CHAPTER V

A DETERMINED STRATEGIC QUEST
( NOT MEETING Mr. RIGHT & AVOIDING Mr. RIGHT )

Anita Heiss is the most prolific and well known Aboriginal writers in the contemporary period. Born and bred in Sydney, She is considered to be the first Aboriginal to graduate with Ph.D from the University of Western Sydney. She continues to be academician, besides being an author, poet, social commentator. She is a member of Wiradjuri nation of central New South Wales. She is an initiation for Indigenous Literary project and was an ambassador for Indigenous literacy day. Among all her novels Manhattan Dreaming, Avoiding Mr. Right, Yirra and Her Deadly Dog Demon, who Am I? The Diary of Mary Talence, Not Meeting Mr. Right (2007) is the most renowned and popular novel that catapulted her position as the promising Aboriginal writer. She has examined the predicament of Aboriginal women’s lives confronted with the contemporary culture. Taking a sudden leap from examining the practical realization of the basic necessities of life in the lives of Aboriginal women, she examines the contemporary cultural issue of an Aboriginal woman finding a better husband from the wretched cultural situation. The very formation of Aboriginal identity is seen completely from the perspective of Aboriginal women’s experience. The Post colonial propositions of First world Feminism, Second world Feminism, Third World Feminism and Subaltern Feminism become inapplicable and pave the way for
the emergence of Fourth World Feminism. Fourth world Feminism finds its appropriate relevance and resonance in elucidating the theme of *Not Meeting Mr. Right*.

To understand the theme of the novel in a better perspective, it is essential for any reader to know the background of Aboriginal communities in Australia, especially Koori community. The chief protagonist of the novel Alice Aigner hails from Koori community. *Not Meeting Mr. Right* is not well knit organic plot. The theme of the novel is not unfurled in a traditional development. The central character Alice Aigner displays a strategy and methodology in promoting and implementing her wish. She executes her plan inhabiting the dating culture that prevails in Australia in the contemporary situation. The execution of her strategy is explained through various subheadings, while sustaining the ironical stance in the title of the novel.

The prevailing dating culture has conveyed the assumption that most Australian women are incredibly hot, average or real scrubbers. Their attitudes towards sex and dating culture are quite liberal and religion has very little influence in guarding them from the cultural wretchedness. Australian women have nothing to fear from unwanted pregnancies, nude photographs and free sexual relationships outside the orbit of marriages. They are renowned for enjoying alcoholic intoxicated lives and notoriously known for encouraging their teenagers and women in their twenties into the world of alcoholism. In this nurtured cultural degradation, one finds it easier to get laid
although his or her partner may or may not remember what happened the night before. This is considered to be a serious problem that endangers Australian society. But most of the Australians are in appreciation of this culture, as travelers are likely to hookup with other travelers. Many of the gazing clubs and bars in Sydney and Melbourne which are quite common are depicted in this novel. Existing in this culture, some times, it is generally believed that most people have options to know some one, to have a hot chick and find genuine warmth and friendliness. For the easy going Aussies who run after beer and sports it is simply an attempt to get a root rather than start any meaningful relationship. But there are sensitive Aussies who are less likely to be found in pubs and clubs wishing for meaningful relationships opposite the sea. This kind of culture has offered a broader space for the rights of gays and lesbians in the major cities. There is even a whole street and parade dedicated to gay and lesbian culture in Sydney: “If you’re a gay male and try proposition another guy in a country and regional town, you may be in for trouble. There’s an insidious thread of unjustified hatred for gays and lesbians in some Australian communities and gays have been assaulted because of their sexuality. It is however more likely that the hot country boy you’ve just propositioned will probably just tell you to, “fuck off” (35).

There exists a severe socio economic situation in Australia. House prices and rent in Australia are very high. Many Australians share
accommodation or live with their family well into their twenties. This situation has eroded the privacies of the people in the recent times. To protect the privacies of the people, inviting to hotel or having a quickie on the beach is the only way left to most people. Their fascination is confined to the sea and the beach. The sea and the beach cast its magnetic spell to draw people from different walks of life. They often live in one coastal destination and then go to another beach side location for their vacation. Those who do not live near the coast will happily spend hours in their vehicles or public transport every week end or holiday to get to beach. The sea loving culture and the casual pre and post martial sexual relations justifies the availability of emergency pill over the counter of the pharmacists and easy availability of condoms. Understanding the attitudes of the people, the habitation of dating and surf culture, contribute to the clear understanding of this novel in a better perspective.

Alice Aigner, as a central character of Not Meeting Mr. Right makes private reflections public which is found to be common in Aboriginal communities. Hailing from Aboriginal community with complete contentment in life preferring ‘loving, being single or ‘I love being Single’, she chooses to be successful, independent and confirmed serial dater. At Twenty eight, she works as the head of department at a private catholic girl’s school. She lives in a funky two bedroom flat near coogee beach. All of a sudden, at her ten year school reunion at the Hub in Bondi Junction, she
notices a sense of loss in her personality. In the midst of all her classmates, she finds herself to be the only woman without a life partner (Mr. Right) considered to be the key ingredient in determining success and happiness. She feels alienated when all her friends in the reunion keep talking about wedding planners, floral arrangements, dress fittings, honeymoon locations and gift registers. She feels that all these experiences are unknown to her. She observes the reaction of her blossom old friend Estella who rearranges her bulky bra and tightening her fanny says: “My nipples are killing me”. Effected by her experience, she decides not to marry and have kids. She arrives to a conclusion and says: “Right at that moment I seriously loved being single: sore nipples, loose Fannies and stretch marks didn’t appeal to me at all” (3). Her confirmation ‘I love being single’ becomes a mantra for her life. She feels contentment and happiness with serial dating and short term relationships. She feels that her single life is great when compared with the lives of some married women. The reactions and responses of some of her married friends are evidences for their dissatisfied lives. As a reaction to one of her old friend Linda’s dissatisfaction with marriage Alice replies expressing her denial to marriage: “None, I’m a bleeder not a breeder” (5).

Alice considers marriage as a fun. She believes that marriage fails to provide holistic approach to life. She understands that behind the ‘love at first sight’ conception of many young men there lies ‘lust at first sight’. Despite her professional background as history teacher and a practicing aboriginal
Roman Catholic, she has her own values that negate with the ideas of marriage and domestic life. She is brought up in idealistic marriage. She observes: “We’d always been taught no sex before marriage and kids out of wedlock. Even as times changed, the morals of the church were upheld, at last in the Aigner house. Christian values worked for me is a very general sense- do unto others and so on. But I’d had to work out my own beliefs when I left schools and started to live the life I thought best for me and the world I tried to love by the Aboriginal values system of the past-community benefits over individual gain, cooperation, over competition responsibilities over rights” (26). Sharing the experiences of married women, understanding the mortgaged conditions of motherly classmates she loses faith in the institution of marriage. She resolves not to marry and decides to lead a lonely life. Alice views strongly: “All married women can talk about is honeymoons, anniversaries, pregnancies, Lamaze classes, sore nipples, breast milk, school fees, nits, mortgage repayments” (26). But when all her friends seriously emphasis the need and importance of marriage and explains her the inevitability of marriage that marriage cannot be considered as trade for kids, Alice declares: “Jealous, hah! I love my life. I could build on it, of course. In fact, I’ll get myself a man, and breed, and show that it’s possible to maintain a marriage, motherhood and a mind of my own” (27).

Alice Aigner, the central character of *Not Meeting Mr. Right* is an independent and a successful person. She develops a sudden change of her
mind at her ten year school reunion. Bored by her rigid marriage, moratagaged and influenced by her former classmates, she decides to prove that a woman can have it all – a man, marriage, career, kids and employment of her own - she decides to have. Just under two years away, she decides and sets a goal in her life to meet the perfect man and marry him before her thirtieth birthday, just under two years away. Prior to her decision, she believed in short term relationships. Alice draws ten-point formula with the assistance of her best friends Dannie, Liza and Peta. Dannie is pragmatic in her thinking. She is a white woman who works for the Aboriginal Legal Service. She is married to Mr. All Right George and leads contended life. George is gorgeous with no romance. Yet, Dannie and George lead a smooth life with kids. Alice in her inquisitive inquiry finds that Dannie and George share a kind of inseparable amenity. Explaining the intimacy with her husband Dannie says: “I have Mr. All Right… there’s hardly any more romance. George and I didn’t even kiss properly any more unless we are having sex… we fall into bed every night exhausted, look at each other and smile, then agree to wait until we have more energy” (28 ). Peta who hails from Italian White background is an unmarried woman. She is the prettiest woman of the group. She is good at policy making. She works at Indigenous education and helps Indigenous women to look at their welfare. Liza is another blossom friend of Alice. Coming from Italian culture, she works Aboriginal legal service. She is a woman of confidentiality with genuine
thirst for learning and helping the Aboriginals. In spite of her white background, she has holistic approach towards Aboriginals. She is a committed woman with passion for social justice. She believes helping the people will make the world a better place to live in.

Being a history teacher, Alice prefers organized implementation of her decision and calls it research. She strongly feels that even single girls have bridal dreams once in a blue moon. She is of the view women who say they’ve never thought about a fancy wedding are lying. Alice feels that to inquire about the consequences of wedding is the sign of indignity. With these perceptions, Alice sets to find Mr. Right with the help of her parents, brothers, colleagues and her neighbours. Unfortunately, this search for finding Mr. Right proves to be complicated and arduous process.

Dannie, Peta and Liza sincerely caution Alice not to take the decision of seeking a partner as she doesn’t fit into the shoe of marriage institution. But Alice sticks to her decision. Dannie, Peta and Liza decide to extend their wholehearted co operation to Alice in finding a bright partner in her life. To achieve this, they draw a Ten point plan over cocktails. They decide to place the strategy in an advertisement or in classifieds. Alice cautions in the criterion list that the people with criminal background are ineligible.

*The essential criteria for the selection of Mr. Right are:*

1. Must be single and straight- 2. Must think I am the most gorgeous woman on the planet- 3. Must be romantic and able to show affection in
public- 4. Must only be addicted to me (no alcoholics, no smokes)- 5. Must be non-resultant and non-homophobic- 6. Must be punctual (although I am allowed to be on Koori times)- 7. Must be good to be mother and like children- 8. Must love his job (don’t want him lingering every night about)- 9. Must be debt free (mortgage will be accepted)- 10. Must be loyal and hair desirable, compatible star sign a definite plus.

Alice unfolds her mind after implementing her strategy for Meeting Mr. Right. Initially, she looks Feminist and Lesbian. Filled with passion in proving herself, she wishes to have unconditional love and support from her husband. She recollects her mother’s painful comments for not fixing dates in seeking an ideal partner for her. She is shocked to hear her mother saying: “I knew it you are a lesbian, aren’t you” (70). Filled with emotion, she bursts with anger and replies: “I am not a lesbian, mum. I actually like single life and having no one to worry about, being able to sleep and read when I want to” (71).

Alice preserves utmost respect for her parents. She considers their relationship as benchmark. She was in high appreciation of the qualities inherent in her parents. Her parents were outcastes who met in 1960’s and became perfect couple. Alice mother was a koori from the country, not even a citizen in her own land. Her father, a migrant from Australia, was simply a ‘wog’ to just about everyone he meets. Yet they made a niche of their own world. Their love knew no racial or claim barriers. They were married in
their early twenties and were always happy even after thirty years. She has two loving brothers Arnie twenty six and Dillon twenty four. She has no hesitation to seek advice, help co operation from her brother Dillion in her designed execution of the strategy.

The background of Alice’s family proves that the parents of Alice are exemplary. She doesn’t want to disgrace her family but has determined to prove to her family that she was not a lesbian. She strongly declares: ‘I am daring and dynamic, deadly and desirable’. She decides to date with men in persuasion of Mr. Right. Dating is a means for her to meet Mr. Right. On the advice of her mother, she dates with Mr. Cliff who was around thirty three. During their relationship Cliff and Alice had a long conversation and arguments about the issues of Aboriginal people. During the conversation, as Mr. Cliff slips into the graphic details of own sex life, Alice experiences uneasy and gives up the attempts of winning his heart. Without giving up her ray of hope, she tries all her means to find another Mr. Right. In response to her email to find Mr. Right, she finds Mr. Renan who is shorter than her. Alice was Leo and Renan was aries. According Alice, an amalgamation of Ms. Leo and Mr. Aries will have marriage potential. Renan is witty and aphrodisiac. The relationship fails as Renan fails to fulfill one of the promises mentioned in ten point formula i.e. ‘no sex on the first date’. Desperately Alice cries: ‘I am deadly, desirable and desperate’. Opening up to all the opportunities, she dates with Mr. Cliff, Micky Charlie, Tufu Malcolm, Mr.
Paul the engineer. All these relationships prove to be futile and turn out to be great disappointments. Alice experiences great disappointment, failing to cope with the attitudes of the people, whom she dates. At one stage she thinks Mr. Micker is her perfect life mate. Micker was a well dressed country boy with gorgeous look. When Alice explains her mission and project the response of Mickey throws her into utter darkness: “I briefed him up on my new mission and all his response was - love, unless you’re harrying sex change, I can’t help you. And should you actually be calling it a mission?” (84). After experiencing failure, on the request of Dannie, Alice accepts to date with her cousin Charlie. But she is disappointed to see eighties style of Charles: “blasted leather bomber jacket skin-tight, pale blue jeans, worn shoes” (95).

When all the friends Mickey, Gabrielle, Dannie, Liza, Peta fail to find Mr. Right for Alice, Liza comes with a new proposal. She views that developing strategies with her friends and making use of friendships to set the deadline is a wrong method. She comments that finding a husband on thirtieth birthday of Alice is a wring idea. The observations of Liza prove to be right and show that Alice is under absorption. Alice realizes the difficulty in finding Mr. Right either from Aboriginal community or white community. She decides not to be carried away by any utopian dreams or expectations.

The next experiment with Tufu proved to be good but eventually fails. Tufu looked perfect and too good to be true. He hails from Coogee region.
He was around thirty, single, employed gorgeous and brown. Believing his attitude Alice accepts to date with him. Tufu never had a girl friend and looked really waiting for Ms. Right. The physical advance in the first meeting makes him disqualified: “He leaned and kissed me. It was swift move and it was all fast, but it was honestly felt perfect” (116). Understanding that Tufu considers her as marriage material, Alice rejects him firmly. Alice experiences the same lustful attitude in the company of Malcom son of her mother’s old friend working in the Aboriginal Medical services as a project manager. When they meet at the Koori crafts stall, Malcom makes physical advance to Alice. Alice reacts with disappointment: “I looked up into his black eyes and suddenly knew what love at first sight was or lust at first sight, any way” (117). In rejecting the relationship with Malcom, Alice brother plays a crucial role. He calls Alice and brings her into the world of consciousness.

Having gone through bitter dating experiences, she loses faith on her strategies and decides not to have any dating. But she meets Simon and thinks that he might be her Mr. Right. After putting up date in China town with, She concludes that he was not Mr. Right but Mr. All Wrong. Finally, Peta comes out with a proposal of making Alice to meet her friend Paul. Paul is black fellow hailing from Aboriginal community. He is gorgeous and well settled in life as an engineer. Posing as a sound perfect partner to Alice, he invites Alice to dinner. Dinner invitations are serious for dating people. A
date on Friday is really serious than dinner on a Tuesday or Wednesday. On the proposed date, Alice and Paul move very close and experience sex. Alice finds Paul making no difference compared to other men. When he says that he wanted some time to think about marriage, Alice experiences total disappointment. Recollecting old mantra ‘Try anything Twice’, Alice refuses to give up and tries to check her luck with another man called Jack. Jack was a philanthropist from Sydney, living in Bronte. Alice makes sex with Jack and considers her potential for holiday romance. But as she finds the relationship slipping out of her control, she breaks this relationship too.

Towards the end of the novel all her dates, research results and strategies prove to be futile. She loses faith in men. She just has to wonder as to why it is not possible to find Mr. Perfect without sex before marriage. She observes specimens of her experience to be dissected, studied and analyses them in an effort to understand them. All she wanted to know was: ‘Why they made it so damned hard to like them, love them, be with them or marry them- why it was so hard to find one worthy to be called Mr. Right’ (330).

As she stands out to be rejected by everybody at the end of the novel, Alice fears rejection. Recollecting all her failed relationships and scattered dreams, she decides to prove that she is not a lesbian. She prepares herself to marry an electrician Mr. Gary a Garbialist by trade and an expert by providing Christmas lights. Garry and Alice exchange their views, understand each other and marry. Alice feels that she is successful in getting a suitable
husband. Alice expresses her satisfaction in her own words: “Life with Gary around was good. No expectation, no disappointments, no dick emotional or otherwise- no moon walking, no victim mentality, no more blind dates or mixed messages or excuses and no more dripping tapos or dragging bags of shopping up too many flights of stairs” (335). Alice journey reminds the readers of many things. We find Alice moving from the world of unreality to reality and from ignorance to wisdom. Her interaction with other characters questions the ethical values of sex and marriage in the society.

The novel presents lots of social commentary, brilliant satire, heaps of black and white politics and revisionist history. The novel has vivacity and presents a pleasing language. Heiss observes: “I have written and published about politics of identity, the stolen generations and indigenous issues generally. But I also want to write with humour and make people laugh. And sometimes, I just want to lie on the beach, read, and smile, so I write a book the chuckle and nod in agreement over how hard it can be to meet a decent man!” (341). Many critics have observed that the entire novel is based on concepts: ‘love’ ‘sex’ ‘marriage’ and ‘morality’. But at the same time the novel poses many questions related to human values. The novel conveys the view that the society will have to evolve a code of conduct to be followed by itself in a given set of circumstances, basing on the relative principle of morality. Sex is natural in all living beings and species. Of all the living beings, humans possess an intelligence of their own. Because of this
distinguishing quality only human beings have to uphold restraint in the matters of sexual relationships. Humans have to keep the natural instincts and impulses under control. Any society has to subscribe to these idealistic functioning under any circumstances without exemption. Alice who is presented morally good in the beginning of the novel looked as if she has compromised with the ethical standards involved in ‘sex’ and ‘marriage’. The society disapproves the theft of a hungry man and punishes him as the theft is socially wrong. Similarly, humans starving from sexual desires will be prevented by the society if they indulge in free sexual relations. As long as man/woman lives in the society and depends on the familial and friendly relations he/she cannot enjoy absolute freedom in any sphere of life including the sphere of sex. The social and cultural set up that exists and continues to prevail make the moralists to question ‘Should Sex be restrained?’ Anita Heiss conveys as long as enjoyment of sex by an individual is harmful, it has to be kept under surveillance and in restraint. This misconception prevails in all the regions across Australia. But the primary concern of Heiss is to provide pleasure to her readers through this novel and experiences alienation from the traditional practice of writing fiction in Australia: “Was sex with oneself not only the safest form of sex in the twenty first century, but something that was now considered an after-dinner activity? Was it the male equivalent of woman telling me she had sore nipples? She is probably just adjusting himself, I thought, Yes that was it” (340). Every individual thinks
that sex is an aspect related to another individual. In what way others get affected by these acts. But this is not as simple as people feel. If it were so, nobody would find fault, much less the society. Unfortunately, sexual actions have wider ramifications. Suppose a man has sexual intercourse with woman and the woman conceives and the man denies his sexual intercourse with woman and the woman conceives and the man denies his sexual intimacy with her or in the case of sexual intimacy, woman conceives and man disowns his parentage. Or in another case if a young man refuses to marry a young woman after sexual intimacy. What should the woman do in those circumstances? When the society fails to prevent the unwanted sexual relations, the host of vexing problems will breed issues like ‘self identity’, ‘alienation’, ‘insecure feeling’ ‘ the failure of matrimonial relations’ etc. Australian culture and other culture across the world are subjected to such kind of problems. The novel Not Meeting Mr. Right examines these aspects as its theme. The theme of the novel is interwoven with various issues. As an answer to the cultural breakdown in Australia, the novel draws our attention to the ethical values of sex and marriage almost on the scale of action packed novel.

AVOIDING MR. RIGHT

Chronologically Avoiding Mr.Right is the first novel. The very idea and attempt of Alice to search for perfect match and man originates in Avoiding Mr. Right and inflates into practical realisation in Not Meeting Mr.
The novel explores the alternative perspective of Peta in marrying Mr. Right. When Mr. Right, a man with all bright ideas and materialistic interest comes forward to marry Peta, she gives importance to settle down. Coming from Italian background with Aboriginal culture, she explains how she avoids Mr. Right inspite of his readiness to marry. The novel introduces the same four female friends of Not Meeting Mr. Right—Peta, Dannie, Liza and Alice. Alice Aigner as the main character of the novel makes a long journey to meet her cherished dream with the help of her three friends. Peta comes out with a new slogan in this novel. Dedicating herself to work on committed issues throughout her career, she leads life with shopping and heavy boozing.

The theme of the novel Avoiding Mr. Right is simple. Unlike Alice in Not Meeting Mr. Right, Peta do not have to desperately search for Mr. Right. James is always ready to strike the relationship. He is a lovely bloke, caring, wonderful, funny and sexy. He is kind, generous, mature, sensible, patient and even romantic. He is considered as great and perfect. James loves Peta sincerely and is possessive about Peta. His love, concern and possessive nature for Peta makes her unhealthy and inconvenience. James sincerely decides to marry Peta and settle in life with children very soon. Peta is in complete contradiction to James character. Her primary concern is not to settle down with marriage. Along with James, she turns to interview seeking a potential husband. Though finding a potential husband is an adventurous task, Peta is not willing to sacrifice her carrier to become a mother for kids.
To her marriage is secondary. Her primary concern is to sort out her life and then share her life with others. She is obsessed in carving a beautiful career but reserves her opinion in avoiding Mr. Right. Her dream is to work in Melbourne which is considered as the centre for encouraging and breeding free culture. Her fascination for Melbourne compels her to sacrifice the idea of marriage. With her unfulfilled dream of high flying career, she wishes to put off her marriage. She loves James greatly and do not develop negative opinion of him despite his insistence on marriage. She feels that she has to leave Melbourne, once she is married. She believes that her life in Melbourne will make her a complete woman. Experiencing cross road juncture in his life, she feels the pressure in making a choice of her own. Battling with the idea of marriage, she maintains healthy relationship with James. But James with a serious perspective of life, wants to marry, beget children and settle in life by thirty five. Peta love him, desires his friendship but dislikes marriage. For her accepting a job in Melbourne is more important to her than marriage. For her the professional satisfaction is of much concern than the personal satisfaction offered by marriage. This perspective leads her to doubt the perspective of James and makes her present her view before all her friends. She explains how stubborn she is in taking decisions and implementing them. She establishes that in the short span of time she wanted to set up the team and oversee the introduction of some new systems. She wishes to formulate new policies and implement ground breaking cultural
projects and programs. She works on genuine local issues. Wishing to stay away from the local Black politics in identifying the segregation of blacks and whites, she decides to address the ground realities in the lives of Aboriginals. All her friends Alice, Dannie and Liza accept her determination and identify absolute reason in Peta. Peta says: “I’ll go to travel, especially to remote communities in the western desert where a lot of our internationally acclaimed artwork is coming from” (13). The determination of Peta surprises Liza as to how the white girl with the Italian heritage came across the Aboriginal legal service. Peta understands how her friends have struggled to find a husband for Alice. She visualizes her mother’s life. It is very painful and ugly to recollect. Her mother married thrice and divorced thrice. She is frightened that she will be like her. Therefore she decides to avoid Mr. Right for marriage and prepares to accept one year contract in Melbourne: “I had finally worked it out; my best relationship to date been with my job, not men” (3).

Peta makes comparison of herself with James. She thinks that James is gorgeous and perfect. He was not emotionally crippled like most other men. He was an over achiever. At his young age, he had already reached his professional goals and was a partner in major architectural firm. He made himself a partner in business. His next goal is to settle in life through marriage. Impressed by James, Alice says that if she had met James before Gary, she would have married James undoubtedly. Peta sees marriage as a
threat to her independence and individuality. Though she loves James from the bottom of the heart, Peta suffers from insecurity. She feels that she will be perfect and complete woman by the time she returns from Melbourne. She thinks that the new assignment will make her realistic. With this view, she accepts the position of manager of the newly formed department of media sports arts, refuges and Indigenous affairs. Her daily activities in Mulbourne are summed up: “Well, the main strength is that this job will make me both professionally and personally happy, and I guess that should be enough, but clearly it’s not for you ladies, so let me go on” (10). She explains all the possibilities to her friends. She takes a voluntary pledge of celibacy. She remains faithful till the end to her pledge. He decision to maintain celibacy is put to test by number of attentive males. She caps the attention of males: “I didn’t get this much attention when I actually wanted a block. I’m having more fun not waiting for one” (57). Bidding good bye to Sydney, she leaves James and all her blossom friends. She dismisses the idea of living together before marriage. She gives a beautiful reply when James asks her whether she would be faithful to him after leaving for Melbourne: “Going to Melbourne is about my career, It’s not about not seeing you. In fact I’ve decided that I’m going to be celibate” (61).

*Avoiding Mr. Right* is an informative novel. It articulates the pertinent political and cultural issues of Aboriginality with humorous perception. During her stay in Melbourne Peta grows sick of James. She realizes the
necessity of James in his absence. Professionally, Peta acquires perfection with the assistance of her deputy Sylvia, a policy development researcher. Peta grows inquisitive of upcoming Eco poetry. Reading Eco literature, she grows conscious of order and disorder of the world. Her fascination for Melbourne is not materialistic. She develops interest in various subjects like ecology, biology, conservation, philosophy etc. She interacts with various groups of people and acquires worldly wisdom. Busy and surrounded by all these people Peta feels the absence of James. She feels the pain and recognizes his jocund company. She recollects the beautiful moments spent in the company of James and indulges in long introspection: “I miss you too, but I need this time alone to learn to fend for myself, to take care of myself. I need to know who I am before I come back”. (24). The distance between Peta and James develops a better understanding between each other and makes their relationship more realistic. She realizes the her love for Melbourne is in view of her profession. Her sense of insecurity is due to the absence of love. These circumstances develop an understanding that one should not marry under the superficial interests. Her stay in Melbourne serves as a probation to her life. This probationary period provokes many questions regarding love, marriage and the success of conditional love. When Peta meets Jacques Reymond in Melbourne, the readers feel as if they are going to be married. But Peta conveys no sings of change and looks stubborn in her character.
Finally, when the day comes for Peta to return to Sydney, she becomes panic. Her vow of celibacy comes to end. She develops mixed feelings in going home to see her old friends Alice, Dannie, Liza and so on. She regrets in leaving Melbourne and the people in Melbourne like Sylvia, Shelly, Joyce and so on. These intense feelings on leaving Melbourne, develop unhappiness in meeting James. Though, James was ultimate safe bet, Peta hesitates to meet him on her coming back to Sydney. The meeting of the two people with conditional love and with different perspectives will not strengthen their relationship in any way. Peta realizes she doesn’t fit into the ways of James. Peta feels that successful relationships in physical matters will fail to provide happiness in domestic matters. She recalls the opinion of aunt Avy who warns her: “Be Careful- A Goodman won’t last long alone” (37). She realizes that Mr. Right is not the best choice of one who answers the physical desires but the man who supports her desires and dreamy career. Though James looks right at this age, she believes that he may not continue his goodness in the near future. She decides to move back to Melbourne to pursue her carrier again and shows interest in Mike who helped her with total faith during her stay in Melbourne. She expresses the determination in her own words: “I moved back to Melbourne and was in a full time position at Domsaria… I bought home reports related to indigenous issues and policing. James attended Klub Kooris with me and art openings and book launches and he didn’t do it just to support me. He said he did it for himself” (68 ).
Therefore, Alice avoided James and decided to marry Mike who loved her truly and expected nothing in return. Peta coming out of the oscillating condition of her mind resolves to marry Mike: “In Mike I’d found my soul mate. He had been my Mr. Right all along. I didn’t have the fancy life style that James would’ve given me, but I had the kind of mutually supportive relationship I’d always thought was beyond me. In return for helping Mike become ‘a better man’, he taught me unconditional love. And he never, ever, ever called me ‘babe’. (39).

Thus, Peta takes a unique decision in marrying Mr. Right. She proved her pragmatic knowledge with practical out look by traveling the road less traveled by. Almost in parallel to her mental maturity, she develops interest on various fields of knowledge. She reads books on the history of Aboriginal visual arts movement and develops fascination to read Alexis Right’s epic novel *Carpentaria*. She also evinces interest to read and follow Aboriginal poetry.

*Avoiding Mr. Right* succeeds in articulating the Socio, political and cultural issues of Aboriginals often with humorous perspectives. Anita Heiss focuses on the real life experiences and everyday adventures of Australians. Poignant conversation between Peta and James provides enormous scope to comment on the various issues of the White Australians: “So it’s final then, you’re not taking James to Melbourne? Alice asked, ‘Are you kidding?
Taking a man to Melbourne would be like taking a sandwich to a smorgasbord” (7).

The process of reconciliation is a symbolic recognition for the Aboriginals. The Govt. of Australia addresses the economic and social disadvantages encountered by Aboriginals in the process of reconciliation. Peta’s desire to work in Melbourne is the result of the space offered by reconciliation. The practical and symbolic measures implemented through reconciliation have positive effect on the everyday lives of Aboriginals. Taking a new direction, Australian women are dealing with the issues of education, health, housing and sexual orientation. The responses to the concerns of women are empathetic. Anita Heiss examines the participation of Aboriginal people in realizing the land rights, recognition, self management within the framework of international human rights in these novels.

Anita Heiss as a contemporary Aboriginal Australian women writer examines the futility and nullity of mainstream Australian culture. With the ground breaking novels *Not Meeting Mr. Right & Avoiding Mr. Right* Anita Heiss exposes the sexual incompetence and sterility of White Australians in these novels. The very idea in choosing dating culture as the theme of these novels is only to depict the contemporary cultural wretchedness of Australia. Aboriginals are physically potential in producing children. The physical relations and the birth of children within and outside the orbit of marriage is
the normal experience for many Aboriginal women. Due to the racial discrimination and the execution of horrendous colonial policies, physical relationships and pregnancy were the regular experiences for many Aboriginal women. Aboriginal women were considered as pounds of flesh and objects to derive sexual desires. The physical exploitation of Aboriginal women by the whites resulted into the creation of half castes, who had to lead sub human lives. Anita Heiss chooses to question the heinous atrocities perpetrated on Aboriginal women. Her intention in making the women protagonists to choose their husbands is only to subtly establish the sexual incompetence and the failure of the whites. Parodying the dating culture, Heiss depicts how Aboriginal women easily get deceived by the partners in dating due to various reasons. The reasons projected are silly, ridiculous and are often shown as valid objections in rejecting the partners for marriage. In this persuasion for finding a husband or wife, Heiss do not convey the aesthetic perceptions. The rules set for finding a husband are not the aesthetic rules but values meant to be subscribed by all the cultures. Heiss emphasizes that Aboriginal culture is complete in conveying the values essential for sound domestic life. The white Australian culture is found to be lacking in these values. Heiss makes use of the dating culture to test the physical potentiality and mental soundness of the whites in understanding the human values of life.
Examining Anita Heiss’s Avoiding *Mr. Right and Not Meeting Mr. Right* in the light Post colonial feminism becomes extensive and variable. These works analyse representations of Aboriginal women in once colonized and westernized locations and positions. The conceptual, methodological, and political problems involved in the representations of gender become specific in dealing with the problems encountered by Aboriginal women. The theme of these novels surpass the global cross cultural sisterhood located in between ‘First world’ and ‘Third World’. John McLeod in *Beginning Post Colonialism* (2000) says that First World Feminism pertains predominantly to the rich western nations like Europe, America and Australasia. The second world is denoted to Soviet Union and its Allies and the third world consists in the former colonies such as countries in Africa and South Asia. These are considered to be categories of convenience rather than factual denotations fixed on stable groups. These perspectives led to challenging and seminal essay by Gayatri Spivak Chakravorty’s *Can the Subaltern Speak?*. Gayatri’s essay facilitated the decipherment of Sally Morgan’s *My Place*. Kirsten Holst Petersen and Anna Rutherford used the phrase ‘a double colonisation’ referring to the simultaneous oppressions of colonialism and patriarchy. These Post Colonial Feminist critical concepts fail to answer the current cultural issues registered by Heiss in *Avoiding Mr. Right & Not Meeting Mr. Right*. The experiences of women are analysed in the light of race, class, religion etc., only to resist the colonial and patriarchal
oppression. There is a need for the consolidation of *Fourth World Feminism* to examine the aspects of caste, aboriginality and the predicament of Aboriginal women caught in the vortex of cultural debris. Of late, there are many works as part of Post Colonial Feminist literary criticism. Rana Kabbani’s *Imperial fictions: Europe’s Myths of Orient* (1994) and Carole Boyce Davies’s *Black Women, Writing and Identity: Migrations of the Subject* (1994) have focused on the limitations of First world Feminism. Anne McClintock’s *Imperial Leather: Race. Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (1995), Chandra Talpade Mohanty’s essay ‘Under Western eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses’ in *Colonial Discourse and Post Colonial Theory* (ed. 1993) by Williams and Chrisman and Susheila Nasta’s (ed) *Motherlands: Black women Writings from Africa: the Caribbean and South Asia* (1991) have exemplified the manifold voices of Post colonial feminist criticism and its limitations in circumscribing the women who continue to suffer from Aboriginality as a colonial weapon. So, these two novels of Anita Heiss that carry the issues of Aboriginality, the survival of Aboriginal women, Dating and Surfing cultures, lesbian and gay relationships and the failure of white culture in accommodating the Aboriginals can only be deciphered from the perspective of Fourth World Feminist literary criticism.