

Brian Matthews
School of Humanities and Creative Arts,
Flinders University

It happened at a conference on the coming Millennium in 1998 or '99 at which I was giving one of the keynote speeches. My contribution was called 'Millenarian Anxieties' and I began like this:

(In loud, dramatic, apocalyptic mode): The world is about to end; mountains will split open; seas will overflow their shores; the air, static with power and burdened with thunder, will be sucked out of the heavens in a cosmic gasp; the planets flung from their orbits will hurtle into the chaos of deep space and death will at last have dominion.

(In 'normal' radio-announcer 'cultured' tones): In the afternoon, however, conditions will moderate, rain will contract to the east and temperatures should be average for the time of year.

Aside from the fact that I had shamelessly stolen and adapted this scenario from (I think) a Monty Python sketch, I claimed it as one – albeit extreme – version of millenarian language, expectation and imagery and in this way was able to get launched into my paper. It worked pretty well and got a good laugh during which I was conscious of one very hearty laughter somewhere in the audience.

When the paper and question time were done with and we were all having a drink, the 'loud laughter' from the audience came over to me and introduced himself. It was Patrick Wolfe. What happened then was one of those meetings where you feel as if you've known this person all your life: Patrick's engaging smile, his enthusiasm and that sort of bubbling pleasantness which distinguished his effortless sociability were all quickly apparent as we chatted over a couple of drinks. But so also was the sharpness of mind, the range of reference and the exciting, labyrinthine resources of ideas and possibilities which fed even the lightest and most inconsequential of his conversations. I had just become Director of the newly established Europe-Australia Institute (EAI) at Victoria

University. When Patrick said that he would like to join me in the new venture and contribute to the institute's programs and research projects I couldn't believe my luck.

As I and my colleague, Deputy Director Professor Ron Adams, quickly discovered, Patrick was a dynamic personal and intellectual presence in the EAI. To write this tribute, I looked back over some of the records I have of those very heady, exciting years. Patrick's periodic reports to me of his work, plans, meetings and burgeoning ideas are laced with his characteristic ironic humour and vibrant with the breadth, insight and sheer speed and élan with which he attacked his programs. Here are some extracts, which were preceded by his introductory note: 'Dear Brian, You'll want to organise and format this according to your own magisterial überplan, so I haven't bothered to make it fancy. If you want, though, I can always tart it up to your specification ...'

July 22. Member of public panel on Native Title organised by the Defenders of Native Title group. October 12. Public lecture on Native Title in Moonee Ponds Civic Centre, organised by Defenders of Native Title. December 14: Talk on Aboriginal history to cultural exchange group from Kyoto Seika University, Japan. December 22: Seminar presentation on Aboriginal history to Students International Training group from the US.

Overseas trip, October/November 1998:

I attended (by invitation) a conference (entitled 'Making History, Constructing "Race"') at the University of Victoria, Canada, on October 23–25 and presented a paper, entitled 'Genetic Arithmetic', which sketched out my intentions for the research project that I am carrying out at the EAI under the terms of my fellowship. The convenors asked me if they could include it in the published proceedings of the conference, but I have other plans for it.

November 9–17. UK. Had a number of meetings with Cassell, during which I proof-read my book for the final and final-final times (they still stuffed it up), negotiated publication dates ... and an Australian price ... got them to agree in principle to co-publishing ... in the monograph series ('Writing Past Colonialism') of which I'm an editor and discussed two manuscripts that had been submitted for the series ... all of which took much more time (and lunches) than it might sound. I also went up to Leeds (the Brotherton Library) to consult Frazer's notebooks on totemism and kinship for the Morgan article.

November 18–21. University of Seville [checking] ... the possibilities of researching the export of Spanish discourses on Jews and Muslims to the New World, where they got reapplied to Amerindians (i.e. the New World was quite old in some ways) ... I came to the conclusion that most of my blinding hypotheses were actually common places of Spanish scholarship. Oh well. The silver lining is that this made a crunch decision easy – whether to learn Spanish and study Latin America or learn Portuguese and study Luso America

(Brazil). No sooner had I got back than I started to investigate learning Portuguese. I've now started weekly lessons and the Brazilian part of the project looks better by the day.

In January, I was made a member (the only one from the southern hemisphere) of the editorial board of the History of Anthropology series, which is the benchmark publication for the discipline. My book, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event*, was published by Cassell in London in January. The Australian launch is to be on April 23rd at the end of our first EAI global seminar.

Patrick was an extraordinary, creative presence during the EAI's short (six years) productive, exciting and crowded life. From the most ordinary of tasks – ushering at one of our evening productions, for example – to highly sophisticated, brilliant seminar chairmanship or delivery of one of his own landmark research papers, Patrick was an unassuming star of our adventure. Perhaps above all, though, he was a considerate, affectionate and true friend and a devoted father to Maeve. I was stunned to hear of his death, incredulous that such vitality, intellectual depth and acuity and such capacity for love and friendship could be so summarily and prematurely ended. On behalf of Ron Adams, Niki Poposki and the EAI to which he brought such shining gifts, I salute him and mourn him.

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