

# Fred Andrews

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## FRED ANDREWS

I'm confused with my Aboriginal identity. First of all, my mother was Aboriginal, and she was taken off her parents and put in homes. This was before the policy law, in the time leading up to it. Anyway, she got out, married an Aboriginal fella, had two kids and two miscarriages, and they're my older brothers, they're really dark. They got taken off my mother, I don't know all the circumstances because my mum wouldn't say too much. Then she married my dad, who was a whitefella, and got her children back. She lived with him and twenty years later she married him. I've also got a sister that's a throwback, fairly dark, from my grandfather. I was a lot like my mother.

It was in my teens that I started to hang around with other Aboriginal people. At first, when I'd waved at them down the street they thought I was giving cheek, a whitefella waving to the blacks. After a while, though, I didn't want to know them. I thought all they did was get drunk and fight all the time. But as I got older and spent time in jail and stuff like that, I got to know more about it.

It's hard issue; you add grog and it makes the issue even harder. It's always been about land rights and recognition – that we're not dumb, we aren't useless, we aren't all alcoholics, you know. But you end up sending us to the pub and drinking. I probably lost my own self-esteem because even places where I worked I'd hear 'dirty black bastards', 'Abo bastards', stuff like that. And I'm an Abo, yet my skin's white.

I can hide in society because of my white skin, if I don't bring up my Aboriginality. That's like being split in half. Trying to be someone I'm not. I can definitely see how for other Aboriginals with dark skins, trying to fight against that, it's like a slippery pole. Every time you try to build your way up in society, you slip right back down, because you just don't fit in with white society. There's no way that a black Aboriginal is going to be a boss over white people. They just don't like it. It's just the way it is.

I know a lot about my culture now, but only because I searched for answers. I haven't gone back to my tribe, but I've studied other Aboriginal cultures from different tribes, I definitely understand other people's culture a little bit, and that's how I know about mine. I've studied it, and I know I'm a rare example of the white Aboriginal.

2000

**to be taken off** fjernet fra  
**the policy law** loven der  
fra 1910-1970 tillod at  
tvangsjerne indfødte  
børn for at integrere  
dem i det hvide samfund

**'miscarriage**  
ufrivillig abort

**throwback** individ, hos  
hvem træk arvet fra en  
fjern forfader træder  
stærkt frem

**give cheek** være fræk

**grog** sprut

**recognition** anerkendelse

**self-esteem** selvagtelse

**slippery** glat

**pole** stang, pæl



WHILE-READING

- 1 What does Fred Andrews say about being a white Aboriginal?
- 2 What does he say about the situation of the black Aboriginals?
- 3 Relate what he says to *Going Home*.



- 1 What is your immediate response to the photo above?
- 2 Find elements representing the past and the present.
- 3 What is the effect of the contrast?
- 4 Give the picture a title.
- 5 Write a short poem about the photo.
- 6 Read the poem on p.122 and compare it with your poem.