

INTERMARRIAGE IN AUSTRALIA: Patterns by birthplace, ancestry, religion and indigenous status

a report using data from the 2006 Census

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1 INTRODUCTION

Characteristics such as birthplace, ancestry, religion and indigenous status are traditionally strong determinants of partner choice. While many individuals choose to partner with someone of similar background, others cross racial, ethnic and/or religious barriers in their choice of a spouse. Intermarriage—defined here as formal or informal (de facto) heterosexual marriage between two people who differ by country of birth, ancestry, religion or indigenous status—has been a subject of much interest to both social scientists and the broader community, particularly in Australia, with its large migration program and culturally diverse population.

This interest arises in part from the diverse cultural and national origin of Australia's migrant population and from the official endorsement of cultural diversity or multiculturalism as a cherished feature of Australian society. Some migrant groups have traditionally discouraged or proscribed marriage outside the group boundaries—known as 'exogamy', in the language of sociology—and, conversely, have encouraged or prescribed marriage within the group, or 'endogamy'. Some commentators have expressed concern that multiculturalism may encourage endogamy and thereby perpetuate group boundaries (Blainey 1994).

The extent of partnering across ethnic and religious lines is a key indicator of social integration. In Australia, this is particularly the case where this partnering is between persons of non-Anglo-Celtic background and Australia-born persons whose background is Anglo-Celtic, or between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. Such intermarriage implies that social barriers between different groups are eroding. In turn, intermarriage facilitates the further erosion of group boundaries by binding families and communities of different ethnic or

religious background together; often requiring compromise and co-operation in, for example, the raising of children.

If such intermarriage is occurring on a large scale, it implies that concerns about the social segregation of migrant groups in Australian society are unfounded. Similarly, the extent to which Australians are partnering across indigenous/non-indigenous lines is an important indicator of whether past social or cultural divisions between the indigenous and non-indigenous communities have dissipated.

1.1 Key sociological themes

At the most basic level, intermarriage is considered to be the outcome of close social interactions between members of different groups (Kalmijn and Flap 2001). The view that intermarriage implies a high level of social integration is well expressed by the American sociologists Alba and Nee (2003 p. 90):

A high rate of intermarriage signals that the social distance between the groups involved is small and that individuals of putatively different ethnic backgrounds no longer perceive social and cultural differences significant enough to create a barrier to long-term union. (In this sense, intermarriage could be said to provide a test of the existence and salience of a social boundary between ethnic categories.)

Intermarriage across ethnic or religious groups may also mean that these groups are becoming more similar with regard to other social and demographic characteristics. People tend to look for partners with similar educational and class backgrounds to themselves (Kalmijn 1998). Where minority groups are socially or economically disadvantaged relative to the rest of society, exogamy is less likely, since prospective marriage partners are unlikely to bridge this gulf. Conversely, the sociological literature suggests that intermarriage by ethnic and religious groups will be relatively high where the members of a community achieve

upward social mobility. Relatively high levels of education, in particular, are often found to facilitate intermarriage (Kalmijn 1998; Sherkat 2004). Studies of third and later generation Americans of Southern and Eastern European origin, which show high levels of intermarriage, support this conclusion (Alba and Nee 2003). In the Australian context the significant educational and occupational mobility amongst the second generation would suggest a similar outcome (Khoo and Birrell 2002).

The changing patterns of family relationships have also favoured exogamy. In the past, the choice of marriage partners was often constrained by parents' preferences. In a patriarchal setting the father has the power and usually the motivation to shape these 'choices' (Therborn 2004). The collapse of patriarchal authority over the past century throughout the developed world has increased the autonomy of young people in making their choice of partner. In the process they are less constrained by parental concerns about the socio-economic, religious or ethnic status of their choices. This autonomy has been enhanced by greater mobility of young people, which diminishes the scope for parents to shape partner choice. Finally, the increasingly secular and individualistic nature of modern societies, along with the fading salience of religious commitments, all imply an opening up of the range of eligible partners.

However, change is not necessarily unidirectional. In fact, the growth of 'identity politics' (Appiah 2006) or the 'politics of recognition' (Connolly, Leach and Walsh 2007) may imply a greater propensity to take pride in group identity, and a greater interest in its preservation. Further, circumstances that limit social mobility are likely to perpetuate barriers to intermarriage. Such barriers can arise from within the mainstream community—remnants of prejudice towards 'others'—or within

minority ethnic, religious or indigenous communities themselves.

1.2 Background to this study

Early work on ethnic intermarriage among first- and second-generation Australians used marriage registration data, which included information on country of birth (Price 1982; Gray 1987; Young 1991; Price 1993).

Unfortunately, data on the birthplaces of the parents of marriage partners are no longer available, so that it is no longer possible to examine intermarriage patterns among the second generation using marriage registration data. Census data on birthplace, ancestry and birthplace of parents provide alternative measures. There are a number of studies that have used data from censuses to examine intermarriage in Australia (Gariano 1994; Gariano and Rutland 1997; Birrell and Hirst 2002; Khoo 2004).

The census provides information on religion and indigenous status as well as on birthplace and ancestry, enabling a more detailed study of intermarriage across all these sub-group boundaries in Australia. Using data from the 2006 census, this paper assesses the extent of intermarriage by birthplace, ancestry, religion and indigenous status in Australian society. Where possible, trend data are used to assess the direction of change in patterns of intermarriage in Australia.

The data presented relate to partnered persons only. There were inevitably some partnered census respondents who did not state their indigenous status, birthplace, ancestry or religion. Those for whom these characteristics were not stated are excluded from the calculations in the following analysis. However, couples are included in the calculations if one partner stated their marital status but the other did not.

2 INDIGENOUS INTERMARRIAGE

To what extent do indigenous Australians mix with non-indigenous persons when forming partnerships? While intermarriage in this context may be viewed as a development that is positive (part of the mixing of backgrounds and cultures that contributes towards a diverse and tolerant society) or negative (signifying the dilution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander blood and cultures), it is important to examine the extent of its occurrence, since intermarriage both reflects and affects the number of people identifying as indigenous and the parameters of indigenous affairs policy.

The analysis of intermarriage between persons identifying as indigenous and non-indigenous raises some unique measurement issues. For official purposes, an indigenous person is one who is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives. The census question is aimed at the first and second parts of this definition (ABS 2004a). However, census respondents are simply asked whether they or other members of their household are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.

Australian residents have shown an increased propensity to identify as indigenous. The number identifying as such in recent censuses rose from 250,738 in 1986 to 414,390 in 1996 (ABS 2006), and 455,028 in 2006, representing 2.4 per cent of Australia's population (ABS 2007b). Over and above natural increase, more people have come to think of themselves as indigenous and/or are more inclined to declare themselves as such on the census returns over the past couple of decades. This in turn may imply greater pride in indigenous identity.

It is likely that the growing propensity to identify as indigenous has implications for intermarriage. On the one hand, it may be

that a greater willingness to assert indigenous identity is associated with engagement in indigenous political and social movements and, through this engagement, narrows the range of eligible partners to those within the indigenous community. Alternatively, pride and confidence in indigenous identity may be associated with greater engagement with non-indigenous Australians. If so this might increase opportunities to partner outside of the indigenous community.

The level of intermarriage on the part of indigenous persons is inevitably linked to the issue of socio-economic mobility. Indeed, intermarriage can be interpreted as a significant measure of this mobility. As argued in the introduction to this study, socio-economic factors are fundamental in shaping partnering decisions. People tend not to partner across a sharp socio-economic divide, since those from more affluent backgrounds usually differ markedly from disadvantaged groups in terms of lifestyle, education and contacts. Recent public discussion about indigenous issues has concentrated on the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians in terms of health indicators, life expectancy and educational attainment. The pronounced socio-economic differences between indigenous and non-indigenous communities in Australia might be expected to minimise intermarriage.

Furthermore, in Australia, socio-economic barriers have been exacerbated by negative stereotypes and resulting prejudice towards indigenous persons. As late as the 1960s, only a small minority of non-indigenous Australians were prepared to say that they would accept a full-blood or part-Aboriginal person as a relative by marriage into their family (Goot and Rowse 2007). To the extent that these attitudes still exist, they constitute a formidable barrier to intermarriage, since formal or de facto marriages are the most intimate of social relationships.

In some societies, longstanding racial divisions and accompanying negative stereotypes have led to negligible intermarriage. As an extreme example, less than ten per cent of African Americans partner with persons of a different race (Qian 1999; Harris and Ono 2005), despite a 'remarkable' increase in interracial marriages in the United States (Joyner and Kao 2005 p. 563). As the findings below indicate, there is no parallel between indigenous/non-indigenous relationships in Australia and the deep black/white social divide in the United States. A better comparison may be with the native Americans of the United States. Studies of intermarriage within this community indicate that exogamy is

relatively high (59 per cent of native Americans were married to non-indigenous partners by 1990). The rate of exogamy was especially high amongst those who had moved to metropolitan areas where they constituted only a small proportion of residents (Nagel 1995).

Finally, there is the issue of community separation. Historically, much of the indigenous community in Australia has lived in relative geographical isolation from the non-indigenous community. For most of the 20th century this isolation has been accompanied by low levels of educational and occupational mobility among indigenous persons. Such circumstances

Table 1: Indigenous intermarriage by area of enumeration, 2001 and 2006

Area of enumeration	Indigenous proportion of 2001 population	Indigenous males				Indigenous females			
		2001 Partnered no.	2001 Exogamous ^a per cent	2006 Partnered no.	2006 Exogamous ^a per cent	2001 Partnered no.	2001 Exogamous ^a per cent	2006 Partnered no.	2006 Exogamous ^a per cent
Sydney SD	1.1	3,785	83	4,140	82	4,115	84	4,578	83
Rest of NSW	3.7	8,315	60	9,514	63	8,888	62	10,210	65
Melbourne SD	0.4	1,251	83	1,501	82	1,294	84	1,571	82
Rest of Victoria	1.1	1,260	71	1,522	72	1,389	73	1,704	75
Brisbane SD	1.8	2,718	78	3,068	79	2,949	80	3,525	81
Rest of QLD	4.9	8,725	41	10,118	44	9,964	47	11,425	49
Adelaide SD	1.1	865	73	1,017	71	1,000	76	1,138	74
Rest of SA	3.4	1,379	31	1,397	38	1,496	36	1,522	41
Perth SD	1.6	1,764	53	1,887	57	1,985	56	2,100	59
Rest of WA	8.6	4,264	21	4,078	23	4,626	25	4,402	27
Greater Hobart SD	3.0	629	84	709	82	683	85	718	82
Rest of Tasmania	1.2	1,449	80	1,504	79	1,566	81	1,719	81
Darwin SD	10.0	790	50	898	51	975	57	1,070	58
Rest of NT	50.8	5,530	5	5,175	4	5,734	8	5,416	8
ACT	1.2	433	78	467	81	382	75	419	79
Total ^b	2.4	43,196	49	47,019	52	47,085	52	51,541	55

Source: 2001 and 2006 census customised tables, ABS (2004) Experimental Estimates and Projections, Indigenous Australians 1991–2001, cat. no. 3238.0

Notes: ^a Excludes those whose partner's indigenous status was not stated or whose partner was temporarily absent on census night.

^b Total includes other territories.

might be expected to lead to marriage markets which are largely separate. The indigenous population remains less urbanised than the non-indigenous population. However, there has been a longstanding shift in the distribution of indigenous persons from the North and West of Australia to the East and the South and towards urban locations (Taylor and Bell 1999, p. 19). By 2006, 34 per cent of indigenous persons lived in major urban areas (compared with 67 per cent of non-indigenous persons) and 42 per cent in other urban areas (compared with 21 per cent of non-indigenous persons) (ABS 2007c).

2.1 Extent of intermarriage

According to the 2006 census, the majority of indigenous persons were partnered with non-indigenous persons: 52 per cent of indigenous males were partnered with non-indigenous females, while 55 per cent of indigenous females were partnered with non-indigenous males (see Table 1). Moreover, the trend is towards greater intermarriage. For both male and female indigenous persons there was an increase of three percentage points in the proportion who were partnered by non-indigenous persons over the five years 2001 to 2006.

2.2 Indigenous intermarriage by location

Table 1 indicates that the extent of intermarriage between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians varies greatly by location. The vast majority of indigenous men and women who are resident in Australia's capital cities are exogamous. In Sydney, 82 per cent of indigenous men and 83 per cent of indigenous women were partnered to non-indigenous persons. Similar levels of exogamy were recorded in Melbourne, Brisbane and Hobart.

This is a significant finding because of the substantial and growing minority of indigenous persons living in metropolitan centres (ABS 2005, 2007a)—by 2006 some 29 per cent

of all indigenous males and females who were partnered were living in Australia's metropolitan areas. Since net migration movements of indigenous persons from non-metropolitan to metropolitan areas have been small in recent decades, the growth in the metropolitan indigenous populations seems largely to reflect better enumeration and a greater propensity to self-identify as indigenous (Taylor 2003, pp. 28–29).

The level of exogamy was lower amongst the generally much larger populations of indigenous persons living outside the respective state capitals. In the case of Queensland, outside of Brisbane, 44 per cent of indigenous women had non-indigenous partners as did 49 per cent of indigenous men. This rate was also fairly low in WA, outside of Perth, where just 23 per cent of indigenous males were partnered with non-indigenous females and 27 per cent of indigenous females were partnered with non-indigenous males. In the Northern Territory, outside of Darwin, exogamy is rare: only four per cent of indigenous men and eight per cent of indigenous women were exogamous.

The relatively high level of intermarriage in capital cities is consistent with an explanation focusing on opportunities for social interaction between indigenous and non-indigenous persons: the more the opportunities, the greater the extent of intermarriage. Table 1 shows that less than one per cent of the population in most mainland capital cities is indigenous. These people have many opportunities to meet non-indigenous partners, and the great majority are intermarried. By contrast, in non-metropolitan areas such as the Northern Territory (outside Darwin), where the proportion of indigenous persons is relatively high (51 per cent), the percentage of indigenous persons in exogamous marriages is low (just eight per cent for indigenous females and four per cent for indigenous males).

Table 2: Indigenous intermarriage by educational attainment, 2006

Level of education	Males		Females		Males		Females	
	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent
	Sydney				Remaining NSW			
Degree or higher	316	90	529	90	374	82	621	78
Other post-school qualification	1,308	88	835	84	2,501	75	1,799	74
Year 11–12	545	83	808	89	968	69	1,423	70
Up to year 10	1,485	80	1,864	83	4,403	58	4,979	62
ID/NS/No attainment	482	63	547	69	1,267	47	1,389	54
Total ^b	4,136	82	4,583	83	9,513	63	10,211	65
	Melbourne				Remaining Victoria			
Degree or higher	160	88	176	87	69	86	117	90
Other post-school qualification	449	86	317	90	432	83	307	82
Year 11–12	276	81	403	84	214	84	357	82
Up to year 10	423	82	457	82	573	66	671	71
ID/NS/No attainment	191	63	222	64	234	57	249	60
Total ^b	1,499	82	1,575	82	1,522	73	1,701	75
	Brisbane				Remaining QLD			
Degree or higher	235	83	392	82	278	72	553	67
Other post-school qualification	925	85	656	83	2,382	59	1,714	59
Year 11–12	557	80	842	85	1,755	47	2,854	50
Up to year 10	1,055	75	1,295	78	4,341	39	4,926	46
ID/NS/No attainment	296	68	341	79	1,359	28	1,376	38
Total ^b	3,068	79	3,526	81	10,115	44	11,423	49
	Adelaide				Remaining SA			
Degree or higher	81	— ^c	98	— ^c	24	— ^c	58	— ^c
Other post-school qualification	291	80	216	80	261	58	198	63
Year 11–12	230	76	329	79	231	57	338	51
Up to year 10	306	63	348	65	634	28	670	33
ID/NS/No attainment	108	53	145	60	249	20	257	28
Total ^b	1,016	71	1,136	73	1,399	38	1,521	41
	Perth				Remaining WA			
Degree or higher	133	76	196	76	61	62	147	59
Other post-school qualification	458	73	311	73	666	43	443	46
Year 11–12	311	63	477	68	615	24	965	30
Up to year 10	707	47	803	50	1,978	19	2,131	23
ID/NS/No attainment	279	39	312	45	758	13	715	19
Total ^b	1,888	57	2,099	59	4,078	23	4,401	27
	Greater Hobart				Remaining Tasmania			
Degree or higher	38	— ^c	54	— ^c	46	— ^c	87	— ^c
Other post-school qualification	233	84	152	88	426	85	325	88
Year 11–12	77	— ^c	125	81	164	76	270	79
Up to year 10	293	79	319	81	724	77	873	80
ID/NS/No attainment	69	— ^c	72	— ^c	151	66	163	66
Total ^b	710	82	722	82	1,511	79	1,718	81

Table 2: Indigenous intermarriage by educational attainment, 2006

Level of education	Males		Females		Males		Females	
	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent
	Darwin				Remaining NT			
Degree or higher	56	— ^c	73	— ^c	34	— ^c	82	— ^c
Other post-school qualification	224	62	213	70	443	17	380	22
Year 11–12	194	58	294	60	527	8	688	14
Up to year 10	299	42	347	50	3,125	2	3,283	5
ID/NS/No attainment	124	33	143	45	1,048	2	983	5
Total ^b	897	51	1,070	58	5,177	4	5,416	8
	Australian Capital Territory				Australia			
Degree or higher	107	92	97	— ^c	2,012	82	3,280	79
Other post-school qualification	123	79	91	— ^c	11,129	71	7,961	70
Year 11–12	100	81	90	— ^c	6,767	57	10,263	60
Up to year 10	97	— ^c	121	77	20,451	44	23,101	49
ID/NS/No attainment	38	— ^c	21	— ^c	6,658	34	6,940	42
Total ^b	465	81	420	79	47,017	52	51,545	55

Source: 2006 Census customised table.

Notes: ^a Excludes those whose partner's indigenous status was not stated or whose partner was temporarily absent on census night.

^b Total includes those whose educational level was inadequately described (ID), not stated (NS), or no attainment.

^c Rate not calculated for those groups numbering less than 100.

There may be other factors contributing to these differences in the level of exogamy by location, including educational and income differentials between the indigenous populations in the cities and in regional and remote Australia. These issues are explored in the next sections.

2.3 Indigenous intermarriage by education

Indigenous persons with relatively high levels of education are most likely to have mixed socially with their non-indigenous counterparts in educational institutions and in employment. In doing so they have, in effect, bridged the socio-economic divide that has affected relations between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians in the past. Even more fundamental, where indigenous persons achieve educational credentials valued within the wider community, this should erode prejudices based on the racial or cultural standing of the

indigenous community. Therefore, indigenous educational attainment would be expected to diminish the barriers of social distance between members of the indigenous and non-indigenous communities. If these hypotheses are correct, higher rates of intermarriage should be evident among the more educated of the indigenous population. Table 2 confirms that exogamy on the part of indigenous persons is associated with higher educational attainment. In 2006, 82 per cent of all indigenous males and 79 per cent of all indigenous females with degrees had non-indigenous partners. Among those who had completed Year 10 or fewer years of school, these figures were 44 per cent and 49 per cent respectively.

However, Table 2 also shows that when the analysis is confined to metropolitan areas, high rates of exogamy are evident regardless

of the education level of indigenous residents. For example, of the partnered indigenous population living in Sydney in 2006, 90 per cent of both males and females with degree level or higher qualifications were exogamous. This proportion is only slightly less amongst those with lower levels of education. In the case of indigenous males living in Sydney, 88 per cent of those with a post school educational qualification other than a degree, 83 per cent of those with year 11 or 12 high school education and 80 per cent of those with less than year 10 education were exogamous. The same pattern is evident across all the capital cities. Exogamy is highest among persons with degree-level or above qualifications. But it is also high for the relatively large numbers of indigenous persons who have much less education, including those with no more than 10 years of primary and secondary schooling.

These findings suggest that social divisions based on indigenous status have relatively little impact on partner choice in the metropolitan areas. Due to their relatively small numbers in the cities, indigenous people are likely to mix more with non-indigenous people. Regardless of educational attainment, the majority choose non-indigenous partners. Urban living, more than education level, seems to be the main contributing factor to the high indigenous intermarriage rate in the capital cities.

The pattern is different in non-metropolitan areas. In these locations the level of education of indigenous persons appears to have a greater impact on the rate of exogamy. In Queensland (outside of Brisbane), which has the largest population of indigenous persons of all the localities listed, 67 per cent of indigenous females with a degree were exogamous in 2006, compared with 50 per cent of those with schooling to year 11 to 12 and 46 per cent of those with education up to year 10. A similar pattern applied in other states outside

the capitals. In every case, indigenous persons with degrees were much more likely to be in exogamous relationships than were those with less education.

This finding is likely to be related to the lesser opportunities for social mixing in some non-metropolitan communities. Up to a quarter of indigenous persons live in remote or very remote areas where indigenous residents make up a substantial proportion of the local population (Taylor 2003, p. 31). However, those who have pursued higher education are perhaps more likely to have mixed socially with non-indigenous persons in educational institutions and workplaces.

2.4 Indigenous intermarriage by income

In the metropolitan areas the great majority of indigenous persons are in exogamous relationships, regardless of male or female income. This generalisation applies across all the income categories listed for indigenous persons in Table 3.

Nevertheless, those reporting incomes in the lowest category are the least likely to be in exogamous relationships. For example, in Brisbane, 67 per cent of men reporting an income in the range \$399 or less were in exogamous partnerships compared with 81 per cent of those in the \$400 to \$799 category and 86–87 per cent in the top two income brackets.

Outside of the capital cities there is a much stronger association between income of indigenous persons and exogamous relationships, particularly for men. The higher the income, the more likely the indigenous person is to be living in an exogamous relationship. The proportion of men reporting \$399 per week or less who were partnered with non-indigenous persons is particularly low. The explanation for this finding is likely to be similar to that for the education factor since

Table 3: Indigenous intermarriage by income, 2006

	Males		Females		Males		Females	
	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent
	Sydney				Remaining NSW			
\$399 or less	1,098	76	2,085	82	3,976	53	5,987	63
\$400–\$799	1,150	82	1,298	86	2,805	70	2,548	70
\$800–\$1,299	1,065	89	666	89	1,491	79	798	74
\$1,300 or more	606	89	291	88	638	82	255	73
Total ^b	4,140	82	4,578	83	9,514	63	10,210	65
	Melbourne				Remaining Victoria			
\$399 or less	342	74	734	82	566	64	963	74
\$400–\$799	448	87	454	86	469	77	441	78
\$800–\$1,299	397	89	220	86	278	89	148	84
\$1,300 or more	217	85	67	83	97	— ^c	34	— ^c
Total ^b	1,501	82	1,571	82	1,522	72	1,704	75
	Brisbane				Remaining QLD			
\$399 or less	742	67	1,693	79	3,875	27	6,512	47
\$400–\$799	987	81	1,072	84	3,145	50	3,155	52
\$800–\$1,299	871	87	479	85	1,688	68	927	61
\$1,300 or more	323	86	118	80	769	69	205	60
Total ^b	3,068	79	3,525	81	10,118	44	11,425	49
	Adelaide				Remaining SA			
\$399 or less	321	61	558	72	740	21	984	36
\$400–\$799	316	75	297	76	334	61	320	51
\$800–\$1,299	220	84	168	83	163	65	97	— ^c
\$1,300 or more	100	84	49	— ^c	60	— ^c	27	— ^c
Total ^b	1,017	71	1,138	74	1,397	38	1,522	41
	Perth				Remaining WA			
\$399 or less	573	36	1,086	57	2,166	10	2,758	23
\$400–\$799	486	68	545	64	718	36	984	35
\$800–\$1,299	435	71	245	71	485	47	271	51
\$1,300 or more	239	79	75	— ^c	383	58	74	— ^c
Total ^b	1,887	57	2,100	59	4,078	23	4,402	27
	Greater Hobart				Remaining Tasmania			
\$399 or less	228	72	381	79	547	76	1,077	80
\$400–\$799	250	87	196	85	505	80	430	86
\$800–\$1,299	157	89	101	89	317	81	126	79
\$1,300 or more	49	— ^c	14	— ^c	79	— ^c	24	— ^c
Total ^b	709	82	718	82	1,504	79	1,719	81

Table 3: Indigenous intermarriage by income, 2006

	Males		Females		Males		Females	
	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent
	Darwin				Remaining NT			
\$399 or less	256	26	443	51	4,257	1	4,326	4
\$400–\$799	215	57	290	61	431	15	616	21
\$800–\$1,299	255	65	234	70	175	33	205	45
\$1,300 or more	123	76	46	— ^c	89	— ^c	43	— ^c
Total ^b	898	51	1,070	58	5,175	4	5,416	8
	Australian Capital Territory				Australia			
\$399 or less	76	— ^c	122	78	19,776	33	29,729	50
\$400–\$799	80	— ^c	93	— ^c	12,346	64	12,739	64
\$800–\$1,299	176	83	127	79	8,177	76	4,816	73
\$1,300 or more	120	84	66	— ^c	3,892	78	1,388	74
Total ^b	467	81	419	79	47,019	52	51,541	55

Source: 2006 Census customised table.

Notes: ^a Excludes those whose partner's indigenous status was not stated or whose partner was temporarily absent on census night.

^b Totals include those whose incomes were not stated.

^c Rate not calculated for those groups numbering less than 100.

income is likely to be correlated with level of education. Indigenous persons with relatively high incomes are likely to be those who have pursued education or job opportunities and are therefore most likely to have mixed socially with non-indigenous persons.

The relationship between income and intermarriage tends to be weaker for indigenous women. This finding may be an artifact of patterns of labour force attachment among partnered women. Individual income is less useful as an indicator of the educational attributes or socio-economic status of partnered women. Once partnered, work patterns of women more so than men are influenced by parental status (mothers of young children are less likely to be in paid employment or, if working, to do so part time). The socio-economic status of many women is thus primarily determined by the incomes of their male partners (not shown in Table 3).

A significant proportion of indigenous persons living in non-metropolitan locations have low incomes. Almost all of these persons are living in endogamous relationships. For example, Table 3 shows that 53 per cent of male indigenous persons who were partnered and living in Western Australia (outside of Perth) reported incomes of \$399 or less. Of these males, only 10 per cent were living in exogamous relationships. Thus endogamy in the indigenous community is closely associated with non-metropolitan residential location and low income.

Table 4 develops this point. It shows the income of the male partner in indigenous and mixed couples by location. In the metropolitan locations, there are relatively few couples where both partners are indigenous. Nevertheless, the income levels of men in mixed couples are above those for the minority where both partners are indigenous. For example, in

Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth, a third or more of indigenous male partners married to indigenous females reported incomes of \$399 or less per week. By contrast only around 20 to 25 per cent of indigenous males married to non-indigenous partners and non-indigenous males married to indigenous females reported such low incomes in these capital cities.

Outside the metropolitan areas, this pattern is much stronger, and the share of marriages that are exogamous (as shown earlier) is much lower. Outside the capitals of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia, half or more of the indigenous males in endogamous relationships indicated an income of \$399 or less. By contrast around a quarter to a third of men in mixed couples reported an income of this level.

Consistent with this pattern, a larger share of male partners in exogamous relationships earn \$800 or more per week than do male partners in endogamous indigenous partnerships. This is the case both within and outside of Australia's capitals.

2.5 Concluding comments

The great majority of partnered indigenous persons living in Australia's capitals are in exogamous married or de facto relationships. In relative terms, the rate of exogamy for these indigenous persons is generally well above the level of most migrant groups in Australia (see section 3). These findings indicate that Australia's heritage of socio-economic, cultural and status divisions between the indigenous and non-indigenous communities is not inhibiting intermarriage in settings where there are plenty of opportunities for indigenous and non-indigenous persons to interact socially. In Australia's capital cities, endogamy within the indigenous population is largely non-existent.

By contrast, fewer indigenous persons living outside the capital cities (a minority in most states and in the Northern Territory) are living in exogamous relationships. The relatively low levels of exogamy in non-metropolitan communities may be explained by the more limited opportunities for social mixing in these communities.

In these areas, education and income differentials are more evident in partnering outcomes. Outside the capitals, exogamy is most likely to occur amongst male and female indigenous partners with relatively high levels of education, and by male indigenous partners with relatively high incomes. In other words, in these locations, exogamy is associated with upward mobility in educational or income terms. Conversely, endogamy is increasingly confined to indigenous couples where the male partner's income is low.

Table 4: Income of male partners by indigenous status of couples by area, 2006

	Couples	Weekly income of male partner (per cent)				Total	Couples	Weekly income of male partner (per cent)				Total	
		<\$399	\$400–\$799	\$800–\$1,299	\$1,300+			Not stated	<\$399	\$400–\$799	\$800–\$1,299		\$1,300+
Remaining NSW													
Both indigenous	733	35	27	16	9	14	3,401	53	24	9	3	10	100
Female indigenous	3,637	21	29	29	17	4	6,316	34	32	20	10	5	100
Male indigenous	3,284	25	28	28	16	3	5,867	35	33	20	9	4	100
Neither indigenous	811,467	22	22	24	28	3	485,406	31	28	22	16	3	100
Total	868,488	22	22	23	27	6	532,661	30	27	21	16	6	100
Sydney													
Melbourne													
Both indigenous	266	33	22	16	12	17	406	48	26	7	5	14	100
Female indigenous	1,234	22	29	29	16	4	1,198	32	34	22	7	5	100
Male indigenous	1,185	21	31	29	16	3	1,066	32	33	23	7	5	100
Neither indigenous	724,525	23	24	26	24	3	276,412	28	31	24	14	3	100
Total	768,988	23	23	25	23	6	295,852	28	30	24	13	6	100
Brisbane													
Both indigenous	635	38	29	17	7	9	5,493	50	28	10	4	8	100
Female indigenous	2,706	21	32	30	13	4	5,275	26	33	23	13	4	100
Male indigenous	2,355	20	33	31	12	4	4,389	24	35	26	12	4	100
Neither indigenous	351,002	20	25	29	24	2	417,068	26	29	25	17	3	100
Total	378,859	19	25	28	23	6	467,435	25	28	24	16	8	100
Adelaide													
Both indigenous	283	43	27	12	5	12	852	68	15	6	2	9	100
Female indigenous	788	26	32	26	11	4	592	37	35	16	8	4	100
Male indigenous	699	27	33	26	11	3	520	30	38	20	8	4	100
Neither indigenous	224,390	26	27	27	18	2	86,106	31	31	24	12	2	100
Total	239,786	25	26	26	18	5	94,030	31	30	22	11	6	100
Perth													
Both indigenous	799	44	19	15	6	15	3,059	63	15	8	5	9	100
Female indigenous	1,156	20	28	29	18	5	1,136	24	27	21	22	5	100
Male indigenous	1,043	19	31	29	18	3	939	22	27	24	23	4	100
Neither indigenous	287,009	20	22	28	28	2	95,829	23	25	25	24	3	100
Total	314,689	19	21	26	26	8	110,502	23	23	23	22	8	100
Greater Hobart													
Both indigenous	124	49	26	15	5	6	311	41	32	18	3	5	100
Female indigenous	563	28	35	26	7	4	1,317	32	37	21	7	3	100
Male indigenous	565	28	37	25	7	3	1,153	35	34	22	6	3	100
Neither indigenous	38,568	25	29	27	17	2	56,119	32	31	23	10	3	100
Total	42,295	24	28	26	16	5	62,703	32	30	22	10	6	100

Table 4: Income of male partners by indigenous status of couples by area, 2006

	Couples		Weekly income of male partner (per cent)				Couples		Weekly income of male partner (per cent)				Total	
			<\$399	\$400–\$799	\$800–\$1299	\$1300+	Not stated	Total	<\$399	\$400–\$799	\$800–\$1299	\$1300+		Not stated
			Darwin				Remaining NT							
Both indigenous	420	42	21	21	21	7	9	100	85	7	2	1	4	100
Female indigenous	580	16	26	35	35	20	2	100	25	27	29	15	4	100
Male indigenous	441	15	27	36	36	20	3	100	18	32	29	18	4	100
Neither indigenous	17,097	12	23	35	35	27	2	100	10	22	33	32	3	100
Total	20,617	12	21	33	33	25	9	100	38	16	20	19	7	100
			Australian Capital Territory				Australia							
Both indigenous	84	27	13	33	33	23	4	100	59	20	9	4	8	100
Female indigenous	312	13	26	33	33	27	2	100	27	31	25	13	4	100
Male indigenous	366	14	18	38	38	27	3	100	27	32	25	12	4	100
Neither indigenous	64,436	12	19	29	29	39	1	100	24	26	25	22	3	100
Total	69,738	12	18	28	28	37	5	100	24	25	24	21	6	100

Source: 2006 Census customised table.

 Note: ^a Totals include couples in which one or both partners did not state their indigenous status

3 ETHNIC INTERMARRIAGE

Much interest in the subject of ethnic intermarriage in Australia stems from the scale of Australia's migration program and concurrent concerns about the extent to which migrants are integrated into Australian society. As indicated earlier, overseas studies of intermarriage between immigrants and native-born residents have considered it an important indicator of immigrant integration into the host society. Australian scholars have taken a similar stance (see discussion in Price and Zubrzycki 1962; Jones 1995). Price (1982) has written that 'intermarriage is still the best measure of ethnic intermixture because it breaks down ethnic exclusiveness and mixes the various ethnic populations more effectively than any other social process'. Intermarriage between persons of different ethnic background also affects the social and cultural identities of the next generation, who will be of mixed or multi-ethnic heritage.

Intermarriage across ethnic groups may also be related to the social distance between ethnic groups (Jones and Luijckx 1996). Persons from ethnic groups that are more similar with regard to social and demographic characteristics, such as educational attainment, residential location and language, for example, are more likely to intermarry because they encounter fewer barriers to social interaction. This hypothesis was supported by an early study of intermarriage among immigrants and the second generation of European ancestries in Australia which shows that persons from ancestry groups that are similar to one another on these social and demographic characteristics are more likely to intermarry (Giorgas and Jones 2002).

As indicated in the introduction, the sociological literature suggests that (as is the case with indigenous exogamy) intermarriage by migrants and their descendants will be relatively high

where the members of a community achieve upward social mobility. As migrants and their descendants progress through the education system and enter the labour force, the possibility increases of meeting prospective partners outside the community. Participation in schools, universities and the workplace all potentially serve to open up new social relationships and different ways of living which serve to liberate young people from the influence of parents and the ethnic community. The more this occurs, the more those making partnering choices are likely to be influenced by emotional ties developed with prospective partners rather than the preferences of their parents, who may be prescriptive about the ethnic background and economic prospects of the partners of their children.

On the other hand, some migrants belong to communities which place a high value on the maintenance of their values and cultural practices, contributing to strong social cohesion within the group. This may be accomplished by the creation of educational and cultural institutions which limit social encounters outside the community, or even by the proscription of out-marriage. Ethnic endogamy can be seen as an indicator of the strength of group cohesion

and ethnic intermarriage as an indicator of its weakening. An additional factor which may contribute to this process in contemporary societies is the extent of electronic communication linkages to the homeland and relative cheapness of international travel. These developments contribute to the maintenance of the ethnic community's cultural traditions as well as the ease with which members of the community can return to their homeland to find a spouse.

The analysis of ethnic intermarriage in this section includes comparisons across successive generations of Australians by ancestry. Intermarriage amongst the first generation—that is, the generation born overseas and now living in Australia—is low. Most adult first generation migrants arrived in Australia as endogamous couples, both partners having been born in their country of origin and married before they immigrated to Australia. Of more interest in terms of the social integration of ethnic communities is the partnering behaviour of the second generation, that is the offspring born in Australia of immigrant (overseas-born) parents and, for longer established communities, the third and subsequent generations, that is, those who

Table 5: Birthplace of partners in couple families^a, 1991 and 2006

	1991		2006	
	number	per cent	number	per cent
Both partners born in Australia	2,130,475	58	2,317,335	54
One partner born in Australia, other born overseas	597,415	16	723,629	17
Male partner born overseas	339,015	9	387,998	9
Female partner born overseas	258,400	7	335,631	8
Both partners born overseas	795,670	22	893,064	21
One or both partners' birthplace not known ^b	142,731	4	346,553	8
Total	3,666,291	100	4,280,581	100

Sources: 1991 census figures from Penny and Khoo (1996); 2006 census figures from customised table.

Notes: ^a Excluding same sex couples.

^b Birthplace not known includes not stated, inadequately described or partner temporarily absent.

are the grandchildren (or further removed) of migrants. The second generation, unlike their immigrant parents, will have grown up and gone to school in Australia. Their partnering patterns reflect the extent of their social interaction outside their ethnic group and with broader Australian society.

The 2006 census data is particularly valuable in allowing further study of the extent to which Australian residents whose parents or grandparents came from Eastern and

Southern Europe in the post-war period have intermarried. Using the ancestry variable it is possible to track the scale of both second and third generation partnering across ethnic and religious lines and whether intermarriage is with those of Anglo-Celtic background or other backgrounds.

Unfortunately this strategy is of little help in understanding the experiences of more recent migrant groups. Since the 1980s, migrants to Australia have come from predominantly non-European countries, mainly from Southeast and East Asia, but also from the Indian sub-continent and the Middle-East and North Africa. Communities from these source countries bring with them cultural traditions quite different from those of the predominantly Christian European countries which dominated the migrant intake until the 1980s. Their presence raises new issues about whether social integration, as measured by intermarriage, will be repeated at the same rate as with the European migrant communities. The second generation of these groups are only now reaching marriage age. Therefore their partnering pattern is incomplete at the time of the 2006 census.

3.1 Intermarriage between immigrants and native-born Australians

Of the 4.28 million couple families enumerated in the 2006 census, 723,629 or 17 per cent were intermarried couples with one partner born overseas and one partner born in Australia. Of these intermarried couples, the number with an overseas-born male partner exceeded the number with an overseas-born female partner (Table 5). Over 2.3 million or 54 per cent were couples with both spouses born in Australia and 21 per cent were couples with both spouses born overseas.

A comparison with figures from the 1991 Census shows that there has been little change

Table 6: Intermarried couples comprising an Australian-born and an overseas-born spouse

Birthplace of overseas-born spouse	1991		2006	
	couples	per cent	couples	per cent
United Kingdom	280,666	47.0	284,965	34.4
New Zealand	51,567	8.6	81,711	11.3
Italy	34,769	5.8	31,760	4.4
Germany	26,808	4.5	26,469	3.7
Netherlands	27,128	4.5	23,914	3.3
Philippines	11,184	1.9	18,795	2.6
USA	11,311	1.9	18,348	2.5
South Africa	5,484	0.9	12,644	1.8
Ireland	9,411	1.6	12,011	1.7
Greece	11,247	1.9	11,636	1.6
Canada	6,042	1.0	10,864	1.5
Lebanon	3,585	0.6	10,049	1.4
Malaysia	6,161	1.0	9,853	1.4
Malta	9,794	1.6	8,747	1.2
India	6,737	1.1	8,403	1.2
China	2,931	0.5	5,473	0.8
Croatia	na	na	4,995	0.7
Singapore	2,711	0.5	4,806	0.7
Other	89,879	15.1	138,186	23.8
Total	597,415	100.0	723,629	100.0

Sources: 1991 census figures from Penny and Khoo (1996); 2006 census figures from customised table.

Note: na=not available

during the 15-year period in the percentage of intermarried couples with an Australia-born and an overseas-born spouse (Table 5). However, there have been some changes in the birthplace of the overseas-born spouses over the period (Table 6). In 1991, nearly half of Australians with a foreign-born spouse had a spouse who was born in the United Kingdom (UK); in 2006, that proportion had dropped to one-third. There were also declines in the proportions with spouses born in Italy, Netherlands, Greece and Germany while increases were observed in the proportions with spouses born in New Zealand, the United States of America (USA), the Philippines and other Asian countries, South Africa, Lebanon and Canada.

These trends reflect changes in migration patterns to Australia during the past 30 years. While the European countries were the major source countries of migration to Australia before 1975, in recent years the sources of migration to Australia have become more diverse, with the Asia-Pacific region becoming more significant. The source countries of spouses of Australians have also become more diverse. Nevertheless, the number of persons born overseas in Asian and Middle-Eastern countries who have intermarried with Australia-born persons is very low. There were only 5,473 Australian born persons with China-born spouses and 8,403 with India-born spouses.

The intermarriage rates between Australia-born and overseas-born persons are shown by the birthplace of the overseas-born spouse in Table 7. The 'rate' is defined here as the percentage of partnered individuals from a specific country who have an Australia-born spouse.

The census did not collect information on the timing or place of marriage or the start of a de facto relationship. Therefore, it was not possible to determine whether couples with one or both spouses born overseas had married overseas

or in Australia after the arrival of the overseas-born partner(s). As indicated earlier, birthplace groups with a low rate of intermarriage with Australians may be a reflection of the migration of family units (both spouses would be of the same birthplace or ethnic origin) or a low propensity for exogamy or both.

Men and women from North America have the highest rate of intermarriage with Australians, followed by persons born in the UK and other Western European countries such as the Netherlands, France and Germany. There is generally no difference between men and women from these countries in their intermarriage rate with Australians. Around half of the overseas-born spouses from these countries were married to Australia-born persons, with the highest rates being for Canada-born men and women of 61 and 60 per cent respectively. The high rate of intermarriage indicates that there is little social and cultural distance between Australians and people from Western European and North American countries.

Women from three Asian countries—Thailand, Japan and Philippines—had much higher intermarriage rates than men from these countries with people born in Australia. This pattern of higher rates of intermarriage for women than men is seen for all the East and Southeast Asian birthplace groups (although the gender difference is not as large as for the three countries mentioned above) and also for migrants from Russia, but not for the South Asian groups, whose intermarriage rates with Australians are higher for men than for women. Intermarriage with the Australia-born is also more likely for men than for women from Lebanon, Turkey and other Middle Eastern countries. These gender differences in intermarriage rates are likely to be related to differences in gender roles in Asian and Middle Eastern families (Penny and Khoo 1996).

Table 7: Overseas-born men and women in couple families, by birthplace: per cent with Australian-born partner, 2006

Birthplace	Intermarried (per cent)		Birthplace	Intermarried (per cent)	
	Male	Female		Male	Female
Canada	60.6	60.1	Cyprus	24.6	14.5
United States of America	57.3	56.6	Egypt	23.3	14.4
Thailand	15.6	47.4	Portugal	19.0	14.1
Netherlands	50.3	42.3	Italy	29.6	13.5
United Kingdom	43.4	40.8	Ukraine	9.8	12.6
Japan	14.9	40.6	Lebanon	24.3	12.2
France	43.8	39.5	Hong Kong	8.5	12.0
Switzerland	40.7	39.2	Taiwan	2.2	11.8
Germany	45.2	38.6	Romania	12.4	11.3
New Zealand	42.9	38.3	Croatia	18.3	10.9
Austria	43.9	36.6	Korea, Republic of	1.6	9.9
Philippines	8.1	35.6	Turkey	16.8	9.9
Ireland	42.3	34.8	Greece	19.4	9.1
Singapore	23.5	28.2	Serbia	13.8	9.0
Spain	30.6	26.0	Sri Lanka	10.4	8.9
Indonesia	17.4	24.0	India	10.7	8.8
Argentina	25.5	24.0	Fr Yugo Rep of Macedonia	15.0	8.4
Malaysia	17.0	23.7	Samoa	10.8	8.3
Malta	32.7	23.4	China	2.4	7.3
Hungary	28.5	22.4	Pakistan	10.8	7.0
Mauritius	23.6	22.4	Iran	9.3	6.8
Zimbabwe	24.5	21.7	Viet Nam	2.0	5.2
Russian Federation	8.9	21.4	Cambodia	2.2	5.2
South Africa	22.5	20.7	Bosnia and Herzegovina	6.4	4.6
Chile	19.7	18.3	Bangladesh	3.4	2.2
Poland	18.7	18.0	Iraq	4.7	2.1
Fiji	14.2	16.8	Sudan	3.7	1.9
Burma (Myanmar)	16.2	16.4	Afghanistan	2.7	0.9

Source: 2006 Census customised tables.

Birthplace groups with the lowest rates of intermarriage with the Australia-born population are mostly from countries that have been the sources of recent refugee and other humanitarian migration, such as Afghanistan, Sudan and Iraq. Their low intermarriage rate reflects the migration of families from these countries, most of whom arrived during the past ten years for resettlement under Australia's Humanitarian migration program.

Table 7 also shows the relatively low

intermarriage rates of migrants born in southern European countries such as Greece and Italy. These are related to the migration of family units from these countries in the 1950s and 1960s. With the decrease in migration from these countries after 1970, many of the intra-married couples are now in the older age groups. As shown in Table 4, men and women from these countries aged 40 and over are much more likely to have a spouse from the same country of origin than those under age 40, few of whom have partners from the

Table 8: Per cent of partnered men and women with spouse from the same country of origin, by age, 2006

Birthplace	Men		Women	
	15–39 years	40+ years	15–39 years	40+ years
Bosnia	65.1	76.9	73.0	80.5
Canada	10.8	13.8	9.9	12.7
China	87.4	81.0	73.7	74.8
Croatia	33.8	64.6	43.0	76.0
Egypt	43.0	53.0	73.1	62.1
Fiji	70.3	76.1	69.2	64.4
Rep of Macedonia ¹	38.6	84.2	59.2	90.2
Germany	16.5	27.5	15.3	31.1
Greece	13.0	73.1	22.2	84.5
Hong Kong	42.8	62.7	42.6	56.6
India	81.2	71.5	86.6	69.6
Indonesia	70.7	59.0	45.4	44.5
Iraq	80.3	81.7	88.4	86.1
Ireland	19.3	30.5	22.1	35.6
Italy	10.6	60.1	19.1	80.5
Japan	67.3	70.5	23.1	33.8
Lebanon	36.3	78.4	66.1	84.2
Malaysia	39.6	60.1	32.9	50.5
Malta	9.2	53.5	14.3	62.9
Netherlands	15.3	28.0	16.8	42.2
New Zealand	32.6	41.5	35.4	43.0
Philippines	75.2	92.0	41.1	38.5
Poland	45.5	62.2	41.0	66.8
Singapore	29.5	45.1	25.5	34.0
South Africa	43.9	65.1	47.3	61.8
Sri Lanka	71.6	81.5	81.2	80.8
Thailand	54.9	63.0	16.4	14.4
Turkey	51.9	79.0	71.6	84.9
United Kingdom	26.0	42.3	31.4	47.7
United States of America	12.6	18.0	11.8	19.5
Vietnam	82.7	91.1	79.3	86.6

Source: 2006 census customised tables.

same country of birth. Many of the younger men and women are likely to have migrated as children with their parents, and have grown up and partnered in Australia.

A very high percentage of both younger and older migrants from more recent source countries of migration, such as China, Vietnam, India and Sri Lanka, also have spouses who are born in the same country (Table 8). While most of the older migrants would have been married before their migration to Australia, it is possible that some of the younger migrants may have sponsored marriage partners from their country of origin under the family migration program for spouse and fiancé(e) migration. Data on spouse and fiancé(e) visa grants show that China has been the second largest country of origin (after the UK), and Vietnam and India are among the top ten source countries of recipients of the partner visas since the late 1990s (DIAC 2008; DIMIA various years). A study of spouse migration shows that more than 85 per cent of migrants arriving on partner visas in 1993–95 from China, Vietnam, India, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Lebanon and Turkey were sponsored for migration by Australian residents from the same country of birth (Khoo 2001).

3.2 Intermarriage by ancestry and generation

As in the 2001 census, the 2006 census asked the question, ‘What is each person’s ancestry?’ A census guide handed out with the census form stated that each person should provide a maximum of two main ancestries with which they most closely identified, if possible, and that they considered the origins of their parents and grandparents. Seventy-two per cent of the population stated one ancestry and 28 per cent stated two ancestries. The analysis of intermarriage by ancestry in this paper is based on only those men and women who stated a single ancestry, since the aim is to examine the

extent of exogamy in relation to each ethnic group.

The census ancestry data show much variation in the percentage intermarried by ancestry and generation (Table 9). The majority of persons of the first generation of most Western European ancestries (except the English) had partners of a different ancestry. The relatively low rate for the English is a consequence of the high proportion of Australia-born persons who are of English ancestry. In contrast, only a minority of the first generation of Southern or Eastern European ancestries had partners of a different ancestry. The proportion was even lower for the first generation of Middle Eastern and Asian ancestries. The low proportions intermarried among men and women of these ancestries partly reflect the migration of family units from these respective regions.

As expected, intermarriage increases for both men and women from the first to the second generation and from the second to the third or more generations (Table 9). These patterns point to increasing social interaction between the second and third-plus generations of these ethnic groups and people outside their ethnic group. Similar patterns were observed in the analysis of 2001 Census data (Khoo 2004). The increase was quite large for some ancestry groups, for example, people of Greek, Lebanese and Chinese ancestries. By the third generation, two-thirds of men and women of these ancestries had partnered outside their ethnic group. Significant increases in intermarriage were also observed from the first to the second generation for other Asian, Middle Eastern and Southern European ancestry groups that do not yet have many people in the third generation who are of marriage age at this time. The third-plus generation of Western European ancestries have very high intermarriage rates of over 90 per cent. The low intermarriage rate of the third-plus generation of English ancestry is a

notable exception. As noted earlier this reflects the large number of third-plus generation Australians who are of English ancestry.

These findings are important. They confirm that there appear to be few barriers to social integration in Australia, not just for immigrants from Western Europe but also for those from Eastern and Southern Europe. In the case of those with Eastern European ancestries—including those of Polish, Russian and Serbian backgrounds—there is almost complete out-marriage by the third generation. Just as was the case for the USA, noted earlier, this pattern is repeated for those from Southern European backgrounds. The Greek case is worth highlighting. Almost all post-World War Two migrants from Greece arrived as couples or families with young children. As has been noted in many studies, the second generation of Greek ancestry have exhibited a relatively low propensity to marry out (Price 1993). The 2006 census results (Table 9) show a similar pattern with only 37 per cent of second generation males of Greek ancestry and 31 per cent of females married out. This outcome reflects a strong tendency for first generation Greek families to concentrate residentially and to develop ethnic specific social institutions, including the Greek Orthodox church. Yet despite this ethnic solidarity, by the third generation 67 per cent of men of Greek ancestry and 61 per cent of the women had married out.

The intermarriage rates by ancestry also show patterns by gender that are similar to those indicated in Table 7 by birthplace. Men and women of western European ancestries have similar rates of intermarriage. There is also not much difference by gender among people of Pacific island ancestries and for men and women of Indian ancestry. However, men of Middle Eastern ancestries are more likely to intermarry than women of these ancestries,

Table 9: Percentage of partnered men and women with spouse of a different ancestry^a by ancestry and generation, 2006

Ancestry	First generation		Second generation		Third plus generation		Ancestry	First generation		Second generation		Third plus generation	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
English	41	36	49	48	20	21	Egyptian	24	14	66	58	— ^b	— ^b
Irish	62	59	86	83	71	67	Afghan	8	4	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Scottish	65	60	90	88	80	75	Iranian	19	12	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Welsh	71	66	96	96	96	9	Iraqi	14	8	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Austrian	74	65	98	96	— ^b	— ^b	Lebanese	11	8	31	21	68	58
Danish	68	61	98	97	98	97	Turkish	11	7	25	16	— ^b	— ^b
Dutch	62	55	89	88	95	95	Filipino	8	52	47	76	— ^b	— ^b
Finnish	44	54	93	93	— ^b	— ^b	Indonesian	24	53	58	64	— ^b	— ^b
French	61	60	91	93	98	98	Khmer	10	16	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
German	59	56	91	90	72	69	Thai	23	81	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Swiss	67	57	94	98	— ^b	— ^b	Vietnamese	7	13	48	48	— ^b	— ^b
Greek	12	9	37	31	67	61	Chinese	6	13	35	48	69	73
Italian	22	12	51	42	77	74	Japanese	18	63	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Maltese	33	28	67	64	79	77	Korean	6	15	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Portuguese	28	25	67	64	— ^b	— ^b	Bengali	8	3	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Spanish	36	37	87	85	96	98	Indian	11	11	56	58	— ^b	— ^b
Bosnian	15	14	44	42	— ^b	— ^b	Sinhalese	14	13	95	86	— ^b	— ^b
Croatian	26	21	60	59	88	88	Pakistani	19	8	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Macedonian	10	8	39	35	— ^b	— ^b	Sudanese	8	6	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Serbian	26	17	67	62	96	91	South African	30	34	92	97	— ^b	— ^b
Czech	52	47	96	96	— ^b	— ^b	Maori	53	50	89	88	— ^b	— ^b
Hungarian	47	36	89	88	— ^b	— ^b	New Zealander	70	69	97	96	— ^b	— ^b
Polish	34	34	84	80	95	94	Samoan	26	22	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Russian	28	43	74	76	97	94	Tongan	29	25	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b
Ukrainian	44	46	79	75	— ^b	— ^b	American	82	82	99	99	— ^b	— ^b
Arab	19	10	40	39	— ^b	— ^b	Chilean	30	34	79	73	— ^b	— ^b
Armenian	21	15	48	47	— ^b	— ^b							
Assyrian	9	6	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b							

Source: 2006 census customised table

Notes: ^a Based on sole ancestry response^b Less than 100 persons.

while the opposite pattern is observed for men and women of East and Southeast Asian ancestries.

A final indicator of the significance of intermarriage is the extent to which it involves partnering with persons of similar or different ethnic and racial background. It is possible that marriage across ethnic lines may be confined to persons of similar ethnic origins, such as from other Southern or Eastern European countries in the case of persons of Greek or Italian backgrounds. Alternatively, if intermarriage is predominantly with persons who claim Australian or Anglo-Celtic ancestries it implies a higher degree of social integration into Australian society, which is composed predominantly of persons of English-speaking background. Table 10 provides the information necessary to explore this issue.

Among the ancestry groups shown in Table 10, the intermarried second generation of Eastern European ancestries such as Polish and Hungarian shows the highest proportion (60 to 70 per cent) with spouses who are of Australian or Anglo-Celtic ancestries. More than 60 per cent of the intermarried second generation of two of the

Table 10: Partnered men and women of the second generation with spouse of different ancestry: percentage distribution by spouse's ancestry, 2006

Ancestry of individual (second generation)		Ancestry of spouse					Total	Intermarried
		Australian/NZ Anglo-celtic	Other European	Asian	Middle Eastern	Other ^b		
Greek	Men	45	37	5	4	8	100	37
	Women	40	42	3	5	10	100	31
Italian	Men	64	25	4	2	5	100	51
	Women	59	29	2	3	7	100	42
Maltese	Men	58	31	4	2	5	100	67
	Women	56	34	2	3	5	100	64
Croatian	Men	57	32	4	1	7	100	60
	Women	50	39	2	2	8	100	59
Serbian	Men	58	31	3	2	6	100	67
	Women	55	34	2	2	7	100	62
Hungarian	Men	67	21	5	1	7	100	89
	Women	66	27	1	1	6	100	88
Polish	Men	71	20	3	1	2	100	84
	Women	67	26	1	1	6	100	80
Russian	Men	66	24	3	0	7	100	74
	Women	61	28	0	2	8	100	76
Lebanese	Men	44	36	5	5	11	100	31
	Women	35	35	5	8	18	100	21
Turkish	Men	32	44	6	6	12	100	25
	Women	27	35	7	16	15	100	16
Vietnamese	Men	25	10	44	0	21	100	48
	Women	37	13	42	0	9	100	48
Chinese	Men	61	11	22	1	5	100	35
	Women	67	17	8	1	8	100	48
Indian	Men	66	19	7	3	6	100	56
	Women	61	18	11	1	9	100	58

Source: 2006 census customised table

Notes: ^a Based on sole ancestry response

^b Other ancestries include American, African and Pacific islander ancestries, other small European, Asian and Middle Eastern groups not separately identified and 'Not stated'.

Asian ancestries shown—Chinese and Indian—also have Australian or Anglo-Celtic partners. The proportion with Australian or Anglo-Celtic partners was lower among the intermarried second generation of Southern European ancestries, 50 to 60 per cent for those of Italian, Maltese, Serbian or Croatian ancestry, and less than 50 per cent for the intermarried second generation of Greek ancestry. The proportion was lower for the Lebanese intermarried second generation, and lowest for the Turkish and Vietnamese intermarried second generation.

Over 40 per cent of the Vietnamese second generation who had partnered a person of

a different ancestry had partnered a person of another Asian ancestry, showing a high preference for pan-Asian partnering. Second generation intermarried Chinese men also show a relatively high propensity to partner with other Asians, much more so than second generation Chinese women who had intermarried. The reverse pattern is observed for the intermarried second generation of Turkish and Lebanese ancestry, with the women more likely than the men to partner with persons of other Middle Eastern ancestry.

The intermarried second generation of the three Asian ancestries shown were less likely

Table 11: Partnered men and women of the third generation or more with spouse of different ancestry: percentage distribution by spouse's ancestry, 2006

Ancestry of individual (third generation)		Ancestry of spouse (per cent)					Total	Intermarried	
		Australian/NZ/ Anglo-celtic	Other European	Asian	Middle Eastern	Other ^b		per cent	total
Greek	Men	69	22	3	2	5	100	67	844
	Women	62	29	1	3	5	100	61	825
Italian	Men	78	15	3	1	4	100	77	3497
	Women	75	17	1	1	5	100	74	3517
Maltese	Men	71	22	4	0	3	100	79	403
	Women	68	21	1	2	8	100	77	411
Croatian	Men	61	23	6	2	8	100	88	189
	Women	71	23	2	0	5	100	88	183
Polish	Men	67	25	2	1	6	100	95	593
	Women	69	21	2	1	7	100	94	588
Russian	Men	68	24	4	0	4	100	97	169
	Women	69	22	2	0	8	100	94	186
Lebanese	Men	71	20	1	0	8	100	68	270
	Women	69	26	3	0	3	100	58	227
Chinese	Men	77	15	2	1	6	100	69	520
	Women	76	17	1	0	6	100	73	501

Source: 2006 census customised table

Notes: ^a Based on sole ancestry response

^b Other ancestries include American, African and Pacific islander ancestries, other small European, Asian and Middle Eastern groups not separately identified and 'Not stated'.

to partner with people of Other European ancestries compared with the intermarried second generation of the two Middle Eastern ancestries shown. There appeared to be less intermixing between the second generation of these Asian ancestries with people of non-English speaking European ethnicities than between the second generation of Lebanese or Turkish backgrounds with people of the European ethnicities. This may reflect the differences and similarities in the period of migration to Australia of the first generation of these migrant communities.

Table 11 shows the level of intermarriage for third-plus generations. It indicates that the process of integration—when measured by the share of each third generation by ancestry who have intermarried with partners of Anglo-Celtic origin—continues to rise. In the case of those of Italian ancestry, three-quarters of intermarried men and women had partners of Anglo-Celtic origin. This is well above the 64 and 59 per cent figures respectively for second-generation intermarried persons of Italian origin. A similar pattern is evident for third-plus generation intermarried persons of Greek ancestry.

When the ancestry of the spouses of the intermarried third-plus generation is examined for the non-Western European ancestry groups that have an adult third generation of sufficient numbers for analysis, there is remarkable similarity among the ancestry groups in the distribution of their spouses by ethnic origin. Three-quarters of intermarried third generation men and women of Italian or Chinese origin and two-thirds of those of other ancestries as shown in Table 7 had partners of Australian or Anglo-Celtic ancestry. Another one-quarter had partners of other European ancestries. There was much less pan-ethnic partnering in the third generation of Chinese or Lebanese ancestry than observed in the second generation in Table 10. Very few third generation intermarried

men and women claiming Chinese ancestry had partners of other Asian ancestries; the overwhelming majority of those who had intermarried had spouses of Australian or European ancestry. Similarly, very few of the third generation of Lebanese ancestry who had intermarried had spouses of other Middle Eastern ancestry; the overwhelming majority had partnered with Australians of Anglo-Celtic or other European ancestries.

It appears that by the third generation, the partnering patterns of those who intermarry are more a reflection of the ethnic composition of Australian society than any preferences based on cultural heritage. According to this measure, a high level of social integration is achieved by the third generation of most ethnic groups.

3.3 Education and ethnic intermarriage

Does education lead to a greater propensity to partner outside the ethnic group? Table 12 examines the intermarriage rate by ancestry and level of education. While more educated men and women of some ancestries had higher rates of inter-ethnic marriage, there is no difference by education among men and women of other ancestry groups, and in a few ancestry groups, men and women of lower education had higher rates of intermarriage than those who are better educated.

As noted in section 2.3, there is a particularly strong association between level of education and intermarriage for people reporting Aboriginal ancestry, with both men and women with degree qualifications much more likely to partner a person of non-Aboriginal ancestry than those with other or no post-school qualifications. People stating Australian, English, Southern European and Middle Eastern ancestries also show an increase in intermarriage rates with educational attainment. In contrast, no difference is observed in the intermarriage rate by education

for men and women reporting German, Polish, Russian, South African, New Zealander or Sinhalese ancestries. Among men and women of Filipino or Indian ancestry, those who have no post-school qualifications are more likely to intermarry than those who are better educated. In some groups such as the Chinese, the effect

of education seems to vary by gender, with men showing no difference in intermarriage by education, but women showing a positive correlation between level of education and inter-ethnic marriage. The effect of education on inter-ethnic marriage appears to be mixed.

Table 12: Intermarriage by gender, education and ancestry, per cent, 2006

Ancestry	Males				Females			
	Degree	Other quals	Year 11–12	Year 10	Degree	Other quals	Year 11–12	Year 10
Australian	26	20	22	16	27	25	24	20
Aboriginal	62	21	9	4	55	25	14	6
Maori	71	64	51	53	60	54	49	55
New Zealander	69	74	71	74	69	73	70	74
English	41	31	32	26	37	32	29	26
Irish	69	69	71	70	68	67	67	66
Scottish	78	73	78	77	74	72	69	71
Welsh	85	74	82	82	84	78	68	74
Dutch	75	71	75	75	77	70	69	68
German	73	66	80	70	75	65	76	66
Greek	35	32	30	11	33	28	26	9
Italian	54	43	45	22	54	39	38	16
Maltese	79	58	57	35	75	65	56	35
Spanish	55	43	43	37	59	51	47	34
Croatian	55	36	44	24	54	39	43	18
Macedonian	34	21	20	9	34	23	19	7
Serbian	37	32	32	32	36	24	28	23
Hungarian	68	51	63	55	67	49	53	42
Polish	46	45	54	58	49	40	50	58
Russian	30	41	47	42	44	48	53	56
Lebanese	27	20	19	11	27	19	12	8
Turkish	19	18	15	7	21	16	10	4
South African	30	28	43	48	35	35	38	34
Chinese	8	9	7	6	19	15	12	9
Filipino	5	9	13	12	38	52	60	79
Vietnamese	11	10	7	5	24	18	12	8
Indian	10	12	18	16	9	16	17	19
Sinhalese	14	15	24	22	18	12	16	17

Source: 2006 census customised table

Note: ^a Based on sole ancestry response

Table 13: Inter-marriage by gender, education, generation and ancestry, per cent, 2006

Ancestry	Males				Females			
	Degree	Other quals	Year11-12	Year 10	Degree	Other quals	Year11-12	Year 10
English								
1st generation	49	39	40	41	42	38	32	38
2nd generation	55	50	51	46	54	51	51	44
3rd+ generation	29	21	21	16	27	23	22	18
Greek								
1st generation	33	22	19	7	32	19	16	5
2nd generation	34	37	39	43	32	31	30	31
3rd+ generation	57	75	67	69	59	61	57	76
Italian								
1st generation	51	31	35	13	51	25	25	7
2nd generation	53	50	49	53	52	42	40	36
3rd+ generation	80	79	74	79	81	72	73	76
Maltese								
1st generation	65	46	41	27	68	52	39	24
2nd generation	85	66	73	58	76	69	66	55
Croatian								
1st generation	45	28	34	18	45	28	29	13
2nd generation	62	56	62	74	59	55	61	62
Macedonian								
1st generation	24	14	12	6	23	14	10	5
2nd generation	47	38	37	41	43	36	33	31
Lebanese								
1st generation	21	14	13	8	20	13	8	6
2nd generation	33	30	34	31	31	23	18	18
Turkish								
1st generation	19	16	13	6	22	14	8	4
2nd generation	20	28	24	24	17	18	16	14
Chinese								
1st generation	7	7	6	5	17	14	11	8
2nd generation	34	37	42	28	50	52	50	38
3rd+ generation	52	76	60	83	71	75	72	77

Source: 2006 census customised table

Note: ^a Based on sole ancestry response

Some of the effect of education is also related to age and generation. The younger age cohorts in Australia are better educated than the older age cohorts, due to higher school retention rates and increasing proportions of the younger cohorts going to universities and undertaking other tertiary education and training in recent years than in the past. Since the second generation is also of a younger age group than the first generation, they are also generally better educated than their parents' generation. A disaggregation by generation may be necessary when analysing the effect of education on inter-ethnic marriage for some ancestry groups.

Table 13 shows the intermarriage rate by education and generation for ancestry groups that have younger and better educated second and third generations to take account of the possible effect of the interaction between

education and generation on the patterns shown in Table 12. These figures show that while level of education may be correlated with intermarriage in the first generation, that correlation is no longer observed in the second or third or more generations of some groups such as Greeks, Italians and Croatians. No relation between education and intermarriage is observed for men of the second generation of Lebanese, Turkish or Macedonian ancestry; but the more educated among the women of these ancestries do have higher rates of intermarriage than the less educated. It would appear that education has a modest effect in broadening the choice of marriage partners across ethnic boundaries for women of these ancestries.

The effect of education on intermarriage is also mixed for men and women of different generations of Chinese ancestry. Education

Table 14: Top five birthplaces of overseas-born spouses of Australian-born men and women, by age and education, 2006

	Men		Women	
	Aged <40	Aged 40+	Aged <40	Aged 40+
Degree	United Kingdom New Zealand United States (USA) South Africa Malaysia	United Kingdom New Zealand United States (USA) Germany Malaysia	United Kingdom New Zealand United States (USA) South Africa Canada	United Kingdom New Zealand United States Germany Italy
Other qualifications	United Kingdom New Zealand South Africa Philippines United States (USA)	United Kingdom New Zealand Philippines Germany Netherlands	United Kingdom New Zealand Lebanon South Africa United States (USA)	United Kingdom New Zealand Italy Germany Netherlands
Year 11–12	United Kingdom New Zealand Philippines United States (USA) South Africa	United Kingdom New Zealand Philippines Germany Italy	United Kingdom New Zealand Lebanon Italy United States (USA)	United Kingdom New Zealand Italy Netherlands Germany
Year 10	United Kingdom New Zealand Philippines Lebanon Germany	United Kingdom New Zealand Philippines Netherlands Germany	United Kingdom New Zealand Lebanon Italy United States (USA)	United Kingdom New Zealand Italy Netherlands Germany

Source: 2006 Census customised table

appears to increase intermarriage for women but not for men in the first two generations. It has no effect on intermarriage for women in the third-plus generation; however better educated men in the third-plus generation are more likely to marry within the ethnic group than less educated men.

In contrast to the above patterns, for two of the ancestry groups shown in Table 13, the English and Maltese, there is a clear pattern of increasing intermarriage with education within each of the three generations of men and women.

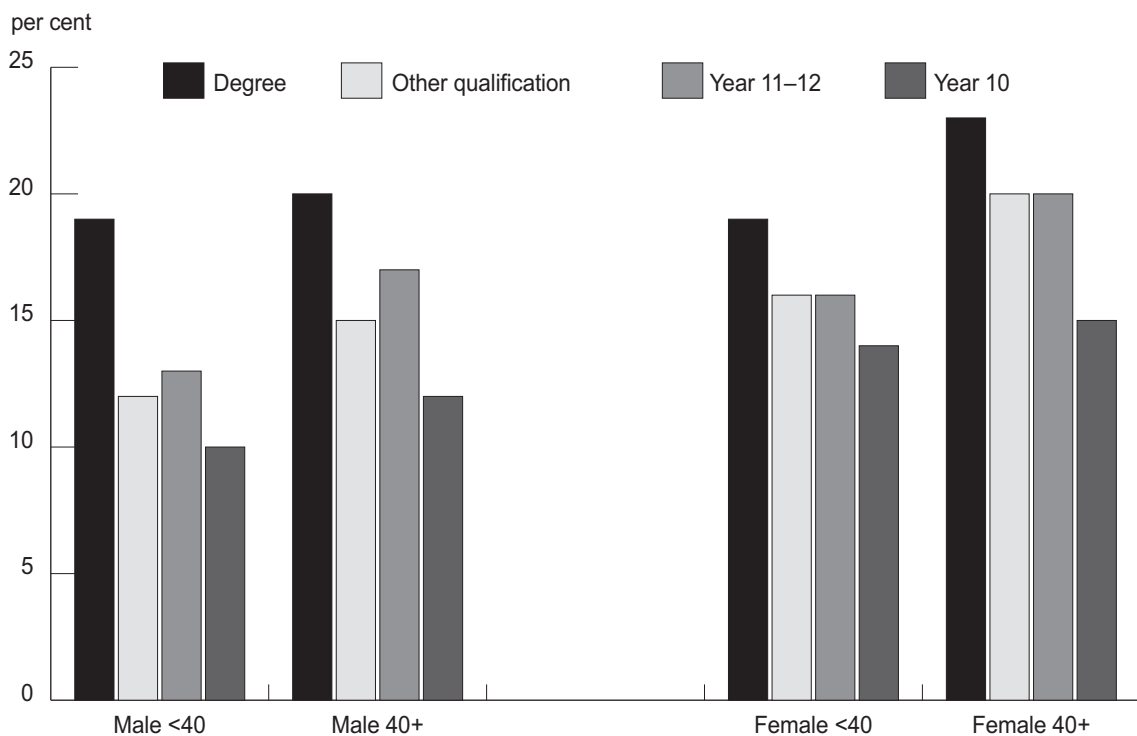
It appears that the relation between inter-ethnic marriage and level of education is different for different ethnic groups and for men and women of some ethnicities. The variations in patterns as described above suggest the complexity of the

relationships between education, ethnicity and marriage/partnering that may be grounded in cultural and generational differences in male and female roles and status in the family.

Are better educated native-born Australians more likely to have an overseas-born partner than their less educated compatriots? Figure 1 shows that they are. The same pattern is seen in both younger (under aged 40) and older (aged 40 and over) cohorts of men and women. Education appears to break down both geographic and cultural boundaries in the choice of marriage partners.

Table 14 shows some differences in the main countries of birth of the overseas-born spouses of the intermarried Australia-born men and women by level of education and the two age groups. While the United Kingdom and New

Figure 1: Australian-born men and women by education and age: per cent with overseas-born partner, 2006



Zealand are the top two sources of overseas-born spouses of Australian men and women in both the under 40 and 40+ age groups, and in all levels of education, the other main source countries differ by level of education and age group. The United States was the third largest source country of spouses for Australia-born men and women with degree qualifications. The Philippines was the third largest source country of spouses for men with no post-school qualifications and the older cohort with non-degree qualifications. For Australia-born women with non-degree or no post-school qualifications, Lebanon was the third largest source country of the younger age group and Italy for the older age group. The Australia-born women with Lebanese-born partners are likely to be second generation of Lebanese ancestry. An analysis of intermarriage patterns based on the 2001 census ancestry data showed that 42 per cent of second-generation women of Lebanese ancestry had spouses who were born in Lebanon (Khoo 2004). Many of these women appear to have sponsored marriage partners from their parents' country of origin (Birrell 1995), as Lebanon has consistently been among the top ten source countries of partner visa grants since the 1990s (DIAC 2008; DIMIA various years).

3.3 Concluding comments

If inter-ethnic partnering is a key indicator of social integration, as suggested by sociologists, then the increase in intermarriage from the first to the second generation, and from the second to the third generation, of Australians of various ethnic backgrounds indicates that social integration is proceeding with each successive generation. It is particularly noteworthy that by the third generation, the majority of Australians of non-English-speaking background had partnered with persons of different ethnic origin, and that of these, the majority had partnered with persons of Australian or Anglo-Celtic

ancestry. These partnering patterns suggest that while Australian multiculturalism may have encouraged the intergenerational maintenance of ethnic identity, it has not inhibited increased social interaction outside the ethnic group with each successive generation.

Education increases the propensity of Australia-born men and women to partner with persons born overseas. It also appears to increase the likelihood of intermarriage for people of some ethnicities, but not others. Its effect on intermarriage is also different for men and women of some ethnicities. The relationship between education and intermarriage across ethnicities appears to be more complex than that between education and intermarriage by indigenous status discussed in section 2.

4 RELIGIOUS INTERMARRIAGE

The census of 1933 showed that Australians overwhelmingly affiliated with the various denominations of Christianity at that time. Owing to the settlement of the country mostly

by people from Britain and Ireland, Protestants and Catholics dominated, albeit with sharp social divisions between the two groups. Only in the later decades of the 20th century was this dominance challenged. In 1971, the proportion

Table 15: Religious affiliation, Australia, 1996, 2001 and 2006

	1996	2001	2006	1996	2001	2006
		number			per cent	
Buddhism	199,812	355,732	418,756	1.1	1.9	2.1
Christianity:						
Anglican	3,903,324	3,845,537	3,718,252	22.0	20.7	18.7
Assyrian Apostolic	6,236	7,096	8,189	0.0	0.0	0.0
Baptist	295,178	306,709	316,738	1.7	1.7	1.6
Brethren	22,063	19,245	24,232	0.1	0.1	0.1
Catholic	4,798,950	4,967,200	5,126,880	27.0	26.7	25.8
Churches of Christ	75,023	60,769	54,822	0.4	0.3	0.3
Eastern Orthodox	497,015	528,133	544,160	2.8	2.8	2.7
Jehovah's Witnesses	83,414	80,474	80,919	0.5	0.4	0.4
Latter Day Saints	45,112	49,386	53,199	0.3	0.3	0.3
Lutheran	249,989	247,635	251,107	1.4	1.3	1.3
Oriental Orthodox	25,106	29,147	32,711	0.1	0.2	0.2
Other Protestant	50,216	52,102	56,106	0.3	0.3	0.3
Pentecostal	174,720	193,124	219,689	1.0	1.0	1.1
Presbyterian & Reformed	675,534	631,188	596,671	3.8	3.4	3.0
Salvation Army	74,145	70,748	64,200	0.4	0.4	0.3
Seventh-day Adventist	52,655	53,238	55,251	0.3	0.3	0.3
Uniting Church	1,334,917	1,236,104	1,135,427	7.5	6.6	5.7
Christian, no further detail ^a	186,109	250,730	313,190	1.0	1.3	1.6
Other Christian	33,058	32,403	34,093	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total	12,582,764	12,660,968	12,685,836	70.9	68.1	63.9
Hinduism	67,279	95,128	148,119	0.4	0.5	0.7
Islam	200,885	280,435	340,392	1.1	1.5	1.7
Judaism	79,805	83,709	88,831	0.4	0.5	0.4
Other religions:						
Australian Aboriginal Traditional Religions	7,357	5,101	5,377	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other religious groups	59,333	83,657	103,645	0.3	0.5	0.5
Total	66,690	88,758	109,022	0.4	0.5	0.5
No religion ^b	2,948,888	2,877,299	3,706,555	16.6	15.5	18.7
Other religious affiliation ^c	56,121	349,981	133,820	0.3	1.9	0.7
Religious affiliation not stated	1,550,585	1,796,298	2,223,957	8.7	9.7	11.2
Total	17,752,829	18,588,308	19,855,288	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS cat. no. 2068.0, 2006 census tables

Notes: ^a Comprises 'Christian, no further detail', 'Apostolic Church, so described', 'Church of God, so described', 'Australian Christian Churches, so described', and 'New Church Alliance, so described'.

^b Comprises 'No Religion, no further detail', 'Agnosticism', 'Atheism', 'Humanism' and 'Rationalism'.

^c Comprises 'Religious belief, no further detail', 'Not defined', 'New Age, so described' and 'Theism'. In 1996 and 2001, 'Religious affiliation, not defined' was called 'Inadequately described'.

of the population affiliating with Christian denominations was 86 per cent. However, by the 2001 census, this proportion was 68 per cent (ABS 2004b). Greater religious diversity has come about through growth in the numbers of Australians practising Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and other non-western faiths. By 2006, over a million Australians (6 per cent) identified with religions other than Christianity (Table 15).

Simultaneously, organised religion of any kind has lost some of its monopoly over Australian spirituality (Bouma 2006). Those claiming no religious affiliation increased in number to 3.7 million, or 19 per cent of the population, in 2006 (Table 15).

These changes have taken place within the context of a trend towards secularisation across the western world. A secular society is not necessarily irreligious. Rather, secularisation refers to the diminished reach of organised religion, and implies that religious institutions have less control over the identities and social lives of individuals (Bouma 2006). Australian society is more secular than the US, where religious belief plays a greater role in public life (Bouma 2006). However, religion in Australia can seem lively compared to many parts of Europe, where there has been a sharp decline in religious participation and belief since the 1960s (Jenkins 2007).

The question on religion in the Australian census is optional, that is, people can choose not to answer it. Eleven per cent of the population did not state their religion in the 2006 census. The analysis that follows is based on the 89 per cent of the population that responded to the question. It should also be noted that some religions require that spouses of another religious affiliation convert to that religion on marriage to a person of that religion. People can also change their religion at any time after their marriage. The census data refer to respondents'

religious affiliations at the time of the census, which may be different from their affiliations before or at the time of their marriage.

4.1 Religion and partnering

The scale of intermarriage across ethnic lines, described in the previous section, would be expected to bring in its wake more couple relationships which cross religious lines. That is, as migrants move into mainstream educational and occupational institutions, so the salience of the ethnic or religious commitments valued by their family or community of origin would be expected to diminish. Indeed, all the factors explored earlier which contribute to social integration and thus increased partnering across ethnic or indigenous/non-indigenous community lines, should also apply to religious intermarriage.

In the case of religion there is a further factor, which, other things being equal, appears to diminish religious attachments. This is the increased sway of the aforementioned secular value systems in developed societies. Increased intermarriage between people of different religious affiliation may be considered a sign of advanced secularisation. In turn, religious intermarriage is considered to be a major factor contributing to further secularisation. Having a partner who does not belong to the same religion increases the probability of disaffiliation and reduces the probability that children of the union will be raised in that religion (Voas 2003).

Hayes (1991, pp. 469–478) claimed that 'homogeneity along religious and non-religious lines is a characteristic feature of Australian marriage patterns'. Yet if secularisation implies that religious institutions have less control over the social lives of individuals, it might be expected that partnering across denominations and religions would continue to increase over time. As noted by Bouma (2006, p. 78), 'churches are not the primary local social

centres they once were when they provided dances, socials, tennis and other occasions for people to meet⁷.

Table 16 confirms that religious exogamy—as measured by the proportion of men and women married to someone of a different religious affiliation at the time of the census—has increased marginally for the majority of religious groupings shown between 2001 and 2006. (In Table 16, and hereafter, tables and discussion are confined to the thirteen most popular religious affiliations, which claim in excess of 85,000 adherents each in Australia).

As would be expected, rates of exogamy for each religious affiliation are similar for males and for females, with few exceptions: men with no religion are much more likely to

have partnered women who have a religious affiliation (37 per cent) than are women of no religion to have partnered men who have a religion (23 per cent); and Pentecostal women are much more likely to have partnered outside their church (15 per cent) than are Pentecostal men (six per cent). Buddhist women are also more likely than Buddhist men to have a partner of a different religious affiliation. The gender differences probably reflect the fact that these affiliations allow spouses to maintain different religious affiliations. There are notable excesses of men over women professing no religion, and of Pentecostal women over Pentecostal men.

Intermarriage is more common among some religious groups than others. A substantial proportion of those who identify with the main

Table 16: Intermarriage by religion, 2001 and 2006

	Males				Females			
	2001		2006		2001		2006	
	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent
Catholic	1,033,398	35	1,067,406	37	1,114,383	39	1,159,527	40
Anglican	907,563	39	878,393	41	952,608	40	930,099	42
No Religion	607,761	38	789,030	37	492,693	23	658,281	23
Uniting Church	278,014	40	257,776	43	321,371	46	300,474	49
Presbyterian and Reformed	169,580	61	158,626	61	165,070	59	156,150	60
Eastern Orthodox	133,989	19	135,742	21	130,251	16	133,474	19
Other Christian	145,114	20	159,606	20	164,302	28	180,073	27
Buddhism	68,661	17	81,250	18	76,751	24	95,169	29
Islam	55,922	9	67,883	8	54,327	6	66,634	6
Baptist	67,141	32	69,910	31	73,282	36	76,907	36
Lutheran	57,254	48	57,467	51	60,903	50	61,513	53
Pentecostal	38,520	7	43,791	6	43,171	15	49,574	15
Hinduism	22,747	12	36,217	10	22,783	11	36,247	10
Judaism	20,205	20	21,581	21	19,756	17	21,127	19

Source: 2006 census customised table.

Notes: ^a Rate excludes those whose partner's religion was not stated or whose partner was temporarily absent on census night.

Table 17: Partnered Christian men and women, religious affiliation of spouse, 2006, per cent

	Catholic	Anglican	Uniting Church	Presbyterian & Reformed	Eastern Orthodox	Baptist	Lutheran	Pentecostal	Other	No Religion	Total
Males											
Catholic	63	18	4	3	1	1	1	0	2	6	100
Anglican	23	59	6	4	1	1	1	0	2	4	100
Uniting Church	17	16	57	2	0	1	1	0	2	4	100
Presbyterian & Reformed	23	24	5	39	1	1	1	0	2	4	100
Eastern Orthodox	11	4	1	1	79	0	0	0	1	2	100
Baptist	10	10	3	2	0	69	1	0	2	3	100
Lutheran	19	14	6	3	1	1	49	0	3	6	100
Pentecostal	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	94	1	1	100
Females											
Catholic	60	18	4	3	1	1	1	0	2	10	100
Anglican	21	58	4	4	1	1	1	0	2	9	100
Uniting Church	16	17	51	3	0	1	1	0	2	9	100
Presbyterian & Reformed	21	22	4	40	1	1	1	0	2	8	100
Eastern Orthodox	10	3	1	1	81	0	0	0	1	3	100
Baptist	10	10	3	2	0	64	1	0	2	8	100
Lutheran	17	13	5	3	1	1	47	0	2	11	100
Pentecostal	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	85	2	4	100

Source: 2006 census customised table.

Christian religious groups are exogamous. By 2006, some 37 per cent of Catholic men and 40 per cent of Catholic women were partnered with non-Catholics. The exogamy rate was similar for Anglicans and Uniting Church adherents, while more than half of all partnered men and women affiliated with the Presbyterian and Reformed and Lutheran churches had married outside their own church. The highest overall rate of exogamy was amongst Presbyterian and Reformed adherents at 61 per cent for men and 60 per cent for women. Pentecostals were an exception, with exogamy rates among the lowest of all religious affiliations. The Pentecostal church is relatively recently established in Australia. Otherwise, these are all long established communities in Australia, with most of their adherents being Australia-born (see section 4.2). Their relatively high rates of exogamy are consistent with the theory that social mobility and secularisation tend to erode exclusive religious attachments. Certainly it seems that the sharp divide between Catholics and Protestants that remained strong

until well into the 20th century has largely disappeared, as measured by intermarriage between the two groups.

However, it is important to note that most exogamous Christians have spouses with a different Christian affiliation, rather than with a non-Christian affiliation. Twenty-eight per cent of Catholic men and women were partnered with someone from the main Protestant groups shown in Table 17. More than one fifth of Anglicans and Presbyterian and Reformed adherents were partnered with Catholics. Lutherans had the highest rate of exogamy outside the Christian affiliations, yet this was only three per cent.

Studies based on earlier censuses indicated that intermarriage was negligible outside the 'dominant' (Catholic, Anglican and other Protestant) religious groups in Australia (Gariano 1994; Gariano and Rutland 1997). These findings are replicated for the 2006 census. Rates of exogamy are under one

Table 18: Partnered non-Christian men and women, religious affiliation of spouse, 2006, per cent

	Buddhism	Islam	Hinduism	Judaism	Catholic	Anglican	Other Christian	Other	No Religion	Total
Males										
Buddhism	82	0	0	0	7	2	3	1	5	100
Islam	0	92	0	0	3	1	2	0	1	100
Hinduism	1	0	90	0	4	1	2	1	1	100
Judaism	1	0	0	79	6	4	4	1	5	100
Females										
Buddhism	71	0	0	0	8	5	4	1	11	100
Islam	0	94	0	0	2	1	1	0	2	100
Hinduism	0	0	90	0	3	2	1	1	2	100
Judaism	0	0	0	81	4	4	3	1	7	100

Source: 2006 census customised table.

quarter for all the non-Christian religious groups, with the exception of Buddhist women (29 per cent). Exogamy is least common among Muslim women and men (six and seven per cent respectively).

Table 18 shows that exogamous men and women from all the major non-Christian religious groups are more likely to be married to adherents of the major Christian denominations or to partners with no religious affiliation than they are to be married to adherents of a different non-Christian religion.

Outside the major Christian denominations, intermarriage patterns are inseparable from migration patterns. The next sections address religious intermarriage by country of birth and by generation.

4.2 Religious intermarriage by country of birth

While increased religious diversity owes much to migration (ABS 2004b, p. 182), it should not be assumed that all migrants from non-western countries, especially Asian countries, bring non-western faiths with them. Of

Table 19: Religious intermarriage, males and females in couple families by top three countries of birth, 2006

Religion	Males			Females		
	Country of birth	Partnered number	Exogamous ^a per cent	Country of birth	Partnered number	Exogamous ^a per cent
Catholic	Australia	682,021	44	Australia	765,094	47
	Italy	74,432	11	Italy	55,978	6
	United Kingdom	39,677	46	United Kingdom	41,377	51
Anglican	Australia	665,018	42	Australia	717,891	44
	United Kingdom	142,592	36	United Kingdom	135,869	35
	New Zealand	19,310	45	New Zealand	20,528	48
Eastern orthodox	Australia	42,979	37	Australia	48,304	33
	Greece	39,698	9	Greece	34,405	6
	FYROM ^b	14,374	7	FYROM ^b	13,178	4
Buddhist	Viet Nam	25,994	8	Viet Nam	27,545	12
	China ^c	9,305	10	China ^c	11,409	25
	Australia	9,071	57	Australia	8,677	65
Muslim	Lebanon	12,100	3	Australia	10,044	7
	Turkey	8,342	7	Lebanon	9,930	1
	Australia	7,437	16	Turkey	7,528	4
Hindu	India	18,642	7	India	18,127	4
	Fiji	7,155	8	Fiji	7,636	14
	Sri Lanka	3,910	8	Sri Lanka	3,783	5
Jewish	Australia	7,412	28	Australia	8,002	24
	South Africa	3,774	10	South Africa	3,647	8
	United Kingdom	1,306	32	United Kingdom	1,201	30

Source: 2006 census customised table.

Notes: ^a Rate excludes those whose partner's religion was not stated or whose partner was temporarily absent on census night.

^b Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

^c Excludes SARs and Taiwan Province

partnered men and women from China, Hong Kong and Japan, ‘no religion’ was the most common response in 2006, while Catholicism was most commonly nominated among those from Indonesia, the Philippines and Singapore. The same applies to partnered immigrants from some Middle Eastern countries: men and women from Iraq were most likely to be Catholic, as were women from Lebanon. Nevertheless, many religious groups in Australia have their origin in particular migrant source countries.

Table 19 shows the top three countries of birth for men and women of particular religious groups, and their rate of intermarriage. Australia was the most common country of birth for Catholics, Anglicans and those of Eastern Orthodox and Jewish faiths. These are all well established religions in Australia, of which large numbers of adherents are second or third-plus generation Australians. Thus it is not surprising that exogamy rates for the Australia-born are relatively high. For example, amongst Catholics, the Australia-born exogamy rate for males is 46 per cent and for females 47 per cent. It is also notable that exogamy rates are similarly high for the United Kingdom-born adherents of these faiths. The explanation is undoubtedly the same. That is, these people come from a society with similar strong secular value trends, thus facilitating cross-faith partnerships.

The pattern is quite different for the smaller and more recently established religious communities in Australia. For each religious group there tends to be a distinct country of origin pattern and a very low rate of exogamy. For example, Australia’s Buddhists were most commonly born in Viet Nam, Muslims in Lebanon and Hindus in India, and the overseas-born of these religious affiliations have lower rates of intermarriage than their Australia-born counterparts.

Arguably, these findings do not help much in understanding the dynamics of religious exogamy among the less established religious groups. Most migrants when they arrive in Australia are already partnered with co-religionists. Thus where a community consists primarily of recent arrivals it is no surprise that, as with Muslims and Hindus, exogamy is low. The interest lies in what happens with second and subsequent generations within each religious community. Table 20 addresses this question by providing intermarriage data by religion and generation in Australia.

Table 20 shows that exogamy is notably low for all the first generation non-Christian religious groups, including Muslims, Jews and Hindus. Intermarriage is discouraged in almost all these faiths. In the case of many countries from which Australia’s Muslim community derive, exogamy is strongly proscribed. In Australia, however, it may be more difficult to maintain such proscriptions. Although data are not available on when the marriage occurred, most partnered members of the Islamic community are likely to have arrived in Australia as married couples—Table 20 indicates that over 80 per cent of Muslims are first generation Australians. Table 20 also shows that intermarriage by religion increases with each successive generation. In some cases the shift is quite dramatic between generations. Whereas only seven per cent of overseas-born Muslim men are exogamous, this proportion increases to fourteen per cent among second-generation Muslim men and to 25 per cent among Muslim men who are third or more generation. However, the numbers of second and third generation Muslims remain small. As the Muslim community increases in size and institutional complexity (as mosques and Islamic schools and related institutions develop) this may enable younger generation Muslims to more easily find partners within their religious community.

Exogamy is also low amongst first generation Jewish men and women. Most of these men and women would have been married at the time of migration to Australia. The rate of exogamy increases to 25 per cent among second generation Jewish men and to 33 per cent among Jewish men who are third generation or more. For Jewish women the parallel rates are 22 per cent and 28 per cent respectively. Are these rates high or low? From the point of view of the Jewish community in Australia they would be considered high, since community leaders have been concerned about any indications of increased out-marriage (Goldlust 1993). This is because where it occurs it often implies (as noted above) that the couple will not carry on Jewish religious traditions or raise their children as Jews. A third generation exogamy rate of around 30 per cent may indicate that Australia is following the pattern in North America, where the rate of exogamy reaches almost 50 per cent (Gariano and Rutland 1997). Although it is possible that marriages to non-Jews may be followed by conversion, the evidence suggests that exogamy is usually associated with a decline in Jewish identification and commitment to the Jewish community institutions on the part of the intermarried couple (Waxman 1990).

On the other hand, a 30 per cent level of exogamy amongst the third generation may seem low in the light of the theory that upward mobility and secularisation normally promote intermarriage. The Australian Jewish community has been one of the most successful in regards to upward educational and occupational mobility. Table 21, which shows exogamy by level of education for those identifying as Jews, highlights this point. It shows that around half of Jewish partners hold a degree or higher (a rate far higher than any other major religious group in Australia). It also shows that exogamy is low for all levels of

Table 20: Religious intermarriage by generation, 2006

Religion and generation	Males		Females	
	Partnered number	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered number	Exogamous ^a per cent
<i>Catholic</i>				
First generation	350,065	23	354,990	27
Second generation	193,435	39	217,479	41
Third+ generation	488,673	46	547,896	49
Total ^b	1,067,401	37	1,159,518	40
<i>Anglican</i>				
First generation	186,438	36	183,011	37
Second generation	108,809	42	119,768	45
Third+ generation	558,546	42	601,716	44
Total ^b	878,388	41	930,103	42
<i>No Religion</i>				
First generation	227,648	32	185,096	18
Second generation	123,042	38	111,385	25
Third+ generation	419,396	39	345,936	24
Total ^b	789,031	37	658,294	23
<i>Uniting Church</i>				
First generation	30,023	31	34,250	39
Second generation	28,038	41	33,184	50
Third+ generation	193,388	45	225,570	51
Total ^b	257,782	43	300,477	49
<i>Presbyterian and Reformed</i>				
First generation	41,578	48	40,018	46
Second generation	20,030	65	20,238	64
Third+ generation	92,526	67	91,449	65
Total ^b	158,627	61	156,146	60
<i>Eastern Orthodox</i>				
First generation	86,987	13	79,313	11
Second generation	39,819	37	43,807	32
Third+ generation	2,675	47	3,868	36
Total ^b	135,744	21	133,474	19
<i>Buddhism</i>				
First generation	69,307	13	83,101	25
Second generation	2,719	53	2,788	63
Third+ generation	6,392	58	5,965	66
Total ^b	81,244	18	95,162	29
<i>Islam</i>				
First generation	57,606	7	53,645	6
Second generation	5,924	14	8,387	7
Third+ generation	1,352	25	1,408	12
Total ^b	67,883	8	66,637	6
<i>Baptist</i>				
First generation	20,129	24	22,441	31
Second generation	9,195	32	10,390	37
Third+ generation	38,599	35	41,883	38
Total ^b	69,909	31	76,901	36

Table 20: Religious intermarriage by generation, 2006

Religion and generation	Males		Females	
	Partnered number	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered number	Exogamous ^a per cent
<i>Lutheran</i>				
First generation	18,737	56	17,923	55
Second generation	6,859	71	8,408	74
Third+ generation	30,419	44	33,613	47
Total ^b	57,472	51	61,515	53
<i>Pentecostal</i>				
First generation	15,820	5	17,448	13
Second generation	6,281	7	7,184	15
Third+ generation	20,428	7	23,477	16
Total ^b	43,788	6	49,570	15
<i>Hinduism</i>				
First generation	34,579	10	34,408	9
Second generation	367	32	459	39
Third+ generation	461	44	516	44
Total ^b	36,217	10	36,253	10
<i>Judaism</i>				
First generation	13,185	17	12,099	15
Second generation	5,461	25	5,687	22
Third+ generation	1,909	33	2,290	28
Total ^b	21,581	21	21,123	19

Source: 2006 census customised table.

Notes: ^a Rate excludes those whose partner's religion was not stated or whose partner was temporarily absent on census night.

^b Totals include those whose generation was not stated.

Table 21: Jewish intermarriage by educational attainment

	Males		Females	
	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent	Partnered no.	Exogamous ^a per cent
Degree or higher	10,986	19	9,682	19
Other post-school qualification	4,194	22	3,971	18
Year 11–12	3,450	24	4,123	18
Up to year 10	1,195	24	1,324	23
Total ^b	21,581	21	21,123	19

Source: 2006 census customised table.

Notes: ^a Rate excludes those whose partner's religion was not stated or whose partner was temporarily absent on census night.

^b Total includes those whose educational attainment was not stated, inadequately described, or none.

education, including those with a degree or higher. The development of Jewish social institutions appears to have functioned as community leaders have hoped, that is to counter the erosive impact of upward mobility on ethnic attachment. According to one leader (Goldlust 1993, p. 38), writing of Melbourne's Jews:

the organic development of an extensive structure of formal and informal community organisations has operated as a particularly effective socialising framework. Certainly the current evidence documents a relatively high level of ethnic endogamy and suggests that the experience of growing up within such a community has engendered widespread positive commitment towards the principle of ethnic continuity among succeeding generations of Melbourne Jews.

The Jewish case shows that there is no single pathway to intermarriage in Australia and thus to a form of social integration which dissolves ethnic and religious attachments.

4.3 Concluding comments

Religious exogamy is increasing in Australia. Rates of intermarriage by and between Catholics and Protestants, already high in 2001, were higher in 2006, suggesting the continuing erosion of the historic divide between these two groups. Catholics and Protestants are more exogamous than other groups due to their longer exposure to each other and to the forces of secularisation operating in Australia, as in most western nations. However, most exogamous Catholics and Protestants are married to spouses from other Christian denominations. Intermarriage across religions remains relatively rare in Australia.

Cultural diversification in Australia has been accompanied by greater religious diversification. However, the overseas-born Australians who are now contributing to

Australia's religious diversity have often arrived as couples, and are not yet contributing much to rates of intermarriage. Nevertheless, sharp differences between migrants and subsequent generations of migrant descent suggest that intermarriage by members of newer religious groups will also increase over time as these groups have more opportunities to mix, both with each other and with adherents of the longer-established Catholic and Protestant faiths.

5 CONCLUSION

Australia is distinctive among developed nations for the very high level of cultural and national origin diversity of its residents. By 2006 around 24 per cent of all Australian residents were born overseas, with the majority coming from non-English-speaking countries. Australian residents were overwhelmingly drawn from Western European stock until World War Two. But this changed in the aftermath of the War as a consequence of Australia's post-war migration program. Around a third of the migrants arriving in Australia between World War Two and 1970 came from Southern and Eastern Europe. The distinctive cultural, linguistic and sometimes religious practices and commitments of these migrants presented a challenge to the expectations of existing residents that migrants could and should quickly become 'like us'. By the 1970s this assimilationist perspective had been challenged by the advent of multiculturalism. Since that time cultural difference has been valued by many and ethnic communities have been encouraged to celebrate their cultural traditions and diversity.

These developments have prompted a lively interest in the social outcomes. A key question has been whether multiculturalism has worked to isolate or include migrants. This study cannot provide a full answer to this question. However, intermarriage is an important indicator of the

extent to which social difference based on the different cultural and religious backgrounds of migrants persists in Australian society. As we have argued, intermarriage between partners of different cultural, religious or ethnic backgrounds is more likely to occur where social distance is minimal. That is, people are not likely to enter partnerships which necessitate close linkages between the families and communities of the respective parties if their lifestyles and cultural attachments differ significantly. This argument applies across several dimensions, including class, culture and ethnicity.

The census results on intermarriage suggest that, in Australia, these barriers are weak. The main contributor to this situation is the relatively high degree of upward educational and occupational mobility in Australia of young people born to post-war migrants. This mobility has eroded the class, cultural and ethnic divisions and the prejudices which were evident in the early years of post-war migration to Australia. The most striking illustration is the experience of the Eastern and Southern-European migrant communities. By 2006 there were a substantial number of second and third-plus generation residents from these backgrounds. In the case of those whose ancestry was traced to Eastern Europe, most of those of second and third-plus generation had formed exogamous relationships. In the case of those with Southern European ancestry, a significant minority of the second generation of Greek or Italian ancestry remained endogamous, but only a small minority of the third generation. In addition, of those in exogamous relationships amongst the third-plus generation, most were partnered with spouses whose ancestry was Anglo-Celtic.

There was a high level of exogamy amongst second and third-plus generation Australians across religious boundaries. An important

example, given the heritage of divisions between the Catholic and Protestant communities in Australia, was that 44 per cent of Australia-born Catholic males and 47 per cent of females were in exogamous relationships in 2006, with most of these married to Protestants.

It will be interesting to compare intermarriage patterns among the second generation of more recently arrived migrants from Asia and the Middle-East, whose religious attachments are to Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and other non-Christian religions. Current marriage registration statistics show that the great majority of marriages conducted in Australia which involve persons born in Asia or the Middle-East—that is, first generation migrants—are with spouses from the same national origin. If second and third generation Australians of Asian and Middle Eastern ancestries experience levels of upward educational and occupational mobility similar to those achieved by the second and third generations of Southern and Eastern European background, they may repeat the intermarriage experience of the latter group. However, the boundaries between religions may prove to be stronger than those between denominations.

The analysis of intermarriage tells a related story for Australia's indigenous residents. Just a few decades ago there was evidence of deep prejudice within the non-indigenous community towards the indigenous community. Yet by 2006 the great majority of indigenous persons living in Australia's capital cities were in exogamous relationships. This finding applied regardless of income or education. While this does not mean that there are no class barriers in Australian cities, it does imply that there are few impediments to the social mixing of indigenous and non-indigenous persons from similar socio-economic backgrounds. For indigenous persons who live outside Australia's capital cities,

intermarriage was much lower. Even so, most indigenous persons who had achieved relatively high levels of educational and income mobility were in exogamous relationships. This suggests that any remaining social divide between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians is attributable to socio-economic divisions and to the relative residential isolation of indigenous communities outside the capital cities.

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