

# **Overflow**

Peter Geoffrey Bower (BA(Hons))

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## Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
Synopsis.....	2
Overflow.....	3
Malcolm.....	6
Trace.....	20
Bruce.....	45
Jack.....	62
Geoff.....	73
Exegesis—Overflowing.....	98
Pre-Drinks.....	99
Entering The Bar.....	105
The Shout.....	119
Last Call.....	139
Bibliography.....	141

## Synopsis

*Overflow* is a novel formed from a collection of five stories, each focussing on a different character and exploring the themes of loss, escape and dependency. Newcastle and the fictional Queen Victoria pub form environments in which the characters experience tragedy, death, love and infatuation. The novel also explores the interlocking relationships and the characters' dependence on the pub and alcohol. The linked narratives highlight the coincidental connections that occur within the city of Newcastle and are part of my exploration to understand the environment of the Australian pub.

The exegesis, *Overflowing*, discusses the influence that place has on the individual and the connection between place and portrayals of self. The first part of the essay focuses on the idea of place and its significance, examining how place shapes the development of characters and how characters in turn influence the sense of place. The second part of the essay looks more specifically at the place of the pub, the representation of self, portrayals of masculinity, and the role that violence and vulgarity has on representations within the pub. The essay explores sociological ideas of place and identity, and applies these theories to fictional works set in Newcastle, with close examination of Patrick Cullen's *What Came Between* in particular, and the genre of "pub fiction", with particular focus on David Ireland's *The Glass Canoe*.