

# Discovery: the fringe dwellers and dolly essay sample

[Education](#), [Learning](#)



To encounter the concept of both physical and metaphorical exploration is the act of discovery, which can either be positive or negative, planned or unplanned. However, through discovery individuals will find new understanding and renewed perceptions of themselves as well as others. In all aspects, discoveries can be profoundly meaningful in ways that can be emotional, creative, intellectual, physical and spiritual. This will be examined in the play "" Rainbow's End" by Jane Harrison, the film " The Fringe Dweller's" by Bruce Beresford and the novel " Looking for Alibrandi" by Melina Marchetta as they all portray attributes of self-discoveries, discoveries about each other and about the world they adapt to and live within.

The importance of discovery through learning has been represented throughout the play " Rainbow's End" as Gladys discovers the true wonders that education makes to one's life. As Errol describes the encyclopedia as being " most beneficial. It will open up a world of dis..[...] A lifelong love of learning [...] allowing them to reach their full[est] potential."(p. 134) Gladys begins to visualise one of her dream sequences in which she sees Dolly in a graduation robe and clapboard hat. This dream sequence emphasizes Gladys' perspective of the importance of knowledge as she sees the encyclopedia as a beneficial factor for Dolly to learn and become a successful graduate through the knowledge the books contains. As Gladys did not have the opportunity to learn, she understands how important it is for Dolly to gain an education she truly deserves for her to move forward and assimilate.

In the play “ Rainbow’s End”, the audience can foresee the discovery of the individual and the family unit. Despite the generational differences of the three Aboriginal women, Nan Dear, Gladys and Dolly, the audience discovers that they have commonalities between each other due to their shared experiences. Through the play, Nan Dear is seen as being constantly over protective of Dolly and doesn’t want her to go past the cork trees. “ No, Dolly-See, I was walking home, taking a short cut-and-and-and the lad-he took advantage of me...” (p. 187) The use of repetition “ and-and-and” shows her stuttering, and the hesitation on whether she should reveal that Papa Dear is not Gladys’ real father and more importantly shares her own past, her rape. As Nan shares her story, Dolly discovers that Nan Dear was raped by a whitefella but promises to keep it a secret from Gladys. The use of colloquial language such as “ whitefella” makes the play accessible to a wide range of audiences. Although Nan Dear and Dolly have different views, the discovery of their very similar experience enables them to relate to each other.

The discovery of the social and political barriers has been examined in the play “ Rainbow’s End.” During the scene of the Bank Manager’s office, Gladys is asking the manager to employ her daughter Dolly, as she is having a conversation with him she discovers that society; education, where you live and your cultural background have a major influence on how you are perceived by others. “ He hands her his fountain pen. She holds it, uncertain, then hands it back. She collects her things as if to leave...He Calmly begins to fill out the form and Gladys sits back down.” Through the dialogue and

tone, it can be seen that Gladys who is very aware of the social implications brought upon society, is still very desperate to give Dolly the same opportunities as everyone else and wants Dolly to assimilate and have a brighter future than she ever did.

The social and political barriers to discovery are further evident in the film “The Fringe Dwellers” by Bruce Beresford. The film focuses on an Aboriginal family who also face social implications within the society. Trilby, the protagonist in “The Fringe Dwellers” is determined to become and assimilate as one of the white girls by wanting to move to the city and being like everyone else. This self-discovery is shown through the medium-shot of her looking at the paintings of the city completely immersed, wondering what the city life has to offer. This is very different to Dolly in “Rainbow’s End” as she does not want to move to the city with Errol when he offers her to live with him in an apartment in the city, as Dolly believes that family is most important. As Errol discovers what truly matters to Dolly, her family, he undergoes a change through the process of his own self-discovery. At first Errol could not understand the familial attachment Dolly had to her family, however, he later re-discovers it and states “I’ve changed, Dolly, I realise I was wrong... because it’s where you belong, and your family is important to me.” (p. 179) This is the moment when Errol discovers the difference in his way of thinking.

In “Looking for Alibrandi” by Melina Marchetta, Josephine believes that her appearance and ethnic background is the determining factor in her social acceptance as she remembers feeling less socially accepted while at St

Marthas “ I though it was my birth circumstances.” (p. 258) She thinks that the prejudice she experiences was due to her cultural differences. Josie, just like Dolly finally feels comfortable with her place in society and she is optimistic like Christina and Katia and like Dolly and her family. She says, “ I am an Australian with Italian blood. I will say that with pride.” (p. 256) Josie discovers the lesson of stereotyping and just like the characters in Rainbow’s End, where they are subjected to racism and enforced rules of assimilation, displacement and exclusion.

Throughout Jane Harrison’s play “ Rainbow’s End”, Bruce Beresford’s film “ The Fringe Dwellers” and “ Looking for Alibrandi” by Melina Marchetta, the concept of discovery has been explored through the discovery of learning, discovery of the individual and family unit, and the social and political barriers. Through the experience the characters go through, they are able to self-discover and expand their viewpoints, beliefs and perceptions about themselves, about each other as well as the world they live within.