I previously taught was not used as one of the schools in this research to avoid potential
conflicts of interest. Instead, three government schools were selected where I had no previous involvement with teaching staff or students.

The motivation for this study came from a Year 9 Indigenous student whom I taught during the first years of my employment. This student was highly competent at many of the core skills that are taught in PE, such as throwing, catching, kicking, striking, running and jumping. Indeed, there seemed to be a widely held belief amongst the HPE staff as well as teachers from other faculties in the school, that this student had a high level of ‘natural ability’ in both PE and school sport. Nonetheless, he was reluctant to take part in school related physical activity. Despite efforts by myself and others to involve this student in PE and school sport, he chose to exclude himself. When asked why he did not want to take part, he offered no reason other than ‘he did not want to do it’. This student also demonstrated high levels of absenteeism in PE and a noticeable withdrawal and silence on the few occasions that he did attend. I was curious as to why this student demonstrated such behaviour despite being physically talented. This curiosity led to me considering a research topic concerned with how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport.

1.4 Context for the Research

The following section provides some background to the research by detailing the proportion of the Australian and ACT population that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders comprise. British influence in Australian society and in particular within schools as part of the social administration apparatus is also discussed along with racism in sport and PE. This racism it is contended is a legacy of colonization where Indigenous people were and still are marginalized according to both actual and imagined difference. PE as part of schools is a cultural space within which racism and marginalization takes place (Tatz, 2013).
1.4.1 Demographics of Indigenous peoples in Australia and in the Australian Capital Territory

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) from the 2011 census, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population accounts for approximately 2.5% of the Australian population (ABS, 2012). In the 2011 census there were 548,400 people in Australia who identified as being either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders (ABS, 2012). In addition, approximately one third of the Indigenous population reported as living in capital city areas in Australia. According to the ABS, in 2011 there were 5,184 Indigenous people living within an overall population of 357,219 in the ACT.

1.4.2 Background to the three schools

Year 7 to 10 was chosen, because this study is concerned with government secondary school PE and school sport in the ACT. In the ACT secondary schooling is organized to cater for Years 7 to 10, with PE compulsory across those years (http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/directory_of_schools/high_schools_act_government). The three schools chosen, were amongst 17 high schools for which ACT ETD has responsibility. There were 308 Indigenous students enrolled in Years 7 to 10 across all ACT ETD secondary schools when this study commenced in 2010 (ACT ETD, 2010a). Background information for each of the three schools in this study, obtained from the ‘My School’ website (http://www.myschool.edu.au), is provided in the following paragraph for the academic year 2011, when most of the research data was collected.

School A is located in the Belconnen district of north Canberra and in 2011 had 80 teaching staff. At that time there were nearly 900 students enrolled with two percent identifying as Indigenous. School B is situated in the south of Canberra and had fewer teachers than School A with a contingent of just over 60. The student population was also marginally smaller than School A, with approximately 800 enrolled. Despite having smaller
student enrolments School B had almost twice the number of Indigenous students. Both schools A and B were Year 7 to 10 secondary schools. In contrast, School C is an International Baccalaureate (IB) Foundation to Year 10 school located in the inner south of Canberra and is one of the oldest schools in the ACT. The school had a student population of over 1000 students, and similar to School A had an Indigenous student cohort of two percent. There were just less than 90 teachers at School C.

1.4.3 Colonization, British influence and racism in physical education and sport

British influences stemming from the colonization of Australia from the late 1700s is evident in present day legal, parliamentary and education structures (Tinning, 2005). Further, Tinning (2005) suggests that the Australian education system is more akin to that in Britain than any other country. Fitzpatrick (2009) also notes that in Australia the contemporary PE curriculum is a consequence of a history of colonial influence. Fitzpatrick (2009) continues by claiming that this influence has involved institutionalised Eurocentric racism towards Australian Indigenous peoples. The term ‘Eurocentric’ refers to “viewpoints and practices based on the historical knowledge or ideas of European communities. Such practices usually ‘marginalise’ or ignore perspectives from other cultural groups” (Fitzpatrick, 2009, p. 123). There are various definitions of racism, but for the purposes of this research, ‘racism’ is defined as “an ideology that ascribes negatively evaluated characteristics (e.g. stereo-types about laziness or greed) in a deterministic manner to a group of people who are additionally identified as being in some way biologically distinct” (Miles, 1982, p. 78). Using this definition, the term ‘racism’ is at once problematic concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as their identity is socially rather than biologically constructed.

Despite this philosophical argument about Indigenous peoples not being a biologically distinct group, there is a wealth of literature to suggest that racism against Indigenous populations is ‘alive and well’ in schools as well as in sport generally across Australia.
(Coakley, Hallinan, Jackson & Mewett, 2009; Godwell, 2000; Lynch, Taylor & Toohey, 1998; Rigney, 2003; Tatz, 1995; Veal, Darcy & Lynch, 2013). Indeed, Australian sports history has almost entirely been a post-colonial account of modern physical activities and sports that has discounted the range of pursuits that existed in Australia before European settlement (Edwards, 2009). Lynch et al. (1998) describe Australia as a sporting nation, although they comment that defining what that means exactly is problematic. Lynch et al. (1998) argue that most likely, the term describes Australians as being generally more active in sport than people from other countries. This definition they qualify by describing a selective identity that is young, white, male, and associated with mainstream sports. Lynch et al. (1998) continue by suggesting that many other groups in society, including Indigenous people, are excluded from this notion of a ‘sporting nation’.

Rigney (2003) also observes as an Aboriginal academic, that sport, including sport in Australia is characterised by processes of social inequality. Social characteristics such as race, income, wealth, gender and age, currently and historically have influenced access to education, health, employment and sport. Rigney (2003) believes that success in sport has been restrictive for Aboriginal people and asks “what is the value or point in being fitter, stronger and faster if we do so only in ways and within limits set for us by those who oppress Indigenous Australian people?” (p. 55). In other words, Rigney (2003) views Indigenous participation in sport as being only within parameters set by non-Indigenous Australians.

Edwards (2009) collectively describes pre-colonial Indigenous games as traditional games which “…include all aspects of traditional and contemporary play cultures associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identifiable communities” (p. 33). It is only in recent times that traditional games have rememerged in Australian society (Howell, 1996), although it is argued in this thesis that they still exist outside of Australian national sporting identity. In the next section, a historical overview of PE and school sport is provided.
This overview is important to this research because it documents long term processes in PE and school sport including an absence of Indigenous reference or mention. In conducting an extensive search of the literature, no recent references were found pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games. In addition, the references that do exist are limited, hence the reliance upon a restricted range of sources.

1.5 A Historical Overview of Physical Education and School Sport in Australia

The following section discusses key concepts about the nature and purpose of PE, dominant discourses and notable changes that have occurred historically in PE in Australia. Definitions of PE, sport and school sport are also provided and their differences are discussed. The remainder of the section is about Indigenous perspectives in PE, and barriers to participation in physical activity and sport that affect Indigenous peoples.

1.5.1 Main discourses and the influence of the physical education profession as an established group

PE is defined by ACT ETD (2009) as “the process of gaining knowledge, skills and attitudes, mainly through physical activity” (p. 8). However, there is uncertainty and a lack of consensus amongst professionals regarding the nature and purpose of PE (Green, 2008; Kirk, 2010a). Accepting the definition of PE offered by ACT ETD, it is proposed that the PE programs and activities discussed in this research have resulted from the shaping and reshaping of PE curricula for over a century. Further, it is argued here that the version of PE currently in place at the schools in this study can be termed “physical education-as-sport-techniques” (Kirk, 2010a, p. 31). This phrase describes a pedagogy of PE that focuses upon the development of skills and techniques in a wide range of British, European and American sports and physical activities with a strong emphasis on team games.
Writing about the development of PE in industrialized countries including Australia, Kirk and Tinning (2005) comment “the forms of human movement that make up physical education programmes exist because they are important to the interests of some groups of people somewhere in society” (p. 6). Consequently, it is posited that the history of PE policy and practice in Australia has resulted from unequal power struggles between people with differing interests (Tinning, Macdonald, Wright & Hickey, 2001; Wright, 1996). Those individuals and groups with the most amount of power it is contended, have been able to exert their influence on what should be included in PE according to their particular values and beliefs, or what could be termed ‘discourses’. The main discourses that have influenced the development of the PE curriculum in Australia for more than a century have been those concerned with nationalism, the military, citizenship, science, sport and fitness (Wright, 1996; Kirk, 1998; Tinning et al., 2001).

A major change to PE occurred in the early 1990s when the subject expanded to include Health as a main topic within its title (Dinan-Thompson, 2006). This development resulted from modifications to PE at a national level (Dinan-Thompson, 2006). In the late 1980s Ministers of Education as members of the Australian Educational Council (AEC) developed eight Key Learning Areas (KLAs) for the compulsory years of schooling. The KLA that related to PE was initially titled ‘Health’ by the AEC in 1991. However, the title of this KLA was amended in 1993 to ‘Health and Physical Education’ (HPE). Most states and territories adopted the title HPE although New South Wales chose to call it Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) instead (Dinan-Thompson, 2006).

**1.5.2 Physical education, sport and school sport**

According to Green (2008), at least amongst academics, there is a view that PE cannot simply be reduced to sport. Instead, PE should be regarded as part of the process of educating the whole child with sport, or more precisely modified sport, being used within PE (Green,
2008). In other words, sport forms are used in PE but the terms ‘sport’ and ‘PE’ are not synonymous. ‘Sport’ is defined by Chandler, Cronin and Vamplew (2002) as “a structured, goal-oriented, competitive, contest-based, ludic physical activity” (p. 191). Using this definition, sport as it occurs in PE or in school sport within ACT high schools is competitive, ludic (play oriented), contest-based, structured with rules and has some kind of purpose. However, not all activities offered within PE are competitive, contest-based or bound by rules. Therefore PE can be considered as being much broader than just ‘sport’. Nonetheless, the close association and synonymous nature of PE and sport is unsurprising, given that sport is the main movement form in Australian cultures in common with most developed countries (Tinning et al., 2001).

Within the ACT, sport in its own right is offered in addition to timetabled PE in the form of school sport through the ACT Secondary School Sports Association (ACT SSSA), also known as School Sport ACT. According to their website (http://www.schoolsportact.asn.au/about school sport act.html), school sport:

…not only contributes to the health and character of those who participate but also arms them with essential tools that will help them meet life’s challenges. School Sport ACT seeks to provide appropriate physical activity opportunities for all ACT school students at all levels and encourage participation in sporting activities as part of life-long learning and participation.

It is interesting that a military metaphor ‘arms’ is used in this description of school sport because as discussed in Chapter 3, military discourse was a feature of PE and school sport in Australia for a large part of the twentieth century. Also, the word ‘appropriate’ is value loaded, and is indicative that a decision has been made at some point in time over what sports are deemed suitable.
The main purpose of the ACT SSSA is to organise inter-school competition across a broad range of sports for different age groups of students. Of particular importance to this research is the ACT SSSA annual Indigenous Buroinjin Carnival which first took place in 2010 with six ACT government high schools taking part. Buroinjin being a traditional Aboriginal ball tag game (Australian Sports Commission [ASC], 2009). This inclusion by the ACT SSSA of buroinjin is of consequence to this research, because for the first time in the history of school sport in the ACT an Indigenous traditional games competition was held.

1.5.3 Mention of Indigenous perspectives in physical education and barriers to Indigenous participation in sport

With the exception of the Northern Territory, there has historically been a silence of Indigenous perspectives in state and territory HPE curricula (Fitzpatrick, 2009). Garrett and Wrench (2006) also note that Indigenous “…experiences, perspectives and cultural understandings have been ignored and are predominantly absent from mainstream HPE programs” (p. 206). The Department of Sport and Recreation Government of Western Australia (DSRGWA) (2006), similarly identify a dearth of Indigenous mention in PE curricula and specifically name Victoria as a state where Indigenous cultural acknowledgement is missing in PE programs. Barriers to participation in physical activity are considered to exist for Indigenous people generally and not just school aged students in particular (DSRGWA, 2006). Those include non-European attitudes to health where notions of family are valued more than those of the individual. The importance to many Indigenous people of relationships, and spending time with family rather than taking part in individual physical activity (DSRGWA, 2006) is ignored.

The lack of Indigenous perspectives in PE is of importance to this research given the topic of the study, and because there is the possibility that a similar silence of Indigenous content may exist within ACT PE curricula. DSRGWA (2006), state Indigenous traditional
games and dance as particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island content that is absent in PE curricula. Indigenous traditional games are a recognized way of including Indigenous perspectives in Australian PE curricula (Callcott, Miller & Wilson-Gahan, 2012; Harrison, 2011), as is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island dance (Callcott et al., 2012). Further, racism is noted by DSRGWA (2006) as being a reason for Indigenous students feeling both isolated and misunderstood by the dominant group, and causes some to withdraw from PE and school generally. Issues of modesty in covering up skin, along with the irrelevance of health promotion programs are suggested by DSRGWA (2006) as obstacles to Indigenous peoples participating in sport generally. Finally, lack of access to transport and sport and recreational facilities are provided as other reasons why Indigenous peoples limit their activity choices (DSRGWA, 2006).

Outside of Australia, Olsen, Rynne and Macdonald (2002) note that Indigenous and minority group issues are starting to be addressed within PE curricula and cite New Zealand and the United Kingdom as places where these developments have been evident. Olsen et al. (2002) regard New Zealand as a country where there has been particular curriculum development. Further, the authors comment that a lack of Indigenous focus in Australian PE curricula is strange since issues such as social justice are given high status in HPE publications and other resources. This lack of acknowledgment is relevant to this study because the extent to which Indigenous perspectives are mentioned will have some bearing on how Indigenous students in the ACT experience PE and school sport.

1.6 Methodology

This section provides a summary of the methodology used by introducing the figurational approach adopted that incorporated racialization theory. It is argued later in the thesis how racialization theory can be integrated into a figurational approach. Alternative
approaches that could have been used are also discussed along with an overview of the methodology that was deployed in this study.

1.6.1 Theoretical framework

It is contended that the meaning that PE and school sport has for Indigenous students is inextricably linked to the past, and is the result of social processes that have been in play since Europeans first arrived on the Australian continent. These processes have been far-reaching in shaping and reshaping Australian Indigenous peoples’ way of life, and extend far beyond Indigenous students’ experience in PE. Consequently, a process-oriented approach was used to carry out this research, and figurational sociology was chosen as the main theoretical framework.

Central to figurational sociology, pioneered by Norbert Elias (Bauman, 1979; Dunning, 1992; Mennell & Goudsblom, 1998) is the idea of the figuration itself, which refers to how individuals are located interdependently in social structures characterized by relationships of power. Power, it is argued can be created by members of established groups through having a surplus of resources at their disposal. Those individuals can then use their excess power to influence others who share any given figuration (Elias, 1998a). Relationships of power were a central aspect of this research. Importantly, within figurational sociology, figurations are considered in dynamic rather than static terms, and change on account of the intended and unintended consequences of the actions of individuals (Elias, 1978a).

Figurational sociology, also known as process sociology, was adopted as the main theoretical framework in this research because of its usefulness in understanding complex human relationships. Much of the pioneering work in figurational sociology and its relation to PE and sport in particular, was carried out during the 1980s and 1990s. However, it is argued in this thesis, that this historical work is both relevant in the twenty first century and within the Australian educational context.
Racialization was incorporated into the theoretical framework, due to its processual characteristics and on account of its central importance to the research topic. For the purpose of this study, racialization is taken to mean a process by which people are assigned physical and cultural differences (Barot & Bird, 2001). Often those ‘differences’ have a high fantasy element, and those that engage in the racialization of others through stereotyping and stigmatizing behaviour can only do so because of a surplus of social power (Elias & Scotson, 1994).

1.6.2 Alternative theoretical approaches

Having completed a Master of Science degree in the Sociology of Sport and Sports Management at the University of Leicester the researcher had some insight into the relevance of figurational sociology to this research. However, the following alternative theoretical approaches were also considered for this study and then subsequently rejected: Colonial discourse theory, postcolonial theory and critical multicultural theory. Colonial discourse theory was appealing as a possible theoretical framework because of its concern with social power, which is regarded as being central to the research topic. According to Cashmore (1996a), colonial discourse theory is used to interpret issues around power imbalances, marginalization and exploitation, all of which were deemed relevant to this research.

Postcolonial theory was also contemplated, because it is involved with identifying, highlighting and theorising issues that have arisen in colonized countries and territories as a result of the practice of colonization (Cashmore, 1996b). This theoretical approach is informed by accounts from the Indigenous peoples who were colonized as well as their descendants (McLeod, 2007). Further, according to Cashmore (1996b), postcolonial theory also focuses upon how societal institutions mould and set boundaries regarding the representation of Indigenous people. Pivotal to postcolonial theory are the lasting effects that have resulted from the former control by powerful European colonizing nations. This
influence has shaped dominant ways of thinking in the modern world (Bhabha, 1994), such as how societal institutions choose to represent Indigenous people.

Critical multiculturalism targets unfair balances of social power and the privileged position of white people, and middle and upper class white people in particular (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). It examines how whiteness is used as the standard by which all other ethnic groups are measured. In addition, critical multiculturalism encourages white people to think about their own values and belief systems and how they came to be. Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) criticise schools that far too often view multiculturalism in a fragmented way and fail to adopt a critical multicultural approach. Such schools tend to view issues such as prejudice in isolation and not within broader interconnected political and cultural contexts.

Each of the above theories was discounted on the basis that figurational sociology is a more comprehensive way of answering the research questions in this study. This is because figurational sociology as well as having a main focus on power also pays deep attention to process and relationships (Dunning & Hughes, 2013). The particular aspects of figurational sociology that were deemed as being most useful for answering the research questions were: *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 1978a); habitus (both individual and social) (Elias, 1978a); established and outsider theory (Elias & Scotson, 1994); and involvement and detachment (Elias, 1998c). Each of these sub-disciplines of figurational sociology are discussed in some detail in Chapter 2. A further advantage of figurational sociology is that it is established as being a useful analytical tool in the sociology of PE and sport.

1.6.3 Study methodology

A methodological approach that was consistent with figurational sociology was adopted and is covered in some detail in Chapter 4. This methodology reconstructed the PE and school sport figurations in three ACT government schools on three different but inter-related levels. Those being the macro, micro and sociogenesis levels (Baur & Ernst, 2011).
The macro level refers to the nature of the social structure and ‘rules’ within a given figuration and represents how a figuration exists in the present. The micro level is a recreation of how individuals behave within a figuration; their ability to influence as well as how they enter and leave; and the sociogenesis level is a reproduction of how a figuration came to be. In keeping with a figurational approach, a wide range of data sources were selected that were suitable for answering the research questions. A school plan, photographs, websites and documents that were currently in operation at the schools were used to reproduce the macro level of the figurations. Interviews were mainly used in recreating the micro levels, and archival documents including historical letters were used for the sociogenesis levels.

To reproduce the micro levels of the figurations interviews were conducted with the separate participant groups: Indigenous students from Year 7 to 10; school principals; executive and Level 1 HPE teachers; and Indigenous Critical Friends (ICFs). The ICFs were current or former IEOs who had existing relationships with the Indigenous students in each school. The ICFs were interviewed because they provided an adult perspective of the power relationships within their figurations. They were also interviewed because they were an interface between the non-Indigenous education staff and the Indigenous students in their respective schools. The ACT ETD staff collectively were included because of their inextricable connection with, and their influence upon the Indigenous students involved in the study.

The Indigenous student group was made up of 21 students representing each of the specified year groups. All of those students took part in PE and some participated in school sport. The groups of students were invited for interview because they were the central participants in the study. The process by which those students were identified and selected for interview is detailed in Chapter 5. School principals at each school were chosen because they
have curriculum leadership and overall management responsibility within a school and indirectly affect Indigenous students in PE and school sport through their authoritative power. This influence is dependent upon the extent to which principals value PE and school sport, how much principals understand and respect Indigenous culture and whether or not they value Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum.

The executive HPE teachers were chosen because they are the teaching staff who have responsibility for the administration of PE and school sport programs within any particular school. This group was relevant because the extent to which those teachers as well as Level 1 teachers understand and respect Indigenous students, and value Indigenous perspectives in PE and school sport, has a direct bearing upon Indigenous student experiences. Level 1 HPE teachers were invited to take part because they have primary responsibility for teaching PE and school sport. Given the nature of their role, those teachers have the most direct ‘face to face’ contact with Indigenous students in teaching PE and facilitating school sport.

1.7 Benefits of the Research

The topic of this research is an issue worth investigating because it may help explain why Indigenous content is largely missing in Australian PE curricula (Fitzpatrick, 2009). It is also believed that the research findings will add to the limited existing knowledge stock of what participation in PE and school sport means for Indigenous students in Year 7 to 10 in the ACT. It will be the first time that a figurational study has been undertaken in the ACT that is concerned with how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport. Therefore this research provides insights where there were none previously. Through using figurational sociology, Indigenous student experience of PE and school sport is considered in processual terms with a focus on social power relationships. By drawing attention to those kinds of relationships, current and future teachers may gain deeper understanding of how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport. It is important for HPE teachers to have this
understanding because the *Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education* (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2014) requires students to examine power differentials and issues of social justice.

Further, the research may serve to inform ACT ETD, to what extent current teaching and learning in PE and school sport at the three sites is appropriate for Indigenous students. The findings may also influence what Indigenous content is taught and how it is taught. Regarding the wider Indigenous community the findings of the research will serve to raise awareness of the potential for PE curricula and school sport to be realized beyond Eurocentric limitations. Correspondingly, the findings will it is argued, assist schools in meeting the purposes of the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (*Melbourne Declaration*) (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2008) in making education more relevant for all Australians. Finally, the topic of this research is worthy of study because in meeting the purposes of the ‘*Melbourne Declaration*’ [MCEETYA], education becomes more relevant for all Australians through acknowledgment of cultures other than the dominant culture.

### 1.8 Risk Associated with the Research

This section explains the risks involved in carrying out the research. Those risks can be categorized as risks that are specific to research involving Indigenous peoples, children, as well as risks that apply generally in carrying out research.

As stated previously, the researcher is non-Indigenous and in undertaking this research it was identified at an early stage that his non-Indigenous status was problematic to the success of the study. Nakata (1993) encapsulates the problematic nature of non-Indigenous researchers investigating Indigenous issues “you see, experts still name the game, still identify the problem, and they still provide the solution on our behalf” (p. 63). From the initial stages of this project, strategies were put in place to counter researcher non-Indigeniety. Measures
that were adopted included having an Indigenous Adjunct Supervisor who was involved with the research through the entire process. Another Indigenous supervisor also joined the supervisory panel later in the candidature. In addition, ICFs were involved at regular stages during the investigation and provided support in a number of different ways. Mainly they helped ensure that an Indigenous perspective was maintained at all times and acted as a sounding board for the cultural aspects of the study. The role of the ICFs is described in more detail in Chapter 5.

In relation to the Indigenous students who took part in the research, the *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies* (‘the Ethical Guidelines’) (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [AIATSIS], 2012) state that it is crucial that Indigenous people have continuous involvement in Indigenous related research studies. A purposeful attempt was made in this research to ensure this level of involvement by the Indigenous people who took part in the study. It is recognized that Indigenous people have cultural ownership for the findings generated from this research albeit the researcher owns the actual thesis. Cultural ownership meaning here, that Indigenous people are recognized as the rightful owners and custodians of all aspects of their culture. In addition, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who contributed to the study are acknowledged while their actual identities are not disclosed. Finally, in complying with the Ethical Guidelines (AIATSIS, 2012) Indigenous people have agreed access to the thesis through it being made available in the public domain including AIATSIS.

Children are also at risk when involved in research, and as a measure to control this risk, a National Ethics Application Form (NEAF) was completed. NEAF is an online tool (http://www.neaf.gov.au) that assists researchers across multi-disciplines to prepare ethic proposals involving human research for submission to human research ethics committees. Participant information and informed consent forms that had to be signed by parents or carers
of the Indigenous student participants were generated as part of the NEAF process. Approval for conducting research involving children was subsequently granted from the University of Canberra Human Ethics in Research Committee (UCHERC) and ACT ETD.

In terms of risk that applies to research generally, there was the risk that information given by research participants would not remain confidential, or that the names of individuals would become known where the intention was for them to remain anonymous. The researcher acknowledges that individually collected data is always at risk of not remaining confidential through accidental disclosure or through lack of secure storage. Therefore during the research every effort was made to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of all of the participants involved and all data was securely stored. All of the recorded data in both paper and audio format will be destroyed within five years of collection in accordance with stated university ethical agreements. Finally, awareness of risk associated with research was increased through the researcher presenting at a national conference, and from producing a peer reviewed research paper during his candidature.

1.9 Overview of Thesis Chapters

This section provides an outline of what is covered in each of the thesis chapters. Chapter 1 has provided an overview of the thesis subject matter detailing the research context, key concepts, methodology adopted, benefits and risks associated with the research. Chapter 2 provides an introduction to figurational sociology and racialization theory and provides particular aspects of both theories that are relevant to this research. Chapter 3 is a literature review of the socio-historical context that relates to PE and school sport in Australia and Britain. The British context is important because, as was discussed earlier in this chapter, Australian education including the PE curriculum has historically been subject to major British influence.
In Chapter 4, a literature review is provided of the theory of method suitable for using with figurational sociology. Within Chapter 4, assumptions associated with figurational research are outlined, as are beliefs about how knowledge is constructed. Research design is also discussed in this chapter along with methods of data collection. Chapter 5 details the methodology deployed, that was informed by the literature outlined in Chapter 4. The steps involved in the research design, deciding the theoretical framework, ethical considerations, and the role of the ICFs are also detailed in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 is the first chapter of three findings chapters, and serves to reconstruct the macro levels of the PE and school sport figurations involved in the study. Chapter 7 reproduces the micro levels of the same figurations, and Chapter 8 is a re-creation of the sociogenesis of those figurations. Chapter 9 offers a discussion of the main research findings, addresses the research questions, and presents a conclusion for the study.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided an introduction to the subject of the investigation and has detailed why the topic is worthy of in-depth analysis. Further, this chapter has presented the background and context for the study, a summary of the theory and methodology used, benefits and risks associated with the research, as well as an outline of what is covered in each chapter. The next chapter explains figurational sociology, as well as the specific aspects of this theory that were used in this study. It is also demonstrated in this next chapter how racialization theory can be incorporated into a figurational approach.
Chapter 2: Figurational Sociology and Racialization Theory

**Literature Review**

This chapter provides a review and explanation of the theoretical framework that was used to inform the research method and interpret the findings in this study. Figurational sociology and racialization theory were chosen, although a number of theories could have been used to explain issues of race and ethnicity in PE and school sport (Macdonald, Abbott, Knez & Nelson, 2009). These two theories were selected because, they offer particular advantages over other theories concerning research design and making sense of research findings. A summary of criticisms of a figurational approach and racialization theory are also provided in this chapter.

### 2.1 Figurational Sociology

Figurational sociology, or process sociology as it is also known, was pioneered by Norbert Elias (1879–1990) who some consider to be one of the greatest sociologists of the twentieth century (Mennell & Goudsblom, 1998). Elias’s contribution to sociology however was only recognized towards the end of his life. According to Dunning and Sheard (1979), figurational sociology differs from other sociological theories because it is concerned with long-term social processes both planned and unplanned, and uses sociological theory to gain understandings of historical data. Central to figurational sociology is the concept of the figuration itself, which Elias (1978a) defines as “a structure of mutually oriented and dependent people” (p. 261). The word ‘figuration’ is an abbreviation of ‘configuration’, which in ‘Eliasian terms’ is a dynamic representation of how people are interdependent of each other (Cashmore, 2000).

According to Elias (1978a), figurations offer a way of explaining society as a network of interdependencies formed by both individuals and groups. These figurations are largely independent of the individuals who have created them, and over time their characteristics tend
to change. In other words people do not have control over figurations although they are inextricably linked to them. Elias (1978a) suggests that a multitude of different figurations exist in a variety of forms, with differing lengths of interdependent bonds such as nation states, different kinds of political systems and families. In other words, figurations exist in all aspects of social life and vary in their complexity from those involving small numbers of individuals such as schools, to those that encompass whole populations created through European colonization, for example. Individuals contained within any figuration are mutually reliant upon each other, with the size of interdependency chains varying according to the magnitude of the figuration and the numbers of people involved.

Figurations of all types can metaphorically resemble social dances. For a dance to happen it has to include individuals who are co-dependent on other individuals who are also part of the dance. The dance analogy also reflects the dynamic qualities of figurations because the shape and structure of dances constantly changes. As Elias (1978a) notes “the same dance figurations can certainly be danced by different people; but without a plurality of reciprocally oriented and dependent individuals, there is no dance” (p. 262). In other words, people involved in a social dance are mutually reliant upon each other and the dance cannot occur without this interdependence.

In the context of figurational sociology the terms ‘macro’ and ‘micro’ have distinct meanings. ‘Macro’ is taken to mean the social structure and rules that are common to any given figuration, and ‘micro’ describes the actions and behaviour of individuals that are contained within this macro level (Baur & Ernst, 2011). The duality of relevance to macro and micro systems is important in this research because both types of figurations have to be considered in answering the research questions. In addition, a third level, the sociogenesis of the figuration also has to be taken into account in using a figurational approach (Baur &
Ernst, 2011). The sociogenesis level explains how a particular figuration came to be, detailing the long-term processes involved in its creation and sustainability.

Another main feature of figurations is the notion of social power. Elias (1978b) states that:

…during the whole development of human societies, power ratios have usually been extremely unequal; people or groups of people with relatively great power chances used to exercise those power chances to the full, often very brutally and unscrupulously for their own purposes (p. 74).

As such, it can be argued that power is a characteristic of all social groups, although importantly no single group has absolute power. Instead, suggests Elias (1978b), power exists relatively between different groups, and like the structural characteristics of figurations themselves, power differentials are also subject to change. Elias (1998a) explains the idea of relative power using the analogy of the relationship between a master and a slave. Elias (1998a), argues that a master does not have complete power over his slave because the nature of the relationship between the two is such that the master is dependent upon the slave.

Instead of power being something that one person possesses and another does not, Elias (1998a) instead considers power to exist as a balance in all human relationships. While power differentials may exist between individuals and groups, no single person or group has absolute power. Conversely, no single person or group is completely without power either. The idea of relative power is important to this research, because it can be used to explain the nature of power balances that exist between the different research participants.

In the following section, it is contended that the centrality of power relationships in figurational sociology is one of the main reasons why this theoretical approach was adopted in this study. It is also argued that power relationships are pivotal in racialization theory.
2.1.1 Why figurational sociology was chosen for this research

The main reason for choosing this theoretical approach is that the research questions are directly related to process and social power relationship issues. Figurational sociology is also versatile and can be considered as a multi-paradigmatic theory (Dunning, 1992). Hence it can be used to explain a wide range of social occurrences. Figurational sociology was also selected because it is recognized as one of the “major theoretical approaches” (Chandler et al., 2002, p. 187) for studying PE and sport in society.

Despite the appeal of figurational sociology, it has rarely been used in the Australian setting with most research having been undertaken in British and European contexts (Dunning, 2002). It is contended that several inter-connected aspects of figurational sociology are relevant to this research: The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a); habitus (both individual and social) (Elias, 1978a); established and outsider theory (Elias & Scotson, 1994); and involvement and detachment (Elias, 1998c). Each of those sub-disciplines of figurational sociology is considered in turn in the following section.

2.2 The Civilizing Process

The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a, 1994) is the theory for which Elias is most known (Murphy, Sheard & Waddington, 2000). It sets out to explain how Europeans have come to view themselves as being more ‘civilized’ than both previous societies as well as people from some contemporary neighbouring nations (Linklater & Mennell, 2010). Central to this theory is the notion that between the Middle Ages and the early twentieth century, there was a gradual refinement of manners and social behaviour accompanied by a move towards greater self-restraint by the individual. This theory is relevant to this study because British colonialists deemed the social standards, norms, values and beliefs of Indigenous peoples to be ‘out of sync’ with their own (Van Krieken, 1999). As such Indigenous peoples were considered inferior, and consequently the use of violence was justified by those at the
frontiers of the British Empire (Van Krieken, 1999). *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 1978a) is important in this thesis because it may be relevant for explaining possible differences in behaviour contemporarily between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants who took part.

Elias developed his theory from an empirical study of historical documents that detailed this long-term process (Aya, 1978). A large part of Volume 1 of *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 1978a) describes some of the behaviours that were part of this change such as table manners, nose blowing, spitting, sleeping arrangements and aggressiveness. Specific to aggressiveness, part of the alteration of social behaviour at a personal level included an increase in revulsion towards violent acts. The upper and middle classes led the way in this shift, by changing their behaviour and manners, with those changes gradually diffusing to the lower classes (Elias, 1978a).

According to Elias (1978a), *The Civilizing Process* was able to occur in Western Europe because of wider societal changes that led to the formation of nation states. Those nation states formed in evolving nations from elimination battles between competing factions. Typically these groups included kings and feudal lords, with the outcomes of disputes leading to the formation of powerful alliances. In each nation state, the resultant established group, through its relative power was able to monopolise violence, taxation and facilitate economic growth – all of which argues Elias, are required for the relative pacification of society. Elias used the expression ‘functional democratization’ (Elias, 1978b) to describe the levelling out of power between the different classes and groups that occurred as part of this process of nation state formation.

In the next section it is explained how *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 1978a) is not a continuous unidirectional process that describes the progressive development of European societies. Instead, according to Elias (1978a), this process also included what he termed
episodes of reverse civilization. This section shows that the development of European societies while being characterized by refinements in behaviour including increased regulation of violence at a state and individual level, also included acts of inequity, barbarism and aggression by so called ‘civilized’ people. Reverse civilization is important to this research, because according to Elias (1996) differences in social standards and expectations between different groups are often justification for ‘uncivilized’ acts. Aspects of reverse civilization relating to differing social standards and expectations may therefore be useful, for explaining possible differences in behaviour between the non-Indigenous and Indigenous participants involved in this study.

2.2.1 Reverse civilization as part of The Civilizing Process

Dunning (1992) argues that The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a) is often misunderstood and misrepresented partly because some of its meaning is lost in translation. Elias originally wrote The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a) in German, and of note is that in German, the word ‘process’ also means ‘trial’. Writing as a German Jew just before the outbreak of World War II, Elias considered that civilization in addition to being a process, was also ‘on trial’ given the social unrest in German society at the time. Importantly, Elias also considered The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a) to be unfinished and viewed his theory “as a contribution [author’s emphasis] to the understanding of Western civilization and its development rather than as a theory which is fully fledged and complete” (Dunning, 1992, p. 260). Dunning also argues that a poor translation of The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a) accounted for it being represented as an uninterrupted linear process, when in fact Elias explicitly states that reverse civilization or ‘de-civilizing spurts’ are involved (Linklater & Mennell, 2010).

Elias (1996) used the example of the Nazis to illustrate such a ‘de-civilizing spur’, commenting that the mass murder of the Jews “…was probably the deepest regression into
barbarism in twentieth-century Europe” (p. 309). Regarding this barbarism, Elias (1996) argues that a main motivation for the Nazi atrocities towards the Jews was differing and incompatible social standards between the two groups. In addition, a nation state monopoly of violence enabled this barbaric behaviour. Further, Elias (1996) argues that the social values of the Nazis are not uncommon to those of developed societies in contemporary times and comments:

People of the twentieth century are often inclined implicitly to see themselves and their age as if their standards of civilization and rationality were far beyond both the barbarism of earlier times and that of less developed societies of today (p. 302).

Elias (1978a) believes that far from being superior and representing a peak in civilization, supposedly ‘more civilized’ nation states include people whom he calls ‘late barbarians’. Elias contends, however, that relative to the Middle Ages, contemporary society is overall relatively more civilized (Dunning, 1992).

2.2.2 Reverse civilization in the Australian context and the ‘superiority’ of British and European knowledge

It is argued in this thesis that Elias’s observations and interpretation of Nazis genocide can be related to the atrocities committed by the British as part of Australian colonization. Those atrocities include massacres of Indigenous people (Mudrooroo, 1995; Pattel-Gray, 1991) and displacement of Aboriginal people and their way of life from the late 1700s.

Examples of de-civilizing spurts involving Australian Indigenous peoples have also occurred in more recent times such as the cruel treatment and resettlement of Aboriginal children known as the ‘Stolen Generation’. In fact, a figurational account of the ‘Stolen Generation’ has been written (Van Krieken, 1999). The idea of Western European people feeling superior to non-European societies about which Elias comments, is another central argument in the theoretical framework used in this study. Later in the chapter, the complex processes that have
led Europeans to adopting this superior attitude are detailed. In the context of the ‘superiority’ of those people, Elias (1996) continues:

Many Europeans seem to be of the opinion that it is part of their nature to behave in a civilized manner – more or less in the manner in which aristocrats used implicitly to consider their specific manners and ways of behaving as inborn. Sometimes they even characterize themselves in their speaking and thinking as members of ‘civilized’ races in contrast to ‘uncivilized races’, as if civilized behaviour were a genetically inherited attribute of specific human groups and not of others (p. 308).

Elias (1996) draws attention to a belief amongst European people that their manners, customs, and ways of doing things are somehow innate and more advanced than those of people from other societies. Inherent in this belief is that the ‘civilized’ behaviour of European nation state populations is unique to them, and that this behaviour distinguishes those people from groups who are at a lesser stage of development. Elias (1996) comments that the word ‘civilization’ is used in a wide range of contexts with multiple meanings, but notes that it represents a self-expression of what it is to be Western which also forms part of the national psyche of Western nation states. Elias (1978a) argues that ‘civilization’:

…sums up everything in which Western society of the last two or three centuries believes itself superior to earlier societies or “more primitive” contemporary ones. By this term Western society seeks to describe what constitutes its special character and what it is proud of: the level of its [author’s emphasis] technology, the nature of its [author’s emphasis] manners, the development of its [author’s emphasis] scientific knowledge or view of the world, and much more (pp. 3–4).

Elias (1978a) argues that people from industrialized European countries have come to think of themselves as being more advanced in all aspects of life compared with people from ‘less developed’ societies. The theory presented here about ‘superiority’ could be relevant in
explaining the behaviour of the non-Indigenous participants in this research, if they are found
to act as if they are ‘superior’ to Indigenous peoples. Elias’s (1978a) observations about
‘superiority’ may be relevant in answering research question one, if HPE teachers in this
study are found to consider Eurocentric sport and dance forms as being more advanced than
Indigenous alternatives.

In the next section, The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a) is discussed in the context of
the colonization of the Australian continent. This discussion is relevant because the arguments
presented may again help explain the behaviour of participants in this research.

2.2.3 The Civilizing Process and colonization

According to Van Krieken (1999), Elias mentions little in his work about the violence
that nation states instigated as part of their colonial exploits while they were simultaneously
engaged in civilizing processes in their own countries. Instead, in a similar way to his
observations about the Nazis and the Jews, Elias focuses more on the motives involved.
Nonetheless, Elias (1994) does acknowledge that civilizing processes and colonization go
‘hand in hand’ “it is not a little characteristic of the structure of Western society that the
watchword of its colonizing movement is “civilization”” (pp. 509–510). Mennell and
Goudsblom (1998) proceed to explain how the meaning of ‘civilization’ has changed from
associations with the refinement of the manners of courtiers in sixteenth century French court
society, to ultimately become an evaluative colonial ideological term devoid of any sense of
process.

It is important to emphasise the importance of ‘process’ in Elias’s (1978a)
understandings of The Civilizing Process. In ‘Eliasant terms’, The Civilizing Process (Elias,
1978a) in common with all figurations is never static, but continually moving (Dunning &
Sheard, 1979). Further, for Elias, the word ‘civilized’ had a ‘technical’ meaning rather than
being about one group of people considering themselves to be morally superior than another
(Dunning, 2002). Using this technical meaning, Mennell and Goudsblom (1998) contend that by the nineteenth century Western European people considered that *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 1978a) was accomplished. Those people were by that time self-assured of their own ‘superior’ standards and their main focus was “…only to ‘civilize’ others: the lower classes of their own countries and, especially, the natives of lands now being colonized by European powers” (Mennell & Goudsblom, 1998, pp. 14–15). Therefore, there was a sense of duty as part on the part of the colonizers to civilize the ‘uncivilized’. For Elias, there is also an emotional factor in one group of people claiming superiority over another. He observes that “human groups seem to take a strange delight in asserting their superiority over others, particularly if it has been attained by violent means” (Elias, 1998c, p. 89). Pleasurable feelings seem then to accompany group domination by one group over another.

National confidence through the reconstruction of the meaning of ‘civilization’ accompanied by state monopolization of military force and taxation, and the desire to expand, paved the way for the colonization of Australia. Many reasons have been proposed by historians to account for nineteenth century imperialism, including economic factors, international competition and the fragility of colonial frontiers (Ferguson, 2004; Headrick, 1981). However, Elias (1998c) contends that an additional motivation for colonization was a desire to diffuse *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 1978a) beyond Western European nation states. Indeed, spreading *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 1978a) was deemed essential as a means of controlling the Indigenous people and ensuring that they were able to fulfil their function, and know their social place in colonial society. According to Elias (1994), the process of colonization meant that those being colonized had to adopt the values of the colonizers, including at an individual level, self-control and self-regulation. Elias (1994) states that colonization:
...demands a “civilization” of the colonized. Just as it was not possible in the West itself, from a certain stage of interdependence onwards, to rule people solely by force and physical threats, so it also became necessary, in maintaining an Empire that went beyond mere plantation-land and plantation-labour, to rule people in part through themselves, through the moulding of their super-egos (p. 509).

Further, Elias (1998b) contends that as part of colonization, nation states perform an ‘upper class’ function and engage in particular behaviour, and adopt other ‘distinguishing characteristics’ that differentiate them from the colonized. Examples that are relevant to this research include systems of government, education provision, and games and sports. Indeed, such ‘defining qualities’ are considered almost ‘sacred’ and safeguarded at whatever cost. According to Elias (1998b), institutions are created by the colonizers with the purpose of helping create this ‘distinctiveness’. In this sense European sport, and British sport in particular could be considered as examples of ‘institutions’ as will be explained in the next chapter. Schools also served a similar function in creating distinctiveness and were used to prepare Indigenous students for a life quite different from that planned for non-Indigenous students (Price, 2012a). During colonial times Indigenous students were considered by the British as being uneducable (Price, 2012a). The role of schools as part of colonization is also considered in the following chapter.

Despite nation states using methods described in the previous paragraph for colonization, over time, and as part of an unintended process there occurs a ‘levelling out’ of social power and behaviour between settlers and Indigenous peoples “the contrasts in conduct between the upper and lower groups are reduced with the spread of civilization; the varieties or nuances of civilized conduct are increased” (Elias, 1998b, p. 71). Through mutual dependency on each other, and a lengthening of interdependency ties over time, a power balance shift occurs between colonizers and the colonized. A corresponding levelling out of
contrasts in social behaviour also occurs, which Elias (1994, 1998b) describes as a process of ‘diminishing contrasts’. This notion of diminishing contrasts is relevant to this research because in the school context, it is assumed Indigenous peoples in Australia have ‘advanced’ from being excluded from government schooling to becoming ‘accepted’. However, overall their schooling experience has historically been, to varying degrees quite different from non-Indigenous students. The nature of these differences is again considered in the subsequent chapter.

The ideas that have been presented in this section are perhaps relevant to this research if the HPE teacher participants involved believe that it is their role is to ‘civilize’ Indigenous students, using PE and sport and the values associated with both.

2.2.4 The Civilizing Process and the development of modern sport

A consideration of the development of modern sport is important to this research because modern sport is the form played in the schools that took part in this study. This development as a long-term process could be important for answering research question one, because modern sport represents the dominant physical activity practiced in PE and school sport in Australia (Kirk, 2010a).

From a figurational perspective the development of modern sport commenced in England and occurred in conjunction with The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a). As part of this transition, traditional physical contests became less violent through the use of rules, the regulation of behaviour and the standardization of equipment. These changes commenced simultaneously with the pacification of English society towards the end of the seventeenth century. The seventeenth century having been a turbulent period that was characterized by warring factions of Protestants and Catholics. The latter religious group comprised loyalists and members of the ruling classes.
In contrast to the seventeenth century, eighteenth century English society was much more peaceful. This more settled period was on account of political disputes became increasingly resolved through parliamentary processes from the beginning of the eighteenth century. This ‘parliamentarization’, the term used by Elias to describe the origins of parliamentary government took place at the same time as the ‘sportization’ of physical pastimes (Elias & Dunning, 1986). ‘Sportization’ being a term coined by Elias and Dunning (1986) to explain the process by which pastimes in England were transformed into sport. In other words, members of the upper classes who were responsible for introducing non-violent processes of conflict resolution, were at the same time responsible for the reduction of violence in physical pastimes (Dunning, 1993). The pacification of society enabled these activities to begin to adopt their modern qualities, and from the eighteenth century people began calling them ‘sports’ (Dunning, 2010). According to figurationalists, modern sport evolved in two distinct stages. The first was in the eighteenth century where the ruling classes of society took a leading role, and the other in the nineteenth century where lower classes of society also took part (Dunning, 1999). Although there had been some movement towards transforming physical activities in the sixteenth century, momentum did not gather until the eighteenth century.

Eighteenth century England witnessed the appearance of more ‘civilized’ versions of boxing and cricket, and the nineteenth century saw the rise of more standardized forms of athletics as well as more refined forms of soccer, rugby, tennis and hockey (Dunning, 1999). As will be shown in Chapter 6, each of those sports with the exception of boxing, have been traditionally played in PE and school sport in the three schools that took part in this research.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the term ‘sport’ increasingly came to represent physical pursuits that were characteristically non-violent. Where violence was an inherent part of a game, such as in boxing or wrestling for example, it was increasingly
constrained by rules. Further, enjoyment derived from violence became increasingly distasteful in society generally, and not just in sport. Consequently, there was a reduction in the tendency for people to seek and experience pleasure in participating in, or observing violent acts (Dunning, 2010). Elias called this change in behaviour “a dampening of Angriffslust” (as cited in Dunning, 2010, p. 20). While those kinds of changes as part of The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a) were apparent within Western European societies, Dunning observes that elsewhere in the world the amount of transformation varied.

Although other theories have been used to explain the development of modern sport, Dunning (1999) is critical of those that suggest that it is attributed to Britain being the world’s first and foremost industrial nation. Instead, Dunning and other figurationalists prefer multi-causal explanations for societal events. Dunning (1999) does however recognise the influence of the industrial revolution, but argues that this was only part of a wider process of social transformation that had far reaching effects at an individual personality level as well as at a societal level. Figurationalists argue that The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a) has been central in the development of modern sport. Wider societal changes were mirrored through the modification of standards of behaviour, increased structure and additional rules being introduced. In particular, there was greater regulation of violence as well as compartmentalizing of time and space.

2.2.5 The Civilizing Process and cricket as the ‘quintessential’ English game

Cricket enjoys something of a unique position in The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a) because this sport comes to represent many of the ideals of the British Empire while simultaneously incorporating elements of sanctioned violence and ‘gentlemanly’ conduct. Dunning (1992) describes how this game is intended to resemble launching a hard object at a castle represented by the wicket. A tactic involves purposefully aiming the ball at the head of the batsmen which along with the analogy of the castle emphasises the violent aspects of the
game. The game also involves strategies to outwit components that require thought as opposed to physical force. In contrast to associations with violence, cricket is also characterized by cucumber sandwiches and breaks for tea emphasising the Englishness of the sport (Dunning, 1992).

According to Dunning (1992) ‘refreshment traditions’ and other gentlemanly behaviour embodied in cricket should not detract from the less civilized behaviour displayed by initial proponents of the game. In particular, these individuals who predominantly came from the ruling classes:

…were still capable of cruelty to social subordinates and were engaged, at the same time as they were involved in the early development of cricket and other sports, in the predatory build-up of the largest empire – at least in the formal sense of being named as such – that the world has ever known (p. 271).

It could be argued that what cricket represents (the destruction of a castle along with particular customs off the field) demonstrates its connectedness to ‘Englishness’. The balance of violence and gentlemanly behaviour associated with the game, along with its interdependencies to the British Empire, make it especially relevant to this study. That the same people who played this ‘civilized’ sport, could then be engaged in the atrocities that were involved in establishing the Empire is also noteworthy. There is a sense of double standards, where civilized conduct is displayed by the same individuals who are simultaneously engaged in acts of high violence. The capacity for so called ‘civilized’ people to behave in such a barbaric way can be explained using figurational sociology and the same argument that Elias (1996) offers in accounting for the Nazi atrocities discussed earlier. Justification of those violent acts it is argued parallels how the Nazis rationalized the use of violence against the Jews.
This section has detailed how modern sport evolved as part of *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 1978a), and it is argued that its development took place simultaneously with global imperialism. Hence, versions of sport in their modern form diffused in conjunction with British political, educational and other social systems. Particular British sports, and team games in particular, along with those broader systems have persisted to a greater extent since colonization.

### 2.3 Habitus

Although the term ‘habitus’ is often credited to Bourdieu (1990), Elias was using the word in his work some time before Bourdieu (Dunning, 2002; Dunning & Mennell, 1996; Mennell & Goudsblom, 1998; Paulle, Van Heerikhuizen & Emirbayer, 2012). Paulle et al. (2012) note that “…it remains the case that Elias was working extensively with habitus long before Bourdieu had ever heard of the term” (p. 71). Nevertheless, suggest Paulle et al. (2012), both Elias and Bourdieu used habitus, or words with similar meaning. However, according to Paulle et al. (2012), differences in translation masked commonality in how the notion of habitus was understood and used. Nonetheless, both agreed about the fundamental meaning of ‘habitus’, that the actions of people at an individual level are influenced by the social world in which they live (Paulle et al., 2012). Each also sought to challenge taken-for-granted explanations of behaviour by individuals through the notion of habitus (Paulle et al., 2012).

The following paragraphs introduce habitus as a theory in understanding how individually and collectively people are predisposed to certain kinds of behaviour. The terms individual and social habitus are explained, and the formation of ‘We’ identities by social groups is also discussed.
2.3.1 Individual habitus

Habitus, sometimes referred to as ‘second nature’ or ‘personality make-up’ (Mennell & Goudsblom, 1998), describes aspects of personality that become deeply engrained in one’s self that are learned in social situations as opposed to being innate within the individual.

While it is widely accepted that much of an individual’s habitus development occurs during the early years of life, it is a process that is in effect throughout life, from birth onwards. Although habitus informs our behaviour, it is subject to modification through the different social experiences individuals encounter in the variety of figurations that they form, and are part of during their life span. Further, changing power differentials in these various figurations influence when and how habitus continues to be formed. According to Elias (1998b), habitus is “…the web of social relations in which the individual lives during his most impressionable phase, during childhood and youth, which imprints itself upon his unfolding personality…” (p. 62). Personality peculiarities become so embedded that they are assumed as being ‘natural’, and result in a person becoming pre-disposed to behaving in a particular way.

The kind of sport played at the schools involved in this research is an example of the web of social relations to which Elias (1998b) refers. Indigenous students and future HPE teachers alike play those same sports within the school setting. This exposure to certain sports is important to this study because involvement from a young age shapes the habitus of those individuals. In other words, particular sports become more valued than others because of early associations in the lives of individuals.

Central to Elias’s argument is the concept of an individual not existing as a self-contained unit or what could be termed ‘homo clausus’ in Freudian terms (Kilminster, 2004). Elias (1988), argued that a person’s habitus is subject to social processes and constraints typical of the society in which they live. In other words, habitus is largely influenced by people being interdependent upon each other within social structures or figurations (Elias,
1988). In more developed societies the effect of this interdependency can be shown in social manners that have been passed down by generations over several centuries, or in individuals demonstrating self-restraint. The example earlier of Western European people considering themselves as being superior, through being more ‘civilized’, is an example of how habitus forms. Consequently, it can be argued that the notion of being ‘civilized’ has been so engrained at a personality level, that it can be mistakenly interpreted by the individual as being ‘innate’ which can lead to racial connotations. In the Australian context those connotations being that people of European heritage are superior to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people.

2.3.2 Social or group habitus (‘We’ identities)

As well as at an individual level, habitus can also be considered as ‘We’ identity. Elias (1991) uses the analogy of ‘soil’ to explain the ‘common ground’ that influences the shaping of our norms and beliefs as individuals. Social habitus can be explained as “…the modes of conduct, taste, and feeling which predominate among members of particular groups. It can refer to shared traits of which the people who share them may be largely unconscious…” (Mennell, 1994, p. 176). Included within social habitus, is the notion of group charisma. Group charisma is a collective belief where members of a given group believe they possess honourable and upright characteristics, which distinguish them from people from other groups who they consider to be inferior (Elias & Scotson, 1994).

Elias (1991) maintains that people in nation states take on both ‘I’ and ‘We’ identities, and the two are inter-related, albeit there is a tendency in contemporary developed societies for the ‘I’ identity to be stronger. Elias suggests that ‘national character’ is a particular form of ‘We’ identity that is deeply embedded within individual ‘I’ identities. In addition, Elias (1991) contends that national identity, like all other figurations is characteristically dynamic and that government education plays a part in this process. Elias (1991) notes “in all nation
states the institutions of public education are dedicated to an extreme degree in deepening and consolidating a we-feeling based exclusively on the national tradition” (p. 210). Thus schools such as those that were part of this research, serve in part to develop both ‘I’ and ‘We’ identities. ‘We’ groups vary like figurations themselves, in terms of nature and size. In this thesis, examples of ‘We’ groups at a school level are principals, teacher and parents; Indigenous students and IEOs; as well as HPE teachers including pre-service teachers. At a national and global level, non-Indigenous and Indigenous people can also be considered as separate ‘We’ groups. It is argued that racialization, involving fantasy elements as well as real differences such as skin colour, has contributed to those particular ‘We’ identities.

In schools, examples of ‘We’ identity behaviour are apparent in the kinds of PE and sport that are valued and that ‘we play’ (which can be related to the traditional national team games such as cricket and both codes of rugby) in the singing of the national anthem, as well as in the racialized positioning of some students by other students discussed later in the thesis. ‘I’ identities are also apparent in how HPE teachers and students perceive themselves according to their sporting associations, and schools it will be argued are instrumental in shaping and reinforcing those perspectives. The importance of group habitus to this research will be explained in the next chapter when different contexts in the research are examined.

In a similar way to individual habitus, certain behaviour and customs are passed down from generation to generation in creating ‘We’ identities (Elias, 1991). Concerning the practices of English PE teachers, Green (2000a) states that it is “…important to recognize that PE teachers, headteachers and governors in the past [author’s emphasis], as well as the present have influenced the context and the constraints in which contemporary PE teachers work” (p. 196). How PE teachers go about their day-to-day work has been shaped by long-term processes including dominant discourses and traditions, involving previous generations of PE teachers and other key players of influence. In the same way as individuals from
Western European societies consider their ‘civilized’ behaviour as being innate, and devoid of the influence of long-term processes; so too can teachers concerning their preferred practices. It is suggested that HPE teachers can be largely impervious and indifferent to how their shared teaching practices came to be, and can consider those practices as having ‘always been’.

2.3.3 Scientific societies and ‘We’ group Identity

Elias (1987) asserts that people from what he calls ‘scientific societies’ tend to view their greater fact based or technical knowledge, as something that they have personally reasoned as opposed to inherited. As such, they fail to recognise that their knowledge is part of a long-term process that has seen information handed down from generation to generation. According to Elias (1987) this scientific or technical knowledge has been extended and translated by scientific societies to equate to superiority in every sense when compared with pre-scientific societies. Elias (1987), contends that on account of this ‘passed down’ accumulated knowledge people are now much better prepared to cope with their physical environments than were their ancestors.

However, at a social level, Elias (1987) believes that the people from scientific societies are less in control of their environment, and that their environmental knowledge is nowhere near that of the scientific. Subsequently, humans he argues are not able to control the dangers they present to each other, nor can they adequately understand societies ‘less advanced’ than their own. According to Elias (1987), people from more developed societies sometimes have a more rational view of life, and have what Elias describes as lower-fantasy content in their systems of knowledge. The beliefs of those individuals are typically attributed, not to long-term processes of social development and behaviour modification. Instead, they consider their stage of development to be innate. About people at prior stages of development, those people:
…including their own ancestors, did not or do not possess or possess only in smaller doses. They might say of these people, “They are just superstitious and irrational”, which may seem like an explanation but, in fact, explains nothing. It simply means “We are better” (Elias, 1987, pp. 51–52).

Elias’s argument can be developed to describe contemporary Australian society if one was to consider a school community for example. Within such a community, teachers including HPE teachers may consider themselves consciously or subconsciously, as being representatives and proponents of the ‘scientific society’. For example, Tinning et al. (2001) commenting about Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) observe that student teachers are taught about the body as if it was just a machine and “…come to understand the scientific body as a ‘natural body’ and probably not even contemplate the idea of the body as a ‘social body’ (also)” (p. 173). This view of knowledge and approach is important to this research because as will be explained in the next chapter, by privileging scientific knowledge over social knowledge factors such as culture, social justice and meaning are ignored.

It is also perhaps the case, that because of the low status and poor understanding of Indigenous forms of knowledge that have endured since colonial times (Nakata, 2012a; Price, 2012a), again discussed in the next chapter, HPE teachers may regard Indigenous students as being from non-scientific societies. A figuration where HPE teachers consider themselves to have more advanced knowledge with a ‘lower fantasy-content’ (Elias, 1987) can it is contended facilitate racialization against Indigenous peoples. However, it is argued later in this chapter, that racialization can only occur where one individual or group has more social power than another.

‘We’ identities are relevant to this research because they signify social power within figurations, the behaviour and practices that count, as well as what does not count. In the next section, it is contended that ‘We’ identities are a main characteristic of established groups.
2.4 Established and Outsider Group Theory

Elias and Scotson (1994) use the term ‘established-outsider’ relationships as a way of conceptualizing group domination and group oppression as a particular kind of figuration where unequal power balances play an essential role. Much of the work by Elias and Scotson (1994) on established and outsider relations was developed from a study of the Winston Parva community near Leicester, England. Winston Parva was made up of residents who had lived there for some time, as well as newcomers to the area. Those that had been in the community the longest being the established group and the newcomers the outsiders. Elias and Scotson’s research (1994) was concerned with relationships between those two groups, and in particular how the established group developed ways in which to distinguish themselves from the outsiders. In summing up how the established group behaved in Winston Parva, Elias and Scotson (1994) state that they:

…felt exposed to a three-pronged attack - against their monopolised power resources, against their group charisma and against their group norms. They repelled what they experienced as an attack by closing their ranks against the outsiders, by excluding and humiliating them (pp. li–lii).

Elias and Scotson (1994) argue that their theory is largely transferable, valid for a wide range of situations, and can shed light on understanding small and large scale social problems. This transferability and application of established and outsider theory to a broad range of settings makes it appealing to this research. It is perhaps possible that it can be used to explain the social structural arrangements that were studied in this thesis.

As will be shown in the following chapter, it is argued that HPE teachers can be considered an established group because they have a particular social habitus and group charisma. As such, they are able to decide what being an HPE teacher means, as well as what is taught in PE. Through having shared beliefs and values formed over time, as well as a high
differential of social power, HPE teachers can act to exclude other groups that they consider to be inferior or who have different points of view. An example of the ability of HPE teachers to exclude influences from outsider groups is also provided in the next chapter. It is explained that HPE teachers are included in a national figuration that has adopted a Eurocentric curriculum. This curriculum has historically excluded non-European mention, and Indigenous perspectives in particular. Further, this figuration has remained largely unaltered for more than 50 years (Kirk, 2010a) with its longevity demonstrating the relative power of HPE teachers in continuing the figuration.

It is argued that in addition to the idea of HPE teachers being an established group, established and outsider relations exist in various forms, both within the schools studied in this research, and in wider national and global contexts. In the next chapter and in the findings chapters, the nature of these different levels of established and outsider relationships are examined.

2.4.1 Established group cohesion

A key finding from Elias and Scotson’s 1994 study was the central role of ‘cohesion’ of individuals within established groups in creating and maintaining an excess of social power in comparison to outsider groups. Cohesion was found to be dependent on ‘time’, because the authors argue that it takes time for cohesion to develop in any group. Over an extended period, distinguishing structures and characteristics form such as group norms, beliefs, particular ways of doing things, traditions and “common memories” (Elias & Scotson, 1994, p. xxxviii) all of which contribute to group unity. Further, those observations concerning established group cohesiveness argue Elias and Scotson (1994) are not peculiar to the Winston Parva study, but instead can be seen in many other established-outsider figurations.

However, Elias and Scotson (1994) believe that the influence of cohesion has been overlooked by commentators in favour of other ‘defining characteristics’ such as ‘class’ or
‘skin colour’. In Winston Parva, the greater cohesiveness of the established group enabled its members to secure and maintain positions of privilege in the community that were inaccessible to the outsiders. According to Elias and Scotson (1994) a further feature of established groups is that when a group is threatened by outsiders, members tend to work together to protect group status and existence by ‘closing rank’. Acting in this way, group members retain their sense of ‘distinctiveness’ and ‘superiority’. Cohesion is of importance in this research, because it is argued that HPE teachers as an established group may demonstrate cohesion in protecting what they value as PE from outside influences. Those influences might relate to Indigenous perspectives.

### 2.4.2 Stigmatizing behaviour in established and outsider relationships

Another key occurrence that Elias and Scotson (1994) identified in their research, which they believe is also a common characteristic of established-outsider relations, is the use of stigmatizing behaviour by the former to distinguish them from the latter. They argue that stigmatization within the context of established-outsider relationships often relates to “…a specific type of collective fantasy evolved by the established group. It reflects and, at the same time, justifies the aversion – the prejudice – its members feel towards those of the outsider group” (Elias & Scotson, 1994, pp. xxxiv–xxxv). According to Elias and Scotson (1994), as part of this stigmatizing behaviour, established groups tend to regard outsider groups as representing the ‘worst behaviour’ of a dysfunctional minority. Members of established groups also tend to define themselves according to the ‘best behaviour’ of a minority in their own grouping. A further feature of this argument (Elias & Scotson, 1994) is that members of outsider groups begin to internalize those stigmatizing messages, believing them to be true, and that they are indeed inferior. They adopt what Elias and Scotson (1994) refer to as their ‘group disgrace’, which has the effect of weakening and disarming them.
Elias and Scotson (1994) also identified that a characteristic of stigmatizing behaviour in Winston Parva and elsewhere, was for outsiders to be considered ‘polluted’ and that if anyone from the established group had any association with them there was a risk of ‘contamination’. Subsequently, in their study there were no examples of established members interacting with the newcomers other than for reasons associated with work. This suggests Elias and Scotson (1994), is an example of the strength of the controlling effect that cohesiveness has within established groups. Association with the newcomers was taboo, because members of the established group risked being ostracised and losing status in their own group. There was risk of countering established group beliefs and norms. Indeed, Elias and Scotson (1994) maintain that the stigma of ‘contamination’ has enduring qualities that enable it to prevail even when there is a shift in the overall power balance in favour of outsiders.

2.4.3 Racial difference and established-outsider relationships

According to Elias and Scotson (1994), sociologists in trying to make sense of established/outsider figurations tend to do so through reduction to notions of individual ‘prejudice’. That is, discrimination based upon racialized viewpoints. For example, one person disliking another person only because of differences in skin colour or standards of behaviour. Such a viewpoint is devoid of any recognition or consideration for the wider group related factors and other interdependent variables discussed in the previous section. From a figurational perspective it is argued that prejudice is more than the act of one individual or group victimizing another individual or group. For this behaviour to occur, there needs to be a power differential favouring the perpetrator or perpetrators. Established group norms, cohesiveness and historical influences are all factors that enable prejudice to take place. Therefore, for Elias and Scotson (1994), prejudicial behaviour can only be adequately explained by examining simultaneously those wider processes. Therefore, understanding the
nature of established and outsider figurations must involve more than a consideration of real
and imagined differences produced at a personality level. In addition, shared and group
influences, including group constructs of difference also have to be contemplated (Elias &
Scotson, 1994).

Elias and Scotson (1994) therefore emphasise that power imbalances are a key
characteristic of established-outsider figurations, along with the tension that such differentials
create. The ability of established groups to engage in stigmatizing behaviour is entirely
dependent upon them holding and maintaining a surplus of social power relative to the
outsiders. Nonetheless figurations are dynamic, as over time balances of power tend to shift in
favour of outsider groups sometimes resulting in acts of retaliation (Elias, 1978a). The
following extract serves to explain Elias and Scotson’s argument about how the terms ‘race
relations’, ‘racial prejudice’ and associated words are misleading and inadequate. Through
using such terms Elias and Scotson (1994) contend that attention is diverted to issues of skin
colour, and other secondary considerations instead of the salient issues concerning power
differentials:

Whether or not the groups to which one refers when speaking of “race relations” or
“racial prejudice” differ in their “racial” descent and appearance, the salient aspect of
their relationship is that they are bonded together in a manner which endows one of
them with very much greater power resources than the other and enables that group to
exclude members of the other group from access to the centre of these resources and
from closer contact with its own members, thus relegating them to the position of
outsiders (p. xxx).

Therefore from a figurational perspective, an understanding of power imbalances is
central to issues concerning racial difference. Only by taking social power variances into
consideration can matters that appear to be due to observable difference be explained.
2.4.4 Diminishing contrasts in established-outsider relationships

Writing about The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a), Elias (1994) explains how power differentials continuously change over hundreds of years within established and outsider figurations, and over time tend to move in favour of the latter group. Eventually a ‘levelling out’ or ‘diminishing of contrasts’ occurs in the different standards of behaviours and general living conditions between the two groups. As ‘desirable’ standards of behaviour diffuse from a small ruling group to an outsider group, there are two distinct phases of change according to Elias (1994):

…a phase of colonization or assimilation in which the lower and larger outsider class is still clearly inferior and governed by the example of the established upper group which, intentionally or unintentionally, permeates it with its own pattern of conduct, and a second phase of repulsion, differentiation or emancipation, in which the rising group gains perceptibly in social power and self-confidence, and in which the upper group is forced into increased restraint and isolation… (p. 507).

This argument can be extended to apply to the Indigenous peoples of Australia by suggesting that it does not have to be a ‘larger outsider class’ for the kind of changes that Elias (1994) describes to take place. If one considers how Indigenous peoples and Australian migrants have come to live together over the years since colonial times, the kinds of changes that Elias (1994) describes are evident. It could be contended that in contemporary times, Indigenous peoples are in the ‘second phase of repulsion’ (Elias, 1994). This can be shown for example in wider societal changes such as the right for Indigenous people to vote, access to education and health systems, a dedicated Indigenous channel on pay to view television, and the ‘national apology’. This notion of ‘diminishing contrasts’, particularly within an educational context will be developed and explained more in the next chapter, particularly in the context of Indigenous traditional games.
2.5 Involvement and Detachment

A key aspect of figurational sociology is the concept that all people, at any given time, are both involved and detached to the figurations of which they are part. The relativity of this arrangement is a symptom of the interdependence that individuals have with each other in any given figuration. For Elias, no person is ever entirely involved, or in contrast completely detached:

The view, widespread today, that a sane individual may become totally independent of the opinion of all his or her we-groups and, in that sense, absolutely autonomous, is as misleading as the opposite view that his or her autonomy may entirely disappear within a collective of robots (as cited in Elias & Scotson, 1994, pp. xl–xli).

Elias (1994) reasons that only babies, or the insane devoid of their capabilities and responsibilities could be regarded as being completely involved in any particular experience. In both cases those concerned could be viewed as not having a ‘care in the world’ other than with what is of immediate concern (Elias, 1987). Regarding detachment, and in a similar way to how Elias considered the Nazis and the Jews mentioned earlier, Elias and Scotson (1994) approached their Winston Parva study with a degree of distance. Their focus of attention was on the reasons for, and processes behind the stigmatization they observed, rather than casting any kind of value judgment about who was ‘right’ and who was ‘wrong’.

2.5.1 Involvement and detachment in physical education

Elias and Dunning (1986) commenting about the PE research context, argue that PE professionals often lack detachment in their work by being too emotionally involved. They are also critical of PE teachers for not examining PE concerns within wider social contexts and believe that they tend to favour pragmatic approaches. More recently, Green (2006) observes that high levels of PE teacher involvement and in addition PE academic involvement still occurs:
...one cannot escape the impression that many physical educationalists (including those who might reasonably be expected to be constrained towards more ‘objective’ or detached positions, namely, academics) display a tendency to talk of physical education as if it has a readily identifiable core or essence – something it is ‘at heart’ and must always be if it is to be worthy of the name... (pp. 653–654).

Instead of being something that is clearly distinguishable, Green (2006) argues that PE in contrast is an amalgamation of taken for granted habitual beliefs and practices that are safeguarded by the PE profession. As well as being concerned about issues of involvement, Green’s (2006) observations suggest underlying themes of ‘We’ identity, and established group structural characteristics in which notions of what constitutes PE are based upon mythical elements. There is also a sense that this established group will go to some length to uphold the intrinsic value of their subject, and in doing so will work cohesively to counter any outsider threats – such as significant curriculum changes for example.

2.6 Criticisms of Figurational Sociology

Figurational sociology has been subject to some criticism, although it is argued that often this criticism is unjustified on account of misunderstandings about the discipline. For example, Elias has been accused of promoting figurational theory as being ‘superior’ to existing sociology theories (Layder, 1986). Layder argues that instead of demonstrating what figurational sociology offers that extant theories do not, or indeed building on those theories, Elias chooses instead to dismiss them. Layder (1986) uses alternative processual approaches to illustrate this point, commenting that current theories, such as symbolic interactionism and phenomenology incorporate the notion of ‘process’, contrary to what Elias contends.

Therefore, according to Layder (1986) figurational sociology fails to offer anything ‘new’.

The claims of figurational sociology to be a better way to understand the social world are at best exaggerated according to Layder (1986). Elias’s figurational theory according to
Layder (1986) offers too general an approach, is descriptive rather than analytical, and...“proposes an empty processual relationalism, and any plausible appeal it has is based upon an extreme generality, which explains all and nothing specific at the same time” (p. 376). It is argued that such a viewpoint fails to sufficiently understand figurational sociology through ignoring its contribution and adequacy in making sense of social problems.

In contrast to Layder, Dunning and Hughes (2013) contend that Elias did not regard figurational sociology as being unique, but that it was different from other approaches.

Dunning and Hughes (2013) recognise that an emphasis on process is not exclusive to figurational sociology. The difference compared with other supposedly similar process related theories, is that in figurational sociology, process and relationships are deep rooted concepts (Dunning & Hughes, 2013).

Coakley et al. (2009) see the attention given to long-term processes as the major weakness in figurational sociology because this focus detracts from issues of the present. Coakley et al. (2009), however, seem to misunderstand figurational sociology and the central issue that sociologists should avoid retreating to the present (Elias, 2009). Avoiding a retreat to the present is quite different from ignoring contemporary social issues. It is argued that to understand what meaning Indigenous students take from participating in PE and school sport in the present, a long-term process approach is required. This is because, as the sociogenesis of the figurations in this study show, much of what happens today is a consequence of what has happened in the past. It is maintained that the research questions in this investigation could not have been adequately answered by only addressing immediate concerns that are devolved from what has gone before.

Coakley et al. (2009) also criticise another main focus of figurational sociology; that of interdependent relationships; claiming again that there is not enough attention paid to the present. This time those authors cite the example of personal disadvantage experienced by
individuals with low power resources in present day situations. Again, this argument is countered from a figurational perspective by maintaining that existing power imbalances, along with their consequences, can only be fully understood by considering how those differences came to be. In other words the associated long-term processes of current phenomena also have to be taken into account.

A further criticism of figurational sociology relates to Elias’s *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 1978a), where he is accused of describing historical changes in social behaviour as a unidirectional ‘progress’ theory (Dunning & Hughes, 2013). However, such criticism fails to acknowledge that Elias’s theory also takes into account ‘de-civilizing processes’ that move in the opposite direction discussed earlier in the chapter (Dunning & Hughes, 2013).

Misrepresentations of figurational sociology such as this are common according to Dunning (1992). Dunning (1992) comments on criticism by Chris Rojek, who argues that figurationalists offer no ‘rules’ in detaching themselves from their objects of study. The response by Dunning (1992) is that Rojek has misunderstood Elias’s work on involvement and detachment, suggesting that instead Elias offers a number of procedural rules for carrying out research that incorporates managing levels of involvement and detachment.

Elias and Scotson’s (1994) established and outsider theory has also been subject to criticism. Bloyce and Murphy (2007) have particular reservations about the usefulness of this theory and concerns that have tended to not be recognized by figurationalists (Bloyce & Murphy, 2007). Bloyce and Murphy (2007) accuse Elias of failing to address a number of key issues in formulating this theory. In particular, the authors claim that Elias was so driven in showing the value of established-outsider theory as a sociological tool that data from the Winston Parva study from which the theory was developed was used selectively. Further, they also contend that important questions relating to this data were left unanswered. In particular, questions that would have provided deeper understanding of the complexity of the
relationships between the different parts of the community were not asked. Bloyce and Murphy (2007) argue that Elias through avoiding what they believe were pertinent questions, as well as crucial data sources contributed to a high level of involvement on his behalf. The authors are also critical of a lack of explanation of the methodology that was used. Despite the fore mentioned criticisms, Bloyce and Murphy (2007) recognize strengths of established outsider theory, which were the same ones used in the methodology for this research.

Bloyce and Murphy (2007) have three main areas of criticism directed at Elias’s central contribution to developing involvement and detachment theory. They attribute Elias as being responsible for data analysis and theory development within the partnership between Elias and Scotson. Scotson in contrast was mainly responsible for data collection for the Winston Parva study which was for his master’s thesis. The first concern is that locating the Winston Parva study within what is a broad range of literature on community studied is problematic. Their second concern is that Elias and Scotson (1994) provide a lack of clarity about the literature that they used to inform their study. The final key area of criticism is that Elias’s main concern was not the Winston Parva community but was in illustrating the usefulness of established – outsider theory.

Bloyce and Murphy (2007) conclude that Elias and Scotson’s analysis “… simplifies and distorts the power dynamics that characterized Winston Parva…” (Bloyce and Murphy, 2007, p. 15). The authors contend that this distortion was due to Elias and Scotson not taking into account the wider range of power differentials that existed within the full range of social groups that existed within the community. Concerning the claim about Elias having too much involvement in the Winston Parva study:

It is a danger that can perhaps afflict intellectuals who have placed considerable distance between themselves and ideological concerns, but in the process have
developed a commitment to a particular theoretical framework to such a degree that they lower their critical guard (Bloyce & Murphy, 2007, p. 17).

This important point raised by Bloyce and Murphy (2007) serves to show the difficult challenge of researchers remaining detached from their work. The next section explains how racialization theory was used in this research.

2.7 Racialization Theory

Racialization theory was also used in this research and it is explained in this section how it can be merged with figurational sociology as the main theoretical approach. A definition of racialization is provided by Miles (1996, pp. 306–307), who describes it as a “process by which particular populations are identified by direct or indirect reference to their real or imagined phenotypical characteristics in such a way as to suggest that the population can only be understood as a supposedly biological unity”. Similarly, Barot and Bird (2001) state that racialization is “a process that ascribes physical and cultural differences to individuals and groups” (p. 601). Racialization can be incorporated into a figurational theoretical framework because, as demonstrated by Dunning (1999) it can be directly related to established-outsider theory.

Commenting on Elias and Scotson’s investigation, Dunning (1999) notes that acts of stigmatizing behaviour “…are generally associated with established-outsider relations based on ‘real’, that is phenotypical and usually readily observable racial differences such as skin colour, as well as with racial differences which are ‘supposed’ rather than ‘real’” (p. 189). As discussed earlier, there is a ‘fantasy’ element in how established groups come to understand outsider groups through stigmatization, with both individuals and entire populations being viewed as the ‘minority of the worst’ (Elias & Scotson, 1994).

Within the boundaries of this research, the term ‘race’ means “a population of people who are believed to be naturally or biologically distinct from other populations” (Coakley et
al., 2009, p. 286). In the Australian context, and elsewhere, racial dissimilarities were used during colonization to justify the ‘sub-human status’ of Indigenous people, and led to the adoption of policies that sanctioned barbaric violence including annihilation as well as the stealing of land and property (Rigney, 2003). These policies were regarded by colonizers as being necessary for ‘civilizing’ Indigenous peoples in order that they could become citizens in their own countries (Smith, 1999). Schools in the new colonies played a central role in this version of a civilizing process by forcing Indigenous people to abandon their own way of life and adopt that of the colonizer (Simon & Smith, 2001). In the next chapter the role of schools in this civilizing process is discussed in greater detail.

The notion of ‘race’ is relevant to figurational sociology because ‘race’ is a long-term process that has changed over the course of at least several centuries. In the seventeenth century race was defined in broad terms according to differences in religion, language, traditions, and other social factors. Then in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there was a move towards a more biological definition of race that became popular as colonization gathered pace (Coakley et al., 2009). The popularity of racial ideology peaked when the Nazis were in power and post-World War II, ideologies of race were largely disputed with socio-cultural theories becoming more popular (Ahmed, 2002; Ansari, 2004). However, despite this general dismantling at an academic level, racialization has endured and still occurs in contemporary times (Barot & Bird, 2001; Jackson, 2000).

2.7.1 Racialization and the stereotyping of the ‘other’

Stereotyping is used in racialization to stigmatize others and can also incorporate ‘binary thinking’ (Hokowhitu, 2003a). Wadham, Pudsey and Boyd (2012) define ‘binary thinking’ as “thinking in terms of opposites in which both parts are defined in opposition to the other, and are seen as mutually exclusive and hierarchical with the first part of the dichotomy being dominant over the other” (p. 170). As such, binary thinking as a form of
stereotyping exists within established/outsider figurations (Elias & Scotson, 1994) in which power imbalances are necessary for stigmatization to occur, and for it to have any effect. Another feature of binary thinking is that it involves associating positive ideas with the West and negative ideas with ‘the rest’ (Wadham et al., 2012).

Such interpretations are flawed because as Hall (1997) notes “stereotyping reduces people to a few, simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by Nature” (p. 257). There are parallels here with what Elias (1987) observes about scientific societies in the West and how people from those societies come to understand people from ‘lesser developed’ parts of the world. According to Hallinan, Bruce and Bennie (2004) in their study of Australian Football League (AFL) players in Australia “stereotypes represent inequalities of power where those without cultural power – in this case Indigenous Australians – are defined as ‘Other’ in ways that reinforce difference rather than similarity” (p. 2). This argument by Hallinan et al. (2004) demonstrates how non-Indigenous Australians AFL players create group cohesion (Elias & Scotson, 1994) through emphasising how Indigenous AFL players are different from them.

Racialization theory is important to this research because it can be used to explain how much of the process by which people categorise and understand other people, is based on assumption rather than fact. Elias and Scotson (1994) comment how the invented characteristics that one group attributes to another, as part of racialization, defy the ‘rational’ thinking of humans in contemporary times. Further, according to Elias and Scotson (1994) those imagined differences it would seem take shape and substance during the early stages of life as part of the formation of habitus, and also influence people’s behaviour later in life. Elias and Scotson (1994) add that those ‘fictions’ of the human imagination are not unstructured, nor are they random. Instead, they are inextricably linked to the power imbalances that exist between established and outsider groups in favour of the former. The
enduring fantasies that Elias and Scotson (1994) mention surface in both PE and sport as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Racialization theory in the way it is defined in this section has been criticized because it fails to take into account the structural aspects of how people are typecast as being different due to their ‘race’ (McConaghy, 2000). Part of this shortcoming is that there is a tendency for racialization to be viewed within the limits of the actions of individuals. McConaghy (2000) argues that such a perspective ignores how racialization is also perpetrated at a group level, within organizations as ‘institutional racism’ for example. Such organizations include state sanctioned institutions such as schools, and as discussed in this chapter, institutionalized racism in Australian schools is well documented. It is maintained that by viewing racialization within the context of figurational sociology, that this lack of structural consideration identified by McConaghy is addressed. It is also contended, that by combining racialization theory with figurational sociology, connections to historical and contemporary processes, involving particular kinds of power relationships can be acknowledged.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined and explained the theoretical framework which was adopted in this research. The standpoint of the researcher is that relationships of power are most important in understanding how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport and also how this experience came to be. It is contended that long-term processes have been in operation since colonial times that have, and continue to have, a profound effect on the way of life of Indigenous peoples. Racialization is an example of such a long-term process, and as will be discussed in the following chapter, has been used by non-Indigenous Australians to ‘explain’ Indigenous peoples.

It is further argued that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples exist within figurations where they are at times interdependent upon non-Indigenous people. This
interdependence is characterized by power imbalances in favour of the latter. In Chapter 3, national level figurations of government education, as well as national and global figurations of PE and school sport are discussed. It is argued that the Indigenous student experience of PE and school sport at the three sites in this study is affected by those wider figurations.
Chapter 3: Context Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to provide deep understanding of various inter-related aspects of the Australian PE and school sport figuration at a national level along with its sociogenesis. This perspective is important in this research, because it helps answer each of the research questions by drawing upon the related literature. To understand how Indigenous students experience PE in the present, from a figurationist standpoint, it is necessary to examine the past (Elias, Van Krieken & Dunning, 1997). Therefore this chapter is a literature review of the interdependent historical and contemporary contexts that form the figuration within which the Indigenous students in this study are situated.

The chapter commences by considering Indigenous education in the general school context, followed by a historical overview of pre-colonial and post-colonial games in Australia. This overview includes an account of how the games ethic (Mangan, 1986), was used for character development and instilling certain behaviours, beliefs and values amongst students. This account is important to the research because it explains British beliefs and values that have over time been present within the national PE and school sport figuration. Such values may have a bearing on how Indigenous students currently experience PE and school sport in this study, hence those values may relate to research question one. The development of PE in both Britain and Australia follows. The advance of PE in Britain is examined, because it is argued that PE as it is taught today in Australia is a legacy of the British education system (Fitzpatrick, 2009; Meldrum & Peters, 2012; Tinning, 2005).

This chapter is also concerned with the nature of contemporary Australian PE curricula, and the challenges of including Indigenous perspectives. The reasons why traditional Indigenous games have historically not been included in state and territory PE curricula (Fitzpatrick, 2009) is also deliberated. Contrary to this trend of exclusion, traditional Indigenous games have been identified in the *Australian Curriculum Health and Physical*
Education (ACARA, 2014) as a way to incorporate Indigenous content in PE. The remainder of this chapter covers pre-service and in-service HPE teacher habitus, the mention of Indigenous content in Australian PE text books, and the notion of black ‘natural ability’ in PE and sport.

The chapter concludes that long-term historical processes have shaped how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport. These long-term processes, through a strong British influence, have ensured that a relatively unchanging figuration for PE and school sport has existed nationally in Australia since the middle of the last century. HPE teachers, by having a habitus with strong associations to Eurocentric sport have contributed to this continuing figuration. The chapter also notes that Indigenous perspectives during this period have been silent within the figuration, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students experience PE and school sport in racialized ways.

3.1 Indigenous Education

This section presents both the historical and current contexts of Indigenous education in Australia and details the main issues and complexities associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

3.1.1 Historical context

Indigenous students have faced ongoing disadvantage throughout the history of public school education in Australia (De Plevitz, 2007; Gray & Beresford, 2008; McConaghy, 2000). During colonial times Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders were regarded as ‘uneducable’ (Price, 2012a), and their knowledge was considered as primitive (Nakata, 2007). According to Nakata (2007), this false notion about Indigenous peoples’ knowledge has persisted into recent times.

In addition, Nakata (2007) argues that Indigenous knowledge systems were viewed by the colonizers as obstacles in the progress of Indigenous peoples towards ‘civilization’, and
were therefore discounted, ignored and superimposed by Eurocentric knowledge. Elias would explain this ‘civilizing’ behaviour as the social standards, values and beliefs of ‘unsophisticated’ societies being incompatible with those of more developed European societies (Elias, 1996). The colonizers believed that their knowledge was ‘superior’ and they had the political, economic and military power, and the will to impose their way of life on Australian Indigenous peoples (Beckett, 1989; McConaghy, 2000).

Policies also helped ensure that Indigenous students experienced a lack of equity in education. For example, the ‘Aborigines Protection Act’ (New South Wales Government, 1909) allowed Aboriginal students to be removed from schools if parents of white students complained (Tatz, 2013). Reagan (2005), comments that in contemporary times there has been a move to include Indigenous educational traditions in teaching and learning by non-Indigenous educators. According to Reagan (2005), historically such knowledge has been considered unimportant by non-Indigenous educationalists and unconnected to their interests and priorities.

When educationalists have paid attention to Indigenous perspectives often it has been “…through a very potent and distorting lens. That lens was the assumption that non-Western educational traditions were in some significant way “primitive”” (Reagan, 2005, p. 247). Reagan’s (2005) comments relate to Elias’s (1987) observations about ‘We’ groups discussed in the previous chapter relating to the supposed superior knowledge of ‘scientific’ societies.

Reagan’s (2005) observations are important to this research if they adequately describe how the HPE teacher participants regard Indigenous knowledge.

It is argued that Indigenous educational traditions remain ‘largely irrelevant’ in Australian education (Tait, 2013) and that the ‘superiority’ of non-Indigenous education persists. However in the sporting context there has been some interest in Indigenous traditional games in recent decades. According to Howell (1996), from the mid-1980s there
has been some revival of Indigenous traditional games in Australia, whereas previously these were widely considered to be inferior to Eurocentric sports forms.

It is noted that prior to colonization, local Aboriginal Wiradjuri children played skipping games (Bamblett, 2013) and ‘Fly’ (Haagen, 1994). ‘Fly’ is an elimination game where students run and leap through sticks that are spaced at different intervals on the ground. The spacing between the sticks is progressively increased. ‘Fly’ is of note, because it is still played in ACT schools (as detailed in the interview transcripts later in the thesis), and has been included in European sports such as athletics and hockey as a warm-up drill to increase leap or stride length.

3.1.2 Contemporary context

A highly racialized ideal of ‘national purity’ and ‘superiority’ was the foundation for a collective ‘white We-group’ Australian identity that excluded Indigenous peoples, their values, beliefs and ways of life (Tait, 2013; Wadham et al., 2012). This ‘white We-group’ described by Wadham et al. (2012) as an “imagined community” (p. 168) has altered its shape over time but has served to represent the interests of non-Indigenous Australians while marginalizing those of Indigenous peoples. Tait (2013) sums up how a subset of this imagined community, the teaching profession, view Indigenous students as being:

…visitors to our sensible system from a different planet. Importantly, much as we may try to integrate ‘them’ into ‘our’ classroom – and certainly, they are more than welcome there – this doesn’t alter the fundamental fact that ‘we’ have organised the life-world of the classroom in our own image; they are just visitors to it, and have to make do the best they can” (p. 74).

This depiction by Tait (2013) highlights the nature of the power relationships that exist within current Australian education, suggesting a power surplus in favour of the dominant culture. The use of the words ‘we’ and ‘them’ indicate established and outsider
relationships (Elias & Scotson, 1994). Also apparent through the use of the word ‘sensible’ is a notion of superiority. That is, non-Indigenous knowledge is regarded as logical, whereas Indigenous knowledge is not. It is argued that this set of circumstances described by Tait (2013) has come to be, as a result of the intended and unintended consequences of individuals and groups through long-term processes since colonization. Included in these long-term processes has been a multitude of ineffectual and inequitable educational policies that have collectively contributed to poor educational outcomes for many Indigenous Australians (Jude, 1998; Malin & Maidment, 2003; Tatz, 2009).

Gray and Beresford (2008) argue that poor educational achievement by Indigenous students can be attributed to five inter-related factors. Firstly, the lasting effects of colonization and associated racism have created long-term trauma and disadvantage amongst Indigenous peoples. Secondly, government attempts at education reform have tended to be based on deficit understandings of Indigenous students, and have not taken into account relationships of power involving racism by the dominant culture. In terms of deficit understandings, Nakata (1993) comments that Indigenous peoples have been viewed by non-Indigenous Australians since colonial times as being deficient in most aspects of life.

Thirdly, Gray and Beresford (2008), claim that there has been a lack of attention to a range of social issues that have affected the attendance and retention of Indigenous students in schools. The fourth factor mentioned by Gray and Beresford (2008), is sustainability of reform, meaning that change by successive governments to improve Indigenous student outcomes has lacked continuity. Finally, Gray and Beresford (2008) argue that a political history of Indigenous peoples being denied the right to self-determination has also contributed to poor student outcomes. In particular there has been a failure to address social and economic issues relating to reconciliation.
Zubrick et al. (2006) identified 15 separate social factors that affected Indigenous student attendance and hence achievement. These factors include low rates of school attendance, language issues, lack of sleep, emotional and behavioural concerns, family relationships with school staff, limited home study support, stress factors in students, the existence of an IEO and the number of Indigenous students at a given school. Problems associated with language serve to compound those various challenges that Indigenous students experience (Zubrick et al., 2006). Reinforcing the observations by Gray and Berresford (2008), De Plevitz (2007) observes that:

A number of educational policies are based on the assumption that Indigenous people who no longer live in the ‘traditional way’ have ‘lost their culture’ and are therefore ‘like us’. This is not so. Whether they live in remote areas of Australia or in the city, Indigenous people maintain a culture, not based on physical characteristics but on common beliefs, family ties, language and shared history (p. 60).

Similarly, Tait (2013) argues that Indigenous students do have a culture but they often underachieve in schools because their culture is ‘too different’ from non-Indigenous culture. This supposed ‘difference’ being interpreted by teachers as a ‘deficit’. Indigenous peoples have also tended to be considered as a homogenous group and so subsequently share the same ‘problem’. Tait (2013) also argues that within the belief that Indigenous peoples are ‘too different’ there is also the notion that white culture has a ‘neutral’ position, and that there is no effective solution to the ‘problem’. Despite the ‘problem’ of teaching Indigenous students, Australian state and territory education authorities have nonetheless included Indigenous perspectives to varying degrees in school curricula since the mid-1990s (Harrison & Greenfield, 2011).

Although Indigenous perspectives are evident in some KLAs, there has been almost no mention in state or territory PE curricula other than that of the Northern Territory
(Fitzpatrick, 2009). Also, in school sport, lack of equality and unfair access has meant that “in short, school sport was never a springboard for black kids” (p. 70). It is argued that the lack of Indigenous perspectives in PE and school sport is a consequence of continuing British influence that has been effective since colonization.

### 3.2 Strategies for Including Indigenous Perspectives in School Education

Lampert (2012) suggests four pragmatic approaches for making a positive difference to including Indigenous perspectives in teaching and learning. Firstly, white Australians have to make a commitment to Indigenous education by critiquing and reframing their own privileged position with that of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (Churchill & Keddie, 2013; Herbert, 2012). Secondly, teachers have to put their beliefs into practice about addressing Indigenous student education equality. Thirdly, Indigenous education should be embedded into existing teaching. Embedded meaning that Indigenous education is permeated through teaching subjects rather than selectively added to existing content. This approach of embedding Indigenous education is recommended in several sources (Ashman, 2015; Craven, 2012; Hart, Whatman, McLaughlin & Sharma-Brymer, 2012). The final recommendation by Lampert (2012) is that there must be ongoing partnership building between teachers and Indigenous communities. The four approaches suggested by Lampert (2012) are expanded below.

#### 3.2.1 Commitment to Indigenous education by non-Indigenous teachers

Lampert (2012) believes that non-Indigenous Australians have improved their attitude towards Indigenous Australians through being more accepting that inequality exists. She argues, however, that non-Indigenous teachers:

…need to do more than say we care, or that we believe in empowering our students. Teachers have to act on these convictions, and they have to know [author’s emphasis] how to act on them in ways that support their beliefs (Lampert, 2012, p. 84).
This proposed action suggests a shift in how teachers think about Indigenous education, and in particular to move away from notions that Indigenous students must fit into the Eurocentric education provided (Tait, 2013). Also, the recourse suggested by Lampert (2012) would require teachers to progress from understandings that Indigenous students no longer have a culture (De Plevitz, 2007), or that their culture is ‘too difficult’ to acknowledge in their teaching (Tait, 2013). In other words, what Lampert (2012) is suggesting is that a modification of the individual and social habitus of teachers (Elias, 1991; Mennell, 1994; Mennell & Goudsblom, 1998) is necessary. Such a change would require teachers to accept alternative ways in which knowledge is constructed other than dominant discourses.

### 3.2.2 Putting beliefs into practice and improving teacher knowledge of Indigenous education

According to Lampert (2012), it can be challenging for non-Indigenous teachers to put into practice beliefs about valuing and realizing Indigenous perspectives in their teaching. Although it has been suggested that there is an abundance of published information about Indigenous education that assists teachers (Price, 2012b; Tait, 2013), it is argued that this ‘wealth of information’ does not exist across all KLAs. For example, as discussed later in the chapter, there is a dearth of literature about Indigenous perspectives in Australian PE. Therefore, the suggestion that there is ‘extensive literature’ is somewhat misleading, because the implication is that it should be easy for all teachers to find what they require.

Lampert (2012) also notes that locating resources is problematic for many teachers. Price (2012b) contends that this material “…sees little use by teachers, as teachers have not had the guidance, and therefore the confidence, to use the material – if indeed they have been exposed to it” (p. 154). Implicit in this observation is the notion that pre-service teacher educators and school leaders have either not known about the resources, or have deemed them as not being a priority. Lampert (2012), also notes that teacher confidence in including
Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum can be affected through teachers not knowing what resources are best to use, not being able to access good enough resources, or not having adequate time to review them.

### 3.2.3 The challenge of embedding Indigenous education

The third approach Lampert (2012), proposes is for teachers to embed Indigenous perspectives into existing teaching and learning. Consequently, Lampert (2012) is critical of ‘off-the-shelf’ short-term solutions as being inadequate in for teaching Indigenous content appropriately. Instead teachers should incorporate Indigenous content were possible on an ongoing basis. Lampert (2012) argues that “real change, then, will have to come from ongoing and difficult discussions about how to embed Indigenous issues in the curriculum” (p. 91). In other words, ‘add-ons’, such as occasional or tokenistic mention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island perspectives will not suffice.

However, the broad challenge of embedding Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum seems to be underestimated by Tait (2013), who comments that in pre-service teacher education embedding Indigenous content:

…is not as radical, or impossible, as it might first appear. Most universities within Australia have by now made concerted attempts to establish such perspectives across the board within their diverse curricula (p. 77).

Tait (2013) does not elaborate on whether attempts to embed this content into teaching and learning have been general, subject specific or both. Tait (2013) continues by suggesting that teachers should also be able to embed Indigenous perspectives into their classroom practices by making a concerted effort and being organised. However, Tait (2013) again seems to underestimate the complexities that teachers experience in instigating such change.

In the HPE context those complexities include teachers being ‘time poor’, and trying to deliver what is already a broad curriculum (Tinning, 2000). Further, Tait (2013) does not
take into account the figurations and the associated power differentials within HPE teacher ‘We’ groups described in the last chapter, that constrain to a greater or lesser extent teacher behaviour or action. Nor does he acknowledge some HPE teachers being deeply emotionally involved in their subjects (Green, 2008) and being resistant to considering PE as something different from ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a). This emotional involvement has to some extent, occurred as an unintended consequence of ongoing power struggles amongst educationalists in securing credibility for PE as a discipline within the school curriculum (Armour & Kirk, 2008; Kirk, 2010b).

3.2.4 Building partnerships with Indigenous communities

Lampert (2012) believes that teachers connecting with Indigenous communities is “…a key part of properly accessing Indigenous expertise to inform classroom practice” (p. 92). This is necessary suggests Lampert (2012) because non-Indigenous teachers teaching Indigenous education do so as ‘outsiders’. In other words non-Indigenous teachers can never be ‘experts’ in Indigenous education because they are not Indigenous. Tait (2013) also believes that teachers should connect with their respective local Indigenous communities and engage in intercultural approaches and initiatives. There is some support advocating this kind of partnership work in Australian education generally (Harrison & Greenfield, 2011; New South Wales Department of Education and Training and New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated, 2004) and in the PE context in particular (ASC, 2009; Williams, 2014). Indeed, the New South Wales Department of Education and Training and New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated (2004), also note that Indigenous people in school communities believe it to be disrespectful not to be invited to contribute to the teaching of Indigenous perspectives in their local schools.

The issue of respect for Indigenous peoples by non-Indigenous Australians is important to this research, and is highlighted in Yulunga (ASC, 2009), which is one of the
main resources in Australia for teaching Indigenous traditional games. *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009) is a compilation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island traditional games presented in age appropriate lesson plan format using contemporary sports equipment. A wide range of games are provided, which have been played both historically and contemporarily by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples throughout Australia. Included are activities that involve: throwing and catching balls or other objects, ‘spinning tops,’ boomerang throwing, climbing, guessing, finding, ‘hide and seek,’ striking balls or other objects, jumping, running, skipping, ‘tag’ games, ‘spear’ throwing, wrestling and water activities. The diversity of games it is contended, make it appealing and relevant to PE curricula in Australia.

The nature of the games is such that they can easily be incorporated into existing PE lessons and programs of work offering increased variety, and acknowledgment of culture other than the dominant culture. Both competitive and non-competitive games are included, adding to the versatility of the resource for using in PE lessons. The games included also closely relate to the fundamental movement skills (FMS) that are taught as part of PE within Australian schools. In particular, the games in *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009), are specific to the FMS of sprint run, kick, vertical jump, leap, dodge, single and two arm strike (Walkley, Armstrong & Clohesy, 1998).

It is recommended in *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009), that people from the local Indigenous community are always invited to assist teachers in the delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games. To not involve Indigenous people, in addition to being disrespectful, can also lead to issues of appropriation. Appropriation is a concern in Indigenous education because since colonization, much of Indigenous culture has been stolen from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples (Williams, 2014).
3.3 The Influence of Family, Community and Culture on Indigenous Students’ Experiences in Physical Education and School Sport

This section provides an overview of the ways in which family, community and culture can impact upon Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student experiences of PE and school sport. Although much of the literature cited relates to the adult sports context it may be that the themes presented may also be present within the school Indigenous context and consequently could be relevant to this research.

3.3.1 The influence of family

Macdonald (1998) comments about how Wiradjuri people despite enforced changes through colonization have been able to maintain kinship. According to Macdonald (1998) Kinship is a relational family network, sometimes referred to inadequately as ‘extended family,’ within which Wiradjuri life takes place and has meaning. The term ‘extended family’ is inadequate suggests Macdonald, because it fails to encapsulate the magnitude of the social network or the complexity of the social responsibilities required of the individuals involved. Macdonald (1998) comments that kinship is a continuation of Wiradjuri cultural tradition, noting also that it is “… a cornerstone of all Aboriginal social systems” (p. 309). As part of this kinship, an important aspect is for individuals to do something first and foremost for their own people (Macdonald, 2001).

For example, according to Macdonald (2001), Wiradjuri people are skeptical about how non-Indigenous people regard Aboriginal elite athletes in high regard as a measure of how Aboriginals can be successful. For Wiradjuri, acting for one’s family and community is more important than wider societal recognition. Within the school sport context, Kickett-Tucker (2009) found that Indigenous students through participating in sport were able to experience kinship and positively restate their Aboriginal identity. It afforded social opportunities with Indigenous peers and facilitated communication in tribal language.
Kickett-Tucker (2009) also found that taking part in non-Indigenous school sport contributed to the happiness of some Aboriginal children.

Mackinnon and Campbell (2012) report how Indigenous sports carnivals serve to bring families together to enjoy watching Aboriginal footballers playing contemporary sport. Similarly, Norman (2006) describing the annual New South Wales Aboriginal Rugby League ‘Knockout’ Carnival states “it is an opportunity for families to gather, reunite as a community and barrack for their home-town and mob, and commemorate past glories and those who have passed on” (Norman, 2006, p. 170). Continuation of culture is suggested by Norman (2006), where she likens this ‘knockout’ carnival to a ‘modern day Corroboree.’ A Corroboree is taken within this context to mean an informal Aboriginal gathering. It is perhaps possible then, that such sports carnivals positively influence Indigenous student participation rates in the respective sports, because of the social significance those carnivals to families and the wider community. It follows then that families may encourage their younger members to play those sports and football codes in particular, because of the prestige, value and meaning associated with Aboriginal sports carnivals.

3.3.2 The influence of community

According to Bamblett (2011), Indigenous community sports carnivals such as rugby league and AFL knockout events provide opportunities for kinship to be nurtured. Such events allow people to get together and socialize and are seen as much as a social highlight as a sporting event. They facilitate community prestige (Godwell, 1997) and enable Indigenous community groups to realize their cultural traditions (Bamblett, 2011). Contemporary sports events have also been incorporated into Indigenous culture through story telling of particular sporting achievements (Bamblett, 2011). In the Northern Territory it was found that sport generally was important to Indigenous communities because it provided cohesion and a sense of pride that had previously been provided for by missions or reservations and plays a vital
role in the social fabrication of Indigenous communities (Owston, 1991). Further, sport has given some communities self-determination and control where they organize their own Indigenous sports carnivals for example. Similarly, Tatz (2012) contends that a wide range of modern sports are vital to Indigenous communities because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders enjoy them and do not consider those activities as being imposed upon them like other aspects of dominant culture. The importance of sport to Indigenous communities is summed up thus “it has ritual, a set of formal and informal rules, and it provides a sense of belonging and a feeling of coherence” (Tatz, 2012, p. 930). In other words, sport provides Indigenous communities with a shared focus and purpose.

3.3.3 The influence of culture

Despite Indigenous peoples having the policies, practices and ways of life of the dominant culture imposed upon them, it has been argued earlier in this chapter that Indigenous peoples still have their own culture. This is despite claims in the literature that much of Australian Indigenous culture has been lost or is in demise (De Plevitz, 2007). Culture here is understood according to the meaning proposed by Macdonald (2001) “…those social, intellectual and materially-oriented practices through which people express what it means to them to be in the world” (p. ’82). Macdonald (2001) argues that such practices can only be understood in dynamic rather than in static terms. In other words, culture never remains still but instead is constantly changing.

Macdonald (2001) researched the culture and traditions of the Wiradjuri people over two decades. In contrast to being passive recipients of the actions and effects of the dominant society and subsequently losing their culture, Macdonald found, Wiradjuri people have continued their culture through adaptation. By making adjustments to their way of life, Wiradjuri have been able to continually express their beliefs values and cultural practices. Whereas social life was traditionally demonstrated and recalled through songs, ceremonies
and rituals for example, Wiradjuri as a consequence of colonization have incorporated new means for social expression such as through mainstream sport (Macdonald, 2001). Continuity of culture is also noted by Tregenza (1995), who in recounting the stories of an Aboriginal family, the McAdam family, reports how its members in becoming elite sports people experienced kinship, the expression of shared values, and joyful times. The issue of racism is discussed by Tregenza (1995), but this topic is offset by the positive accounts of the McAdam family’s involvement in sport.

Another example of the continuity of culture through sport is provided by Mackinnon and Campbell (2012), who describe the men of Yuendumu in the Northern Territory as joking about AFL being a new ‘ceremony’ because it brings people together. This football code is considered as being a contemporary opportunity for those men to prove themselves as warriors. Mackinnon and Campbell (2012) argue that being part of the local AFL team provides young men with recognition of manhood, honour and prestige that was previously afforded to Yuendumu men by virtue of their nomadic existence in the Tanami desert. In other words, AFL has replaced hunting as modern day equivalent. Yuendumu also organize an annual sports weekend that involves several mainstream sports. These sports are provided alongside traditional events such as fire making, boomerang and spear throwing and the weekend is seen as much as being a family gathering as a sports event (Mackinnon and Campbell, 2012). According to Mackinnon and Campbell (2012), the weekend allows continuation of historical inter-tribal and inter-community competition.

Sport and the football codes of AFL, rugby union and rugby league in particular are of great importance to Aboriginal young men as well as having the capacity to engage those men in broader areas of society (McCoy, 2012). McCoy (2012) provides the example of the Clontarf Football Academy where AFL has been successfully used to improve educational outcomes while at the same time developing particular behavioural traits such as self-
discipline and commitment as well as life skills and increased employment opportunities (Neesham & Garnham, 2012; McCoy, 2012). Such has been the success of the Clontarf Football Academy, that from its origins as a single sporting school in 2000, it has grown to become 36 schools in number (McCoy, 2012). Why AFL is important to Indigenous peoples, and the ways in which it facilitates the continuation of culture are discussed in the following paragraph.

AFL it is argued has the capacity to allow purposeful interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (Judd, 2005). Concerning Indigenous players, McCoy (2002) comments about the specific cultural value of AFL to Indigenous men identifying three aspects of this football code that relate to Aboriginal culture. Firstly, AFL involves the pairing of players in competition. According to McCoy (2002), the notion of pairing is an important tradition in Aboriginal culture where historically young single men for example have paired up, travelled and experienced life together. When those men play AFL, being paired up in the game thus has a special meaning for them. McCoy (2002) also makes a connection between hunting and AFL drawing similarities between both.

The physical skills, communication and social aspects of hunting can argues McCoy (2002) be realized by Aboriginal men playing AFL. Finally, McCoy (2002) maintains that AFL enables men’s business and relationships outside of football to be continued and expressed within the game using the example of kinship. Commenting about cricket, Whimpress (1999) acknowledges that although introduced for ‘civilizing’ purposes, it was nonetheless appealing to Indigenous peoples for its intrinsic value as a sport. The central reason for this interest suggests Whimpress (1999), was its close resemblance to Indigenous traditional games. The examples of sport detailed here illustrate ‘diminishing contrasts’ (Elias1994; 1998b), where colonizers using sport as a ‘civilizing’ tool created the unintended
consequences of providing Indigenous people with opportunities to continue their own culture.

This section has detailed how family, community and culture positively embrace a restricted range of contemporary sports, and how those sports ‘fit’ in with contemporary Indigenous ways of life (Bamblett, 2011). It has been shown that Indigenous culture has adapted to colonization in positive ways in contrast to the negative effects that have impacted Indigenous peoples described earlier in the chapter. Although this section does not directly concern PE and school sport, it nonetheless important, because it may be that the Indigenous students involved in this research experience PE and school sport in positive ways similar to those documented.

The next section provides some historical context about the nature of Indigenous traditional games in Australia and in the colonies that comprised the British Empire prior to colonization. An argument is also provided from a figurational perspective about why those games have largely disappeared.

3.4 Traditional Indigenous Games and their Global ‘Inferior’ Status

Prior to colonization Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples had their own games (Edwards, 2009). Colonialists in recalling and explaining those games often described the activities in terms pertaining to their inferiority, lack of complexity, and only being suitable for young children (Edwards, 2009). Edwards (2009) comments that this was an inaccurate representation of the games and notes “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures were, of course, varied and complex, yet European observers commonly described them incorrectly as ‘unsophisticated’. This continued well into the late twentieth century, despite anthropological evidence to the contrary” (p. 33). It could be argued that such ‘unsophisticated’ perceptions have fuelled binary thinking (Wadham et al., 2012) that Indigenous people are not ‘intelligent’, and consequently were unable to create games that
were as ‘good’ as British and European games. The colonizers used the ‘inferior’ status of Indigenous games as justification for enforcing their own games on Indigenous peoples, which were also used to civilize them (Kirk & Twigg, 1995). As a consequence of this action, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games were suppressed along with many other aspects of Indigenous culture (Howell, 1996).

Throughout the British Empire, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries British games replaced Indigenous games for the same kinds of reasons discussed. The British Empire was an established group of people, or in one sense a single social unit, with a monopoly of power resources on a global scale (Elias, 1982). This monopolization of power enabled the British to force their way of life on Indigenous peoples throughout their colonies. All over the world ‘Empire sports’ superseded traditional activities, or were used to civilize the Indigenous peoples (Cashmore, 2000; Heinemann, 1993; Phillips & Magdalinski, 2008). In Africa for example, Amusa and Toriola (2010) comment that traditional physical activities represented a first phase of ‘PE’, where like pre-colonial Australia these games and pastimes were not separate from, but were interconnected to every-day life and were used in hunting, rituals and as preparation by children for adulthood (Howell, 1996).

According to Amusa and Toriola (2010), the second phase of PE:

…is characterized by the contact with the “western world” which marked the beginning of the erosion of the traditional education and the establishment of colonial and missionary models of education that regarded the indigenous physical activities as primitive, immoral and anti-Christianity (p. 666).

In summary, British games and sports transplanted the activities that had existed prior to colonization and that situation has remained to a large extent until present times. How those games and sports were used to ‘civilize’ Indigenous people is discussed in greater detail in the following section.
3.4.1 The nineteenth century games ethic

Mangan (1992) notes that nineteenth century British sport: “...formed a distinct, persistent and significant cluster of cultural traits isolated in time and space, possessing a coherent structure and definite purpose” (p. 1). As discussed earlier, European sports and team games in particular were imposed on Indigenous peoples throughout the British Empire. Headmasters of English private schools upheld and promoted the games ethic, which was “the ideal of character-training through games” (Mangan, 1986, p. 42). The kinds of qualities that the games ethic (Mangan, 1986) was believed to develop included manliness, respect, initiative, loyalty and obedience (Kirk & Twigg, 1995). The ‘virtues’ of loyalty and obedience were particularly important to teach in the colonies (Mangan, 1986). It is argued by Kirk and Twigg (1995) that this approach was taken because those qualities helped ensure that Indigenous peoples and lower colonial classes ‘knew’ their position in society through reinforcing the ‘superior’ status of the established group and the ‘inferior’ status of outsider groups.

Team games were central to the games ethic (Mangan, 1986), and different sports were considered as having particular purposes. Mangan (1986) recites the values that Cyril Norwood, the English Harrow School Headmaster between 1926 and 1934 attributed to particular team games. “Norwood was firmly of the view that cricket had supplied a new conception of chivalry to the common stock of national ideas, but rugby football promoted the cardinal virtues appropriate to the imperialist: unselfishness, fearlessness and self-control” (Mangan, 1986, p. 23). Cricket was also regarded as a game that could ‘civilize’ Aborigines because it represented the essence of being English (Cashman, 1995). Likewise, Howell (1996) observed that “games such as cricket were effective agents of “anglicization” and inculcated European values and norms” (p. 1086). British games then, had a particular
function within education beyond their capacity for promoting physical health and development.

The extent to which British games disseminated throughout the British Empire is noted by Ferguson (2004) who identifies ‘team games’ as one of nine distinctive features of British society that were common to all British colonization. The games ethic (Mangan, 1986) was similarly adopted throughout the British Empire, in New Zealand (Mangan & Hickey, 2000), Singapore (McNeill, Sproule & Horton, 2003), South Africa (Shehu, 2004), Canada (Mangan, 1986) and India (Hokkanen & Mangan, 2006) for example.

3.4.2 The use of games and sport in ‘civilizing’ Indigenous peoples

In colonial nineteenth century there was a persistent ideology that British civilization was synonymous with British superiority founded on the virtues of a ‘civilized life’, property ownership, European societal structures, law and order (Buchan, 2008). Indeed, there were attempts made to create facsimiles of British society, such as the establishment of South Australia which unlike the other colonies, was not developed as a penal community (Daly, 1988). Many colonialists believed that as well as demonstrating British superiority, they also had a benevolent role to play in helping the ‘savages’ to become ‘civilized’ and ‘know their place’ in colonial society (Buchan, 2008):

The often baffling difference that colonialists felt separated themselves from Indigenous Australians constituted ‘problems’ requiring governmental solutions.

Among the chief of the ‘problems’ Europeans considered Indigenous people to exemplify was the social difficulty of how to ‘fit’ a people without ‘society’ for taking their place in the lower orders of colonial society (p. 100).

Government schools played a key role in addressing these ‘problems’ through the use of what Mangan (1986) describes as “Christian militancy in the guise of imperial philanthropy” (p. 21). In other words, schools as ‘zones of prestige’ (Maguire, 2007) played a
role in a form of civilizing process where British ways of life were forced upon Indigenous peoples in order to make them ‘civilized’ by British standards. In practice ‘civilization’ for Indigenous peoples meant that they were regarded as being inferior to the colonizers, and their way of life, customs and cultural practices were suppressed (Phillips, 2012).

It is contended that how the colonialists came to consider themselves ‘civilized’ was a consequence of long-term processes in Europe linked to the development of particular social standards, behaviours and knowledge. The school served as an instrument of ‘functional democratization’ (Elias, 1978a) whereby Indigenous peoples could be assimilated into the lower classes for the benefit of the Empire. The British Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools (Board of Education, 1933) played a central role as an instrument of the state in this civilizing process. It addition, this syllabus was used to address concerns such as overcrowding and lack of space associated with urban society in Britain and her colonies in the 1930s. The ‘solution’ to those conditions was that “…children and young people should receive physical training by well-considered methods devised in a broad and catholic spirit to promote and encourage the health and development of the mind and body (Board of Education, 1933, p. 9). The phrase ‘well-considered methods’ is of interest because it is value-laden with a notion that some forms of PE are more highly regarded than others.

Also of note, is the use of the words ‘catholic spirit’ in the above citation, which suggests that the British Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools (Board of Education, 1933) was used to inculcate all students according to muscular Christianity; a connection between sport and religion that had originated in Victorian Britain (Watson, Weir & Friend, 2005). The lower case ‘c’ in catholic is also important as it extends beyond the Catholic doctrine of the church to provide a broader understanding of what ‘Catholic’ means. In addition to Catholicism, Protestant religion was well established in Australia by the early twentieth century. Veal et al. (2013), comment about some of the values associated with Protestantism
and in particular that salvation is gained through hard work rather than idleness. Veal et al. (2013) note this value of a Protestant work ethic has endured within Australian society as a long-term process. Such a perspective about work is important to this research because it can be transferred to student effort in the PE and school sport context.

### 3.5 The Development of Physical Education in Britain

A brief account of the development of PE in Britain is important for this study because up until the 1940s British PE curricula were used throughout Australia (Meldrum & Peters, 2012; Van Dalen & Bennett, 1971). It was not until 1942 that Western Australia created the first Australian curriculum (Van Dalen & Bennett, 1971) replacing the British *Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools* (Board of Education, 1933). This British curriculum and its predecessors were used in all parts of the British Empire (Amusa & Toriola, 2010) including Australian schools (Wright, 1996). This use of British curricula throughout the Empire demonstrates that British versions of PE were part of a global figuration in the first half of the twentieth century.

Historically, PE curricula in Britain have been subject to discourses associated with the making of particular types of citizens in response to government policies and directives. Discourses are important to figurational sociology because they are long-term processes in constant flux that are subject to the varying influences of governments as powerful established groups (Elias, 1982). Three of the main discourses in British PE have been those concerned with the military, health and sport.

#### 3.5.1 Physical education as a military discourse

PE emerged as a government school subject towards the end of the nineteenth century with the purpose of disciplining students mainly through the use of ‘drill’ (Kirk, 1992). Both government and public support grew for PE during the Boer War because of the poor physical condition of recruits. PE was seen as a way in which the physical health of future recruits
could be addressed. In the early 1900s, the British Board of Education permitted structured games to replace drill, although a lack of open spaces, especially in cities, slowed down expansion and development (Musgrave, 2012). Between the outbreak of the First World War and the late 1940s, PE retained its military focus on instilling discipline, compliance and general physical development in school aged children (Musgrave, 2012).

Up until the end of the Second World War, drill and gymnastics comprised the main content in British PE programs. Swedish gymnastics in particular, characterized by regimented routines was taught to mass groups for general physical training and for developing a nation fit for war (Kirk, 2011; Tinning, 2012). Swedish gymnastics lost popularity in the post-war years with the emphasis shifting towards PE and sport being taught as “socially valuable ‘ends in themselves” (Dunning, 1999, p. 53). Therefore, the end of the Second World War marked a major turning point in the purpose of PE and sport, moving from having a militaristic focus to being valued for social reasons. Physical activities were used then for their ‘intrinsic’ health and enjoyment qualities rather than for nation building or defence related reasons.

3.5.2 Physical education as a health discourse

After the Second World War, reflecting the change in attitude away from military associations, Swedish gymnastics were replaced by educational gymnastics along with the introduction of team games on a large scale (Kirk, 2011). Health had become the main focus for PE, although this was not an entirely new focus, as health as hygiene, had been a main reason for PE during the first part of the twentieth century. The post-war health focus was a variation of a health discourse but with an emphasis on physical health. While educational gymnastics still offered general physical development this activity was more child centred than Swedish gymnastics and hence suited the emphasis of PE at the time.
3.5.3 Physical education as a sports discourse

The introduction of team games to British government schools occurred much later than was the case in the private school system. By the early twentieth century, team games were well established in British private schools, where they were used to develop desirable social qualities in the children of the upper classes (Mangan, 1986). Team games were subsequently introduced to government schools in the belief that they could be used in a similar way, with comparable outcomes (Bailey et al., 2009; Green, 1998; Kirk, 2010a, 2010b). The use of team games in government schools rapidly expanded during the post-war years, becoming so popular from the 1950s, that they quickly became the main component of PE programs (Capel & Blair, 2007; Green, 1998). Kirk (2010a), notes that the dominance of team games in government school PE has continued to the present. A main reason for their continuation is that games have fitted well with school timetables where lessons are compartmentalized into blocks of time, and with the nature of school facilities (Kirk, 2010a). Indeed, the prevalence of team games is such, that along with an accompanying skills based pedagogical approach, they have come to be described as ‘traditional PE’ (Green, 1998).

Discourses are of consequence to this research, because in contemporary times they affect how HPE teachers go about their work. Tinning et al. (2001) argue that discourses influence both the day-to-day practices of PE teachers and PETE facilitators. In addition, Tinning et al. (2001) contend that how PE classes are organized, the kinds of activities taught, and teacher student interactions each play a role in reproducing dominant discourses. Tinning et al. (2001) also contend that the everyday practices of teachers can also contribute to discourses modifying.

PE teacher values and beliefs exist as long-term processes and influence what is done, and subsequently what is not done in ‘the name of PE’ is as will be discussed later in this chapter. As will be shown, the literature suggests that those PE teacher values and beliefs
affect how Indigenous students experience PE, hence they are important to consider within this study. In the next section, it is argued that the development of PE as a discipline in Australian schools largely mirrors the changes that took place in Britain.

3.6 The Development of Physical Education in Australia

The development of PE in Australia reflects many British trends largely on account of Australia being part of the British Empire since 1788. Consequently, the same kinds of discourses as Britain, are also evident in Australian PE history. The main discourses since the beginning of the twentieth century, being those concerned with the military, sport and health (Tinning & McCuaig, 2006). The importance of each of these discourses has varied over time, with some having more prominence than others according to changing social issues and the requirement for different kinds of citizens.

The sporting discourse has been an ongoing feature in Australian PE and is illustrated contemporarily by the prevalence of games in most contemporary school curricula. Stolz (2010), commenting on the prevalence of British and European team games, maintains that “the traditional games ideology is still one of the most powerful influences in Australia’s cultural heritage” (p. 24). In contrast to Britain, team games took hold much earlier in Australia due to geographical and climatic differences that allowed widely available open spaces to be utilised. A lack of open spaces slowed down the rate at which team games were introduced to British government schools. Kirk and Twigg (1995) note:

In Australia, competitive team games and the English Public School games ethic had a profound impact on the conduct of sport in both non-government and government schools, and eventually on the meaning of physical education within those schools, from the beginning of the twentieth century and the end of World War II (p. 3).

For example, the positioning of team games as a central feature of PE is evident in the 1946 Education Department of Victoria syllabus where it was argued:
…every child has the right to play, and that this right must be restored to all children who have lost it. The only logical approach to this ideal is to adopt the method of providing physical education by teaching participation in games (p. vi).

According to Tinning et al. (2001) some personal qualities associated with sport have persisted throughout the twentieth century up until the present. They note that “sport for instance, as character building, as training for productive citizenship, as a source of national identity-have been enduring” (Tinning et al., 2001, p. 165). Indeed, ‘character building’ can be traced back to being a main feature of the games ethic (Mangan, 1986). Tinning et al. (2001) continue by arguing that sport as part of PE “…is seen to be important to transmit culturally valued activities to the next generation” (p. 167). As Indigenous traditional games have been historically missing from most state and territory PE curricula (Fitzpatrick, 2009), those games have consequently not transferred across generations in most Australia schools. This means that Indigenous traditional games through not being passed on, are in danger of being forgotten about.

Like Britain, how PE has been experienced by students in Australia has been dependent upon their gender and social class (Wright, 1996). While the health of the population was a main discourse in early justifications for PE, there were variations in what ‘health’ meant according to a child’s social positioning. Wright (1996) comments that games and Swedish gymnastics were taught to the daughters of the wealthy classes in order that they could produce healthy children for the Empire. On the other hand, for girls and boys from the lower classes, health was associated with hygiene, discipline and order. Marching and drill were deemed as activities useful in developing the ‘health’ of the working classes so that they could work together and be reactive to the requirements of the British Empire, including its defence (Tinning et al., 2001).
A variation of the military discourse characterized the purpose of PE in the 1930s when it was again used to prepare students for war (Tinning & McCuaig, 2006). Similar to Britain, the emphasis in PE after the Second World War switched from being military-oriented to being concerned about the health and welfare of students as individuals. Again, in common with Britain, team games and sports became more popular from the 1950s and largely replaced the drill and rigid exercises that had been commonplace for the first half of the century (Gray, 1985; Tinning et al., 2001). This shift is noted by the Education Department of Victoria (1946) who comment “formal exercises are artificial, unrelated to life situations, and generally lacking in interest…” (p. vi). Commenting about PE in European countries, or nations that have been subject to British influence, Kirk (2009) notes that the change from drill and gymnastics, to games and sports has been the most noteworthy development to occur in PE between the 1880s and the 1990s.

### 3.6.1 Additional discourses in Australian physical education

Tinning et al. (2001) have identified other discourses that relate to the three main ones mentioned above that have had an ongoing presence in the PE figuration in Australia. They cite concerns about fitness of the population in various contexts as being a long-term issue. Also mentioned are discourses relating to performance and participation. These authors however note that performance discourses tend to be prioritized in PE and school sport over those relating to participation. Performance typically relates to skills and is about making students better at doing given activities. Participation on the other hand, includes notions of inclusivity and social justice as well as student involvement in PE lessons. The ‘performance discourse’ in PE is of note in this study because as will be discussed later in this chapter, Indigenous student performance is often perceived in PE in racialized ways.

The purpose of this section has been to show that PE in Britain and its justification and purpose at different points in time, have been mirrored in Australia. In other words, PE in
Australia has historically been part of a wider global figuration of PE that has changed over time in response to popular discourses. In the following section, the influence of what is termed ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) is discussed in the context of education, PE and school sport.

### 3.7 Invented Tradition as a Long-term Process in Physical Education and School Sport

It is argued in this section, that the concept of ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) is important to this thesis because it may be useful in explaining some of the research findings, particularly in relation to research questions two and three. ‘Invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) is used in this thesis to mean:

…a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past (p. 1).

Inherent in the context in which ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) is used, is a sense of long-term process, characterised by beliefs, values and practices of established groups that predominantly ‘count’ and that have withstood time. The word ‘invented’ shows that tradition has been created by established groups over time, rather than being something that is ‘innate’ or that has ‘naturally occurred’. The word ‘rules’ is also of interest, because it could be that ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) informs the macro level of the single figuration for PE and school sport studied in this research.

The processual nature of the term ‘tradition’ is also illustrated by Reagan (2005) who observes that “…traditions are in fact processes that continually change, develop, and evolve and that, at best, we are looking at a snapshot of a tradition at a particular point in time”
(p. 11). In other words, for the purposes of this thesis, ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) is considered as a figuration in constant flux, rather than being something that is static (Elias, 1978a). It is argued that ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) within schools, including the physical activities and sporting forms that ‘count’, have largely shaped the kind of PE and school sport that has been taught in Britain, many European countries and Australia since the mid-1950s.

The idea of ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) is important to this research because it is possible, that ‘invented tradition’ influences the design of the school buildings; shape and markings of indoor and outdoor sports facilities; the particular games and sports played; as well as what is taught in PE. It is posited that ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) in Australian schools, is part of a global figuration that developed on account of a power imbalance that favoured British culture. This power imbalance originated in colonial times, where tradition was revered by the ‘old school boys’ of the English public school system who administered the British Empire from the late 1800s into the twentieth century. Those former pupils were a product of a particular kind of schooling where leadership was instilled through purposeful methods including the games ethic (Mangan, 1986) discussed earlier. As Wilkinson (1964) observes “the fact remains that the Victorian public schoolboy was basically tradition-directed and community-directed rather than other-directed” (p. 60). In other words, those former pupils were conditioned partly by their schooling to be future community leaders as opposed to being ‘followers’. This conditioning was based around ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) as a long-term process.

It is suggested, that the intentional and unintentional actions of powerful individuals in Australian society, including the British ‘old boys’, facilitated the continuation of certain ‘invented traditions’ (Hobsbawm, 2012).
3.8 Contemporary Pedagogical Theory and Practice in Physical Education

PE as it is practiced contemporarily in Britain, Western Europe and nations that were part of the British Empire is discussed in the following section. It is argued that a global figuration for PE exists due to a large degree of commonality in what is practiced as PE, in those parts of the world. This is presented because it may be useful in explaining the nature of the PE taught in the schools in this research.

3.8.1 The id² of physical education and ‘physical education-as-sport-techniques’

Kirk (2010a) notes that there is a lack of agreement amongst PE professionals in defining what is PE, and argues that it is perhaps more useful to instead consider PE as being what teachers and students “…do [author’s emphasis] in the name of the subject” (p. 30). Kirk (2010a) believes that the practice of PE can be better understood within a theoretical framework that he calls “‘the idea of the idea of physical education’” or the id² (p. 30). The id² asserts that there are multiple meanings of the term PE and as well as being socially constructed (Kirk, 2010a; McKay, Gore & Kirk, 1990) it is subject to the influence and beliefs of dominant groups. Instead of being a definition of PE, the id² is a way in which people can make sense of the wide variety of opinions about what is PE. Kirk (2010b) theorises that:

…the id² of physical education allows us to identify clusters of common institutionalised practices that, taken together, amount to a recognisable and particular configuration of knowledge, with a specific relation to physical culture, a view of transfer of learning, a notion of excellence, and a mission for social and cultural transmission and renewal (p. 22).

This id² of PE according to Kirk (2010a), has stayed constant, been resistant to change, and has spread across the national boundaries of European and colonized nations since the mid-twentieth century. It is argued then that what teachers ‘do as PE’ can be
described as a macro level international figuration; a particular social structure and ‘rules’ (Baur & Ernst, 2011). This macro level figuration is noted by Tinning et al. (2001) who observe that PE has become an important school subject in most developed countries. In order to understand how ‘what is done’ in the name of PE came to be so widespread that Kirk (2011) believes that it is necessary to review the past.

Kirk (2011) has named the id² of PE that emerged from the 1950s as ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’, which regards PE as being predominantly concerned with a skills based approach to games and sports (Green, 2008). Singleton (2010), writing about the North American context, adds weight to Kirk’s (2011) argument of ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ by stating “games permeate every aspect of school physical education. They are used as warm-ups or modified instructional tools as well as taught as complex activities worth learning for their own merits” (p. 22). This connection with North America shows that PE exists as part of a global figuration with common characteristics in countries at opposite ends of the world.

According to Kirk (2010a), PE teachers teach ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ by repetition of practices that are abstract or modified versions of related sports. Rarely are sports taught in their entirety or holistically other than sometimes at the end of a topic or unit of work. According to Kirk (2010a), in describing PE in many industrialized countries, instruction rarely goes beyond a basic skill level in each activity and the introductory nature of those lessons is often repeated over and over again. In addition, class sizes can be up to 30 students with a typical lesson duration of between 40 and 50 minutes (Kirk, 2010a). Kirk (2010a) also comments that teachers across most industrialized nations are inclined to use similar pedagogy in teaching ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’, particularly the more autocratic styles of teaching (Mosston & Ashworth, 2008).

Thus, accepting the argument by Kirk (2010a) that the id² of PE, or what is contemporarily done in ‘the name of PE’, is ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’, and is practiced in most
industrialized nations, then PE/HPE teachers can be considered as an established group with social habitus and a ‘We’ identity on a global scale. In other words PE teachers in Britain share a common bond with HPE teachers in Australia by having the same kind of group charisma, as well as valuing and practicing the same kinds of activities, structures and pedagogy. As discussed in the next section, teachers within this large scale international figuration also have strong predispositions to sport and often view PE and sport as being synonymous terms.

3.8.2 Shortcomings of ‘physical education-as-sport-techniques’ and the multi-activity curriculum

Kirk (2010b) draws attention to how some proponents of ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ consider the model to be exemplary on account of its longevity. Kirk (2010a) argues, however, that this perspective does not take into account how the world has changed dramatically from how it was in the mid-twentieth century to the second decade of the twenty first century. In particular, argues Kirk (2010a), ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ is an ‘out of date’ concept that has its roots in a different age, and has failed to adapt to change on a global scale. As such, it is limited in its application in contemporary times by its restrictive nature and Eurocentric focus. A further problem with this now inappropriate PE program, is that it replicates what is truly valued by the dominant culture while reinforcing difference and inequality through the nature of the activities included.

Kirk (2010b) proposes, however, that there is potential for PE to be used to address inequity. Whilst Kirk offers a persuasive argument about how contemporary PE can be described as ‘sport techniques’, perhaps a more telling description might be ‘PE as-Eurocentric-sport-techniques’. This is because the games and sports to which Kirk refers, are largely implicated to the British Empire. In effect, those Eurocentric sports are the ‘rules’
within the macro figuration (Baur & Ernst, 2011); the particular physical activities that are ‘allowed’.

Tinning (2012) contemplates why ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ has endured for more than half a century and proposes several reasons. At a national policy level PE has appealed to various governments in Britain, many European countries and current former colonies because of the wide range of expectations there has been for the subject. At the school level, ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ fits well into the broader educational framework that accommodates ‘stand-alone’ disciplines within highly routinized timetables. In PETE, this concept of PE closely relates to the programs offered at most institutions in industrialized nations (Tinning, 2012), and at the individual level, ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ aligns well with the personal biographies of PE teachers, and in particular their strong associations with sport (Green, 2000b; McKay et al., 1990). This alignment of ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ with the habitus of PE teachers means that this is what they do in the name of PE.

At the same time that ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ became popular in many industrialized nations, the multi-activity curriculum also emerged, which comprised individual physical activities or sports taught separately as short units of work (Drummond & Pill, 2011). Like ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’, the multi-activity curriculum too has withstood the passage of time, and is the leading framework for teaching PE in most developed countries including Australia (Capel & Blair, 2007; Drummond & Pill, 2011; Tinning, 2005). This popularity is despite the multi-activity model being recognized almost 30 years ago as not allowing students enough time to develop content knowledge and skills before moving from one activity to another (O’Connor, 2006). Other limitations of the multi-activity approach are that students can be excluded because of ability, or gender, and content is often poorly related to the full versions of the games and sports that occur outside of school (Hastie, 2003; O’Connor, 2006; Tinning,
2010). As an alternative, Hellison (1987) suggests pedagogical approaches that involve sequential themes that span entire academic years, or offer continuity in other ways.

3.8.3 Power struggles, privileged content and ‘technocratic’ physical education in Australian health and physical education curricula

Ennis (2003) discusses PE curriculum within the context of a broad definition of curriculum to mean “the learning experiences that occur within the school” (p. 109). Such a definition can be taken to include the content of PE programs as well as the ‘direction’ for teaching and learning that is adopted within a school or schools. According to Ennis (2003), in deciding any curriculum, writers have to agree what knowledge is most important for the students to learn. In making this choice there are numerous factors or influences that have to be taken into account including what is appropriate, as well as the expectations from students, parents/carers and educational authorities. Traditionally curriculum writers in PE have included narrow and prescriptive skills based curricula with a very contracted range of content (Ennis, 2003).

The development and writing of any curriculum is biased, because the values of writers and others of influence tends to be what is most highly valued (Dinan-Thompson, 2009; Ennis, 2003; Penney & Glover, 1998). As Wright (1996) notes:

Contemporary policy and practices in physical education have not arrived by chance. They are not perennial and universal, nor the outcome of progressive improvements constructed on the basis of scientific knowledge and rational debate. Rather the curriculum is the outcome of struggles and negotiations between particular interests with their own investments in having their version of physical education recognized as the one legitimate version (p. 332).

In other words, curriculum writers have relative power in deciding what is, and what is not included, as well as what becomes privileged knowledge. Consequently, knowledge that
is regarded as being non-essential, or unimportant, which has been the case with Indigenous
knowledges as discussed earlier, tends to be excluded. Tinning et al. (2001) comment that:

Historically, Australian physical education curriculum documents have made no
explicit reference to the Aboriginal movement culture, however rich it has been and
continues to be. Despite broad recognition of Aboriginal peoples’ physical prowess,
the Aboriginal culture has received little more than token recognition in mainstream
curriculum theory or practice in physical education (p. 193).

The term ‘Aboriginal movement culture’ is taken here to mean traditional Aboriginal
then, has been historically regarded as being of limited importance in Australian PE curricula.
The presence, status and amount of Indigenous content in PE curricula are important in this
research. This is because a main purpose of this study is to examine to what extent Indigenous
perspectives have been included in historical and contemporary curricula in the ACT
government school context.

Meldrum and Peters (2012) argue that there is much benefit in HPE teachers working
together in developing curriculum because collaboratively they can progress “in a much more
powerful, exciting and innovative way than when working alone” (p. 174). However, such a
perspective is somewhat oversimplified because it does not take into account the dominant
belief systems and values that exist within any given figuration. Where teachers are asked for
example, to dramatically alter pedagogy that has been used for many years, there is arguably
scope for tension within the group, and for the more dominant group members and traditional
viewpoints to prevail. Alternatively, PE curriculum writers, like PE teachers, often share
common attributes including for example, valuing medical science over social science
(discussed in the next section), as well as upholding a notion of ‘professional expertise’.
McKay et al. (1990) note that in society generally, ‘professionals’ are bequeathed power through being given the task of deciding what knowledge counts. By professionals having this power, issues concerning equality, inclusivity, social justice, accountability and ethics are raised. McKay et al. (1990) argue:

First, professionals disqualify the majority of citizens from the decision-making process because professionals prescribe and proscribe how knowledge is defined to “outsiders”. Second, by appealing to the purportedly neutral and benevolent aspects of professional knowledge, professionals have gradually translated questions about moral and political ends (What for? For whom?) into issues of technical, administrative, and managerial means (How to?) (p. 54).

Within this observation there is a suggestion of rationalizing social issues by reducing them into ‘technical problems’. Elias (1996) also notes that people in developed countries often use scientific technical knowledge to make sense of people from societies that are not as ‘progressed’. The same kind of argument can be extended to how PE practitioners understand people from the non-dominant culture. McKay et al. (1990) argue that PE professionals also have a propensity to explain social issues and concerns in technical or scientific ways. McKay et al. (1990) maintain that this is because PE practitioners tend to value ‘technocratic’ pedagogies of PE “…based on ideologies of professionalism, scientism, and instrumental rationality, which articulate one-dimensional definitions of excellence in teaching, the body, and sport and also marginalize issues related to political and moral ends” (p. 52). A possible reason why the PE profession has a tendency to favour scientific knowledge is provided by Wright (1996). Wright (1996) argues that PE has always existed as a marginalized school subject and in order to justify its place and continuation, teachers have sought to ‘intellectualize’ the subject. Hence it was ‘legitimized’ in schools through prioritizing links with disciplines such as anatomy, physiology and sports science.
3.8.4 Adopting a socio-cultural perspective in physical education

In the past two decades there has been a shift in PE curricula across Australia from PE being considered predominantly in technocratic, scientific terms, to include socio-cultural perspectives (Burrows, 2004; Cliff, 2012; Meldrum & Peters, 2012). Olsen et al. (2002) argue despite such a shift it is absurd that there is little mention of Indigenous perspectives in HPE. In contrast to a technocratic approach, Cliff (2012) and others (Burrows, 2004; Callcott et al., 2012; Tinning, 2004) advocate a socio-cultural pedagogy, because such a pedagogy recognizes knowledge as being socially constructed and serving particular purposes. There is also scope within this kind of pedagogy for alternative knowledge to be equally valued and for social justice issues to be addressed. Indeed, for those reasons a socio-cultural approach has much to offer in teaching Indigenous perspectives in PE. However, Cliff (2012) makes an important observation, that HPE teachers may well avoid using a sociocultural approach because pressures of time in trying something new may be seen as too problematic. Hence they are more likely to resort to ‘tried and tested’ established ways of teaching. In other words they tend to continue with technocratic oriented pedagogies that are in keeping with their habitus of ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010b).

Addressing the imbalance between medico-scientific and socio-cultural perspectives, Meldrum and Peters (2012) argue that “a shift in the ways of thinking and doing for teachers is a huge expectation. It is laden with difficulty, especially when an individual has been doing things in a particular way for a long period of time” (p. 170). However, the authors continue by arguing that nonetheless, schools and teachers have obligations in curriculum documents that they must fulfil. Further, Tinning (2010) argues that the majority of HPE teachers do not adequately understand socio-cultural perspectives themselves and consequently are unable to teach such an approach to their students. The same observation has been made about teachers generally, that many lack the knowledge and skills for tackling issues relating to social justice.
and diversity (Keddie & Churchill, 2013). This lack of knowledge and skills is relevant to this thesis, because teachers by not knowing how to address issues of social justice and diversity will influence how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport. Within the recently introduced *Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education* (ACARA, 2014), issues of social justice are a key concern. Therefore it is important that HPE teachers are able to adequately address these issues in their teaching.

### 3.9 Situating Indigenous Traditional Games Within Contemporary Physical Education Curricula

The following section discusses the challenges and issues that teachers experience in including Indigenous perspectives in current PE curricula. Indigenous traditional games have historically been absent from most Australian PE state and territory curricula (Fitzpatrick, 2009) although there some evidence of their recent revival. Howell (1996) describes Indigenous games and sport in Australia as:

> The assimilation of Aborigines into European games and sports has been relatively effective and complete. In the schools and on the reserves and missions the “normal” games are now cricket, rugby and netball. Beginning only in the mid-1980s has an appreciation of Aboriginal heritage evolved and some traditional activities revived (p. 1086).

One of the main issues of including Indigenous traditional games contemporarily is that they only have conditional acceptance by dominant cultures. When Indigenous traditional games are allowed, they tend to be represented tokenistically and in such a way as to not threaten established sports and games (Heinemann, 1993).

In contrast to Australia, in New Zealand Maori games are much more established in the PE curriculum and have been included as Te Reo Kori for more than a quarter of a century (Salter, 2002; Tinning et al., 2001). The Maori term Teo Reo Kori is used to describe
traditional physical activities that are connected to wider Maori culture and are used to help Maori, and non-Maori or Pakeha students to understand, appreciate and perform movement from alternative knowledge-bases other than those from dominant Eurocentric culture (Salter, 2002). Despite Te Reo Kori being used in PE for some time, Salter (1998) comments that there has been unwillingness by some New Zealand PE teachers to embrace this content. Salter (2002), drawing on earlier work (Salter, 1998; Walker, 1995), provides a number of reasons for this resistance. Maori dance forms are often perceived by non-Maori teachers in negative stereotypical ways and are deemed as being inferior to the existing European and American dances. Teachers frequently had concerns about offending Maori culture through accidently misrepresenting Maori perspectives in their teaching. Some teachers and schools expressed indifference towards, or were ignorant about how to include Maori content. Further, there was reluctance by some teachers towards varying their teaching styles to include Te Reo Kori (Salter, 2002).

While not understating such criticisms, it is contended that there are a number of ways in which traditional games can make a positive contribution to PE programs by addressing cultural imbalance. Parker et al. (2006) suggest that facilitating Australian Indigenous traditional games can enable the regeneration of aspects of Indigenous cultural identity and can contribute towards cultural longevity. Moreover, traditional games can be used in PE to provide some understanding of the cultural customs of Indigenous peoples that have been passed down through generations, and which have symbolism, meaning and association with particular groups and geographic locations (Murphy & Maeda, 2012; Parker & Ninham, 2002). The wider benefits to Indigenous peoples of playing games are expressed by Tatz (2013), who comments that “…Aboriginal culture is not solely about corroborees, body-painting and dancing, but it is also very much about kinship, reciprocity, family and social ties that are enhanced by playing games” (p. 73). Therefore the benefits of incorporating
traditional games in PE are more than students just playing those games. In addition there are rich opportunities for including socio-cultural aspects of PE.

3.9.1 Indigenous perspectives in the Australian Curriculum and Yulunga as a resource for Indigenous traditional games

The *Melbourne Declaration* (MCEETYA, 2008) offers some direction and justification for the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in teaching and learning in schools (Churchill & Keddie, 2013). These authors argue that it is possible for teachers and school communities to effect meaningful change through determination, making a commitment to learning about Indigenous issues and through concerns for social justice. Meaningful change in this context is change that is non-tokenistic and that genuinely attempts to address the injustice of Eurocentric curricula. However, it is argued that realising such change is more complex than those authors present. There is much rhetoric about issues of social justice for example, including Indigenous perspectives in teaching and learning. But there is a lack of information, direction and professional learning offered about how to translate broad ideals into pedagogies that can be used in classrooms, gyms or on the ovals (Evans, 2012).

Churchill and Keddie (2013) however, understate the complexity and challenge of including Indigenous perspectives in Australian education. The nature of this challenge is shown in a New South Wales government education report commissioned to address equality in Indigenous and non-Indigenous education. In this report teachers expressed a desire to gain greater knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island perspectives but were unsure where to locate teaching resources (New South Wales Department of Education and Training and New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated, 2004). Further, secondary teachers were reported as wanting additional assistance from the Department of Education and Training and were critical of there being too few Aboriginal

This report also showed that teachers and non-teaching staff who had poor knowledge of Indigenous culture were considered by the Indigenous community as being disrespectful of culture. Furthermore, the report recommended partnerships between government and non-government agencies for instigating sustainable change to achieve equality, as opposed to one-dimensional strategies and solutions (New South Wales Department of Education and Training and New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated, 2004). Gray and Beresford (2008) make similar observations suggesting that a collaborative approach involving a range of community organizations is required to successfully achieve better outcomes for Indigenous students. These examples from New South Wales it is argued collectively illustrate the complex challenge of including Indigenous perspectives in the ACT context, as well as in Australian education more widely.

Within the Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games are suggested as a way of including Indigenous perspectives in PE. Further, Yulunga (ASC, 2009) is recommended by Callcott et al. (2012) as a suitable resource for including those games within this curriculum. Despite the existence of Yulunga (ASC, 2009), there are issues about how content such as Indigenous traditional games is introduced. Several studies, including research in the PE context, have shown that attempts to ‘reform’ or de-colonize curricula have been ineffective. Those efforts have failed, and have been non-threatening to the dominant discourse, because Indigenous content is selectively added to the existing Eurocentric curriculum rather than embedded (Macdonald, Abbott, Knez & Nelson, 2009; Nakata, 2012). Consequently, the established curriculum remains unaffected and is still what really counts.
A further challenge in including Indigenous traditional games in PE, is that by using contemporary PE equipment as recommended in Yulunga (ASC, 2009), there is some risk that the games are appropriated into the existing PE forms. In other words they become ‘just another activity’ in the Eurocentric program, devoid of any meaning and association with Indigenous culture. Further, it is acknowledged within Yulunga (ASC, 2009) that “some games have been reconstructed from vague or incomplete accounts into what is believed to be an accurate account” (p. 1). There are also few descriptions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games by Indigenous people with many of the games instead being portrayals by nineteenth century colonizers. These secondary interpretations resonate with what Elias (1996) observes happens in power struggles where dominant groups succeed:

Generally speaking, the victims of history, the less powerful groups who have been defeated, have had only a small chance of being remembered. The principle framework of what is remembered as history remains to this day a state, and history books are still largely the chronicles of states (p. 302).

Given those concerns about the authenticity of ‘traditional’ games, there must be some question over the validity and appropriateness of some of the content of Yulunga (ASC, 2009), which presents a challenge to teachers and educators in using this resource. Howell (1996) and Edwards (2009) argue that this uncertainty about the authenticity of Yulunga (ASC, 2009) is a consequence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games as part of wider Indigenous culture experiencing severe dislocation from colonization. Since many traditional records of games were oral (Edwards, 2009), few accounts have survived (Nakata, 2007). It would seem in the case of Yulunga (ASC, 2009), that Elias’s (1996) comments about the knowledge of minority groups not being remembered ‘ring true’, and consequently even the ‘very best’ resource for teaching Indigenous games can be nothing greater than a compromise due to the devastating effects of colonization. Therefore, even the principal state-funded sport
organization in Australia, the ASC, with an abundance of resources at its disposal, can only produce a resource that has limited accuracy and legitimacy. Teachers then are faced with using a resource for teaching Indigenous traditional games that is not entirely accurate. The issue of authenticity in relation to *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009) is discussed further in Chapter 9.

‘Top down’ or ‘add-on’ approaches, meaning action or strategies that supplement or attach to existing provision are discussed by Harrison and Greenfield (2011). In relation to these approaches, Harrison and Greenfield (2011) comment that schools often invite local Indigenous dance groups to perform at the National Aborigines and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week and ‘Sorry Day’. Such practices are recognized by Harrison and Greenfield (2011) as being tokenistic on the grounds that they marginalize Indigenous education and again do not threaten the day-to-day established group activities. However, Harrison and Greenfield (2011) still advocate for the kinds of events mentioned on the grounds that they involve members of the Indigenous community. The one-off performances described are examples of how traditional cultural activities of minority Indigenous groups are positioned by state governments as tourist attractions or other forms of entertainment (Heinemann, 1993). According to Heinemann (1993) traditional culture when treated in this way becomes:

…depleted of such basic functions as its cults and myths. Ignorance of the cultural tradition, of its contribution and meaning, leads very rapidly to the destruction of traditional ties. Traditional sport falls into oblivion and is seldom found to synthesise with modern sport. A decrease in the varieties of physical expression and the destruction of the traditional body culture become apparent (pp. 144–145).

According to Heinemann (1993) within the context of sport, traditional games are positioned in such a way that they do not affect dominant group traditions, or ways of doing. Instead, traditional cultural games are positioned outside of dominant sporting forms and their
purpose is limited to that of amusement. As Elias and Scotson (1994) argue, established groups, such as the governments suggested by Heinemann (1993), are able to act in this way through having a surplus of social power. The observations by Heinemann (1993), albeit they are more than two decades old, may be important to this research. This is because those observations might perhaps help to explain how Indigenous traditional games and other physical activities are viewed by the established groups studied.

Thus far there has been much discussion about many of the challenges of incorporating Indigenous perspectives within contemporary PE curricula as well as some of the reasons why this content has historically been absent from most Australian state and territory PE curricula. It is contended that those challenges along with other historical processes have influenced how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport.

3.10 Physical Education Teacher Education

PETE is important to this study because what is valued and included in PETE has a bearing on how Aboriginal and Torres Island perspectives are taught in schools. In this section the kind of knowledge that is valued most in PETE is considered, which over time has retained many central characteristics. These key features or characteristics have remained largely on account of PETE educators as an established group, prioritizing particular content over other content. The selected material has had to be accommodated in limited time and subject space that is often allocated to PETE courses (Callcott et al., 2012). Keay (2009) notes for example, that “the nature of the training of new teachers and the relative power of PE culture may be reasons for the lack of change and development in the subject” (p. 226). Research suggests that the content offered in PETE tends to value scientific-based learning that relates to human movement such as biomechanics, exercise physiology and anatomy (Cliff, 2012; Macdonald & Tinning, 1995). Privileging scientific or positivist knowledge, means that the body is considered mainly in medico-scientific, technocratic terms rather than
in more holistic ways that take into account the social domains of an individual (Tinning, 2004; Maguire, 2013).

Writing almost two decades ago about the Australian context, MacDonald and Tinning (1995) argued that where PETE courses are predominantly focused on human movement and PE technical practice, it is often in an attempt to make PE more attractive to pre-service students. The authors add that PETE institutions that adopt such approaches to popularize PE programs negatively affect the status of PE teaching, and also inadequately prepare pre-service teachers for their careers. Writing more recently, Cliff (2012) comments about the “…ongoing marginalisation of the ‘socio-cultural’ as a form of knowledge within HPE” (p. 298). Notably, at the university located closest to where this study was carried out, the PETE degree offered was changed in 2011 from a HPE major degree to a joint education/science degree. A similar tendency has been observed in general teacher education, where subject content pertaining to sociology, history and philosophy has disappeared and been replaced by subjects concerned with teaching technique and curriculum studies (Symes & Preston, 1997).

3.11 Pre-service and In-service Health and Physical Education Teacher Habitus

In this section the habitus of pre-service teachers is explored as a key determinant to explain why individuals choose to become HPE teachers. The habitus of in-service HPE teachers is also considered in connection with how it affects the content that is, and is not taught in PE.

3.11.1 Pre-service health and physical education teacher habitus

Tinning (2010) notes that students enrol into HPE programs in Australia with particular values, beliefs and expectations about what is HPE, based upon their own experiences. For example, Tinning (2010, 2004) argues that PETE students often expect
program content to reinforce their deep-seated interest and love of sport. Green (2000a) in his English study also found that PE teachers typically expressed a ‘love for sport’ and also noted this occurrence in the Australian pre-service HPE student context, as the following personal communication indicates:

Macdonald et al. (personal communication) have noted a good deal of evidence to suggest that both male and female students have been attracted to careers in teaching PE primarily because it provides them with an opportunity to continue their association with sport... (p. 191).

Thus, many pre-service HPE teachers commence PETE with preconceived views about what being an HPE teacher means. When faced with the prospect of “becoming someone they don’t want to become” (Tinning, 2004, p. 245) through having to accept and learn a much wider curriculum, resistance is frequently shown. However, pre-service HPE teachers’ technocratic predispositions can be altered, although prompting this kind of change at a personality level is problematic (Tinning, 2010).

Two decades earlier than Tinning’s (2010) research, McKay et al. (1990) commented that most PE degree students graduate with beliefs about PE that have been largely unaffected by PETE and that are characterised as being “…overwhelmingly individualistic, atomistic, mechanistic, and impersonal” (p. 60). More recently, Currie (2014) similarly notes “…most teachers have completed extensive training and preparation in performance studies and a range of practical physical activities and sports…” (pp. x–xi). Currie’s observations show that the privileging of technocratic and medico-scientific approaches continues to be part of a long-term process in PETE. However, there are some exceptions to this trend as some Australian universities are offering PETE that teaches students the social aspects of PE beyond performance and technocratic understandings (Drummond & Pill, 2011).
McKay et al. (1990) also observe that HPE students in Australia predominantly come from an Anglo-Celtic heritage, and regard PETE as an unavoidable pre-requisite for entering the teaching profession that requires them to ‘jump through hoops’. Many students therefore hold the view that practical experience ‘counts’ and theory does not. While HPE students teachers may listen to theory in classes, they remain largely unaffected, and tend to resort to technical or scientific approaches (McKay et al., 1990).

McKay et al. (1990) further comment “the point is not to accuse physical educators of malpractice or of being Fascists but to emphasize that a command of technical skills cannot ask, let alone solve, political and moral questions about their uses” (p. 57). More recently, and from a figurational perspective, Maguire (2013) concurs with the critique of technocratic PE offered by McKay et al. (1990) and argues that “a more adequate and ‘scientific’ picture of human beings than is currently available may be produced if human beings are studied ‘in the round’ as whole selves, not as isolated physiological or psychological units” (p. 48). These examples serve to show the limitations of technocratic or medico-science understandings of PE. Also, given that McKay et al. (1990) made their observations a quarter of a century ago, and the same findings have been noted recently, there is a sense of scientific and technocratic approaches enduring as long-term processes. Consequently, pre-service HPE teachers tend to have fixed and limited views about what PE is, meaning that they are ill-prepared for managing the broader issues that contemporary HPE teachers are required to manage. Those issues include teaching Indigenous content in PE.

Tinning et al. (2001), writing in the Australian context, also highlight the primary importance given to science-based subjects by students in PETE suggesting “most students would see the relevance of learning about the muscular system of the body but few see the relevance of learning the history of the field” (p. 156). Tinning et al. 2001 argue that this attitude exists because the history of PE is not regarded as being essential knowledge for
teaching PE. Such a belief exists, as part of HPE pre-service teacher habitus is a concern because those students not interested in PE history are less likely to accept that how Indigenous students experience PE today is directly related to the past.

Pre-service HPE teacher predispositions, particularly those associated with sport tend to be welcomed when they commence teaching practicums. Sirna, Tinning and Rossi (2008) observe that “within a community of practice certain behaviors, attitudes, and dispositions are practiced, reinforced and encouraged while others may be marginalized, dismissed or even ridiculed” (p. 287). In other words, certain behaviours are valued as part of the ‘We’ identity of the HPE faculties or departments. In addition, Sirna et al. (2008) found that student HPE teachers on teaching placements sought ways in which they could be accepted as part of the established group and be included in those ‘We’ identities. Expression of a common interest in sport was one way in which those pre-service teachers tried to be included. It is argued that accepted conduct has been shaped to a greater or lesser extent by ‘invented traditions’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) upheld by the teachers as part of a long-term process. Those ‘invented traditions’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) relate to the individual and social habitus of the teachers as well as to the wider school and educational context. Further, it is argued that what is agreed as accepted conduct by ‘We’ groups of HPE teachers is a consequence of their group cohesion and social power (Elias & Scotson, 1994).

In England, Keay (2009) used a figurational approach to examine power relationships, including the kind mentioned in the previous paragraph, in which new teachers find themselves immersed after commencing their initial appointments. Although Keay (2009) used habitus (Elias, 1998b) for her theoretical framework, she did not make use of Established and Outsider theory (Elias & Scotson, 1994). Elias and Scotson’s (1994) work would have been relevant to Keay’s research given the established and outsider relationships that she describes. In her study, the new teachers as ‘outsiders’ demonstrated particular behaviour in
attempting to be accepted as part of the ‘We’ group of established teachers. As Elias and Scotson (1994) allude, people are often prepared to modify their beliefs in order to be admitted to a given ‘We’ group figuration. In the Australian context such a compromise it is argued could be new teachers rejecting Indigenous traditional games that they may have learned as part of PETE in order to ‘fit in’.

3.11.2 In-service health and physical education teacher habitus

In Australia, Meldrum and Peters (2012) note, similar to the pre-service teacher context that HPE teachers believe the focus of their job is to deliver a technocratic curriculum, and that the social aspects of the subject ‘takes care of themselves’. This ‘set curriculum’ reflects the nature of curriculum design discussed previously in the chapter and comprises privileged and marginalized knowledge (Macdonald & Tinning, 1995; Tinning, 2004). According to Tinning (2004), privileged knowledge includes science-based content such as ‘motor skills’, ‘biomechanics’ and ‘exercise physiology’, as well as ‘fitness’, and ‘team sports’. ‘Dance’ and ‘ethnicities’ on the other hand are categorized as marginalized knowledge. The term ‘Ethnicities’ is used by Tinning (2004) to describe curriculum content that relates to cultural minority groups outside of Australian dominant culture. The status of ‘ethnicities’, through its positioning by teachers as knowledge that is of secondary importance in PE, is of relevance to this research. This is because Indigenous knowledge may be viewed in the same way by the HPE teachers involved in this research. In other words, Indigenous physical activity may be viewed by those teachers as ‘marginalized’ knowledge.

Tinning (2004) notes that HPE teachers have strong opinions about the nature of PE content and pedagogies. Despite those viewpoints concerning what pedagogy matters, and what pedagogy is subsidiary, Tinning (2004) remarks about how expectations of PE/HPE teachers have changed over time:
The traditional role of the PE teacher has been to teach for the development of physical activity and sport-related outcomes. However, the new HPE curriculum, the conditions of contemporary schooling, and the nature of postmodern youth culture (Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992), has meant that traditional ways of doing [author’s emphasis] PE and of being [author’s emphasis] a PE teacher are now under threat (pp. 242–243).

Similar to what has been discussed above in the Australian pre-service teacher context, in England Green (2000b) found that theoretical or academic constructs of PE had little bearing on English PE teachers, and instead they held ideologies or adopted taken-for-granted practices that were related to their habitus and interdependencies with other PE teachers. Green (2000b) concluded that:

the way teachers thought about PE had been shaped by their past experiences and had become bound up with the job itself. As such, their ‘philosophies’ tended to be practical [author’s emphasis] ‘philosophies’; that is to say, ‘philosophies’ that bore the hallmarks of their prior PE and sporting practice and their contemporaneous practical teaching contexts (p. 127).

In other words, Green (2000b) found that the way PE teachers regarded their subject and the teaching practices in which they engaged, were inseparable from their wider figurations including their habitus.

It has been argued that teacher biographies and habitus that have been constructed from scientific, technical and skills knowledge bases, are resistant to change (Elias, 1998b). Nonetheless, McKay et al. (1990) concur with Elias (1998b) that such predispositions largely shaped by habitus, can be altered.
3.12 Indigenous Content in Physical Education in Pre-service and In-service Textbooks

Part of this literature review includes consideration of the extent to which Indigenous perspectives in PE are mentioned in Australian books designed as core texts for pre-service HPE teachers, and as sources of information for in-service HPE teachers. A review of several books was undertaken where mention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island content was sought. Books were identified from a literature search of pre-service PE texts designed for use in the Australian PETE context. In addition, the researcher consulted with his PETE teaching colleagues about what texts were used at the university (within the ACT) where he currently teaches PE to pre-service teachers. Suggested strategies for teaching Indigenous content were critiqued in each book, and the structure of how those approaches were presented was compared in each text. It was found that similar to the wider PE and school sport context including PETE, there was limited attention paid to Indigenous perspectives. Although issues about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island education have been addressed by educators, the focus has tended to be on literacy and numeracy with little attention paid to HPE (Olsen et al., 2002).

Tinning et al. (2001) devote less than a half page to discussing the silence of Aboriginal perspectives in HPE. In contrast, a whole chapter titled ‘Contemporary Curriculum Practice’ describes and emphasises, probably unintentionally the Eurocentric nature of PE and school sport in Australian schools. Given the title of their book *Becoming a Physical Education Teacher: Contemporary and Enduring Issues*, a pre-service or in-service teacher could be forgiven for thinking that the content that really matters is what is detailed in the ‘Contemporary Curriculum Practice’ chapter. Also, by not tackling ways in which the shortfall of Indigenous content can be addressed, Tinning et al. (2001) arguably inadvertently create the impression that it is a problem without a solution.
Similarly, there is limited coverage in more recent Australian HPE text books with two or less pages devoted to Indigenous perspectives (minimum mention in Callcott et al., 2012; Garret & Wrench, 2006; Meldrum & Peters, 2012; Currie, 2014). This ‘whisper’ highlights the nature of the power relationships that exist in the Australian HPE text book writer figuration. Those power relationships are typified by a power imbalance that favours the Eurocentric knowledge of the dominant culture. Further, it is this knowledge that ‘counts’, through it being the principal content in each of those text books. Meldrum and Peters (2012) claim that a motivation for writing their book was the lack of Australian HPE texts that address “our unique context” (p. xiii). It seems strange to the researcher, who is originally not from Australia, that the histories and cultures of Australia’s First peoples have minimal acknowledgment in this ‘unique context’. It therefore appears to be a substantial shortcoming that there are only two pages in the entire book (Meldrum & Peters, 2012) that are devoted to Indigenous perspectives in PE.

Further, in three of the books reviewed (which were Callcott et al., 2012; Garret & Wrench, 2006; Meldrum & Peters, 2012) a similar structure has been used for discussing Indigenous perspectives. Each of these books states that Indigenous peoples are not a homogenous group, that some Aboriginal students may show traits such as shyness, not looking teachers in the eye, and not wanting to expose their limbs. These ways Indigenous perspectives have been addressed is striking for a several reasons. Firstly, Indigenous students have been marginalized through being given almost no mention. Secondly, each book states that Indigenous people are not a homogenous group, but by listing behavioural traits that some Indigenous students might display, there is scope for stereotypes to be generated that ‘apply’ to the whole population. Thirdly, the sections of the books that address Indigenous perspectives are so similar that the format appears to have been reworked from the earliest
information written by Garrett and Wrench (2006). Suggested within each book are the same ‘strategies’ for teaching Indigenous students detailed in bullet points or as sub-headings.

The strategies suggested are learning and appreciating Indigenous culture, recognizing the strengths of Indigenous students, and working with local Indigenous communities. While those strategies are of the kind recommended by Lampert (2012) that call for teachers to “…challenge their practice in an ongoing way…” (p. 91) there is no guidance provided in these three texts about how a teacher might go about realizing such an approach. Also suggested as strategies are the inclusion of traditional games, dance, other physical activities, and using a wide range of pedagogies. Garrett and Wrench (2006) suggest using “…multiple and diverse approaches to teaching, learning and assessment that include peer teaching, group work, multiple entry points and integration across the curriculum. Acquire specific knowledge about individual learning needs and styles” (p. 207). It is argued that what Garrett and Wrench (2006) propose could be considered ‘good teaching practice’ for all students and not just specific to Indigenous students. Therefore what they suggest, does not add anything new that is pertinent to Indigenous students.

Likewise, Callcott et al. (2012) comment “…Aboriginal students desire active participation, with challenging tasks and tactics rather than more stationary or passive practice activities such as throwing to a partner or team games requiring waiting in line or standing in the field. In order to maintain interest, regularly offer mini games and game-based activities in contrast to more traditional drill approaches” (p. 52). Again, the advice offered would be applicable to students generally, and is not specific to Indigenous students. An approach suggested in two of the books (Callcott et al., 2012; Garrett & Wrench, 2006) is to use Indigenous dance, but neither book acknowledges that Indigenous dance is a culturally sensitive area where many dances can only be taught by Indigenous people (Williams, 2014).
Importantly, there is no mention in any of the books reviewed about the challenges of including Indigenous perspectives in existing content. Those challenges were discussed earlier in the chapter, and included considerations about using ‘add-on’, or embedding as possible strategies for incorporating Indigenous viewpoints. Issues concerning authenticity of Indigenous games or appropriation are not discussed either. Nor is the lack of mention of Indigenous content as part of PETE (discussed earlier in the chapter), or possible established group resistance within HPE school faculties towards such ‘radical’ change. There is also a lack of attention provided to how learning about Indigenous perspectives in PE is of benefit to all students, and not just Indigenous students (MCEETYA, 2008). Two of the texts recommend using successful Aboriginal sportspeople as positive role models for Indigenous students (Callcott et al., 2012; Olsen et al., 2002). However, using such an approach can be problematic as it can serve to reinforce narrow career choices for Indigenous students (Fitzpatrick, 2009; New South Wales Department of Education and Training and New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated, 2004). Other issues relating to using sports celebrities are that schools sometimes expect them to make appearances without being paid, and some communities may not have access to such role models. Therefore, the involvement of Indigenous sporting celebrities is fraught with problems and can be viewed as tokenistic.

The suggestion of adding Indigenous games, physical activities and dance discussed in the previous paragraphs are examples of ‘add-ons’ to the dominant culture. Nakata (2012) as a Torres Strait Islander argues that “our educational situation is addressed only through culturally ‘relevant’ programs confined as such by western experts, not by us. Our education, therefore, becomes mere ‘cultural’ add-ons to largely unchanged mainstream practices in the education system. Nothing changes, not really” (p. 90). In addition, nowhere in the three text books do the authors mention possible challenges, actual or perceived, that teachers may
experience in introducing the kind of content suggested or why it ought to be included in classroom practices.

A lack of mention of Indigenous knowledges is evident more recently in an Australian text book by Currie (2014). This book has the least mention of Indigenous perspectives in PE content in all of the books reviewed. While the text addresses both Health and PE, there is more of a health focus, with six of the eight chapters devoted to health or health and physical activity. The final chapter is concerned with movement and PE, and the only reference to Indigenous perspectives is in a single bullet point that states Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island traditional games should be taught as part of PE (Currie, 2014). As much of this text refers to the Australian Curriculum for Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014), the silence of Indigenous knowledges is of concern. In the words of Nakata, cited earlier in this section “nothing changes, not really” (Nakata, 2012, p. 90).

In the next section, superior sporting performance by black people including Indigenous peoples is considered from a sociology perspective. Reasons for black sporting success are debated along with stereotypes, assumptions and other problems that accompany black people being good at sport. It is argued that how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people are viewed in PE and school sport both concerning their abilities and generally, is directly related to the nature of PE in Australia both historically and as it is now.

### 3.13 Black Natural Ability in Sport

According to the research literature Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples are often described as having innate sporting ability. This section problematizes this depiction of Indigenous peoples and black people more widely, and presents alternative viewpoints with which to understand black sports performances. Further, it is argued that the ways in which black sporting performances are portrayed by dominant white cultures are a feature of the power relationships that exist between the two groups. Those kinds of sports performance
portrayals could perhaps be important to this research, because HPE teachers participants may be found to have similar beliefs about their Indigenous students. HPE teacher beliefs about Indigenous student sport performances are important in answering the first research question: How do Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research? It is argued that the way that HPE teachers interpret Indigenous student sporting performance can affect how those students experience PE and school sport.

### 3.13.1 Nature versus nurture arguments

In contemporary Australian society there is a widely held belief that has persisted since colonial times, that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people possess innate superior ability in sport compared to non-Indigenous people (Tatz, 2013). It is argued that this belief is erroneous principally on account of Indigeneity being socially rather than biologically constructed. Further, Delaney and Madigan (2009) comment “there are many flaws to the theory of genetic predispositions to sports. Primarily, there is no “pure” gene pool that guarantees an individual is genetically programmed to be an athlete, or a teacher or biologist for that matter” (p. 203). Further, there is a lack of sports science evidence to support such claims (Adair, 2012; ASC, 2012; Sailes, 1991).

Adair (2012) illustrates the main problem with the idea of ‘natural ability’ in sport by discussing two separate initiatives, one for marathon running and one for sprinting. It has been asserted that Aboriginal people are ‘naturally well equipped’ for both. What strikes Adair (2012) is the incompatibility of the physical requirements required to excel in each of those disciplines. Adair (2012) observes “it is difficult to imagine a more starkly opposite set of athletic performance expectations from the same population” (p. 23). Accepting that Aboriginal people are not a homogenous population or group, such a contrast in athletic prowess is perhaps possible. However, without scientific confirmation there is a risk that what are ‘collective fantasies’ (Elias & Scotson, 1994) and at best broad assumptions, fuel beliefs
that all Aboriginal people have ‘innate abilities’ in all sports. As Tatz (1987) puts it “are Aborigines so physically superior that ‘one can get any Aborigine off the street and he’ll go four rounds’?” (p. 4). In the school context, this question by Tatz (1987) viewed several decades later, also raises concerns, about how Indigenous students who are not good at sport, perceive themselves and are perceived by others.

Notions of Indigenous superiority in sport have existed in Australia as a long-term process. Percy Cerutty, an Australian Olympic Athletics coach in the 1950s and 60s formed a theory about Aboriginal natural running success based upon nineteenth century racial athletic ideology (Phillips & Hicks, 2000). Aborigines were particularly celebrated by Cerruty, because he regarded them as having superior athletic qualities compared to any other race. However, he also believed that Aborigines could never realize their full potential because they “…lacked the drives and incentives that motivate us” (Phillips & Hicks, 2000, p. 213). There lies another problem with claims of Indigenous natural ability in sport: that Aboriginal people lack the necessary personal qualities required to reach the highest level in sport. Such a view still exists today, and is used by non-Indigenous people to explain the behaviour of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in other aspects of life including education. Commonly, Aboriginal people are considered in deficit terms lacking for example intelligence, commitment, and work ethic, and rely solely on their innate abilities.

According to Dunning (1999), the myth of natural ability occurs as a product of the power relations that exist between whites and blacks. As was the case in the Winston Parva study (Elias & Scotson, 1994), black people are perceived as the ‘minority of the worst;’ in the case of sport, demonstrating characteristics such as those detailed at the end of the previous paragraph. Dunning (1999), provides a direct link between figurational sociology and racialization theory drawing upon the work of Elias and Scotson (1994). Dunning (1999),
asserts that binary thinking about blacks being ‘physical’, while at the same time being ‘unintelligent’, is a ‘We’ group fantasy shared by white people. Dunning (1999) notes that:

It differs marginally from most beliefs of this kind in that the fantasy of the intellectual inferiority of blacks is, as is typical, based on popular speculation about and pseudo-scientific observation of a ‘minority of the worst’, whilst the belief in their innate sporting superiority is based on popular speculation about and pseudo-scientific observation of a ‘minority of the best’, that is top-level athletes (p. 190).

Links between the physical abilities and corresponding low intelligence of black people seems to also be widespread (Azzarito & Harrison, 2008; Hokowhitu, 2003b; Sailes, 1991; Wright & Burrows, 2006). Azzarito and Harrison (2008), in the American context, argue that the myth of ‘physical but not intelligent’ continues and has been perpetuated by individuals, groups, professions and organizations and notably PE teachers. In a similar way to what Elias and Scotson (1994) observe, Azzarito and Harrison (2008) also report that black Americans as an outside group tend to internalize the stigmatizing messages promoted by the white established group. In this regard, Black Americans were found to internalize the belief that they possess natural superiority in sport and are less intelligent than whites. Those beliefs also influenced what sports Black Americans participated in, and how they took part. Azzarito and Harrison (2008) note that the problem is “…exacerbated when physical education teachers and coaches embody these beliefs, adopting pedagogically discriminatory practices” (p. 349). Azzarito and Harrison’s (2008) findings are relevant to this research if it is found that the HPE teachers in this research have similar beliefs.

Azzarito and Harrison’s (1998) observations also draw attention to another aspect of racialization, that of ‘stacking’, where black people are directed towards particular sports or team positions according to stereotypes. Such stereotypes are based on assumptions
concerning physical traits, levels of intelligence or playing style (Coram, 2007; Entine, 2000; Godwell, 2000; Hallinan et al., 2004).

In the Australian context, Tatz (1987) has identified that Aborigines have traditionally been most successful in boxing, rugby league and AFL, and have also have been proportionately over-represented in those sports compared to non-Indigenous people. Tatz (1987) proposes a number of reasons for this occurrence, including the low cost of taking part; professional career possibilities; fewer class barriers; large numbers of role models; and potentially improved status in the eyes of white people. Interestingly, Tatz (1987) and Vamplew and Stoddart (1994) include a final reason, the “inclusion as a special black breed of gladiators and entertainers” (Tatz, 1987, p. 5). Emphasized in this citation by Tatz (1987) is the physicality of Indigenous peoples as well as their inferior positioning as entertainers to white people.

Likewise, Hallinan et al. (2004) in their study of Indigenous AFL players found that sports coaches and administrative staff considered that “their “place” was to “kick the freak goal” or “do the magical stuff” and their style remains an “exotic” sideshow” (p. 8). It would seem that the ‘physicality’ required for the three sports that Tatz (1987) mentions, combined with stereotypes of Indigenous people being ‘physical’, make those sports ‘ideal’ for Aboriginal people. In other words, the stereotype of Aborigines having ‘innate savage’ qualities, combined with natural ability make them particularly suitable.

The ‘interconnectedness’ of natural ability in sport and low intelligence has also been reported in the New Zealand context, in the way that Maori students have been portrayed in PE (Hokowhitu, 2003b). This portrayal has been partly constructed through PE being the only state education subject to include Maori perspectives between the 1940s and 1970s. This inclusion of Maori content only in PE, suggests that New Zealand educational authorities believed the place of Maoris in schooling was in the physical domain. Also in the New
Zealand context, Fitzpatrick (2013) found that Maori and Pasifika (New Zealand migrants from various Pacific islands) students regarded PE as a non-academic subject.

Fitzpatrick (2013) argues, through viewing PE as being non-academic, linked with notions of ‘natural ability’, those students conform to widely held beliefs that they are both physical and unintelligent people. Because those students stated that they enjoyed PE, and felt that they ‘belonged’ in the subject area, they inadvertently reinforced this stereotype. With reference to mainstream sport, Fitzpatrick (2013) also contends that the media in New Zealand as well as depicting Maoris as having natural ability, also promote the idea that they do not have the commitment and dedication of sportsmen from a European background. This stereotype of black talented sportspeople being lazy and relying on their innate abilities is also described for contemporary Australian Indigenous athletes (Coram, 2007). It would seem that those stereotypical beliefs are part of a long-term process of how Indigenous Australians are viewed by non-Indigenous Australians. A long-term process is suggested given the discussion earlier (Phillips & Hicks, 2000) about Percy Cerutty during the 1950s and 1960s, and his beliefs about Aboriginals having superior sporting prowess compared to non-Indigenous Australians. At the same time Cerruty believed that Aboriginals had ‘deficient’ personal qualities. This kind of binary thinking could be important to this research if the HPE teachers in this study were shown to perceive their students in the same way.

Sport can also affect the involvement in PE of students who do not live up to the ‘natural talent’ expectation. Again, in New Zealand, Fitzpatrick (2011) indicates that those students who fall short of this ideal demonstrate low participation rates in PE, and instead divert their energies into the ‘more academic’ school subjects. This re-directed attention towards other school subjects demonstrates the weakness of claims that all Maori students have ‘natural talent’ in sport. Further, Fitzpatrick (2011) problematizes this ‘natural talent’ stereotype as having two particular effects. Firstly, there is an implication that ‘brown’
athletes (Fitzpatrick’s term) do not have to work as hard as everyone else, and that success comes easily (Hallinan et al., 2004). According to Fitzpatrick (2011), for those performers success is not the product of hard work and dedication which is what the white athlete must do to compete. The latter are praised for having qualities such as a high work ethic, commitment to training and being disciplined. In contrast, the brown athlete is described according to his or her playing style and ‘ability to read the game’. Secondly, suggests Fitzpatrick (2011), there is an expectation among Maori and Pasifika youth perpetuated by immediate and wider family, that they are indeed ‘gifted’ sportspeople.

In the Australian context, Nelson (2009) reports similar findings to New Zealand amongst Indigenous students. As a consequence of those expectations, sport is highly valued among those Maori, Pasifika and Australian Indigenous populations and participation rates are high from an early age. However, natural sporting ability can be self-limiting for Indigenous people as it can lead to them being stereotyped as only being sportspeople (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Godwell, 2000; Hokowhitu, 2003a; New South Wales Department of Education and Training and New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated, 2004). Such stereotyping is limiting because minimal career opportunities exist for any talented athlete (Delaney & Madigan, 2009; Godwell, 2000).

There is also a body of research that argues that the notion of innate ability in black people in sport is false, and that instead environmental or ‘nurturing’ variables are responsible for observed differences in sports performance (Cashmore, 1982; Hoberman, 1997; McKay, 1991; Nelson, 2009; Sailes, 1991; Tatz, 1995). Environmental factors include the social conditions in which a person is brought up, personal drives and ambitions, available opportunities, as well as access to facilities and equipment. Environmental factors can also be used to explain certain ‘innate’ sporting qualities.
Tatz (2013) dismisses ‘innate’ natural sporting ability in Australian Indigenous peoples by offering an alternative argument. For example, concerning being able to ‘read the game’ Tatz (2013), suggests the following ‘nurture’ theory about Aboriginal people:

Child-rearing practices lead them to a greater ability to “read” a game, to see a whole field of play, to anticipate danger, to avoid excessive waste of energy. Economy of movement and energy is the hallmark, not any genetic predisposition (p. 73).

Similarly, according to Entine (2000), commenting about the American context, a combination of environmental and genetic factors account for top sports performances by American athletes. For Entine (2000) trying to separate natural variables from nurture variables is both challenging and pointless, and he comments:

There is no way to control for all the environmental influences to determine whether behavior, temperament, or skills are genetic or are shaped by environment. Science is just beginning to decipher how genes and culture interact, and whether the small but noticeable functional differences we can identify in population groups underlay what we have come to think of as cultural patterns (p. 279).

Therefore there seems little point in trying to separate what can be attributed to genetics and that which is due to upbringing. What does seem to be important though, is the ways in which superior Indigenous sporting performance is described, because of the problems associated with assumptions and stereotypes discussed in this section thus far. In other words, it is problematic to attribute Indigenous sporting success to supposed ‘innate’ abilities when there is no evidence to support such claims.

This section has shown that the notion that Indigenous peoples are naturally good at sport has problems associated with it. In the absence of any supporting scientific data, the stance of the researcher is that claims of innate sporting ability are self-limiting for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.
3.14 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the historical and contemporary national contexts and figurations within which Australian Indigenous students experience PE and school sport. The literature shows that Indigenous student experiences have been shaped by long-term processes. Those processes have established what is, and correspondingly what is not valued in current PE and school sport provision in Australian government schools. A particular model or version of PE has evolved, also as a consequence of long-term processes, that can be described as ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’, or perhaps more accurately ‘PE-as-Eurocentric-sport-techniques’. This version of PE values a technical, skills based approach using team games, that has existed as an unchanged figuration for more than half a century. It is also argued that this model is a consequence of social power enjoyed by a HPE profession who may traditionally be of Anglo-Celtic heritage, accepting that there is no available current research about the cultural background of teachers (Weldon, 2015). Further, the literature suggests that this version of PE is the social structure, or broad macro level within which Indigenous students experience PE.

Also discussed in this chapter was the notion that prospective HPE teachers undergo a socialization process that commences in childhood where a habitus develops that forms strong associations with Eurocentric sport. These associations tend to endure any attempts during PETE to introduce alternative meanings and perspectives in PE. This final part of this chapter included a discussion about how Indigenous students in Australia experience racialization in PE and school sport. The literature proposes that those students are regarded as being ‘physical’ rather than ‘intellectual’, and are only suited for certain sports where physicality is a pre-requisite. It was also argued that racialization is inextricably linked to differentials of social power between established and outsider groups.
The following chapter describes the methodological theoretical framework used to inform the methodology adopted in this research.
Chapter 4: Methodology Theoretical Framework

The purpose of this chapter is to detail the theoretical considerations that were taken into account in deciding the methodology adopted in this research. The chapter is written in two parts. The first section is concerned with figurational, or what could be termed process-oriented methodology theory, and how this differs from other theories for conducting research. As figurational sociology was pioneered largely during the 1970s, the remainder of the chapter details contemporary research methodology that is attuned to figurational sociology.

The three research questions that this study set out to answer were:

1. How do Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research?
2. How did these Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport come to be?
3. What events and long-term processes have influenced Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport at the three high schools?

The methodological theory that relates to figurational sociology and, the kinds of assumptions that underpin a figurational perspective are discussed in this chapter in the context of those questions. A main part of this discussion concerns how figurationalists view reality, as well as their broader perspectives on knowledge construction. It is explained how those assumptions influence the way in which figurational sociology is carried out, and how figurationalists reject what they term to be ‘false dichotomies’.

Norbert Elias was a German Jew (1897–1990) who became a British Citizen in 1952 and as discussed in Chapter 2 was responsible for pioneering figurational sociology (Dunning, 2010). As present day research methodologies were at an early stage of development when Elias carried out much of his research (Baur & Ernst, 2011), current approaches have been considered and appraised within this chapter regarding their suitability for use in a
contemporary figurational study. The framework adopted in this research incorporated data methods that were compatible with figurational sociology and that were suitable for answering the research questions. These research methods were considered as being most appropriate for this particular study and their relevance and usefulness to this research is explained in this chapter.

4.1 Assumptions and Knowledge Construction in Figurational Sociology

In any kind of research, researchers tend to favour a philosophical viewpoint according to how their own belief systems are oriented (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2006). Figurationalists typically reject what they consider to be polarised and fixed perspectives. For Elias, reality was not something that was stationary, or could be ‘pinpointed’ or that could be viewed in isolation (Dunning & Hughes, 2013). Commenting about reality, Dunning and Hughes (2013) note that:

…Elias did not think of ‘reality’ as something fixed, monolithic and ultimately ‘fully knowable’. He did not see it as a ‘thing out there’, but rather as a dynamic totality which includes humans and their expanding (and sometimes contracting) knowledge as an integral part (p. 134).

Elias generally rejected the kinds of assumptions described as being “overly voluntaristic and rationalistic” (as cited in Dunning & Hughes, 2013, p. 81). In other words such assumptions were considered by Elias as being selected or ‘picked off the shelf’ by researchers primarily because they were appealing, and because they ‘seemed’ reasonable choices for the topic of their research. According to Dunning and Hughes (2013), Elias was more concerned with “…establishing as precisely as possible the balance [authors’ emphasis] between choice and determinism or compulsion in the origins and development of concepts, social practices and social structures” (p. 81). In other words, Elias believed that researchers should resist the temptation to feel ‘bound’ to use one approach over another.
Elias used the terms ‘sociogenesis’ and ‘psychogenesis’ to explain the nature of human relationships. Sociogenesis in figurational sociology is defined as “a figuration’s becoming, change and ending [authors’ emphasis]” (Baur & Ernst, 2011, p. 132). Psychogenesis means at an individual level “…the part played in social processes by ‘psychodynamics’ – that is, processes at the level of the psyche, personality or habitus that have lasting social ramifications” (Dunning & Hughes, 2013, p. 81). Although individuals act at a psychogenesis level they are nonetheless inextricably linked to the figurations of which they are a part. Subsequently their behaviour is affected not just by their own thoughts and motivations, but also by the actions of others within the same figuration.

Punch (2009) comments that assumptions inform the paradigm, or way that a researcher views the world, as well as the kinds of methods that are applicable for researching their ‘world view’. According to Punch (2009), paradigms are shaped by a researcher’s perspective of “…what reality is like (ontology), what the relationship is between the researcher and that reality (epistemology), and what methods can be used for studying the reality (methodology)” (p. 16). Bloyce (2004), while recognising that the terms ‘ontology’ and ‘epistemology’ have a place in the theory of research, argues that the two terms are interdependent and “figurationalists tend not to write about epistemology and ontology because, it is argued here, there are more object-adequate ways of understanding the focus of our study: human relationships” (p. 146). In using ‘object-adequate’, Bloyce (2004) means the sociogenetic, psychogenetic and processual nature of human relationships that as mentioned are characteristic of a figurational approach. Indeed, from a figurational perspective all social things in the universe including, knowledge, consciousness and ideas are considered as being both dynamic and open ended (Dunning & Hughes, 2013). In other words, figurationalists believe that all social phenomena are developed as part of a continuous process by people bound together in complex networks of interdependency.
Figurationalists also struggle with the fixed and ‘polar opposite’ beliefs present in much of the research literature about the ways in which research should be carried out. Swann and Pratt (2003), although not writing from a figurational perspective similarly observe, “many texts on educational research present it (research practice) in terms of mutually exclusive, competing approaches and techniques. We think this reflects erroneous assumptions about how the growth of knowledge is best advanced” (p. 3). Bloyce (2004) as a figurationalist refers to these ‘one or the other choices’ as ‘false dichotomies’ such as where the researcher has to choose between either a ‘quantitative’ or a ‘qualitative’ approach.

Another example of a false dichotomy is provided by Lodico et al. (2006) who comment that researchers typically opt between using ‘inductive’ or ‘deductive’ methods in their studies. Induction involves the collection of data about a given topic and then making sense of this data towards the creation of a theory to explain a given research problem. Deduction on the other hand involves the creation of a hypothesis which is then tested typically using some kind of experiment (Scott & Morrison, 2007). Induction is most often linked to qualitative approaches and deduction with quantitative methodologies. However, according Dunning and Hughes (2013) neither term was regarded by Elias as being adequate:

…it is crucial to realise that it is not so much a question of selecting between (or, indeed, of reconciling) two static logical extremes – such as are suggested, for example, by the terms ‘deductivism’ and ‘inductivism’ – as it is of asking questions about the structure of a specific kind of order, more specifically about the connections involved in the sequential order of knowledge development (p. 124).

More recently, Punch (2009) has discussed the debate concerning qualitative and quantitative paradigms, and notes the value of combining both as a ‘mixed method approach’. Overall, Elias sought to avoid being drawn into arguments over one approach being better than another, or in developments in sociology that did not concur with his own ideas.
Hughes (2013) comments that “…Elias’s work has historically displayed an obstinate tendency to run counter to intellectual fashions, and more generally to transgress dominant codes of sociological etiquette” (p. 1). Elias consistently chose to not participate in debates about what he considered false dichotomies or in progressing more mainstream approaches within sociology. Instead, Elias developed an approach that was built upon classical nineteenth century sociology (Jary & Horne, 1987).

The examples in this section serve to demonstrate that Elias believed that it was wasted endeavour to compartmentalize, or reduce human relationships into fixed components of analysis that were typically viewed in opposition with each other. Instead, he believed that knowledge construction should be viewed as being dynamic, processual and open ended (Elias, 1978a). How figurationalists believe knowledge is constructed is important to this research, because those beliefs about knowledge construction highlight the need for research methods to be process oriented. The methodology that Elias used is reviewed in the next section, and of note is that he adopted a broad range of approaches in his research.

### 4.2 Figurational Methodology

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Norbert Elias is recognized as being the pioneer of figurational sociology theory. However, the methodology that Elias utilized has received limited attention and has also been criticised as being insufficient in detail for guiding figurational researchers (Baur & Ernst, 2011; Bloyce, 2004; Dunning, 1992). Several reasons are offered by Baur and Ernst (2011) for Elias not providing more prescriptive accounts of the methods that he adopted in his research. Similar to many of the classical sociologists, Elias “…did not write about methods of social research – instead, he conducted actual social research, thus giving examples of good practice” (Baur & Ernst, 2011, p. 118). Furthermore, when Elias carried out much of his research, sociology was in its infancy as a discipline, and research methodology was not as documented or as developed as it is today (Baur & Ernst,
Nevertheless, Elias used methods that resemble and are compatible with contemporary methodology discourse (Baur & Ernst, 2011). It is argued that Elias’s methods can be directly related to a range of research approaches including mixed methods research, grounded theory, ethnography, and social network analysis (Baur & Ernst, 2011). As will be explained later in this chapter, the expose of Elias’s methodology by Baur and Ernst (2011) proved useful in informing the research design used in this study.

Elias was less concerned about methodology than present day social scientists, and mainly focused on what data collection was necessary for answering his research questions (Baur & Ernst, 2011; Bloyce, 2004; Dunning & Hughes, 2013). Indeed, according to Dunning and Hughes (2013), Elias urged sociologists to “…adopt methods matched to and appropriate for the relational and dynamic, that is, processual, character of their subject matter” (pp. 149–150). Elias (1986) comments that the “…discovery, not the method, legitimizes research as scientific” (p. 20). Dolan (2009) interprets this remark by Elias (1986) as being “…a critique of standardised approaches to method, which imagine that faithful implementation will produce ‘truth’, irrespective of the object of investigation” (p. 188). In other words, the nature of the subject being investigated should determine the research method used and not the latter determining the former. Bloyce (2004) also warns against using inflexible procedural approaches in research, arguing that research is a ‘messy process’, meaning that any notion that there is a standard ‘recipe’ for carrying out research is misleading.

Dunning (1992) provides a summary of the practices that Elias recommended to his students for conducting research and ‘doing’ sociology. Firstly, researchers should avoid focusing just upon the present, and instead should treat their research in processual terms, in other words as dynamic figurations instead of static structures (Elias, 1978a). Elias argued that in adopting a process orientation researchers would automatically become more detached from their subject of research. Secondly, researchers should purposefully work towards even
greater detachment by being as impassionate as possible when exploring associations, interdependencies, processes and structures. They should consider social phenomena for its own sake while resisting the temptation to fulfil short-term objectives. Elias argued that by avoiding short-term goals, researchers were more likely to prevent partiality in their findings through having too much involvement in their research.

Thirdly, Elias recommended that researchers should always attempt to see their research as being connected to existing knowledge and not regard it as isolated work (Dunning, 1992). Fourthly, data collection must relate to a theoretical framework, and data and theory are mutually influenced by each other (Dunning, 1992; Dunning & Hughes, 2013). As Maguire (1988) puts it “…the processes of theory formation and empirical enquiry are seen as interwoven and indivisible” (p. 188) and, for Elias, the theoretical framework that was adopted was always figurational sociology (Baur & Ernst, 2011).

It has been argued in this section that although the focus of Elias’s work tended not to be on his methodology, he did however have certain ‘rules’ about how figurational research should be conducted. The purpose of this section was to outline the methodological principles that accompany a figuration research approach.

4.2.1 Involvement and detachment in research methodology

The notion of involvement and detachment (Elias, 1987) from a figurational perspective was introduced and discussed in Chapter 2. Concerning involvement in the research process, Elias urged his students to carry out studies in areas that were of interest to them, and in topics with which they already had some association (Dunning, 1992; Hughes, 2013). Nonetheless, at the same time as being involved in their subject matter, Elias’s students were also encouraged to have a degree of detachment (Dunning, 1992). ‘Detachment’ in this context, meaning that students were to be as emotionally removed from their research as they could be, in order that their findings were reality-congruent (Baur &
Ernst, 2011; Bloyce, 2004; Dunning, 1992). ‘Reality-congruent’ in figurational terms means as close to reality as possible, with minimal influence from individual fantasies or bias (Dunning, 1992).

With respect to involvement and detachment, Baur and Ernst (2011) contend that researchers are expected to declare their own personal and theoretical standpoint to avoid partiality:

In order to achieve sound results, and if their premises and analyses are to be of any use for the understanding of social processes, they must adopt an analytically detached outsider-perspective and refrain as much as possible from being affected by the constraints and struggles for position that mark wider society. At the same time, they need insider knowledge and must fully participate and involve themselves in the research process… (p. 121).

For figurational sociology research then, a balance has to be struck between researcher involvement and detachment. The researcher must ensure that they separate their own emotional involvement with the research as much as possible.

The PE profession is amongst those who have been accused of having too much involvement in their research. For example, Green (2006) comments:

Whilst there may be no doubting the sincerity of those advocating on behalf of physical education, the impact of this apparently unrecognized involvement with our subject matter has, I would argue, resulted in a tendency among physical educationalists towards partiality and even bias in our study of physical education (p. 653).

This level of involvement by PE researchers is arguably due to the passion that physical educationalists internationally share towards their subject (Kirk, 2010a). It is contended that such a level of involvement leads to assumptions of PE being value free, as
well as privileging certain knowledge as discussed in Chapter 3. The kind of involvement described, where PE researchers display a high level of emotional association with their discipline, is important to this research. This is because, such involvement can help explain why what is done in the name of PE, has changed little since the middle of the last century in many nations. Within the research context, it is argued that the guidance provided by Dunning (1992) helps counter excess involvement by PE researchers. Through following Dunning’s (1992) guidance, adequate levels of detachment can be built into research projects ensuring that research processes and findings remain reality-congruent.

4.2.2 Rejecting positivism

Elias was of the view that positivist research methods such as surveys were insufficient in answering the kinds of research questions that he posed (Baur & Ernst, 2011). In connection with the inadequacy of surveys, especially if used as a sole method of data collection, Maguire (1988) comments “…whatever alleged precision they may have, cannot (as a consequence of gauging individual opinions as separate and distinct data) adequately capture wider figurational concepts” (p. 191). In other words, because figurations are considered as being in constant flux, quantitative approaches on their own do not encapsulate their dynamic and infinite nature. Maguire’s (1988) observations concur with wider criticisms of positivist approaches to social research, as such approaches are unable to sufficiently answer many of the types of questions such as ‘how’ or ‘why’ an occurrence happens. Nevertheless, Elias did use a mixed method approach in some of his studies, and indeed Baur and Ernst (2011) consider Elias as one of the first advocates of mixed methods research.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) mention that social scientists typically analyse three different levels in their research, that of the individual, group and society. They suggest that critics of contemporary research accuse researchers of using the wrong level, or only one level of analysis. Often this single level of analysis involves what Elias (2009) calls a ‘retreat
to the present’ (Dunning & Hughes, 2013; King, 2006), where topics of research are considered in isolation, as stationary, and only in how they are perceived within contemporary contexts. As such there is no consideration as to how subjects of enquiry are part of an ongoing dynamic figuration that is inextricably linked to the past (Elias, 1978a). In figurational terms the description by Cohen et al. (2000) would be regarded as ‘static’, because those authors do not comment about the interconnectedness and interdependence of the different levels of enquiry. Nonetheless, there is some similarity between what Cohen et al. (2000) suggest and with what Elias loosely termed his methodology, as Elias favoured a multi-level approach also involving three levels (Baur & Ernst, 2011; Maguire, 1988).

According to Baur and Ernst (2011), firstly Elias reproduced the macro level of a given figuration by representing the defining characteristics and broader social structures that were inherent. This included a portrayal of the extent to which the evident social relationships were formal or informal, what the values, beliefs, ‘rules’ and accepted behaviour were, as well as the nature of power differentials. Next, Elias focused on the micro level with an emphasis on the interaction of the individual within a given figuration. This focus included how individuals acted, the extent to which they could or actually did exert influence, how they entered and subsequently left the figuration, and how their experience changed over time. Thirdly, Elias was concerned with the ‘sociogenesis’ of the figuration which recreates how the figuration came to be. Elias considered the sociogenesis level as being of central importance in understanding the micro and macro levels and how both are dynamic and interdependent upon each other. In connection with the sociogenesis of figurations Baur and Ernst (2011) note:

Only when looking at the past can one analyse the relation between the macro and micro-level, the long-term evolution of contemporary processes, the changes in the balances of power and functional equivalents… (p. 125).
Likewise, Dolan (2009) emphasises the importance of the ‘time’ dimension within figurations and argues that all ‘things’ in the social context have to be considered as being “…in process” (p. 190) because such entities have histories. Further, those ‘things’ have not always existed, but instead have grown and developed over time and therefore must be considered as dynamic rather than stationary structures (Elia, 1978a). Baur and Ernst (2011) note that as well as figurations being in flux they also have beginnings and ends. In addition, the social power balance of the individuals contained within figurations is subject to change. It is contended that this processual nature of figurational sociology is what distinguishes it from other sociological theories “Elias thus intended to pioneer social sciences that go beyond the historical sciences and a static sociology limited to mere descriptions of the status quo” (Baur & Ernst, 2011, p. 125). In other words, the centrality of process is what makes figurational sociology distinctive.

The approach of recreating micro, macro and sociogenesis levels has been documented in several PE and sport figurational studies. For example, Green (2002) in his research into the everyday ‘philosophies’ of PE teachers and Bloyce, Smith, Mead and Morris (2008) in their research about how sport development officers managed processes of organizational change. A similar strategy was used by Smith and Green (2004) who considered PE teachers and their personal, local and national figurations in a high school study of including students with special educational requirements. These examples serve to demonstrate that the approach of considering figurations in multi-layers or levels has already been successfully applied to PE and sport studies.

4.2.3 Qualitative research in figurational methodology

Qualitative research is defined as “the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual (i.e., nonnumerical) data to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest” (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2014, p. 7). It is concerned with the
documentation of meanings in human relationships and the way in which such meanings are constructed and upheld (Holdaway, 2000; Krathwohl, 1998). In addition, it is characterized by ‘immersion’, with the researcher ‘up close and personal’ and concerned with the uniqueness of human experience typically asking ‘how’ in a given social situation rather than ‘why’ (Padgett, 2004). Thus the researcher is involved in observing and possibly participating in the life of a subject(s) over an extended period of time, seeking to gain understanding of the meaning that a participant or participants take from their reality (Holdaway, 2000; Stroh, 2000). Researchers who do not allocate enough time to the study of a given social situation risk misinterpreting their findings (Holdaway, 2000). However, at the same time Holdaway (2000) recommends that researchers strive towards having minimal impact upon the lives of research participants as well as approaching any particular problem with sensitivity. In other words, researchers must be detached from their research.

Successful qualitative research requires the researcher to be patient, observe, and listen in an attempt to adequately understand the meaning of a given social circumstance before asking any questions. According to Drisko (2004), qualitative researchers have to be both curious and persistent. A key feature of qualitative research is that it contests positivist, or quantitative methodologies (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006), which are based on the premise of “…objective facts that speak for themselves” (Baur & Ernst, 2011, p. 120). Nonetheless, amongst qualitative researchers disagreement can exist over matters such as ethics, politics, and understandings of reality (Howe, 2001).

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) argue that qualitative research is more than a series of techniques or methods used to gather information. Instead, it is a reactive and holistic (Scott & Morrison, 2007; Stake, 1995) process that is informed by theory, favours particular kinds of knowledge building, and uses a wide range of methods. The importance of theory in social research is explained by Liston (2008), who comments:
The value of utilizing theory in the social sciences, including the sociology of PE and sport, can be seen in the ways in which it provides a guide to the sociologist, signalling what to look out for and what to ignore. It assists the sociologist in attempting to make connections or links between observed facts (p. 125).

Qualitative researchers also use theory to help explain emerging themes in collected data as well as explain findings (Lodico et al., 2006). Theory then, is used at different stages within a qualitative research approach.

Qualitative research is worthy of some detailed consideration within this chapter because although Elias used quantitative methods to some extent, he most often used qualitative approaches in his work (Dunning & Hughes, 2013). Nonetheless, Baur and Ernst (2011) comment that for Elias ‘qualitative’ was not the correct term and he considered ‘figurational’ to be a more adequate description. In other words, Elias was again emphasising the proprietary of processual, interdependent and dynamic characteristics of human relationship to be taken into account (Elias, 1978a). Similarly, Rojek (1986) observes that Elias advocated an approach that was “…non-reifying, non-deterministic and committed to studying social relations as relatively open-ended processes” (p. 586). While qualitative research can be used as part of a figurational research approach, figurationalists are nonetheless at odds with the restrictiveness that accompanies choosing one particular strategy over another (Baur & Ernst, 2011).

It is argued then, that qualitative methodology can be used in a figurational methodological approach so long as it takes into account the central features and assumptions of figurational sociology. Indeed, the use of qualitative approaches in figurational studies is well documented (Atkinson, 2008; Green, 2001; Velija & Malcolm, 2009). In the remainder of the chapter the theoretical aspects of the different stages of the research process adopted in this study are discussed.
4.3 A Qualitative Research Process Within a Figurational Sociology

Methodological Framework

The following section outlines the steps that are typically taken in the research process that are also compatible in using a figurational methodology. Those steps include identifying a research topic, a review of the relevant literature, research design, ethical issues, data collection and data analysis.

4.3.1 Identification of the research topic

It is recommended for any kind of social research that the topic is about a subject that interests the researcher, because of the amount of time required to carry out the research (Bryman, 2012; Gray, 2014). As was discussed earlier in this chapter, Elias also recommended that researchers should have an interest in their subject (Dunning, 1992; Hughes, 2013). However, Elias argued that at the same time researchers should strive towards being detached from their subject in order to obtain more adequate findings (Dunning, 1992). In choosing a research topic Creswell (2009) proposes a number of approaches that can be used. Creswell (2009) suggests that researchers should reflect on a broad topic and in doing so consider whether it is worthy of further study. Also suggested, is that a working title is drafted at the outset that can serve to give direction to the study from the commencement of the project. An additional approach is to identify an overarching question that the study seeks to answer. From this preliminary question an initial proposal can be developed where the feasibility of the topic is discussed along with justification for the proposed study. Research topics can also be identified through initial literature reviews that provide ideas and insight regarding possible areas of study (Creswell, 2009; Gray, 2014).

4.3.2 Literature review

According to Jesson, Matheson and Lacey (2011), literature reviews have different purposes such as informing research methods, explaining theories, or providing the researcher
with information about work that has already been carried out in the field. Jesson et al. (2011) continue by commenting that literature reviews provide background to a given study and offer the basis for future research. In terms of providing study context, Creswell (2009) comments that a literature review “…relates a study to the larger, ongoing dialogue in the literature, filling in gaps and extending prior studies” (p. 25). Other purposes of literature reviews include identifying important themes, and guiding the development of research questions about the topic (Gray, 2014).

4.3.3 Research design

Research design is described by LeCompte and Preissle (1993) as “…what the research purpose and questions will be, what information most appropriately will answer specific research questions, and which strategies are most effective for obtaining it” (p. 30). The research design can be considered as a framework of how the research will be carried out. Smith (2010) describes this framework as “the logical and systematic structure or plan by which data collection can take place” (p. 36). In designing such a research framework Creswell (2009) proposes three questions are asked. What knowledge claims (assumptions) are being made by the researcher? What investigation approaches will be adopted? What data collection methods and analysis will be used?

The kind of structural, procedural notion of research design described in the previous paragraph has been criticized for giving the impression that researchers can follow a step by step, rational, mechanistic and trouble-free process progressing from one stage to another. Waddington and Smith (2014) argue that many research textbooks portray research in this way, and fail to take into account unforeseen circumstances that result in research design changing direction. Typically those textbooks provide information about how research should be done, rather than how it tends to happen in practice:
students are thus presented with a view of research as a process which moves smoothly and unproblematically from the initial conceptionalization and definition of the research problem through to the development of research methods, data collection, interpretation and writing up and presentation of the project (Waddington & Smith, 2014, p. 2).

The authors proceed by suggesting that viewing research in such a static way fails to take into account what they term ‘serendipity’. In other words, ‘discoveries’ that occur by chance that relate to the research design as well as other aspects of the research process are ignored. Serendipity, argue Waddington and Smith (2014) can lead to research design and methods changing dramatically from how they were first planned.

Given the discussion in the previous paragraph research design is perhaps more adequately understood as being an “emerging design” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p.143). Considered in those terms research design is regarded as something that is not fixed, but instead is likely to alter or evolve over time. The approach of developing research questions and methods over time is recognized by Punch (2009) who states:

For the report of the completed research, the order in which things were done does not matter, only that there is this conceptual clarity and good fit. This can be achieved in different ways – the questions can be developed first, and the methods aligned; or, the research might begin with only a general approach to its topic, and then develop focus in the questions and methods as things proceed (p. 57).

It is also argued that the idea of an emerging design, because of its dynamic nature (Elias, 1978a), is particularly suited to a figurational approach, as opposed to considering this aspect of the research process in fixed terms.
4.3.4 Ethical issues

Ethical issues it is argued, have to be considered at the early stages of any research and must be incorporated into the research design at the earliest opportunity. As this study involved Indigenous peoples and children there were substantial ethical issues that had to be addressed. Punch (2009) notes “empirical research in education inevitably carries ethical issues, because it involves collecting data from people, and about people” (p. 49). Researchers must also be mindful of ethical issues throughout the life of project and not just at the planning stage (Ashley, 2012; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Miles and Huberman (1994) provide some detailed guidance for researchers about ethical considerations. This includes contemplating: to what extent the project is worthwhile, the competence of the researcher, informed consent, costs, benefits and possible harm and risk to participants, trust and honesty, confidentiality, anonymity, integrity, ownership of data and findings, use of results and conflicts. Kimmel (1988) argues that informed consent is perhaps the most important ‘rule’ in the relationship between the researcher and participant. However, it is contended that the other areas suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) are just as important because all are relevant. Because Indigenous children were involved in this research, care had to be taken with concerns about ‘harm and risk’ in order that their participation in the research was safeguarded.

Current researchers have inherited a legacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people being unfairly treated in research. Dodson (1994) maintains that this mistreatment can be traced back to when the Australian continent was first colonized. During this colonial period research was used to categorize and ‘label’ Aborigines. Consequently, it is argued that this early research has contributed to Indigenous peoples having a lack of trust in researchers and their intentions. Indigenous people often believe that researchers are only interested in ‘taking’ and not interested in ‘giving back’ to the Indigenous participants involved (Cochran
et al., 2008). Another criticism specific to non-Indigenous researchers of Indigenous studies raised by Cochran et al. (2008), is that the research design and methodology used is sometimes culturally inappropriate. In particular, those authors argue that such studies do not take into account the values, traditions and requirements of the respective communities.

Johnston (2003), a Maori researcher, is critical of research that is framed using a Eurocentric lens. Such frameworks “…operate as a universalizing blueprint that names every world according to their interpretations of how those worlds exist” (p. 98). To counter such perspectives, Johnston (2003) suggests some ‘good practice’ in carrying out bicultural research (where the researcher has a different cultural background) suggesting a list of 12 main points. Included is guidance about assumptions concerning researcher involvement and detachment, using culturally appropriate research design, research ownership and detailing what people benefit from the research. The list also includes addressing who writes up the findings, how the findings are disseminated, and the roles and responsibilities of the researcher in the process. Johnston emphasises the importance of consulting and involving Indigenous people in all aspects of the research. Regarding researcher responsibility, Johnston (2003) challenges ‘traditional’ research that typecasts the researcher as the ‘expert’ in addition to:

The tendency for research to be done by white middle-class men, studying and creating a literate (as opposed to an oral) account for a myriad of less powerful ‘others’ – that is, research driven by the interests and values of the already powerful (p. 108).

Johnston (2003) also believes that ‘traditional’ research holds that objectivity is both sought after and achievable. As discussed earlier in the chapter, figurationalists argue that this kind of ‘objectivity’ does not exist. In managing the complexities in this research, of a non-Indigenous researcher carrying out research involving Indigenous peoples, the Ethical
Guidelines (AIATSIS, 2012) proved to be a valuable resource. Those guidelines were of assistance in providing important ethical information and direction throughout the duration of the project, and helped address the points raised by Johnston (2003). More specific detail about how the AIATSIS guidelines were used is provided in the next chapter.

In involving children in research there are important differences that have to be considered in comparison to research with adult participants. Hill (2005) has suggested that these differences are concerned with ‘competence’, ‘power’ and ‘vulnerability’. Competence can include a child’s ability to understand what is being asked of them, how able they are to express their ideas, and the ability of the child to communicate verbally and non-verbally. Further, issues concerning competence become more complex when for example interviews are used to collect data, and the researcher speaks with a different accent (as was the case with this researcher) and perhaps does not understand some of the local terminology or ‘slang’ that the children concerned use.

Several kinds of power differentials generally exist between the adult researcher and the child. These include differences in age, gender, ethnicity and status. In this study, the researcher was white, middle-class, middle-aged and a practicing teacher. Vulnerability is about trust, the cognitive abilities of the children and the capacity for them to be influenced. The issues raised by Hill (2005) were addressed in this study and control measures put in place. The nature of those control measures, which were put in place from the outset of the study, and embedded into the research design are discussed in the next chapter.

4.3.5 Data collection

Holliday (2007) defines qualitative data as “what happens in a particular social setting – in a particular place or amongst a particular group of people” (pp. 60–61). Before data collection commences, decisions have to be made early in the proceedings about ‘who’, ‘when’, ‘what’ and ‘where’ (Merriam, 1998). There is no set way of collecting qualitative
data, instead data collection and sources of data are determined by the kind of problem being investigated as well as by practical considerations (Baur & Ernst, 2011; Gay et al., 2014; Merriam, 2009). In conducting figurational sociology, Elias used a range of data including maps, interviews, surveys and historical documents (Baur & Ernst, 2011). However, some sources of data are more suitable than others for constructing the respective macro, micro and sociogenesis levels of a figuration (Baur & Ernst, 2011).

Baur and Ernst (2011) suggest that the first stage of recreating a figuration is to approach it holistically in order to gain some sense of the macro level. In doing this, Elias used data sources such as maps, buildings and topographies (Baur & Ernst, 2011). These were used to give some sense of the overall figuration, what was valued and how it was structured. Baur and Ernst (2011) comment that the way in which buildings are constructed provides some indication of their social purpose. It is suggested that this same argument can be extended to how plans can be interpreted. For recreating the micro level, Elias tended to use ‘open-ended data’ including historical books and documents, observations, and interviews as well as spatial data (Baur & Ernst, 2011). To recreate the sociogenesis level of the figuration, Baur and Ernst (2011) recommend the use of historical, or archive documents and the use of some kind of timeline.

Therefore in reconstructing a figuration, attention is not only given to what form the figuration takes in the present, but consideration is also given to the processes that have made it this way. In the next section several qualitative data collection methods are reviewed that are sympathetic to a figurational approach.

4.3.6 Interviews

An interview is described by Gay et al. (2014) as being “…a purposeful interaction in which one person obtains information from another” (p. 338). Mishler (1986) describes an interview as a jointly produced talk between interviewers and interviewees. Records of
interviews are analyzed and interpreted by interviewers as a representation of those talks. Mischler (1986) notes that “how we make that representation and the analytic procedures we apply to it reveal our theoretical assumptions and presuppositions about relations between discourse and meaning (p. vii). The use of the term ‘discourse’ is central to Mishler’s view of what constitutes an interview. For Mishler (1986), an interview is a particular kind of discourse that is characterized by the use of questions and answers to develop a joint construction of meaning.

The advantage of interviews is that they allow a depth of data collection and the examination of specific issues that other approaches are unable to achieve (Amis, 2005; Kvale, 2007; Stroh, 2000). The terms ‘structured’ and ‘unstructured’ can be used to categorize types of interview, with structured interviews adopting a formal, rigid structure typically using pre-determined questions. Unstructured interviews on the other hand tend to be less formal, use fewer pre-set questions, and seek to obtain more detail and reasons for the responses participants provide (Mabry, 2008). Often questions in unstructured interviews are used as prompts to encourage participants to provide more information. Stroh (2000) believes that research interviews should not be characterized by a set of strictly ordered and structured questions asked one after the other. Instead, interviews should be seen as a forum in which purposeful conversation can be facilitated in a more flexible way.

Kvale (2007) advocates using the ‘semi-structured life-world interview’. This type of interview is characterized by not being as rigid as a structured interview, although it has more of a framework than an unstructured interview. A ‘semi-structured life-world interview’ is defined as “…an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena” (Kvale, 2007, pp. 7–8). According to Kvale (2007), the semi-structured life-world interview provides an opportunity for the researcher to explore how interview participants experience and
understand their social world. This type of interview allows interviewees to explain their experiences, perspectives and ways of life in their own words. Semi-structured interviews of the kind suggested by Kvale (2007) have been used in figurational studies including for example those mentioned previously in this chapter (Bloyce et al., 2008; Smith & Green, 2004).

Green (2000a) writes about the benefits of using semi-structured interviews in his figurational study of extra-curricular PE:

…semi-structured interviews proved a very useful means of exploring the interrelationships between past and present – that is to say, the networks in which PE teachers have been involved in the past as well as those in which they are currently involved – since both affect their view on the nature and purposes of PE (p. 185).

Bloyce (2004) also recommends semi-structured interviews as being useful for addressing gaps that may appear in data collected from other sources, and suggests that it enables the interviewer “…to seize upon any opportunity where the interviewee could elaborate on points of interest without being restricted to the rigidity of a more structured interview” (pp. 161–162). A further advantage of semi-structured interviews is offered by Gratton and Jones (2010) who maintain that semi-structured interviews allow themes to surface that perhaps would not appear if a more structured approach was used.

The physical act of conducting interviews is only part of the procedure of using interviews as a data source. In addition, interviews are usually audio recorded and recordings transcribed into written accounts of conversations (Gay et al., 2014). Gay et al. (2014) observe that preparing transcripts is a time-consuming process that can take four or five times longer to complete than the actual interview itself. Good practice in transcribing involves providing each speaker on a recording with a unique identity, and carefully checking the resulting text against the recording for accuracy (Gay et al., 2014). Gay et al. (2014)
recommend that because of the high volume of words that transcripts generate, where possible they should be cut back to include only the information that is most pertinent to the research.

Interviews in a figurational research arguably have most value in recreating the micro level, and to some extent the macro level of figurations because of the ‘lived memory’ information that they illicit (Baur & Ernst, 2011). In understanding the sociogenesis of figurations, interviews are regarded as not being encompassing enough as they are only suited for what Baur and Ernst (2011) call the ‘medium duration’ of figurations. ‘Medium duration’ is used to account for living memory. Because of the relative shortness of human life experience and recollections, interviews fail to encapsulate and detail the enduring processes that are central to sociogenesis (Baur & Ernst, 2011).

Historical or archive documents are a much better data source in this regard. Baur and Ernst (2011) comment that Elias offered specific guidance about how to analyse process oriented data in creating the sociogenesis level and use The Civilizing Process (Elias, 1978a) as an example. Firstly, the time period within which the analysis occurs is divided into distinct shorter components effectively creating a timeline. Then particular documents are selected that are relevant to each period. The documents are then arranged chronologically and compared. The use of documents in figurational research is considered in greater detail in the following section.

### 4.3.7 Documentary evidence

The next part of this chapter is concerned with two types of documentary evidence that are used in figurational methodology. Each of those data sources were used by Elias in his work (Baur & Ernst, 2011), and were used in this study.

#### 4.3.7.1 Written documents

Documents are defined by McCulloch (2012) as “a record of an event or process” (p. 210) and can be written by individuals or groups and exist in various forms. In social
research documents are often used as repositories of content where analysis involves the identification of recurring themes (Prior, 2008). However, the use of documents in social research has tended to be overlooked by researchers (Merriam, 2009; Punch, 2009). A proposed reason for this reluctance is that researchers often prefer to create their data from first principles, with documents being traditionally unfashionable and perceived as being ‘historical’ and as such lacking relevance (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Figurationalists would regard the approach of only valuing primary data as a ‘retreat to the present’ (Dunning & Hughes, 2013; King, 2006). The broader benefits of using documents as a data source in an institutional context are described by Dolan (2009) who observes that documents have:

…specific effects; they do not simply describe some organisational social reality; they actively shape the practices and conduct of people. Indeed, certain documents are explicitly prescriptive; they are written in order to [author’s emphasis] change or sustain the behaviour of workers… (p. 186).

In other words, in addition to what is explicitly stated within their pages, documents are written for a particular purpose. This notion of ‘purpose’ is discussed by Denscombe (2007), who suggests that at first glance government publications seem an appealing source of data because they contain information that appears to be authoritative, impartial and factual. Denscombe (2007) argues that those first impressions must be treated with caution, as the substance of documents must be examined in some detail in order to ascertain their true meaning. Given the nature of this research, government publications were an important source of data. In line with Denscombe’s (2007) observations, government documents were carefully analyzed at various levels to account for their different purposes.
Documents can also provide information about the nature of power relations within the figurations of which they are part. Dolan (2009) suggests that:

…we should be careful not to imagine such documents as floating free of specific social relations (bonds between people). Ultimately, documents are written, and they are written by people for other people to read. The extent to which people follow, ignore, adapt or change such written prescriptions is an aspect of the power ratio between writers and audiences (p. 187).

Prior (2008) makes a similar observation to Dolan (2009): “in all cases the key theme involves a consideration of documents as actors in a web of activity” (p. 480). Through conceptualizing documents as a set of interwoven connections, the focus becomes more about what a document ‘does’ rather than about what it ‘says’ (Prior, 2004, 2008). Hughes and Goodwin (2014) note that a characteristic of documents is that they are underpinned by continuing processes, where people have developed the ability to create records through the use of symbols and text. Further, those records are able to be ‘passed on’ from one generation to another, and should be considered as figurations in their own right argue Hughes and Goodwin (2014). Through viewing documents in this way, Hughes and Goodwin (2014) contend that a wider range and a greater depth of questions can then be asked about a topic. Hughes and Goodwin (2014) suggest that the following kinds of questions can be asked:

…”how did this or these come to be [author’s emphasis]”; ‘how are “these” interrelated’; and ‘what broader sets of social relationships are involved in “this” or “these”’. That is to say, an orientation towards, respectively, sociogenetic questions, relational questions, and the image of humans (rather than simply, a conception and classification of ‘the [author’s emphasis] human’) as open, bonded pluralities of people comprising webs of interdependency chains… (p. xxxiv).
The types of questions that Hughes and Goodwin (2014) put forward can help to increase knowledge about why present circumstances are what they are. As was stated earlier about recreating the different levels of a figuration, the lived memories of individuals are limited as sources of data. Documents on the other hand, as Hughes and Goodwin (2014) allude to, extend beyond the lived memories of individuals. Therefore they have a particularly useful role in recreating the sociogenesis of figurations. Another strength of documentary evidence is that there is less impact by the researcher on the research setting, and there are less of the cooperation, approval and other logistical issues that are associated with interviews and observations for example (Merriam, 2009).

Within the educational context, Punch (2009) claims that schools tend to produce a large amount of documents. Guba and Lincoln (1981) argue that where documents do not exist, are limited, or provide inadequate information, such shortcomings can say much about the context of the research. Concerning archive records, Maguire (1988) observes:

Archival silence, by which a direct record of the activities and perceptions of specific individuals or groups is absent, should not be taken as indicating that a particular group did not have its part to play in the unfolding figuration under examination. Equally, neither is there such a thing as an innocent text (p. 190).

An example of the kind of argument provided by Guba and Lincoln (1981) and Maguire (1988) is the Australian PE text books for pre-service and in-service PE teachers discussed in the last chapter. The silence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island content in each of those books ‘speaks volumes’ about the nature of the research context. The absence of those perspectives suggests that those writing the books were non-Indigenous and had alternative points of view concerning what should be included. Those points of view being representative of the dominant models of PE common to most industrialized nations.
Weaknesses of using documentary evidence in educational research include: problems locating publications; issues about permission/authorization and access; and researcher bias in the choice of documents to use. Despite these limitations, documentary evidence has been used extensively in figurational sociology. For example, as was discussed in Chapter 2, Elias (1978a) used European feudal society historical records to study the history and development of manners. In this study, contemporary and historical policies and curricula, school Year books, school prospectuses, letters and HPE Faculty program plans and unit outlines were the documents used.

4.3.7.2 Visual sources

A number of different kinds of ‘visual documents’ can be used as documentary evidence in social research including film, video and photography (Merriam, 2009). Visual documents can also be sub-categorised according to primary visual material (that which already exists), or data that is produced by the researcher (Pauwels, 2010). Visual sources are used as observations of the social world with their meaning explained in text (Chambliss & Schutt, 2010). However, Chambliss and Schutt (2010) maintain that researchers must be receptive to the content of images while bearing in mind the kind of reality being depicted. In other words, images similar to written documents, are produced for particular reasons and have some kind of pre-determined intent. In some contexts, projected messages should not be taken at ‘face value’, as images can be ‘staged’ according to the purpose for which they are designed.

A key benefit of using visual sources, like written documents, is that they enable researchers to gain insight into phenomena of interest and allow “…access to broader and more profound aspects of society (the broader realm of values and norms of a given culture)” (Pauwels, 2010, p. 550). While the use of visual documents in social research has gained in popularity in recent times, there has been limited attention given to the methodologies that are
suitable for using with them (Pauwels, 2010). Mannay (2010) observes that visual data in social research has been criticized because it is often under-analyzed. The main concern being that visual data serves little more than an illustrative function. Pauwels (2010) argues that in analyzing the content and form of visual data, researchers would benefit from considering how the data relates to cultural time and space dimensions. In other words, Pauwels (2010) is suggesting, similar to Hughes and Goodwin (2014), that visual data could be analysed within its processual context. In other words, visual data could be interpreted according to how given figurations came to be.

Prosser (2007) uses the concept of the ‘visual culture of schools’, which he argues is just as important as the use of numerical and text sources to describe school culture. Explaining the term ‘visual culture of schools’ Prosser (2007) states:

The first element in a visual centric method gives primacy to what is visually perceived rather than what is said, written, or statistically measured. The second element ‘culture’ draws attention to taken-for-grantedness and the unquestioned and unwritten codes of habitual practice. The third element ‘schooling’ is process orientated and provides the context in which the visual culture is situated and enacted (p. 14).

It is contended that what Prosser (2007) observes about the visual culture of schools can be directly related to the reconstruction of the macro level of a school figuration. Much of what Prosser (2007) describes is the social structure and rules (Baur & Ernst, 2011) in the broadest sense within any given school.

Similar to Pauwel’s (2010) remarks about visual documents, maps are suggested by Gay et al. (2014) as being useful documents because they offer researchers a “way of rethinking the way things are in schools and classrooms” (p. 342). In other words maps, school ground architectural plans for example, provide insight into a given school or
classroom context, and provide some indication of what is valued in a given school. In addition, Stake (1995) recommends that researchers should seek to adequately describe the physical environment within which their research takes place. Doing so assists researchers and readers in drawing meaning from the research context, because it is argued that vivid description enables a sense of actually ‘being’ at the site of the research. Maps, plans and photographs can be used to provide such rich description while at the same time providing opportunities for triangulation of data. In this study, facility photographs for each site and an outdoor facilities layout plan for School B were used as visual data sources.

### 4.3.8 Data analysis

There is no definitive point in the research process when data analysis commences (Gay et al., 2014; Stake, 1995). The process of data analysis can be considered as the review of raw data using interpretative frameworks; the identification of developing patterns, themes and connections; making provisional conclusions; ordering common issues; writing a final report; further review of data and the collection of additional data if required (Robson, 2011). In qualitative data analysis ‘coding’ is used as part of such an interpretative framework with ‘codes’ being “…tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 57). Typically qualitative researchers at the beginning of their formal analysis create a multitude of provisional codes that act as broad labels for categorizing data (Merriam, 2009). These codes are then subject to a process of revision and refinement that continues through to the writing up of findings. Through scrutinizing and modifying codes the researcher is able to sort and separate data in such a way that it relates to the research questions.

In the initial stages of coding, refinement involves the merging of some codes, the creation of sub-codes, and the removal of others while codes that transcend different sources of data become worthy of particular attention (Merriam, 2009; Robson, 2011). Once data has
been coded to a satisfactory level where it makes sense to the researcher, and is in a format that it can be worked with, it can then be subject to greater analysis. One approach to analysing data is thematic analysis which is “a term used in connection with the analysis of qualitative data to refer to the extraction of key themes in one’s data” (Bryman, 2012, p. 717). Thematic analysis is also used in figurational research (Bloyce et al., 2008).

Content analysis (Merriam, 2009) is another method of qualitative data analysis also known as lexical coding (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). This is an approach that can be used to quantify the “…frequency and variety of messages, the number of times a certain phrase or speech pattern is used” (Merriam, 2009, p. 205). In figurational research, Smith and Green (2004) report using content analysis in their study of students with special educational requirements in PE. The importance of content has also been acknowledged by Goodwin and Hughes (2011) in their study of personal correspondence between Norbert Elias and his colleague and friend Ilya Neustadt:

…we are also concerned with the substance and content of the correspondence.

Accordingly, both ‘form(s)’ and ‘content(s)’ are here treated effectively as ‘relational clues’: that is, as data which have the potential to yield insights concerning the broader social and sociological landscape (p. 681).

The emphasis by Goodwin and Hughes (2011) is to consider documentary evidence in dynamic rather than static terms by considering how documents relate to their wider context. As discussed in the following chapter, documents were used in this research to show the fluid nature of the figurations studied. Documents were used extensively in recreating both the macro and sociogenesis levels of the figurations. Current ACT ETD school based and system level documents were used for the former and historical educational documents for the latter.
4.3.9 Triangulation of data

The term ‘triangulation’ comes from navigation practice where a particular point on a map, land or sea, is confirmed from several different angles (Merriam, 2009). In qualitative research the same principle can be used to corroborate findings for a given occurrence. Denicolo and Becker (2012) provide the following definition of triangulation “a design that involves two or more methods or techniques for collecting data on a topic, providing both additional data and an opportunity to compare perspectives and either substantiate or modify alternative interpretations” (p. 130). A ‘system’ is constructed by the researcher that allows the area of interest to be cross checked from different perspectives (Holliday, 2007). Through cross-checking, triangulation can be used to check the accuracy of a particular idea or finding by converging different sources of information (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest five different ways in which verification can occur through triangulating, by: data source, researcher, method, theory and data type.

An example of triangulation by ‘data source’ is where different interview participant groups say the same thing about a particular topic. In triangulation by researcher, different researchers report similar findings about a given topic. Triangulation by ‘method’, could be where something said in an interview is cross checked using ideally at least two other data sources. Through triangulation by ‘theory’, emerging themes or topics of interest are compared with aspects of the theory that are related to the research. Lastly, ‘data type’ is about drawing consensus across different kinds of data, such as across qualitative and quantitative data, as would happen when using a mixed methods approach.

In deciding which kind of triangulation to use, Miles and Huberman (1994) comment “the aim is to pick triangulation sources that have different biases, different strengths, so they complement each other” (p. 267). Within figurational research a wide range of data sources are often used. Therefore, there is much scope for triangulation to occur. For example, Baur
and Ernst (2011) observe that “whenever Elias uses maps, buildings and landscapes as a data source, he triangulates them with other data sources, including historical documents, diaries and letters” (p. 127). It is argued that the approach of using a range of data sources not only allows for opportunities to triangulate data, but also enables more compelling findings to be obtained. Through the use of a range of data sources, triangulation was able to be used in this study as demonstrated in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the methodological theory that guided the research methods adopted in this study. Such a discussion is important, because it provides a perspective on how knowledge is created. It is contended that assuming a standpoint on how knowledge is constructed is required for deciding the most apt research methods for any given study. It has been argued that there is no single way of carrying out research. Instead, approaches should be based on what is most suitable for answering the research questions. In completing his research, Elias used qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (Baur & Ernst, 2011). In the current study a qualitative approach was deemed appropriate because of the nature of the subject of enquiry, and also because it could be used to adequately answer the research questions. This qualitative approach is discussed in some detail in the following chapter.
Chapter 5: Study Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to detail the qualitative approach, informed by the theory outlined in Chapter 4, that was adopted as the study methodology for this research. For the theoretical framework, it was decided to proceed with figurational sociology after taking into account the limitations of this theory outlined in Chapter 2. It is argued in this chapter why figurational sociology was chosen as the best theory for using in this study, despite those criticisms. A research design was constructed that involved forming the research questions, deciding the most appropriate methods to reconstruct the macro, micro and sociogenesis levels of the figurations studied (Baur & Ernst, 2011), and the identification of ethical issues. Strategies were put in place to counter those ethical concerns, including the use of ICFs. A further part of the research design was to identify the participants who would take part in the study.

Following the completion of the research design data collection commenced. The data sources used were school websites, ACT ETD government documents, a plan of one of the schools, photos of PE and sports facilities at each site taken by the researcher, individual and group interviews, and historical documents. Data was analysed using the theory provided in Chapters 2 and 3 and findings were then presented by recreating the macro, micro and sociogenesis levels of the figurations studied (Baur & Ernst, 2011). Those findings are presented in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. In the following sections the different aspects of the methodology used are considered in some detail.

5.1 Figurational Sociology

Figurational sociology was used to guide the research design, help refine the research questions and assist in deciding what topics would be researched. In choosing figurational sociology, a theoretical standpoint was adopted where contemporary Indigenous student
experience of PE and school sport was understood to be process related. The issues or topics for investigation were largely decided from personal interest and an initial literature review.

Figurational sociology was also used to help select the participants that would be included in the research. This is because this theory helps understand who the main actors are within PE and school sport figurations and the different amounts of power that those individuals hold. Figurational sociology also helped to draw attention to the nature of the relational and interdependent relationships between those individuals as well as how the Indigenous student experience of PE and School is affected. In other words, Indigenous students do not exist in isolation within a given school setting and instead are influenced by the actions of other people in the different figurations involved. It was therefore important that the additional social actors who make up the relevant PE and school sport figurations were identified and included. Figurational sociology was used to interpret the findings while ensuring an adequate amount of researcher detachment. By adopting a relatively detached position the reasons behind some of the human action reported was considered and explained with relative partiality. The words ‘relatively detached’ are used because it is acknowledged that a researcher can never be completely detached (Elias, 1998c).

5.2 Research Design

The research design used was an emerging design (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005) that took shape from the commencement of the project and from regular supervisory panel discussions in the first two years of part-time candidature. As knowledge about the study topic increased the research design became more refined. The purpose of the research was to gain an understanding of how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport, and what meaning they associate with their participation or lack of participation in both. Also of interest in the study was finding out how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are able to influence
their involvement in PE and school sport through their relative power within relevant figurations.

A further reason for the research was to investigate the attitudes and beliefs of ACT ETD staff, including HPE teachers included in the figurations studied, and how their actions affect Indigenous student experiences of PE and school sport. The research also sought to find out the nature of the figurations of PE and school sport at the three schools selected and how these figurations developed over time. The processes and events involved in the creation of these figurations for PE and school sport were also of interest. From the purpose of the research, the three research questions were formulated over time. Taking an extended period of time to finalise research questions can be justified on the grounds that the researcher often does not know enough about their research topic to be able to form definitive questions at the outset.

5.2.1 Research questions

1. How do Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research?

2. How did these Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport come to be?

3. What events and long-term processes have influenced Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport at the three high schools?

Initially, the research questions were of a very general nature and broadly related to what PE ‘meant’ for Indigenous students and why they might like or dislike PE. It took much reflection and substantial reading about the topic to finalise the questions. Nevertheless, from the initial research questions and preliminary literature review, it seemed that some kind of process-oriented approach would be appropriate for this research. Also, there was a gap in research using figurational sociology in the Australian PE context. Maguire (1988) was used to refine the research questions through highlighting that “‘how it happened’ and ‘how it was’
questions allow for the probing of the manifold, sequential and cumulative nature of structuring and the capturing of how ‘it really was’” (p. 192). Maguire (1988) contends nonetheless, that other kinds of questions are necessary in figurational research to take into account particular events and occurrences in a given figuration. In other words, figurational research like this study requires additional questions that seek to further understand relevant long-term processes and interdependencies that add to the existing stock of knowledge.

5.2.2 Reconstructing the macro, micro and sociogenesis levels of the physical education and school sport figurations using a qualitative approach

Creswell (2009) was used to inform the research design by drawing attention to the ‘knowledge claims’ made, as well as the enquiry approach and data collection methods used. With reference to knowledge claims, a figurational stance was assumed. This viewpoint considers all social knowledge as being continuously constructed and reconstructed, through long-term processes, and the power relationships that exist in all figurations. A qualitative enquiry approach compatible with figurational sociology was adopted. This qualitative approach reconstructed the PE and school sport figurations studied according to their macro, micro and sociogenesis levels (Baur & Ernst, 2011).

In recreating the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration (Baur & Ernst, 2011), school specific and system level documents recommended by the three principals, were the main data sources used in addition to school websites. Those documents included a curriculum, PE program plans, a code of conduct for teachers, teacher quality teaching documents and a plan for teaching Indigenous education. Photographs taken by the researcher of the indoor and outdoor facilities at each of the three school sites, as well as a plan of the outdoor facilities at School B were also used. Collectively these documents and websites set out the social structure and rules (Baur & Ernst, 2011) of the PE and school sport figuration.
For reproducing the micro level of the figuration, interview data was drawn upon that was collected from the principals, HPE executive teachers, HPE classroom teachers, ICFs and Indigenous students at the three sites. The sociogenesis of the figuration was reconstructed through an examination of historical PE curriculum documents, letters, memos, and other PE specific and general written documentary evidence that spanned the history of public school education in the ACT (Canberra in 2013 celebrated its centenary). This range of documents was chosen to provide a sense of how PE and school sport, and Indigenous mention or lack of Indigenous mention have been shaped by intended and unintended human action. Also, using a wide range of data sources enabled triangulation and greater reliability to occur in the research findings. In recreating the macro, micro and sociogenesis levels (Baur & Ernst, 2011) of the figurations, contrasts and similarities were made between the three schools. The detail about how the three levels of the PE and school sport figuration were constructed is discussed in the subsequent three chapters, Chapters 6–8.

5.2.3 Indigenous critical friends

In a similar way to Elias’s work about researcher involvement and detachment (Elias, 1987), Creswell (2009) notes that researchers analyse and explain data according to their own values and beliefs. Given that the researcher is non-Indigenous it was decided early in the research design that this outsider status would have to be managed carefully throughout the course of the study. ICFs were partly used for this purpose, and one of their main roles was to act as an Indigenous lens to ensure that interpretations of findings were not just a non-Indigenous account. Existing or former IEOs were selected as ICFs using the criteria that each had some association with one of the schools and importantly had a successful working relationship with the Indigenous students. The relationship with the students was important in order that those students felt as relaxed as possible during their interviews.
All of the ICFs were male, Aboriginal, and identified with different peoples. ICF A stated that his people came from Northern NSW, Southern QLD and Central Western NSW. Although he had grown up in Canberra, he still had strong connections to those areas. ICF B descended from the Nuenonne people of the South East coast of Tasmania (his mother’s family) and the Gubbi Gubbi people of the South East coast of QLD (his father’s family). Lastly, ICF C was of the Kamilaroi people who are from an area of East Australia that stretches from the Hunter Valley to the Warrambungle Mountains, and through NSW as far as Nindigully in South West Queensland.

The ICFs then, were involved in this study as one of the main strategies to help manage the outsider status of the researcher and to help ensure that culturally appropriate research methods were used. ICFs were consulted regularly during the life of the project to gain and maintain legitimacy about knowledge systems, cultural practices, beliefs, experiences and Indigenous values. This involvement was crucial because Indigenous people have the right to have participation in any research about them, as well as the right to uphold and have influence upon their culture, values and traditions (Introduction to the AIATSIS Ethical Guidelines, AIATSIS, 2012). Further, the ICFs were included throughout the study because it is critical that Indigenous people have continuous involvement in Indigenous related research studies (Principle 7, AIATSIS, 2012).

A total of four meetings were held between the researcher and the ICFs during the project and discussions were audio recorded with permission. The main purpose of those meetings was consultative, in order that the researcher could gain ongoing Indigenous insight into the research process. The first two meetings were particularly important for the research design. At the initial meeting, information was given to the ICFs about the nature of their involvement in the research, and each was given a document describing their role (see Appendix A). The purpose of the ICFs was explained along with what their participation was
likely to involve. At the second meeting, the ICFs were consulted regarding the best way to structure the Indigenous student group interviews, to help manage the outsider status of the researcher and to allow the students every opportunity to contribute. Proposed interview questions were also discussed at this meeting and subsequently some questions were amended to reflect the concerns and wishes of the ICFs. At the second meeting, the issue of honorariums for the ICFs was also discussed (a ‘one-off’ payment for the ICFs, for giving up their time to assist in the research, provided by ACT ETD; Principle 11, AIATSIS, 2012). Honorariums were built into the research design as a way to acknowledge and provide some remuneration the ICFs for their involvement.

In summary, the ICFs helped ensure that an Indigenous perspective was maintained throughout the study and they acted as a sounding board for cultural aspects of the research.

5.3 Alternative Approaches to Carrying Out the Research

There are other approaches that could have been used in this study, two of which are considered in the following paragraphs, along with the main reasons why both were subsequently discounted.

5.3.1 Ethnography

Although a figurational approach was used, ‘ethnography’ and ‘case study were both considered as possible approaches and subsequently rejected. While some characteristics of ethnography were appealing it was not used for two reasons. Firstly, field observations are considered to be a main data source in ethnography, and although observations had been included in the original research design it was decided not to proceed with those. This was because after data collection had commenced, it became apparent that observations had the potential to compromise the anonymity of the Indigenous students. In addition, conducting observations would have required visiting the schools many times.
A large number of visits would have been required, because each participant group of Indigenous students was spread over as many as four separate Year groups, and the students were often in PE classes at different times. Frequent visits to schools were not feasible because of ACT EDT approval restrictions for this research. A stated condition on the ACT ETD website (http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/publications_a-z/Research_in_ACT_public_schools) was that there should be minimal impact by the researcher on the schools involved. Secondly, ethnographic studies tend to involve the researcher being immersed in a given culture for an extended period of time (Angrosino, 2007). Again, being in a school environment for an extended period of time would not have been acceptable to ACT EDT.

5.3.2 Case study

While a case study approach has been used in figurational studies (Bloyce et al., 2008), it was felt that Elias’s approach to carrying out research described by Baur and Ernst (2011) was more fitting to use as a methodology. Although there is no consensus in social sciences about what constitutes a case study (Burton, 2000; Merriam, 1998), the literature suggests general agreement about the use of ‘boundaries’. Indeed, Merriam (1998) goes as far as to say that “the single most defining characteristic of case study research lies in delimiting the object of study, the case” (p. 27). It was believed, that setting boundaries would have represented this study in static terms, and would therefore have restricted and misrepresented the dynamic nature of the figurations involved (Elias, 1978a). It is argued then, that a case study approach by its nature can reduce long-term dynamic processes to fixed components, and in so doing can encourage a ‘retreat to the present’ (Elias, 2009). Further, employing the kind of methodology that Elias used (Baur & Ernst, 2011) was more in keeping with an overall figurational approach, which it is argued also helped facilitate more reliable analysis.
5.4 Data Collection

Before data collection commenced, permission for carrying out research in the three ACT schools was obtained from ACT DET (see Appendix B). This authorization was sought following ethics approval from UCHERC for conducting the research. Three schools were chosen to enable a depth of research, and allow comparisons to be made in answering the research questions. To enable a greater likelihood that students would take part, schools with more than 20 Indigenous student enrolments were identified. It was believed that selecting schools with larger numbers of Indigenous students would mean that there was a greater likelihood that at least some of those students would take part. Further, it was also likely that Indigenous students who did take part would be able to offer support to each other because of the high numbers of students at each site. Good working relationships with staff at the schools were essential in order to facilitate data collection within the timeline available for the study.

Interview data was the first data to be collected in the study and the processes involved are outlined in the next section.

5.4.1 Interview participant groups

The following five interview participant groups took part in the study: Principals, Executive HPE teachers, Level 1 HPE teachers, Indigenous students, and ICFs. Those participant groups were identified from discussions with the principals at each school as being the main participants in the PE and school sport figurations investigated. Each participant group is now considered in the order that they were interviewed (the interview questions asked to each participant group are detailed in Appendix C). All of the participants in each group were interviewed using semi-structured interviews before proceeding onto the next participant group. This approach of completing all of the interviews for a given participant group before moving onto another, meant that unforeseen points of interest raised by a
participant or participants at one interview, could be ‘followed up’ at subsequent interviews within the same participant group.

5.4.1.1 Principals

The principal participant group comprised two males and one female principal who were all non-Indigenous. Individual interviews were held with each of the principals in their respective schools and were the first interviews to be completed in the study. Those interviews were used for context setting to explain the purpose of the research, outline timescales, boundaries, and to request access to the other research participants within the school, and documentation. Principals perform the role of ‘gatekeepers’ (Amis, 2005; Burton, 2000) for their schools in so far as this research was concerned, because they control the amount and nature of access to data sources. As ‘gatekeepers’ the principals were asked and gave permission for their staff and students to be interviewed.

With the principals, the researcher was able to talk generally about school life as a ‘warm up’ for the main interviews. During those interviews and with the interviews with the HPE teaching staff, it was found that being a full time teacher within the ACT ETD system was helpful. There was a sense of ‘professional belonging’ by the researcher by also being a teacher, and through having current understanding of the ‘system’. This was some measure of researcher ‘involvement’, meaning that the researcher through his substantive employment as a teacher had an association with the ACT ETD research participants. This involvement was acknowledged and carefully managed through the researcher consciously focusing on being as detached as possible. Part of this detachment required ensuring that no reaction was ever shown to what was said. Follow-up questions were asked to find out the reasons behind responses that were unusual, unexpected, or offensive. Further, personal opinions were never offered by the researcher about any of the issues discussed.
5.4.1.2 Executive health and physical education teachers

The three executive HPE teachers, one from each school, were non-Indigenous and male. Each was an experienced teacher and each had approximately three decades of HPE teaching experience. The executive HPE teachers were identified as interview participants because they have a leadership responsibility in deciding the nature of the day-to-day PE teaching in their respective schools. One had completed their PETE in Canberra, another in NSW and the third had not undertaken any formal PETE being qualified in another KLA. Additional details about the executive HPE teachers are provided in Table 1. Like the principal interviews, the executive teacher interviews were carried out as individual interviews in the respective schools.

5.4.1.3 Level 1 health and physical education teachers

There were 17 HPE teachers, all of whom were non-Indigenous and were interviewed using group interviews at each school. The HPE teachers were identified as interview participants because they directly influence what is taught to students in their school as well as the kind of school sport that is offered. The teachers varied in HPE teaching experience from four to 29 years (see Table 1). Those teachers had mainly completed PETE within the ACT, the exception being Teachers 3B, 5B and 6B, and few had teaching experience outside of the ACT. The common characteristics of studying in Canberra, and only teaching in Canberra, means that these teachers will have been exposed to a somewhat narrow range of influences as adults that have shaped their PE pedagogies. However, their early habitus may have been shaped outside of the ACT, as some may have moved to Canberra prior to commencing PETE.
Table 1

*Executive HPE Teacher and Level 1 HPE Teacher Participant Group Characteristics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>HPE Teaching Degree</th>
<th>PETE and Year Completed</th>
<th>Length of Time Teaching PE in the ACT</th>
<th>Teaching Experience Elsewhere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Teacher A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>32 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1A</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra 2004</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra 1999</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra No date</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra 2006</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra No date</td>
<td>13 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Teacher B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra 1982</td>
<td>27 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1B</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra 2008</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra 2003</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>NSW 2001</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra No date</td>
<td>None given</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5B</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>South Australia 1982</td>
<td>29 years</td>
<td>South Australia 1 Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 6B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>USA 1993</td>
<td>17 years</td>
<td>USA 2 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 7B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra 2008</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Teacher C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Western Australia 1993</td>
<td>32 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra 2002</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2C</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra 2002</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>United Kingdom 1 Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4C</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra No date</td>
<td>19 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5C</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Canberra 2009</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the HPE teacher participant groups, it was felt that the researcher could relate to the teachers, as the interviews as broad conversations, bore some resemblance to professional dialogue that often occurs in HPE faculties. This sense of equality and collegiality was
beneficial to the research process as it facilitated ‘open talk’ with fellow teachers. In other words, if the researcher had not been a practicing HPE teacher, he could have been considered an ‘outsider’ and this may have affected the amount and quality of information that was gathered. This status as an ACT ETD teacher, along with perhaps being an older student, meant that the researcher was made to feel welcome by all of the ACT ETD staff.

However, the researcher acknowledges that his professional relationships with the ACT ETD staff were indicative of his involvement in the research. Through being aware of this involvement, detachment was deliberately sought during the interview process. This detachment included the researcher focusing on being as emotionally removed as possible from the participant interview responses. Overall, physical access to the schools for interviews and documentation was trouble free and there were few constraints.

5.4.1.4 Indigenous students

A total of 21 Indigenous students agreed to participate in the research. Of those, two identified as having both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, and the remainder identified as Aboriginal. There were four students in Year 7, five in Year 8, five in year 9 and seven in Year 10, and gender was almost equally split with 11 male and 10 female students. The Indigenous student characteristics are provided in greater detail in Table 2.
Table 2

*Indigenous Student Participant Group Characteristics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Cultural Identity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Year Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1A</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2A</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3A</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4A</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5A</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 6A</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7A</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 8A</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 9A</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 1B</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2B</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3B</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4B</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5B</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 6B</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7B</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 1C</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2C</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3C</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4C</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5C</td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indigenous students were included in this research because their involvement is central to the study. The Indigenous students were recruited by the ICFs by being personally invited at school or through telephone requests to parents/carers. Part of this recruitment process involved letting parents and carers know that there was no consequence for the students by not participating. Every Indigenous student at each school was asked if they would like to take part and therefore were given the same opportunity to participate. In other words, each student was invited to be involved in the same way. The ICFs were in a
favourable position to recruit the students because they worked with them on a daily basis as IEOs. Participation however, was conditional on the students returning completed participation forms, with signed parent or guardian consent. The ICFs reported that they found it challenging receiving the forms back from a lot of the students.

To help manage actual and perceived power relationships as well as outsider issues, no teachers (other than an Acting IEO trusted by the students who happened also to be a teacher) were involved in recruiting Indigenous students or in the interviews themselves. The ICFs also had responsibility for recruiting the students to help safeguard participant anonymity and confidentiality. At the actual interviews, each ICF or the Acting IEO introduced the researcher to the Indigenous students who agreed to take part. This was the preferred method of introducing the researcher, rather than using school administrative systems, again for reasons pertaining to anonymity and confidentiality. Those reasons included protecting student identity by ensuring that the only school staff involved in the actual student interviews were the ICFs or the Acting IEO. A key role of each ICF and Acting IEO, was to always be present during the Indigenous student interviews to support the students, and to offer clarification of questions and reassurance where required. The students were encouraged with the help of the ICFs and the Acting IEO to share their own experiences of PE and school sport, although they were under no obligation to answer any of the questions. The students also had the option of asking the ICF to leave the room at any time or if preferred to not have them there at all.

Care was taken in selecting a location for the Indigenous student interviews in order to help protect the anonymity and confidentiality of those involved. It was decided that where possible the interviews would not be conducted within the schools themselves. Consequently, at two of the schools the interviews occurred off-site. In one of the schools it was deemed acceptable to use the Indigenous Unit within the school building as the location for interviews. This was because the Indigenous Unit was considered by the Indigenous students
as being ‘safe’ and private from the main school. School administrators and teachers at the respective schools were deliberately not told when or where the interviews were being held, or the identity of the students involved.

Establishing rapport and trust with the Indigenous student participant groups was a very different process to that undertaken with the ACT ETD staff. In contrast to the ‘insider’ status with ACT ETD staff, the researcher felt ‘outsider’ status when interviewing the students. The ICFs and Acting IEO played a crucial role in facilitating effective interviews which was assisted by a professional relationship between the ICFs and the researcher. This professional relationship was characterized by a level of trust reciprocated through working on collaborative projects as part of the researcher’s employment. Those relationships were acknowledged as areas of researcher involvement. However, the involvement with the Indigenous students was deemed necessary to help ensure that they were as comfortable as possible during their interviews. With the ICFs, researcher involvement was beneficial because the trust gained through professional relationships helped facilitate the interview process.

An additional way in which ‘outsider’ status was addressed, was for the researcher to deliberately ‘dress down’ at each of the Indigenous student interviews. ‘Outsideness’ was perhaps reduced by not dressing as a teacher, and emphasizing more the student status of the researcher. Also emphasized, was that one possible outcome of the research may be to improve how Indigenous students experience PE. A small number of the students were known to the researcher, although not by name, through involvement as a teacher in ACT SSSA sporting carnivals. Those events were areas of ‘common interest’, and so offered a way of ‘warming into’ the main interviews. Amis (2005) describes how he used common interests, including sport, to establish rapport with an interviewee. The researcher also used his Scottish background as a way of engaging with this participant group, by recalling that after moving to
Australia, he was surprised that Indigenous perspectives were missing from the PE curriculum and wondered why this was the case. Again, the emphasis was on how the research might benefit the students.

5.4.1.5 Indigenous critical friends

ICFs were interviewed in this research because they act as an interface between the predominantly non-Indigenous education setting and the Indigenous students. The ICFs were able to provide perspectives of Indigenous student experience of PE and school sport from an Indigenous adult point of view. The ICFs were invited to talk about their experiences of working with both the Indigenous students and HPE staff as well as relevant aspects of their role as current or former IEOs. The ICFs were selected after seeking permission for their involvement from the respective school principals. The ICF group interview took place off-site because the ICFs were more comfortable with this arrangement, again for anonymity and confidentiality reasons.

5.4.2 Interview transcription

Each of the interviews was audio recorded with informed written consent. For the Indigenous student interviews, permission was obtained from the parents or carers of each of the students as they were all under 18 years of age. The recordings were transcribed by the researcher which it is argued assisted data analysis by allowing an additional level of scrutiny. A professional transcribing service was not used because the researcher can become somewhat removed from the detail of what was said, and there is potentially greater scope for human error. Consequently, time must be allocated for checking the accuracy of transcripts. In addition, ‘accent’ was a factor. I have a Glaswegian accent and was concerned that if someone else transcribed the interviews they would struggle to understand some of what was said. In carrying out my own transcribing I believed that I was able to add an extra layer of analysis and immerse myself in the process at a much deeper level. Through meticulously
transcribing each interview, ideas also emerged that helped shape the future direction of the research.

Every interview was transcribed in exactly the same way, verbatim and directly from a digital audio recording device using predetermined conventions (Macnaghten & Myers, 2004). This approach of transcribing everything that was said was particularly time-consuming. After each transcript was completed, the interviewees were given the opportunity to read their transcript and have it amended. In the final transcripts participants were identified according to the participant group they belonged, and the school with which they were connected. While transcription can perhaps be considered a straightforward process, Marshall and Rossman (2006) warn researchers to be cautious about the pitfalls. They argue for example that in transcribing, researchers make judgments about where commas and full stops are placed, and the meaning of pauses during conversations. Sometimes these interpretations by the researcher can be very different from those intended by the participants. To avoid such pitfalls, every participant was allowed the opportunity to read their transcript as described above.

5.4.3 Interview data analysis

The interview transcripts were analysed using NVIVO, where traditional or orthodox coding; the identification of recurring themes in the data (Lichtman, 2010) was undertaken using ‘nodes’. A node being the NVIVO term for a code. Initial nodes were created from provisional themes and connections that emerged when the transcripts were reviewed during the first stage of formal analysis. Each node was then reviewed, and either retained in its existing form, omitted, or combined with one or several other nodes in subsequent stages of refinement and analysis. Commonly themed data from each interview participant group was ‘dumped’ into respective final nodes thus merging interview data (Stake, 2006) from across the three sites. Within each final node data was analysed using figurational sociology and
racialization theory, and the findings were written as Chapter 7, the Micro Level of the PE and school sport Figuration.

It is noted that when data is merged, typically the value of the situational context of each site of data collection is compromised (Stake, 2006). However, merging data enables comparisons and connections to be made across each interview participant group, and this kind of appraisal was deemed as being important in answering the research questions. Therefore it was decided to merge the interview data in this study. There were two other main reasons for doing this. Firstly, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, it is contended that the ‘separate’ PE and school sport figurations at each school actually exist as a single larger figuration (this claim is argued in greater detail in Chapters 6 and 7). Secondly, and again as mentioned previously, from an initial review of the interview data it was realized that if the PE and school sport figurations were reconstructed separately for each school, participant anonymity would be compromised. Consequently, the situational context is of lesser importance when the school based PE and school sport figurations are viewed thus.

Thematic analysis was used for the interview transcripts, the focus being on what was said and the reasons why. Common themes were identified in these transcripts that related to research question one. No emphasis was placed upon extracting meaning from participant body language, pauses in sentences or other behaviour such as laughing, all of which can be open to misinterpretation. As an additional check, the ICFs were consulted to help ensure that the meaning that was drawn from the Indigenous student transcripts was what had been intended by the students. This was done to help avoid misrepresentation of what was said due to cultural differences. Mabry (2008) problematizes the position of the researcher as the ‘outsider’ according to how data can be misinterpreted:

For external researchers, the cultural competence needed for grasping local meanings cannot be presumed. Even when external researchers share nationality and language
with case participants, they may be unable to detect the subtle or hidden meanings suggested by a pause in conversation, the type of refreshments offered, who is present and who is absent in a gathering, the items found (or not) on a meeting agenda, who gives and who receives gifts, who makes decisions and how (p. 220).

Mabry (2008) continues by suggesting that ‘key informants’ (or in the case of this research the ICFs), can help to interpret local meanings that the ‘external researcher’ would otherwise miss. Therefore, at the second and the third meetings with the ICFs, they were invited to comment upon the Indigenous student transcripts. Emerging themes from those transcripts were also debated in order to gain an Indigenous point of view about what the students said.

### 5.4.4 Document and visual data

Documents were used in reconstructing the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration (which is outlined in Chapter 6) and in reconstructing the sociogenesis of the PE and school sport figuration (which is outlined in Chapter 8). The school specific documents that were analysed in recreating the macro level were the school websites, a school based HPE curriculum for School C, HPE Faculty program plans and unit outlines for Schools A and C, school prospectuses, photographs of facilities and an outdoor facilities architectural map for School B. The following system level PE and school sport documents were also used: *The Physical Education and Sport Policy and Implementation Guidelines* (Australian Capital Territory Department of Education and Training [ACT DET], 2009), and *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007). Two documents were also reviewed that were concerned with the changing nature of the PE and school sport figuration from being a local ACT figuration, to becoming part of a national figuration. This change was on account of ACT ETD moving towards adopting a national curriculum in all KLAs. Those two documents were the: *Draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education Consultation Report*
(ACARA, 2012a) and The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2012b).

The following documents were also used as data sources, because they had some bearing on research question one about how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport: A Classroom Practice Guide: Quality Teaching in ACT Schools (ACT DET, 2006a); An Assessment Practice Guide: Quality Teaching in ACT Schools (ACT DET, 2006b); Teachers’ Code of Professional Practice (ACT DET, 2008); and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010–2013 (ACT ETD, 2010b).

In recreating the sociogenesis level of the PE and school sport figuration in this study, in excess of 50 historical documents were reviewed that included reports, curricula, letters, school Year books, prospectuses, a student Master’s Degree thesis and government education documents. The documents that were examined were those thought to be most suitable for recreating the figuration, but were restricted according to what existed in public records, and what was made available by the respective schools. In addition to the schools, the Australian National Library and ACT Archives were also used as data sources. Most data came from School C, partly on account of the school having an archivist, with Schools A and B providing substantially less material. Nonetheless, the information in its entirety has provided what is arguably a compelling account of the sociogenesis of the figuration for PE and school sport examined in this research.

5.4.4.1 Document and visual data analysis

Documents were analysed in a similar way to the interviews used for reconstructing the micro level of the figuration (as outlined in Chapter 7), except content analysis was used in addition to thematic analysis. Most of the analysis was carried out manually except where publications existed in an electronic format. In considering the latter, search functions in Microsoft Word and PDF formats were used for content analysis, searching for specific words
or phrases. This was an effective way to carry out data interpretation. In contrast, where documents, particularly archived sources were only available as ‘hard copies’, analysis occurred entirely manually and was a time intensive process. In addition, as part of the overall analysis, attention was paid to the amount and positioning of the relevant content. It is argued that considering the form that the data took within the surrounding text provides some indication of its broader meaning.

In recreating the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration for Chapter 6, the extent to which Indigenous content in PE was included or not mentioned at all, was examined in curriculum documents. In documents that were of a general nature, such as Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007), the researcher limited analysis to that which was directly relevant to the study. For example, in Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) the guiding principles of the publication were considered along with the Essential Learning Achievements (ELAs) (the essential content students are expected to learn) that relate to PE and Indigenous education. Also, only the ‘Early Adolescence’ and ‘Later Adolescence’ bands of development in Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) were analyzed, as those correspond to the age of the students in the research. Indigenous reference or mention, was sought in the non-PE and school sport publications where it had some bearing on how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport.

Content analysis was used to find if and where the words ‘Aboriginal’, Aborigine’, ‘Indigenous’, and ‘Torres Strait Island’ appeared in the respective documents and the context of the use of those words explored. In recreating the sociogenesis level, content analysis was also adopted to locate and investigate the use of the word ‘tradition’ as well as its derivatives, and was undertaken manually where no electronic documents were available. In common with the interview data, analysis of the documents was undertaken using figurational sociology adopting a similar approach to that of Dolan (2009) as well as racialization theory.
Dolan (2009) in analysing documentary evidence applied the concept that people exist in interdependency networks, and therefore any figurational analysis has to take that into consideration.

Themes that were identified as being concerned with change over time were considered as being processual in nature and relevant to the sociogenesis of the figuration. Hence those themes were used extensively in recreating the sociogenesis level of the PE and school sport figuration in Chapter 8. Visual data, in the form of photographs taken by the researcher with permission, and a plan of School B were used to recreate the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration. However, this visual data was not used as the main data source. Instead, visual data was used for illustrative purposes to support other data sources. Therefore the analysis of the visual data was minimal, with the images used to show the nature of indoor and outdoor sports facilities at the three sites. The floor and oval markings, as well as related structures such as goal posts, served as visual representations of the sports and physical activities that mattered at the three schools.

It is argued that those images, along with the labelling and diagrammatic representation of sports facilities on the architectural plan for School B, draw attention to the taken-for-granted nature (Prosser, 2007) of the sporting culture at each school. This sporting culture being a central part of the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration examined in this research. The images used here also provide the visual physical context (Prosser, 2007) within which the research took place, and when triangulated with other data give a sense of the processual aspects central to the study. In other words, the visual phenomena included did not occur by chance, but instead as will be explained later in the thesis, have been created by long-term processes. These long-term processes are identified and discussed in Chapter 8, and it is argued are central to answering research questions two and three.
5.5 Ethical Issues

Ashley (2012) suggests that researchers in planning their research should try to anticipate the kinds of ethical issues they are likely to encounter. In planning this study, the researcher identified the likely ethical issues that he would encounter. Those included explaining adequately to the participants the nature and purpose of the research, what taking part in the study would mean for them, issues of confidentiality and anonymity, and specific concerns relating to Indigenous children as research participants. In this research, none of the participants were ever told the identities of the other schools involved, or the names of the individuals who came from those schools.

Concerning the Indigenous children involved, the AIATIS Ethical Guidelines (AIATSIS, 2012) were regularly consulted and used throughout the duration of the study. All of the Indigenous student participants who took part in the interviews had full access to their interview transcripts after the interviews were completed. In addition, both the Indigenous students and their parents/guardians, in common with all of the interview participants, were given the opportunity to receive a copy of the final thesis.

Participant information and consent forms were given to every research interviewee (Ashley, 2012). Those consent forms are based upon the principle that participants who take part in any research do so voluntarily, and that they understand what their involvement entails. Through agreeing to take part, participants are also aware that they can withdraw at any time without consequence. Because all of the Indigenous students in this study were under 18 years of age, informed written consent was sought from their parents or guardians. In addition, the students were each given separate participant information forms, purposefully written in user-friendly ‘plain’ English (Principle 6, AIATSIS, 2012). Overly technical terms and unnecessarily complicated language were deliberately avoided. Each of the participant information forms also described how the findings would be reported and used, and the
possible benefits of the research outcomes (Ashley, 2012; Principle 11, AIATSIS, 2012). The information forms were intended to provide respondents with enough detail about the study to make an educated choice about whether to participate or not. Further, the information forms stated that data collected in the study was securely locked in a filing cabinet at the University of Canberra, and interview audio recordings were also securely stored.

The researcher intended from the outset that the research findings would be used in some way to improve the educational outcomes of Indigenous students in ACT ETD schools (Principle 12, AIATSIS, 2012). The research approach adopted, sought acceptability from the Indigenous community who were affected by the research, partly through the assistance of the ICFs. In addition to using the AIATSIS Ethical Guidelines, two other main strategies were deployed to ensure that the research design and methods were culturally appropriate with minimal risk to the Indigenous participants. Firstly, discussions with the Chair of the supervisory panel at the early stages of this project led to an Indigenous Adjunct Supervisor being appointed to the supervisory panel. One of the main reasons for this appointment was to help ensure the cultural legitimacy of the research, and the researcher worked closely with this supervisor in this regard throughout the duration of the research. This Adjunct Supervisor also provided reassurance that figurational sociology was a culturally appropriate framework to use and welcomed the involvement of ICFs, which was the second main strategy used. The addition of a second Indigenous supervisor further into the research candidature also helped facilitate a culturally appropriate approach.

Lastly, it is intended that the findings and implications from the research will be reported back to the Indigenous students who were involved in the research, as well as to their parents, carers and other interested parties.
5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter detailed the study methodology used in carrying out this research. The figurational theory adopted, research design, and strategies for addressing ethical issues were discussed. Data collection methods were also specified, and in keeping with a figurational standpoint these methods were chosen according to their suitability for answering the research questions (Baur & Ernst, 2011).

The next chapter and the subsequent two chapters concern the findings for the research, with each providing a different level of reconstruction of the PE and school sport figurations examined. Chapter 6 seeks to reproduce the macro level; Chapter 7 the micro level and Chapter 8 the sociogenesis level of the figurations (Baur & Ernst, 2011). In each of these chapters, the reasons for choosing the data collection methods are explained in relation to the relevant research questions.
Chapter 6: Macro Level of the Physical Education and School Sport Figuration

The content of this chapter relates to the first research question which is: How do Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research? According to Baur and Ernst (2011), the macro level of a figuration is a re-creation of its “rules and social structure” (p. 123). It is the invisible web within which individuals function relative to their power position within a figuration. The macro levels of the PE and school sport figurations inform research question one because they replicate the rules and social structure in which the Indigenous students experience physical activity at their respective schools. It is argued that the actions of ACT ETD staff decide the nature of social structure in which PE and school sport is provided. Those staff, and the HPE staff in particular have the decision making power to decide what is, and what is not included within this framework of provision. Findings in this chapter are also triangulated with those in the next chapter illustrating how individuals act within the macro levels to influence Indigenous student experiences in PE and school sport. The macro levels studied here are those that existed contemporarily at the time of data collection, accepting that the figuration is continuously changing (Elias, 1978a).

All three of the PE and school sport macro levels were analyzed and there were so many likenesses identified across the three sites, that in order to avoid repetitiveness only the single figuration is presented and analysed here. It is contended that one of the main reasons for those similarities is that the same kinds of PE content, administrative practices and supporting documentation are used in each school. The use of system level documentation also contributes to similarity. As demonstrated in the chapter, this consistency means that at each school, teaching and learning takes place within a similar social structure. The processes,
practices and documents that construct the macro level of the figuration are examined as a main focus in this chapter.

The argument that there is a single figuration for PE and school sport is also strengthened through interconnections and interdependencies between each site. One of the main ways in which the three schools are interdependent upon each other is through the nature of the school sport played at each location. All three schools play the same kinds of sports, partly to enable students to participate in ACT SSSA competition. Given the close connection between PE and sport discussed in Chapter 3, it is argued that this interdependence in the sporting domain extends to PE. Those connections and interdependencies are demonstrated through the triangulation of a range of data from each school as well as system level documentation applicable to all government schools in the ACT.

It is also argued in this chapter that the single PE and school sport figuration reported does not exist in isolation. Instead it is inextricably linked to a wider PE figuration partly because at the time of data collection ACT schools were transitioning from their own curriculum, Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) to a new Australian curriculum. This transition shows that figurations never remain static but instead are always in a state of flux (Elias, 1978a). It is also argued that the single PE and school sport figuration discussed in this chapter, is interdependent with the wider ACT ETD general education figuration evidenced by the non-KLA specific policies and directives that guide all teaching and learning. Consequently some analysis of the documentation relating to this wider figuration is also provided in this chapter. The system level documents used as the data sources for this chapter were recommended by the three principals on the basis that they were used, or were intended to be used by the Directorate at each site.
It is proposed that the official purpose of the system level documents analyzed in this chapter is to ensure that procedures and practices are carried out consistently across different sites within the ACT ETD jurisdiction. The documents considered thus form an overarching structure that provides information and broad guidance to ACT ETD employees about professional teacher conduct, safe practice, quality teaching, curriculum and importantly in the context of this research Indigenous education. The documents reviewed in this section are analyzed in the context of how they affect, or are designed to affect the way that Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three schools. In other words, these documents are reviewed within the context of research question one.

6.1 How the Macro Level of the Physical Education and School Sport Figuration Was Recreated

The next section describes the range of data sources that were used to reconstruct the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration as well as the particular contribution that each source made in this regard.

6.1.1 Physical education and school sport specific data

A description and analysis of the single PE and school sport figuration follows using websites for the three schools, a school based HPE curriculum for School C, HPE Faculty program plans and unit outlines for Schools A and C, school prospectuses and facility photographs for each site and an outdoor facilities layout plan for School B. The data sources mentioned were solely concerned with PE and Sport at the three sites in addition to two system level documents. The latter two documents were analysed because they provide the main PE and school sport policy structure for the PE and school sport figuration. Those publications were the Physical Education and Sport Policy and Implementation Guidelines (ACT DET, 2009) and Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007). Collectively those websites and documents provide a sense of the nature of contemporary PE and school sport provision.
at the three schools. This provision relates to research question one because it is argued that the kind of PE and school sport provided influences Indigenous students experiences of school physical activity.

6.1.2 Non-physical education and school sport specific data

Four other non-PE and school sport specific system level documents were also considered because each of them provide some direction for including Indigenous perspectives within teaching and learning: A Classroom Practice Guide: Quality Teaching in ACT Schools (ACT DET, 2006a); An Assessment Practice Guide: Quality Teaching in ACT Schools (ACT DET, 2006b); Teachers’ Code of Professional Practice (ACT DET, 2008) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010–2013 (ACT ETD, 2010b).

6.1.3 Data sources illustrating the changing nature of the figuration

Two final system level documents were analyzed because they detail planned change at a policy level for the PE and Sport Figuration to become part of the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2014). Those publications were the: Draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education Consultation Report (ACARA, 2012a), and The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2012b).

Analysing and triangulating those data sources enabled a sense of the social structure, ‘rules’ and changing nature of the figuration to be provided. A main characteristic identified at the macro level of the figuration was that only Eurocentric PE and school sport was provided in the PE and school sport figuration. As such there was no evidence of Indigenous mention or content. In contrast, in each of the non-PE and school sport specific system level documents analyzed, there were various directives to include Indigenous perspectives in all KLAs including PE. There was therefore a lack of connection or ‘slippage’ between what was
stated in the general education documentation and the teaching and learning framework that was in place for PE and school sport.

Findings in the following chapter suggest that this slippage is a consequence of the relative power of the ACT HPE profession as an established ‘We’ group that includes HPE teachers and PE and school sport policy writers. As an arguably cohesive (Elias & Scotson, 1994) and powerful ‘We’ group those people have been able to selectively include privileged knowledge (Tinning, 2004) within the macro levels studied. This privileged knowledge amounts to Eurocentric content, being the only kind of provision mentioned in the school sport related documents and websites examined.

The websites and documents used in recreating the macro levels of the PE and school sport figurations were analyzed using thematic and content analysis. Recurring themes were identified across the respective school websites and in the different publications reviewed. Content analysis was used to identify the occurrence of key words that related to the study. These words included Indigenous, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Island (and derivatives of these words), and were deemed as being important to locate in documents because of their central relevance to this study. The occurrence or absence of these words provided insight to the social structure and rules of the figurations studied.

In electronic versions of documents key words were identified using search and find software, and in written documents these words were searched for manually. The mention or lack of mention of key words concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island culture was important in answering research question one. This is because mention of those words, and the context in which they are used, may suggest Indigenous culture is acknowledged within the macro levels of the figurations. Conversely, the absence of these words may suggest that Indigenous culture is silenced. The mention or silence of Indigenous culture in the macro level of the figurations examined in this research is important because the macro level is the
social framework within which Indigenous students experience PE and school sport. In addition, ‘one-off’ sentences and phrases were sought that provided an indication of the nature and purpose of PE and school sport at the three schools.

6.2 The Physical Education Curriculum

HPE is taught as a core subject for Year 7 to 10 students with sport related electives available in Year 9 and 10 at all three sites (Schools A, B and C websites). The purpose of PE in Year 7 and 8 at each school is typically to develop basic movement skills, improve fitness, foster teamwork and promote life long physical activity. Skill development and British, European and American team games have a particularly strong focus. At School A:

“in the Year 7 and 8 program students undertake a wide range of activities to develop hand-eye co-ordination, gross and fine motor skills, balance and spatial awareness”

(School A, 2011, p. 18).

Year 7 and 8 students at School B will be:

“…involved in learning basic skills in major games…” (School B, 2011, p. 26).

At School C, students in the Year 7 and 8 program:

“... participate in a broad range of activities with the emphasis on skill development, fitness, participation and fun through minor games, modified games and a team-oriented approach…” (School C, 2009, p. 2).

The skills focused nature of the programs offered across each site is also consistent with a system level ACT ETD definition of PE:

“the process of gaining knowledge, skills and attitudes, mainly through physical activity” (ACT DET, 2009, p. 8).

At all three schools, the PE offered in Year 9 and 10 builds on what is taught in Year 7 and 8. At School B Year 9 and 10 students are offered choices of semester long courses through an elective program as an alternative to mainstream PE. Options are varied and
include: Outdoor Education, individual, dual, and team sports, racquet sports, recreation excursions for dance, gym and aerobics, fitness, community based sports, and sports coaching. This structure of mainstream and elective forms of PE in Year 9 and 10 is also offered at the other two sites (School A, 2011; School C, 2009). At School A, there is also a ‘Talented Athlete Program’, which is:

“…designed to give the students the best possible chance of reaching their potential in Physical Education” (School A, 2011).

Students must apply for this program (School A, 2011). In other words, they are not automatically given a place from an expression of interest. Again, on the websites for each school it states that students take part in the core units of Athletics and Social Dance throughout Years 7–10.

Evidence of the kinds of physical activities taught at School A and C is also provided in teacher program plans that detail specific units taught across two semesters spanning the academic year. These units of study vary in duration between three and five weeks and have a generic skills based focus covering ‘striking’, ‘kicking’, ‘throwing/catching’, ‘passing’, and ‘modified games’ in addition to including a wide range of Eurocentric sports. The sport units mentioned in those programs include: basketball, tennis, netball, volleyball, softcrosse, football skills, swimming, badminton, European handball, soccer, athletics, touch, futsal, cricket and hockey. As discussed in Chapter 3, the structural and durational unit characteristics at the schools are consistent with the kind of PE taught in most developed countries such as Western European countries and nations that were formerly part of the British Empire (Capel & Blair, 2007; Kirk, 2010a; Tinning, 2005, 2010). This common approach shows that PE, as it is taught at Schools A and C is part of a global figuration of how PE is structured.
Included in the PE curriculum for School C (2009) were semester overviews that detail the activities taught across Years 7–10. Like the evidence from the program plans, the activities described were entirely European or American in origin. Indeed, a review of the documents and school websites for all three schools showed that the kinds of sports and physical activities offered in PE were entirely sport forms with British, European or American origins.

The PE program at School B is described on the school website as being:

“A comprehensive and dynamic Physical Education program aimed at improving the wellbeing of all students”.

There is an inference in this statement that the program offered is appropriate for all students, and it is implied that the Eurocentric model used in the school (as described on the School B website) is taken-for-granted as being relevant for every student. The word ‘comprehensive’ suggests that the program offered is ‘all-inclusive’ and as there is a silence of Indigenous perspectives in the other data analyzed for school B, this claim is problematic. Also, in one of the principles of Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) discussed later in the chapter, it is inferred that this curriculum should enable ALL students to obtain learning goals. Related to this inference is an assumption that Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) is suitable for all students which is problematic because the PE related content in this document was found to be Eurocentric. The notion of programs being suitable for ‘all students’ is relevant to this research because it is an example of Eurocentric knowledge forms being assumed to be more virtuous than alternative knowledge (Elias, 1978a, 1998c).

It is also stated on the School B website that the PE program is supported by a:

“…highly experienced and expert teaching team boasting a range of specialist skills”.

The word ‘expert’ is again problematic because it is argued that it implies that those teachers are custodians of all of the knowledge that counts. As none of the teachers were Indigenous
they cannot claim to be ‘experts’ of Indigenous knowledge (Lampert, 2012; Nakata, 1993) or indeed ‘experts’ of knowledge from any other culture other than their own. What is inferred in the above statement and evidenced in the data sources thus far reviewed, is that it is only the Eurocentric knowledge of the teachers that matters in the social structure and rules of the PE and school sport figuration.

6.2.1 ‘Cultural activities’ in physical education

As School C is an IB school, it is mentioned in the PE curriculum for School C (2009) that it integrates to both *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007) and the *International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program* (IBMYP). Students are offered opportunities to take part in:

… international sports/activities that are traditionally outside the school’s local/national experience, for example; European Handball, martial arts, table tennis and pétanque. In the specific Year 7 and 8 EFS PE classes, students are exposed to some Australian cultural activities including the respective football codes, swimming program and the three annual carnivals. Students also study the cultural context of each activity and sport (School C, 2009, p. 2).

The Australian cultural activities are taken to be the football codes, swimming and the school carnivals rather than Australian Indigenous culture. This perspective of ‘cultural activities’ provides a sense of what physical activity and sport is valued in the social structure at School C. As will be shown in Chapter 8, each of the Australian ‘cultural activities’ mentioned above, have frequent mention in the sociogenesis of the PE and school sport figuration.

6.3 School Sport Provision

The HPE faculty in each school also has overall responsibility for school sport which includes entering teams into ACT SSSA competitions (School A, 2011; School B website;
School C website). The importance of sport at School B is suggested on the school website, where it states that the school prides itself in a history of high achievement in school sport. This connection shows that school sport aligns to School B values relating to reputation and honour that are part of a long-term process. At School A it is noted:

“…the school participates in a wide range of sports to cater for all students” (School A website).

Again, similar to how PE at School B was described earlier in the chapter, there is a taken-for-granted assumption, intended or otherwise, that the program offered is completely adequate by being suitable for ‘all students’. It is also stated on the School A website that the school:

“…is committed to achieving student excellence in academic endeavours, performing and creative arts and sporting pursuits”.

This shows that success in sport, as measured in high performance school sport such as winning state championships is valued, and is an important part of the social framework of the school. The respective HPE faculties at each site also had responsibility for organising three annual sports carnivals in swimming, cross country running and athletics (School A, 2011; School B, 2011; School C website).

In the school specific data sources analysed there was no mention of Indigenous perspectives in PE or school sport in any of them. This absence is noteworthy, because with the exception of the Physical Education and Sport Policy and Implementation Guidelines (ACT DET, 2009) and the PE related section of Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007), all of the other system level documents examined as data sources for this chapter require teachers to include Indigenous perspectives as part of the ‘rules’ within all schools.
6.4 Additional Indicators of the Physical Education and School Sport Valued

On their own, architectural layout plans can mean very little as a data source, but when triangulated with other data as Elias typically did (Baur & Ernst, 2011), plans can have a useful purpose in contributing to more compelling research findings. Therefore plans were sought in this research, with School B being the only school to provide a plan of their outdoor sports facilities. The School B plan presents supporting evidence of the kinds of physical activities that are offered and valued at the school. Detailed in the plan are designated open and enclosed areas labelled as ‘Basketball/Netball’, ‘Tennis courts’ and ‘Handball type games’. To complement the information from this plan, photographs were taken (with permission and in such a way as to protect the school identities) of indoor and outdoor PE and sport facilities at all three schools. The photos taken at each school and the School B plan are included in Appendix D.

The photographs of the internal facilities at each school, show that permanent floor markings exist for basketball, volleyball, badminton, futsal, netball and at School C European handball. Each school had a general purpose oval which was marked out for rugby and had multi-purpose goal posts (for both rugby and soccer). The multi-purpose goal posts enabling the respective ovals to be used for three football codes without changing goal posts. In addition, School B had a second oval which was again marked out for rugby. Further, all three schools had basketball courts, netball courts (School A and C), tennis courts, and cricket practice nets or local access to the same. School B additionally used local private facilities for AFL, rugby and cricket. At each school, there were also general purpose halls that were used for dance as part of PE.

In summary, evidence from school websites, a curriculum document, prospectuses, photographs and a single architectural layout plan collectively indicate that only Eurocentric
activities were situated within the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration. Evidence was triangulated from each of those data sources and was reinforced by the silence of Indigenous sports and physical activities. This finding that only Eurocentric provision was offered at the three schools is important to research question one because Indigenous students only experienced PE and school sport within a European frame of reference. There was no acknowledgement of Indigenous culture found in the macro level of the PE and school sport figurations. In the following section system level documents that also form the macro level are discussed.

6.5 Physical Education and School Sport Specific System Level Documents

The data suggest that the similarity in the nature of PE and school sport at each of the three schools discussed previously is reinforced by two system level documents. It is argued that the Physical Education and Sport Policy and Implementation Guidelines (ACT DET, 2009) has influenced the implementation of PE and school sport in these schools and Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) has ensured similarity in the kind of PE offered. Those two documents are now considered as they strengthen the argument that the macro level for PE and school sport is Eurocentric.

6.5.1 Physical Education and Sport Policy and Implementation Guidelines

The Physical Education and Sport Policy and Implementation Guidelines (ACT DET, 2009) sets out how PE and sport programs are to be provided in ACT public education from Kindergarten through to Year 12. The purpose of the document is to offer guidance about how PE and sport programs should be taught safely, and age appropriately, with a main focus on teaching procedures. There are eight broad roles and responsibilities for teachers included in the policy. Two of those roles and responsibilities particularly relate to this research because of the wording used in their description:
“Implement broad and balanced programs designed to develop students’ knowledge, skills and attitudes in relation to physical activity through essential and worthwhile content as described in the ACT curriculum framework” (ACT DET, 2009, p. 9).

And:

“…ensure all students have access and opportunity to participate in physical education programs” (ACT DET, 2009, p. 9).

The content that is ‘essential and worthwhile’ is made explicit through the inclusion of a list of 40 sports that have been:

“…approved for teaching and/or competition in ACT public schools” (ACT DET, 2009, p. 18).

All of the sports, with the exception of ‘martial arts’, are British, European or American sport forms. Given that the guidelines are intended to be used in conjunction with Every Chance to Learn (ACT ETD, 2007), discussed in the next section where there is no mention of Indigenous content in PE, then the sports that are privileged are therefore almost exclusively Eurocentric Activities. Because there is no mention of Indigenous traditional games or dance and only sports and games from the dominant culture, then it is implied that Indigenous sports and physical activities are not ‘worthwhile content’. The words ‘Indigenous’, ‘Aboriginal’ or ‘Torres Strait Islander’ or derivatives of those words are not evident in the guidelines.

An important ‘rule’ of the macro level of the figuration then is that only Eurocentric sports and physical activities are predominantly practiced, and Indigenous content is excluded.

**6.5.2 Every Chance to Learn**

*Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007) was the overarching curriculum framework that was in operation across all three sites during the research, albeit since data collection the
Australian Curriculum for Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014) has been introduced. Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) was used for Foundation to Year 10 in government and non-government schooling in the ACT from 2008. The use of this curriculum was a milestone for the ACT, because it was the first time that a single curriculum covering all KLAs had been adopted since autonomy was granted in 1974 (ACT DET, 2010). Given the scope of Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007), it is a substantial document with a complex structure. A total of 25 ELAs are included in Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007), defined as:

“…statements of what is essential for ACT students to know, understand, value and be able to do from preschool to year 10” (p. 12).

Most of the ELAs directly relate to eight distinct KLAs including three that are concerned with HPE (ELA 12, 13 and 14). In addition to those ELAs that relate to specific KLAs there are also six interdisciplinary ELAs that reinforce learning in all the other ELAs. Within each ELA there are four bands of development: ‘Early Childhood’, ‘Later Childhood’, ‘Early Adolescence’ and ‘Later Adolescence’. Given that this research is just concerned with Year 7 to Year 10 students, only the bands ‘Early Adolescence’ (Year 6 to Year 8) and ‘Later Adolescence’ (Year 9 to Year 10) were analysed. Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) also includes ten ‘guiding principles’ for curriculum decision making which are discussed in the following section.

6.5.2.1 Guiding principles underpinning Every Chance to Learn

This section about the guiding principles of Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) is important in considering the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration. This is because it provides some insight into the beliefs that informed this curriculum and that consequently apply to the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration. It is stated within the introduction that:
From 2008, all ACT government and non-government schools will base their school curriculum plans on *Every Chance to Learn – Curriculum framework for ACT schools*. This will ensure that all students in the ACT are given every chance to understand the world in which they live and act effectively in that world (ACT DET, 2007, p. 6).

Implicit in the above statement is some notion of developing a particular kind of citizen. In relation to PE, it is implied that students will ‘understand the world’ and ‘act effectively’ through participating predominantly in Eurocentric physical activities. This Eurocentric focus is because, as will be discussed later in the chapter, only Eurocentric perspectives are included within ELA 13 which is the ELA concerned with PE.

The guiding principles in the document provide a sense of the intent of the publication. Guiding Principle Three states:

“with good teaching and the right support, every student can learn – every student can be engaged, can attain learning goals within a reasonable amount of time and can feel a sense of achievement in attaining these goals” (ACT DET, 2007, p. 10).

Learning goals here is taken to mean individual student learning targets. This statement as it applies to PE is problematic because it suggests that the recommended Eurocentric social structure of teaching and learning in ELA 13 is adequate for all students. Therefore the assumption is that all students can ‘be engaged’, can ‘attain learning goals’ and satisfaction through being taught from a Eurocentric PE frame of reference in *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007). Also, inferred in the above statement is that *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007) is such a virtuous curriculum, despite having no Indigenous mention in ELA 13, that Indigenous students will enjoy being taught from it nonetheless.

Within the single figuration for PE and school sport it is only Eurocentric teaching that is valued according to the data sources reviewed for this chapter. This is the central rule about
what really matters in so far as this figuration is concerned. Indeed, there is some sense of a form of civilizing process operating where the beliefs, value system and knowledge of the established group, the PE profession that includes policy writers and HPE teachers alike, is forced upon the culturally diverse student population. Effectively ‘our’ PE curriculum is ‘better’ (Elias, 1987). Schools and education by acting as agents of cultural transmission or zones of prestige (Maguire, 2007) ensure that dominant values are perpetuated.

As explained in Chapter 8, HPE teachers and curriculum writers as professionals within the dominant culture have a history of privileging certain practices in common with what Elias and Scotson (1996) observed in the established group in their Leicester study. Through having a monopoly of power resources those professionals can continue advocating and using those practices. Also included in the ‘We’ identity of those professionals, by virtue of their temporal positioning in the figuration is their tendency to consider themselves as being innately more advanced than cultures of earlier societies (Elias, 1996). It is possible therefore, that the HPE teachers and writers in the figuration view Indigenous games and dance as being primitive compared to those physical activity forms with which they are familiar. Perhaps they may have also not known about them, and were mostly acquainted with the activity forms that have had a long-term presence in the figuration that are discussed in Chapter 8. The views and beliefs of the teachers are considered in the following chapter concerned with the actions of individuals within the macro level of the figuration.

Principle Seven relates to inclusivity:

Curriculum decisions should value and include the knowledge, perspectives, cultural backgrounds and experiences each student brings to their learning. The school curriculum should provide opportunities for students to develop intercultural and inter-group understanding and value diversity. It should enable all students to realise their individual potential (ACT DET, 2007, p. 10).
In common with the school specific websites, written and visual documents considered earlier, the theme of inclusivity stated above is not evident in ELA 13 ‘The student is physically skilled and active’ discussed in the following section.

6.5.2.2 Essential Learning Achievement 13 ‘The student is physically skilled and active’

As mentioned previously, ELA 13 is the ELA that is principally concerned with PE in Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007), with ELAs 12 (health focused) and 14 (self and relationship focused) also included in the overall HPE KLA. In the ELA 13 overview it states:

This Essential Learning Achievement focuses on the important role physical activity plays in the lives of all students by providing opportunities for personal growth, enjoyment and challenge. It promotes the value of physical activity in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and in a manner that reflects awareness that everyone has the right to participate in an active lifestyle (p. 130).

There appears to be some notion of inclusivity inferred in the last sentence of this statement. Despite this inference, from carrying out content analysis on the electronic version of Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007), there is no mention of the words Indigenous, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or their derivatives in ELA 13. This silence of Indigenous reference is important, because it shows in common with the data sources considered thus far, that the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives is not a ‘rule’ within the PE component of the Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) curriculum. This finding is consistent with the absence of Indigenous mention that has been observed in Australian state and territory curriculum documents generally (Fitzpatrick, 2009; Tinning et al., 2001). The omission means then that Indigenous students experience PE at the school sites within a Eurocentric structure. ‘Inclusivity’ is only realized then, if students are willing to engage in
Eurocentric content. In other words, if all of the students attach value, worth, and see relevance in the activities that they are taught as part of the existing PE curriculum.

The focus of ELA 13 is predominantly with ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a). Within the Early Adolescence band of ELA 13, students build upon basic movement patterns and skills that they learned in previous years. The content taught includes: fitness, skill development, and active participation in sports and other physical activities. Students also learn to practice and improve combinations of learned movements in familiar and new game situations. This band of development also incorporates games strategy and personal goal setting. Later Adolescence provides students with opportunities to again learn skill development, fitness and to enhance physical performance. In addition, the students are expected to be able to perform complex movement skills. Students are also taught:

“…personal, environmental and socio-cultural factors that influence participation in physical activity” (ACT DET, 2007, p. 135).

Due to the words ‘socio-cultural’, this is the only mention within ELA 13 that prompts teachers to consider cultural viewpoints other than those from the dominant culture. This is contrary to claims that socio-cultural factors have become more commonplace in Australian PE curricula (Burrows, 2004; Cliff, 2012; Meldrum & Peters, 2012). Further, given the broad description of this ‘socio-cultural’ direction, there is no explicit requirement for teachers to include Indigenous perspectives when teaching to this part of the curriculum. In the Later Adolescence band students also learn about acceptable behaviour in sport, as well as the range of physical activities offered in their community. However, once again, there is no requirement for teachers to specifically include pedagogy about Indigenous sport and physical activity.
In contrast to ELA 13, there is a single interdisciplinary ELA in *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007) discussed in the next section that requires Indigenous perspectives to be addressed within subject specific ELAs.

**6.5.2.3 Interdisciplinary Essential Learning Achievements as ‘rules’ at the macro level of the physical education figuration**

The six interdisciplinary ELAs exist to underpin the learning that takes place in the eight KLAs and their purpose is outlined below. Because of their focus in underpinning key areas of learning they can be considered as ‘rules’ within the PE and school sport figuration:

The ACT curriculum framework ensures all students are provided with a core of discipline-based study from the eight key learning areas of the arts, English, health and physical education, languages, mathematics, science, the social sciences and technology. It also ensures that learning in the key learning areas is underpinned by, and connected with, the essential interdisciplinary knowledge, understandings and skills required for students to prosper in the 21st century (ACT DET, 2007, p. 13).

Of those six interdisciplinary ELAs, the one that is most relevant to this research is ELA 4 ‘The student acts with integrity and regard for others’. The focus in ELA 4 is on having regard for different cultures and all students are treated with:

…consideration, compassion and respect. It involves taking into account the feelings, motivations, cultures, backgrounds, languages, circumstances, beliefs and opinions of other individuals and groups…It is well recognised that some groups in Australia are regarded and treated differently on the basis of these and other factors including race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexuality, ability, disability, physical or intellectual attributes… (ACT DET, 2007, p. 48).

Within the essential content for ELA 4, sport is specifically mentioned concerning ethics. However, there is no ‘signposting’ that links ELA 4 and ELA 13, although ELA 4 is
signposted in the document with ELA 14 ‘the student manages self and relationships’. This link between ELA 4 and ELA 14 could be interpreted as meaning the HPE writers regarded ELA 4 as being relevant to the Health domain but not PE. It is possible that by ‘allowing’ connections between ELA 4 and the health related ELA that the curriculum writers felt ELA 13 could be protected from outsider influences.

It is argued that those outsider influences, knowledge from other cultures including Indigenous culture, may have been seen as a threat to what has traditionally been done ‘in the name of PE’. In other words it could have been seen as a threat to a Eurocentric curriculum that has been delivered for more than half a century. The id² of PE as ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a) may have been viewed as being under ‘attack’ from outside of the established group. The PE writers were able to demonstrate cohesion as an established and relatively powerful group (Elias & Scotson, 1994) by protecting the traditional aspects of PE and the ‘essence’ of PE (Green, 2006) that they valued by ‘giving ground’ in the Health related KLA.

It is also possible through ignorance, that the writers were unaware that Indigenous traditional games existed, if it was not taught as part of their PETE when they were teachers. Also the writers perhaps assumed that because Indigenous peoples have high participation rates in European sport and AFL (Howell, 1996) that a Eurocentric focus was appropriate and adequate. In addition, Indigenous connection through health is in keeping with non-Indigenous ‘deficit’ (Nakata, 1993) thinking of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, which also serves to uphold the ‘superior’ status of the established group (Elias, 1996).

It is further contended that Health is generally not as strong a part of HPE teacher habitus as PE. This is partly because Health was added relatively recently to the longer established PE subject area in Australia, and its addition required then PE teachers to review and modify how they had traditionally taught the subject (Tinning, 2004). The lack of mapping between ELA 13 and ELA 4 suggests a gap between curriculum policy and
implementation, which as discussed earlier, can be related to the relative power that HPE professionals share as an established group in being selective in what is taught in the ‘name of PE’ (Kirk, 2010a). Also, because of time constraints (Cliff, 2012; Tinning, 2000) in carrying out their jobs, teachers may only focus on the traditional content that most closely relates to PE within ELA 13. In addition, without ‘signposting’, it seems quite possible that teachers may unintentionally not include ELA 4 in teaching ELA 13.

It is also argued that the requirement to meet mandated weekly time for moderate to vigorous exercise (ACT DET, 2009) is a reason why the wider social aspects of PE, including the essential content in ELA 4 is neglected. The practical emphasis in PE that is valued by pre-service and in-service teachers and the wider community (Green, 2000b; Kirk, 2010b; McKay et al., 1990; Tinning, 2004) ensures that there is minimal space for theoretical work in PE. In other words teachers are conditioned to focus on the content that they would expect to find in their subject area, based largely upon their own predispositions to ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a). Teachers also have a tendency to replicate what they are most comfortable with, and associate with, according to their personal orientations towards PE (Green, 2002).

6.5.2.4 Essential Learning Achievement 15 ‘The student communicates with intercultural understanding’

Interestingly, ELA 15 ‘The student communicates with intercultural understanding’ is not included as an interdisciplinary ELA, but is instead located within the Languages KLA. This is surprising, as one would expect intercultural understanding to underpin all 19 of the KLA specific ELAs, if Principle Seven discussed above is indeed truly valued. Therefore it is argued that this omission is a major shortcoming of Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007). Nevertheless, much of the content of ELA 15 about the influence of culture on
individual and group identity is relevant to ELA 13. There are two focus areas in ELA 15 that are especially important to this research. The first focus area:

…involves making the transition from seeing one’s own cultural values as the only possible ones, to understanding that all thinking and behaviours exist within a cultural framework.

The second is about developing the mental preparation needed for meaningful intercultural communication. Such mental preparation involves both knowledge about the culture and the disposition to engage with it. As students engage with other cultures, they are more likely to develop an empathetic willingness to step outside their own cultural frame into another’s (ACT DET, 2007, p. 144).

While those focus areas have potential for challenging the dominant position of Eurocentric sport and physical activity, the extent to which HPE teachers would wish to adopt intercultural understanding, or would have the skills to embrace it is uncertain (Cliff, 2012; Tinning, 2004, 2010). As discussed in Chapter 3, many HPE teachers demonstrate resistance to pedagogical change that is noticeably different to what they already do.

Within the bands of development for ELA 15 there are several essential content statements that include games and dance that would be relevant to ELA 13. In addition, and in contrast to ELA 13, the word Indigenous is mentioned in the essential content where students learn about:

“Indigenous and other cultures represented in Australia through their arts and literature (e.g. visual art, dance, music, novels, plays, films, news reports, documentaries)” (ACT DET, 2007, p. 148).

This acknowledgment is important because unlike ELA 13, ELA 15 positions Indigenous perspectives within the curriculum. The reference to dance and games from other cultures in ELA 15, and not ELA 13, suggests that the HPE curriculum writers thought those
activities belonged outside of PE. In other words those kinds of activities did not ‘fit’ with the valued version of PE upheld and safeguarded by the PE profession (Green, 2000b, 2008). Alternatively, the PE writers may not have known about Indigenous activities, perhaps because they were not taught them as part of their own PETE. Or it may have been the case that they did not know how to categorize those activity forms within the content that was familiar to them, and therefore left them out. There is no ‘signposting’ linking ELA 15 with ELA 13 or vice versa, hence the connection between the two ELAs is not explicit. In contrast there is signposting between ELA 15 and ELA 14, ‘the student manages self and relationships’. It would seem then that the PE curriculum writers believed that there was a link between ELA 15 and Health, through ELA 14 being one of the two health related ELAs in the HPE KLA, but not with PE.

From a figurational perspective, it is possible that the writers acted unintentionally in not signposting connections between ELA 15 and ELA 13. It is perhaps the case that there was ignorance of a link, explained by those writers existing within lengthened interdependency bonds that extend as far back as colonial times. Those bonds serve to maintain the ‘taken for granted’ ‘superiority’ of the ‘traditional’ PE curriculum with a strong focus on European and in particular British team games (Stolz, 2010). It would have been ‘second nature’ for the writers to have based ELA 13 on their own ideologies of PE (Green, 1998) that have been shaped over many years, by many individuals and in unplanned ways. Those ideologies would have been influenced by ‘key players’ within the figuration such as HPE teacher colleagues as part of a ‘We’ identity (Elias, 1991; Mennell, 1994), head teachers, parents and students. In addition those ideologies are also shaped within PETE training (Macdonald & Tinning, 1995) and childhood experiences of PE. Therefore an unintended consequence of the habitus of the writers of ELA 13 is that possible links to intercultural understanding are missed.
It is argued that *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007) is structured in such a way that HPE teachers will tend to only focus on the three ELAs that are most relevant to the HPE KLA (ELAs 12, 13 and 14). Those three ELAs are also structured by the curriculum writers to ensure that the core or what is ‘done in the name of PE’ (Kirk, 2010a) is retained. Thus the curriculum writers have created their own ‘rule’ within the *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007) curriculum, that ensures that ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ is maintained as the PE curriculum of choice.

6.6 Non-Physical Education and School Sport Specific Data

In this section the following non-PE or school sport specific documents are analyzed according to how they contribute to the social structure and rules of the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration: A *Classroom Practice Guide - Quality Teaching in ACT Schools* (ACT DET, 2006a); *An Assessment Practice Guide - Quality Teaching in ACT Schools* (ACT DET, 2006b); *Teachers’ Code of Professional Practice* (ACT DET, 2008); and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010–2013* (ACT ETD, 2010b).

6.6.1 A Classroom Practice Guide: Quality Teaching in ACT Schools and An Assessment Practice Guide: Quality Teaching in ACT Schools

Those two system level documents are generic teaching guides rather than being specific to PE. Both were written to support teachers in their classroom teaching and in their student assessment, through the application of a quality teaching model (QTM) that formed the basis of *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT ETD, 2007). The QTM developed by NSW Department of Education and Training, is used with permission in ACT schools and has three dimensions: ‘Intellectual quality’, ‘Quality learning environment’ and ‘Significance’ (ACT DET, 2006a), with the latter arguably being most relevant to this research:

*Significance* [author’s emphasis] refers to pedagogy that helps make learning more meaningful and important to students. Such pedagogy draws clear connections with
students’ prior knowledge and identities, with contexts outside of the classroom, and with multiple ways of knowing or cultural perspectives (p. 9).

This directive can be considered as part of the social structure of the PE and school sport figuration, as all ACT ETD teachers are required to use the QTM in their teaching. There are five elements included within ‘Significance’, with ‘Background knowledge’ and ‘Cultural knowledge’ being those elements most relevant to this research.

Teaching and assessment that emphasises background knowledge invites students to draw upon knowledge in the broadest sense, including alternative ways of understanding, and not just knowledge that is learned at school. Cultural knowledge is described as recognising:

“claims to knowledge from non-dominant social groups in an authentic, detailed and profound manner” (ACT DET, 2006b, p. 40).

Explicit within this description is the invitation for teachers to include knowledge from cultures other than their own, in non-tokenistic ways. In taking this alternative knowledge into consideration, teachers are encouraged to adopt a ‘strengths-based approach’, meaning that they focus on “the capacities, competencies, values and hopes of all students, regardless of their current circumstances, to optimise their own health and that of others” (ACARA, 2014, p. 65). Taking such an approach requires teachers to consider socially and culturally disadvantaged groups in terms of the positive contributions that they can make to the classroom:

While some social groups experience prejudice and disadvantage, cultural knowledge is not an indicator of disadvantage, but rather a valuable resource upon which teachers can build learning. For example, the inclusion of Indigenous cultural knowledge in KLAs and subjects strengthens the understanding by all students that social groups represent knowledge in different rather than “lesser” ways (ACT DET, 2006b, p. 41).
Importantly though, in order for such a viewpoint to be realized, teachers must also genuinely value cultural knowledge. Given that there is a lack of socio-cultural mention in ELA 13, and as discussed in Chapter 3 PETE courses tend not to privilege socio-cultural learning, some HPE teachers may find it challenging to adopt the viewpoint described above. Consequently, in adopting a socio-cultural perspective, it will be necessary for some HPE teachers to re-orientate their habitus away from associations that are primarily linked with ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a). It is argued that where alternative knowledge is not valued, then it tends to be not included at all, or else tokenism occurs.

One of the suggestions in the guides for incorporating cultural knowledge is to include members of cultural groups from the local community in classroom teaching. In the PE context this kind of intercultural approach is also recommended in *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009). It is argued, that by organising lessons that involve external individuals and groups, issues concerning tokenism and appropriation can be avoided. Teachers are also encouraged to:

“…provide opportunities for students to look beyond stereotypes used to describe different social groups” (ACT DET, 2006a, p. 47).

However, for this approach to be successful it would require teachers themselves to not uphold such stereotypes. Overall, there was no evidence in the research that HPE teachers considered knowledge other than that of their own culture at the macro level.

6.6.2 Teachers’ Code of Professional Practice

The *Teachers’ Code of Professional Practice* (‘the Code’) (ACT DET, 2008) is important to this study because it details the kinds of behaviour and conduct expected of all teachers. The Code outlines:

“…the Department’s statement of the standards of professional conduct and integrity expected of teachers in ACT Public schools” (ACT DET, 2008, p. 1).
In other words it sets out the ‘rules’ for teacher behaviour for all ACT government school teachers. The Code states:

“teachers must not unlawfully discriminate against any person. It is unlawful to directly or indirectly discriminate against a person on the basis of…” (ACT DET, 2008, p. 34).

A list of attributes then follows and at the top of this list is ‘race’. In the context of the Code, it is argued that the PE and school sport programs at the three schools are in breach, because they could be interpreted as being racist due to their Eurocentric nature and omission of Indigenous content.

There are five principles which according to the Code should guide teachers as to whether their actions are ‘right or wrong’ in carrying out their duties. Across the five principles are in excess of 100 obligations, most which would be completed as a matter of course by teachers in their day-to-day practice. There are however several obligations that relate to this research. Principle 1 includes the expectation that teachers are responsible for:

“…organising learning to take account of the diverse social, cultural and special learning needs of their students” (ACT DET, 2008, p. 6).

Also in Principle 1, is the expectation that teachers are participating in:

“…reflective practice and developing their professional knowledge and teaching skills” (ACT DET, 2008, p. 7).

There is a requirement that teachers are:

“…open and accepting of differing views and perspectives that may better achieve Departmental and school goals” (ACT DET, 2008, p. 8).

Under Principle 2, teachers are obliged to work:

“…to develop an educational environment, which addresses the needs of all students, including Indigenous students…” (ACT DET, 2008, p. 10).
Lastly, in Principle 4, it states that teachers are expected to display a level of correctness by:

“…being aware of the social, cultural, and religious backgrounds of their students, and treating students appropriately having regard to their individual needs” (ACT DET, 2008, p. 12).

Those different obligations detailed above, are written using what could be described as ‘rule language’ that sets out explicitly and succinctly what is required from all teacher in carrying out their duties.

It is maintained that if the HPE teachers at the three sites had been diligently following the principles of the Code, then Indigenous mention would have been visible in the respective PE and school sport programs. Pertaining to the obligation in Principle 2 about addressing the requirements of all students, it was shown earlier in the chapter that the non-Indigenous focused programs were considered as being suitable for ‘all students’. As illustrated in the next chapter, most of the teachers believed that what they taught was indeed suitable for ‘all students’. The observations noted in this paragraph suggest that PE is considered by principals, HPE teachers, policy writers as being neutral and value free. Implicit in such a belief is that social justice is not a concern of those individuals. With reference to the Code generally, it is perhaps unrealistic to expect teachers to meet each of the obligations, given the volume involved, and the varying degrees of complexity.

Teachers it is argued are most likely to meet the obligations where breaches have the greatest consequence, as well as those that are deemed as being most important. About the latter, it is suggested that teachers will pay most attention to obligations that best fit their own philosophies of teaching and their individual and group habitus. Teachers it is maintained show their position of relative power in being selective about the obligations they uphold. Consequently, senior management and policy makers within the broad ACT ETD figuration do not enjoy absolute power in ensuring that policies are followed.
6.6.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010–2013

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010–2013* (‘the Plan’) (ACT ETD, 2010b), was the principal guiding document about teaching Indigenous perspectives in ACT public schools when the research was carried out according to the ACT ETD Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education section. The Plan was the first of its kind to be used in ACT ETD (ACT ETD, 2014a). Through guidelines, the Plan details the social structure in which Indigenous perspectives should be taught. Consequently, the Plan is relevant to this study and the following sections in particular: ‘Learning and Teaching’, ‘School Environment’, and to a lesser extent ‘Leadership and Corporate Development’. It is stated that the Plan:

“…provides clear direction for closing the learning achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students” (ACT ETD, 2010b, p. 3).

However, as reported in the next chapter, most of the teachers said that they had not seen the plan and were therefore not following the guidelines.

A priority within the Plan under Learning and Teaching is to:

“deliver high quality curriculum which incorporates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives” (ACT ETD, 2010b, p. 5).

As was discussed previously, this priority is not evident in ELA 13 of *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007). However this omission can be explained in part through this curriculum being adopted by schools from 2008, and the Plan from 2010. Linked to the above priority is the performance measure:
“all teaching and learning documentation incorporates the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander priority and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content as prescribed in the Australian Curriculum” (ACT ETD, 2010b, p. 5).

This performance measure is problematic within the scope of this research because the Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014) was not implemented until after data collection was completed. Therefore HPE teachers who may have seen this performance measure perhaps regarded it as not being relevant to them, because the national curriculum for HPE was yet to be launched. Nonetheless, the curriculum priority itself does not specify any particular curriculum. In other words the priority of delivering high quality curriculum that includes Indigenous perspectives is just as relevant to Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007).

Given that the requirement to include Indigenous content is mentioned in other documents such as the Code, and to some extent in Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007), it could be reasonably expected that HPE teachers would address this priority in their PE curricula as a ‘rule’ within the PE and school sport figuration. Further, the priority is explicitly stated, hence one would assume that there is no confusion over what action is required. There is also a key action under ‘Learning and Teaching’ in the Plan that is worth mentioning, which is to:

“develop and implement units of work incorporating local Aboriginal content” (ACT ETD, 2010b, p. 12).

Again, there is an expectation for teachers, including HPE teachers to integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teaching and learning material into curricula.

Although there are some arguably explicit and unambiguous priorities detailed in the Plan, a major weakness is that it exists as a separate document in isolation from other policy documents. Teachers are required to draw direction from an array of different written sources.
in order to include Indigenous content in their programs. Given the time poor nature of HPE teaching discussed in Chapter 3, it is argued that not having the different policies in a single succinct publication is not conducive to Indigenous perspectives being taught in ACT ETD schools.

6.7 Data Sources Illustrating the Changing Nature of the Figuration

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, two national level documents were analyzed because they illustrate the direction in which the PE and Sport Figuration examined in this research was likely to change to meet the requirements of the then forthcoming *Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education* (ACARA, 2014). Those publications were the: *Draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education Consultation Report* (ACARA, 2012a) and *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education* (ACARA, 2012b).

6.7.1 Draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education Consultation Report

The purpose of this publication was to publish the findings from the consultation feedback for the *Draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education* (ACARA, 2012a). In preparing this report feedback from various interested individuals and stakeholders was gathered. The draft shape paper served to provide some broad indicators of what the *Australian curriculum for Health and Physical Education* (ACARA, 2014) might look like.

According to ACARA (2012a), excerpts presented in the report are typical of the kinds of comments expressed by people Australia wide. Some 80% of online respondents:

“…agreed or strongly agreed that the outline of each cross-curriculum priority in the Health and Physical Education learning area is appropriate” (ACARA, 2012a, p. 38).
Of those respondents:

“the majority indicated that this section soundly places the Health and Physical Education learning area at the forefront of developing a culture of understanding, respect and valuing diversity within the community” (ACARA, 2012a, p. 38).

However, the report also identified areas for improvement where respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the suitability of the cross-curriculum priorities to HPE. These concerns included issues about tokenism, relevance, not enough space in what was already a congested curriculum, and time to implement:

Superficial or tokenistic treatment of the priorities, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia was raised as a concern by several respondents. Some respondents also commented that they struggled to see the relevance of the cross-curriculum priorities to the Health and Physical Education learning area (ACARA, 2012a, p. 38).

‘Superficial or tokenistic treatment’ suggests that the priorities would not be considered seriously by some of the PE profession and is indicative of traditional Eurocentric knowledge still being regarded as superior (Elias, 1987). Further, the ‘relevance issue’ implies an attempt by some PE professionals to safeguard the traditional model of PE by resisting Indigenous perspectives from being included (Elias & Scotson, 1994). About including cross-curriculum perspectives within an already busy curriculum:

Many respondents were concerned that the Health and Physical Education learning area was already a crowded curriculum and with the addition of cross-curriculum priorities the time available for delivering the Health and Physical Education curriculum would result in superficial coverage of core learning (ACARA, 2012a, pp. 38–39).
The above statement is consistent with the issues raised by Tinning (2000) about HPE teachers being time poor. In addition, the mention about ‘core learning’ implies that the teaching that ‘matters’ is ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a) with the cross-curriculum priorities being something ‘extra’ and ‘outside’ of the knowledge that counts. In response to the concerns about cross-curriculum priorities being treated superficially ACARA (2012a) recommend:

“…revised text to ensure examples provided are authentic opportunities within the Health and Physical Education context” (p. 43).

About cross-curriculum priorities competing with core Health and Physical Education learning:

“guidance to be provided to writers to ensure that the cross-curriculum priorities are embedded within the core expected learning for Health and Physical Education only where relevant and appropriate, and in authentic and non-tokenistic ways” (ACARA, 2012a, p. 43).

Such guidance may then increase the likelihood of those perspectives being taught through clarity of expectations. Concerning teacher expertise and resources, again the ACARA response relates to cross-curriculum priorities being embedded. Further, it is stated:

“It is also acknowledged that these are implementation issues that fall outside of ACARA’s current remit” (ACARA, 2012a, p. 43).

Although these implementation issues may fall outside of ‘ACARA’s current remit’, they are however very important matters that must be resolved. If those concerns are not satisfactorily addressed then there is a danger that the teaching of the cross-curriculum priorities will indeed be tokenistic, avoided, or will be of poor quality.

There were also some apprehensions raised about ethics and sensitivities, the adequacy of PETE and availability of resources in delivering the cross-curriculum priorities
including traditional Indigenous games. Some of those anxieties, particularly those relating to PETE and resources were discussed in Chapter 3. It would seem also, that many of those concerns come from a lack of understanding in the HPE teaching profession about how to incorporate this ‘new’ content.

### 6.7.2 The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education

This shaping document provides an overview and general guidance about the aims, composition, scope and writing of the then forthcoming *Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education* (ACARA, 2014). The shaping document was produced after public consultation with the Australian education sector and the broader community, in addition to input from ACARA appointed HPE experts and the ACARA Board.

A notional time of 80 hours of PE per year (two hours a week) is suggested for Foundation to Year 10 HPE, albeit the actual time allocated in real terms would be subject to individual state and territory jurisdiction (ACARA, 2012b). This time recommendation amounts to approximately 20 hours a year less than what is mandated in the *Physical Education and Sport Policy and Implementation Guidelines* (ACT DET, 2009). A number of broad traditional ‘focus areas’ are described that include games, sports, aquatics, and movement. Of note, and in contrast to the more traditional PE content, the focus area of ‘cultural and community-based activities’ is included. This new focus area is described thus:

Including participation in activities of cultural significance, understanding food practices across cultures, participating in traditional Indigenous games, exploring physical activities valued in Australia and those originating from cultures in the Asian region and other regions of the world (ACARA, 2012b, p. 22).

This new focus area demonstrates a commitment towards encouraging HPE teachers to include knowledge that is from outside of the dominant culture. In doing so, the writers of this policy have broadened the scope of PE to include previously marginalised groups. This
more prescriptive focus, when compared with the silence of Indigenous perspectives in ELA. 13 of *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007) is an example of how figurations are never fixed but are constantly changing (Elias, 1978a, 1994). In addition, this new area of attention is also an example at a policy level of increased variability and diminishing contrasts (Elias, 1994, 1998b). Such a shift facilitates a lessening of the power that the PE profession hold as an established group over Indigenous peoples as an outsider group, in deciding ‘suitable’ or privileged content. This proposed inclusion as a more explicit ‘rule’ in the figuration may in turn have the effect of lessening the outsider status of Indigenous perspectives in PE.

However, in the New Zealand context, despite Maori perspectives having been embedded within the HPE curriculum for some time, non-Maori or ‘Pakeha’ HPE teachers have resisted teaching this content. The same situation may well occur in Australia, as simply mandating or recommending Indigenous content in PE pedagogy does not guarantee meaningful change. This is because the relative power of HPE teachers as an established group enables individual teachers to be selective in the content that they teach. In other words, there is no accountability for what HPE teachers do and do not teach.

### 6.7.2.1 Cultural understanding as a general capability within health and physical education

Cultural understanding is described as:

Through participation in a range of culturally-based physical activities students will develop an understanding that across cultures there are different ways of thinking about individual, group and intergroup participation in physical activity (ACARA, 2012b, p. 27).

It would seem then that this general capability for cultural understanding is much more explicit than what was detailed in *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT DET, 2007). Instead of cultural understanding being removed from KLA content as was the case in *Every Chance to
Learn (ACT DET, 2007) through ELA 15, the intention from ACARA was that cultural understanding would be embedded within the HPE KLA. It could be argued again, that this move towards strengthening the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in the Australian curriculum is another example of ‘diminishing contrasts’ (Elias, 1994, 1998b).

6.7.2.2 Cross-curriculum priorities

There are three cross-curriculum priorities mentioned in the document that are: ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures’; ‘Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia’; and ‘Sustainability’ (ACARA, 2012b). As to the rationale of the cross-curriculum priorities in the HPE context:

“the Health and Physical Education curriculum must be both relevant to the lives of students and address the contemporary issues they face” (ACARA, 2012b, p. 28).

This rationale seems similar to the ‘Significance domain’ of the QTM discussed earlier (ACT DET, 2006a), but in contrast mention is specific to HPE. Concerning the cross-curriculum priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures:

The Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, [author’s emphasis] encourages all students from Foundation to Year 10 to engage with Indigenous communities to understand and appreciate the lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Health and Physical Education will promote exploration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage and further develop student knowledge of the cultures, identities, countries and places of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Students learn about the richness and variety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander modes of communication and ways of living. Students will explore the importance of family and kinship structures for maintaining and promoting health, safety and wellbeing with their community and the wider community. Students will experience
the richness of the contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities continue to make to the wider community through participation in traditional and contemporary games, physical activities and cultural practices. In doing so, students will develop an appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through valuing their contribution to the wider social and cultural community of Australia (ACARA, 2012b, p. 28).

Unlike ELAs 12, 13 and 14 of Every Chance to Learn (ACT ETD, 2007) there is an explicit directive in this statement to teach Indigenous perspectives in HPE. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander games are suggested in the document as one way in which this cross-curriculum-priority can be realized in PE. In contrast, in Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) there was no mention of Indigenous traditional games. In Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) it was evident that PE retained its essential characteristics through ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a) and was simultaneously impermeable to Indigenous content.

6.8 Chapter Summary

Like all figurations, the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration reported in this chapter is subject to continuous change (Elias, 1978a). During the period when data was collected the figuration was undergoing curriculum transformation from teachers using a territory curriculum towards adopting a new national curriculum. The ‘social structure’ of the PE and school sport figuration discussed was one in which a Eurocentric model was favoured and upheld. As an established group, HPE teachers through using similar structures such as program plans, curricula and facilities demonstrated cohesiveness and a consistent Eurocentric focus. Further, HPE policy writers reinforced this Eurocentric model by the complete omission of Indigenous perspectives in the Physical Education and Sport Policy and Implementation Guidelines (ACT DET, 2009) and in ELA 13 of Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007).
It was also found that the macro level for PE disregarded broader ‘rules’, that applied to all ACT ETD teachers about including Indigenous perspectives. Those rules were expressed in: *A Classroom Practice Guide: Quality Teaching in ACT Schools* (ACT DET, 2006a); *An Assessment Practice Guide: Quality Teaching in ACT Schools* (ACT DET, 2006b); *Teachers’ Code of Professional Practice* (ACT DET, 2008) and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010–2013* (ACT ETD, 2010b).

Reasons are offered in the following chapter as to why the HPE teachers chose to ignore those rules. Central to those reasons it is argued are notions of social power.

This chapter has addressed in part research question one: How do Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research? This is because it has shown the social structure within which Indigenous students contemporarily experience PE and school sport. The next chapter considers the main individuals that exist within the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration, along with their accompanying power resources and the enabling and constraining factors that affect their actions. It is contended that the actions of those individuals within the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration address research question one.
Chapter 7: Micro Level of the Physical Education and School Sport Figuration

In Chapter 6 the macro level of a single figuration for PE and school sport was discussed in relation to research question one. In recreating this macro level it was shown that the rules that were followed were those that reinforced Eurocentric provision of PE and school sport. It was also shown that rules in the figuration specified in several documents, which called for HPE teachers to include Indigenous perspectives in PE, were ignored. In this chapter the micro level of the figuration is recreated, which is concerned with those individuals who exist within the macro level. About the different people within any figuration, Baur and Ernst (2011) observe “…individuals can influence the figuration, thus not only changing their position within the figuration, but also changing the figuration itself (both concerning its rules and social structure)” (p. 124). Within the PE and school sport figuration in this study, the key individuals involved can be grouped as: Principals, Executive HPE Teachers, Level 1 HPE Teachers, Indigenous students and ICFs. The focus of this chapter then, is about those people and their perception of the figuration, as well as their action, inaction and constraints that affect their behaviour (Baur & Ernst, 2011).

It is shown in this chapter how HPE teachers were able to alter the macro level of the figuration by being selective about the ‘rules’ that they followed. The HPE teachers as well as the writers of the Physical Education and Sport Policy and Implementation Guidelines (ACT DET, 2009) and ELA 13 of Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) were able to change the figuration from what was intended by ACT ETD to what they decided the figuration should be. Those individuals were able to do this by being members of an established group, meaning that they enjoyed a privileged position in the figuration that allowed them to have a relatively high share of power. The relative power of those teachers also demonstrates that
ACT ETD does not exercise absolute power within the PE and school sport figuration (Elias, 1978b).

Through this social power imbalance, the HPE teachers were able affect how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport by deciding the content that is included. It is also argued in this chapter that by having this relative power, the HPE teachers were able to position Indigenous perspectives outside of PE and school sport. Also, through this power differential the teachers were able to relegate the teaching of Indigenous games and sports to the IEOs at the schools. In a similar way, and again as a consequence of their relative power, the HPE teachers were able to avoid organizing an Indigenous sport carnival and leave that responsibility largely to a single IEO at one of the schools. While the Directorate is responsible for determining policy, lack of compliance by the teachers in the examples detailed demonstrates ‘slippage’ between the intended PE and school sport, and what was actually provided. This chapter then mainly relates to the first research question:

1. How do Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research?

It is maintained that how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport is largely influenced by the intended and unintended consequences of the actions of other individuals also located within the macro level of the figuration. In order to recognize and understand those actions, appropriate data sources had to be selected. After considering alternative data collection methods, interviews were chosen as the most adequate data source for comprehending the actions of individuals at the micro level. The points of view of the different participant groups are presented allowing corroboration or disagreement about key themes at the micro level to be identified.

In analyzing responses from the different participants, common themes were identified as well as information of interest from ‘one-off’ remarks that were relevant to the above
research question. The findings are summarised and presented below using the different voices of the participants, analyzed using figurational sociology and racialization theory and compared with what was stated in the literature in Chapter 3.

7.1 The Perception of Indigenous Students Within the Physical Education and School Sport Figuration

This next section details how Indigenous students perceived themselves within the figuration, and how individuals from the other participant groups also viewed their position. A discussion is also provided of the relative power of different individuals and their ability to act within the figuration.

7.1.1 Indigenous student perceptions of their placement within the physical education and school sport figuration

Some insight about how Indigenous students experienced PE and school sport is provided by considering their likes and dislikes. Many of the students liked PE. Most commonly it meant ‘fun and enjoyment’ and it provided opportunities for playing sports and hanging out with friends. ‘Being outside’ was another popular reason why the students liked PE along with being active, health and fitness, skill development, teamwork, and competition. The following response was typical of many of the students:

_It’s fun... a lot of outdoor sports. I kind of enjoy being outdoors instead of being stuck in a class all day…_ (student 5C).

In many respects, the kind of response provided by student 5C and other students about why they liked PE, reflected the official discourse for PE contained in the documents that were used to re-create the macro level of the figuration. In other words, that PE as well as being fun has the purpose of making students active, while developing their skills and fitness. It seems that those particular students perceived their position in the figuration with general contentment and satisfaction. Overall, there were generally few things that the students
disliked about PE, with a number of students across all sites not disliking anything. The exceptions included:

If I’m not in the mood to do anything then I’ll just... sit out (student 9A).

And at School B:

I dislike...having to...like do things in front of everyone else...like...if we have to...run to the other side and then run back and everyone else is watching...I just don’t like that (student 6B).

Team games were disliked by some:

...well that’s all I know how to play [team games]. Like that’s all... we’ve ever played at this school so far...we just do... probably football for like a week... and then... the next week you know... another game or something (student 5A).

The concerns raised by student 5A highlight some of the issues in the literature discussed in Chapter 3 about the dominance of team games (Capel & Blair, 2007; Green, 1998; Stolz, 2010), and the widespread use of the multi-curriculum model (Tinning, 2010) in PE curricula in most developed nations. As discussed in the preceding chapter the multi-activity curriculum (Drummond & Pill, 2011) was also found to be used at all three schools where individual physical activities or sports are taught separately as short units of work. As such the multi-activity curriculum formed a common social structure within the PE and school sport figuration. At School B, the ‘beep test’ and running up the local mountain were cited as dislikes:

When we go up the mountain...like how we have to jog up there and...it’s kind of embarrassing like when you’re...like sort of the last one...going up the mountain (student 7B).

At school C students did not like other students who never participated, and one commented that they loathed cross-country running.
The students only experienced American, European and non-Indigenous Australian dance in PE. They had never been taught Indigenous dance forms. Some said that they enjoyed the dance that they were taught. However, some said that they did not enjoy it, nor could they see its relevance:

Dancing, why do we do dancing? Like I don’t see the point in it. We learn... the same dances... for the two years that I had to do it... and... I’ve never had to use any of them for anything. It’s like... the ‘Tango’ and... like... ‘country line dances’ (student 9A).

This repetition in dance provides evidence that there is space for Indigenous content in the curriculum, contrary to the views of some teachers at the three schools discussed later in the chapter, mention in Chapter 6, and in the literature covered in Chapter 3. The students at school A thought that it would be a good initiative to include Indigenous dance in PE:

It would be so much better to do like Aboriginal dancing than like... ‘cowboy’ and ‘country’... dancing [laughs] (student 6A).

Further, the comments by the students from School A suggest a lack of ‘significance’ (ACT DET, 2006b) for the students in connection with the dances that were offered. In other words, the predominant British, European, American and Australian dances lacked meaning and connectedness for those students. Again, there is a sense that what was being provided did not meet the requirements of ‘all students’, despite claims to that effect in Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007), school websites and other documents reviewed in the previous chapter. Those students who did not like PE or aspects of PE, gave the impression that they had limited power to change the figuration, such as in the above response about Dance.

A lot of students across all three sites said that they would not change anything in PE. However, some students commented that there was too much repetition:

…we pretty much just… do the same thing. Like at the moment we’re just… going to the gym and that but... I just think we should do like more... like units for like touch or
something like that... or like ball games or something like that... but we always just...

play like... the same games... (student 5B).

The mention of repetitiveness of content reflects the shortcomings of the ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ model raised by Kirk (2010a) mentioned in Chapter 3. In addition, those student remarks are in contrast to responses at a national level to the Draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education Consultation Report (2012a) where teachers said there was no room for additional content because of an already crowded curriculum. Some of the HPE teachers interviewed at the three schools also spoke about how there was no space in the existing program to include Indigenous perspectives. Those ‘reasons’ it is argued are unjustified and instead represent cohesion by the established group in resisting infiltration by an outsider group (Elias & Scotson, 1994).

The majority of Indigenous students had never experienced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games and physical activities in their PE classes. All of the students interviewed at school A said that they had not undertaken any Indigenous content in PE, and most never knew that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games existed. The response from student 1A was typical:

I didn’t even know that there was...such a thing as Aboriginal games.

This remark is consistent with the literature about knowledge of Indigenous games being lost through a general dislocation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island culture as a consequence of colonization (Edwards, 2009; Howell, 1996). Student 5A commented:

The only thing that we have had for Aboriginal kids at the school is... Art...and that’s it.
Only one student at school B had experienced Indigenous content in PE played in a single lesson:

_Yeah I remember playing this game [in Year 9]... it was kinda like cricket... and you had to like... run around these... cricket stumps... kinda_ (student 4B).

At school C Indigenous games tended to be played infrequently and sporadically with buroinjin being the most popular, often taught as part of a European handball unit. The only other Indigenous game that some of the students played in PE was ‘Fly,’ which was taught in athletics. Indigenous games at School C tended to be more often taught separately from PE, by their IEO in a ‘culture and language class’:

_We haven’t really played any Indigenous sports this year... only last year like... when the IEO did it_ (student 2C).

Some of the students at school C had also played a game called ‘Naynay’, a tag game where students fetch water and bring it back to ‘camp’. Balls are used instead of water and are brought back over a line without ball carriers being tagged. It was taught in a program called ‘On Track’ by the IEO, but not in PE.

### 7.1.2 Executive and level 1 health and physical education teacher perceptions of the positioning of Indigenous students within the physical education and school sport figuration

The executive teachers gave similar responses to the Indigenous students about what PE meant for Indigenous students. PE was considered as a forum where Indigenous students could take part with non-Indigenous students on ‘more even’ terms in a way that they were not able to in other subject areas:

_I think it’s a window of opportunity for them. It’s an area where they’re engaged, where they feel that they can actually be successful as well... where they can compete on... equal, or even better than equal terms. Whereas I think in some other subject_
areas some of the Indigenous kids feel like... ‘that we’re a little bit behind everyone else’ (executive teacher A).

In the same way, executive teacher B responded:

*I think it gives them success...because they make rep sides...or school sides...and you know...make Zone teams...and they do well in PE...in the class activities.*

Executive teacher C commented:

*...an opportunity to be out of the classroom...that they aren’t...I guess for want of a better word...stuck in a classroom where they’re forced to be for several of their other subjects....*

This executive teacher also thought that some of the Indigenous girls in Year 7 and 8 wanted to ‘by pass’ PE because they found it boring. An exception to this was when they played ‘footy skills’ because the girls tended to be more interested in that along with athletics.

There were also issues mentioned by executive teacher C about some of the girls demonstrating in front of other students because of fear of failure. A strong interest in the football codes by both male and female Indigenous students was identified as a recurring theme across all three sites.

*PE that was not school based seemed to be more attractive for some of the students:*

*I think that they’d sort of had enough of the...what we call the ‘mainstream PE’...In other words, ‘I’ve had enough of the structured basketball, volleyball, netball’...and that they’re looking for some sort of...broadening of the curriculum to meet their needs...* (executive teacher C).

Again there was a sense that the PE program offered was not suitable for ‘all students’.

The HPE teacher participant group also thought that Indigenous students preferred being active and outside instead of being in the classroom. They also believed that PE offered opportunities for those students to experience success unlike other KLAs:
I don’t know if it’s just part of their culture that’s engrained in them to be outside and... being physically active. As a culture I believe they’re pretty active... traditional people that they... are out there walking or going ‘walkabouts’ or they’re... chasing... food or whatever (teacher 3B).

Similarly, at school C:

I think naturally... Indigenous students generally... have a good natural aptitude with the practical subjects and from my experience the majority of those students have done quite well in the practical setting and therefore I suppose they enjoy it... (teacher 1C).

It is argued that inferred in the reflections by teacher 3B and 1C is a racialized view of Indigenous peoples being physical rather than intellectual people (Hall, 1997; Wadham et al., 2012) due to mention of students wanting to be outside, being ‘practical’, as well as references to pre-modern times. Further, it is proposed that both depictions can be considered as ‘collective fantasies’ (Elias & Scotson, 1994), by the established non-Indigenous HPE teacher group due to the subjective rather than objective nature of the responses. It is also suggested, that non-Indigenous students are just as likely to not enjoy being in classrooms for long periods of time. Elias and Scotson (1994) contend that fantasies of this kind are formed in the early habitus of Western European people and contradict the ‘rational thought’ that ‘distinguishes’ them.

Also in common with what the students said, teacher 3A thought that the social aspect of PE was important for the students as well as participation in group activities. Teacher 1A thought that the students liked the:

...actual game participation...rather than the skill development.

These observations would concur with the literature about the importance of community and social relationships to Aboriginal peoples (Tatz, 2013).
7.1.3 Indigenous critical friends’ perceptions of the positioning of Indigenous students within the physical education and school sport figuration

All three ICFs again thought that majority of Indigenous students generally enjoyed PE and it meant an opportunity to have a ‘run around’. According to ICF A it was:

...probably the easiest one [subject] for them’, and ‘...they probably don’t even see it as a class...they see it as a ‘break’.

ICF B commented:

* I had kids...that struggled to read and write and that, but then you know come PE time it’s their time to ‘shine’...you know the first kid picked for whatever team...and you know...and they’re having a good time...obviously with a lot of our kids there’s literacy and numeracy problems. They don’t count...come into the factor. I mean a lot of our kids love sport and they grow up playing sport, so it’s one class they actually do really well at and even feel good about themselves....

The ICFs recognized then, that many of the Indigenous students were good at PE and sport, enjoyed both, and were proud of their position within the PE and school sport figuration. However, in contrast to the teachers, the ICFs never spoke in typecasting terms about the students being ‘physical’, or ‘practical’ and never made reference to ‘traditional’ culture. They just noted instead that the students were good at PE and sport in contrast to their theoretical subjects. It is possible that the ICFs were nonetheless internalizing, and being accepting of the non-Indigenous positioning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as ‘physical peoples’.

7.2 The Behaviour of Principals Within the Physical Education and School Sport Figuration

All of the principals said that Indigenous mention in PE and school sport was important within their school. However, there was almost no evidence of their beliefs being
realized in the PE and school sport programmed at their schools. This lack of influence by the principals who have a high share of the power resource within schools affected how Indigenous students experienced PE and school sport.

Of note was the strong impression given by all of the principals that including Indigenous perspectives in the PE curriculum was a ‘new’ directive. This was despite there being system level documents, as discussed in the last chapter, used at each school that required Indigenous content to be included in all KLAs. Most of those documents had been in use for several years before the interviews were carried out (ACT DET, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2008; ACT ETD, 2010b).

At school B the development of a traditional Indigenous games unit of work had commenced in the academic year prior to data collection. The then IEO had been given this remit through having an interest in sport, but progress had been ‘slow’ because he required a “lot of guidance” (principal B). The principal believed that involving the IEO in this initiative would give him a much higher profile in the school. This comment gives the impression that the IEO had a position of lower social status within the micro Level of the PE and school sport figuration compared with the other school staff. There was a sense then that the IEO had limited power within the figuration, which could be seen as a constraining factor in his ability to act.

The principal at School C believed that Indigenous content in PE and school sport was important not just for Indigenous students, but for all students in the school. This was because Indigenous peoples were Australia’s First people, and as such their culture was valued. This principal was unaware of any units of work in the school that had an Indigenous focus in PE, and as to whether Indigenous traditional games should be included in PE responded:

*Well I must say I hadn’t thought about it but it’s a possibility. I’m very keen on not making these children [Indigenous children] feel different to everyone else. They are*
living in Australia. They are Australians. I like to keep it as normal as possible, but if Indigenous games would be supported, or if everyone else would be interested, of course I’d be putting them into the curriculum...Certainly, all of those children [Indigenous students] want to play traditional Western games. The boys want to play rugby in both forms, they want to play soccer. They’re actually good at that, but I think from a historical point of view having Indigenous games at the school would be very interesting.

This principal it is contended was safeguarding the Eurocentric PE and school sport ‘invented traditions’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) of the school through supporting the ‘status quo’ and repelling a ‘threat’ to the power resources, norms, values and way of life of the established group (Elias & Scotson, 1994). The reference to keeping things ‘normal’, implies that conversely Indigenous culture is abnormal, and it is the practices of the established group that count, that are most valued and that must be protected. Further, there is a suggestion that Indigenous physical activities are inferior to the existing provision at the school, as they are deemed as having relevance only through their ‘historical’ social significance. There was also the impression, that because the Indigenous students enjoyed the non-Indigenous sports offered, there was no requirement to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander games and sports. Again there is the theme of ‘one size fits all’ being adequate and Eurocentric knowledge being superior.

ICF A remarked that he had been asked by his principal:

...for information [Yulunga]...to sort of pass it on...and I passed it on...Cos everyone had heard about buroinjin and I wanted the PE staff to...talk about it and teach it in PE and get kids interested in it...so we could have a team [in school sport]....

Likewise ICF B commented:
...there was the plan with the Pastoral Care Coordinator because her husband was a PE teacher in another school and they were going to write up a curriculum. It was going to be a unit...as part of the Year 8 PE...

However, the Pastoral Care Coordinator went on long service leave and the ICF left soon after, so nothing came of the initiative. In contrast, ICF C had not been approached by his principal:

No principal ever came...and wanted it promoted but...classroom teachers did [not HPE teachers].

This comment by ICF C indicates reluctance by the HPE teachers to include Indigenous content in their programs, as the ICF notes that it was teachers in other KLAs, and not in HPE, who expressed an interest in Indigenous traditional games. Again there is suggestion of the HPE teachers safeguarding the PE and school sport that ‘matters’ by not finding those games appealing. It is argued then, that the HPE teachers at School C were acting as protectors of a model of PE that they had a deep-seated emotional involvement with. This behaviour of defending a preferred model of PE is similar to what Green (2008) found in his study of English PE teachers.

7.3 Health and Physical Education Teacher Habitus in Altering the Physical Education and School Sport Figuration

It is contended in this section, that HPE teacher habitus had the effect of altering the PE and school sport figuration as a consequence of HPE teacher relative power in the PE and school sport figuration. This relative power allowed the executive and Level 1 HPE teachers as an established ‘We’ group, to choose the content that fitted with their individual and social habitus (Mennell, 1994). Simultaneously, this ‘We’ group, through having a large share of the power resource in the figuration were able to ignore the ‘rules’ at the macro level that called for content that was inconsistent with their habitus to be included.
All of the teaching staff had predominantly experienced Eurocentric PE content during their own schooling, when they attended PETE and throughout their teaching careers. As such familiarity with this kind of content was a long-term process for those teachers. The majority of the executive teachers and teachers said that they had become HPE teachers because of a ‘love of sport’ (Eurocentric sport). All of the teachers at School A said that sport had influenced their decision to become HPE teachers:

*Sports that I grew up...playing as a kid* (teacher 4A).

And, at School B:

*We’ve been... raised in Westernised culture... obviously our interests are... Westernised sports. That’s what we’ve been brought up playing...* (teacher 7B).

Teacher 1B reflected:

*While I had the specific sports I enjoyed playing while I was at school... the PE that we were brought up with...at the high school I went to...we got a huge range of sports ‘thrown’ at us....*

At school C:

*You definitely can’t do it [PE] without liking sport* (teacher 5C).

This comment by teacher 5C suggests that sport was considered to be inextricably connected to PE, and that the two terms are interdependent upon each other. Further, there is some sense in this response of a ‘taken for granted’ assumption that PE and European sport are inseparable from each other. In addition, there is also a notion that this belief has occurred naturally, and is devoid of any kind of social process. Sport was also seen as a ‘vehicle’ for teaching PE:

*I see it as...you’re teaching skills [in PE] like throwing, catching, kicking, running, jumping and sport is the ‘tool’ to do that...So it’s not like you’re teaching basketball, or soccer or cricket or whatever...you’re actually teaching how to ‘hit and strike’ or...*
how to ‘throw and catch’ or... and being a... a holistic person so that you [the student] can... take those skills into any... situation (teacher 3B).

What is particularly interesting is that the desired skill development described could also be achieved through non-European games and physical activities. The perspective by teacher 3B provides strength to an argument that it is not for physical, structural or technical reasons that non-European content is not included, but instead it is for social reasons. Teacher 3B indirectly suggests that there is scope within the figuration for teachers to include non-European content but as will be discussed later, this rarely occurred.

Consistent with an English study by Green (2000b), the teachers in this research were found to share similar strong, personal long-standing associations and interests in sport that pervaded into their day-to-day PE and school sport pedagogy. Those identities based upon Eurocentric sport were so pronounced that there was a notion of a ‘We’ identity and cohesiveness in the HPE executive teacher and teacher group at each site.

Indigenous sports and games were not part of the habitus of any of the HPE teachers. This lack of connectedness with Indigenous physical activity forms is perhaps unsurprising given that none of the HPE teachers at the three sites were Indigenous. Likewise, there was a sense in a response from principal A that teachers would not be comfortable in teaching Indigenous content because it was not part of their habitus. Consequently he believed that some HPE teachers may demonstrate passive resistance towards its inclusion through a lack of knowledge, experience of and exposure to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander games:

It’s a bit like getting the physics teacher to teach chemistry, because it’s still science...The PE teachers have great difficulty in teaching what they are not ‘innately good at’. Because of the nature of the pride that a PE teacher has in their...own, sporting abilities... (principal A).
Executive teacher A concurred with Principal A by suggesting that HPE teachers preferred to teach in their comfort zone and do things that they were good at. Likewise Executive teacher C commented:

...if you haven’t grown up with it (any sport or physical activity), yes some people are vulnerable....

In other words, some teachers if they have not played a particular sport or activity growing up may well avoid teaching it. Teachers at each site confirmed that they would indeed be uncomfortable, and lack confidence in teaching content that they were unfamiliar with, or uninterested in:

Absolutely... if you’re not interested in it, you’re not going to incorporate it... (teacher 3B).

The teachers from all three schools felt that they did not currently have the skills and knowledge to teach Indigenous content in PE.

7.4 Executive and Level 1 Health and Physical Education Teachers, Their Positioning and Behaviour Within the Physical Education and School Sport Figuration

This section argues that executive and Level 1 HPE teachers enjoyed a comparatively large share of the power resources relative to the other individuals in the PE and school sport Figuration in deciding what was taught in their schools. The positioning of those teachers in the figuration allowed them to decide the kind of PE and school sport that the Indigenous students, as well as all other students experienced. As was explained in the last chapter, the macro level is a framework in which different individuals act. In this research the framework, or macro level of the PE and school sport figuration had no Indigenous reference. It is contended that HPE teachers largely on account of their habitus and position of power within the figuration were able to alter the ‘official structure’ of the PE and school Sport figuration
that included Indigenous perspectives to one that better fitted with their habitus. Hence, those teachers acted in such a way as to protect a ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a) curriculum that they valued through ignoring the broader rules within the figuration that called for Indigenous mention.

At School B, the executive teacher summarised the kind of PE taught as being:

* A traditional program that has been there for years and years...covering all the types of physical...sort of pursuits.*

What is noticeable is the use of the word ‘all’ implying that the Eurocentric provision offered equates to every kind of physical pursuit. Executive teacher B continued by stating that there was no Indigenous content in their current PE curriculum:

* Well I say ‘no’...but you might ‘pluck out’ one game that you happen to know...on a day that...we've got everyone in the gym and it’s wet and we’re thinking well what are we going to do? We can do this big game. I’ve done that a couple of times...with a game that was shown to me as an Indigenous game...but not as a unit of work or anything like that.*

From this statement Indigenous content at school B is explicitly positioned outside of the PE curriculum. Further, as a ‘wet weather’ option, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games are afforded secondary status as a lesser physical activity form than what is included in the day-to-day program. This description of how Indigenous content is provided is also evidence that ‘rules’ at the macro level specified in generic system level documentation about including Indigenous perspectives are not followed. What this executive teacher states also ensures that the games are removed from any kind of cultural associations and are ‘added on’ in a tokenistic way without threatening what is provided in the main curriculum (Heinemann, 1993; Macdonald et al., 2009).
At school C, the executive teacher said that there was a limited amount of buroinjin taught in PE classes. When asked if there were any other traditional Indigenous games taught, he replied:

*To be honest, probably at this point...probably not* (executive teacher C).

In connection with how they would meet the requirement to include Indigenous perspectives as part of the forthcoming national curriculum, one of the executive teachers said:

*I don’t know. Wait and see...what comes up. I mean we get all these demands. It doesn’t mean we do them...you would have to see what was being asked and...whether there was some ‘tokenism’ of you know you must play a game or...whether you have to integrate...some other aspects of Indigenous culture, or we have an Indigenous Day...I mean you’d have to be told what to do and then we’d have to say ‘well is that worthwhile putting in in comparison to what we’re already doing’?*

What this statement shows is the relative power that executive HPE teachers have within the PE and school sport figuration. Through the mention of the words ‘we’d’ and ‘we’re’ there is also evidence of a ‘We’ group that includes the HPE teachers who decide which ACT ETD policy directives are followed and which are not. The statement also shows that senior management within the Directive do not hold absolute power (Elias, 1978b). Suggesting an ‘Indigenous day’ implies that Indigenous content can be ‘included’, but again in terms of it being ‘outside’ the established day-to-day provision. The theme of protecting what already exists is again evident through the words ‘is that worthwhile putting in in comparison to what we’re already doing?’ This response demonstrates resistance to what is perceived as threats to the existing figuration. It is argued that executive teachers like principals, have major influence in what is included, or conversely excluded in PE curricula through possessing a relatively high share of social power resources. It is further contended
that the power chances enjoyed by those individuals are by virtue of their promoted position within any given school.

The same executive teacher suggested that there was substantial Indigenous mention in other subjects, that there was an Indigenous Centre in the school, and that Indigenous culture was visible in the school building in artwork and through school assemblies:

*So in that respect you know...I would think we were way over...above other schools...But not in PE, no...it wasn’t in the ‘PE scene’*[laughs].

When asked why it was not in PE:

*...it’s just not there because...as I said, we run a program that is the different types of...fitness or sport, individual or team...and we just focus on that. Who’s in it...we don’t focus on....*

This executive teacher, similar to some individuals within the wider national HPE profession figuration (see ACARA, 2012b), believed that Indigenous perspectives were not relevant to PE. Instead, such content again belonged ‘outside’ of PE in other KLAs, and was well catered for elsewhere in the school.

The executive teachers at two schools said that Indigenous content should be included. However, at the third school the executive teacher thought:

*No...I don’t think so...I think we should just run the PE program that suits...that’s best for the kids in relation to...proper physical education which is you know...individual activities, team sports, dance, swimming, athletics. All those types of things which come under the curriculum. So...and Indigenous kids are...skilled in that area so...you know they should do well in it.*

The reference to ‘proper physical education’ is indicative of the strong emotional involvement that this teacher has to their subject, and that the defining characteristics of PE are self-evident and not subject to change (Green, 2008). There is also a notion that ‘proper’
equates to ‘Eurocentric’ and is the ‘superior’ knowledge that counts (Elias, 1987). There are also similarities in this response with what one of the principals said earlier, about keeping curricula as ‘normal as possible’, and Indigenous students being good at European sport forms.

The HPE teachers across all three schools confirmed that there was limited Indigenous focus currently in PE. Indeed, at School A, some teachers were completely unaware of any of those perspectives being taught in classes. ‘Fly’ was the only named Indigenous game taught and was used in athletics. Some ‘warm-up’ and ‘cool-down’ activities were used by teacher 2A from information that was included as footnotes in a teachers’ diary. However, the names of those activities could not be recalled. The lack of Indigenous content reported by the HPE teachers corroborates with what the Indigenous student participants said. In addition, this ‘silence’ is in common with the literature, with the Northern Territory being cited as the only state or territory including Indigenous perspectives in PE (Fitzpatrick, 2009).

This section has provided some explanation for the ‘policy slippage’ discussed in the last chapter, where the wider rules of the PE and school sport figuration about including Indigenous perspectives were ignored. It has been argued that the individual and social habitus of the HPE teachers, and in particular their pre-disposition to European sport along with their comparative power as a ‘We’ group, has resulted in the PE and school sport figuration being altered. The ‘rules’ at the macro level about including Indigenous perspectives, made explicit in the non-PE and school sport specific system level documentation were therefore not followed by the HPE teacher ‘We’ group. In addition, it was discussed that one of the principals and an executive teacher thought that the existing PE and school sport program was adequate for the Indigenous students.
7.5 Constraints in Delivering Indigenous Content in Physical Education

The HPE teachers listed a number of constraints that made it challenging for them to include Indigenous perspectives in their teaching. The teachers argued that it was difficult for them to introduce Indigenous content for a number of reasons that are discussed in this section.

7.5.1 Time poor

‘Time poor’ was a recurring theme across all sites, both within schools generally, and in the day-to-day work of HPE faculties in particular. This lack of time is reported in the PE literature (Tinning, 2000). A shortage of time made it problematic to have even informal discussions about professional practice:

*It’s about actually having that time... to step back and reflect on our actual practices and say ‘yep, with this little bit of tweaking we could do this better or... we could... make sure that everyone had an opportunity to learn this’. It’s just like go, go, go, status quo. This is what we’ve been doing. Let’s just keep doing because... we don’t have time really to sit back and reflect* (teacher 3B).

It is argued that the pressure of time reported by the HPE teachers in delivering the established curriculum is not conducive to adding, what was regarded as ‘new content’ in the form of Indigenous perspectives.

7.5.2 Resources

There appeared to be a misunderstanding, and lack of knowledge amongst the HPE teachers about the resources that were available for teaching Indigenous content in PE. For example, executive teacher B was unaware of the existence of the *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009) resource, and in response to being informed about it said:

*So it’s alright to have a 200 page document on the web...but teachers aren’t going to look at it...because you know...it’s not being ‘delivered right to their door’...you*
What is evident in the above comment is some notion of PE knowledge accumulating over time and being passed down as part of an ongoing and lasting process. However, at the same time, there is also a lack of understanding about how this knowledge has developed and a sense that it has ‘just come to be’ (Elias, 1987). It is also implied that this understanding is sufficient for teaching PE and alternative knowledge is not needed.

In contrast, executive teacher C knew about the Yulunga (ASC, 2009) resource:

*The IEO has sort of brought...well not just the IEO, we were aware of it before. But I would have to be honest with you, that we probably could have used more...games out of that...than we probably have.*

However, similar to executive teacher B, executive teacher C thought that HPE teachers tended generally to not make use of resources:

*... even though there’s the resource (Yulunga)...and then...how long does it sit on a shelf for...before we actually...unless someone has got the initiative...or the foresight to...to keep people up to speed with it... but....*

Again, there was the notion of ‘time poor’ being a reason for not including Indigenous perspectives, as well as the current knowledge stock being adequate for delivering the curriculum. None of the teachers at School A or B knew about Yulunga (ASC, 2009).

**7.5.3 Support**

Lack of support from school management was regarded as a constraint for including Indigenous content:

*Money, resources, support from... people who need to support us. We can offer lots of things at this school... but if we’re the only people who wanted it... it’s not going to happen. So we’ve got to have... people higher up the ‘food chain’ ready to support it...*
provide the time for the training which is a pressure in every school for professional development (teacher 5B).

Within this comment there was again a sense that Indigenous content was not ‘core business’. Instead, it was something that with ‘appropriate support’ had the potential to be added to the curriculum. ICF C had similar sentiments suggesting that greater direction from education management and organizations such as ACT SSSA would help:

*I think more directive from authority... to say ‘you must do this’... and now with the SSSA... they’re an authority here... they should be sending that authority out to every PE staff... in secondary school and say... ‘you must’ [the words ‘you must’ emphasised]... invite an AEO... or you must... implement... these games in your curriculum... Because otherwise they’ll just go on... because you’ve got to remember teachers just write up their own lesson plans... what they want to teach.*

ICF C draws attention to the relative power that HPE teachers possess, through being able to teach the content that they value most, which also corresponds to their individual and social habitus (Elias, 1998b; Mennell, 1994).

7.5.4 Pre-service physical education teacher education

A common theme across all three schools stated by the HPE executive teachers and teachers, was that Indigenous content was not included in the specialist PE subjects as part of PETE:

*It’s not covered in any of the courses that we study at university and I think it should be. I mean that’s where it should start. So I think our issue is that we don’t have...a really big background like we do in some of our traditional sports and that’s where it has to start... so that we feel comfortable in teaching it. So we’d love to teach it... but we need to have the knowledge to be able to teach it...* (executive teacher A).
In other words, the habitus of the teachers in this study was geared towards Eurocentric sport and the kind of traditional PE described by Green (1998). The teachers commented that the only Indigenous content that was covered during their PETE was in a generic unit, that never provided them with PE specific information:

As far as that’s concerned [Indigenous perspectives in PE] that’s all good and I’m happy to include it... but as we’ve said... how do we include it if we’ve never been exposed to it? As far as at uni we did ‘Indigenous Education – What Works’... and it was the worst unit that I have done... because all it was...was us getting up and talking about... different cave paintings and different things... and that’s fine... but the name of the unit was ‘Indigenous Education What Works’... you’d think that there’d be some sort of practical application... what can we do to help Indigenous kids... learn in ‘our scene’ (teacher 7B).

Similarly:

Yeah, but it doesn’t tell you anything [Indigenous Education What Works]...Like it’s not helpful at all...But in terms of PE like ‘chucking it’ in the PE curriculum at uni, you definitely want to do something like that. Like classroom strategies and then you’d want to do the games and... even right down to the Dance... you’d have someone come in and stuff, but they [university] don’t do anything like that (teacher 5C).

ICF B, concerning PETE remarked:

...certainly I picked up in the schools...there’s probably a fear...amongst non-Indigenous teachers...because...you know all through university they haven’t learned a whole lot about all this stuff and I think they’re afraid of doing these things wrong...that’s why they’re so reliant on us [the ICFs]...it doesn’t need to be intimidating...like you come out and watch buroinjin it’s not...it’s pretty
universal...you know...Yeah and all the kids enjoy it. It’s not just an Indigenous ‘thing’. It’s just a game that happened to be played before colonization....

The lack of Indigenous mention in PETE courses that the HPE teachers comment about is perhaps due in part to the kinds of constraints experienced by PETE educators discussed by Callcott et al. (2012). In particular, decisions are made by program providers about what to include in the PE specific aspects of PETE programs that typically have a limited time allocation. That Indigenous content was only included in the general, but not the core PE subjects, shows that alternative or more privileged content was deemed by the course providers as being more important within the PE subjects (Tinning et al., 2001). Again there is a feeling within this wider PE figuration, that includes the local PETE establishment, that Indigenous games and sports were not as highly valued as content with European or American heritage. The latter content took priority in the restricted space available in the PETE program, and demonstrates the relative power of those responsible for program design and delivery. Also, it can be reasonably assumed that those lecturers and tutors would have had individual and social habitus that were heavily informed by Eurocentric activities, given the history of PE and school sport in Australia.

7.6 Implementation of School Documentation and Policies

A consideration of how directives in school policy and other documents are implemented by principals and HPE teachers is important in answering research question one. This is because, the extent to which those directives are followed directly affects how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport.

There was some evidence of ‘policy slippage’ in how principals and HPE teachers interpreted and implemented the policies examined in the last chapter. Policy slippage here meaning a difference in how policies were used compared to how they were intended to be used. During the interviews, both participant groups were found to be selective in how closely
they followed policy directives demonstrating their relative power within the PE and school sport figuration. It is contended that the principals and HPE teachers, by having a large share of power in the PE and school sport figuration were able to act in particular ways. In other words by having a power imbalance in their favour, the principals and HPE teachers had considerable freedom of choice in how they acted within the figuration. Teacher habitus, multiple priorities, as well as lack of understanding and indifference of Indigenous perspectives affected how policies were applied. In addition, time pressures in schools meant that an unintended consequence of policy implementation was that principals and teachers were strategic and creative about how policies were interpreted.

Concerning whether HPE teachers used the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010–2013* (‘the Plan’) (ACT ETD, 2010b), Principal A commented:

*At this point in time…they don’t use this…at the moment.*

He continued by suggesting that the Plan was used as a ‘check list’ by the school leadership team for what was already happening in the school, that could be matched to key actions and priorities in the Plan. Further, the principal believed that policies generally had most relevance when they were considered at the appropriate time for what was most important in any given school. At school A school management issues had been the greatest priority in recent years. Until this issue had been effectively resolved other ‘priorities’ were of lesser importance. In other words, being ‘time poor’ meant that not all policy priorities could be attended to simultaneously:

*I know from a hierarchical point of view it’s great to ‘roll over’ a nice new glossy plan…but unless it fits into the context of the school’s journey…it doesn’t work as well. It’s got to be respectful. This one [the Plan] says…from 2010 to 2013 so it’s*
basically got a life of about four years. At some point in the next four years...every
school should embrace the Plan...when it fits their context... (principal A).

Similarly, principals B and C said that they tended to use Department policy documents as
‘check lists’ or ‘markers of progress’ in the context of what they were already doing in their
schools.

At school A, only one teacher had seen the Plan which corroborated with what the
principal had said. Further, this teacher commented:

I think it just points out the guidelines. It doesn’t really teach you how to do it (teacher
3A).

None of the teachers at school B or C had seen the Plan. The HPE teachers at all three
sites did not display any understanding that they were expected to include Indigenous content
in their teaching. About whether or not there was any policy requirement to teach Indigenous
content, teacher 5B said:

Not that we’ve seen....

At schools A and C the teachers felt that the number and range of ACT ETD policy
documents was overwhelming:

...I’d say if there was five or six separate documents it would be hard to
implement...but if it was one solid document like the...National Curriculum then
obviously it would be a lot easier to implement (teacher 3A).

Likewise:

It’s just a time factor. I mean... we get so many... different... booklets [policy
documents]... and we’re always having to pick booklets up from the front office...but
to actually sit down and then go... ‘okay... that looks great I’ll put that in place’... it’s
to be honest...it’s a time thing (teacher 2C).
There was also a perception that the policy documents did not accurately reflect the actual PE teaching that happened in schools:

_In the... Every Chance to Learn document most of the content that is allocated to PE is about Health... where really Health is about 20% of our actual teaching time maximum. Where... 80% of our time is teaching physical education and skills..._ (teacher 3B).

The teachers tended to have a similar approach to the principals in implementing policies:

... we’re just finding ways... to ‘tick a box’... to say that we do these in our class... it’s just time consuming and it doesn’t seem to do anything for the kids or for us (teacher 4B).

Similarly, teacher 3 C remarked:

When we get an extra one [policy document]... we... honestly... sometimes think what do we ‘already do’ that we can say that ‘we’re going to do’?

In both examples the teachers are showing cohesion through the use of the word ‘we’ in how they made sense of the documents. Teacher 4B also implied that the PE delivered at School B was entirely appropriate for teachers and students alike. In other words, there was nothing in the new directives that was of any worth. In using the words ‘it doesn’t seem to do anything for the kids or for us’, there is a suggestion that the existing PE curriculum is superior to anything ‘new’ such as Indigenous perspectives. In both of the statements, the teachers demonstrated their ability to change the intended social structure or macro level of the figuration by displaying resistance to policy directives. This resistance meant that what was valued, ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a), taught in the name of PE, was protected and maintained. In addition, there was a perception that the teachers are generally time poor, and therefore find creative ways to prevent change occurring within the PE and school sport Figuration.
The teachers at schools B and C were somewhat cynical about the value of policy documents:

*If... you want to put something in the curriculum something has ‘to go’ at the other end... and often... the important stuff... the ‘day-to-day’ etc. etc. is just... ‘hard put’... and any time you want to do anything else it becomes very problematic because you don’t have any time allocated to it. So therefore you just don’t do it* (teacher 5B).

In this response there is a belief that no space exists in the curriculum for any new content, and a lack of acknowledgement about repetition of content discussed earlier in the chapter, and in Chapter 3 by Kirk (2010a).

### 7.7 School Sport

This next section relates to research question one because it is about how Indigenous students experience school sport. It is argued in this section that racialized perceptions, including the supposed ‘natural ability’, of Indigenous students held by HPE teachers and non-Indigenous peers influenced the school sport played by the Indigenous students. Those perceptions had the effect of ‘stacking’ (Coram, 2007; Entine, 2000; Godwell, 2000; Hallinan et al., 2004; Tatz, 1987) participation by Indigenous students to a narrow range of sports that were mainly the football codes. As a result, most of the students spoke about representing their school in rugby league, rugby union, Oztag, Touch, and AFL (see Table 3).
### Table 3

*Student School Sport Representation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Sports Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1A</td>
<td>Signed up for rugby union but then the team collapsed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2A</td>
<td>Volleyball, soccer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3A</td>
<td>Rugby union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4A</td>
<td>Nothing reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5A</td>
<td>Nothing (only in primary school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 6A</td>
<td>Nothing reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7A</td>
<td>Nothing reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 8A</td>
<td>Nothing (only in primary school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 9A</td>
<td>Nothing (only in primary school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 1B</td>
<td>Rugby league, AFL, Oztag, Touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2B</td>
<td>Rugby league, Oztag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3B</td>
<td>AFL, Touch, Oztag, rugby league, basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4B</td>
<td>Rugby league, rugby union, Touch, Oztag, AFL, volleyball, badminton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5B</td>
<td>Rugby league, rugby union, AFL, Touch, Oztag, Futsal, basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 6B</td>
<td>Nothing in high school but did Oztag in primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7B</td>
<td>Soccer, volleyball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 1C</td>
<td>Rugby union, rugby league</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2C</td>
<td>Rugby union, rugby league, AFL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3C</td>
<td>Rugby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4C</td>
<td>Rugby league, cricket, AFL, rugby union, buroinjin, basketball, European handball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5C</td>
<td>Buroinjin, rugby league, rugby union, cricket</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the students said that they had been encouraged by the HPE teachers to only play football codes for their schools. Three of the students at school C said they were only ever approached by the HPE teachers to play rugby:

*Because they [HPE teachers] just... expect... all the Aboriginal kids... 'he only plays footy or League’...or stuff like that* (student 2C).

Sometimes students were directed towards football codes because the HPE teachers thought that they were only suited for those sports:

*It’s...my choice [rugby league and AFL] as well as others [other people]...one of my PE teachers said that since I have such a high jump that I’d be suited for...AFL...and because like I’m skinny but...I’m like strong... I’m more suited to AFL than*
rugby…which I kind of agree too… and AFL’s actually a pretty fun game to play…Interestingly I grew up with rugby league…and AFL…the teachers only suggested it [AFL] because it suited my natural abilities…and…they knew that the game would come easily but…I don’t think they’ll mention any other games cos I don’t think they think that I’m suited for it… (student 1B).

Also, student 2B had been encouraged “a little bit” by HPE teachers to play rugby league but they had not asked him to play other sports. He thought that this was because of his “size probably”.

The ICFs also thought that the HPE teachers directed Indigenous students towards football codes:

*I think there’s probably the perception that rugby league…and…maybe…AFL…but I think…if a PE teacher sort of…one of the kids was good at…something else that they encouraged them…You’d hope anyway. But yeah, I think that’s the way it is* (ICF A).

Similarly:

*Well they’re pushed towards them sports [rugby league] because that’s all the PE staff wants to teach them…well mainly football codes…now one or two of them [Indigenous students] they play basketball…I know none of them go to European handball…or…Futsal…I don’t know if the kids are not interested…or teachers don’t want to take the kids…but I notice the teachers are running around looking for them…when they want to play league, Aussie rules or union* (ICF C).

Those observations by the students and one of the ICFs are consistent with what Tatz (1987) comments about Aboriginal people being over-represented in football codes. It is argued that this over-representation is part of a long-term process where Indigenous peoples are deemed by non-Indigenous people as being ‘only suitable for’ a narrow range of sports based on racialized perceptions. Central to this racialization is the ‘physicality’ of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islanders, and supposed other innate sporting traits that closely align to skill sets required in the football codes. Non-Indigenous people are able to demonstrate such racialization as a consequence of their greater social power as the dominant societal group. Given their greater share of power, non-Indigenous HPE teachers, and some students at School A, acted in the school sport figuration by stacking the Indigenous students towards a restricted range of sports.

Figure 1 below, is a word cloud that illustrates the topics that were most discussed during the interviews, as it shows the 100 most frequently mentioned words in the interview transcripts for all participant groups in the research. The main purpose of this word cloud is to highlight the prevalence of rugby, rugby league and AFL as sports that had some kind of meaning for the participants within the context of the research. Consequently, the word cloud shows that ‘stacking’ occurred in those three football codes given their frequent mention in the interview transcripts. Buroinjin is also included as the most common Indigenous game spoken about in the interviews.

Given that buroinjin is the only Indigenous game played at ACT SSSA level, the frequency with which this game appears is perhaps unsurprising. The narrow range of sports mentioned in the 100 most frequently mentioned words relate to research question one, as they indicate those that were central to the experiences of the Indigenous students in PE and school sport. Also of relevance to research question one is the frequent occurrence of the words ‘game’, ‘games’ and ‘skills’. Each of those words can be associated with team games as the version of the id² of ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a), that has been dominant in Australian schools since the mid-1950s.
As discussed above, it was found that perceptions held by HPE teachers and non-Indigenous students of Indigenous ‘natural ability’ in sport, influenced the kinds of sports that the Indigenous students played in the school sport figuration. Each of the executive teachers thought that Indigenous students possessed some kind of innate natural ability. The traits cited included: spatial awareness, quick reflexes, good ‘hand balling’ (AFL), hand-eye
coordination, hand-foot coordination, speed and ‘speed off the mark’. All of the fore-
mentioned aptitudes are advantageous in the football codes, and it is argued that those 
racialized perceptions about ‘natural ability’ reinforce the stacking of students towards a 
restricted number of sports within the school sport figuration.

Executive teacher B commented:

...the ones [Indigenous students] who do well in PE...do have those natural sort of 
aptitudes...you know... yeah, I mean they are fast. Some of these boys are fast. They’ve 
got a good vertical jump. It’s just ‘innate’....

The use of the word ‘innate’ shows that this teacher believes that the students had 
superior genetic abilities rather than performances attributed to environmental factors. Having 
this point of view serves to reinforce racialized perceptions of physical superiority, that 
biologically ‘distinguish’ one group of people from another. As was discussed in Chapter 3, 
categorizing people according to supposed ‘defining’ characteristics is a long-term process 
that can be traced back to colonial times (Rigney, 2003). It was argued earlier in the thesis, 
that categorizing Indigenous peoples in this way is at once problematic, because Indigenous 
peoples are not a homogenous group.

The HPE teachers thought that the Indigenous students were talented at side stepping, 
locomotion skills, and again hand-eye co-ordination for passing and kicking. Like their 
executive teachers colleagues, those talents cited are important in football:

Some of the Indigenous at this school...are ‘freakishly talented’... but we also have 
those that have... not shown talents... in areas because they’ve... you know, possibly 
chosen not to, or maybe they don’t have them... (teacher 3C).

Three of the girls at school A had been influenced by non-Indigenous peers to play 
rugby union for the school. Those peers, non-Indigenous female students, perceived the 
Indigenous students as being physical, aggressive and ‘scary’, and hence suited for rugby:
A lot of people like at school said...you should...play union because...the Aboriginal girls were...tough and stuff and everyone was...‘play on this team because everyone will be scared or something’ (student 4A).

Two of the students said that they did not even know how to play rugby, they just ‘signed up’ because of what their non-Indigenous contemporaries had said.

Those perceptions by the HPE teachers and non-Indigenous students are considered as being racialized, because there is no evidence that the Indigenous students are born with the talents cited, or have other qualities that predispose them to certain sports. Through considering the Indigenous students as being naturally good at sport, HPE teachers and some non-Indigenous students reinforce viewpoints that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are ‘physical people’. There is also a danger through such beliefs of Indigenous students being typecast along with a number of associated qualities. Those qualities include being unintelligent, lazy, unreliable and not having to try as hard as non-Indigenous players (Coram, 2007).

7.7.2 ‘Civilizing’ Indigenous students through school sport

At schools A and B there was a sense that the HPE staff wanted the Indigenous students to ‘harness’ their ‘natural ability’ and reach their ‘full potential’ in particular sports. Along with this was a desire amongst the teachers to develop associated behaviour such as working hard, being disciplined and reaching set goals:

We’ve got some really talented footballers [rugby league] here with Indigenous background...and our...‘big thrust’ with them is to encourage them to be as good as they can be. I’d a session with one of our ‘off task’ boys earlier this week because he’s mucking up in PE... loves being involved but...finds it very hard to stay ‘on task’ and my main brief with him was saying you know, ‘I’ve seen how good you can be. We’ve got really talented footballers at the school...and you make them look silly...How
good are you?... and where do you want to go?...because if you put your mind to it...you could be anything you want to be’. So I’m encouraging him to be the best he can possibly be. I mean that’s the same for any student...but in this case...he hasn’t got any of that mentoring happening outside of school. He doesn’t have a really good male role model...someone to...actually work with him, someone to encourage him...and that’s what we want to try and set up for him and see if we can keep him on track...particularly so that he doesn’t drop out of school as well...because he’s a prime candidate not to even get to the end of Year 10... (executive teacher A).

And at school B:

_I took three Indigenous boys to GWS [Greater Western Sydney AFL] talent ID...in my own time...because I thought...if I don’t take them they won’t get taken and... they all got tested. They all did extremely well...They’re now in the system...for future recruitment into the AFL...but...I even told the GWS guys you know...’we’ve got a kid here at our school who could be anything...but if you want him to do stuff you’re going to have to take him...you’re going to have to drive him...you’re going to have to pick him up. It’s going to all have to come from you guys because otherwise he’s going to slip through the net’_ (executive teacher B).

Exemplified in both of the above executive teacher accounts are behaviours of both the ‘minority of the worst’ and the ‘minority of the best’ of Indigenous peoples (Dunning, 1999; Elias & Scotson, 1994). On the one hand, the ‘unique’ natural sporting abilities as a minority of the best and simultaneously deficit understandings such as poor role models, lack of effort, and lack of reliability as a minority of the worst. There is also some suggestion of the non-Indigenous executive HPE teachers being the ‘saviour’ of those students through helping them be ‘as good as they can be’. Through acting this way within the figuration the HPE teachers are effectively enacting a form of civilizing process whereby they are
encouraging Indigenous students to adopt values and beliefs that have much in common with
the public school games ethic (Mangan, 1986). This ‘desirable’ behaviour stresses work ethic,
perseverance, discipline, reaching one’s full potential and so on. Effectively those are the
kinds of qualities that Indigenous peoples have traditionally ‘lacked’ (Keddie & Churchill,
2013; Nakata, 1993). The executive teachers acted within the figuration through intervention
and benevolence to address the ‘deficits’ that the Indigenous students had.

7.7.3 Buroinjin as school sport

The executive teachers for Schools A and B said that their schools had not entered a
team for ACT SSSA buroinjin that year because there was not enough notice about the event.
Both executive teachers A and C suggested lack of notice of the event was attributed to poor
coordination by the buroinjin competition organisers. It is contended that those ‘reasons’ put
forward by the executive teachers for not taking part in buroinjin could have been overcome,
had they been obstacles concerned with the popular traditional sports at the schools. In other
words the sports that ‘mattered’ and that were part of the social habitus and ‘We’ identity of
the HPE teachers.

Executive teacher C believed that an IEO who had a lead responsibly for this event
had lacked appropriate organizational assistance, and the date chosen was unsuitable because
it was the first week back at school after a holiday break. That responsibility was left to an
IEO suggests that in school sport, like PE, Indigenous traditional games are regarded by the
HPE teachers as being outside of the Eurocentric school sport that matters. Further,
administratively, buroinjin has never enjoyed the same kind of status as the established sports
in the main ACT SSSA annual sports calendar. Instead, it is included within the ACT SSSA
‘community calendar’, which is reserved for minority or marginal sports that are ‘second
stream’ compared with the European or American sports in the school sport calendar. This
positioning of buroinjin reinforces its outsider status, and at the same time facilitates the
status quo of the privileging of British, European and American sports within the school sport figuration.

The ICFs believed that the HPE staff at each site had never shown an interest in buroinjin as school sport. ICF B said that there had been some discussion at his school with HPE teachers about buroinjin, but that there had been no progress beyond that. This inaction by the School B teachers as an established group at the micro level could be interpreted as another demonstration of cohesiveness in protecting the ‘status quo’. ICF C could only recall one HPE teacher from his school ever attending buroinjin since the inaugural competition in 2010:

No-one [HPE teachers] has ever showed interest in it...like for instance we’ve got a buroinjin competition [ACT SSSA] coming up...in three weeks’ time.... there’s not one PE teacher ‘available’ from my school...the school that I work at to bring a team here...[Boomanulla]...because they’re at a primary school athletics fete.

ICF A remarked:

I spoke to...the Level 2 [executive teacher]...and...forward the stuff on...they said they would think about it but then that’s it.

ICFs A and C believed that buroinjin, like most aspects of Indigenous education was considered ‘black man black issue’ and not something that was the responsibility of non- Indigenous teachers:

I think that...goes for everything... (ICF A).

ICF C continued:

Basically it goes for everything in the school system...It’s our problem [Indigenous people].

It is contended then that HPE teachers at the micro level ‘close rank’ in a variety of ways to protect the school sport that they value, and in so doing only uphold the rules at the
macro level that they endorse. The nature of this, ‘traditional school sport’ and how it came to be, is discussed in some detail in the next chapter.

7.8 Chapter Summary

Indigenous student experience of PE and school sport is largely a product of the intended and unintended consequences of the actions of individual principals, HPE teachers and the established ‘We’ groups of HPE teachers at the respective schools. Although, no single person or group within the figuration has ‘absolute’ power (Elias, 1978b), the HPE teachers have enough relative power and cohesiveness to ensure that the figuration remains resistant to change.

Further, it is argued that the non-Indigeneity of the HPE teachers in this study also contributed to their relative power and their ‘We’ identity. Particular versions of PE and school sport were favoured and safeguarded, on account of this identity built on individual and social habitus (Elias, 1998b) aligned to Eurocentric Sport. In contrast to the principals and teachers, the Indigenous students possessed relatively little power to influence the figuration, and to a greater or lesser extent had to ‘go along’ with the Eurocentric programs offered. This chapter addressed research question one: How do Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research? It has been shown how the actions of individuals within the figuration studied affect the experiences of Indigenous students in PE and school sport. The next chapter is an account of how the single PE and school sport figuration came to be.
Chapter 8: Sociogenesis of the Physical Education and School Sport Figuration

This chapter recreates the sociogenesis level of the single PE and school sport figuration, the macro and micro levels of which have been reproduced in the preceding two chapters. Although the main focus of this thesis is about Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport, from a figurational perspective it is important to consider how those experiences came to be. Elias (2006) comments “long-term syntheses, even if they only provide a rough outline, are by no means limited to shedding more light on the problems of past societies only. They also help to create a greater awareness of contemporary problems…” (p. 407). It is contended then, that in order to understand how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport contemporarily, it is necessary to consider events and long-term processes that have conditioned this experience. Although only a limited number of PE and school sport specific documents were provided by Schools A and B, a wide range of general documents from each school and elsewhere, provided more than a ‘rough outline’ of the sociogenesis of the PE and school sport figuration. The recreation of the sociogenesis level of the PE and school sport figuration explains how the macro level detailed in Chapter 6 came to be.

This wide range of documents included past curricula, prospectuses, school Year books, government letters, and memos that were all reviewed and analyzed. The findings from examining the kinds of documents detailed enabled research questions two and three to be answered:

2. How did these Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport come to be?

3. What events and long-term processes have influenced Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport at the three high schools?
In writing this chapter, emerging themes that relate to both research questions were interpreted using a figurational lens through data analysis, and were also linked with the literature in Chapter 3. In particular, connections were made to the reading about the nature of PE in Britain, nations that were formerly part of the British Empire, and how what is taught in PE lessons in those countries has changed little since the middle of the twentieth century. In addressing both research questions, two timelines were constructed within an overarching timeline of 1923 to 2010. Those two sub-timelines spanned 1923 to 1973 and 1974 to 2010 respectively. The first timeline covers the period from when School C opened, until the year before autonomy took effect, and the second timeline is from autonomy until the year preceding the commencement of data collection at the schools.

The separate PE and school sport figurations at each school began when each respective school opened. Since the schools joined the figuration at different times, each has been subject to common and dissimilar influences within the overall figuration. This chapter will illustrate that those influences, planned and unplanned, have over time created a single figuration for PE and school sport incorporating the PE and school sport figuration at each school. It is argued that similar sport played at each school, enabling students to compete in the ACT SSSA (formerly NSW Combined High Schools Amateur Athletic Association [NSW CHSAAA]) school sport contributes to each of the schools being interdependent upon each other.

In answering research question three, events and long-term processes that have created or reinforced the single figuration for PE and school sport are identified. The key events or occurrences are: 1933 when the British Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools (Board of Education, 1933) was published; the early to mid-1950s when NSW introduced two PE curricula; 1974 when the ACT Interim Education Authority was established; 1975 when a PE teacher curriculum working group took place and 1994 when the first system level HPE
curriculum was adopted. Three key long-term processes were also found that had the effect of preserving key characteristics in the figuration over time. Those long-term processes were: inter and intra-state teacher transfer; an ongoing program of in-service PE professional development for teachers commencing from 1975; and lastly, the effect of ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012). Those defining events in time and long-term processes are important to this research because each played a role in creating or consolidating the single figuration for PE and school sport. This figuration is the framework within which Indigenous students currently experience PE and school sport.

8.1 The Sociogenesis of the Figuration for Physical Education and School Sport 1923–2010

Between 1880 and 1900, a number of small schools existed in the area that was to become the ACT (Power et al., 1983). However, when the state was established in 1913, it was decided that a more substantial school was required in anticipation of a population growth. Consequently, in 1915, the administrator of the ACT, Colonel David Miller requested to the then Minister for Home Affairs:

“…an area be set apart for a school and grounds and that the building and facilities be designed on the most modern lines incorporating a gymnasium, sports ground, swimming pool and miniature rifle range” (Power et al., 1983, p. 9).

Of note, is the mention of a rifle range which relates to preparing male students for war consistent with British and colonial schools of that period (Kirk, 1992). However, because of the economic demands of the First World War nothing came of the recommendations. Nonetheless, the suggested design is almost a ‘blueprint’ for the schools subsequently built in the ACT including those in this research, particularly the inclusion of gymnasiums and ovals common to all three schools. It is reported some 65 years after Colonel Miller made his recommendations that:
high schools are adequately catered for in terms of sporting facilities, most have tennis courts, basketball courts and a football oval. Not all high schools have a gymnasium and some must use the hall as a gymnasium and a general purpose assembly area (ACT Schools Authority, 1981, p. 25).

It can be see that the description of PE and sport facilities above, that also describes provision at the three schools in this research, resembles much of Colonel Miller’s plans. This likeness shows that the nature of the facilities within the PE and school sport figuration has remained relatively constant over time. In the above statement, there is also a notion that the facilities provided are suitable for all students through the use of the word ‘adequately’. There is an assumption therefore that tennis, basketball, and football address the PE and sporting requirements of every student.

The figuration for PE and school sport in this research commenced more than a decade after Colonel Miller’s recommendations with the opening of School C in 1923. For the first 50 years of its operation up until autonomy, School C was administered along with eight other high schools by the NSW Department of Education (Department of Education and Science, 1969). Being part of this larger state figuration meant that those nine schools used system level PE curriculum documents that had the effect of ensuring that similar content was taught. This content, as will be explained from an examination of those PE curricula, was characteristically Eurocentric. It is argued that School C, by being the first of the three schools in this study to be built, and from being one of nine high schools administered by NSW Department of Education, influenced the kind of PE and school sport offered at the other two schools.
8.1.1 The sociogenesis of physical education in the physical education and school sport figuration 1923–1973

Early forms of PE taught at School C were informed by various editions of The Syllabus of Physical Exercises for Schools 1909 (Board of Education, 1909) which was extensively revised and modified from the 1904 Board of Education Official Syllabus (Board of Education, 1911). Subsequent editions of the 1909 syllabus tended to largely resemble the original 1909 content. It is noted in the 1911 edition that although games and dancing had been introduced:

speaking generally the new Syllabus, like its predecessor, is based on the Swedish system of educational gymnastics which has been adopted in several European countries, and is now the basis of physical training in the Army and Navy in this country (Board of Education, 1911, p. vi).

From a figurational perspective, this statement shows that the physical training outlined in the 1909 syllabus was part of a figuration that involved several European nations, as well as other countries including Australia that were part of the British Empire. Also evident, is a military association which is in keeping with the purpose of physical training at the time, as discussed in Chapter 3. Although the central purpose of the 1909 syllabus was physical training, it was also concerned with character development and disciplining the child:

exercises, if rightly conducted, also have the effect, not less important, of developing in the children a cheerful and joyous spirit, together with the qualities of alertness, decision, concentration, and perfect control of brain over body. This is, in short a discipline, and may be termed the educational benefit [author’s emphasis] (Board of Education, 1909, p. 2).
In other words, physical training was used to instil obedience in children through fostering the kinds of qualities described. Again, those outcomes were in keeping with dominant discourses of that time in preparing strong and healthy citizens that could defend Britain and the Empire. Some of the notable modifications in 1919 curriculum are discussed in the 1933 *Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools* (Board of Education, 1933):

…important additions and modifications were made as a result of the experience gained during the previous ten years, in peace and in war, in the gymnasium and in the battle zone. The formal nature of the lessons was greatly reduced and every effort was made to render them enjoyable and recreative. It was suggested that not less than half the lesson should be devoted to active free movements including games and dancing (p. 7).

Although militaristic purposes of physical training are continued, there is a shift towards physical training being more about fun rather than being exclusively concerned with discipline and obedience. This emphasis on enjoyment has remained a central theme in PE and school sport throughout the life of the PE and school sport figuration studied in this research.

The British *Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools* (Board of Education, 1933) was used at School C following on from the 1909 syllabus as evidenced in a NSW Department of Education inspectorate report (District Inspector of Schools, 1944). The 1933 syllabus was intended to be used by children mainly up to 11 years of age, but had provision that made it suitable for using with students as old as 14 years of age (Year 8 in present times). As School C has historically always catered for students from early childhood eventually to Year 10, this curriculum would have had a major bearing on the kind of physical training and PE provided. Importantly as far as this research is concerned, it is stated in the 1933 syllabus:
“this book sets out the fundamental principles underlying all physical education and deals with teaching methods suitable for all children in general” (Board of Education, 1933, p. 11).

The 1933 syllabus makes an important claim as far as this research is concerned, that it contained the essential features for ‘all’ physical education programs while being relevant for ‘all’ students. As was discussed in Chapter 6 and elsewhere in the thesis, the assertion that the kind of PE and school sport offered at the three schools is appropriate for all children has been a recurring claim throughout the life of the PE and school sport figuration. Also there is a sense in the above statement through the use of the words ‘principles underlying all physical education’ that what is provided in the 1933 Syllabus is superior to any other perspectives of PE that might have existed.

The scope of the 1933 syllabus is outlined in the following statement:

“physical exercises and games are dealt with comprehensively, and some general guidance is given as to the introduction of swimming, dancing and school sports into the curriculum” (Board of Education, 1933, p. 11).

Of note, is that what is described has remained as the main focus in the PE and school sport figuration ever since, with the addition of athletics. The 1933 syllabus has two parts. Part one details general guidance about principles, methods and organization of lessons with notes on teaching dance, athletics and swimming. Part two which comprises nearly four fifths of the book is devoted to describing exercises, games and lessons.

In effect, the 1933 syllabus served as a blueprint for the form that PE and school sport should take on a global level throughout the British Empire. At a local level, it determined the kind of PE and school sport that was offered at School C.

The influence of the 1933 British syllabus persisted at least into the 1950s, as this British document is mentioned in both the Modified Curriculum for Secondary Schools.
(Department of Education New South Wales [DE NSW], 1952) and the *Alternative Curriculum for Use in Secondary Schools* (DE NSW, 1955). In the chapter concerning PE in each of those publications, the 1933 British syllabus is frequently referred to along with several other British publications including the London County Council *Syllabus of Physical Training for Boys in Secondary Schools* (n.d.). Reference is also made to curriculum resources from other parts of the then British Empire including South Africa, and also the United States of America in relation to softball and baseball. In the section on dance in both curricula, reference material for European dances is recommended from England, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden, and Hungary.

*The Modified Curriculum for Secondary Schools* (DE NSW, 1952) provided a PE curriculum with aims that promoted vigorous physical activity, fitness, skill development, sportsmanship and lifelong participation in physical activity. Those aims were to be met through a program based on educational gymnastics, individual and team games, European sports and dance forms, athletics and swimming. Skill development and encouraging an ongoing interest in physical recreation had a central focus in this curriculum:

“…emphasis should be given to the development of interest and skill in out-door recreational activities, so that on leaving the school the child is equipped to take a place in the physical recreation of his community” (DE NSW, 1952, p. 2).

It is assumed by the curriculum writers through the exclusive mention of British, European and American activity forms that those are the only varieties played, or that counted, in a given student’s local ‘community’. There is no Indigenous mention whatsoever in this curriculum or in the *Alternative Curriculum for Use in Secondary Schools* (DE NSW, 1955). It is argued that the absence of Indigenous games and sports is due to the Eurocentric forms mentioned being considered as superior (Elias, 1978a, 1996) and representing the knowledge that matters.
It is suggested in both curricula that half of the time in PE programs be devoted to ‘the Directed Activity’ lessons. Those lessons were mainly gymnastics focused and were used to develop fundamental skills such as running, jumping, landing, and leaping as well as general fitness and mobilization, with and without apparatus. The other half of PE lessons was to be made up of games and dance. The purpose of games lessons was to develop skills that were:

“…fundamental to our national games” (DE NSW, 1952, p. 16).

In selecting activities, teachers were to use those that were popular, and again local. The kinds of generic skills to be promoted in games included throwing, catching, striking, running and dodging. Individual and minor team games are suggested that facilitate the development of those skills and are referenced from the British Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools (Board of Education, 1933), and other resources including a Victorian state curriculum.

The minor games mentioned were designed as preparation for major games, by allowing the practice of acquired skills, encouraging vigorous activity, and improving fitness. Games were considered thus:

“the games situation provides abundant opportunities for desirable character and personality development, and the playing of games presents one of the child’s main avenues for recreation” (DE NSW, 1952, p. 26).

The use of games in ‘desirable character and personality development’ is important in this research because HPE teachers at School A, as discussed in the previous chapter, used school sport to encourage Indigenous students to be the ‘best that they could be’. Nearly half of the Modified Curriculum for Secondary Schools (DE NSW, 1952) provides detail about the following major games, including the fundamental skills relevant to each game and practices for developing those skills: cricket and vigoro, softball and baseball, tennis, volleyball,
basketball, hockey, soccer, AFL, and rugby. Those Eurocentric major games then, were the ones valued in this curriculum.

The _Alternative Curriculum for Use in Secondary Schools_ (DE NSW, 1955) was designed as a supplementary curriculum to be used in NSW and ACT secondary schools for children who were ‘less academic’. However, the PE section of this curriculum is a complete facsimile of the PE content in _The Modified Curriculum for Secondary Schools_ (DE NSW, 1952). The _Alternative Curriculum for Use in Secondary Schools_ (DE NSW, 1955) had the effect of ensuring that a consistent version of PE, as outlined in the 1952 curriculum, was offered to all students in NSW and ACT public schools.

During the 1960s, the NSW curricula were still followed by ACT government schools because as mentioned, those schools still came under the educational responsibility of the NSW government up until autonomy. As well as providing curricula, the NSW Department of Education was also responsible for staffing the nine government high schools that then existed in the ACT (Department of Education and Science, 1969). Teachers at School C came from NSW, as well as other parts of Australia, with the practice of teachers transferring from NSW occurring regularly during the first five decades of School C’s operation (Power et al., 1983). Teacher migration from NSW is reported as having occurred at School C as early as the 1930s (School C, 1932a).

The combination of NSW government controlled curriculum and staffing meant that NSW PE practices diffused to what amounted to approximately half the number of high schools that currently come under the remit of ACT ETD. It is proposed that this level of influence had the effect of embedding a Eurocentric version of PE at those ACT schools, given the British and European foundations of the NSW curricula described in the previous paragraphs. At School C, additional PE teachers were appointed during the 1960s, which meant that:
“basic skills were taught more effectively and better use was made of grounds, equipment and staff” (Power et al., 1983, p. 77).

This statement shows that skill development continued to be a valued part of the PE figuration at the school at that time, with sport also being incorporated into the PE curriculum.

This section has demonstrated the enduring nature of British and European influences in PE curricula during the first five decades of School C’s existence, and in the first 50 years of the PE and school sport figuration in this research. It is contended that PE at School C on account of this British and European influence was part of a global figuration. Through its immense scale, the macro level of this figuration was powerful in prescribing the kind of PE that was taught and the kind of sport that was offered.

8.1.2 The sociogenesis of physical education in the physical education and school sport figuration 1974–2010

The year 1974 was chosen as the beginning of the second timeframe, because it was the point in time when the ACT gained autonomy from the NSW Department of Education for the provision of government education in the ACT. During 1974:

“ACT schools severed their links with the NSW Department of Education and came under control of the Federal Minister for Education administered through the newly created Interim ACT Schools Authority” (Livermore & Willis, 1993, p. 8).

One of the first changes made by the Interim ACT Schools Authority, later to become the ACT Schools Authority, was to move away from the kind of system level curricula described earlier, to favour school based curriculum development (SBCD) instead (Livermore & Willis, 1993).

At School C, autonomy from NSW meant the introduction of semesters, continuous assessment instead of exams, and greater student choice regarding programs of study (Power et al., 1983). Autonomy also meant that some teachers at School C returned to NSW schools
and were replaced by teachers from other states as well as locally (Power et al., 1983).

Similarly, at School A, PE teachers were reported as having moved from Queensland (School A, 1978a) and Tasmania (School A, 1978b). This transfer of PE teachers again led to similar practices in PE diffusing inter-state. In more recent times, teacher transfer by ACT ETD within the territory has also ensured the regular diffusion and levelling out of teaching practice in ACT government schools. This territory level teacher transfer termed ‘mobility’, is described by ACT DET on the Department website (http://www.det.act.gov.au/employment/teach_in_canberra) as allowing:

“…teachers to move around schools and across sectors. An initial placement is for a maximum of five years and placements thereafter are for eight years”.

Teacher transfer as a long-term process, it is maintained, has contributed to a recognizable version of PE with common characteristics occurring at each school in this study. Those common characteristics are discussed later in the chapter.

The Interim ACT Schools Authority would have affected how PE was programmed at all three schools in this research because Schools A and B joined School C in the PE and school sport figuration reconstructed in this thesis following their opening in 1976 and 1970 respectively. Despite the Interim ACT Schools Authority encouraging schools to engage in SBCD, the nature and aims of PE at all three schools in this study in the late 1970s bore considerable likeness to the PE described earlier in the 1950s curricula.

At School C:

the role of physical education in the school today is not merely to build muscles or teach skills, but to educate with the same aims, high ideals and objectives as any other aspect of education. We aim to ensure that all students will develop the maximum of their physical potential and to provide foundations for its use to enrich their lives (School C, 1977).
At School B, the objective of Year 7 and 8 PE was:

to develop an appreciation of the importance of movement skills in a full spectrum of Physical Activity and to require vigorous participation in a range of activities which will include creative and directed Gymnastics, skills of major team Games using both small and large equipment and which develop hand-eye and foot-eye co-ordination, Athletics, Swimming and Life Saving skills, Fitness training and Social Dance (School B, 1976a, p. 81).

And at School A, the main purpose of PE, and the reason that it was taught is summarised by a senior PE teacher:

such things as personal health, cleanliness, reflexes, co-ordination, sportsmanship and physical dexterity are going to influence children for the rest of their lives, no matter what trade or profession they enter for jobs. Very few parents cover all these “Non-academic” areas before their children go out into the world (School A, 1976, p. 5).

A possible reason as to why PE at the three schools was similar to that prescribed in the 1950s NSW curricula is suggested by Livermore and Willis (1993):

Teachers and parents in the embryonic ACT system in 1974 had little previous experience in widespread participation in school based curriculum design, development and decision making and the SBCD ideal remained elusive. Reaction varied from little activity, confusion and apprehension resulting in minor modifications to existing NSW courses to an unleashing of teacher energy and expertise in developing suitable new courses for their schools (p. 12).

PE appears then, to be example of a KLA where ‘minor modifications to existing NSW courses’ were made given the similarities between PE at the three schools and the previous 1950s NSW PE curricula. Overall, the curricula across all KLAs that were provided by ACT government schools tended to be amalgams of different practices:
“the majority of education programs and courses of study represent a combination of
local school based innovation and adapted/adopted state, overseas, commercial or
local school courses or schemes” (ACT Schools Authority, 1981, p. 22).

As will be seen in the next section, PE teachers in 1975 considered existing programs in
Australian states and overseas including importantly England, in deciding what PE should
‘look like’ in the ACT.

Some indication of how PE and sport were valued in ACT government high schools
by the end of the 1970s, is provided in the following communication between the then
Minister for Education and a member of the ACT Legislative Assembly:

all ACT high schools regard Physical Education and Sport as essential parts of the
educational program. Physical Education and Sports programs require the same
planned and developed learning experiences as other subjects offered in the school
curriculum and aim to give the students the opportunity and skills to make effective
use of their leisure time (ACT Minister for Education, 1978).

Despite individual ACT schools being responsible for developing their own PE
programs as a result of autonomy, there were shared aims in the PE and sport offered across
all government schools according to this statement. This similarity is evident in references to
skill development, life-long contribution and positive attitudes to physical activity.

Historically, each of those references have been recurring themes in the PE and school sport
figuration, mentioned in the 1950s NSW curricula and as detailed later in the chapter in more
recent ACT PE curricula. This historical similarity in the nature and purpose of PE in the PE
and school sport figuration did not occur by accident. Instead, this replication occurred
because of a number of factors in addition to former NSW PE curriculum influences. The
movement of teachers in and out of the territory, and the actions of PE teachers as an
established ‘We’ group at an ACT PE curriculum workshop in 1975 also had some bearing.
Indeed, it is contended that the latter workshop, discussed in the next section, was a key event in shaping the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration discussed in Chapter 6.

**8.1.2.1 The Physical Education Curriculum Workshop March 1975**

This workshop held soon after autonomy comprised 17 participants who were almost exclusively PE teachers (including two from School B) from government schools and two private schools in the ACT. Group cohesiveness amongst those present is evident in a report of the workshop proceedings:

the Workshop decided that the most positive step it could play would be to present ideas and examples of activities that relate directly to the A.C.T. This document in itself is not a syllabus, but a guide to teachers, school boards, and administrators, of the type of activities a well planned physical education program may include (ACT Interim Education Authority, 1975, p. 1).

It would seem then that the teachers had a shared idea of what PE in the ACT should ‘look like’ once autonomy took effect. Part of the workshop included presentations about PE programs in England, Victoria, South Australia, and Queensland. Although there was also a presentation about PE at School B, all of the other presentations were about programs from outside of the territory. The inclusion of programs from outside the ACT indicates that the PE teachers were again part of a wider figuration that extended beyond ACT boundaries, to include inter-state, overseas and importantly (regarding this research) British and more specifically English influence. The PE teachers considered programs outside of the ACT perhaps because, in line with what Livermore and Willis (1993) observe about ACT teachers at that time, they had little experience of SBCD.

A PE teacher who attended the workshop reflected on two of the presentations: these two speakers changed ideas by ‘opening our eyes’ to see development overseas and in other states of Australia. It was also noted here that in certain instances, the
A.C.T. schools were as educationally advanced as other states. What we must strive for, however, is to fully satisfy the needs of the children and not just “keep up with the Jones’s” (School B, 1975b, p. 43).

This statement shows that international versions of PE were consulted, and were to a greater or lesser extent influential in shaping the views of those ACT teachers present. This consideration of ‘good practice’ in PE elsewhere, acted as a ‘benchmark’ for the kind of PE that was to be provided in the ACT. There is also an impression of insecurity about what should be done in the ACT in the name of PE at that time. Hence there was a requirement for justification and reassurance that necessitated considering alternative models.

The contemplation of overseas programs is also evident at School A at about the same time:

when we look at other countries we notice the emphasis being put back into Physical Education and fitness. Higher worker productivity is just one immediate result among the many benefits that these countries have realised out of this increased emphasis in Physical Education. So then why do Australians stand back and say we are naturally athletic? We used to be, but now we have fallen obese and apathetic about our bodies. Thus we must change our thoughts if we are to prosper (School A, 1976, p. 5).

It can be asserted then, that far from PE teachers being relatively ‘detached’ and acting independently to develop and teach programs specific to the requirements of their own individual schools, they were instead substantially ‘involved’ (Elias, 1987) in a much wider figuration that transcended state and national boundaries.
The working group recommended that high school PE should be a core subject for Years 7–10 with the focus in Year 7 and 8 being:

“…hand-eye co-ordination (including other body parts); throwing, catching and fielding ability, running and jumping, hitting and kicking, lifting falling and rolling” (ACT Interim Education Authority, 1975, p. 22).

Much of what is stated here is common to what was detailed in the NSW curricula discussed earlier. The focus of Year 9 and 10 was to build on the skill development taught in the Year 7 and 8 curriculum, with an increased focus on developing lifetime sporting interests. Team games and competitive sport had a particular role in the recommendations, with the working group believing that:

“participation in team games is essential for the fulfilment of many socially desirable goals and competition adds to this highly valuable situation” (ACT Interim Education Authority, 1975, p. 23).

The use of the words ‘socially desirable goals’ bears similarities to the ‘virtues’ of the games ethic (Kirk & Twigg, 1995; Mangan, 1986) in developing particular kinds of citizens. There was a distinct emphasis on skill development continued on from the objectives of the 1950s NSW curricula, demonstrated in the following statement:

“the secondary program should be based upon skill, and the skill program should be as wide and variable as possible” (ACT Interim Education Authority, 1975, p. 8).

In addition, an emphasis on fitness and developing student interest in ‘lifetime sports’ was advocated with:

“…pleasure and fulfilment as outcomes” (ACT Interim Education Authority, 1975, p. 20).

Nearly 30 years on, similar features of PE, to those discussed above are valued at School A, where it is noted that in PE there is a:
“...huge emphasis on participation, co-operation and skill development” (School A, 2003, p. 17).

Indeed, as discussed later in the chapter, the features of skill development, encouraging a lifelong interest in physical activity and fitness, were found to be a recurring theme in PE at each of the three schools.

8.1.2.2 In-service professional development for teachers

In addition to the influences on the PE and school sport figuration discussed in the previous section, in-service PE professional development helped ensure that the same content in PE was replicated across the territory from the mid-1970s onwards.

In-service professional development, organised initially by the ACT Interim Education Authority ensured that the model of PE recommended by the 1975 working group diffused throughout ACT government schools. It was the Physical Education Teachers Association (PETA), on behalf of the ACT Interim Education Authority, who took on responsibility for designing an in-service program for PE teachers (School B, 1975b). It is contended that a single professional body, having sole responsibility for the PE in-service program, also contributed to a universal form of PE being taught across the ACT. The following account by a PE teacher provides insight into the justification for having PE in-service professional development in the mid-1970s:

it was felt that definite areas within the curriculum should be defined and laid down, since the turnover of Physical Educators in A.C.T schools is fairly high. In addition to this there was a need, from the child’s point of view, of a continuous curriculum rather than the present system of broken, irregular development (School B, 1975b, p. 43).

What is evident in this reflection is a desire for uniformity in particular aspects of the PE curriculum. PE specific in-service programs were subsequently included in an Interim ACT Schools Authority prospectus of professional development that was issued to all schools
just prior to autonomy. Supporting the prospectuses were subject specific consultants including a specialist for PE (Interim ACT Schools Authority, 1975b). A summary of the content of the courses over almost two decades from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s is detailed in Tables 4 and 5 below.
Table 4

*In-service Courses Offered to ACT PE Teachers 1975 to June 1983*

| Professional Development Prospectus | Gymnastics | Rugby League | Rugby Union | AFL | Soccer | Hockey Coaching | Hockey Umpiring | Indoor Hockey Coaching | Netball | Basketball | Games Skills | Archery | Life Games | Social Dance | Square Dance | Volleyball | Mini-Volleyball | Cricket | Remedial PE | Trampolining | Swimming | T Ball and Softball | Fitness | Ball Skills | Water Polo | Badminton | Tennis | How to Organise a Carnival |
|-----------------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-----|--------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------|-------------|-------------|--------|------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|---------------------|--------|--------------|-------------|-----------|--------|------------------|
| Jan–June 1975                     | X          | X            | X           | X   | X      |                 |                 |                       | X       |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     | X      | X            |             | X         | X      |                 |
| Jan–June 1976                     | X          |              |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       |         |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     |        | X            |             |           | X      |                 |
| July–Dec 1976                     |            |              |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       |         |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     | X      |                |             |           | X      |                 |
| Jan–June 1977                     | X          | X            |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       |         |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     | X      | X            |             |           | X      |                 |
| July–Dec 1977                     |            |              |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       |         |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     |        | X            |             |           | X      |                 |
| Jan–June 1978                     | X          |              |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       |         |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     | X      |                |             |           | X      |                 |
| July–Dec 1978                     | X          |              |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       |         |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     |        |                |             |           | X      |                 |
| Jan–Jun 1979                      | X          | X            |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       | X       |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     | X      | X            |             |           | X      |                 |
| July–Dec 1979                     | X          |              |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       |         |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     |        |                |             |           | X      |                 |
| Jan–June 1980                     | X          | X            |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       | X       |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     |        |                |             |           | X      |                 |
| July–Dec 1980                     |            | X            |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       |         |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     | X      | X            |             |           | X      |                 |
| Jan–June 1981                     | X          |              |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       | X       |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     |        |                |             |           | X      |                 |
| July–Dec 1981                     | X          | X            |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       | X       |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     |        |                |             |           | X      |                 |
| Jan–June 1982                     |            | X            |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       |         |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     |        |                |             |           | X      |                 |
| Jul–Dec 1982                      | X          |              |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       |         |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     |        |                |             |           | X      |                 |
| Jan–June 1983                     | X          | X            |             |     |        |                 |                 |                       | X       |             |             |        |            |             |             |           |                     | X      | X            |             |           | X      |                 |
### Table 5

**In-service Courses Offered to ACT PE/HPE Teachers July 1983 to 1994**

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<tr>
<th>Professional Development Prospectus</th>
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<th>Aussie Sport Courses</th>
<th>HPE Curriculum Framework</th>
<th>Getting to Know the Profiles for HPE</th>
<th>Implementing the ACT Curriculum Frameworks</th>
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Of note, is that sports coaching and/or refereeing courses in rugby league, rugby union, AFL, soccer, hockey and netball were amongst the first PE and sport courses offered in 1975. The choice of those particular sports provides some understanding of the activities that were most valued by the PETA for professional development. The activities are also predominantly the British team sports that have a long-term association with the PE and school sport figuration. Further, the continued focus on individual sports specific coaching courses particularly in the 1970s and 1980s serves to promote and reinforce the id² of PE as ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a).

Teachers were also encouraged to attend professional development that was not promoted in the prospectus (Interim ACT Schools Authority, 1975a). This included school based, intra-state and overseas professional development with the Authority offering financial assistance to teachers in some cases (Interim ACT Schools Authority, 1975a). This openness towards supporting wider teacher professional development opportunities, suggests that the Authority was receptive to influences beyond ACT boundaries. With respect to the Authority adopting a flexible approach to teacher professional development, it states in the 1976 January to June prospectus that:

one of the essential features of the ACT School System is the significant degree of freedom and responsibility held by each individual school to decide the type and quantity of the curriculum programs it offers. Many schools have chosen to vary their programs, and the results of such changes have proved very worthwhile. For its part, the Authority has been willing to offer financial assistance, curriculum advice through the consultant and curriculum teams, technical and other professional advice through the Teaching Resources Centre, and so on. Through its inservice program the Authority has attempted to offer the individual teacher as much support as possible (Interim ACT Schools Authority, 1976, p. 2).
Although as discussed earlier, schools had a large amount of ‘freedom’ to develop their own curricula, instead, in-service professional development for PE from 1975 as a long-term process helped ensure the uptake of one model of PE and school sport. This preferred model was a ‘one size fits all’ version, defined by a cohesive established group of PE professionals at the 1975 PE Curriculum Workshop, that was subsequently adopted across all ACT government schools including those involved in this study.

8.1.2.3 The Health and Physical Education Curriculum Framework

The practice of SBCD was still favoured in the early 1980s (Director [Schools Branch] ACT Schools Accrediting Agency, 1982) and continued until 1994 with the introduction of the Curriculum Frameworks (ACT DET, 1994) as a system level curriculum. Despite this shift in curriculum design and implementation, this section shows that the nature and purpose of PE in the 1970s, largely replicated from the 1950s NSW curricula, is unchanged in the PE and school sport figuration decades later. One difference of note nonetheless, is the mention of Indigenous perspectives in the Health and Physical Education Curriculum Framework (ACT DET, 1994) and subsequent school based curriculum document at Schools A and B that were informed by this overarching framework.

The ACT Curriculum Frameworks were the first system level KLA specific curricula to be used in the ACT following autonomy. This switch from a SBCD model to a system level approach was a consequence of an administrative restructure with the ACT Schools Authority being replaced by the Department of Education in 1987 (Livermore & Willis, 1993). The Health and Physical Education Curriculum Framework (ACT DET, 1994) is a noteworthy document in the scope of this study, as it was the first time that Indigenous perspectives had been included in a system level ACT curriculum document for PE. Inclusion of those perspectives reflected national discussion in the early 1990s advocating the inclusion of
Aboriginal education as a cross-curriculum perspective in all KLAs (Harrison & Greenfield, 2011). At School A, for example, it was recommended that Aboriginal studies be:

“…incorporated in all curriculum areas” (School A, 1991, p. 22).

The purpose of the 1994 framework for HPE, like the frameworks for the other KLAs, was to provide schools with a common curriculum structure, while still allowing flexibility in meeting the demands of individual school communities (ACT DET, 1994). Much of the 1994 HPE curriculum framework has a skills focus common to the earlier school based and NSW curricula described in this chapter. There is also a scientific human movement emphasis included, consistent with the technocratic approaches to PE discussed in Chapter 3.

Underpinning the HPE framework curriculum are ‘strands’ that describe:

“…the knowledge, skills and processes distinctive and essential to each area” (ACT DET, 1994, p. 1).

Those strands include the following topics: Human Development, Human Movement, Physical Activity and the Community, Safety and Human Relations (ACT DET, 1994). A lack of socio-cultural reference demonstrates that a medico-scientific focus is favoured (Tinning 2004; Maguire, 2013).

In the introduction to the document, diversity and social justice are described as key principles of the HPE learning area that are reinforced through across curriculum perspectives one of which is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. Of particular note to this research, is the marked contrast in how the latter across curriculum perspective is explained in generic terms (as it relates to all KLAs) and how it is interpreted in the HPE context. The generic overview of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education Across Curriculum Perspective states:

Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students must have the opportunity to experience their cultural and natural heritage. This will enhance their sense of identity
and pride in their culture and ensure a greater knowledge and understanding of their cultural heritage. These perspectives will develop in all students an appreciation of the importance of Aboriginal cultures and Torres Strait Islander cultures as part of every Australian’s national identity and heritage. It is important that all Australian students develop an awareness of the effects of the European invasion and settlement on Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people. The curriculum must also provide greater access and participation for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, value Aboriginal people and cultures and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures and actively challenge the social constructs that surround the notion of race. Learning to recognise prejudice and racism and how to deal with them appropriately are essential aspects of every child’s education (ACT DET, 1994, p. 10).

While this appears to be a succinct but nonetheless comprehensive overview of the intention of this across curriculum perspective, the way that it is interpreted in PE is strikingly different from how it was intended. The full interpretation of this across curriculum perspective in the HPE context is:

“the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education perspective in health and physical education emphasises the contribution of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people and their cultures to Australian sport” (ACT DET, 1994, p. 10).

Indigenous culture is almost completely ignored in this understanding and instead Eurocentric sport is emphasized. Presumably, there is some ‘well-meant’ intention where successful Indigenous sportspeople are regarded by the curriculum writers as being good role models for Indigenous students. Perhaps this view is because, as discussed later, those sportspeople have become ‘civilized’. In ignoring the ‘cultural and natural heritage’ of Indigenous peoples, there is a suggestion that the HPE writers considered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games as being inferior to Australian mainstream sport.
Perhaps also, for the curriculum writers traditional Indigenous physical activities did not matter (Howell 1996; Edwards, 2009) or that the writers did not know about them. As this chapter demonstrates, PE in the living memory of those writers will have been almost entirely a Eurocentric recollection. However, regardless of the motivations, understandings, beliefs and knowledge of the curriculum writers, the interpretation nonetheless underlines ‘traditional PE’ as being superior to other kinds of physical activity forms. This understanding is consistent with what Elias (1987) notes about Western knowledge being unequivocally more ‘advanced’ than any alternative knowledge.

In ‘misinterpreting’ how the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education priority is realized in PE, the curriculum writers are simultaneously displaying cohesion (Elias & Scotson, 1994) while protecting their coveted and long established model of PE from being ‘contaminated’ by an outsider group. Inclusion of this perspective, is likely to have been considered a threat to the ‘proper PE’ that ‘has always been’. In other words, PE that had strong associations with Britain and that was unquestioningly upheld, neutral, value free and righteous. What is also apparent is a strong emotional involvement by the writers to their subject matter similar to what Green (2006) found in his study of PE teachers in the English context.

Kirk (2010a) likewise observes that physical educators “…have a history of passionate advocacy for our subject” (p. 30). In figurational terms, this passion described as a long-term process by Kirk amounts to a high level of involvement and conversely limited detachment by PE educators to their subject matter (Elias, 1987). The actions of the writers who wrote the PE interpretation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education Across Curriculum Perspective demonstrate a high level of involvement through their focus on Eurocentric activity forms. Those actions have the effect of ensuring that status quo in the PE and school sport figuration prevails.
The approach of acknowledging successful Indigenous sportspeople is also recommended in two textbooks for pre-service and in-service HPE teachers (Callcott et al., 2012; Olsen et al., 2002). Through highlighting those kinds of successes there is an accompanying risk of reinforcing racialized binary thinking about Indigenous peoples being ‘physical people’ rather than intellectual people. There is also a danger of limited, and often unattainable career choices being promoted to students by promoting Indigenous sporting successes (New South Wales Department of Education and Training and New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated, 2004).

There may also be an underlying message in the interpretation of this perspective, that the Indigenous sportspeople acknowledged have been ‘civilized’, because they have been successful in the ‘superior’ sports forms of the established group. In other words, the notion that Eurocentric sports forms are some kind of civilized ‘benchmark’ is upheld (Elias 1978a, 1996). Through having this interpretation in a system level curriculum document that informed school based curricula, it is argued that this interpretation would have guided HPE teachers to encourage Indigenous students to be ‘all that they can be’ in the British, American and European sports offered at the schools. This curriculum guidance would have directly influenced how Indigenous students experience school sport as a Eurocentric social construct.

A possible reason for the HPE curriculum writers’ interpretation of the generic Across Curriculum Perspective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education is suggested in the following observation by Tinning and McCuaig (2006):

the contributions of sports participation to the making of citizens who are self-confident team players, who can work diligently for delayed rewards and who have a sense of nationalistic pride in our sporting achievements remains a powerful discourse in the shaping of Australian Physical Education (p. 5).
It would seem that the curriculum writers are acknowledging achievements by elite Indigenous sportspeople within the frame of a broader nation building discourse. Such a discourse is reminiscent of colonial ideals of ‘civilizing’ the savage, as well as developing qualities associated with the games ethic (Mangan, 1986). Those Indigenous sporting successes are portrayed as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders sharing nationalistic pride through their achievements and therefore becoming a particular kind of citizen.

How the PE curriculum writers have interpreted the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education Across Curriculum Perspective is also consistent with how the games and sports of minority groups have been typically represented by established groups. The latter often being ignorant of the contribution that minority sport can make to mainstream sport, as well as the cultural meaning associated with those activity forms (Heinemann, 1993). This example of misrepresentation also demonstrates ignorance of Indigenous culture on the part of the curriculum writers, if this is the only PE related connection that they can make to a culture that is over 50,000 years old. At best it demonstrates unashamed tokenism.

8.1.2.4 School based physical education curricula that incorporated the 1994 across curriculum perspective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

Three curricula were identified that were written in response to the Health and Physical Education Curriculum Framework (ACT DET, 1994) guidelines, one at School A and two at School C. Each of those three curricula consisted predominantly of units of work for sports and physical activities with an emphasis on skill development, student participation, effort and attitude. What is included is the kind of privileged knowledge that typically dominates HPE curricula (Tinning, 2004). In addition, the interpretation of the across curriculum perspective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education in HPE (ACT DET, 1994) is mentioned verbatim in each of the documents (see School A, 1998; School C, 2003a; Slotemaker de Bruine, Adam, Fisher & Hibben, 1994).
However, in common with the system level curriculum framework document (ACT DET, 1994), the interpretation of the across curriculum perspective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education does not carry through to the units of work that make up the vast majority of the content in each of the documents. Again, what is provided in each curriculum are overviews of how to teach Eurocentric sports and physical activities. What is again evident in all of those curricula, is that Indigenous mention is situated outside of traditional PE content. It is contended that Indigenous perspectives are purposefully situated separately to avoid any possibility that they could infiltrate what has been traditionally valued, safeguarded and upheld by HPE teachers as an established group (Elias & Scotson, 1994).

At School C it is suggested that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education Across Curriculum Perspective (ACT DET, 1994) is also met through the following:

Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islanders will have the opportunity to experience their cultural and natural heritage through participation in sporting fixtures organised for their inclusion. This will enhance their sense of identity and pride in their culture and ensure greater knowledge and understanding of their cultural heritage. They will also be encouraged to participate in the School sporting teams that are organised for inter-house and inter-school competitions (School C, 2003a, p. 9).

This statement contradicts what was said during the teacher interviews at School C, as the only Indigenous related ‘sporting fixtures’ mentioned, were those relating to buroinjin offered from 2010. There was no evidence of additional Indigenous sporting fixtures in any other document reviewed, or mentioned in any of the interviews conducted at School C. Therefore it is unclear what sporting fixtures are referred to in the above statement. Within the Physical Education and Health Curriculum Year 7–10 (School C, 2003a) there is also mapping table (see Appendix E) that indicates where the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education Across Curriculum Perspective can be likely realized across each of the year groups
(7–10) in PE. However, in the unit overviews that follow in this curriculum document there is no additional mention of this perspective, other than in two Dance elective units offered in Years 9 and 10.

At School A, in a curriculum audit for Health and PE, the following question and response is written regarding across curriculum perspectives:

“does your Faculty include these aspects of the curriculum: a. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders?” (School A, 1998, p. 12).

The response is:

“in every class through use of examples and/or activities” (School A, 1998, p. 12) (see Appendix F).

Five years later, School A underwent a curriculum self-assessment process. This process involved a review and evaluation of the different programs offered at the school. It is stated in the review report that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education Across Curriculum Perspective is included through:

“traditional games in PE classes” (School A, 2003, p. 11) (see Appendix G).

Despite those examples from school documentation, none of the teachers interviewed at School A, including the HPE executive teacher who had worked at the school since the early 1980s, knew or had taught Indigenous games. Once again, this is evidence that the dominant version of PE prevails, and has remained largely intact and impervious to Indigenous influence. It would seem that Indigenous games were mentioned in the school documents, and then soon forgotten with ‘business as usual’ resuming.

Within the report (School A, 2003) it also states future professional development requirements and of note is the absence of Indigenous perspectives. Likewise, in the professional development records reviewed (see tables 1 and 2), there is no mention of development opportunities for PE that are Indigenous focused. The limited reference to
Indigenous education (typically only one or two sentences) and extensive attention to Eurocentric material in the three school based curriculum documents suggests a ‘retreat to what really counts in PE’. This imbalance is also consistent with Indigenous subject matter in PE in text books discussed in Chapter 3.

The retreat to what really counts in PE is also evident in a detailed 12-page pamphlet (Education and Community Services, 1994) that accompanies the _Health and Physical Education Curriculum Framework_ (ACT DET, 1994) aimed at parents, carers and other stakeholders. In this leaflet there is no mention of the across curriculum perspectives or the words ‘Aboriginal’, Aborigine’, ‘Indigenous’, or ‘Torres Strait Island’. In summarising and preparing content for the leaflet decisions would have been made about what to leave out from the main 1994 curriculum given the limited space in the leaflet. Interestingly it is the Indigenous reference that is omitted again highlighting the secondary importance of this content.

8.1.2.5 The continuation of a constant figuration for physical education and school sport

Apart from the notable change of including an across curriculum perspective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait education in PE from 1994, the nature, purpose and what is done in the name of PE in the 1950s and 1970s continues to contemporary times unabated. At School C for example, the purpose of PE at the beginning of the new millennium was very similar to 1970s renditions:

the Health, Physical Education and Human Movement Faculty is committed to developing in students a desire to improve and/or maintain good health, a desirable level of fitness and skills in a variety of activities (School C, 2003b).

Improving physical health and skill development are recurring themes evident in the statement describing PE at School C in the mid-1970s, detailed earlier in the chapter.
Likewise, the purpose of PE at School A in the late 1990s is very similar to what it was in the 1970s. There is still an emphasis upon skill development, sportsmanship, health and the lifelong value of PE as can be seen below:

the primary aim of Physical and Health Education at School A is:

- To help each student develop the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable them to cooperate effectively with others, solve individual and group problems and to lead healthy and fulfilling lives (School A, 1998).

At School B, Year 7 and 8 PE is described as:

- Basic skills in major games
- Gymnastic activities
- Track and field skills and cross-country running
- Dance (School B, 2005, p. 22).

In essence, the activities mentioned at School B in 2005 are exactly the same as those taught in 1976.

Within the Health and Physical Education Curriculum Audit (School A, 1998), there are various examples of PE unit outlines that include European and American sports, or modified sports of three to four weeks duration. The format of those unit outlines is common to that used in PE in many industrialized nations (Capel & Blair, 2007; Kirk, 2010a; Tinning, 2010), showing that how PE was, and still is structured at School A is part of a much wider figuration. Included in the Health and Physical Education Curriculum Audit (School A, 1998), are units of work for: gymnastics, soccer, volleyball, netball, hockey, athletics, badminton, Touch, cricket, tennis, basketball and swimming. With the exception of vigoro, softball, baseball and rugby, the sports detailed include the same as those specified in the NSW PE curricula from the 1950s. Likewise, in the School Development Report (School A,
2003) units of work with a focus on ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a) are consistent with programs at the other two schools, and demonstrate defining characteristics of PE again that are part of a much wider figuration. The emphasis on ‘skill’ at the three sites is in common with what Ennis (2003) has observed about PE curricula generally, that they have a narrow focus prioritizing skill development.

In summary, skill development, physical fitness, life-long interest in, and positive attitudes towards physical activity have been recurring objectives in PE in the PE and school sport figuration since at least the 1950s. In addition, what was found to be done in the name of PE in the documents analyzed was consistent with Kirk’s observations about what takes place in many nation states. In figurational terms, what is done in the name of PE can be considered as a global figuration:

what teachers and pupils mainly do in the name of physical education is teaching and repetitious practice of the techniques of a wide range of individual and team games, aquatic activities such as swimming, gymnastics, athletics, exercise for fitness, and various forms of dance (Kirk, 2010a, p. 30).

This finding of a relatively unchanging figuration for PE, both in terms of focus and content from the 1950s onwards, is consistent with the id2 of PE-as sport-techniques (Kirk, 2010a), where what has been taught ‘in the name of PE’ has changed very little since the mid-twentieth century. In other words PE during this period has had a main emphasis on the development of skills using team games and modified sports.

8.1.3 The sociogenesis of school sport within the physical education and school sport figuration 1923–2010

At School C a sports day was held as part of the opening celebrations, and inter-school sport commenced soon after (Power et al., 1983). The kinds of sports played at School C during the early 1920s included:
“...cricket, tennis, Australian Rules, and Rugby League football, athletics, swimming, hockey, basketball and other ball games” (Power et al., 1983, p. 75).

There are sports reports in several school magazines (School C, 1931a, b; 1932a, b) that detail the outcomes of inter-school sport fixtures for tennis, hockey, basketball and football, with the latter comprising AFL and rugby league. Football, cricket, tennis, swimming, athletics, hockey and basketball sports clubs are noted as being affiliated to the student School Union (School C, 1931a, b; 1932 a, b). School sport was played at School C throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and it is noted in a District Inspector of Schools report from 1949 that:

“considerable success has been won in football, hockey, tennis and basketball competitions” (District Inspector of Schools, 1949).

It is argued that the commencement of inter-school sport early in the history of School C, and the kinds of sports played influenced inter-school sport at Schools A and B when they joined the PE and school sport figuration several decades later. The nine high schools in the ACT that came under NSW Department of Education control prior to autonomy would have played the same school sport as that played in NSW. This was because school sport at that time was organized by the NSW CHSAAA (Frey, 1979). Of importance to this research, is that the same sports mentioned as being played in the beginning years at School C have been played continuously at all three schools (see tables 6, 7 and 8 in Appendix H). Further, the nature of the facilities at each school in this study, discussed in Chapter 6, reflect the practice of those sports. Following autonomy, responsibility for school sport was passed to the ACT SSSA. It is reported at School B that this change enabled the school to have the:

“...opportunity to compete in matches in all codes, at all levels, against all other ACT schools on a knock-out basis” (Frey, 1979, p. 45).
In other words, in a similar way to what was reported for PE, NSW influence preceding autonomy laid the foundations for school sport in the ACT.

Tables 6, 7 and 8 in Appendix H, detail the school sport that was offered at the three schools between 1976 and 2010. In compiling those tables a broad range of prospectuses, curricula and Year books were consulted and only British, European and American sports were found to be mentioned with the exception of Buroinjin at School C (Year books 2010 and 2011). Those tables also showed that swimming and athletics carnivals took place annually at each school during this period, and have been a regular occurrence at each school from their respective beginnings. A student at School B recognizes carnivals as a valued feature in the PE and school sport figuration “every school has its sports carnival, and they are one of the high school moments we enjoy the most and will remember for years to come” (School B, 1993).

Notably there is no mention of Indigenous physical activities or sports in any of the documents referred to in completing tables 6, 7 and 8 in Appendix H other than Buroinjin mentioned above.

In summary, Indigenous participation in school sport has always been within a Eurocentric frame of reference. The silence of Indigenous perspectives in ACT school sport is also highlighted in two publications (Aitken, Collins & Cork, 1990; Andrews, 2013) detailing the history of school sport in NSW and in the ACT over 100 years and 34 years respectively. Both showed that students in each jurisdiction had almost never experienced Indigenous traditional games in school sport.

**8.2 School ‘Invented Traditions’ in Reinforcing a Single Figuration for Physical Education and School Sport**

‘Invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) it is argued, as a long-term process has played a key role in maintaining the defining characteristics of a single PE and school sport
figuration and consequently it has affected the kind of PE and school sport experienced by Indigenous students. This final chapter section details the ways in which ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) has influenced the sociogenesis, and consequently the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration.

The words ‘tradition’ and ‘traditional’ were frequently mentioned in documents across all three sites. Frey (1979) cites the original principal of School B as saying:

“in many ways I am a strong traditionalist, and I still consider that the ancient classics, especially Greek language and literature, Greek philosophy, religion and history, offer continuing sources for human inspiration and intellectual development” (p. 13).

In connection with background discussions at School B in the 1970s concerning how autonomy would affect future education, Pettigrove (1982) notes that those conversations had:

…little effect on the organization and administration of School B at that time. All school activities including the operation of the school’s Education Program continued to follow the traditional lines established by the founding principal, his team of teachers and the Parents and Citizens’ Association (p. 30).

What Pettigrove (1982) is acknowledging, is the existence of an established group that upheld a shared value, that of ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012). The persistence and continuation of ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) is evident more than 20 years later:

“in making choices, the staff seeks to retain the best traditions while ensuring that best practice and up-to-date teaching approaches are utilised” (School B, 2005, p. 8).

Similarly, with specific regard to school sport, a principal at School B reflects back on the previous year and notes as a highlight:

“…the continuation of the fine sporting traditions with yet again, a number of ACT titles” (School B, 2002, p. 1).
The word ‘traditional’ is also used to describe the particular sports played:

“each year School B enters teams in inter-school competitions and one day carnivals in a wide range of traditional team sports such as basketball, football, rugby league, AFL, netball, Touch, cricket and softball” (School B, 2010, p. 41).

Further, ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) can be triangulated with data from the teacher interviews in the three schools. For example, the Executive teacher at School B commented that a traditional PE program had been offered at the school for:

“years and years” (see previous chapter).

‘Invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) at School A, was described in the following context:

“over the last nine years the school has been concerned with combining the best of traditional education practice with proven new beneficial developments in education” (ACT DET, 1985).

PE can be considered as being part of this ‘traditional education practice’, as it is referred to as a ‘traditional subject’ in a proposal for how School A will operate after opening (mentioned in School B, 1976b, p. 17).

And at School C, ‘invented traditions’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) at the school are suggested in the following citation:

…aspects of school life which feature prominently in ex-student recollections are the drilling and exercises on the school oval and the formal Monday morning assemblies when the Anthem was played and the flag raised to mark the beginning of the school week; and again, the cold – cold classrooms, freezing winds blowing across the bare plains of Canberra, the funny old donkey heater, the necessity for students to run around the oval to get warm before going to classes (Power, Gillespie & McPherson, 1983, p. 107).
Regarding school sport:

“School C has a full and excellent sporting programme. You will have a chance to play in the traditional sports like cricket, Australian Rules, Rugby Union, or you might like to join our excellent rowing team…” (School C, 1982).

Notably, all of those sports with the exception of AFL are British team sports. This strong British ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) is evidenced in other school practices and activities that are part of a figuration that extends back to when the school opened. If one looks back to 1935, for example, staff and students presented a jubilee concert and organised celebrations in honour of the British king and queen that included ‘Maypole’ dancers (Power et al., 1983). Further, ‘Empire Day’ was celebrated each year at School C during its early history (Power et al., 1983).

The ‘invented traditions’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) mentioned in this chapter reflect the belief and value systems of the established ruling classes who colonized Australia and other countries in the British Empire. In this research there has been a common theme of British traditional sports and games that have persisted throughout the histories of each school as well as the overall PE and school sport figuration. However, in contrast to those traditional physical activities, there was almost no mention of Indigenous games and sports in the documentation reviewed. Indeed, the words ‘Aboriginal’, Aborigine’, ‘Indigenous’, and ‘Torres Strait Islander’ were absent in all of the documents considered that were published prior to 1994. An exception was mention of a school badge that acknowledged the Aboriginal history of the land on which one of the schools was built. This gave the impression of a previous figuration that had ‘ended’ and was therefore ‘no longer relevant’.

Only from 1994 was there any mention of the words ‘Aboriginal’, Aborigine’, ‘Indigenous’, and ‘Torres Strait Islander’ in the curriculum documents reviewed (ACT DET, 1994 and subsequent school based HPE curricula discussed in this chapter). Despite this
mention, there was no sense of those words being used in the context of any long-term process. Instead, those words were not associated with any kind of school ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012), had marginalized status, and were paid ‘lip service’ in several documents. While it was stated in some publications that Aboriginal and Torres Islander culture was important and should be celebrated, this intent was not carried through to the main substance of the PE and school sport specific documents examined.

8.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter served to reconstruct the sociogenesis of the single figuration for PE and school sport studied in this research. Over time, as with all figurations, this figuration has been subject to change (Elias, 1978a). Importantly though, in terms of the scope of this research, the structural properties of this figuration have remained constant in the sociogenesis to date. It was found that the nature and purpose of PE within the figuration has changed little since the mid-1950s, along with what is taught as PE. The same British, European and American sport and physical activities that were taught more than six decades ago are still taught. What was found is also consistent with the literature, and in particular what Kirk (2010a) reports:

‘“the idea of physical education’ or the id² - that has remained more or less intact since around the middle of the 20th century, transcends national borders, and has been highly resistant to change” (p. 30).

The id² that Kirk (2010a) refers to, ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’, describes the nature of the PE reviewed in this research, within the same time period described by Kirk. According to Kirk (2010a), prior to the 1970s sport-techniques was starting to replace gymnastics as the main focus of PE in many industrialized countries. In contrast, it was found in this research that sport-techniques had a presence in PE from the 1930s in the PE and school sport figuration studied. Nevertheless, there were more commonalities with Kirk’s observations
about the id² of ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ than there were differences. The findings in this chapter therefore present the figuration for PE and school sport as being part of an international figuration. How this globe spanning figuration came to be it is argued, has historically shaped how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport. In summary, Indigenous students in this research have almost exclusively experienced PE and school sport in Eurocentric terms with almost no reference to their own culture.

It was shown that although there have been attempts to introduce Indigenous perspectives into several HPE curricula during the past 20 years, the established traditional version of PE and school sport has remained impenetrable to this policy level recourse. This chapter reported that part of this resistance has been the ‘misrepresentation’ of Indigenous perspectives by HPE curriculum writers. It is argued that the retention of an ‘intact’ traditional PE and school sport model by the non-Indigenous PE teaching profession has occurred as a consequence of power differentials between this group and Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples. The unidirectional process of the including an almost exclusive Eurocentric curriculum is it is argued also a consequence of ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012).

Linked to the power imbalances discussed is the enduring notion that the PE and school sport of the established group is part of a civilizing process extending from colonial times where white Australians have continuously regarded Eurocentric knowledge as being superior to Indigenous knowledge (Nakata, 2007; Tait, 2013; Wadham et al., 2012). Further, the established group version of PE and school sport described here bears much in common with a more general view of the ‘Australian classroom’ (Tait, 2013) where Indigenous Australians are expected to ‘fit’ into a socially constructed Eurocentric ‘one size fits all’ learning environment. The sociogenesis of the figuration explored, shows that the expectation
by HPE teachers that Indigenous students should ‘fit in’ to the Eurocentric provision offered has been a recurring theme throughout the life of the figuration.

In the final chapter the findings from Chapters 6, 7 and 8 are discussed as inter-related levels of the figuration for PE and school sport, and a conclusion for the study is provided.
Chapter 9: Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter discusses how the findings from the three levels of the figuration for PE and school sport are inter-related and collectively answer the research questions for the study. It is explained that how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport is not accidental. Instead it is the result of both planned and unplanned processes, as well as the actions of individuals and the intended and unintended consequences of those actions. Through holding relatively low power resources, the Indigenous students along with the IEOs were able to exert limited influence in the figuration. In contrast, non-Indigenous ACT ETD staff enjoyed a higher power differential that enabled a monopoly of control over the nature of the PE that was taught, and the kind of school sport offered. The kinds of processes that influenced the figuration studied were found to include those that were long-term. These long-term processes were shown to be interdependent with larger figurations, including global figurations, that extended beyond the geographic boundaries of the ACT.

The importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island perspectives to PE and school sport is also discussed, along with recent developments in the PE and school sport figuration that have occurred since data collection. Such developments include a major curriculum shift from Every Chance to Learn (ACT ETD, 2007) to the Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014). The developments considered serve to demonstrate that this figuration, in common with all other figurations is constantly changing (Elias, 1978a). Also included in this chapter are strategies for raising the profile of Indigenous perspectives in PE curricula, limitations of the research, contribution to the field, possible future research, and a conclusion.
9.1 Addressing the Research Questions

Through reconstructing the macro, micro and sociogenesis levels of the figuration for PE and school sport each of the research questions were addressed. In the following section the research questions are considered in turn.

1. How do Indigenous students experience PE and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research?

2. How did these Indigenous students experiences of PE and school sport come to be?

3. What events and long-term processes have influenced Indigenous students’ experiences of PE and school sport at the three high schools?

9.1.1 How Indigenous students experience physical education and school sport at the three high schools selected for the research

Indigenous students were found to experience PE and school sport as part of a global figuration that promotes ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a). Although various assertions were made on the school websites, prospectuses and curricula about providing programs that met the requirements of all students, those claims were misleading. A more adequate explanation, was that Indigenous students were expected to obediently engage in what can be described as Eurocentric PE curricula, that rarely provided any recognition or incorporation of their culture. Although Indigenous traditional games were mentioned in PE curriculum documents from 1994, there was almost no evidence of those games being played currently at any of the schools. In school sport, all students were expected to participate wholeheartedly in what were almost exclusively British and American activities. Within school sport, Indigenous students were found to be stacked towards football codes in particular, with the exception of soccer.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students undertook PE in units of work that usually lasted two or three weeks, often with content repeated from year to year. The nature of
indoor and outdoor facilities was such that they provided a visual statement of the sports and physical activities that ‘counted’ at each site. Many of the HPE teachers held racialized views of the Indigenous students, evident where teachers spoke about them in racialized terms.

Racialization also occurred where Indigenous students were ‘stacked’ in school sport towards sports that characteristically required physicality and aggression. Such was the relative power of the established non-Indigenous HPE teacher group, that it was possible for some teachers to stigmatize the students according to imagined ‘innate’ characteristics relating to superior sports performance.

In common with what Elias and Scotson (1994) observed in their Winston Parva study, some of the students embodied those racialized beliefs that included erroneous understandings that high performance in sport could be reduced to notions of natural athletic ability. There is however, no scientific evidence to support the assertion that Indigenous peoples possess some kind of ‘sporting gene’, lacking in the non-Indigenous population. The notion that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people have innate sporting capabilities is fundamentally flawed. This idea is immediately problematic because Indigeneity is a social rather than biological construct, and because of the diversity and non-homogenous nature Indigenous peoples. In school sport, Indigenous students were held in high regard by HPE teachers and their non-Indigenous peers on account of their sporting prowess. The students had a ‘special place’ reserved for representing their schools in AFL, rugby and other football codes except for soccer. In the words of Tatz (1987), those students were modern day gladiators who served a particular role in contributing to school honour and pride through competing in a narrow range of specially ‘suited’ sports.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students were perceived by the HPE teachers as the ‘minority of the best’ and simultaneously as the ‘minority of the worst’ of Indigenous peoples (Elias & Scotson, 1994). As a minority of the best, the students were regarded in high
esteem because of their physical abilities. In contrast, they were simultaneously viewed as the minority of the worst by being ‘lazy’, ‘unreliable’, ‘uncommitted’ and ‘lacking motivation’.

Although the HPE teachers often marvelled at the physical skills of the students, there was a strong impression that they considered the Indigenous students as being ‘physical people’.

9.1.2 How the Indigenous students’ experiences of physical education and school sport at the three high schools came to be

How the students’ experiences of PE and school sport came to be, were analysed using a figurational lens taking into account the sociogenesis of the PE and school sport figuration.

It is contended that the nature of the provision described at the macro level of the figuration did not occur by chance. Instead, the macro level of the PE and school sport figuration was shaped as a consequence of the intended and unintended actions of powerful individuals and groups that occurred as part of long-term processes from when the figuration commenced.

Many of the contemporary sports played as school sport or in their modified forms in PE had their roots in colonial times and early curricula used in the figuration. Some of those sports, and British team games in particular, had originally been used to ‘civilize’ Indigenous peoples throughout the British Empire (Ferguson, 2004). This research found that sport was still being used in a similar way by HPE teachers and principals to instil Eurocentric values in Indigenous students. In summary, the macro level represented a framework that had retained its Eurocentric characteristics throughout the sociogenesis of the figuration.

Team and sporting spirit, as well as pride in representing the respective schools, were long-term processes that were evident within the PE and school sport figuration. Sport was seen as playing a key role in developing cohesiveness in the student population, while simultaneously promoting desirable behaviour reminiscent of the nineteenth century games ethic (Mangan, 1986). In addition to the recurrence of quintessential British sports, carnivals for athletics, swimming and latterly cross country running had traditionally been held at each
school. Those carnivals were recorded in archive documents as having a pivotal role in fostering group cohesiveness amongst students and staff, and in developing particular kinds of values, beliefs and practices in all students.

The research showed that despite some intent to provide PE curricula that were attuned to the specific requirements of the ACT, what has historically been provided is a form of PE that exists in many nation states worldwide. HPE teachers, formerly PE teachers, have typically sought exemplary practice from other states and overseas in creating PE programs for the ACT. In the early history of the figuration, at school C, new teachers were applauded because of their expertise in valued sports such as tennis and rowing due to the ‘Englishness’ and ‘relevance’ of those activities (Power et al., 1983).

Importantly, how the Indigenous student experience of PE and school sport developed, is largely a result of power relations between an established group of non-Indigenous principals, HPE teachers and to some extent students, and an outsider group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and IEOs. Surplus power resources in favour of the non-Indigenous individuals in the figuration, ensured that the Indigenous students experienced the forms of PE and school sport favoured by the main cultural group. Those versions of PE and school sport include virtually no Indigenous content. Any Indigenous games and sport that were taught, were predominantly delivered by IEOs outside of PE.

HPE teachers through having individual and social habitus based on strong associations with mainly European and American sport, have successfully prevented Indigenous content from being included in any meaningful way in PE and school sport. While there appears to have been isolated incidences of Indigenous mention in PE curricula in at least two of the schools, Indigenous perspectives in PE have been successfully resisted by the HPE teachers. PETE was found to support the ‘We’ group (Elias & Scotson, 1994) Eurocentric and technocratic PE identities of the HPE teachers through reinforcing what
'proper’ PE was. As such PETE served to reaffirm the pre-dispositions of HPE teachers towards ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ (Kirk, 2010a). Further, recent text books for PE in Australia were found to almost exclusively acknowledge ‘white’ culture, while only providing superficial coverage of Indigenous perspectives.

9.1.3 The events and long-term processes that have influenced Indigenous students’ experiences of physical education and school sport at the three high schools

It is contended that it is mainly long-term processes, rather than ‘one-off’ isolated events that have affected and shaped the figuration for PE and school sport in this research. It is further maintained that one-off events by their very nature can lead to static accounts for social occurrences. Therefore, it is argued that processes through being dynamic (Elia, 1978), are more adequate in understanding social phenomena. Given that this research adopted a figural perspective, a process-oriented focus was used in recreating the sociogenesis level of the figuration.

It was shown in the last chapter that PE and school sport at the oldest school included in the study can be directly related to the British Syllabus for Physical Training for Schools (Board of Education, 1933) as part of a global figuration that spanned the British Empire. It was argued that PE and school sport in the ACT, was, and still is part of a global figuration given the nature of the activities that take place. In effect, PE has existed in the three schools as ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ largely unaltered for more than half a century and is the dominant model of PE in most developed countries (Kirk, 2010a). Likewise, school sport was found to include almost entirely European sports forms that have existed on a continuous basis throughout the life of the figuration. Despite attempts by the ACT government to acknowledge Indigenous perspectives from the mid-1990s, in line with national initiatives, the PE and school sport figuration has remained virtually impervious to influences outside of the traditional PE and school sport model.
Similarity in the single PE and school sport figuration incorporating the three schools in this study has been aided by there being only one PETE organization in the territory. Acquaintances and friendships formed from pre-service teacher experiences, inter-school sport, an annual ‘PE dinner’, and various other forms of informal and formal system level interaction have ensured the predominance and continuation of certain practices. Those practices have remained largely constant for more than four decades and have been resistant to change through the cohesiveness of the HPE teacher profession, as well as the influence of ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012).

The resilience of the PE and school sport figuration has largely been on account of the power held by the exclusively non-Indigenous ‘white’ HPE teachers as an established group in this research. Those individuals have collectively ensured, partly also through ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) as a long-term process, that certain practices within the figuration have continued unabated. While the Health and Physical Education Curriculum Framework (ACT DET, 1994) was identified as a curriculum where Indigenous focused education was emphasised, this emphasis was found to have no lasting effect within the PE and school sport figuration. Similarly, in Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007) where there was some, arguably less prescriptive signposting, to include Indigenous perspectives through the interdisciplinary ELAs.

It seems likely that the recently launched Australian Curriculum for Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014) will also be largely ineffectual for including Indigenous perspectives in PE in a non-tokenistic way. This predicted ineffectiveness, is because the established group of HPE teachers have always held most of the power resource within the figuration, and consequently are able to teach what they are most comfortable with. Through having a high level of relative power within the figuration, HPE teachers are able to safeguard a coveted version of PE and school sport equating predominantly to European and American
sports and physical activities. Subsequently, it is only the PE and school sport knowledge from the associated nation states that since the beginning of the figuration has ‘counted’.

It is further maintained that this protected model of PE and school sport, and the kinds of sports privileged, is resistant to change due to the individual and social habitus (Elias, 1998b; Mennell, 1994) of the HPE teachers which have largely contributed to the ‘We’ identity of this established group. What is taught tends to be what has always been taught, certainly within the living memory of the teachers, and aligns with their individual and social habitus. For Indigenous perspectives to be included in PE in a non-tokenistic way, change requires to take place at a habitus level for those teachers. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island perspectives must become genuinely valued, and gain parity with existing activity forms.

Presently Eurocentric content is, considered superior to alternative physical activity knowledge in the PE and school sport offered at the three schools. This superiority is evident in the absence of reference to any other cultures. Consequently, Indigenous knowledge for example is viewed as inferior, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island movement forms largely being disregarded, until relevantly recently. However, the revitalisation of Indigenous traditional games during the last five years in the ACT, largely through the efforts of IEOs, is an example of ‘diminishing contrasts’ (Elias, 1994, 1998b) within the PE and school sport figuration studied. Of note is that most of this change has been at a school sport level rather than in PE.

The lack of progress in PE it is argued can again be attributed again to the nature of HPE teacher habitus and pre-dispositions of those teachers to Eurocentric sport. As an established ‘We’ group, HPE teachers are in a position to repel content that is a threat to their group charisma. The issue of HPE teachers teaching Indigenous traditional games in PE is exacerbated by the principal resource for those games, *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009) having some content that is not authentic. This issue of validity could be used as a reason for some teachers
to avoid teaching Indigenous traditional games altogether. The question is also raised as to whether teachers should use an inaccurate resource.

Findings from this study would suggest that not using *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009), on the grounds of a lack of authenticity, would reinforce the dominant position of Eurocentric content. More research could be undertaken to provide a more authentic Indigenous traditional games resource which would alleviate this issue. However, there is the possibility that some valuable games could be lost. Such an outcome would be unsatisfactory for example, if a game was not included because only a non-Indigenous account of the game exists. What if that account was an accurate representation? Also problematic, is the issue of Indigenous dance being taught by non-Indigenous HPE teachers. There are various cultural issues around non-Indigenous people teaching Indigenous dance, as discussed earlier in the thesis. Once again, those issues could be regarded by some teachers as being too difficult to address, with the ‘safer’ option being to avoid teaching Indigenous content altogether.

Despite the limitations presented in the previous paragraphs about *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009) being an appropriate resource for teaching Indigenous games, it is argued that it has some merit for embedding Indigenous traditional games into contemporary PE curricula. This is because *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009), includes games and activities that are specific to a wide range of FMS taught in contemporary PE curricula. Those FMS include throw, catch, leap, vertical jump, run, dodge, leap, fore-hand and two-hand strike (Walkley, Armstrong & Clohesy, 1998). Using *Yulunga* (ASC, 2009) to embed Indigenous perspectives in the games and sports contemporarily taught in PE would avoid possible issues around Indigenous traditional games being viewed by teachers as something separate to PE. Embedding Indigenous content in PE may subsequently lead to more successful inclusion of Indigenous traditional games. However, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games also have to be viewed by teachers as having equal status to existing content and taught in ways that avoid tokenism.
The following section provides insights by the ICFs into the principal findings of the research.

9.2 Comments on the Research Findings by the Indigenous Critical Friends

A final meeting was held with the ICFs to explore how they interpreted the study findings, in order that an Indigenous perspective was applied to the research outcomes. Each of the ICFs was given draft results chapters and a draft conclusion chapter to read in advance of this meeting. The meeting format was an informal discussion based upon the content of those chapters.

9.2.1 The relative power of health and physical education teachers and executive teachers within the physical education and school sport figuration

The ICFs were asked to comment about the findings in relation to the different levels of power that individuals within the PE and school sport figuration hold. The ICFs agreed that in addition to principals, the HPE executive teachers and teachers hold a majority share of power in the figuration. The executive teachers and teachers, largely by virtue of their professional power in the figuration, were able to control the nature of the content that was taught. The ICFs believed that the HPE teachers were generally not interested in Indigenous content and instead taught what suited them. ICF A commented:

*It’s ignorance and subconsciously they don’t want to do it…they think ‘I didn’t learn it at school…I play sport now…I know what’s best for students…I know what’s going to get them to pass’.*

In other words, ICF A felt that traditional PE was viewed by the HPE teachers as being superior to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island physical activity forms and was suitable for all students. The ICFs believed that how buroinjin was programmed was an example of the relative power that HPE teachers hold in the figuration. Buroinjin was only taught or organized as school sport by a small number of individuals in the PE and school sport
figuration. Those people were mainly the ICFs along with a few interested non-Indigenous HPE teachers. ICF B commented:

*Well the proof is in the pudding...I think with you know the fact that in the schools where buroinjin is being driven, it’s being driven by individuals...If ICF C was to step out of education...is it in the system? Is it embedded?*

ICF B was suggesting that if ICF C was to no longer be involved in teaching buroinjin at his school then the activity would cease to be offered. In connection with the revival and organization of buroinjin within the PE and school sport figuration, the ICFs commented that a lot of responsibility gets delegated to the IEOs instead of the HPE teachers. ICF A commented:

*The majority of it should be going to PE staff and the IEO can sort of advise...it’s [the popularity of buroinjin] changing slowly but they have to get the responsibilities right.*

The ICFs commented that within the PE and school sport figuration it was the IEOs who were being asked by school management to teach buroinjin and organize buroinjin as school sport rather than the HPE teachers. The ICFs thought that the HPE teachers were happy for the IEOs to teach buroinjin because it was regarded as inferior to the traditional games played in school sport. Concerning the organization of buroinjin as school sport ICF A suggested:

*And then if it does ‘fall down’ then it’s not their fault [the HPE teachers] and then it comes back to ‘ah he [the IEO] was too lazy’ whereas this fella’s [the IEO] sitting saying ‘I f***’n tried but I don’t have the skills, I don’t have the contacts...’.*

About wider Indigenous content in PE, ICF remarked in relation to his school:

*There was a teacher who was willing to write the curriculum or whatever and then...she’s moved onto another school and now it’s just ‘dead in the water’.*
ICF C added:

_They just don’t want to do it [teach Indigenous content in PE]...because they’re bloody racists...Ethnocentric views...their world views are more powerful than ours._

Teacher attitudes of having superior knowledge were felt to be reflected in how IEOs were treated in schools generally:

_They just ‘put it on’ the IEOs to sort of do [teach Indigenous PE and sport content] because it’s beneath them [the HPE teachers]...it’s the same throughout the system._

_It’s that same kind of thing...’okay it’s Aboriginal so it goes to the Aboriginal person’_ (ICF A).

The above comments show that the ICFs were in agreement that Indigenous perspectives were typically regarded by the HPE teachers as being irrelevant to PE, with Indigenous traditional games being considered inferior to Eurocentric forms of PE and sport. The ICFs thought that those HPE teacher beliefs ensured that the teaching of Indigenous physical activity occurred outside of PE within the figuration. According to the ICFs, the majority of HPE teachers were happy for the IEOs to play a lead role in organizing buroinjin as school sport, because it did not matter to those teachers. It did not equate to ‘proper’ school sport. The IEOs believed that the relative power of the HPE teachers as an established ‘We’ group permitted them to be dismissive of Indigenous content.

The ICFs were also in agreement about the cohesive nature of the HPE teachers as a ‘We’ group (Elias & Scotson, 1994), suggesting that teachers who might want to teach Indigenous content refrain from doing so because of the fear of being ostracized by the group:

_You’ve got to remember a lot of their [HPE teachers] peers...are f***’n racist people and they don’t want to upset their peers_ (ICF C).
The ICFs felt that being more prescriptive about the teaching of Indigenous perspectives through the *Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education* (ACARA, 2014) would be ineffective in changing the attitude of some of the teachers:

*There’s no good in forcing someone to do something they don’t want to* (ICF C).

Further, ICF A commented:

*I don’t think teachers feel like they are going to get into trouble if they don’t teach the Aboriginal perspectives. I think they feel like ‘okay we’ll get this other stuff out of the way and if we have time we’ll do it’. Yeah and at the end, when they don’t do it and they [school management] say ‘why didn’t you do this?’ ‘We didn’t have time’.*

Those comments again illustrate the relative power that the HPE teachers hold in the PE and school sport figuration, that they can effectively teach what they want regardless of curriculum and other directives without consequence.

In connection with the kind of activities that were predominantly offered in PE and school sport, ICF C thought that much of the current provision lacked significance for Indigenous students. Commenting about those activities:

*It’s suitable to play at school as a PE exercise...outside of school...a lot of them don’t want nothing to do with the game.*

ICF A added:

*The schools saying PE caters for all kids...it’s almost like a bullying kind of thing, because it’s like ‘we offer this many sports’...if you’re not good at it you’re useless.*

Within this statement is again the notion of Eurocentric PE being value free, that it is inherently good for all students.

### 9.2.2 Indigenous ‘natural sporting’ ability and associated stereotypes

The ICFs concurred that the notion of Indigenous genetic advantage in sport was false. ICF C summed up their views:
There’s good Aboriginal sportspeople...there’s good non-Aboriginal sportspeople...so that’s [Indigenous natural ability in sport] *a fallacy*.

The ICFs also thought that stereotyping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students as being good at sport was problematic:

...if they’re all getting boxed in...like ‘all black fellas are good at sport’, there’s going to be those kids that don’t want to perform because they’re not interested in sport, or they might not be ‘too flash’ at sport, so they don’t want to get up and feel like they’re letting their mob down, because if they can’t perform well then they come away thinking ‘well what kind of black fella am I?’ So they just withdraw themselves completely (ICF A).

The ICFs also believed that Indigenous students who were good at sport were perceived in terms of the minority of the best and simultaneously the minority of the worst (Elias & Scotson, 1994). Concerning negative stereotypes held by some of the teachers about Indigenous students being lazy and unreliable, the ICFs felt that the teachers were ignorant of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island culture:

*There are underlying factors...you know your obligations to family...you know...sometimes kids have got to get up to go to a funeral... out of town, or whatever so they can’t make a game...you know...being in the minority its sometimes difficult to turn up to a team if you’re the only Koori kid there... you’ve got to look at those underlying factors rather than just say well he’s lazy and unreliable...he didn’t show up...I think that gets overlooked* (ICF B).

The above comment by ICF B suggests that teachers often resorted to stereotypes of the minority of the worst (Elias & Scotson, 1994) through a lack of understanding about Indigenous culture.
9.2.3 School sport and the civilizing of Indigenous students

The ICFs also agreed that a form of civilizing process was evident in the findings, where some of the teachers tried to instil non-Indigenous values in the Indigenous students using school sport. In this regard, altruism on the part of the teachers was explained as being:

...like a selfish kind of thing... if this kid succeeds then that was all ‘me’ [the HPE teacher]...they can take the credit because they drove them to training...they picked the kid up...whereas the kid’s probably thinking ’f*** off I just want to relax for a day. I don’t want to f***’n train...I want to go and play f***’n guitar or something’

(ICF A).

In summary, the IEOs were in broad agreement about the findings from the research, and in their observations and comments they affirmed that how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport within the figuration is a consequence of the relative power of the HPE teachers. The responses provided by the IEOs also show connections with Eurocentric ‘invented tradition’ (Hobsbawm, 2012) as a long-term process in the figuration, as well as the influence of HPE teacher individual and social habitus and ‘We’ group identity. Interestingly ICF A pointed towards some irony in a main topic of the research by commenting that:

PE’s probably one of the easiest subjects to fit our perspectives into the curriculum....

The ICFs felt that another reason why Indigenous perspectives were not included was because Indigenous students tend to do well in the PE and school sport that is offered. Hence this Indigenous student success in Eurocentric PE and school sport was a reason for teachers not to act towards changing the status-quo. ICF A summed up the overall discussion by commenting:
I’m just reading it thinking…it’s nothing that we don’t know…it’s sort of the same thing comes up all the time and…Also just that whole thing black fellas just being good at sport.

This statement by ICF A highlights the kinds of issues raised in the research as being part of a long-term process where Indigenous educational concerns generally have been managed in the same kinds of ways by non-Indigenous people in Education. Those ways have historically marginalized Indigenous perspectives in education, while at the same time typecasting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as being only good at sport.

9.3 The Importance of the Research

This study has shown that Indigenous students experience a ‘traditional’ PE curriculum and school sport program where their own culture is rarely acknowledged. HPE teachers generally considered traditional PE as being adequate for Indigenous students, with one executive teacher blaming a lack of Indigenous content on poor promotion by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Such a viewpoint demonstrates that some HPE teachers are ignorant of the lasting effects of colonization that have suppressed Indigenous traditional games. A lack of knowledge amongst the Indigenous students that they have their own traditional games was further evidence of the dislocation of their culture. The research also pointed to a lack of mention of Indigenous perspectives in PETE, although there was some willingness expressed by the teachers to learn Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island content, and to include it in their programs. Nonetheless there was little evidence of those teachers acting to realize this willingness.

HPE in Australia is at the time of writing at an important juncture in its history with the recent launch of the Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014). This curriculum, the first of its kind in Australia, asks new demands and expects increased responsibilities of teachers. The requirement to include Indigenous perspectives in
this new curriculum is somewhat more prescriptive, as is argued later in this chapter, than was the case in *Every Chance to Learn* (ACT ETD, 2007). Current and future teachers are now challenged to adopt more of a socio-cultural focus in their pedagogy that includes Indigenous content, and in so doing alter their habitus by moving beyond a Eurocentric curriculum. In meeting the goals of the *Melbourne Declaration* (MCEETYA, 2008) in providing education for all Australians, a broader approach is required than that of ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’. However, it is argued that for such change to happen, social research such as this study is required that helps to explain why the current situation ‘is what it is’, as well as how it came to be.

This research is also important because it has shown that at three high schools in the ACT a Eurocentric PE curriculum supported by a school sport association with a similar Western focus is firmly established. The findings of this investigation are timely because they serve to demonstrate that what is offered at those schools is, contrary to the aims of the *Melbourne Declaration* (MCEETYA, 2008), not relevant for all Australians because of a lack of significance (ACT DET, 2006a) for many Indigenous students. What is offered lacks purpose and meaning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students, as well as those students who do not have European heritage. In other words, PE and school sport were found to not be neutral or value free. It is also argued that because what is done in the name of PE has hardly changed for more than six decades, it is somewhat irrelevant to contemporary students many of whom do not have European ancestry. Hence this research offers empirical evidence of the requirement to decolonize the PE and school sport within the figuration studied.

The research also showed that the university local to where the study took place, must work towards supporting Indigenous perspectives as a cross-curriculum priority within the *Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education* (ACARA, 2014) as part of PETE. It is
not simply a matter of including Indigenous content in PE tutorials, or having a generic Indigenous education unit for pre-service teachers from all disciplines to collectively attend. HPE pre-service teachers must know why PE specific Indigenous content should be included, why it has historically been missing, and ought to be taught practices to include it. In other words, pre-service teachers require to know the ‘why’ as well as the ‘how’ to teach Indigenous perspectives. Part of this educational approach requires that students consider the past to understand the present, and in so doing challenge ‘taken for granted’ assumptions embedded in contemporary Eurocentric beliefs about PE and school sport.

There is a requirement for pre-service, and indeed in-service HPE teachers to reflect on the games and physical activities that they have come to take for granted as having ‘always been’, and begin to understand why Indigenous games have been predominantly absent in Australian PE curricula. As part of this reflection and critical analysis those individuals must also learn about the processes and ideologies that have led to mainly European and American sports forms dominating. The positioning of ‘PE-as-sport-techniques’ must also be challenged by pre-service HPE teacher educators and serious attempts made by them to modify their own habitus in order that they can teach PE in broader terms. Such broader terms include increased acknowledgment and understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of PE. However, the influence of PETE is minimal in affecting meaningful change if in-service HPE teachers continue to solely value a traditional Eurocentric model of PE.

It is contended then that in order for meaningful change to occur in including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island perspectives in PE, it is not enough to have renewed statements of intent in curriculum documents. The ineffectiveness of policy statements alone was demonstrated in the *Health and Physical Education Curriculum Framework* (ACT DET, 1994) and is also evident in New Zealand through the issues concerning Pakeha teachers using Teo Reo Kori (Salter, 2002). Policy slippage in the pedagogy intended by ACT
educational senior management and what was actually taught in practice by HPE teachers was
evidenced at both the macro and sociogenesis levels of the PE and school sport figuration.
This slippage occurred as a consequence of the relative power that HPE teachers enjoyed
within the figuration. It was also shown that policy slippage has occurred as a long-term
process since at least 1994, when Indigenous perspectives were included as an across
curriculum perspective within the Health and Physical Education Curriculum Framework
(ACT DET, 1994).

This research showed that the habitus of the HPE teachers had strong associations
with Eurocentric sport, and a love of ‘sport’ was a main reason why most had become HPE
teachers. PETE as experienced by the teachers served to reinforce beliefs that PE had to be a
Eurocentric construct in order for it to be ‘real’ PE. HPE teachers across each site also spoke
about how they were not taught Indigenous content as part of PETE. There was evidence from
the HPE teacher interviews that HPE teacher childhood experiences of PE were replicated and
reinforced through PETE, and again through the pedagogy that was valued within schools.
This finding of self-replication is consistent with what Green (2000b) observed in his English
study of PE teachers. The research is also important for making HPE teachers aware that they
can sometimes be enacting a civilizing process through well-meaning altruistic actions in
encouraging Indigenous students to be all that they can be in school sport.

9.4 Benefits of the Research

This research affords opportunities for teachers and other ACT ETD staff to view and
understand Indigenous student experience of PE and school sport through a figurational lens
for the first time in Australia. The findings may encourage PETE establishments to include
more PE specific socio-cultural content instead of privileging medico-scientific PE pedagogy.
The findings may also motivate HPE teachers to adopt a more balanced approach in their
teaching through developing their socio-cultural pedagogical skills. Traditionally in
Australian PE, including PETE, social studies based pedagogy has been of secondary importance to the more ‘scientific’ performance pedagogy (McKay et al., 1990; Tinning et al., 2001). The findings from this research also facilitate intercultural understanding on the part of ACT ETD staff by emphasising that Indigenous students have little influence within PE and school sport figurations on account of their marginal social power.

This study also draws attention to the shortcomings of a Eurocentric PE curriculum and associated school sport as it was found that both are not entirely relevant for all students. The non-Indigenous professionals responsible for writing and delivering curricula may not necessarily be consciously aware that what they are providing is predominantly Eurocentric. This is because European and English values in particular have traditionally been considered as the ‘neutral bench mark’ by which everything else is measured in writing PE curricula in Australia. Eurocentric PE is all that many in the Australian HPE teaching profession have ever known, and because it has ‘always been’, is considered as value free ‘proper’ PE. A further benefit of the research is that the findings encourage teachers to use more appropriate language in describing the physical attributes of Indigenous students in PE and school sport. Hence, such descriptions can be informed by environmental understandings rather than by racialized viewpoints. The findings may also assist HPE teachers in recognizing and countering ‘stacking’, and may encourage them to purposefully make a wider range of school sports available to Indigenous students.

9.5 Developments Within the Wider Australian Capital Territory

Education and Training Directorate Physical Education and School Sport

Figuration and Beyond

The purpose of this section is to point out that since data was collected, there have been developments in the national PE figuration, as well as some notable changes in the PE
and school sport figuration studied in this thesis. Those changes collectively illustrate the
dynamic nature of all figurations (Elias, 1978a).

9.5.1 Developments in the physical education figuration at a national level

In this section, a review of the Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education
(ACARA, 2014) is provided within the context of this research, and the inclusion of
Indigenous perspectives in particular.

The main focus areas of Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical
Education (ACARA, 2012b) are evident in the actual Australian Curriculum Health and
Physical Education (ACARA, 2014). Within PE, those focus areas include ‘minor games’,
‘games and sports’ and ‘lifelong learning’. The focus area ‘cultural and community-based
activities’ that was detailed in the draft curriculum (ACARA, 2012b) is not continued in the
final document (ACARA, 2014). Nonetheless, the main themes from the ‘cultural and
community-based activities’ focus area are retained in the final curriculum, including cultural
significance, and participating in traditional Indigenous games for example.

In the first paragraph of the Rationale for the Australian Curriculum Health and
Physical Education (ACARA, 2014) it states:

The Health and Physical Education learning area has strong foundations in scientific
fields such as physiology, nutrition, biomechanics and psychology which inform what
we understand about healthy, safe and active choices. The Australian Curriculum:
Health and Physical Education (F–10) is informed by these sciences and offers
students an experiential curriculum that is contemporary, relevant, challenging,
enjoyable and physically active (p. 4).
Of particular note is the continued privileging of a technocratic approach and physical science in the national curriculum. This focus on medico-science is continued later in the Rationale where it states, about PE:

As a foundation for lifelong physical activity participation and enhanced performance, students develop proficiency in movement skills, physical activities and movement concepts and acquire an understanding of the science behind how the body moves (ACARA, 2014, p. 4).

A number of recurring themes from the PE and school sport figuration examined in this thesis are evident in the above statement along with a repeated emphasis upon science. Those themes are, the mention of ‘lifelong physical activity’, ‘performance’ and ‘skills’. It can be contended that those repeated themes are part of a long-term process of what PE amounts to. Although it states in the rationale, that a strengths based approach, and critical enquiry are main foci, there is limited mention of Indigenous culture in the PE content included for Year 7 to 10. It can be assumed then that technocratic knowledge remains the privileged content that counts in the Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014). This continuation of what is taken to be the privileged knowledge is concerning within the scope of this thesis, because it suggests ‘carry on as before’.

It is argued that status quo is also emphasized through the way that the General Capabilities are presented in the final curriculum. The General Capabilities are written in generic terms, included verbatim in all Australian Curriculum KLAs. ‘Cultural Understanding’ (ACARA, 2012b) is kept as a General Capability but has been renamed ‘Intercultural Understanding’ (ACARA, 2014).

An icon for intercultural understanding is used in the Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014) to show teachers where they can realize this general capability in their pedagogy. The use of this icon within PE content for Year 7 to 10 is in the
broad context of student participation in physical activity. This focus includes students being taught about sports, games and dance forms from around the world including those that have diffused to Australia. In the Year 9 and 10 content the intercultural understanding icon is linked to the content statement “examine the role physical activity, outdoor recreation and sport play in the lives of Australians and investigate how this has changed over time” (ACARA, 2014, p. 51). A suggested elaboration for this content is that students can analyse “…the significant contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to sport in Australia” (ACARA, 2014, p. 51). The inclusion and wording of this elaboration closely resembles how the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education perspective in HPE is acknowledged in the Health and Physical Education Curriculum Framework (ACT DET, 1994). There is a continuation then, of a focus on successful Indigenous sports people at a curriculum policy level within the PE and school sport figuration.

The same three cross-curriculum priorities are also retained from the Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2012b). Much of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures cross-curriculum priority is mentioned verbatim, in a revised and elaborated statement to that provided in the shape document (ACARA, 2012b). Included in a description of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures cross-curriculum priority is the statement “students also have the opportunity to participate in physical activities and cultural practices such as traditional and contemporary Indigenous games” (ACARA, 2014, p. 15). This is the only mention of Indigenous games in the entire Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014). While there is no guidance about how those games should be taught, it is stated that each of the three cross-curriculum priorities are embedded across all learning areas (ACARA, 2014).
The use of icons is again adopted to signal where the three priorities are explicitly included in teaching and learning. It is mentioned that the priorities will “...have a strong but varying presence depending on their relevance to the learning areas” (ACARA, 2014, p. 218). To assist teachers in embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, a theoretical framework is provided. This framework, based upon the unique identity of Indigenous peoples takes into account three inter-related areas of identity which are Country/Place, People and Culture (ACARA, 2014).

Of note to this study is that under the ‘movement and physical activity’ sub-heading (the heading concerned with PE) of the Year 7 to 8 and Year 9 to 10 content descriptions, the icon for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures cross-curriculum priority is absent. This silence is important, because it means that Indigenous physical activity is not signposted within the PE content of the Australian Curriculum. Therefore teachers who seek guidance from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander icon in informing their teaching and learning may think that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures cross-curriculum priority does not have a presence in PE. Hence a similar problem arises to that noted earlier in the thesis in Every Chance to Learn (ACT DET, 2007), where interdisciplinary ELAs lacked connection to ELA 13. Further, the omission of the icon for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures cross-curriculum priority is contrary to the claim mentioned above, that all three cross-curriculum priorities are embedded across all learning areas.

The main emphasis within the PE domain of the curriculum, is on the technocratic scientific knowledge that has historically been privileged in Australian PE, since the middle of the twentieth century. If one considers the overall length of the new curriculum, 223 pages, Indigenous mention in PE is limited. How intercultural understanding and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures cross-curriculum priority have been included
within the ‘movement and physical activity’ section means that Indigenous cultural inclusion is limited in PE. Again, there is the potential for teachers to include in their teaching how Indigenous peoples have helped the dominant culture, and not mention Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island sports and physical activities. Therefore, it can be argued that what has historically been done in the name of PE has remained largely unaltered within the scope of the Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014).

9.5.2 Changes in physical education teacher education

Since data was collected, Indigenous content has been programmed in primary school pre-service PETE at the university local to the three schools. This has been achieved through scheduling Indigenous content in tutorials for the two HPE units that are taught as part of the primary teaching degree. In the pre-service secondary teaching program for future HPE teachers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island content in PE has yet to be included in such a structured way. However, since 2014 students have been introduced to Indigenous perspectives informally outside of their compulsory programs of study. The intention is that those perspectives will in the future have a more prominent place in PETE through a Bachelor degree in HPE being reintroduced at the university from 2016.

Through primary and secondary pre-service teachers being exposed to Aboriginal and Torres Island sports and games as part of PETE there is perhaps more likelihood that they will teach this content when they become teachers. Exposure to this knowledge in PETE may assist in modifying habitus, accepting that instigating change in habitus in adults is challenging because habitus is largely formed in the early years (Elias, 1998b). Through including Indigenous content as part of PETE stronger connections with the Australian Curriculum for Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014) are possible. Future HPE teachers by being taught Indigenous content through the Australian Curriculum for Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2014) will learn Indigenous games in addition to
Eurocentric games as part of their childhood PE experiences. Consequently Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island games will be included as part of the early habitus of future HPE teachers and through becoming the ‘norm’ may even influence decisions by individuals to become HPE teachers as adults.

9.5.3 The United Ngunnawal Elders Council

Another way in which HPE teacher habitus can be influenced is through assistance from the United Ngunnawal Elders Council who represent the Ngunnawal people as the traditional Aboriginal owners of the land that is now the ACT. The researcher was invited in 2013 to assist the Elder in Residence at the local PETE university to help write a statement about how Indigenous content should be taught in PE. This statement is near completion and addresses some of the barriers expressed by HPE teachers, real and perceived, that adversely affect the teaching of Indigenous perspectives in PE.

9.5.4 The growing popularity of buroinjin

In ACT school sport there has been increasing interest in buroinjin with enough schools now participating in the game as part of ACT SSSA to necessitate separate Northside and Southside competitions to be held instead of a single event. Since data was collected, School A has taken a lead role in organising the Northside competition, as well as teaching the game as part of PE. Further, an Indigenous suicide awareness raising buroinjin event that involved ACT ETD schools and the wider Indigenous and non-Indigenous community was held for the first time in October 2014. This event where rugby union sports celebrities played the game, also helped raise the profile of buroinjin in the ACT by attracting substantial media interest. Mainstream sport celebrities by playing buroinjin helped raise the profile of Indigenous games in the ACT.

Despite the success of the buroinjin suicide awareness event, the researcher along with a colleague from the local university where the competition was also held, were the only
PETE staff to attend. The other two PETE staff, who were also Canberra HPE teachers with decades of teaching experience between them, were invited to play but declined to be involved. No reason was given for their unavailability. Likewise, only a single team of pre-service HPE teachers comprising eight players took part from a cohort of more than 50 students. The lack of interest from staff and students suggests that buroinjin, despite its increased popularity in state schools, is not yet as valued in the PETE environment. There were many similarities in this indifferent attitude in the PETE context with what was demonstrated by HPE teachers at School C. All of the HPE teachers at School C were reported by ICF C as opting to attend a primary school athletics event rather than the ACT SSSA buroinjin event. There is a sense in those examples that if Indigenous games and sport really mattered, or were of genuine interest to pre-service and in-service HPE teachers, there would be greater involvement by them.

Nonetheless, the increasing popularity of buroinjin, at least at a school sport level illustrates that the figuration is changing and like all figurations is in constant flux. Another indicator of the dynamic nature of the figuration, is that buroinjin is to be included within a revised edition of the ACT ETD Physical Education and Sport Policy and Implementation Guidelines (ACT ETD, 2014b).

The examples mentioned in this section are indicative of a gradual change towards greater inclusion of Indigenous perspectives mainly in school sport. In figurational terms, this shift demonstrates increased variability and diminished contrasts (Elias, 1998b).

9.6 Limitations of the Research

Perhaps the most important limitation of the research is the non-Indigenous status of the researcher. Through being non-Indigenous the researcher was unable to fully understand the cultural nuances of the Indigenous peoples involved in the research. However, the study was only partly concerned with Indigenous peoples, albeit issues pertaining to Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Island peoples were central. Much of the research was also about the non-Indigenous employees who share the PE and school sport figuration with the Indigenous students and their understandings of Indigeneity and the nature of Eurocentric PE and school sport.

Having a non-Indigenous background, albeit not Australian, and working as an HPE teacher in the ACT ETD system meant that the writer had a high level of involvement in the research. This involvement though, was also considered advantageous as well as being a limitation. Researcher involvement was a benefit because it meant that the writer had some existing knowledge, interest, and understanding of traditional PE and school sport. However, because the researcher had not grown up in Australia his habitus is somewhat different from Australian HPE teachers. In addition, the researcher was not a trained HPE teacher when he commenced the research. Therefore, he had a relatively detached view of what PE meant when he commenced the research. In other words, the writer had no strong beliefs about what PE was and what it was not. The ‘flip side’ of this lack of involvement and association with the research topic as a recent migrant, was a lack of cultural knowledge and understanding about Indigenous peoples. Through including ICFs and Indigenous supervisors as part of the research design, this shortcoming was able to be addressed to some extent.

Another main limitation was that documentary data sources were restricted according to what was made available by the schools, and what could be obtained from archive sources. Publications, especially PE specific school documents were not in abundance, with School B providing the least amount of material overall and being unable to provide any PE curricula or program plans. A further limitation was perhaps that only a small number of system level documents were selected and analysed in creating the macro level. The publications chosen were felt to be main documents that the staff in the three schools used, and included those that
related to Indigenous education. However, it is argued that having limited access to a broader range of documents did not compromise the research.

Through using multiple data sources and triangulation it is maintained that the research questions were adequately answered. Likewise, in considering the sociogenesis of the figuration there were some gaps in the data. At School C for example, there was a lack of information for the 1940s and 1950s. However data from before and after that period showed that the figuration remained relatively unaffected during the 1940s and 1950s with the same kinds of sports and physical activities and their associated values prevailing.

It is acknowledged that there are other key players within the figuration that were not included as participants in this research. An example is the parents and carers of the Indigenous students, who it can be assumed had a level of influence over the types of activities that the students took part in. In their interviews, the Indigenous students were afforded the opportunity to talk about the influence of family and friends. Therefore this weakness was accordingly addressed. Another limitation was restricted access to the schools which made requesting any additional information challenging. This meant that information that was not identified at the time of the scheduled visits to the schools to carry out interviews for example, was delayed or was not forthcoming.

9.7 Contribution to the Field

One of the main ways in which this study contributes to the field of research is that figurational sociology regards power relationships as central to issues of race with physical and cultural differences being secondary. The process-oriented positioning of social power as the principal factor in relationships between non-Indigenous Australians and Indigenous peoples has never been applied in the Australian PE and school sport context before. Nor have other aspects of Elias’s work relating to habitus, *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 1978a), involvement and detachment or established and outsider theory. Figurational sociology was
used here as an alternative way to view intercultural relations in the Australian PE and school sport setting. Further, in general terms, there has been no research of any kind undertaken previously about how Indigenous students experience PE and school sport in the ACT.

This research also contributes to the field because it builds on the work of Ken Edwards (ASC, 2009; Edwards, 2009) by examining the reasons why Yulunga (ASC, 2009) as a comprehensive resource, endorsed by the ASC, has had little uptake at the three sites. This research showed that the existence of a resource is in itself, not enough to ensure that it is used. Further, this research also demonstrated that making the teaching of Indigenous content arguably more prescriptive than previous curricula is insufficient in ensuring that it is taught. Instead, it is the collective actions of the non-Indigenous established group of HPE executive teachers, HPE teachers and principals through their relative power within the figuration that decides what is, and what is not included in PE and school sport.

Most research to date about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island sport, including racialization, has been carried out in the Indigenous adult sporting context (Adair, 2012; Tatz, 1987, 1995) with less attention being paid to school aged students. The findings from this research adds to the existing literature (such as Nelson, 2009) by showing that racialization of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples occurs in school aged sport as well as in PE in the ACT. Also, this research found that HPE teachers, non-Indigenous students and the Indigenous students themselves at the schools were compliant in this racialization.

9.8 Future Research

In order for Indigenous perspectives to have increased presence and sustainability in PE and school sport there is a requirement for further research to be carried out in this area. Reference to Indigenous education in current pre-service and in-service PE texts currently tends to be tokenistic and superficial, and gives the impression that Indigenous peoples can be considered as a homogenous group with a few ‘common’ defining characteristics. Research is
also required to ensure that Indigenous perspectives in PE are discussed beyond ‘strategies’ which tends to be the current focus. Such approaches are reductionist, as they oversimplify the issues involved by offering unidirectional, often ‘scientific’ solutions to complex social problems. Instead, there should be a greater socio-cultural focus and comprehensive discussion about why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives have been historically absent from most state and territory curricula.

It would be beneficial for further research to be carried out into the habitus and predispositions of HPE policy writers. Those individuals while not having ‘face to face’ contact with Indigenous students, nonetheless affect how those students experience PE. It would be interesting to find out how PE policy writer habitus affects what is, and what is not included within curricula. Also of interest would be insight into the associated power relationships within the PE curriculum writer figuration such as the influence of Federal government, and other processes that inform curriculum decisions and the values and beliefs that count. Additional research is essential for increased mention of Indigenous content in PE and school sport to be realized. Otherwise there is every chance that Eurocentric approaches will prevail.

In addition, there is a requirement for additional research in the sports science area to be carried out such as the proposed study by Pitsliadis (2014c) to find out if Indigenous Australians have any kind of genetic advantage in sport over non-Indigenous Australians. As was discussed in this thesis sports science research in this area is fraught with difficulty. However, sports science research may well provide Australian specific evidence that endeavours in this area are fruitless for the reasons argued in this research. Sports science findings that show no evidence for ‘natural ability’ amongst Indigenous peoples in sport would do much to reduce the racialization of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as ‘physical’ peoples. Further, such findings would silence, or at least encourage individuals
such as HPE teachers and Indigenous peoples to reconsider making unsubstantiated comments about supposed ‘innate’ abilities.

**9.9 Conclusion**

This research contends that the Australian HPE teaching profession as a dominant group act as ‘gatekeepers’ in deciding what and how much Indigenous content is included in PE and school sport. Also, those same people decide the school sport that is most valued and promoted. The relative power of non-Indigenous principals, HPE executive and Level 1 HPE teachers within the PE and school sport figuration studied in this research is a major obstacle in decolonizing a Eurocentric curriculum. Through making PE and school sport more balanced to include Indigenous physical activity forms, it is argued that more socially just provision is offered. However, incorporating Indigenous perspectives into PE and school sport is fraught with difficulty and layers of complexity, and the researcher concurs with Gray and Beresford (2008) that improving Indigenous outcomes in education generally is a “formidable challenge” (p. 215). Although this research points to the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in PE and school sport as being a complex undertaking, it is nonetheless important for HPE teachers to accept this challenge. Only by HPE teachers addressing the issues raised in this research can the Indigenous student experience of PE and school sport move beyond one that is Eurocentric.

Including Indigenous perspectives is much more than teachers ‘doing their homework’ and embracing this ‘new material’ as some writers contend. A characteristic of HPE teachers and teachers generally, as this research has shown, is that they are time poor. Although individual teachers are capable of, and do instigate change in matters such as Indigenous education, individual efforts are limited in effectiveness. Instead, it would appear that sustainable, meaningful and lasting change can only be realized from a multi-agency and multi-dimensional approach. Such an approach requires commitment from government and
non-government agencies alike, including departments of education, schools, universities and importantly Indigenous communities on a national basis (Gray & Beresford, 2008; New South Wales Department of Education and Training and New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated, 2004). As part of this suggested process there is a requirement for principals and teachers at an individual and group level to work towards modifying their habitus in order to acknowledge, value and be proactive at including Indigenous perspectives in PE.

What was found at the three schools was a Eurocentric model of PE and school sport built upon ‘invented tradition’ and beliefs about mainly British and English knowledge in particular, being superior. This supposed ‘superiority’ shared by the non-Indigenous individuals in the PE and school sport figuration closely resembles what Elias and Scotson (1994) observed in their Winston Parva study. Elias and Scotson (1994), found what they claimed to be a common occurrence across all human societies, that members of groups with greater power tend to consider themselves superior to individuals from interdependent groups who have lesser power. The main issue in this research then, was that within the PE and school sport figuration examined, some principals and executive HPE teachers and Level 1 HPE teachers as an established group believed that the PE and school sport offered was appropriate for all students, and was superior to alternative knowledge forms. While there were comments in the interviews about Indigenous aspects of the curriculum being valued, there was very little evidence of this part of the curriculum being realized.
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doi:10.1080/0022027960280306


doi:10.1080/13573320600813440

Appendices
Appendix A

The Role of the Indigenous Critical Friends (ICFs) in the Research

- To act generally as a soundboard for cultural authenticity as and when required throughout the course of the study (2–3 hours approximately).
- To help the researcher select and contact the Indigenous students who will take part as research participants in the study – up to 20 students at each site (3–4 hours approximately).
- To act as a liaison person for the researcher for all matters that relate to the Indigenous students throughout the course of the study. This will involve as required assisting the researcher in answering questions from the Indigenous students or their parents/carers (6 hours approximately).
- To encourage Indigenous students from their respective school to become involved in the study, distribute, follow-up and/or collect participant information and consent forms for the Indigenous students (5 hours approximately).
- To assist in finding a suitable venue for and be present at the Indigenous student group interviews (1 hour approximately).
- To read transcripts from the Indigenous student group interviews to check for their accuracy (3 hours approximately).
- To read and comment upon the researcher’s analysis of the interview transcripts from the Indigenous student group interviews and the discussion and conclusion chapters of the research. The purpose of this particular role will be to ensure cultural authenticity (3–4 hours approximately).

Total: 26–28 hours approximately
Appendix B

ACT DET Approval to Carry Out Research Letter

Mr John Williams
56 Walker Crescont
NARRABUNDAH ACT 2605

APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Dear Mr Williams

Thank you for your application to conduct the proposed research titled *An Investigation of the aspirations of Year 7 to 10 Indigenous students in Physical Education and School Sport in Public High Schools in the Australian Capital Territory.*

I am pleased to inform you that the ACT Department of Education and Training has approved your research with the following conditions:

- the first phase of the research will be concluded by March 2012
- Annual Progress Reports are submitted in March 2012 and March 2013
- upon completion of your research in March 2014, please forward a copy of your final thesis document, within one month, either electronically to det.research@act.gov.au or by mail to the following address:
  
  Senior Manager
  Measurement, Monitoring and Reporting
  ACT Department of Education and Training
  GPO Box 158
  CANBERRA ACT 2601

Departmental approval is given for research in [REDACTED]

You may now directly approach the principal, with a copy of this approval letter, for permission to carry out your research. It will be at the discretion of the principal as to whether your research can proceed at the school.

As stated on the Department’s website, a person entering a school to conduct research is considered a *visitor* to a school. Visitors must comply with the *Visitors in Schools Policy* available at [http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policy_a-z](http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policy_a-z)

If you require any assistance please contact Larissa Cowlishaw on (02) 6207 1032 or at larissa.cowlishaw@act.gov.au

Best wishes with your research.

Yours sincerely

Mr Tim Grace
Senior Manager
Measurement, Monitoring and Reporting Branch

16 March 2011
Appendix C

Interview Questions

Questions asked to the Principals

1. How old is the school?
2. How many Indigenous students attend the school?
3. What is the gender breakdown of those students?
4. Does the School have a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)?
5. Can I have access to school documentation such as the RAP plan?
6. As a Principal can you tell me to what extent you value Indigenous content in PE and School Sport?
7. How are Indigenous perspectives included in PE?
8. Do you think there should be an Indigenous focus in PE and School Sport?
9. In PE do you know if there’s been any unit written for Indigenous perspectives?
10. What constraints do your teachers experience in their jobs?
Questions asked to the Level 1 and Level 2 HPE teachers in their Group Interviews

1. Why did you become a Health and Physical Education teacher?
2. What is PE? How would you define it in 1 or 2 sentences?
3. Why do you think Indigenous student like or dislike PE in your school?
4. What do you think PE means for Indigenous students in the school?
5. Are there any gender differences in how Indigenous male students experience PE?
6. Is the way that PE is taught to Indigenous students important and why?
7. Why do you think Indigenous cultural awareness on the part of PE teachers might be important in teaching PE to Indigenous students?
8. Do you think that schools in the ACT should have explicit Indigenous content in their PE programs and if so why?
9. Why do you think PE might be an important subject in your school for ‘closing the gap’?
10. How do you include Indigenous content in PE?
11. How was the content informed?
12. Were Indigenous people involved in informing the content?
13. When was the content introduced?
14. Is the content enough and appropriate?
15. How does the amount of Indigenous content influence the interest of the Indigenous students in PE?
16. To what extent do you feel that you have the skills and knowledge to teach Indigenous PE content?
17. Who and where would you go to seek advice about delivering Indigenous PE content?
18. To what extent do you feel that Every Chance to Learn gives you clarity on how to deliver Indigenous PE content?
19. Have you ever seen the ACT ETD Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategy 2010–2013?

20. Do you find it easy to evaluate, comprehend and put into practice new policy at school?

21. How do you think you could improve Indigenous PE content in your school?

22. An ACT Indigenous community member said that when it comes to Western sports that schools are keen for Indigenous students to represent the school but that when it comes to Indigenous games schools are not interested. Do you agree or disagree?

23. Similarly, an Indigenous Education Officer told me that often teachers see Indigenous sport as ‘black man, black issue’. What do you think?

24. Are there any constraints that prevent you from delivering Indigenous PE content?
   Time constraints?

25. Lastly, are you happy for the IEOs to see the transcript?
Questions asked to the Indigenous Students

1. What Year are you in?
2. Do you identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both?
3. What do you like about PE?
4. Is there anything that you do not like about PE?
5. Is there anything that you would change in PE?
6. Compared to other subjects, what grades do you get in PE?
7. What School Sport do you play?
8. What sports do the teachers encourage you to play at school as part of School Sport?
9. To what extent do the teachers respect you in PE?
10. Do you think that black people are naturally good at sport?
11. What Indigenous content do you have in PE?
12. Do you do any traditional games in PE?
13. Do you think that there should be Indigenous content in PE?
14. How would it make you feel about PE if there was Indigenous content included?
15. Is there an expectation at the school that because you are black that you should be good at sport?
Questions asked to the IEOs in their Group Interview

1. How long have you been or were the IEO at your school?
2. What does your job involve?
3. What do you like and dislike about your job?
4. To what extent do you feel valued by the principals and HPE teachers?
5. I have now interviewed all the HPE staff and there was almost no Indigenous content in PE. Why do you think that is the case?
6. Do Indigenous students like PE do you think?
7. What does PE mean for Indigenous students?
8. Can PE be used to close ‘the gap’?
9. Is PE one of the reasons that Indigenous students come to school?
10. Are Indigenous students physical people? Are they naturally good at PE and sport?
11. How did you select the Indigenous students that took part in this study?
12. What were the challenges if any in doing this?
13. Has your principal ever approached you about teaching Indigenous traditional games in the school?
14. Have you ever been asked to contribute to any curriculum documents regarding this?
15. Do you think there should be Indigenous content like traditional games in PE? If so who in the school should be responsible for leading that development?
16. Has the Level 2 HPE teacher ever asked you to teach traditional games in the PE classes?
17. Some of the HPE teachers said that to introduce the games there should be more involvement from the IEOs.

For example:
“…and if our Indigenous officer had... you know, said come into PE and said ‘look I’ve got this great game let’s do it’, I’m sure we would have done it”.

INT Okay, alright, so you’re open to... to that kind of thing. Like...

“Yeah, absolutely. I mean you would always go up and give something... give something a try and see how it went”.

“... and the other factor would be... lack of promotion... by Indigenous people. Not coming in and saying ‘hey I’ve got this great game. Here’s the kit, here’s what you need’, you know…You’ll get Touch ringing you up, Oztag ringing you up. All different sports…”.

18. Have you ever talked to the HPE staff about Buroinjin and how was that received?

19. Do you think that the PE staff see traditional games and Buroinjin for example as ‘black man black issue’? That’s for you to organize and not us.

20. Also someone locally from the Indigenous community said that when it comes to school sport the schools are happy for the Indigenous students to represent the school in Western games but when it comes to Indigenous games they’re not interested.

21. What sports do you think HPE teachers direct the Indigenous students towards when it comes to school sport?

22. How easy was it to get Buroinjin on the ACT SSSA sports calendar?

23. Do you feel you get enough support from HPE staff in organising the Buroinjin Day?
Appendix D

School Facility Photographs and Architectural Plan for School B

School A

School A Basketball Hoop

School A Cricket Pitch

School A Goal Posts

School A Gym Markings

School A Handball Markings

School A Netball Post
School B

School B Hall

School B Basketball Courts

School B Gym

School B Tennis Courts

School B Oval
School C

School C Basketball Courts

School C Oval

School C Tennis Courts

School C Indoor Hall

School C Gym Markings
Architectural Plan for School B
Appendix E

School C (2003) School Development Report Mapping Table Indicating Where the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students Across Curriculum Perspective Can Be Likely Realized Across Each of the Year Groups (7–10) for PE

System Initiatives and School Priorities

The following table charts the likely stages where various initiatives and priorities can be achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>7PE</th>
<th>8PE</th>
<th>9PE</th>
<th>10PE</th>
<th>WIS</th>
<th>FFB</th>
<th>SP L</th>
<th>OE</th>
<th>Dance</th>
<th>Art</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discovering Democracy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enterprise Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>French Perspective</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Access Asia</td>
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<td>A TSI Education</td>
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<td>Australian Education</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment Education</td>
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<td>Gender Equity</td>
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<td>LUAC</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Multicultural Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Needs</td>
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<td>Literacy and Numeracy</td>
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</table>

Our curriculum also reflects the priorities identified in the High School Development Program.

- Developing critical literacies - reading the world.
- Building communities - learning to live together.
- Undertaking real life research and future study.
- Understanding cultural, ethical and environmental heritages.
### Across Curriculum Perspective

Does your Faculty include these aspects of the curriculum:

- a. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- b. Australian Perspective
- c. Environment Education
- d. Gender Equity
- e. Information Technology
- f. Language for understanding
- g. Special Needs Education
- h. Work Education
- i. Multi-cultural Education

### Course / Unit Description

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<th>Y8</th>
<th>Y9</th>
<th>Y10</th>
<th>Course / Unit Description</th>
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<td>In every class through use of examples of people and/or cultures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Promote awareness of Indigenous traditions</td>
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<td>* Respect for tradition</td>
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<td>Sports Coaching 1/2</td>
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<td>Camp Re: Sport</td>
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<td>In each unit where possible</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Experienced programs - incl. activities in smaller size groups</td>
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<td>Extension of sport: sports coaching in the school</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thru use of traditional ceremonies</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Foreign activities sports/sports understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other areas to include are

- a. Literacy
Appendix G

School A (2003) School Development Report Extract Showing How the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students Across Curriculum Perspective is Included Through the Programming of Traditional Games in PE

10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Across Curriculum Perspective

Are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives included in your school’s curriculum documents? □ YES □ NO
Are they being addressed in practice at classroom level? □ YES □ NO
If your response is YES, give examples of how they are addressed.
- Flag designs, spatial maths, cultural maths Year 8 assignment
- Statistics in Years 9 and 10
- Number system in aboriginal culture Year 7
- Traditional games in PE classes
- SOSE racism unit – stolen generation, Australian history - impact of European settlement
- Units which deal with racial issues through Australian writers
- Poetry with indigenous writers
- Autobiography of indigenous writers
- Choice of movies – Rabbit Proof Fence, Australian Rules Yolngu Boy
- Technology students examine the processes associated with the design and use of technology and materials in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander cultures.
- Arts Students exposed to materials that relate to and have been created by Aboriginals & Torres Strait islanders.
- Arts students explore and analyse the many ways and forms of Aboriginal art and craft.

a. Have you evaluated the effectiveness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs? □ YES □ NO
Give a brief description of the evaluation process used.

b. What are your plans to improve the delivery of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander across curriculum perspective?
- After school homework session for ASSPA students of LOTE, mathematics
- Continued dialogue with ASSPA team
- 2002 Indigenous Day to be repeated in 2003

11. Equity and Diversity

How are Equity and Diversity Issues addressed in your school’s curriculum and at classroom level? If they are not being addressed, what future plans and time lines are in place to adjust the curriculum?

- LUAC
- Access to computers
- Gender balance in topics chosen for study
- Choice of topics/classes in PE including a girls only program
- Aussie Optimism, MindMatter
- Choice of texts in English
- PE programs for students with disabilities
- Non gender or racially specific design brief and job choices available to students in technology class
- Cooperative tasks, negotiation and groupwork
Appendix H

Tables 6, 7 and 8 Showing School Sport That Was Offered at Schools A, B and C Spanning the Figureation

Table 6

School A Mention of School Sport in Year Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rugby Union</th>
<th>Rugby League</th>
<th>AFL</th>
<th>Hockey</th>
<th>Basketball</th>
<th>Soccer</th>
<th>Volleyball</th>
<th>Softball</th>
<th>Tennis</th>
<th>Table Tennis</th>
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Table 7  
*School B Mention of School Sport in Year Books*

<p>| Year/Sp | Rugby Union | Rugby League | AFL | Hockey | Basketball | Soccer | Volleyball | Softball | Tennis | Netball | Cricket | Baseball | Touch Football | Futsal | Indoor Cricket | Badminton | Swimming Carnival | Cross Country Carnival | Athletics Carnival |
|---------|-------------|--------------|-----|--------|------------|--------|-------------|----------|--------|---------|---------|----------|-------------|--------------|--------|-----------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1984    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 1985    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 1987    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 1989    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 1990    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 1991    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 1993    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 1994    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 1995    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 1996    | X           | X            |     | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 1998    | X           | X            |     | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 2000    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      | X               |                       |                   |
| 2001    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 2002    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 2003    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 2004    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 2005    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 2006    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 2007    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 2009    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 2010    | X           | X            | X   | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |
| 2011    | X           | X            |     | X      | X         | X      | X           | X        | X      | X       | X       | X        | X           | X            | X      |                 |                       |                   |</p>
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*An Indigenous sports day is included in the 2010 Year Book. It is the Inaugural ACT SSSA Buroinjin competition report.

** The 2011 ACT SSSA Buroinjin competition is reported in the 2011 Year Book.