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Straddling Two Words: Biracial Identity in "Flight"

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Title: Straddling Two Worlds: Biracial Identity in *Flight*.

Written by: Rachel Ramlawi

Topic: Race and identity

If borderlands are the space between two territories that is the space bi-racial people occupy every day. Their entire life is lived in the space between creating a unique form of othering where they're never fully part of either community their parents belonged to. In Sherman Alexie's novel *Flight*, the Narrator Zits is a bi-racial Native American teenager who constantly grapples with his identity. Through the theme of past-lives Zits is able to embrace both parts of his ethnicity, establish his identity, and grow up. It is a coming of age tale that is remarkably unique. This paper draws on the work of Chris Hyeouk Hahm and Anna Elizabeth Kim's, *In the Path of Establishing Ethnic Identity* and Raushanah Hud-Aleem and Jacqueline Countryman's "Biracial Identity Development and Recommendations in Therapy" to discuss how ethnicity is a crucial concept to a person of color's identity, and how biracial children struggle to form an ethnic identity. This paper is a literary analysis of Sherman Alexie's novel *Flight*, a novel written by a Native American man about a Native American character. This paper contributes to the theme of the conference because it takes a look at the metaphysical borders that real life people inhabit every day.