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**TITLE: Chineseness: Reconciling personal constructions of ethnic identity with collective conceptions of identity for Australian-born Chinese**

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Traditional notions of ethnic identity are largely racialised and have the effect of categorizing people into groups based on visual cues. The proliferation of such categorical approaches to identity is problematic to our understanding of identity as a concept with multiple and hybridised meanings. Drawing on Rogers Brubaker's *Ethnicity without Groups* and my interviews with multi-generational Australian-born Chinese, this paper will highlight the diverse ways in which Chineseness is constructed and how this can sometimes be at odds with traditional constructions of Chineseness. Are one's individual perceptions of ethnic identity more valid than group constructions? The issue, though, is not to deny the validity of ethnic groups but to seek some middle ground in our understanding of ethnic identity construction as both an individual and a collective proposition.