ENGAGING EMIGRANTS:

A study of the Australian diaspora in the United States of America

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ABSTRACT

Interest in the Australian diaspora has emerged in response to the growing number of Australians living overseas and the recognition that diaspora populations have the potential to be a positive asset to countries of origin. A contemporary global situation that fuels international mobility, particularly of individuals with highly-skilled characteristics, and technological advancements that allow transnational connections to be maintained across distance, contribute to this interest. A dearth of information about emigration and diasporas, especially from countries of immigration, makes it difficult to apply conventional migration theories to explain the mobility and experiences of these populations, and thereby understand how to effectively engage with these communities. This thesis builds on the base of knowledge about the Australian diaspora from Hugo (2003, 2006a, 2001) and others by examining the Australian diaspora in a particular country of destination, the United States of America (US). The major aims of the thesis are to better understand how the drivers of movement and the experiences of the Australian diaspora in the US relate to the wider global situation, national level policies and circumstances and contemporary migration theory. The thesis adds to the body of knowledge about the Australian diaspora in order to inform theory, policy and future research.

A migration systems approach (Fawcett, 1989, Kritz et al., 1992, Massey, 2003), whereby global, national and individual level factors all contribute to explaining migration, is the theoretical framework of the thesis. The primary research in the thesis comprises of data collected in an online survey of 1,581 Australians living in the US. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted in the US with 17 survey respondents. Motivations for migration, progression of the migrant experience, patterns of international mobility and the maintenance of transnational linkages with Australia are the broad themes explored in the survey. Analysis of secondary data, including immigration statistics and information from previous surveys of Australians living overseas, provide context for the research.

The activities of the Australian diaspora in the US support the view that the Australian diaspora should be seen as a distinct part of Australia’s population and a potential resource
for Australia; they are often high achievers, visit Australia frequently, and usually retain a strong sense of connection and identification with Australia. Implications for theory and policy relating to Australian emigration and diaspora as well as future research are suggested based on the research findings.
DECLARATION

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution to Kelly Parker and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University’s digital research repository, the Library catalogue, the Australasian Digital Theses Program (ADTP) and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

....................................................
Kelly L. Parker
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### ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUSS</td>
<td>Australians in the US Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A$</td>
<td>Australian dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>US Department of Homeland Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIAC</td>
<td>Department of Immigration and Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIMA</td>
<td>Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIMIA</td>
<td>Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESTA</td>
<td>Electronic System for Travel Authorization (US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaHCSIA</td>
<td>Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIE</td>
<td>Institute of International Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRS</td>
<td>Internal Revenue Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEA</td>
<td>Kiwi Expats Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPR</td>
<td>Lawful Permanent Residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDA</td>
<td>Migration for Development in Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPI</td>
<td>Migration Policy Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAFSA</td>
<td>Association of International Educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAD</td>
<td>Overseas Arrivals and Departures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>Official Airline Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCG</td>
<td>Southern Cross Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOKTEN</td>
<td>Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USCIS</td>
<td>United States Citizenship and Information Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US-VISIT</td>
<td>United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US$</td>
<td>United States dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>Visa Waiver/Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WT</td>
<td>Visa Waiver/Tourist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
</tr>
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</table>