

ANU HISTORICAL JOURNAL II

NUMBER 2

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Editorial

Jessica Urwin

The Australian National University

In the six months leading up to the finalisation of this issue of *ANU Historical Journal II (ANUHJ II)*, people the world over have had to grapple with uncertainty to an extent not experienced for decades. Australians have found themselves engulfed by world-altering natural disasters, suffocated day after day by blankets of impenetrable smoke, and faced with the physical, emotional and economic burden of a catastrophic fire season. Chaos continued to reign with the advent of a global pandemic that altered our everyday lives.

Luckily, in times of uncertainty, history remains a constant. In times such as these, historians have the ability to draw upon the past to make sense of the chaos. It is under such circumstances that we deliver the second issue of *ANUHJ II*, 34 years after the first iteration of the journal folded.

As detailed by Emily Gallagher in the editorial of Number 1 of *ANUHJ II* (2019), the original *ANU Historical Journal* was created by and for students of ANU School of History. Thus, the *ANU Historical Journal*, both between 1964 and 1987 and now, has dedicated itself to showcasing the talent and collegiality that binds scholars at various points in their historical careers. Much the same as the *ANUHJ* of the 1960s, '70s and '80s, the articles that make up Number 2 of *ANUHJ II* are geographically, stylistically and topically diverse. Such diversity is a reflection of our contributors; we are delighted to publish the exceptional work of undergraduate students alongside that of postgraduates, early career researchers and distinguished professors of history.

By encouraging submissions from students undertaking undergraduate and postgraduate studies, one of the aims of *ANUHJ II* is to provide opportunities for mentorship and experience in preparing work for publication. We are proud to showcase the exceptional work of both undergraduate and postgraduate students, but this does not mean *ANUHJ II* compromises on quality. Rather, we are dedicated to ensuring

the intellectual rigour of student work through mentorship, creating conversations between students and academics by publishing their work side-by-side.

Highlighting the communication fostered by Number 2 of *ANUHI* II is our editorial conversation with Ben Silverstein about his new book, *Governing Natives*. This conversation platforms the links between students and academics in history within ANU. Commenting directly on such linkages in her own university, Bri McKenzie's article reflects upon her role as a lecturer of history, considering the importance of self-reflexivity in incorporating LGBTQI+ perspectives into historical pedagogy for her students. Both Silverstein and McKenzie provide valuable insight into historical practice in Australia.

In focusing in on Australia, several other contributors have chosen to reflect internally on our more recent past. In light of former prime minister Bob Hawke's death in May 2019, Joshua Black critically examines the role played by memoir, biography and media in moulding and cementing Hawke's legacy. Accompanying Black, Lucinda Fretwell considers ordinary Australians' sense of themselves as a result of the Anzac legend. In the final section of this issue—and contributing to vital discussions of key Australian scholarship—our reviewers, Clare Parker, Margaret Harris, Emma Cupitt and Matthew Cunneen, provide insightful analyses of four new and noteworthy books, all of which engage in issues of great importance to Australian history.

While many of our contributors have tackled Australian history, several have undertaken studies that place Australia in transnational and international contexts. Tom Gardner takes up Australia's continuing relations with Asia by exploring Australian journalist George Morrison's engagement with China during the early twentieth century. In a study of the 'housewife syndrome', Keeley Adams examines the sociopolitical subjugation of American women between the 1940s and 1970s, and Chelsie Baldwin takes a close look at the nationalistic utilisation of Indonesia's Borobudur temple, an architectural feat seldom considered in a historical light by scholars.

Much the same as architecture, art and culture are vital vehicles for examining history. This is demonstrated starkly by David Roth in his consideration of the popularly characterised 'moral' nature of seventeenth-century Dutch art. Further to this, Lucinda Janson artfully demonstrates

how Australia's cosmopolitan magazine, *Home*, grappled with modernism in the 1920s, demonstrating that the magazine's dedication to the 'modern woman' was not so straightforward.

In addition to these diverse articles, we are fortunate to showcase the generous intellect of several professors in Number 2. This is highlighted by our reproduction of David Farber's lecture, 'Trump's Republic', originally delivered as the 2019 Allan Martin Lecture, a key annual event in the School of History's calendar. We are also grateful for the contributions of professors Tim Rowse and Carroll Pursell, both of whom provide thought-provoking pieces: Rowse on then Prime Minister John Howard's Indigenous policies and Pursell on technological novelty and inventors.

We are privileged to publish all of the works within this issue and we remain indebted to those who have assisted us in demonstrating the importance of collegiality and intergenerational discussion to the success of *ANUHI II*, and history more generally. The articles within Number 2 of the *ANUHI II* follow in the footsteps of their forebears, contributing to the diverse intellectual work of student and academic historians alike. This issue demonstrates the power of history in unearthing untold or oft-overlooked stories, while contributing to our understanding of what seem like highly uncertain times.

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Jessica Urwin, Madalyn Grant, Tandee Wang
and Anthony Merlino
The Australian National University

The second issue of *ANU Historical Journal II* was only possible due to the generous support of scholars both at The Australian National University, and at universities all over the world. First and foremost, the journal is indebted to the generous funding initially provided by professors Rae Frances and Michael Wesley in 2017, as well as to ongoing funds committed by professors Frances and Catherine Waldby in 2019. Without financial support, the journal would not have been possible in the first place, and we remain incredibly grateful for the ongoing funding that makes future issues possible.

We also wish to extend our thanks to the dozens of scholars who agreed to review articles for the journal and performed the task with patience and generosity. Without such support, the journal would not be able to function as it does. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated both by *ANUHJ II*'s editors, and by the scholars you assisted with your feedback.

We are also indebted to the continued enthusiasm and generosity of historians who went above and beyond to assist with this issue of *ANUHJ II*. In particular, we are incredibly grateful for the expertise and keen eyes of Professor Frank Bongiorno, Dr Malcolm Allbrook and Emily Gallagher. The second issue of *ANUHJ II* would not have been produced as seamlessly if not for the support, advice and assistance of these individuals.

Finally, to the contributors of this issue, we thank you for your enthusiasm and dedication in working with us to see your writing published in *ANUHJ II*. It has been a privilege to work with you: congratulations to all on seeing this process through to the end.

ARTICLES

Sympathetic or Sinister? Representations of China in George Ernest Morrison's *An Australian in China*

Tom Gardner

The Australian National University

Abstract: *George Ernest Morrison (1862–1920) was an Australian traveller, journalist and political adviser to the president of the Republic of China. Before he became the Peking (Beijing) correspondent of the Times of London, he established a reputation as an expert on the Far East through an account of a trip across China, An Australian in China (1895). Most analyses of Morrison's writings or the part he played in early twentieth-century China focus on the latter half of his life when he lived in Peking. This article analyses An Australian in China within the wider context of Morrison's life. It highlights the traditions of new journalism and special correspondents who shaped his approach to writing about China. Despite leaving China with a clear sympathy for the Chinese, this article argues that this sympathy had definite limits.*

In February 1894, the Australian doctor George Ernest Morrison left the treaty port of Shanghai on a journey to Rangoon in British Burma. His route took him up the Yangtze River by boat, across the western Chinese provinces of Szechwan and Yunnan by a combination of foot, horse and sedan chair, and down the Irrawaddy River by boat once more.¹ Reaching the Burmese frontier exactly 100 days after leaving Shanghai (he waited outside the border on the 99th day to ensure that he would arrive on the 100th), he collated the diaries he kept while travelling into a book, *An Australian in China: Being the Narrative of a Quiet Journey across China to Burma* (1895). The success of this book established Morrison's reputation as an expert on the Far East and enabled him to

1 For the sake of consistency, postal romanisation has been used throughout this article. All other place names are spelt as they appear in *An Australian in China*.

secure a job as the Peking correspondent of the London *Times*. The book was notable for the length of the journey described (although Morrison noted that he was not exploring anywhere new, even among Europeans) and for counteracting stereotypes of China.²

In 'China in the Eyes of Western Travelers, 1860–1900', Xiaolun Wang criticised typical nineteenth-century travellers in China for moving with massive armed expeditions that rarely stayed at Chinese inns or interacted much with the locals.³ Such travellers sought romantic vistas and picturesque scenes in a quest to claim a sort of ownership over the Chinese landscape, but they only ever viewed China from a distance. They also lacked interest in discovery and sought only to confirm what they already thought they knew about China.⁴ This lack of curiosity in the Chinese was a common attitude for late Victorians in general, and even Europeans living in Chinese treaty ports interacted as little as possible.⁵ Like many European visitors to China, Morrison did not learn a Chinese language, but he did make a point of dressing in Chinese clothing, staying at Chinese inns and following Chinese customs and manners as far as he could. He also travelled without non-Chinese companions and translators and without weapons, instead 'trust[ing] implicitly in the good faith of the Chinese'.⁶

In Morrison's native land of Australia, intense Sinophobia was the norm. Federation had yet to bring about a national White Australia policy, but many Australian colonies restricted the entry of Chinese people.⁷ This became an issue of imperial significance as Australian immigration restriction threatened Anglo–Chinese relations.⁸ At first glance it seems that Morrison rejected the Sinophobia of his home colony in *An Australian in China*. He wrote that he:

2 George Ernest Morrison, *An Australian in China: Being the Narrative of a Quiet Journey across China to Burma* (London: Horace Cox, 1895), 149–51.

3 Xiaolun Wang, 'China in the Eyes of Western Travelers, 1860–1900', in *Tourism in China*, ed. Alan A. Lew, Lawrence Yu, John Ap and Zhang Guangrui (New York: Haworth Hospitality Press, 2003), 39–40.

4 Wang, 'China in the Eyes of Western Travelers', 40.

5 Robert Bickers, *The Scramble for China: Foreign Devils in the Qing Empire, 1832–1914* (London: Allen Lane, 2011), 116.

6 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 1.

7 Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the Question of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 20, doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511805363.

8 Benjamin Mountford, *Britain, China, and Colonial Australia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 202, doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198790549.001.0001.

Went to China possessed with the strong racial antipathy to the Chinese common to my countrymen, but that feeling has long since given way to one of lively sympathy and gratitude.⁹

While he never challenged the overriding assumption that the British presence in China was beneficial and ought to be extended, Morrison refuted many of the basic British assumptions held about China. As well as presenting a sympathetic picture of the Chinese, he argued against the effectiveness of the missionary presence in China.¹⁰ However, Morrison's sympathy had clear limits; it never overrode imperial loyalty or the imperative to keep Chinese immigrants out of Australia.

Beyond being an atypical Western traveller in China, Morrison complicates standard narratives around Australia and China in many ways. He was a British subject from a settler colony who moved across the borders of empire in a way that only empire made possible. Movement from one colony to another in this way complicates the metropole-colony model of empire, and assumes a particular dynamic between a white settler colony and a semi-colonised country where multiple imperial interests overlapped.¹¹ Morrison thought of himself as British and, later in his life, would claim to act in the best interests of Britain, but he still brought an Australian viewpoint to events in East Asia.¹² *An Australian in China* is a demonstration of these multiple identities. Publishing the book was a turning point in Morrison's life: it brought him the career he had been working towards for years and began an association with China that would continue for the rest of his life.

This article investigates the approach that Morrison took in his travel writing through an analysis of his life, his influences and the writing itself. In analysing *An Australian in China*, I compare the text to the notes and journals that Morrison wrote while in China. The differences between the two, whether as a result of an editor's influence or Morrison's own circumspection, show the limitations of his determination to present his

9 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 2.

10 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 5.

11 Peter Monteath, 'Peripheries of Empire: G. E. Morrison's *An Australian in China*', in *Colonialism, China and the Chinese*, ed. Peter Monteath and Matthew P. Fitzpatrick (London: Routledge, 2019), 185. For more on this dynamic see Sophie Loy-Wilson, *Australians in Shanghai: Race, Rights and Nation in Treaty Port China* (London: Routledge, 2017).

12 Eiko Woodhouse, *The Chinese Hsinhai Revolution: G. E. Morrison and Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1897–1920* (London, New York: Routledge, 2004), 2, doi.org/10.4324/9780203493885.

own views on China. Conversely, the similarities give us an idea of what he felt he could freely say. This highlights the ways in which Morrison presented a sympathetic picture of the Chinese that still argued for imperialism and maintenance of racial boundaries.

I first sketch a biography of Morrison, noting particularly the circumstances in which he wrote *An Australian in China* and the Chinese career that resulted from publishing the book. I then examine the models of new journalism and the special correspondent that Morrison followed in his writing to establish how these influenced him. My examination of *An Australian in China* itself focuses on three main themes: first, Morrison's criticism of the missionaries in China; second, his dismissal of the Chinese Army; and, finally, his thinking on race. There are other themes in *An Australian in China* worthy of analysis, such as his approach to Chinese medicine, opium and women; however, as Morrison returned to the themes outlined at a number of points, they provide a cross-sectional perspective of the text. Comparing Morrison's public and private travel writings shows the extent to which he adapted *An Australian in China* to the expectations of a late Victorian imperial audience, and his own support for British imperialism in China. Morrison's sympathy and gratitude towards the Chinese by the end of his trip led him to many positive observations in his book, but this sympathy had clear limits.

The Life and Times of Morrison

George Ernest Morrison was born in Geelong in 1862. He began keeping a diary at the age of 16—something that he would maintain with only occasional interruptions until his death in 1920.¹³ At 18 he made the first of his many expeditions, hiking from Melbourne to Adelaide alone through what was then still regarded as wilderness.¹⁴ At the suggestion of his mother, he sent the diaries that he kept on that trip to David Syme, who published them in the *Leader*.¹⁵ At the end of 1881 he bought a canoe, christened it the *Stanley*, and paddled it down the Murray River. Once again Syme published his account of the trip. A medical student at

13 Cyril Pearl, *Morrison of Peking* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1967), 9.

14 Pearl, *Morrison of Peking*, 9.

15 Peter Thompson and Robert Macklin, *The Man Who Died Twice: The Life and Adventures of Morrison of Peking* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 2004), 15.

the University of Melbourne at the time, Morrison failed his second-year examinations and decided to leave, later quipping that 'it was a severe blow to the university, but the university survived'.¹⁶

In the middle of June 1882, Morrison made a serious attempt at a career in journalism, signing on to a ship engaged in the blackbirding of Pacific Island people into Queensland and reporting on his experiences in the *Leader*.¹⁷ While his initial reports were neutral on blackbirding, he sparked controversy later with a letter in the *Age* condemning it. This drew criticism from supporters of blackbirding, including the premier and governor of Queensland.¹⁸ On arriving back in Queensland, Morrison resolved to cross Australia from north to south—the reverse route to the failed Burke and Wills expedition 20 years earlier. During his preparations for the trip in Normanton, he was routinely discouraged from making such a journey, but in his 1882 diary he wrote:

It was hearing on all hands of the long stages between stations and the impossibility of travelling without at least two horses that decided me to go alone. It was the reports told me by everyone of the danger to be incurred from the blacks especially unless the travellers showed a rifle and revolver that promoted me in the decision to go entirely alone.¹⁹

Morrison's personality emerges from these early diary extracts. A wry sense of humour coloured his observations. He was also perfectly happy to be a contrarian and, to some degree, revelled in it to establish his reputation. This played into the model of the special correspondent that he was consciously emulating, with its emphasis on sensationalist, on-the-ground reporting and daring feats.²⁰

Morrison's most ambitious expedition in this mould, however, would end in failure. On an expedition into New Guinea funded by the *Age*, he was speared in the face and stomach in retaliation for shooting a Papuan.²¹ A surgeon in Melbourne was only able to remove the spear point in his

16 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 36. Sarcastic comments such as this were typical of Morrison and permeate *An Australian in China*.

17 George Ernest Morrison and Rob Clifton-Steele, *The Cruise of the Lavinia: An Eyewitness Account of a Labour Recruiting Voyage in 1882* (Chatswood, New South Wales: Rob Clifton-Steele, 2017).

18 Morrison and Clifton-Steele, *The Cruise of the Lavinia*, 6.

19 Morrison, in Pearl, *Morrison of Peking*, 26–27.

20 Andrew Griffiths, *The New Journalism, the New Imperialism, and the Fiction of Empire, 1870–1900* (New York, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 26, doi.org/10.1057/9781137454386.

21 Pearl, *Morrison of Peking*, 48.

nose, unwilling to remove the other. This had to be done by Dr John Chiene, a professor at the University of Edinburgh, to whom Morrison dedicated *An Australian in China* as the man who ‘gave me back the power of locomotion’.²² Morrison remained in Edinburgh to recuperate and finish his medical studies. He attempted to find work as a doctor in the United States, Spain, Morocco, Australia, the Philippines and Japan—with varying degrees of success—but did not hold any job for more than two years.²³ In 1894, he arrived in Shanghai after a trip through Japan that drained the last of his funds.²⁴ After borrowing £30 from his mother, he resolved to make the trip that is the focus of this article.

By the time Morrison left Shanghai he had already built a reputation within Australia as an adventurer and writer, although his precarious financial situation did not quite reflect his fame within Australia. No diaries immediately preceding Morrison’s trip through China have survived, so it is difficult to know exactly what he was thinking as he planned it, but an untitled and undated note from his papers lists the anticipated benefits of his journey:

1. Book to be a great success
2. To enable me to pay off my debts ¼
8. Abundance of money forthcoming ¼
12. Uninterrupted good fortune in London.
13. To become a great newspaper correspondent.²⁵

Morrison hoped that *An Australian in China* would bring relief from the financial troubles he experienced after leaving Edinburgh. A successful book would also help to rebuild his confidence after the disaster in New Guinea. Indeed, he was so embarrassed by the outcome of his expedition to New Guinea that he destroyed all of his papers from that time.²⁶ An unarmed trip across China could have been his way of making up for this failure as an explorer. This trip was a resumption of the adventurous career that he had attempted to build in his early life. Perhaps most

22 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, n.p.

23 Pearl, *Morrison of Peking*, 66–68.

24 Pearl, *Morrison of Peking*, 68.

25 G. E. Morrison, *Books for Publication: An Australian in China*, State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW) Archives, Mitchell Library (ML), MSS 312/28, Item 1, n.p. I suspect this is a ‘thanksgiving’ note, which Morrison would occasionally write at the end of a year to take stock of his accomplishments or express his hopes for the coming year.

26 George Ernest Morrison, *Reminiscences*, SLNSW Archives, ML, MSS 312, CY Reel 16, 11.

importantly for his long-term goals, it was on the basis of his book that he attempted to get a job as a special correspondent for a newspaper in England.²⁷

Eventually his efforts would be successful. In 1895 he was appointed the London *Times*'s Peking correspondent on the success of *An Australian in China*. From 1897 to 1912 Morrison would cover the Boxer Uprising (1899–1901), the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) and the 1911 Chinese Revolution. During this time, he made further trips through Siam (Thailand), Northern China, Mongolia and Siberia. From 1912 to his death in 1920 he served as an adviser to Yuan Shikai, the first president of the Republic of China. The fame that he garnered as a journalist and adviser led him to be dubbed 'Chinese' Morrison, echoing another hero of empire, Charles 'Chinese' Gordon.²⁸ He also received a great deal of praise and recognition for his efforts. For example, his 1920 obituary in the *Times* reported that he had the 'prescience of a statesman and the accuracy of an historian'.²⁹ Representatives of the Chinese Government laid a wreath at his funeral and, at a lecture in his honour, the Chinese consul general to Australia described him as 'a man of whom Australia must be proud, and of whom China was proud. He was a Great Australian'.³⁰

Morrison's life after publishing *An Australian in China* changed from that of a colonial travel writer and unhappy medical doctor to professional journalist and an important actor in the history of early Republican China. This was an extraordinary career; though, considering the model he was following and the opportunities the British Empire provided, it was not unthinkable.

Writings on Morrison

Morrison's life and his various adventures have been the subject of a series of laudatory biographies and academic analyses. The earliest book on his life is *Chinese Morrison* (1939) by popular historian Frank Clune. In a mix of hagiography and boys' own adventure, Clune played up the exotic aspects of Morrison's career and presented him as far less racist

27 Pearl, *Morrison of Peking*, 74.

28 Frank Clune, *Chinese Morrison* (Sydney: The Bread and Cheese Club, 1939).

29 'Morrison of Peking', *Times* (London), 31 May 1920, 19.

30 Wei-ping Chen, *The Inaugural George Ernest Morrison Lecture in Ethnology* (Canberra: Australian Institute for Anatomy, 1932), 8.

than he was. According to Clune, Morrison was 'without prejudice of race or colour. To him all human beings were human beings—just that'.³¹ This came on top of stories of Morrison saving Chinese settlers and being a friend to Aboriginal Australians.³² However, Clune was curiously blasé about Morrison shooting a Papuan tribesman.³³

Peter Thompson and Robert Macklin's *The Man Who Died Twice* (2004), the most recent biography, is essentially an attempt to induct Morrison into the Australian pantheon of heroes. Journalists themselves, Thompson and Macklin focus on Morrison's career as a reporter. Lamenting that he is not better known, they conclude that 'he was to journalism what Bradman was to cricket'.³⁴ Like Clune, they praise his objectivity and keen powers of observation. While they acknowledge the imperial framework within which Morrison operated, they credit him with resisting the sense of superiority that, in some ways, defined the British presence in China.³⁵

Another journalist, Cyril Pearl, in *Morrison of Peking* (1967), acknowledged Morrison as being 'infected with the raging imperialism of the nineties', and showed how this formed something of a blind spot for him.³⁶ This view of Morrison the ardent imperialist aligned more closely with much of the academic literature on Morrison. Pearl also wrote about how Morrison found his love of Britain difficult to reconcile with his love of China, and often had to become adept at 'double-think' in order to maintain both.³⁷ In my analysis of *An Australian in China*, I argue that, instead of double-think, Morrison's Sinophilia was limited and conditioned by his British imperial loyalty and Australian nationalism.

Academic studies of Morrison's life tend to focus on his career as a journalist and adviser rather than the period immediately before, when he wrote *An Australian in China*. On the whole they are much more critical of Morrison than his biographers. In his biography of Edmund Backhouse, Hugh Trevor-Roper painted Morrison as an autocrat who terrorised Backhouse and did not hesitate to destroy the career of anyone who stood in his way.³⁸ Not only did Morrison not learn a Chinese language, but

31 Frank Clune, *Chinese Morrison* (Melbourne: The Bread and Cheese Club, 1941), 23.

32 Clune, *Chinese Morrison* (1941) 2–3.

33 Clune, *Chinese Morrison* (1941), 15.

34 Thompson and Macklin, *The Man Who Died Twice*, 349.

35 Thompson and Macklin, *The Man Who Died Twice*, 349.

36 Pearl, *Morrison of Peking*, v.

37 Pearl, *Morrison of Peking*, vi.

38 H. R. Trevor-Roper, *Hermit of Peking: The Hidden Life of Sir Edmund Backhouse* (New York: Knopf, 1977), 97.

also, Trevor-Roper argued, he never took much interest in Chinese culture at all.³⁹ Instead, Morrison always thought about China in terms of what foreign powers could get out of it.⁴⁰

In a similar vein, Paul French called Morrison 'vainglorious' and disparaged him for missing two of the major events in the late Qing: the death of Empress Dowager Cixi and the Boxer Rebellion.⁴¹ The views of these two historians are a far cry from the saintly picture painted by Morrison's biographers. The claim that Morrison did not take an interest in China or the Chinese, however, does not hold up against his observations in *An Australian in China*, even if his sympathy was filtered through an imperial agenda, as Trevor-Roper claimed.

Another major academic interpretation of Morrison comes from the work of Eiko Woodhouse. As well as a substantial body of literature on Morrison in Japanese, Woodhouse published *The Chinese Hsinhai Revolution* (2004) in English. Unlike French and Trevor-Roper, Woodhouse emphasised Morrison's importance without the laudatory tone of his biographers. In her view, Morrison was highly influential and worked throughout the waning years of the Qing to serve Australia's interests at the expense of Japan and sometimes even Britain.⁴² The height of her claims on Morrison's influence came when she argued that he helped bring on the Russo-Japanese War, the end of the Qing Empire and the entry of China into World War I in 1917.⁴³ She also described a change in Morrison's politics from pro- to anti-Japanese, something that followed the rest of Australian society in the wake of Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War.⁴⁴

Adam Aitken discussed how race and hybridity are explored in *An Australian in China*.⁴⁵ This was, however, more a work of literary criticism based around studies of Orientalism and critical race theory than

39 Trevor-Roper, *Hermit of Peking*, 43–44.

40 Trevor-Roper, *Hermit of Peking*, 47.

41 Paul French, *Through the Looking Glass: China's Foreign Journalists from Opium Wars to Mao* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), 73–75. The latter charge is somewhat unfair since Morrison was trapped by the siege of the legations and wounded in the fighting, and therefore somewhat hindered in his reporting. It is true that he, like many in the legations, missed the significance of the early Boxer movement until it was too late.

42 Woodhouse, *The Chinese Hsinhai Revolution*, 185–86.

43 Woodhouse, *The Chinese Hsinhai Revolution*, 13, 64, 181.

44 Woodhouse, *The Chinese Hsinhai Revolution*, 22.

45 Adam Aitken, 'Australians Going Native: Race, Hybridity and Cultural Anamorphism in G. E. Morrison's *An Australian in China*', *The Journal of the European Association for Studies of Australia* 6, no. 1 (2015): 30–41.

a historical analysis. Peter Monteath, on the other hand, contextualised *An Australian in China* within the arc of Morrison's life and described his journey as a movement from one periphery of empire (Australia) to another (the south-eastern border of China).⁴⁶ Studying *An Australian in China* within the context of Morrison's life shows the influences working on him at the time and highlights some of the themes in his later work as a journalist and adviser. In particular, Monteath emphasised Morrison's sympathy for the Chinese, which led him to criticise many failed imperial interventions. Despite this, Morrison was seemingly unable to turn this same criticism towards the British.⁴⁷ While Monteath identifies this limitation solely in the published text of *An Australian in China*, it becomes even more apparent on examining Morrison's personal writings.

Morrison and the Special Correspondent Model

In reading *An Australian in China*, it is still clear that, for all his apparent sympathy with the Chinese, Morrison's project was implicated in imperialist projects in China. Imperialism was what made his journey possible: he would not have been able to travel anywhere in China safely—Chinese dress or not—if the Opium Wars had not forced the Qing Empire to allow British subjects to enter its territory. In theory, this freedom of entry was mutual under the terms of the Treaty of Tientsin (1858), but Australian colonies would not extend the privilege that Morrison enjoyed in China to Chinese visitors in Australia for long, despite official Chinese protest.⁴⁸ Morrison's observations were also dependent on the idea of objectively viewing the foreign—a key feature of Orientalist discourse.⁴⁹ His project—to travel through China and see with his objective gaze the truth about the country—was heavily implicated in the logic of empire and how the West produced knowledge about China at the time. The specific way in which Morrison did this was by emulating the special correspondents of the late nineteenth century.

46 Monteath, 'Peripheries of Empire', 192.

47 Monteath, 'Peripheries of Empire', 193.

48 Mountford, *Britain, China, and Colonial Australia*, 100.

49 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2003), 32.

Victorian special correspondents were the result of the formation of British mass print culture colliding with the emergence of a new, more self-conscious imperialism.⁵⁰ The 'new journalism' of the late Victorian era aimed to deliver facts in a clear and concise manner—something especially important as telegraph networks spread throughout the world—but it also aimed to make the news exciting.⁵¹ Dull news would not sell to a growing reading public at a time when press competition was becoming fierce. Australian newspapers began to adopt the model in the 1880s, just as Morrison was starting his career as a journalist.⁵²

Special correspondents were a particular hero of the 'new journalism' within the British Empire. The lives of correspondents such as William Howard Russell, Archibald Forbes and, Morrison's personal hero, Henry Morton Stanley generated almost as much interest as the news they sent back.⁵³ A sense of adventure permeated the role of the special correspondent, as they were imagined to be on the frontline of great events. There, they would get to the essence of what was happening and make a mad dash to the nearest telegraph station so that the news might be brought back to the public in the metropole.⁵⁴ Like Victorian travel writers, they were expected to write romantic and picturesque content but, instead of observing from afar, they were expected to be part of the story.⁵⁵ The style of special correspondents had to be vivid, concise and thrilling and, if they could satisfy their audience's thirst for blood, so much the better.⁵⁶

Throughout his life Morrison idolised these heroic special correspondents, particularly Stanley, the adventurer who went in search of the famous missionary, doctor and explorer David Livingstone in modern-day Tanzania.⁵⁷ When travelling down the Murray River, Morrison had named his canoe after Stanley, a mark of both how much he admired the man and his desire to follow his hero's example. In a letter to his mother before signing on to a blackbirding ship, he wrote: 'only as a newspaper correspondent can I expect to distinguish myself above the common herd

50 Griffiths, *The New Journalism*, 13–14.

51 Griffiths, *The New Journalism*, 7.

52 Sally Young, *Paper Emperors: The Rise of Australia's Newspaper Empires* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2019), 76.

53 Griffiths, *The New Journalism*, 53.

54 Griffiths, *The New Journalism*, 36–37.

55 Griffiths, *The New Journalism*, 33.

56 Griffiths, *The New Journalism*, 29, 42.

57 Thompson and Macklin, *The Man Who Died Twice*, 8.

... It is the noblest, in my opinion, of all the professions.⁵⁸ Given that the letter was about Morrison's upcoming career move, he was probably trying to reassure his mother about his job prospects, but it also clearly indicated the esteem in which he held newspaper correspondents.

In writing *An Australian in China*, Morrison emulated this model on a larger scale, travelling to another periphery of empire and summarising it for an audience 'back home'. He sought the picturesque, as travel writers in China did, but the participatory role of special correspondents required actual interaction with the Chinese. Lacking opportunities to satisfy his audience's thirst for blood, he carefully courted controversy to generate interest in his book.

Western Missionaries versus the 'Highly Lucid and Educated Chinaman'

A major point of controversy in Morrison's book lay in his view of missionaries in China. Most late Victorians encountered missionary work mainly through missionaries' own writings, which took for granted that missionary work in China was a worthy cause.⁵⁹ When missionaries implored the readers of, for example, the periodical *China's Millions* to 'pray that [God] will speedily open the as yet unopened parts of the [Qing] empire to resident missionary work',⁶⁰ there was no question that it would be a good thing. Morrison set himself in opposition to these missionary writings in his own account of China.

In the first chapter of *An Australian in China*, Morrison mocked the efforts of missionaries in China by wryly noting that 'the aggregate body [of missionaries and native workers] converts nine-tenths of a Chinaman per worker per annum; but the missionaries deprecate their work being judged by statistics'.⁶¹ He continued this refrain of ineffectiveness throughout his account, such as when he drily noted that the 'abundantly blessed' work of one missionary had resulted in six converts over three

58 G. E. Morrison, *Correspondence 1850-1923*, SLNSW Archives, ML, MSS 312/35, 214.

59 R. G. Tiedmann, 'Western Primary Sources', in *Handbook of Christianity in China Volume Two: 1800–Present*, ed. R. G. Tiedmann (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010), 33, doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004114302.i-1050.

60 'The New Year', *China's Millions* (1890), 1.

61 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 5.

years.⁶² Despite his acerbic comments, however, he seemed sympathetic to the individual missionaries or missionary groups themselves. For example, he described the China Inland Mission (CIM) as ‘a body of courageous workers, brave travellers, unselfish and kindly men endowed with every manly virtue that can command our admiration’, with little sense of irony.⁶³ He drove this point further by describing a ‘poor thing’ working at the CIM station in Suifu, contrasting her health in England, ‘full of life and vigour’, against that in China, ‘forgetting what is the sensation of health’, being indicative of her personal sacrifice for a greater cause.⁶⁴ By taking the position that the mission was futile but the missionaries noble in their suffering, Morrison managed to criticise the missionary project without personally insulting the missionaries.

In his original draft of *An Australian in China*, Morrison’s criticism was not nearly so tempered. For instance, a great deal of his praise for the missionaries is absent, suggesting that these were later additions. Like his claim that the missionaries converted ‘nine-tenths of a Chinaman’, Morrison used hyperbole to mock their efforts, but in a much harsher way:

There are already 2 converts and luckily there are 3 very earnest enquirers who await the first vacancy as time permits. This much is not discouraging and there is a remarkable hope that the city will have 1000 baptised converts by the end of the next glacial epoch.⁶⁵

Whereas he praised individual missionaries in his published work, Morrison was highly critical of missionaries in general in his diary:

The chief characteristic of the [China Inland] Missionaries is ignorance. Few of them are educated[,] many are almost illiterate. Any braindead bootpolisher who feels that he has a mission may be serviced in the C. I. M. and sent to China to crush the highly educated and lucid Chinaman.⁶⁶

62 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 65.

63 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 69–70.

64 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 71.

65 Morrison, *Books for Publication*, Item 2, 23.

66 Morrison, *Books for Publication*, Item 2, 23.

This was accurate in the sense that many British missionaries were selected for their spirituality rather than their level of education; American missionaries, by contrast, were almost universally college graduates.⁶⁷ However, Morrison was equally dismissive of American missionaries:

The American missionaries glory in the possession of high sounding titles. Most of them are M. D. and if they have not received this degree from any university then they are usually granted it by the courtesy of their friends.⁶⁸

The suggestion that American medical missionaries had not earned their qualifications continues the refrain of ignorance and suggests a general contempt for missionaries rather than any concern for the effectiveness of their efforts in China as in his published book.

Peter Monteath describes Morrison's views on missionaries in *An Australian in China* as 'ambivalent'; however, Morrison's original notes show that this ambivalence was a result of later moderation.⁶⁹ In setting out for his journey, Morrison was trying to emulate his heroes, the special correspondents, in both the nature of the journey he took and the content of his writing afterwards. However, to write in the style of special correspondents, Morrison had to be controversial without being unacceptable. Even in its more moderate form, he received a great deal of criticism from religious quarters, including from the Bishop of Ballarat in a letter to the *Argus* that claimed: 'Dr. Morrison's statements about countries he had visited had been emphatically challenged by others who had been there.'⁷⁰

In both his private and public writings, then, Morrison challenged the missionary project to various degrees. It is tempting to see this as an anti-imperialist critique of agents of cultural imperialism. *An Australian in China* certainly had praise for the Chinese woven through the text, mostly regarding the courtesy that was shown to Morrison. At the end he wrote:

67 Ian Welch, "Our Neighbours but Not Our Countrymen": Christianity and the Chinese in Nineteenth-Century Victoria (Australia) and California', *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 13 (2004–2006), 176, doi.org/10.1163/187656106793645204.

68 Morrison, *Books for Publication*, Item 2, 25.

69 Monteath, 'Peripheries of Empire', 188.

70 Samuel Ballarat, 'Dr Morrison's Strictures on Chinese Missions', *Argus*, 14 August 1895, 6. Morrison published a reply to the bishop on 13 November, and a number of correspondents sent letters in a debate with varying levels of pettiness.

I cannot speak more highly of the pleasure of my journey than to declare that I felt greater regret when it was finished than I ever felt on leaving any other country.⁷¹

His claim that he developed a lively sympathy for the Chinese seems to be genuine, at least from his perspective. Morrison's references to 'unoffending Chinese' and 'the highly educated and lucid Chinaman' show that, at the very least, he shared in the broader Chinese contempt for missionaries. Such criticism of Western intervention in China did not extend to many other themes in his book.

'No Time Would Be More Opportune': Morrison on the Chinese Army

Such impressions of Morrison's sympathy for the Chinese are flatly contradicted by his comments on the Chinese Army stationed in Yunnan and his racial theories regarding the Chinese. Where Morrison's private writings aligned with his public travel literature, his support for the British Empire and the racial theories of his time becomes more apparent. Reading both accounts of Morrison's time in China, it seems that he became more jingoistic the further south-west he travelled, and the closer he came to the borders of China and British Burma.⁷²

His observations frequently turned to the poor condition of China's soldiers and forts. He noted a dominant view in British diplomacy that China must be placated 'rather than endanger any possible relations, which may subsequently be entered into, with a hypothetically powerful neighbour'.⁷³ He then compared this hypothetical power with the actual power of the soldiers accompanying him, who usually had no working muskets and had sold their gunpowder to pay for food.⁷⁴ Morrison expressed a similar sentiment in his journals when he noted that 'some soldiers are armed[,] others unarmed. Equal danger to be apprehended from the one as from the other'.⁷⁵ In both his published work and his notes, China was far from a powerful neighbour to be placated, but rather a paper tiger with barely the strength to defend itself.

71 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 280.

72 Monteath, 'Peripheries of Empire', 189.

73 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 241.

74 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 242.

75 Morrison, *Books for Publication*, Item 4, 195.

The poor state of the Chinese military and the outbreak of the First Sino-Japanese War also led Morrison to argue that the time was right to strike in China. Crossing the River Salween—the ancient border between Burma and China—Morrison regretted it was not the current border between China and British Burma. He argued that ‘no time would be more opportune’ to push the British border to this point, and that ‘but little persuasion’ would be required to gain it.⁷⁶ A note made by Morrison mirrored this sentiment: he was ‘none the wiser why the boundary of Burmah [sic] should not be pushed further inland ... along the course of the Salween’.⁷⁷ Neither his book nor diary contained much of an argument as to what benefits this would bring.

In these arguments on the Chinese military, Morrison positioned himself as defying the common thinking around China, although his use of the ‘umbrella soldier’ trope of Chinese soldiers was almost as old as the first Western presence in Canton.⁷⁸ The difference with his argument, however, was that he did not position China’s military weakness in the language of martial races that was so typical of these claims.⁷⁹ Morrison had a great deal of praise for the Chinese as a ‘race’, even though this praise was often loaded. His arguments instead centred on the corruption and inefficiency of the Qing state. This is a theme that would only grow stronger over the course of Morrison’s later reporting in China.⁸⁰

For Morrison in *An Australian in China*, China was a territory ripe for further imperial intervention, although he was not necessarily arguing for total conquest. By the end of the nineteenth century, the carving up of China—as had been done in Africa—was widely regarded as impractical by the British.⁸¹ Morrison did, however, argue for continuing the policy of taking more concessions from China, a process that reached its peak in the 1890s as *An Australian in China* was being published.⁸² Unlike in the case of missionaries, then, Morrison was an enthusiastic supporter of British military intervention in China.

76 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 239.

77 Morrison, *Books for Publication*, Item 4, 267.

78 This trope was based on the idea that Chinese soldiers were inherently unwarlike. A common refrain among the treaty port English, supposedly based on easy victories in the Opium Wars, was that ‘a boatswain and a dozen bluejackets’ would be enough to take any Chinese port. For more on this trope, see Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, 44, 369.

79 See Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).

80 Pearl, *Morrison of Peking*, 180.

81 Mountford, *Britain, China, and Colonial Australia*, 219.

82 Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, 323.

'Which Is to Be Our Colonist, the Asiatic or the Englishman?': Morrison on Race

Just as with the military, Morrison also demonstrated the limits of his sympathy towards the Chinese in discussing race. Aitken focuses on how Morrison presented China and the Chinese as 'anamorphic': capable of being 'desirable or disgusting' depending on one's perspective.⁸³ In the same vein, Yuko Kawai, writing in a current American context, has explained this kind of race construction by arguing that supposedly positive or negative racial stereotypes form a dialectical rather than a contradictory relationship, which often results in ambivalent representations.⁸⁴ This ambivalence is present throughout Morrison's observations of the Chinese in *An Australian in China*. The same supposedly positive claims about Chinese virtue fed into his claims of Chinese threat.

Morrison praised many of the characteristics that he claimed to have observed in the Chinese. These manifested particularly among the baggage carriers he employed and the soldiers that escorted him. He described them as 'capital fellows, full of good humour, cheerful, and untiring'.⁸⁵ He drew favourable comparisons between the average Briton and Chinese person: 'I have seen [Chinese] men ambling along the road, under loads that a strong Englishman could with difficulty raise from the ground.'⁸⁶ In his diary he wrote in a similar vein about the soldiers:

Imagine a rich traveller in England who spoke no English offering Tommy Atkins 2 pence for travelling on foot at forced speed 38 miles to bring him a telegram ... I doubt if the English soldiers would bow so gratefully as the Chinese.⁸⁷

After bidding goodbye to his final group at the Chinese border he wrote:

It surely speaks well of the sense of responsibility innate in the Chinese that, during all this time, I never had in my employ a Chinese who did not fulfil, with something to spare, all that he undertook to do.⁸⁸

83 Aitken, 'Australians Going Native', 39.

84 Yuko Kawai, 'Stereotyping Asian Americans: The Dialectic of the Model Minority and the Yellow Peril', *Howard Journal of Communications* 16, no. 2 (2005): 115, 126, doi.org/10.1080/10646170590948974.

85 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 89.

86 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 90.

87 Morrison, *Books for Publication*, Item 4, 39.

88 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 280.

This established a notion of Chinese honesty at odds with many contemporary racist depictions.

Morrison's positive description of Chinese people began to take on a sinister aspect, however, when he described physical differences among the Chinese. For example, on the topic of Chinese punishments, Morrison reflected that 'no people are more cruel in their punishments than the Chinese, and obviously the reason is that the sensory nervous system of a Chinaman is either blunted or of arrested development'.⁸⁹ His diary makes the same argument, which suggests he thought these claims would be accepted by his audience and needed no modification.⁹⁰

Aitken, citing D'Cruz and Steele, attributes Morrison's account of Chinese punishments to an Australian tendency to judge Asian countries by the standards of Western democracy.⁹¹ However, it is not clear that D'Cruz and Steele are necessarily pointing to a historical trend, as most of the evidence they cite is based on more recent commentary.⁹² Morrison's later support for the authoritarian Yuan Shikai would suggest that his views on democracy were ambivalent at best. While he avoided a cultural condemnation based on Western standards, he instead followed a medical approach that carried its own anamorphic potential. Morrison made these observations at a time when the medical community agreed that European nervous systems were inherently vulnerable to a tropical climate.⁹³ As well as the resistance to pain or physical hardship that Morrison noted, a deadened nervous system would explain why Chinese people were so successful in tropical locations such as Malaysia or Canton. Perhaps more significantly for Morrison, it would ensure their success in the fetid climate of the Northern Territory, where he believed the Chinese had already driven white Australians out.⁹⁴ This tied in to recurring fears around the vulnerability of the 'empty north' in Australia at the turn of the century.⁹⁵ Morrison made these fears explicit when he discussed the role of Chinese people in Australia.

89 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 104.

90 Morrison, *Books for Publication*, Item 2, 541, 547.

91 Aitken, 'Australians Going Native', 33.

92 J. V. D'Cruz and William Steele, *Australia's Ambivalence Towards Asia* (Melbourne: Monash University Press, 2003), 42.

93 Laurence Monnais and Hans Pols, 'Health and Disease in the Colonies', in *The Routledge History of Western Empires*, ed. Robert Aldrich and Kirsten McKenzie (London, New York: Routledge, 2014), 270–98; Warwick Anderson, *The Cultivation of Whiteness: Science, Health and Racial Destiny in Australia* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2005), 97.

94 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 223.

95 David Walker, *Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850–1939* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2012), 116.

Towards the end of *An Australian in China*, Morrison argued in support of nascent White Australia policies based explicitly on the same positive racial traits that led him to sympathise with the Chinese. Morrison argued that '[the Chinese] can outwork an Englishman, and starve him out of the country'.⁹⁶ This led to a racially exclusionary conclusion:

Admitted freely into Australia, the Chinese would starve out the Englishman ... There is not room for both in Australia. Which is to be our colonist, the Asiatic or the Englishman?⁹⁷

The image of Asian settlers swamping the European population of Australia has been a common one since Chinese people first started working in Australia.⁹⁸ White Australians justified their colonisation of the continent on the grounds that they were more productive on land that they had taken from Aboriginal Australians. The possibility of greater Chinese productivity, then, created anxieties about the legitimacy of white colonisation.⁹⁹ These anxieties manifested in a panic over Asian settlers and the exclusion of Chinese people from Australia, something that Morrison expressed his support for.

The section where Morrison outlines the threat of Chinese immigrants appears to be missing from his notes, which suggests it was a later addition. Much like his arguments about missionaries, it could have been changed to make his work more appealing, or it could simply be the result of later reflection as he sailed to England. Just as Kawai articulates, for Morrison, the positive and negative racial traits that he observed did not contradict, but fed into each other. Similar arguments were made by Charles Dilke and Alfred Deakin at the time and these may have influenced Morrison's thinking; however, his personal experience and observations would have lent further weight to these claims.¹⁰⁰ Although such arguments were not unique to Australia, they caused tension between the British colonial administration and Australian colonial governments during the 1880s and 1890s as the Chinese Government attempted to pressure the British into ending immigration restriction.¹⁰¹ Morrison's views on race articulated a support for immigration restriction at a time when it was a controversial topic within the empire.

⁹⁶ Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 223.

⁹⁷ Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 223–24.

⁹⁸ Walker, *Anxious Nation*, 37–38.

⁹⁹ Walker, *Anxious Nation*, 38.

¹⁰⁰ Mountford, *Britain, China, and Colonial Australia*, 207–09.

¹⁰¹ Mountford, *Britain, China, and Colonial Australia*, 216.

Whether he was praising or expressing anxiety about the Chinese, Morrison always presented them in racialised terms that emphasised their alien nature, as shown through his argument that the Chinese nervous system was blunted. At times he viewed this alien nature positively, and left China without ‘the strong racial antipathy’ so typical at the time.¹⁰² But he never erased that antipathy completely, and his affection for the Chinese was always conditional on their remaining in China. He saw no place for them in Australia.

Conclusion

Studying the public and private travel writings of George Morrison highlights the extent to which he moderated the claims he made about China as a result of his journey. Morrison was perfectly willing to criticise some aspects of the Western presence in China such as missionary activity, but was equally happy to advocate further concessions from the Chinese to entrench the standing of the British Empire in the country, while maintaining the racial boundary between China and Australia. Morrison was an atypical Western traveller in China and left China with a great deal more sympathy for the Chinese than when he started. What has been shown in this analysis, however, is that there were important limits to his apparent renunciation of Sinophobia.

102 Morrison, *An Australian in China*, 2.

Moral Messages in Dutch Realist Art of the Seventeenth-Century Golden Age

David T. Roth
The Australian National University

Abstract: *The 'iconographic' faction of modern scholars of Dutch realist art in its Golden Age of the seventeenth century have claimed that a principal function of these works was to transmit educational, moral and uplifting messages. Here I argue that the evidence indicates otherwise. Buying decisions were made on economic, social, egotistical or aesthetic grounds. Moreover, there was a strong demand for works of a far less moral nature that tended to be displayed in spaces open to visitors. The continued survival of such frankly suggestive works indicates that Golden Age art was not necessarily a springtime of moral improvement.*

The transmission of moral messages in Golden Age Dutch art is a core claim of the 'iconographic' faction of scholars of Dutch realist art. Jeroen Dekker writes:

17th century Dutch genre painting played a major role in the promotion of the pursuit of family and educational virtues. Packing moralistic messages in fine paintings was considered as a very effective moralistic communication policy in a culture in which sending such moralising messages was very popular.¹

Dekker's views imply a coordinated strategy of moral education by Dutch artists.² This claim is inconsistent with the available evidence, which indicates that artists of the period were largely motivated by straightforward commercial considerations and not by moral or educational aspirations. They did not conduct explicit morals campaigns or have an organised strategy to 'civilise' their customers. Although patrons and buyers did

1 Jeroen J. H. Dekker, 'Beauty and Simplicity: The Power of Fine Art in Moral Teaching on Education in Seventeenth-Century Holland', *Journal of Family History* 34, no. 166 (2009): 166, doi.org/10.1177/0363199008328377.

2 Dekker, 'Beauty and Simplicity', 169.

undoubtedly wish to enhance their image via 'moral' works, I show that moral and educational improvement was not a significant factor in the buying, selling or commissioning of paintings. Buying decisions were made on economic, social, egotistical or aesthetic grounds, and artists met that demand. Moreover, there was a demand for works of a far less moral nature, which were displayed in the spaces of private homes more open to visitors and public, such as entry halls.³ As I demonstrate, the open display and continuing abundant survival of these 'low' works to the present day shows that they were valued and continued to be valued, which weakens Dekker's notion that Golden Age art was a springtime of moral improvement.

The 'iconographic' school of art criticism began in the 1970s. Before then, the consensus had been that Dutch realist art was a 'mirror of everyday life'.⁴ Consistent with this interpretation is the impression that we are looking at 'real' people, houses and landscapes, not 'captains or kings' or Valhallas, but technically superb scenes from the life of the people.⁵ In 1983 Svetlana Alpers advanced a more nuanced 'descriptivist' approach, which, according to its critics, most notably Eddy De Jongh, 'plays down' any meaning that cannot be found on the surface.⁶ These realist interpretations began to be contested in the 1970s by 'iconologists', most notably De Jongh. They argued that the images have a deeper meaning, for instance, to give a moral message or to educate the viewer.⁷

3 Lotte Van de Pol, 'The Whore, the Bawd, and the Artist: The Reality and Imagery of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Prostitution', *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 2, no. 1–2 (2010): 1, doi.org/10.5092/jhna.2010.2.1.3.

4 Mariët Westermann, 'After Iconography and Iconoclasm: Current Research in Netherlandish Art, 1566–1700', *Art Bulletin* 84, no. 2 (June 2002): 352, 357. See also Kim Sluijter, *Locating 'Realism' in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art—Looking at the Art of Everyday Life* (Saarbrücken, Germany: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011), 5, doi.org/10.2307/3177273.

5 For masterly technique, see Roger West and Hank G. Van Veen, 'Gaze as Depicted in Vermeer's *Girl With a Pearl Earring*', *Journal of General Psychology* 134, no. 3 (2007): 313. See also Westermann, 'After Iconography and Iconoclasm', 358; Walter A. Liedtke, *A View of Delft: Vermeer and His Contemporaries* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2000), 146.

6 Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). For criticism of Alpers's views, see Eddy De Jongh's review of *The Art of Describing in Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 14, no. 1 (1984): 51, 56–57, doi.org/10.2307/3780534. See page 56 for comment on Alpers's 'surface' view.

7 For example, see Dekker, 'Beauty and Simplicity', 166–87. See also Madlyn Millner Kahr, 'Vermeer's "Girl Asleep": A Moral Emblem', *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 6 (1972): 115–32, doi.org/10.2307/1512637.

In this 'iconographic' or 'emblematic' framework, moral and other types of messages can be found in objects and their arrangement, facial expressions or even postures, such as in Johannes Vermeer's *Girl Asleep*. For Madlyn Kahr, the sleeping woman at the table, who rests her head on her hand, epitomises the vice of sloth, the 'root of all sin'. The near empty wineglass on the table suggests that the woman is also drunk. Kahr shows that the 'head on hand' theme, representing laziness or even erotic dreams, as in Albrecht Dürer's *The Dream of the Doctor* (c. 1498), had a long history.⁸

De Jongh strongly criticised Alpers's *The Art of Describing*, rating it as a 'failed book' because he thought that her downplaying of deeper meanings was unhistorical.⁹ In his view, description and iconological perception were not mutually exclusive. According to Mariët Westermann, De Jongh is convinced of the 'repetitive moralising' of Golden Age art, and he claims that clients tolerated and expected it.¹⁰ Westermann writes that other art historians question whether consumers really expected or desired 'moral sustenance'. Moreover, she says that moral messages were not necessarily 'the product of an active moralising on the part of the artist'.¹¹ Her more recent 2002 article on current research in Dutch art discusses these debates in more detail.¹²

Before analysing the respective roles of morality and economics, it is necessary to understand the art market of the period. A huge boom occurred between 1600 and 1660. From 1600 there was a 16-fold increase in working artists in response to the astonishing increase in demand.¹³ But paintings were not the exclusive luxury of the elite. The extraordinary number of paintings in even quite modest Dutch households was remarked on by foreign visitors,¹⁴ with some paintings costing as little as the daily

8 Kahr, 'Vermeer's "Girl Asleep"', 119.

9 De Jongh, [review of Alpers *The Art*], 51, 56–57. See also the Appendix in Alpers's book for her critique of the 'icon' position.

10 Mariët Westermann, review of Eddy De Jongh *Kwesties van Betekenis: Thema en Motief in de Nederlandse Schilderkunst van de Zeventiende Eeuw* (Leiden: Primavera 1995) in *Burlington Magazine* 138, no. 1116 (March 1996): 198–200.

11 Westermann, [review of De Jongh *Kwesties*], 199.

12 Westermann, 'After Iconography and Iconoclasm'. See also Sluiter, *Locating 'Realism'*, 8–9.

13 Maarten Prak, 'Guilds and the Development of the Art Market during the Dutch Golden Age', *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 30, no. 3/4 (2003): 238, doi.org/10.2307/3780918.

14 Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 318.

wage of a skilled workman.¹⁵ Cheaper art prints were also available for poorer folk. An estimated 2–5 million paintings were produced in the seventeenth century.¹⁶ This explosion in artistic activity reflected the exceptional economic growth of the Republic. It was also evidence that some of this wealth was distributed to more humble citizens—enough to buy non-essentials such as artworks.¹⁷ The growth in demand in a time of rapid social change reflects the function of artworks as ‘positional goods’, whereby they signal the owner’s social standing.¹⁸ The eminent French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu thought that the consumption of art was an act of social positioning.¹⁹ Modestly priced, mass-produced artworks would have helped to elevate the status of lower middle-class homes over that of their working-class neighbours, while at the upper end of the market, some ‘top end’ paintings sold for multiples of the annual earnings of a skilled worker.²⁰ Some painters, for example Vermeer, were not in the open market, but relied on a few rich patrons.²¹

Paintings were not the only artworks functioning as positional goods during the Golden Age. Exquisitely handcrafted and costly doll’s houses were considered to be status symbols.²² Artworks also served as positional signals for the civic pride of towns—their possession signified and reinforced status and political clout.²³ Official or semiofficial bodies

15 Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, 167. The daily wage of a journeyman was around 27 stuivers (1.4 guilders). Some paintings sold for as little as a guilder (see page 319). But Muizelaar and Phillips claim that an ordinary workman’s daily wage was around 1 guilder. See Klaske Muizelaar and Derek Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women in the Dutch Golden Age: Paintings and People in Historical Perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 22.

16 Prak, ‘Guilds’, 238. See also J. L. Price, *Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London: Reaktion Books 2011), Kindle ed., loc 1542.

17 See Chapter 5 of Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*.

18 For definition of positional goods, see Investopedia, www.investopedia.com/terms/p/positional-goods.asp#axzz26ypvvpPo, accessed 26 September 2012. See also Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 69: ‘the presence of an artist’s work ... helped to establish or maintain his (or more rarely, her) reputation’.

19 Michael Grenfell and Cheryl Hardy, *Art Rules: Pierre Bourdieu and the Visual Arts* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2007), Kindle ed., loc 1111. See also Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

20 For prices, see Prak, ‘Guilds’, 239.

21 John Michael Montias, ‘Vermeer’s Clients and Patrons’, *Art Bulletin* 69, no. 1 (1987): 69, doi.org/10.2307/3051083.

22 Susan Broomhall, ‘Imagined Domesticities in Early Modern Dutch Dollhouses’, *Parergon* 24, no. 2 (2007): 55–56: ‘Oortman spent ... 20,000 to 30,000 guilders’, ‘Rothé spent ... 1700 guilders’.

23 Eric Jan Sluijter, ‘On Brabant Rubbish, Economic Competition, Artistic Rivalry, and the Growth of the Market for Paintings in the First Decades of the Seventeenth Century’, *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 1, no. 2 (2011): 2, doi.org/10.5092/jhna.2009.1.2.4: ‘The idea that the art of painting contributed to their renown.’

commissioned 'ego' works such as Rembrandt's colossal *Night Watch*.²⁴ Religious patrons also sought secular and personal prestige in fine artwork.²⁵ For some, piety was a secondary consideration.

Simon Schama has argued in *The Embarrassment of Riches* that there was a major tension between the conspicuous consumption of luxury goods and the Calvinist dominant morality, which emphasised thrift and frugality.²⁶ Dekker argues that Schama's 'embarrassment' was overcome for most people by the acquisition of morally elevating and educational artworks on 'the family, parenting, childhood and education'.²⁷ He claims that such works dominated the 'moralistic' genre. There was a dominant taste, he says, for moral messages and artists catered to that taste.²⁸ But Dekker's repeated assertions that Dutch artists had a 'communication policy', 'strategies of moral education' or engaged in a 'propaganda offensive' are difficult to accept, because all these terms connote collaboration, organisation and planning.²⁹

There seems to be no explicit evidence that moral elevation was a concerted aim of artists in the genre, nor is there evidence of coordination or encouragement of their 'civilising' efforts by moral guardians in church or state. It was simply a case of supply and demand. For the wealthier buyers, 'the painter was a supplier of goods like any other'.³⁰ Several economic history studies of the Dutch art market show that moral or educational aims were not factors that artists, assessors or dealers expressly considered when valuing artworks.³¹

Artists' guilds did give some 'not too strict' weighting to moral factors.³² But, if moral considerations were important factors in a painting's value, surely the valuers and buyers would have stressed them. Bernard

24 Rembrandt's *Night Watch* is about 4.5 metres x 3.5 metres.

25 Prak, 'Guilds', 237.

26 Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, 188: 'Prosperity would remain intact only so long as the divine precepts were obeyed.'

27 Dekker, 'Beauty and Simplicity', 167, 182.

28 Dekker 'Beauty and Simplicity', 169–70.

29 Dekker 'Beauty and Simplicity', 169, 182.

30 Paul Zumthor, *Daily Life in Rembrandt's Holland* (Stanford: Stanford University Press 1994), 195.

31 Neil De Marchi and Hans J. Van Miegroet, 'Art, Value and Market Practices in the Netherlands in the Seventeenth Century', *Art Bulletin* 76, no. 3 (1994): 451–64. See also Sluijter, 'On Brabant Rubbis', 1–17. See also 'Introduction' by Eric Jan Sluijter in Anna Tummers and Koenraad Jonckheere, *Art Market and Connoisseurship: A Closer Look at Paintings by Rembrandt, Rubens and their Contemporaries* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008).

32 W. Martin, 'The Life of a Dutch Artist. Part VI—How the Painter Sold His Work', *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 11, no. 54 (September 1907): 357.

Mandeville (1670–1733), an economic commentator active just after the Golden Age, thought that market value was based on usefulness, scarcity and the artist's name, but made no mention of morality.³³ The didactic aims in 'moral' genre paintings pointed to by twentieth- and twenty-first-century art historians are not remarked on in seventeenth-century art treatises, nor is there evidence about the meanings they had for viewers.³⁴ The demand for 'virtuous' artworks was influenced by their function as positional goods, because they gave the owners and their households a certain social standing and prestige in the eyes of their social group, neighbours, employees and social inferiors. This status was not necessarily consistent with the actual practices and moral values of the owners, but enhanced business and political prospects. But there was also a clear demand for less elevating works, as evidenced by their survival to the present day.

One difficulty in assessing the relative demand of 'high' and 'low' art is the fact that the paintings surviving today are not a representative sample. The extant Golden Age paintings represent perhaps less than 1 per cent of the total number produced.³⁵ The paintings we see in galleries, museums or in private hands have survived by what may be termed a Darwinian struggle, with some positive correlation between longevity and considerations of technical quality, perceived value and the artist's 'name', subject to the whims of fashion and taste.³⁶ Chance survivals in storerooms and attics also played a part. It is reasonable to assume that the happy few survivors are heavily concentrated at the top end of the market.³⁷ Works considered to be cheap or unfashionable would risk being unceremoniously discarded on the owner's demise, change of address or business failure. If 'moral paintings' did survive more than 'low' paintings, that would tend to confirm Dekker's thesis. But, in this 'survival of the fittest', the preservation of 'low' art indicates that moral quality was not a predominating selection criterion.

33 De Marchi and Van Miegroet, 'Art, Value and Market Practices', 454–55.

34 Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 123.

35 Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 1.

36 De Marchi and Miegroet, 'Art, Value and Market Practices', 457: 'Therefore "faults and beauties" will be differently evaluated as the composition of tastes in a population shifts over time.' Also see Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 1.

37 Price, *Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, loc 1631: 'Much that was cheap and shoddy has been lost.'



Figure 1: Rembrandt van Rijn, *Familienbild* [*Portrait of a Family*], c. 1668.

Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum, Braunschweig, Germany. Wikimedia Commons.

To consider Dekker's claims fairly, we need to look at his discussion of 'moral' examples. He says that an ideal picture of loving parenthood is represented in Rembrandt's *Portrait of a Family* (Figure 1). The fruit and flowers in the basket refer to 'a fertile marriage and good upbringing'.³⁸ He refers to many other examples of family portraits by Gabriël Metsu, Jan Mitjens and their contemporaries. The emphasis on family life was also reinforced by messages on good and bad motherhood, for example, in *Woman Combing a Child's Hair*, by Quirijn van Brekelenkam, or in Pieter de Hooch's *The Pantry* where there is an atmosphere of love and affection.³⁹ Jan Steen's *The Meagre Kitchen*, as a counter-example and warning, shows the disorder and child neglect resulting from poverty and domestic disharmony.⁴⁰ His cosy, well-fed and harmonious *Fat Kitchen* was the desired goal.

38 Dekker, 'Beauty and Simplicity', 172.

39 Dekker, 'Beauty and Simplicity', 175.

40 Dekker, 'Beauty and Simplicity', 176.

Dekker says that messages about chastity were frequent, such as in Jacob Gerritz's *Four-Year-Old Girl with Cat and Fish*. Sexual lust is represented by the cat trying to eat the fish. The young girl prevents this, showing the triumph of virtue and restraint over base instinct and immediate gratification.⁴¹ The child is confident, well cared for and beautifully dressed, a paradigmatic case of parental affection and conspicuous consumption. One possible, but less plausible, explanation of the cat's distress may be that it is expecting the small fish for dinner and the child is naughtily teasing it. But perhaps, in this case, I would agree with Dekker that a moral message was intended.

The idea that family portraits or portraits of children were bought primarily because of their moral or educational message for the owner and household is a weak point in Dekker's argument. It is true that there was a plausible fertility message in the child pictures.⁴² And it is probable that motivation to buy pictures in general was the desire to show a message about the household, as argued above. But I do not think that the 'family' portraits were primarily positional goods because, based on John Loughman and John Michael Montias's study of art inventories, they tended to be hung in more private spaces of the home.⁴³ These rooms were loosely designated in inventories as *keuken* (kitchen), *binnenhaard* (inner hearth), *achterkamer* (back room) or *zijkamertje* (side room/bedroom).⁴⁴

Dekker claims further that 'family' or 'child' pictures educated parents on how to raise children.⁴⁵ Yet, this alleged role must have been very limited. The range of what can be communicated via artworks is severely restricted when compared to other sources of potential instruction: books,

41 Dekker, 'Beauty and Simplicity', 181–82.

42 Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 143: 'some images were believed to help ensure the birth of beautiful children'.

43 Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 73: 'portraits of a personal nature were hung in private rooms, away from public gaze'. This cites John Loughman and John Michael Montias, *Public and Private Spaces: Works of Art in Seventeenth-century Dutch Houses* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2000). For example, see 67–68. See also 'Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories', The Frick Collection, research.frick.org/montias, accessed 26 September 2012. This inventory of deceased estates, bankruptcies and auctions is referenced in Chapter 2 of Loughman and Montias.

44 Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, 43, 67, and 'Montias Database' discussion in Chapter 2.

45 Dekker, 'Beauty and Simplicity', 169. For further discussion of this role, see also Jeroen Dekker and Leendert F. Groenendijk, 'The Republic of God or the Republic of Children? Childhood and Child-Rearing after the Reformation: An Appraisal of Simon Schama's Thesis about the Uniqueness of the Dutch Case', *Oxford Review of Education* 17, no. 3 (1991): 322, doi.org/10.1080/0305498910170306.

pamphlets, relatives, other parents and so on. Artworks can exemplify but the instructional potential of a given painting is limited and static. Moreover, the child-raising functions of paintings becomes somewhat ambiguous, given the ‘arsenal of horrors’ and ‘repertoire of naughtiness’ represented in many ‘child’ paintings of the time.⁴⁶ It is more plausible that the reason for buying paintings of children, at least of well-behaved offspring, was no different from that of proud parents ordering studio photographs of their progeny today. Dutch parents were notoriously fond of their families, to a degree ‘arrestingly unlike those of other European cultures’.⁴⁷ Having looked at Dekker’s ‘family-orientated’ art world, we now need to examine its underside.

The representation of brothels and prostitution in Golden Age art has been studied by Lotte van de Pol. She writes that *bordeeltje*—‘brothel painting’—was a popular subgenre.⁴⁸ Steen, favourably mentioned in Dekker’s examples of moral art, painted over 40 *bordeeltje* and many more ‘dubious’ paintings, such as *The Wench*, in which coins are clearly visible in the woman’s hand. Dekker claims that Vermeer, whose ‘strategy was focused on beautifying moral messages’, allegedly used fine art to educate in the virtues.⁴⁹ But what then are we to make of his much-discussed work *The Procuress* (Figure 2)?⁵⁰ I cannot agree with Edward Snow’s odd assertion that the procuress and her client are a ‘loving couple’.⁵¹ The commercial nature of the relationship is plain to see.

46 Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, 483–84.

47 Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, 485–86.

48 Van de Pol, ‘The Whore, the Bawd, and the Artist’, 1. See also Harriet Amy Stone, *Tables of Knowledge: Descartes in Vermeer’s Studio* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 23.

49 Dekker, ‘Beauty and Simplicity’, 180.

50 See discussion of this painting and its obscene symbolism in Liedtke, *A View of Delft*, 198–201. Note that there were less refined ‘Procuress’ works by other artists—for example, by Van Baburen and Christiaan van Couwenberg. See also Edward Snow, ‘Vermeer’s Procuress’, *Threepenny Review*, no. 55 (Autumn 1993): 30–31. Note that the painting was given its present name only at the end of the nineteenth century.

51 Snow, ‘Vermeer’s Procuress’, 31.



Figure 2: Johannes Vermeer, *The Procuress*, c. 1656.

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany. The happy man on the left is thought to be Vermeer. Public Domain.

There were also paintings with frank double entendres. For example, Gabriël Metsu, whose oeuvre of family life and motherly care is applauded by Dekker, also painted *The Poultry Seller* (Figure 3). This work shows a shabby market trader showing a rooster to a young woman. It is based on an obscene print by Gillis van Breen, which has the inscription:

‘How much is that bird, poulterer?’
‘He’s sold.’
‘To whom?’
‘To the landlady, whom I bird all year long!’⁵²

52 Elizabeth Alice Honig, ‘Desire and Domestic Economy’, *Art Bulletin* 83, no. 2 (June 2001): 294, doi.org/10.2307/3177210.



Figure 3: Gabriël Metsu, *The Poultry Seller*, c. 1662.

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany. Wikimedia Commons.

The pun in seventeenth-century Dutch (and German) is based on the word *vogel*, which means ‘bird’ when used as a noun, while as a verb it is a slang term for sexual intercourse, still current in the Netherlands and Germany. Hence the ubiquity of poultry in ‘low’ paintings, for instance in Gerrit Dou’s *Kitchenmaid with a Boy on a Window*,⁵³ or in Gabriël Metsu’s *The Huntsman’s Present*. David R. Smith says that birds are the ‘most familiar sex symbol in Dutch art’.⁵⁴ For Mira Friedman, the partridge in particular was ‘the image of immoderate lust and unbridled lewdness’ in seventeenth-century Holland.⁵⁵ *The Huntsman’s Present*, for example, was a partridge.

Another, more subtle, category of double entendre, or perhaps multi-entendre, is the much-commented-on painting by Gerard Ter Borch, *The Parental Admonition* (also known as *The Gallant Conversation*). This painting portrays ‘innocent details that tell a non-innocent story’.⁵⁶ Famously, the German polymath Wolfgang von Goethe had interpreted the painting’s message as an innocent tale—a ‘parental admonition’ to an errant daughter.⁵⁷ In the twentieth century, Ter Borch’s work was seen as a brothel scene: Goethe’s ‘knightly gentleman’ is a client, the ‘daughter’ a sex worker and the ‘mother’ a madam/procuress. In this century, some critics have restored the subjects’ innocence: it is now a courting scene.⁵⁸ These conflicting interpretations do not convict Goethe—anachronistically—of unwitting naivety. They show instead that expert opinions and the state of art knowledge may show marked changes over time.

The Parental Admonition was apparently popular, since Ter Borch made dozens of copies. There are copies in the Louvre in Paris, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, in the National Gallery of Art in Washington and in the Gemäldegalerie Berlin. The key to the ‘brothel’ interpretation is the presence or absence of money in the alleged gentleman’s hand. In the Gemäldegalerie version, the coin was found after cleaning;⁵⁹ in the Rijksmuseum version, the coin is not visible, but the area near the man’s

53 Wayne Franits, *Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press 2004), 118.

54 David R. Smith, ‘Realism and the Boundaries of Genre in Dutch Art’, *Art History* 32, no. 1 (February 2009): 80, doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8365.2008.00651.x.

55 Mira Friedman, ‘On Diderot’s Art Criticism’, *Assaph Studies in Art History*, 2 (1996).

56 Martha C. Howell and Walter Prevenier, *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods* (London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 206.

57 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Elective Affinities*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Classics 2005), 246

58 Blake Gopnik, ‘Exquisiteness in Plain View’, *Washington Times*, 7 November 2004, N.01.

59 See Rijksmuseum website, www.rijksmuseum.nl/en, accessed 24 May 2019.

hand is 'abraded'.⁶⁰ Some critics say they see a fingernail, not a coin. It is possible that Ter Borch 'adjusted' each copy to the customer's taste or perhaps thought that ambiguity would be a selling point. Copying was a well-known practice in this period. Some painters, not only Ter Borch, copied their own originals.⁶¹ Other contemporaries of Ter Borch also used irony and ambiguity—some were directly influenced by him.⁶²

Among paintings that could send immoral messages were depictions of soldiers with young women where the householder's absence 'threatens to transform an otherwise respectable woman into a whore and to make a brothel of a bourgeois home'.⁶³ A classic example is Vermeer's *Soldier and Laughing Girl* (Figure 4).⁶⁴ Richard Helgerson associates this subgenre with the political and military history of the time—the successful end of the revolt against Spain. He suggests that householders were in some way 'entertained' by the pictorial representation of the takeover of their homes and wives' bodies by the very soldiers hired to protect them.⁶⁵ Yet, it could also be argued that the 'soldier and lone woman' paintings were cautions against the peacetime perils of coping with idle mercenaries. Possibly they were also a warning to absent husbands that their wives, unlike Caesar's, were not above reproach.⁶⁶ Although Dutch women enjoyed a great deal of freedom as compared to their foreign contemporaries, Dutch moralists insisted that social stability and prosperity depended on the 'untarnished virtue of their women'.⁶⁷ So it is possible to see 'soldier and lone woman' paintings as economic caveats: warnings about possible losses of wealth and prestige, rather than messages about morals. Wives were regarded as valuable chattels to be guarded.

60 See 'Terborch, Gerard biography', Web Gallery of Art, www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/t/terborch/1/bp_advic.html, accessed 24 May 2019. Perhaps the 'abrasion' was censorship by the curators, the moral equivalent of a figleaf? See, for example, the 1857 'figleaf controversy' concerning the exhibition of Michelangelo's *David* at the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum) in London, www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/d/davids-fig-leaf/, accessed 24 May 2019.

61 De Marchi and Miegroet, 'Art, Value and Market Practices', 453.

62 David R. Smith, 'Irony and Civility: Notes on the Convergence of Genre and Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting', *Art Bulletin* 69, no. 3 (September 1987): 421, doi.org/10.2307/3051063.

63 Richard Helgerson, 'Soldiers and Enigmatic Girls: The Politics of Dutch Domestic Realism, 1650–1672', *Representations*, no. 58 (Spring 1997): 52, doi.org/10.2307/2928823.

64 Helgerson, 'Soldiers and Enigmatic Girls', 69. See also Liedtke, *A View of Delft*, 177–78. Helgerson is undecided whether the subject is patriotic or if it depicts 'mercenary love'. Nanette Salomon thinks it is prurient. See Nanette Salomon, *Shifting Priorities: Gender and Genre in Seventeenth Century Dutch Painting* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 113.

65 Helgerson, 'Soldiers and Enigmatic Girls', 62.

66 Plutarch, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, trans. Rex Warner (London: Penguin Classics 1972) 254: 'I considered that my wife ought not to be even suspected.' Julius Caesar famously divorced his wife not for actual adultery with Clodius, but for even the suggestion of it.

67 Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, 398–404.



Figure 4: Johannes Vermeer, *Soldier and Laughing Girl*, c. 1657.

The Frick Collection, New York. Public Domain.

‘Low-life’ genre paintings were in demand in Amsterdam,⁶⁸ covering a wide range of vulgar themes and icons. There were depictions of violence,⁶⁹ urination, enemas,⁷⁰ fornicating dogs, gambling, and drunken men and women groping each other.⁷¹ This demand clearly extended well beyond Amsterdam, since many of the painters of these works were based in other Dutch or Flemish cities. Pieter Bruegel, who painted *Peasants Fighting Over Cards*, was based in Antwerp and Brussels. Steen, based in

68 Muizelaar and Phillips *Picturing Men and Women*, 125.

69 Such as in Pieter Bruegel’s *Peasants Fighting Over Cards* c. 1619. This is discussed in Walter Liedtke, ‘Peasants Fighting Over Cards’, *Artibus et Historiae* 10, no. 19 (1989): 123–31, doi.org/10.2307/1483287.

70 See Laurinda Dixon, ‘Some Penetrating Insights: The Imagery of Enemas in Art’, *Art Journal* 52, no. 3 (Fall 1993): 28, doi.org/10.2307/777365.

71 Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 125–27.

Leiden, and favourably mentioned by Dekker for his moral works, painted numerous taverns and drinking scenes, such as *Prince's Day* (Figure 5), *Tavern Scene*, *The Dissolute Household* and *The Drunken Couple*. He also painted enema scenes with explicit sexual imagery.⁷² H. Perry Chapman argues that Steen had a moral and didactic aim by 'playing the fool' in this series of paintings,⁷³ but whether they actually promote the moral order is debatable. Pieter de Hooch's *Young Woman Drinking with Two Soldiers*, *Merry Drinker* and *The Empty Glass* fall into the 'drinkers' category. And there is usually a wineglass to hand in the brothel scenes.

Some scholars have claimed that 'low' paintings—consistent with Dekker's thesis—had a didactic function and served as cautionary tales about the dangers of vice.⁷⁴ Simon Schama argues that Steen's *The Dissolute Household*, for instance, was an '*omnium gatherum*' (hodgepodge) of such admonitions, but concedes that we have no way of knowing what the artist really intended. He suggests that perhaps the ostensible moral lesson was the 'the fig-leaf of respectability' for the sexual images.⁷⁵ That sort of cynical hypocrisy was echoed much later in the tabloid press: hand-wringing over declining morals on page one followed by page three girls.⁷⁶

Klaske Muizelaar and Derek Phillips argue that 'low' paintings had other functions besides moral instruction. First, they provided humour and entertainment: patricians laughing at the rough and ignorant play of poor folk, like Titania at the doings of the 'rude mechanicals' in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Taken as parodies and caricatures, the paintings enhanced feelings of superiority.⁷⁷ Therefore, it might be argued that the role of moral instruction was very minor, if at all present. The 'low-life' works functioned mainly as positional goods, by emphasising the neatness and decorum of the owner's home and family as compared to the rough life beyond the pale. Their role was predominantly economic and social, not moral. However, as Schama points out, thinly disguised titillation was also an important factor.

72 Dixon, 'Some Penetrating Insights', 28. Dixon discusses the sexual imagery of Jan Steen's *The Doctor's Visit* (1660).

73 H. Perry Chapman, 'Jan Steen's Household Revisited', *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 20, no. 2/3 (1990–91): 193–96, doi.org/10.2307/3780742.

74 Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 127.

75 Simon Schama, 'The Unruly Realm: Appetite and Restraint in Seventeenth Century Holland', *Daedalus* 108, no. 3 (Summer 1979), 105, 108–09, 112.

76 For example, the UK *Sun*, Australia's defunct *Truth* and Germany's *Bild* (formerly *Bild-Zeitung*) with its 'daily dose of high-resolution soft porn'. See 'Sex, Smut and Shock: Bild Zeitung Rules Germany', *Spiegel Online*, 25 April 2006, www.spiegel.de/international/sex-smut-and-shock-bild-zeitung-rules-germany-a-412021.html, accessed 24 May 2019.

77 Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 128, 130.



Figure 5: Jan Steen, *Prinjesdag* [Prince's Day], c. 1660–79.

Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Notice the small child in the foreground.
Wikimedia Commons.

Where were these 'low' paintings hung? Lotte van de Pol claims that they were displayed in the more public living areas of respectable Dutch homes, although less respectable exemplars were hung in more private areas such as 'art rooms',⁷⁸ where they cohabited with 'family' and 'child' pictures. There is some unpersuasive evidence for the placement of pictures in the 'painting within painting' works. This kind of '*mise en abyme*' was a common practice.⁷⁹ For example, in Vermeer's *A Young Woman Seated at a Virginal*, the painting behind her is Dirck van Baburen's *Procuress*.⁸⁰ Eglon van der Neer's *Couple in an Interior* has a background painting of Venus and Cupid with copulating pigeons—the 'bird' theme again as (re)double entendre.⁸¹ Another example is Samuel van Hoogstraten's *The Slippers*, where Ter Borch's *Parental Admonition* is to be seen on a back

78 Van de Pol, 'The Whore, the Bawd, and the Artist', 1.

79 *Mise en abyme*, strictly speaking, 'mirrors reflecting mirrors in infinite regress', but also 'any part embedded in a work that exists in a relation of similarity with the larger work that contains it', Stone, *Tables of Knowledge*, 2.

80 Liedtke, *A View of Delft*, 258–59.

81 Smith, 'Realism and the Boundaries of Genre in Dutch Art', 79–80.

wall.⁸² But these deliberate juxtapositions of respectable and vulgar, moral and profane, may just have been non-too-subtle hints that the foreground subject was not ‘real’ and not a moral paradigm. Therefore, all this *mise en abyme* may be unsound or misleading evidence about where paintings were actually hung.

Similarly unpersuasive is the positioning of paintings in doll’s houses. James E. Bryan says that these artworks ‘functioned as virtual realities’ and Susan Broomhall notes that upper-class doll’s houses were a ‘sumptuous extension of girls’ pastimes’.⁸³ She adds that the paintings present in Dutch doll’s houses were morally unexceptionable.⁸⁴ Thus they cannot have been a representative sample from real life.

Art theorists of the time, both Dutch and foreign, advised against hanging ‘low-life’ paintings in homes, and contemporary treatises about conduct and morals warned against ‘any amorous or frivolous paintings that also cunningly lead to promiscuity’.⁸⁵ The influential Dutch theorist Gerard de Lairese (1640–1711) thought that only beautiful and virtuous subjects were worthy of representation and violently criticised painters of ‘low’ subjects.⁸⁶ In his *Groot Schilderboek* [*Great Book of Painting*], de Lairese insisted that the artist must follow the highest moral principles—‘only correct theory could produce good art’.⁸⁷ Rensselaer Lee, in his survey of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century art theorists, writes that they promoted the humanistic doctrine that only ‘superior forms’ of human life should be represented by serious artists.⁸⁸ Many well-off patrons did not follow this counsel.⁸⁹ Louise Blaue, female regent (director) of an orphanage and therefore a respectable citizen, had a *bordeeltje*—Metsu’s *The Prodigal Son*—hung in a public area of her home, alongside her

82 ‘Van Hoogstraten *The Slippers*: Experimenting with One’s Gaze’, Louvre Press Release 2008, www.museumlab.eu/press/pdf/Louvre-DNPMuseumLab_5_PressRelease_EN.pdf, accessed 24 May 2019.

83 Broomhall, ‘Imagined Domesticities’, 49–50. See also Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, 33.

84 Broomhall, ‘Imagined Domesticities’, 59–60.

85 Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, 79.

86 Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 125; Claus Kemner, ‘In Search of Classical Form: Gerard de Lairese’s “Groot Schilderboek” and Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting’, *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 26, no. 1/2 (1998): 90. For de Lairese’s influence, see Horton A. Johnson, ‘Gerard de Lairese: Genius among the Treponemes’, *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 97, no. 6 (June 2004): 301–03. A Treponeme is a sufferer from Treponema Pallidum (syphilis).

87 Johnson, ‘Gerard de Lairese’, 301–03.

88 Rensselaer Lee, ‘Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting’, *Art Bulletin* 22, no. 4 (December 1940): 201, doi.org/10.2307/3046716. Ut Pictura Poesis means: ‘as is painting, so is poetry’.

89 Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 125–27.

most valuable paintings.⁹⁰ Blauwe's example is inconsistent with Elizabeth Honig's claim that wealthy women were often the purchasers of paintings and would not have permitted sexually provocative works to be in their homes. Honig, a feminist art historian, writes that artworks had to appeal to women's tastes. But such claims show the difficulties with projecting modern sensitivities onto the tastes and morals of the past. Muizelaar and Phillips criticise the logic of Honig's claim. They argue that if women were the prime decision-makers, as she asserts, this meant that the erotic images, so often found in public spaces in Dutch homes, must have appealed to them.⁹¹ They go on to say that we do not know how decisions were made about the display of paintings—by husbands, by wives or by negotiation.⁹²

It would be ahistorical to say that the seventeenth-century Dutch saw the odd symbiosis and cohabitation of 'low' and 'high' paintings in the same way that we might today. Despite the Calvinist ascendancy, they appear to have been quite relaxed about the depiction of sexual subjects. From 1650 on, the Dutch Republic was known as the 'sex shop' of Europe. Large numbers of pornographic works were printed—plays, prints and books.⁹³ Contemporary sex manuals were extraordinarily frank and their availability in cheap editions was evidence of the wide availability of information about reproduction.⁹⁴ Van de Pol writes that prostitution and brothels were suppressed to some extent by the authorities, hence the existence of the *Spinhuis* in Amsterdam.⁹⁵ But she also mentions that Amsterdam largely tolerated and secretly regulated the very public sex trade.⁹⁶ Friedman claims that it was difficult to separate inns from brothels, hence the Dutch proverb 'inn in front, brothel behind'.⁹⁷

90 Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 135, 141, 143.

91 See also 'Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories', The Frick Collection, research.frick.org/montias, accessed 24 May 2019. *Bordeeltje* (brothel paintings) in 'public' areas are frequently listed.

92 See discussion of Honig's argument in Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 142–43.

93 Inger Leemans, 'Arousing Discontent: Dutch Pornographic Plays, 1670–1800', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 12, no. 2, (Spring 2012): 117, doi.org/10.1353/jem.2012.0007.

94 Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, 424.

95 An institution for reforming 'wayward' women. See Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, 477–78.

96 Van de Pol, 'The Whore, the Bawd, and the Artist'.

97 Friedman, 'On Diderot's Art Criticism', 123.

In artworks, we see a sanitised version of sex work. Sex workers were depicted in fashionable clothes and elegant surroundings, filtering out the reality of poverty, frequent violence and premature ageing due to drink and venereal disease.⁹⁸ This euphemistic approach suggests that glamourised portrayals of sex for sale were not offensive to art consumers. Similarly, attitudes to drink were not automatically negative.⁹⁹ Therefore, it may well be ahistorical to say that art owners and their visitors were scandalised by 'low' works, however much these works were disapproved of by moral guardians outside the home.¹⁰⁰

What can we conclude about Dekker's thesis? I accept that there were numerous instructional and morally elevating works in the realist genre and that art consumers and their social circle did derive—or professed to derive—moral lessons from them. But, as I have argued, moral qualities played a minor role in the marketing of art. Paintings were valued on economic and social grounds—as positional goods and markers of prestige. If organised moral campaigns, 'communications policies' or 'education strategies' by artists played any significant role in determining demand, surely that would have been mentioned in the economic history studies discussed above. Individual artists may arguably have had moral strategies, but this sort of altruism must have been a luxury for painters without independent means. They had to paint to live and 'low' works sold.¹⁰¹

Further study of the factors determining the relative survival rates of 'low' and 'high' works would give more insight into Dekker's claims about preferences for moral artworks. Analysis of contemporary letters and diaries that discuss paintings would also give more evidence on tastes and attitudes. We do not see moral messages in the diary of John Evelyn, the famous English diarist and art critic (1620–1706). He was a correspondent of the eminent fellow diarist Samuel Pepys (1633–1703). Evelyn records at length the many Dutch artworks encountered in his trip to the Netherlands on official business. But he makes little mention of

98 Van de Pol, 'The Whore, the Bawd, and the Artist'. Also see Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches*, 475. It is true that some of the madams/procureesses were depicted as old crones (not Vermeer's).

99 Salomon, *Shifting Priorities*, 32. Salomon writes that moderate drinking was socially acceptable (despite Calvinist strictures), but excess drinking was disapproved of.

100 See discussion of this point in Muizelaar and Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women*, 149–50.

101 Muizelaar and Phillips *Picturing Men and Women*, 128.

their moral aspects in his diary.¹⁰² Dekker's claim that the predominant function of 'low' paintings was to give a moral stimulus is doubtful. There were other, less high-minded, factors at work, as shown above. 'Low' works must have been in demand at the top end of the market, given that they have also survived to the present day and not necessarily because of their civilising influence.

102 John Evelyn and Guy De la Bedoyere, eds, *The Diary of John Evelyn* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004). For a discussion of Evelyn's description of the Dutch art market, see Lisa Jardine, *Going Dutch: How England Plundered Holland's Glory* (London: Harper Perennial, 2009), 121–22.

‘Mostly Good and Always Modern’? The Limits of the Modern for Women in the *Home* Magazine in the 1920s

Lucinda Janson
The Australian National University

Abstract: *This article explores the complex and contradictory attitudes towards modernity in Sydney Ure Smith's high-end Australian women's magazine, the Home. The magazine was published in the cosmopolitan environment of 1920s Sydney, in a period in which Australia was both exhilarated and alarmed by the power of the modern. Ure Smith's Home both reflected and challenged this Australian modernity. While a number of scholars have maintained that the Home was a significant purveyor of modern art and design, this article argues that the magazine was often ambivalent about, and hostile to, artistic and literary modernism, as well as cultural and social modernity more broadly. It frequently represented these female-dominated movements as trivial or even degenerate. The Home shared many of its writers with conservative, masculinist publications such as the Bulletin, and reproduced much of their chauvinistic humour. While the magazine championed some women's attempts to seek careers beyond the domestic sphere, the Home nevertheless clearly delineated the boundaries of women's potential freedom. A focus on the magazine's textual, as well as its visual, content exposes the limits of the Home's construction of its own contemporaneity.*

Australia in the 1920s was gripped by the power of the modern, which simultaneously exhilarated and alarmed the nation. Sydney Ure Smith's high-end women's magazine the *Home* reflected these complex and contradictory reactions to modernity. Instead of taking Ure Smith at his word when he wrote that the *Home* sought to promote a style and taste that would be 'mostly good and always modern', this article seeks

to interrogate and challenge the unthinking equation of the *Home* with modernity.¹ The magazine's conservatism is embedded in its very title, which presupposes that women's primary interest is in the 'home'.

During the 1920s Australia experienced both the emergence of technological modernity, and the rise of modernist movements in art and literature. Modernity describes a historical period characterised by increasing social, cultural and material changes brought about by mechanisation and by developments in mass communication technologies.² Marshall Berman has argued that the upheavals of modernity began at the end of the eighteenth century, and were characterised by advances in industrial, scientific and communication technologies, the growth of urbanisation, the dominance of nation-states, and a rapidly expanding and globalising market.³ By the early twentieth century, these developments contributed to the perception that the world was becoming 'new' and more modern.⁴ This sense of modern life as transitory, frenetic and disruptive of tradition was reflected in literary and artistic modernism, which was characterised by a disjointed and self-reflexive style.⁵ Modernist art and literature rebelled against the strict realism of nineteenth-century modes in favour of a more experimental and ambiguous expression. While the largest centres of modernist art and literature were in northern hemisphere metropolises such as London, Paris and New York, there was nevertheless considerable modernist activity in Australia during the interwar period. It was largely women who were promulgators of literary and artistic modernism in Australia. They range from Eleanor Dark and Marjorie Barnard's use of modernistic literary techniques to the more overt artistic modernism of Grace Cossington Smith, Margaret Preston, Thea Proctor, Clarice Beckett, Grace Crowley, Dorrit Black and Anne Dangar.⁶

1 Sydney Ure Smith, 'The Home: How It Proposes To Be of Service to You', *Home*, February 1920, 3.

2 Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 12–13; Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London: Verso, 1983), 16.

3 Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air*, 17–19.

4 Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air*, 17–18; Jill Julius Matthews, *Dance Hall & Picture Palace: Sydney's Romance with Modernity* (Sydney: Currency Press, 2005), 14–16.

5 Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*, 13; Tim Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 4–5.

6 Susan Carson, 'A Girl's Guide to Modernism's Grammar: Language Politics in Experimental Women's Fiction', *Hecate* 30, no. 1 (2004): 176–83; Julian Croft, 'Responses to Modernism, 1915–1965', in *The Penguin New Literary History of Australia*, ed. Laurie Hergenhahn et al. (Melbourne: Penguin, 1988), 409–29; Lesley Harding and Sue Cramer, *Cubism & Australian Art* (Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press, 2009); Deborah Hart, *Grace Cossington Smith* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2005); Rosalind Hollinrake, *Clarice Beckett: Politically Incorrect* (Melbourne: The Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne, 1999).

Scholars such as Rita Felski have drawn attention to the links between the modern and the feminine, and have argued that the conditions of modernity allowed women to achieve visibility and prominence in contemporary life.⁷ The social upheavals of modernity made it increasingly possible for women to find lives outside the domestic sphere, as new technologies allowed many women to find employment in factories and offices.⁸ Women also emerged as significant consumers and creators of the new 'mass' culture, including fashion, design, advertising, architecture, photography, radio and cinema.⁹ Yet, this feminisation of various aspects of culture provoked male anxieties about the 'corruption' of art.¹⁰ A divide emerged between 'high' and 'mass' culture, with the latter seen as inferior due to its feminine associations.¹¹ Some men also became alarmed at women's increasing visibility in public life and in the workplace.¹²

Critical discourse around the participation of Australia in these modern developments during the interwar period has shifted over time, and has influenced interpretations of the *Home*. During the 1970s and 1980s, scholarship on Australian cultural life in the interwar period elided women's contributions and presented Australia as parochial and anti-modern. Geoffrey Serle argued that Australian taste in the arts during this period was 'conservative and backward', while in his 1981 book *Inventing Australia*, Richard White claimed that Australia only began to develop cultural 'maturity' in the late 1930s.¹³ Such a male-dominated approach to the cultural and artistic life of the period provoked a reconsideration by feminist scholars, who drew attention to Australian women's considerable and early contributions to modernist art and design. Janine Burke, Mary Eagle and Helen Topliss all published books during the 1980s and 1990s creating a female genealogy of modernist art in Australia, beginning with Norah Simpson's introduction of post-impressionism to Australia in

7 Felski, *Gender of Modernity*, 18–19.

8 Felski, *Gender of Modernity*, 18–19.

9 Miriam Bratu Hansen, 'The Mass Production of the Senses: Classical Cinema as Vernacular Modernism', *Modernism/Modernity* 6, no. 2 (1999): 60, doi.org/10.1353/mod.1999.0018.

10 Laurie Duggan, *Ghost Nation: Imagined Space and Australian Visual Culture, 1901–1939* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2001), 78–83.

11 Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986), 47–50.

12 Charles Fox and Marilyn Lake, 'The Sexual Division of Labour', in *Australians at Work: Commentaries and Sources*, ed. Charles Fox and Marilyn Lake (Melbourne: McPhee Gribble, 1990), 144–45.

13 Geoffrey Serle, *From Deserts the Prophets Come: The Creative Spirit in Australia 1788–1972* (Melbourne: Heinemann, 1973), 91; Richard White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity, 1688–1980* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1981), 137–44.

1913.¹⁴ They cited the *Home* as a significant purveyor and champion of women's art in discussions of the modern and modernist work of Thea Proctor, Grace Cossington Smith, Margaret Preston, Grace Crowley and Dorrit Black. While it is true that many of these artists were featured in the *Home*, revisionist scholars' attempts to include women in Australian cultural history overstated the *Home's* approval of modern art. Such an uncritical appraisal of the *Home's* modernity is evident throughout the literature, from Caroline Jordan and Angela Woollacott's argument that the *Home* disseminated modernist women's art, to Mary Mackay and Robert Holden's discussions of the *Home's* depiction of the modern leisured woman on its covers, and John Docker's claim that the *Home* promoted Australian and European artistic modernity and advanced a 'pro-feminist' agenda.¹⁵ Even the recent collaborative work on the *Home* by Victoria Kuttainen, Susann Liebich and Sarah Galletly has maintained that the magazine portrayed itself as 'modern and sophisticated' and that it advocated a cosmopolitan, internationally orientated modernity.¹⁶

14 Janine Burke, *Australian Women Artists, 1840–1940* (Melbourne: Greenhouse Publications, 1980); Mary Eagle, *Australian Modern Painting Between the Wars, 1914–1939* (Sydney: Bay Books, 1989); Helen Topliss, *Modernism and Feminism: Australian Women Artists, 1900–1940* (Sydney: Craftsman House, 1996). Humphrey McQueen and others drew attention to the work of Margaret Preston during the late 1970s and early 1980s in Humphrey McQueen, *The Black Swan of Trespass: The Emergence of Modernist Painting in Australia to 1944* (Sydney: Alternative Publishing Cooperative, 1979) and Ian North, Humphrey McQueen and Isobel Seivl, *The Art of Margaret Preston* (Adelaide: Art Gallery Board of South Australia, 1980), but she was the only female artist of the period accorded this treatment until the feminist reconsiderations of the 1980s.

15 Caroline Jordan, 'Designing Women: Modernism and its Representation in *Art in Australia*', in *Strange Women: Essays in Art and Gender*, ed. Jeanette Hoorn (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994), 29; Angela Woollacott, *To Try Her Fortune in London: Australian Women, Colonialism, and Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 209; Mary Mackay, 'Almost Dancing: Thea Proctor and the Modern Woman', in *Wallflowers and Witches: Women and Culture in Australia 1910–1945*, ed. Maryanne Dever (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1994), 26–37; Robert Holden, *Cover Up: The Art of Magazine Covers in Australia* (Sydney: Hodder & Stoughton, 1995), 24–27, 97–99; John Docker, 'Feminism, Modernism, and Orientalism in the *Home* in the 1920s', in *Journalism: Print, Politics and Popular Culture*, ed. Ann Curthoys and Julianne Schultz (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1999), 117–30.

16 Victoria Kuttainen and Susann Liebich, 'Worldly Tastes: Mobility and the Geographical Imaginaries of Interwar Australian Magazines', *Transfers* 7, no. 1 (2017): 52–69, doi.org/10.3167/TRANS.2017.070105; Victoria Kuttainen, 'Illustrating Mobility: Networks of Visual Print Culture and the Periodical Contexts of Modern Australian Writing', *Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature* 17, no. 2 (2018): 1–16; Victoria Kuttainen, Susann Liebich and Sarah Galletly, *The Transported Imagination: Australian Interwar Magazines and the Geographical Imaginaries of Colonial Modernity* (Amherst, New York: Cambria Press, 2018), 5.

While such interpretations of the *Home's* modernity are understandable in light of the critical neglect of women's role in the cultural life of the interwar period, scholars nevertheless have misstated the extent of the *Home's* commitment to modernity and women's place within it. It is certainly important to stress the role that women artists, writers, designers and critics played in developing, and advocating for, an Australian modernism. Yet it is also crucial not to celebrate uncritically all such contributions as unambiguously 'modern' and 'modernist'. Instead, it is important to interrogate the *Home's* modernity, and to draw attention to the limitations of its claims to being 'wholly modern'. David Carter has highlighted the false dichotomy that critics have established between Sydney Ure Smith's high-art magazine, *Art in Australia*, which was supposedly anti-modernist, and the *Home's* championing of modern art and life.¹⁷ Carter claims that the *Home* was less interested in advocating for modernity than critics have argued, yet he does not substantiate this assertion with examples from the *Home*. This article builds on Carter's observation, and contends that a focus on the magazine's textual, as well as its visual, content exposes the limits of the *Home's* construction of its own contemporaneity.

In this article, I analyse the *Home's* interplay of text and image, and challenge the critical consensus that the magazine promoted a feminine modernity and modernism. I argue that the magazine was often ambivalent about, and even hostile to, artistic and literary modernism, and cultural modernity. It frequently represented these movements, which were largely female-dominated, as trivial or even degenerate. I demonstrate that the *Home* shared many of its writers with conservative, masculinist publications such as the *Bulletin*, and reproduced much of their chauvinistic humour. The *Home* placed severe limitations on women's engagement with modernity, and its audience was confined to wealthy, leisured, urban women. While the magazine championed some women's attempts to seek careers beyond the domestic sphere, the *Home* nevertheless clearly delineated the boundaries of women's potential freedom.

17 David Carter, *Always Almost Modern: Australian Print Cultures and Modernity* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2013), 51–52.

Drawing on the theory of periodical studies, I consider the content of the magazine within its social and cultural contexts.¹⁸ Following Sean Latham and Robert Scholes, I examine the *Home* as ‘an autonomous print object’, rather than as a collection of discrete articles and images.¹⁹ I take into account what Carter has described as the ‘institutional aspects’ of magazines and their culture, including the *Home*’s audience, the context of its publication and dissemination, and the role it played within a wider field of Australian interwar periodicals.²⁰ Carter draws attention to the key role that periodicals played during the 1920s in mediating for local readers the social and cultural transformations of modernity.²¹

It is also important to stress the magazine’s fraught relationship with the middlebrow. While the terms ‘highbrow’ and ‘lowbrow’ had been in existence since the late nineteenth century, the idea of the ‘middlebrow’ emerged in the 1920s, prompted by new, often feminised, forms of mass communication technologies, including radio, popular fiction and women’s magazines.²² Like its relationship to modernity itself, the *Home* displayed an uneasy relationship to the term ‘middlebrow’. The *Home* positioned itself as a ‘superior publication’ and included discussion of ‘high’ modernist art and literature. At the same time, however, the magazine also published middlebrow realist fiction and focused on women’s ‘decorative’ art. Carter argues that the concept of the middlebrow was positioned relationally in opposition to ‘high’ modernism on one hand and mass commercial culture on the other hand.²³ For all its intellectual and artistic pretensions, the *Home* often finds itself in just such a middle space. Such a meeting of high and popular culture, of consumerism and art, is evident throughout the *Home* and colours its attitudes towards modernity. Hence, the *Home*’s relationship to the middlebrow both reflects and shapes its ambivalent relationship to modernity and women’s place within it.

18 Adrian Bingham, ‘The Digitization of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians’, *Twentieth Century British History* 21, no. 2 (2010): 230, doi.org/10.1093/tcbh/hwq007.

19 Sean Latham and Robert Scholes, ‘The Rise of Periodical Studies’, *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 121, no. 2 (2006): 529, doi.org/10.1632/003081206X129693.

20 David Carter, ‘Magazine Culture: Notes Towards a History of Australian Periodical Publication 1920–1970’, in *Australian Literature and the Public Sphere*, ed. Alison Bartlett, Robert Dixon, and Christopher Lee (Toowoomba: Association for the Study of Australian Literature, 1999), 69.

21 David Carter, ‘The Conditions of Fame: Literary Celebrity in Australia between the Wars’, *Journal of Modern Literature* 39, no. 1 (2015): 171, doi.org/10.2979/jmodelite.39.1.170.

22 Carter, *Always Almost Modern*, 131–33.

23 Carter, *Always Almost Modern*, 130.

While the *Home* magazine was in print from 1920 to 1942, this article focuses on the magazine during the 1920s.²⁴ During this decade Thea Proctor produced her famous cover illustrations, and the magazine published a wide range of literary and artistic work. The *Home* was printed on heavy art paper, with its cover and many pages of advertisements in colour, and it made lavish use of photography.²⁵ Its standards of production were higher even than American *Vogue* in 1921.²⁶ Moreover, the *Home* cultivated an elite audience, with its circulation never exceeding 7,000 copies per edition. By way of contrast, the *Australian Woman's Mirror*, launched in 1924 as a weekly publication by the *Bulletin*, boasted that it sold 126,000 copies every week.²⁷ The *Woman's Mirror*, consisting of 64 pages without gloss or colour, was aimed at a mass audience of Australian women, primarily housewives who would have appreciated the paper's recipes, household hints and dress patterns.²⁸

The *Home's* many advertisements for products such as motor vehicles, Parisian fashions and luxury cruises were designed to appeal to leisured, upper-middle-class women who had the money and time to enjoy art, fashion and travel. This wealthy audience would have recognised themselves in the magazine's cover art, most notably in Thea Proctor's modern designs that depicted independent women driving, travelling, shopping and dancing.²⁹ A number of critics, such as Mary Mackay, Robert Holden, Pamela Niehoff and Catriona Moore, have described the women on Proctor's covers as 'flappers'.³⁰ While it is certainly true that Proctor depicted women wearing contemporary fashions and undertaking

24 Gavin Souter, *Company of Heralds: A Century and a Half of Australian Publishing by John Fairfax Limited and Its Predecessors, 1831–1981* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1981), 155–56; Frank S. Greenop, *History of Magazine Publishing in Australia* (Sydney: The K. G. Murray Publishing Co., 1947), 244.

25 Greenop, *History of Magazine Publishing in Australia*, 242.

26 Nancy D. H. Underhill, *Making Australian Art 1916–49: Sydney Ure Smith, Patron and Publisher* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 198.

27 *Australian Woman's Mirror*, 24 April 1928, cover.

28 Vane Lindesay, *The Way We Were: Australian Popular Magazines, 1856–1969* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983), 103–05.

29 Sarah Engledow, 'The World of Thea Proctor', in *The World of Thea Proctor*, Barry Humphries, Andrew Sayers, and Sarah Engledow (Melbourne: Craftsman House, 2005), 41.

30 Mackay, 'Almost Dancing', 28; Holden, *Cover Up*, 96; Pamela Niehoff, 'The New Woman and the Politics of Identity', in *Strange Women: Essays in Art and Gender*, ed. Jeanette Hoorn (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994), 40; Catriona Moore, 'Modern Women: Full Throttle', in *Sydney Moderns: Art for a New World*, ed. Deborah Edwards and Denise Mimmocchi (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2013), 86.

modern leisure pursuits, these women cannot be considered flappers. The flapper of the period was generally an adolescent girl or young woman, not the more mature women depicted on Proctor's covers.

Flappers were largely working-class young women who had abandoned domestic service because of its lack of freedom, and instead worked in the new clerical occupations or in shops or factories.³¹ This modern girl became increasingly visible on city streets during the 1920s.³² While she was associated with modern consumer and leisure cultures, she would have been more likely to watch popular films and to 'jazz' in the new, improvised style of dance than to attend exhibitions of modernist art and design.³³ While both flappers and the upper-middle-class readers of the *Home* sought out the latest fashions, their budgets would have been wildly different. The *Home's* fashion pages were filled with clothes from Paris and London, which would have been unattainable luxuries for the working-class flapper. Jill Matthews characterises the *Home's* Sydney audience as 'the upper echelons of [the city's] society', comprising approximately 10 per cent of the population.³⁴ The *Home* was careful to differentiate itself and its audience from the flapper. Thus, an article about 'How the Movies Influence Fashion' condescendingly described the 'flapper' as a girl whom the movies taught to 'build up her hair in the Pickford manner'.³⁵ The satirical tone of this piece distinguished the lower-class flapper from the affluent and always fashionable reader of the *Home*.

31 Barbara Cameron, 'The Flappers and the Feminists: A Study of Women's Emancipation in the 1920s', in *Worth Her Salt: Women at Work in Australia*, ed. Margaret Bevege, Margaret James and Carmel Shute (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1982), 259.

32 Liz Conor, *The Spectacular Modern Woman: Feminine Visibility in the 1920s* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), 209–10.

33 On the use of the word 'jazz' to mean both the musical style and a form of dance see Katharine Brisbane, ed., *Entertaining Australia: An Illustrated History* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1991), 181. While Bruce Johnson, *The Inaudible Music: Jazz, Gender and Australian Modernity* (Sydney: Currency Press, 2000), has argued that jazz music exhibited some of the formal properties of 'high' modernist music of the period, such as dissonance, weakening of tonality and musical coloration, jazz was nevertheless largely considered to be a popular form of musical expression.

34 Matthews, *Dance Hall & Picture Palace*, 36.

35 'How the Movies Influence Fashion', *Home*, February 1920, 18. This refers to Mary Pickford, a Canadian-born American silent movie star who, at the height of her popularity during the 1920s, was a major influence on women's fashions, and most notably on their hair. See Cristel Schmidt, 'Crown of Glory: The Rise and Fall of the Mary Pickford Curls', in *Mary Pickford: Queen of the Movies*, ed. Cristel Schmidt (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 169–84.

The *Home's* modernity was reserved for a certain upper-middle-class urban woman, who had the leisure to travel, dress fashionably and expensively, and to devote herself to the latest literary and artistic culture. The ambiguities of this affluent modernity are evident in Proctor's August 1925 cover, which depicted a modern woman driving a car alongside her Victorian counterpart in a horse-drawn carriage (see Figure 1).³⁶ The cover contrasted the life of the emancipated modern woman and the restricted world of the nineteenth-century woman. The modern woman is wearing fashionable 'boyish' clothes, and stands confidently with a cigarette insouciantly raised. By way of contrast, the Victorian woman's plumed bonnet, parasol and impractical skirts make her appear modest and retiring. The vignette in the background highlights the technological progress of the 1920s, as cars became an increasingly common form of transport.³⁷ For the *Home's* well-to-do female audience, driving one's own car represented the emancipatory power of modern technology to liberate women from the constraints of the Victorian era.³⁸ Yet, while car prices dropped rapidly during this period, owning a vehicle remained impossible for most Australians.³⁹ The cover thus depicted a modernity that would have been available to only a limited group. Moreover, Proctor's image does not straightforwardly depict the triumph of the modern woman over her old-fashioned counterpart, as some critics have suggested.⁴⁰ The visual prominence of the nineteenth-century woman demonstrates Proctor's fascination with the Victorian past.⁴¹ This double vision is replicated in the pages of the *Home*, which was just as interested in looking back to the past as it was in advocating for the modern. The same edition of the *Home* included a spread of 'Belles of Yesteryear', alongside fashion plates depicting the modern woman.⁴² Hence, the *Home* was not simply interested in championing modernity, and the modern woman, at the expense of the past.

36 Thea Proctor, cover design, *Home*, August 1925. See Figure 1.

37 'Australia's Motor Vehicle Fleet since the 1920s', *Year Book Australia 2001*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 25 January 2001, www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/39F42D529B84BEA2CA2569DE0028B410?Open, accessed 28 May 2020.

38 Georgine Clarsen, *Eat My Dust: Early Women Motorists* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 106–07.

39 Frank Bongiorno, 'Search for a Solution, 1923–39', in *The Cambridge History of Australia: Volume 2: The Commonwealth of Australia*, ed. Alison Bashford and Stuart Macintyre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 68, doi.org/10.1017/CHO9781107445758.034.

40 Mackay, 'Almost Dancing', 33–34.

41 Engledow, 'The World of Thea Proctor', 43.

42 'Belles of Yesteryear', *Home*, August 1925, 56D.



Figure 1: Thea Proctor, Cover Design, *Home*, August 1925.

If Thea Proctor depicted the stylish modern woman admiringly, even with reservations, other *Home* covers more openly satirised contemporary women's attempts to enjoy life outside the domestic sphere. Thus, the cover of the March 1927 edition featured a caricature by Victoria (Vic) Cowdroy of a society woman going hunting (see Figure 2).⁴³ Cowdroy was known for her satirical cartoons, which appeared in *Aussie*, the *Bulletin* and *Man*.⁴⁴ Here she depicts the modern woman out hunting, satirising women who enjoy this unfeminine pursuit. The woman is presented as ridiculous and almost maniacal in her intense concentration as she strides along purposefully. The image derives much of its humour from the juxtaposition of the woman's stereotypically feminine and masculine qualities. Thus, she is depicted wearing rouge, pearls, heeled shoes and an impractical hat, with a poodle by her side, yet, at the same time, she carries a double-barrelled shotgun and wears plus fours, a coat and a wide pouched belt containing ammunition. The contrast between her feminine appearance and masculine activity suggests the incongruity of a woman attempting to usurp a man's position in this intensely macho sport.

The *Home's* art criticism was equally eager to police the borders of acceptable femininity, focusing on the 'feminine' and 'decorative' aspects of female artists' work. A June 1922 interview with Thea Proctor concentrated exclusively on her opinions about fashion, architecture and interior decoration.⁴⁵ The reduction of Proctor's artistic talent to the sartorial reflects the *Home's* condescending attitude towards female artists, whose work was repeatedly not accorded the same respect as that of male artists. The *Home* described Proctor's appearance at the 1927 Sydney Artists' Ball as 'exactly as if she had stepped from one of her own silken fans', a comment that served to reinforce this condescension towards women artists (see Figure 3).⁴⁶

43 Vic Cowdroy, Cover Design, *Home*, March 1927. See Figure 2.

44 Joan Kerr, 'Victoria Ethel Cowdroy', in *Heritage: The National Women's Art Book*, ed. Joan Kerr (Roseville East, NSW: Art and Australia, distributed by Craftsman House, 1995), 334–35.

45 J. G. Lister, 'Australians Must Develop Taste Says Miss Thea Proctor', *Home*, June 1922, 37–38.

46 'Sydney S'Amuse', *Home*, October 1927, 28. See Figure 3.

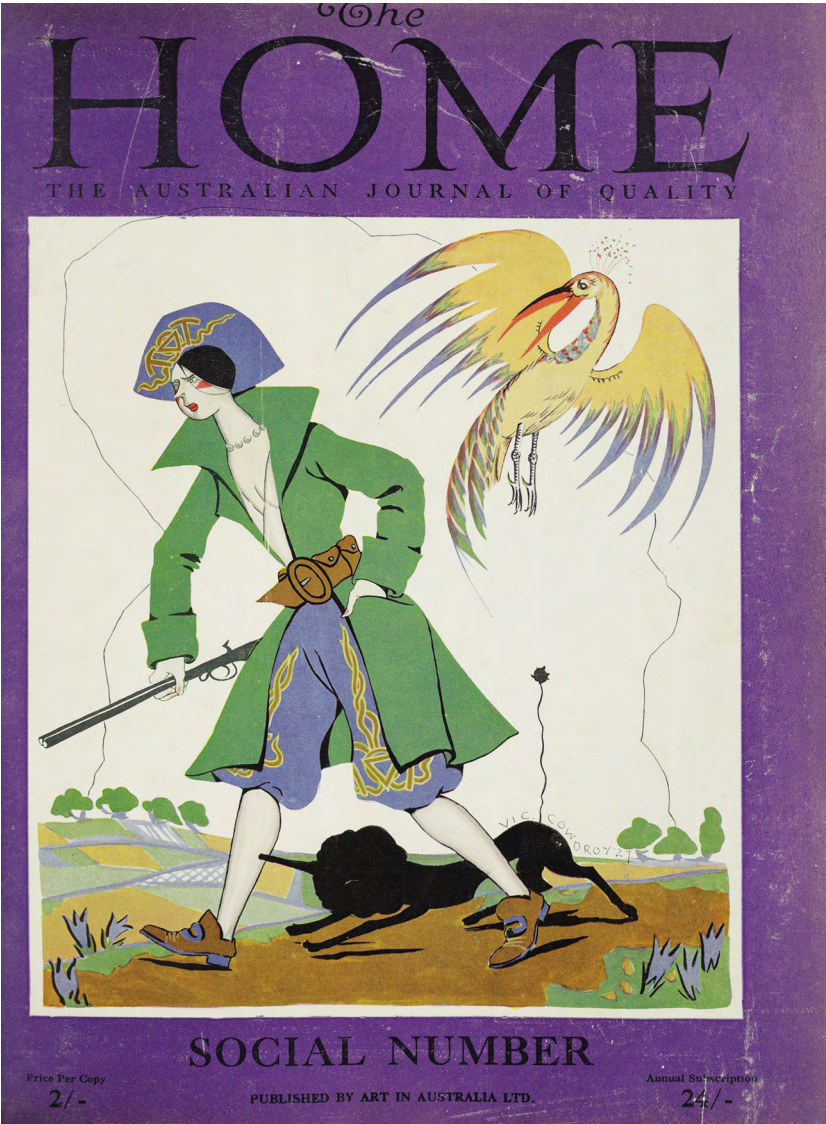


Figure 2: Vic Cowdroy, Cover Design, *Home*, March 1927.



Figure 3: 'Cubist Materials at the Salon d'Automne', *Home*, February 1925, 24.

The *Home's* art critics were often conservative in their tastes, denigrating women's art as decorative and privileging the more stereotypically 'masculine' landscape genre.⁴⁷ In 1926, the *Home* reproduced Elioth Gruner's 'Serpentine Hill' and extolled him as 'one of Australia's foremost landscape painters'.⁴⁸ By way of contrast, when the *Home* reported on Sonia Delaunay's cubist fabrics shown at the 1925 Paris 'Exposition des Arts Décoratifs', the magazine paid more attention to the 'feminine' and decorative qualities of the fabric than to their innovative Orphic cubist design.⁴⁹ While Helen Topliss has argued that this focus on Delaunay's work is a positive example of the *Home's* promotion of artistic modernism,

47 Jeanette Hoorn, 'Women Make Modernism: Contesting Masculinist Art Criticism', in *Strange Women: Essays in Art and Gender*, ed. Jeanette Hoorn (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994), 21–25.

48 Elioth Gruner, 'Serpentine Hill', *Home*, July 1926, 12.

49 'Cubist Materials at the Salon d'Automne', *Home*, February 1925, 24.

it is important to note the magazine's reductive focus on the ornamental over the more seriously artistic.⁵⁰ Some scholars maintain that women's involvement in the less highly valued decorative arts enabled them to introduce to Australia a form of modernism that would have been rejected in the 'high arts' such as painting.⁵¹ Yet, the *Home's* privileging of the decorative over the artistic rather demonstrates the limitations of the magazine's promotion of modernism.

If the *Home* was often disapproving of modern art, it took an equally hostile approach towards modernist literature. Despite the efforts of critic and author Ethel Anderson, most other contributors to the magazine were either bemused about, or contemptuous of, modern literature and its female practitioners. Anderson embarked on a single-handed attempt to advocate for modern literature, and included approving references to modernist authors in her regular columns.⁵² She extolled modern, stream of consciousness, 'subjective prose', appropriated lines from Gertrude Stein and included quotations from the modernist poetry of T. S. Eliot in her articles.⁵³ Yet, other contributors to the *Home* did not share Anderson's enthusiasm for the literary avant-garde. Instead, they remained bewildered by modern literature, and condemned what they did not fully understand.

Much of this ridicule was directed against female exemplars of modernism, as modern literature, like modern art, was denigrated for its perceived femininity. Far from quoting Stein appreciatively as Anderson had done, Jean Curlewis, a regular book reviewer for the *Home*, was baffled at the inclusion of a story by Stein in the 1926 edition of the annual short story anthology *Georgian Stories*. Curlewis was evidently perplexed at Stein's appearance in this typically conservative anthology, wondering whether the story was 'a joke' like those of 'cubist poets' who have 'put over' similar tricks on unsuspecting editors.⁵⁴ Curlewis exclaimed irritably

50 Topliss, *Modernism and Feminism*, 106.

51 Jordan, 'Designing Women', 28–37; Pam James, "'No Thank You, but Do You Have Any Painted Fan Decorations?': Modernist Women Artists and the Gatekeepers of Culture', in *Wallflowers and Witches: Women and Culture in Australia 1910–1945*, ed. Maryanne Dever (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1994), 63–72.

52 Jane E. Hunt, 'The "Intrusion of Women Painters": Ethel Anderson, Modern Art and Gendered Modernities in Interwar Sydney, Australia', *Women's History Review* 21, no. 2 (2012): 171–88, doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2012.657885.

53 Ethel Anderson, 'Certain Things Considered', *Home*, September 1927, 81; Ethel Anderson, 'Certain Things Considered', *Home*, November 1927, 30; Ethel Anderson, 'The Archibald Prize', *Home*, March 1930, 26.

54 Jean Curlewis, 'A Bundle of Books', *Home*, January 1927, 44; Karen Leick, *Gertrude Stein and the Making of an American Celebrity* (New York and London: Routledge, 2009), 112–13.

that 'I wish an editorial note had been attached to this story explaining it', and quoted in bewilderment various sentences from Stein's work as examples of her 'unintelligible' style. Writing about the literary magazine *Triad*, Carter describes a contemporary understanding of modernism 'as the mere outpourings of the subconscious without the "hard work" of literary craft'.⁵⁵ The *Home* here registers a similar critique of the perceived superficiality of modernism, a critique that, in this case, is gendered.

If Curlewis was disconcerted by her contact with the literary avant-garde, Vivian Crockett's mock-imagist poem provided a more vicious condemnation of female literary modernism. Crockett's poem was dedicated 'with apologies to Amy Lowell', and its absurd lack of subject matter and ludicrously disjointed style derided the work of the American imagist poet.⁵⁶ Although it could be argued that Crockett must have been relying on a certain familiarity with imagism for his joke to land, his poem failed to pay the close attention to a single image that was the distinctive feature of imagist poetry. Crockett portrayed the female modernist poet as frigid and unable to find romance, drawing attention to her 'single mattress', yet at the same time sexualising her by voyeuristically inviting the reader to imagine her 'lying' on the mattress 'wearing pyjamas'.⁵⁷ This prurient male interest in a female poet's sleeping habits suggests a type of salacious humour more commonly associated with the *Bulletin* than with a putative women's magazine like the *Home*. Hence, such an objectification of the female poet feminises the modernist literary form in order to denigrate it.

The *Home* contained many more continuities with contemporary Australian masculine parochial publications than has been previously realised. Docker's bald pronouncement that 'the *Home* was pro-feminist' needs to be considerably qualified.⁵⁸ While the *Home* was to some extent supportive of women's careers and lives outside the domestic sphere, it also contained a considerable body of masculinist literature, which either ignored women's concerns, or denigrated and ridiculed them. This male-

55 David Carter, 'Literary, but Not Too Literary; Joyous, but Not Jazzy: *Triad* Magazine, Antipodean Modernity and the Middlebrow', *Modernism/Modernity* 25, no. 2 (2018): 261, doi.org/10.1353/mod.2018.0018.

56 Vivian Crockett, 'With Apologies: To Amy Lowell, Imagist', *Home*, March 1923, 36.

57 The presentation of Lowell as frigid could be linked to the period's hostility to the spinster—or women perceived to be spinsters. See Sheila Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies: Feminism and Sexuality, 1880–1930* (London: Pandora Press, 1985).

58 Docker, 'Feminism, Modernism, and Orientalism in the *Home*', 120.

orientated perspective is perhaps unsurprising since the *Home's* editors and directors were all male, and women were only ever employed as fashion editors or in the ancillary position of subeditor.⁵⁹ Many of the journalists and authors writing for the *Home* also published in traditionally ultra-masculinist periodicals such as the *Bulletin*, *Lone Hand*, *Vision* and *Aussie*.⁶⁰ While Robert Holden has maintained that the *Home* constructed an alternative, feminine national identity, the magazine in fact reproduced, far more often than it repudiated, contemporary masculine, parochial discourse.⁶¹ The Haggardian tale, 'Told in the Clubhouse', by G. C. Dixon, published in August 1925, is one example of the *Home's* indifference to women's experiences.⁶² In this imperial adventure story, two white men, engaged on a game hunt in Uganda, stumble upon another white man who challenges them to a murderous game of golf—the losers being eaten by a cannibal tribe of 'native' Africans. The story includes not a single female character, and the plot is largely incomprehensible to those without knowledge of the rules of golf. At a time when women faced considerable discrimination at golf clubs—being forced to play only when it would not inconvenience the male players, and being refused full club membership—the intended audience of this golfing story would surely have been men.⁶³ Placing the game of golf in the masculine world of the colonial frontier completes the exclusion of women. In the story, golf and 'big game hunting' are in some sense interchangeable—the protagonist states that he 'decided to have a rest from golf and go big game shooting'.⁶⁴ The hyper-masculinity of this tale promotes a sense of male homosocial camaraderie that utterly excludes women. Here, the *Home* contributes to traditional notions of gendered behaviour, which failed to allow for the advances of modernity.

If Dixon's tale presented a fantasy of a world without women, then Montague Grover's 'Spoils to the Victor' activated contemporary anxieties about the dangers of modern women encroaching on traditionally male-dominated domains. Grover's satirical drama ostensibly takes place in

59 Underhill, *Making Australian Art*, 194.

60 Examples of men who wrote for these publications as well as for the *Home* include, G. C. (Campbell) Dixon, Frank Middlemiss, Montague Grover, Vivian Crockett and Ernest O'Ferrall.

61 Holden, *Cover Up*, 97–99.

62 G. C. Dixon, 'Told In the Clubhouse', *Home*, August 1925, 22–23.

63 June Senyard, 'The Imagined Golf Course: Gender Representations and Australian Golf', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 15, no. 2 (August 1998), 165, doi.org/10.1080/09523369808714034; Brian Stoddart, 'Golf', in *Sport in Australia: A Social History*, ed. Wray Vamplew and Brian Stoddart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 86.

64 Dixon, 'Told In the Clubhouse', 23.

1273 BC in what is now Turkey, and dramatises a conflict between female warrior Amazons and male Lycian soldiers.⁶⁵ Grover was a journalist, prolific playwright and author of short stories, who wrote extensively for the nationalistic magazines, the *Bulletin* and the *Lone Hand*.⁶⁶ His use of comic anachronism here allows him to satirise contemporary culture, and especially the perceived feminisation of the public sphere, and of professional life. Published in 1923, only five years after the end of World War I (WWI), Grover imagines women assuming military command, allowing him to comment on their increasing participation in the workforce. WWI had opened up new employment opportunities for women in banks, insurance offices, the railways and the public service.⁶⁷ But, after the war, there was a widespread backlash against such employment, as it was feared that women's success in these traditionally masculine jobs would deprive returned servicemen of work.⁶⁸ Grover's denigration of female capabilities can be read as a response to fears of modern women's putative dominance over men in professional, and personal, life. Grover ridicules Iasis, the commander of the Amazons, as a comically self-important and disagreeable figure, who is described as a 'nasty cat', and as 'straining very hard to maintain her dignity' when she faces the 'amused tolerance' of her male counterparts.⁶⁹ By contrast with Iasis, who is barely able to control her flighty female subordinates, the male characters display valorous and martial abilities. The commander of the Lycian Army, Bellerophon, heroically defeats the Chimæra, a mythical, winged creature with fire-breathing heads. Bellerophon is mounted on the winged horse Pegasus, a metaphorical fighter plane, and wages a daring air battle against his foe, which Grover describes in a breathlessly admiring narration. While Bellerophon is allowed his moment of genuine heroic victory, the female characters' physical prowess is constantly undermined. Iasis manages to disarm her opponent, but she succumbs to his flattery and proposals of a relationship, demonstrating that, for Grover, women will choose love over work. Grover's attitude towards women is made clear in the final scene, in which each of the Amazons is shown not to be fighting their male opponents, but rather

65 Montague Grover, 'Spoils to the Victor', *Home*, March 1923, 57–72.

66 Sally O'Neill, 'Grover, Montague MacGregor (Monty) (1870–1943)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, accessed 1 July 2020, adb.anu.edu.au/biography/grover-montague-macgregor-monty-6500/text11147.

67 Fox and Lake, *Australians at Work*, 144.

68 Cameron, 'The Flappers and the Feminists', 265.

69 Grover, 'Spoils to the Victor', 62.

‘in a close embrace’ with a Lycian soldier.⁷⁰ Hence, Grover’s drama manifests a reactionary attitude towards modern women’s employment, as he argues that women will ultimately return to their ‘natural’ position of subordination to men.

Indeed, while the *Home* supported a few women’s careers, it remained largely ambivalent about the modern women who worked outside the domestic sphere. The magazine ignored feminist debates about women’s right to work, equal pay and economic independence.⁷¹ Feminists active during the period, such as Rose Scott and Jessie Street, advocated for women to be protected from violent, abusive and controlling men. They worked for the independence of married women, and argued for the age of consent to be raised and for the rights of mothers.⁷² Recognising that working-class women struggled to secure paid employment and to care for their children, feminists in the labour movement campaigned for a state-sponsored income for mothers, to save them from reliance on potentially abusive men.⁷³ Such political feminism was far from the concerns of readers of the *Home*.

While feminists of the period fought for women’s right to work and to control their own income, the *Home*’s well-to-do female audience did not so much require a career as a ‘remunerative hobby’, as one article described it.⁷⁴ When the *Home*’s genteel upper-middle-class readership found work, they largely did so not out of necessity but through a ‘spirit of self-reliance’. Topliss claims that the *Home* ‘celebrated the achievements of women in all fields’ and, as I have noted above, Docker has described the magazine as explicitly ‘pro-feminist’. Yet, I argue that it is a mistake to view the publication as in any way aligning itself with feminist movements of the period.⁷⁵ Instead, the magazine largely focused its attention on society women, and only championed a small number of women engaged in socially sanctioned literary or artistic careers. For example, an August 1925 selection of portraits of ‘notable women’ now ‘resident abroad’

70 Grover, ‘Spoils to the Victor’, 72.

71 Edna Ryan and Anne Conlon, *Gentle Invaders: Australian Women at Work* (Ringwood, Melbourne: Penguin, 1989), 121; Marilyn Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1999), 97–109.

72 Lake, *Getting Equal*, 56–57.

73 Lake, *Getting Equal*, 74–75.

74 ‘The Career and the Remunerative Hobby for the Australian Girl’, *Home*, June 1924, 78.

75 Topliss, *Modernism and Feminism*, 50; Docker, ‘Feminism, Modernism, and Orientalism in the *Home*’, 120.

included the painter Bess Norris and actress Marie Ney, but also Mrs Dudley Coats, described simply as 'the wife of Captain Dudley Coats', and 'H.H. the Rani of Pudukota, the beautiful wife of H.H. the Rajah of Pudukota, who was well known as Miss Mollie Fink, of Melbourne'.⁷⁶

In contrast with these lavish 'society' photographs in pride of place near the front of the magazine, an article about the 'motor mechanic and chauffeuse' Alice Anderson was relegated to the rear of the publication (see Figure 4).⁷⁷ The profile of Anderson highlighted her transgression of feminine propriety. The article drew attention to Anderson's 'boyish-looking figure', her 'dungarees', her 'cropped hair' and the 'khaki coats and breeches' that her employees wore.⁷⁸ Yet the article condescendingly referred to Anderson as a 'very feminine person' and described her garage assistants as 'girls', not women, adding that they made 'attractive and reliable chauffeuses'.⁷⁹ This insistence on the feminine form of 'chauffeur', and on the maintenance of appropriate standards of feminine beauty, shows that women adopting male fashions and working in a traditionally masculine profession activated fears about 'modern' women rejecting conventional womanhood. While Lucy Chesser has found that women's cross-dressing in the 1920s was not associated with potential homosexuality, rumours were rife about lesbianism at Anderson's garage.⁸⁰ While it is impossible to substantiate such claims, the persistence of reports of this kind speaks to contemporary anxieties about the suspect 'feminine masculinity' of these women mechanics.⁸¹ By questioning the propriety of Anderson's masculine dress, the *Home* demonstrated its lack of tolerance for deviation from traditionally gendered norms of behaviour, and hence its limited espousal of the changing social world of modernity.

76 'London Portraits', *Home*, December 1920, 24.

77 'The Woman Who Does', *Home*, December 1920, 74.

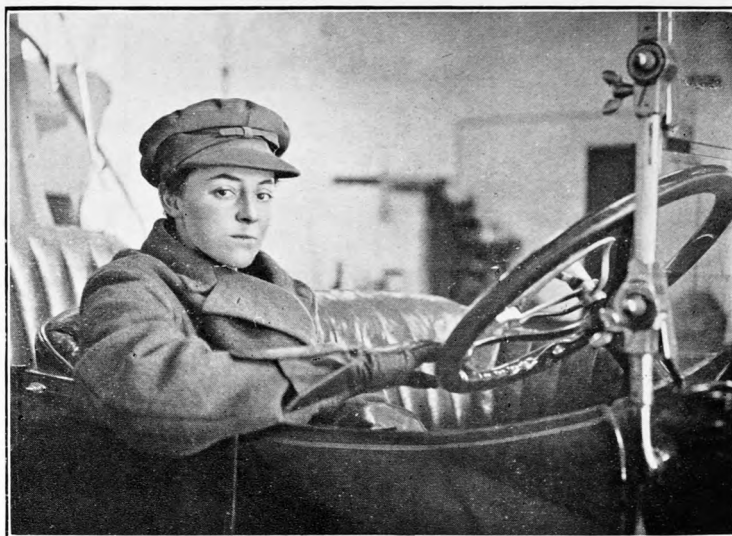
78 'The Woman Who Does', 74; 'Miss Alice Anderson', *Home*, December 1920, 74, photograph. See Figure 4.

79 Loretta Smith, *A Spanner in the Works: The Extraordinary Story of Alice Anderson and Australia's First All-Girl Garage* (Sydney: Hachette Australia, 2019), 186–87.

80 Lucy Chesser, *Parting with My Sex: Cross-Dressing, Inversion and Sexuality in Australian Cultural Life* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2008), 309–11.

81 Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, 116–17.

The Woman Who Does



MISS ALICE ANDERSON :
Motor Mechanic and Chauffeuse, Melbourne.

Figure 4: 'Miss Alice Anderson', *Home*, December 1920, 74.

The *Home* magazine both reflected and challenged Australian modernity of the 1920s. While critics have argued that the *Home* was a major promoter of modernism, the magazine was in fact ambivalent about, and sometimes antagonistic towards, artistic and literary modernism. The *Home* was especially wary of women's involvement in these avant-garde movements, and often sought to ridicule or denigrate women's creative achievements. Moreover, the *Home* displayed considerable anxiety about modern women taking on roles outside the domestic sphere, and especially about women holding traditionally male-dominated jobs. While the *Home* championed the careers of a small number of women artists and writers, it did not feel the need to advocate for women's economic independence. Instead, it worried about working women transgressing the boundaries of feminine decorum. These reactionary elements of the *Home* demonstrate that, for all its putative desire to 'touch [on] whatever seems most modern', the *Home*'s response to modernity was limited, conservative and often hostile.⁸²

82 Sydney Ure Smith, 'The Home: How It Proposes To Be Of Service To You', *Home*, February 1920, 3.

Harnessing the Past for Present Purposes: Self-Reflexivity in Researching and Teaching Western Australian Gay History

Bri McKenzie
Curtin University

Abstract: *Contemporary historians and educators have a responsibility to highlight marginalised voices in their research and teaching work. The past experiences of gay and lesbian Australians is one area of historical study that should thus be further explored and discussed in undergraduate history courses. Yet, the historical research process must always be informed by a self-reflexive questioning of the role of contemporary discourses in the analysis of past events. This article describes some of the challenges that arise when teaching-focused researchers aim both to highlight new historical knowledge and address the silencing of marginalised voices in the classroom. An exploration of a 1931 Western Australian 'unnatural offence' case initially appeared to highlight some historically unique characteristics and apparently fitted neatly into contemporary discourses around the historical marginalisation and victimisation of gay men. However, the case threw up many questions about the role of the researcher in historical research and reinforced the relevance of self-reflexive practice for historians. Harnessing the past for present purposes has many pitfalls but also some unexpected educative benefits.*

Australia's contemporary social context has demanded a re-evaluation of our relationship to gay and lesbian history. Interest in the 40th anniversary of the first Australian Mardi Gras march in 1978 along with the success of the marriage equality campaign have led to a growing awareness around queer issues.¹ With the inevitable backlash that comes

1 Some recent publications on contemporary gay history include Dino Hodge ed., *Colouring the Rainbow: Black Queer and Trans Perspectives* (Mile End: Wakefield Press, 2015); Robert Reynolds and Shirleene Robinson, *Gay & Lesbian, Then & Now: Australian Stories from a Social Revolution* (Carlton: Black Inc., 2016); Alex Greenwhich and Shirleene Robinson, *Yes Yes Yes: Australia's Journey to Marriage Equality* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2018); Noah Riseman, Shirleene Robinson and Graham Willett, *Serving in Silence: Australian LGBT Servicemen and Women* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2018).

with such social progress, it has become more pressing for historians to seek out and represent queer stories from the past or risk the development of a new era of silencing. At the same time, contemporary discourses in education emphasise the importance of the inclusion of marginalised voices. Nowhere is this more apparent than in recent, international efforts towards curriculum 'queering' at primary and secondary school level.² As social justice educators Jeffry D. Zacko-Smith and G. Pritchly Smith suggest:

Educators must ... accept their role as mentors who help to define reality for those they are educating, and they must commit to redefining that reality as dictated by demands for social justice and equality.³

Within this discourse, the emphasis remains on educators to bring about important and significant shifts in relation to how they choose to represent historically marginalised groups to students. In the tertiary context, there is much that can be done by researchers, lecturers and tutors to address the entrenched marginalisation of queer voices.

My own efforts to reimagine the stories of gay men in 1930s Western Australia (WA) formed part of an overarching pedagogical intention to redress the traditional silencing of gay histories and identities in my teaching work. As part of my teaching practice, informed by my specific research interests, I sought to present positive alternative stories of homosexual subcultures in the past within a specific (and neglected) geographical and temporal context. The initial results of this project, however, did not assist me in my efforts to redress the historical silencing and misrepresentation of gay men. Instead, the outcomes of the study necessitated the ongoing examination of my own teaching and research processes through a deeper engagement with self-reflexive practice.

During my research I examined a number of newspaper reports on 'unnatural offence' cases that occurred in Perth during the 1930s. The inclusion of paedophilia, bestiality and homosexual acts under the one

2 See, for example, S. J. Miller, *Teaching, Affirming, and Recognizing Trans and Gender Creative Youth: A Queer Literacy Framework* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56766-6; Nelson M. Rodriguez and William Pinar, eds, *Queering Straight Teachers: Discourse and Identity in Education* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007); William Pinar, 'Queer Theory in Education', *Journal of Homosexuality* 45, no. 2–4 (2003): 357–60, doi.org/10.1300/J082v45n02_21.

3 Jeffry D. Zacko-Smith and G. Pritchly Smith, 'Recognizing and Utilizing Queer Pedagogy', *Multicultural Education*, (Fall 2010): 2–9.

broad banner of ‘unnatural offence’ serves to highlight the discrimination faced by gay men at this time. Of the cases I identified, one in particular stood out: the case of Keith Edwin Gibson, a bank messenger aged 35. Gibson was arrested by Perth police in January 1931 and charged with having ‘carnal knowledge’ of Clarence George Edward Cummings, then aged 16.⁴ Clarence and Keith had been having sex with each other since early December 1930, but the younger man’s willingness to continue the relationship was brought into question when he reported Keith to the police roughly one month later. At trial, however, Clarence retracted his accusation under cross-examination, accusing the police of having coerced him into pointing the finger at Keith. Keith was discharged while Clarence was charged with perjury and with having allowed an ‘unnatural act’ to be performed on him. He was later sent to the Children’s Court.⁵ At this second trial, Clarence subsequently retracted his accusations against police and revealed that Keith had pressured him to withdraw his initial allegations. Clarence’s evidence indicated that he felt used by Keith and that the sexual relationship between them had been unwanted.

This case study initially appeared to highlight the classic demonisation and marginalisation of a consensual sexual relationship between two men, but the truth of the case ultimately worked to undermine and problematise my approach to the research. My failed attempt to harness the past for present purposes necessitated self-reflexive analysis of my role as researcher and teacher. Through this process I was able to develop an unexpected new component to my teaching of third-year history students who were themselves engaged in their first major research projects.

In this paper I will argue for the importance of self-reflexivity in teaching practice at tertiary level within the specific context of the discipline of history. Through an analysis of the Gibson ‘unnatural offence’ case, I will explore some of the possibilities for self-reflexive practice in history teaching. First, the paper discusses current literature on self-reflexivity and its importance to history research and teaching. I follow this with a brief discussion of the historical context of the Gibson case and some commentary on primary sources. I then analyse the case study itself and

4 See, for example, *Police Gazette*, 18 February 1931, 95; *Police Gazette*, 25 March 1931, 165. Accessed through Battye Library, State Library of Western Australia (SLWA). See also ‘March Criminal Sessions’, *Mirror*, 28 February 1931, 3.

5 ‘Perjury Charge. Youth Under Arrest’, *Sunday Times*, 29 March 1931, 2; ‘Boy Charged with Perjury’, *West Australian*, 27 March 1931, 16.

this is followed by a discussion of how the circumstances of the case, along with my intentions for the research, highlighted the importance and application of self-reflexivity in my teaching work.

Self-Reflexivity in Historical Research and Teaching

Social science researchers have long been aware of the way they influence their own interpretations of seemingly 'objective' events.⁶ Moreover, as professional studies specialist and academic Donald E. Hall in his book *The Academic Self: An Owners Manual* highlights, contemporary academics working in tertiary settings are uniquely trained to integrate self-reflexive practice into their research and writing. As Hall notes:

Living in the late-modern age, and trained as skilled critical readers, we academics in particular have the capacity and the professional skills to live with a critical (self-) consciousness, to reflect critically upon self-reflexivity, and to use always our professional talents to integrate our theories and our practices.⁷

The relevance of self-reflexivity and the inclusion of the self as both researcher and object of research has also been identified as integral to understanding the historical research and writing process. That historical writing is predicated on the selection, construction and interpretation of historical sources by subjective actors has been well established.⁸ More recently this has been connected to the sociological concept of self-reflexivity. As contemporary historical theorists Alun Munslow and Robert A. Rosenstone have suggested, 'self-reflexivity is also the appreciation that history is a literary-creative act even when the aim might seem to be reconstruction. All reconstructions are, of course, constructions.'⁹

6 See, for example, S. Reinharz, 'Who Am I? The Need for a Variety of Selves in the Field', in *Reflexivity and VOICE*, ed. R. Herz (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997), 3–20.

7 Donald E. Hall, *The Academic Self: An Owner's Manual* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2002), 5.

8 See, for example, Hayden White, 'Interpretation in History', in *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, ed. Hayden White (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986), 51–79.

9 Alun Munslow and Robert A. Rosenstone, 'Part I: Self-Reflexive', in *Experiments in Rethinking History*, ed. Alun Munslow and Robert A. Rosenstone (New York: Routledge, 2004), 14.

In 'Reflexivity and the Self-Line', historian Ann McGrath asks the reader: 'As well as self-reflexivity, do we have a special obligation to share the journey of scholarship, to be reflexive about the research and writing process?'¹⁰ Such reflections are significant for those of us teaching history and research skills to students. It could be argued that, as teaching academics, it is incumbent upon us to share our research successes and failures with students in an effort to better highlight common pitfalls. Finding the 'self-line' should be a priority for researchers. As teachers of history who aim to share our research skills, we should challenge ourselves to throw off our 'historian's disguise' and engage with our own roles in historical interpretation and representation.¹¹

Similarly, in their article 'Self-Study in Teaching and Teacher Development: A Call to Action', education scholars Kathleen Pithouse, Claudia Mitchell and Sandra Weber emphasise the importance of self-reflexivity in teaching practice. Teaching, in tertiary contexts as well as in others, is potentially messy and unpredictable.¹² Indeed, we can see the unpredictability of both teaching and research as one of the factors that necessitates self-reflexivity in both contexts. In undertaking research into homosexual subcultures and encountering unexpected challenges that required ongoing self-reflexivity in both the teaching and research context, I was engaging in what Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber see as one of the key aspects of self-study in teaching. In this context, 'mucking about, making mistakes, changing one's mind are not viewed as shameful, but rather as learning opportunities that can provoke creative solutions'.¹³ The contradictory results of my research into the Gibson 'unnatural offence' case thus became an opportunity to engage a 'creative solution', one that enabled me to communicate to students the importance of the researcher as an active agent of historical interpretation.

There is also an active connection between self-reflexive practice and queer theoretical and pedagogical approaches. Because queer theory emerged both from and in resistance to existing Western intellectual traditions, it is necessary for queer theoretical approaches to address the inherent

10 Ann McGrath, 'Reflexivity and the Self-Line', in *Writing Histories: Imagination and Narration*, ed. Ann Curthoys and Ann McGrath (Clayton: Monash University Press, 2009), 07.9.

11 McGrath, 'Reflexivity and the Self-Line', 07.10.

12 Kathleen Pithouse, Claudia Mitchell and Sandra Weber, 'Self-Study in Teaching and Teacher Development: A Call to Action', *Educational Action Research* 17, no. 1 (2009): 46, doi.org/10.1080/09650790802667444.

13 Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber, 'Self-Study', 47.

inequalities embodied in these dominant narratives.¹⁴ The un-reflexive nature of dominant narratives is one factor that feeds inherent inequality. As such, queer theoretical approaches must ensure they engage with self-reflexivity in order to remain relevant. As Heather Sykes has identified:

Queer theory has always had to monitor if, and how, it is producing fixed, exclusionary or domesticated ways of thinking about non-normative sexualities and genders. Like feminist research, queer research has to be critically self-reflexive about how genders and sexualities are formed within local contexts and geopolitical relations of power.¹⁵

Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber also emphasise the links between self-study in teaching and social action. Specifically, because teaching and research alter us and necessitate change and growth, they can be radically transformative.¹⁶ As such, self-reflexivity can be understood as not only an essential aspect of our research and teaching work in history generally, but also a particularly important practice in the space of queer history, where our pedagogical approaches should seek to engage with the needs of social justice.

The Representation and Historiography of Queer Subcultures

There has been a steady stream of historical and sociological research interest in the experiences of gays and lesbians in Australia since the 1990s, some of it produced by longstanding activists for LGBTQI+ rights.¹⁷ However, very few publications have dealt with the Western Australian history of

14 Heather Sykes, 'Un-Settling Sex: Researcher Self-reflexivity, Queer Theory and Settler Colonial Studies', *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health* 6, no. 4 (2014): 584, doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2014.893899.

15 Sykes, 'Un-Settling Sex', 584.

16 Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber, 'Self-Study', 48.

17 See, for example, Robert Aldrich and Garry Wotherspoon, eds, *Gay and Lesbian Perspectives IV: Studies in Australian Culture* (Sydney: University of Sydney, 1998); David L. Phillips and Graham Willett, eds, *Australia's Homosexual Histories: Gay and Lesbian Perspectives V* (Sydney: Australian Centre for Lesbian and Gay Research, 2000); Graham Willett, *Living Out Loud: A History of Gay and Lesbian Activism in Australia* (St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 2000); Yorick Smaal and Graham Willett, eds, *Out Here: Gay and Lesbian Perspectives VI* (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2011); Yorick Smaal and Graham Willett, eds, *Intimacy, Violence and Activism: Gay and Lesbian Perspectives on Australasian History and Society* (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2013).

homosexual subcultures and most concentrate on the period after 1945.¹⁸ Such research has highlighted the need for further explorations of the complexity of gay lives in the past and adds to contemporary efforts to seek out positive stories of resilience in the face of persecution. Given the discriminatory and limited nature of past interpretations of homosexuality in Australia generally, and the fact that such discrimination is ongoing, there is also an argument for the educational importance of bringing marginalised narratives into contemporary curricula at tertiary level. Thus my own work took on a dual approach in that I sought both to uncover stories that might add to historical knowledge of homosexuality in 1930s Perth while simultaneously seeking out positive alternative stories of homosexual subcultures that I could communicate to my students.

Because of the traditional neglect of Western Australian queer history as well as the paucity of source material, little is known about attitudes to homosexuality in the state before the 1960s. Sex between men was illegal in WA until December 1989 and could be punished by a custodial sentence of up to 12 years.¹⁹ Importantly, sex between women was never criminalised and this, somewhat ironically, has led to a relative paucity of sources on lesbianism in Australia before the 1960s.²⁰

General histories of sexuality in Australia tell us that, for much of the twentieth century, there was a culture of silence around homosexuality.²¹ In this period, societal opinions on gays and lesbians were partially generated from the limited analyses of homosexuality produced by European medical and scientific authorities. This was in keeping with the representation of homosexuality as a disease or form of mental disorder that necessitated

18 The notable exceptions to this include Bruce Baskerville, ‘“Agreed to Without Debate”: Silencing Sodomy in Colonial Western Australia’, in *Gay and Lesbian Perspectives IV: Studies in Australian Culture*, ed. Robert Aldrich and Garry Wotherspoon (Sydney: University of Sydney, 1998), 95–115; Reece Plunkett, ‘Making Things Otherwise: An Ethnogenealogy of Lesbian and Gay Social Change in Western Australia’ (PhD diss., Murdoch University, 2005); Charlie Fox and Bri McKenzie, ‘CAMP and Gay Rights’, in *Radical Perth Militant Fremantle*, ed. Charlie Fox, Bobbie Oliver and Lenore Layman (Perth: Black Swan Press, 2017), 183–192. Other authors do deal with periods earlier than the 1950s. See, for example, Yorick Smaal, ‘The ‘Leniency Problem’: A Queensland Case Study on Sentencing Male Same-Sex Offences, 1939–1948’, *Women’s History Review* 21, no. 5 (2012): 793–811, doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2012.658182; Dino Hodge, ‘Adelaide’s Flowering Homosexual Culture: 1939–1972’, *Flinders Journal of History and Politics* 27, (2011): 35–55.

19 Fox and McKenzie, ‘CAMP and Gay Rights’, 183–84.

20 Reynolds and Robinson, *Gay & Lesbian, Then & Now*, 8. For more on lesbianism in Australia see Rebecca Jennings, *Unnamed Desires: A Sydney Lesbian History* (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2015).

21 Lisa Featherstone, *Let’s Talk about Sex: Histories of Sexuality in Australia from Federation to the Pill* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2011), 59.

its inclusion within medical discourse.²² However, the apparent link between homosexuality and degenerate behaviour also fed into broader societal concerns in the interwar period. The discourses of eugenics and progressivism were influential on understandings of homosexuality in Australia because they shaped accepted ideas around sexual behaviour and sexual hygiene.²³ Scientific understandings of human behaviour, so valued in this period just after medicine's Golden Age, understood homosexuality not as a sexual activity but as a personality 'type' that was invariably linked to other forms of deviance including paedophilia.²⁴

Primary source documents pertaining to criminal court cases are among the few useful sources on homosexual relationships in 1930s WA. Cases of 'unnatural offence', which from 1903 were heard in the Western Australian Supreme Court, were reported in newspapers and in some of these cases, court records remain. Such sources are, of course, highly problematic in that they often perpetuate the silencing of the accused men.²⁵ It thus remains for the researcher to give voice to their stories and understand their experiences through studied interpretation of the sources, informed by an understanding of the social and criminal context of the period.²⁶ It is unlikely that all cases of homosexuality brought before the courts were instances of non-consensual sex. Homosexual subcultures existed in all capital cities in Australia during the 1930s, so consensual sex between men did take place and, at times, would have resulted in a court hearing and potentially gaol time.²⁷

22 Interestingly, as Featherstone points out, such analysis was generally avoided by Australian doctors. See Lisa Featherstone, 'Even More Hidden from History?: Male Homosexuality and Medicine in Turn-of-the-Century Australia', in *Out Here: Gay and Lesbian Perspectives VI*, ed. Yorick Smaal and Graham Willett (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2011), 61–63.

23 Stephen Garton, 'Eugenics in Australia and New Zealand: Laboratories of Racial Science', in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, ed. Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4, doi.10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195373141.013.0014; Grant Rodwell, 'Curing the Precocious Masturbator: Eugenics and Australian Early Childhood Education', *Journal of Australian Studies* 22, no. 59 (1998): 85, doi.org/10.1080/14443059809387426.

24 Featherstone, *Let's Talk about Sex*, 180–81; Featherstone, 'Even More Hidden from History', 56–68.

25 John Waugh comments on this in relation to colonial sodomy prosecutions in Victoria. See John Waugh, "'A gang of judicial assassins': George Bateson and Colonial Sodomy Laws', in *Intimacy, Violence and Activism: Gay and Lesbian Perspectives on Australasian History and Society*, ed. Yorick Smaal and Graham Willett (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2013), 26.

26 See, for example, how understandings of and prosecutions for sex crimes changed in 1950s Australia. Lisa Featherstone and Amanda Kaladelfos, *Sex Crimes in the Fifties* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2016), 13.

27 See, for example, Featherstone and Kaladelfos, *Sex Crimes in the Fifties*, 160–61.

Yet, in the newspaper reports I examined, representations of ‘unnatural offence’ cases made little distinction between serial perpetrators of paedophilia and men accused of having sex with other men.²⁸ Indeed, all cases of homosexual sex that I have found mentioned in Perth newspapers during this period were represented and understood through a lens of exploitation. For example, two prisoners accused of participating in an ‘unnatural act’ at the Pardelup prison farm in April 1928 were forced to incriminate each other in court despite the encounter clearly being consensual.²⁹ Such interpretations contributed to the stereotype of the homosexual man as morally deviant and inherently criminal and highlight the importance of redressing such misrepresentations.

The Gibson Case

Throughout my analysis of ‘unnatural offence’ cases reported in the Western Australian press during the 1930s, the Gibson case stood out. The role of the police in the case was intriguing, and the way the stories of both Keith and Clarence changed throughout the trials suggested much of historical interest. Keith Gibson stood trial on 9 March 1931 before Justice Draper of the Western Australian Supreme Court. At the trial, the apparent victim—Clarence Cummings—initially gave incriminating evidence against the accused, only to recant under cross-examination. When asked why he had made a false claim, Clarence replied that he had been pressured into incriminating Keith by the arresting officers. According to Clarence, detectives Johnston and Doyle had told him he would be institutionalised if he did not provide evidence against the accused. Keith was subsequently found not guilty and discharged. Clarence, on the other hand, was later arrested for perjury and for allowing Gibson to commit an ‘unnatural offence’ on him and was sent to the Children’s Court.³⁰

While it is clear that sex between the two men took place, it was the circumstances of that encounter that appear to have determined whether or not one or the other was prosecuted. Either Keith was guilty of having ‘carnal knowledge’ of Clarence or Clarence was guilty for having *allowed*

28 See, for example, the case of Peter James Easton Lewis Brown: ‘Children’s Court, Perth’, *West Australian*, 13 January 1931, 8; ‘“Kathleen Mavourneen” for Sex Pervert’, *Daily News*, 18 March 1931, 6; ‘It May Be for Years!’, *Mirror*, 21 March 1931, 12; ‘My Unworthy Life’, *Truth*, 22 March 1931, 7.

29 ‘Down on the Farm: Pleasures at Pardelup. No Real “Prisoners”’, *Daily News*, 7 June 1928, 2.

30 ‘Perjury Charge. Youth Under Arrest’, *Sunday Times*, 29 March 1931, 2; ‘Boy Charged with Perjury’, *West Australian*, 27 March 1931, 16.

Keith to have sex with him. The circumstances of this case appear to show some degree of flexibility in the application of 'unnatural offence' laws in WA at this time. It is unclear why Keith was discharged, given it is evident that sex between the two did take place. Conversely, Clarence was charged with 'allowing an unnatural offence to be committed on him', suggesting that he was viewed as a willing participant. Clarence's age might also have come into consideration here. While boys under the age of 14 were thought to be incapable of taking responsibility for any sex acts they were involved in, boys of 14 and over were considered able to 'resist unwanted advances'.³¹ In WA in 1931, although homosexual sex itself was illegal, the age of consent was 16 for all genders.³² As such, Clarence, then 16, was of an age at which consensual sex was permitted and he was deemed able to prevent sexual advances if they were not wanted. His apparent crime in this case, then, was his choice of partner.

It was not this aspect of the case, however, that most piqued my interest, but the apparent role of police coercion in the charging of Keith. Coercion of gay men by police was well known to have occurred in most Australian jurisdictions from the 1950s onward and police mistreatment formed part of some men's defence against sodomy prosecutions in court.³³ Police would stake out known beats, arrest a group of men and then force those arrested to incriminate others.³⁴ The apparent actions of detectives Johnston and Doyle in the Gibson case were thus, perhaps, illustrative of early manifestations of such police harassment.

This, however, was not the truth of the case. The witness statements taken in advance of the trial paint a different story altogether, one that muddled the convenient tale of police entrapment and highlighted something much darker and sadder about the lives of the two men involved. First, it was clear that Clarence was vulnerable at the time of his encounters with Keith. His parents had recently broken up and he had been sent to live with an aunt in a maternity home.³⁵ While it is not clear how Keith met Clarence, witness statements reveal that in the 11 months leading up

31 Mark Finnane and Yorick Smaal, 'Some Questions of History: Prosecuting and Punishing Child Sexual Assault', in *The Sexual Abuse of Children: Recognition and Redress*, ed. Yorick Smaal, Andy Kaladelfos and Mark Finnane (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2016), 13.

32 Jill Bavin-Mizzi, 'Sexual Assault', in *Historical Encyclopedia of Western Australia*, ed. Jenny Gregory and Jan Gothard (Crawley: University of Western Australia Press, 2009), 810.

33 Featherstone and Kaladelfos, *Sex Crimes in the Fifties*, 14.

34 Fox and McKenzie, 'CAMP and Gay Rights', 184.

35 Statement of George Hugh Cummings, Supreme Court Case File 6007, State Records Office (SRO) Reference AU WA S122-618.

to December 1930, Keith regularly visited the maternity home to spend time with Clarence and nurses there reported seeing Keith kiss and put his arm around Clarence on these occasions.³⁶ Clarence also reported visiting Keith's home in early December 1930 where Keith initiated sex. This relationship between the two continued until Clarence eventually went to live with Keith in late December 1930.³⁷

The age disparity between Keith and Clarence also contributed to Clarence's vulnerability in their relationship. In his witness statement, taken 4 February 1931, Clarence describes a great number of sexual interactions between himself and the much older and more experienced Keith.³⁸ The most convincing aspect of Clarence's statements was the variety of sex acts he described. Given the social context and what was then known about homosexual sex, it is unlikely that a 16-year-old growing up in 1930s Perth would have had enough knowledge to make up evidence of such events. It was also clear from Clarence's witness statements that the sexual encounters with Keith were often coercive and showed a pattern of increasing intensity in the lead-up to the pair eventually living together in late December 1930. For example, on one occasion, after oral sex, Clarence told Keith that he 'did not like it' and Gibson responded by saying that they would 'cut it out'. This did not, however, result in a ceasing of sexual encounters but an escalation to other sexual acts including, ultimately, anal sex.³⁹

Until his eventual reporting to police in January 1931, it seems that Clarence had not expressed any concern about his interactions with Keith. Clarence's father, when interviewed by police, stated that the boy had 'made no complaint to me' about his circumstances. Nor did Clarence's father raise any objection to the pair living together when he visited Keith's house in December 1930.⁴⁰ Annie Bunce, the housekeeper at Keith's flat, also stated to police that she saw nothing suspicious between the two.⁴¹ Yet, the absence of complaint does not in itself imply unqualified

36 Statement of Catherine Egan, Supreme Court Case File 6007, SRO Reference AU WA S122-618.

37 Statement of Clarence George Edward Cummings, Supreme Court Case File 6007, SRO Reference AU WA S122-618.

38 Statement of Clarence George Edward Cummings, Supreme Court Case File 6007, SRO Reference AU WA S122-618.

39 Statement of Clarence George Edward Cummings, Supreme Court Case File 6007, SRO Reference AU WA S122-618.

40 Statement of George Hugh Cummings, Supreme Court Case File 6007, SRO Reference AU WA S122-618.

41 Statement of Annie Bunce, Supreme Court Case File 6007, SRO Reference AU WA S122-618.

consent.⁴² It was unusual for child victims of sexual assault to report their abusers to police during this period. Typically cases came to police attention when a parent reported on behalf of their child.⁴³ Young victims were also sometimes actively discouraged from reporting to authorities because of the stigma attached to such encounters.⁴⁴ As such, Clarence's ultimate decision to report what had been happening with Keith suggests he was sufficiently uncomfortable with the relationship that he would report this relationship to the police despite such barriers, and highlights his lack of adult support during his period of living away from home.

The testimony of the detective who arrested Keith is also revealing. In the exchange between the accused and the arresting officer, Keith certainly presented as a guilty party. This is unsurprising given that sex between men *was* illegal and Keith evidently knew why he had been arrested. Indeed, Detective Johnston began the interview with an ominous 'you know what we want to see you about', and Keith responded with 'I suppose that man ... has been making trouble'.⁴⁵ According to Johnston's testimony, Keith himself brought up the subject of Clarence, asking if 'the boy' had made any accusations against him.⁴⁶ Clarence had made a number of accusations and had given a statement describing the sex acts that had taken place between himself and Keith. Keith was shown this statement and was asked if the boy was lying. After hesitating for 10 or 15 seconds, he responded 'no, I won't say he is telling lies' only to quickly follow with 'I'll take that back. I'll say nothing until I see a solicitor'.⁴⁷

If Johnston's statement is to be believed, Keith clearly admitted to sex with Clarence. Yet, it is difficult fully to understand Keith's responses here. He certainly appears to feel guilty about something, though this does not necessarily imply that he was guilty of sexual assault. His responses could be the result of years of internalised self-hatred and self-doubt brought about through the negative societal messaging around homosexuality that was prevalent at this time. Neither Keith's responses to police questioning; the statement of Clarence's father; the testimony from

42 Yorick Smaal, 'Boys and Homosex: Danger and Possibility in Queensland, 1890–1914', in *Children, Childhood and Youth in the British World*, ed. Shirleene Robinson and Simon Sleight (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 225, doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-48941-8_13.

43 Featherstone and Kaladelfos, *Sex Crimes in the Fifties*, 78.

44 Smaal, 'Boys and Homosex', 224.

45 Statement of John Johnston, Supreme Court Case File 6007, SRO Reference AU WA S122-618.

46 Statement of John Johnston, Supreme Court Case File 6007, SRO Reference AU WA S122-618.

47 Statement of John Johnston, Supreme Court Case File 6007, SRO Reference AU WA S122-618.

Catherine Egan, the nurse at the maternity hospital; nor the statement of Annie Bunce, the housekeeper, can be taken as proof that a sexual assault occurred. We can, however, look to the detailed statement from the apparent victim, Clarence Cummings, to find evidence that strongly suggests Keith Gibson was guilty of assault.

Nothing in Clarence's witness statement to police indicated that he was an enthusiastic participant in his relationship with Keith. Indeed, he had expressed to Keith that he was not comfortable with what was happening and this had not resulted in any noticeable change in Keith's behaviour. Looking at the events as described in the witness statements through a contemporary lens, Keith's behaviour in the lead-up to his sexual relationship with Clarence—his regular visits to the maternity home over 11 months, his evident affection towards the young man—could be seen as grooming. Keith's conduct follows patterns observed in other cases of child sexual assault documented during this period in Australia, assaults that were largely made possible by the unfettered access to public places enjoyed by men and boys.⁴⁸ Clarence's age and manifest vulnerability after the break-up of his family also lend weight to the idea that this was not a relationship that he necessarily wanted. Clarence's descriptions of the intimacy between himself and Keith also highlight Clarence's own need for security and love from an adult figure. According to Clarence's witness statements, Keith told him that he 'would never do it to anyone else' and this was accompanied by kissing and hugging.

Evidence from the two trials also shows that Keith sought to cover his tracks. For example, it later emerged that Keith had visited Clarence on the night before the first trial and had convinced him to recant his evidence. This was the reason for Clarence's apparent perjury in court. At his own trial, Clarence admitted that his accusations against detectives Johnston and Doyle were false and that no threat of institutionalisation had ever been made.⁴⁹ It emerged in later years that Keith also had a number of aliases and was involved in other minor criminal behaviour.⁵⁰

The story of the Gibson case does serve as an opportunity to highlight the marginalisation of gay men within this specific temporal and geographic context. The sources, limited as they are, show an almost complete

48 Finnane and Smaal, 'Some Questions of History', 14; Smaal, 'Boys and Homosex', 224.

49 'Charge of Perjury', *Western Argus*, 7 April 1931, 23.

50 'Inquest', *Northern Times*, 18 November 1948, 1.

absence of Keith's voice. As a man accused of an 'unnatural offence', we hear very little from him. No witnesses appeared for him at his trial and it appears he took no active part in his own defence. Indeed, we hear about Keith's life only three more times in the newspapers. A year after his trial in 1932, he failed to appear in court after refusing to give his name to police officers, though it appears he was never prosecuted for anything in this instance.⁵¹ In 1936, he was fined £50 for his part in an illegal betting shop operation.⁵² He is mentioned again in 1948, this time identified as a man who took his own life, then aged 52.⁵³

My analysis of the witness statements in the Gibson case brought into question any suggestion that this case could form part of an effort to correct historical misrepresentations of homosexual relationships in the past. Indeed, it appeared I had found just what I did not want to find—a reinforcement of the relationship between homosexuality and criminal behaviour. However, as Yorick Smaal has highlighted, cases such as this that are based on criminal trial evidence are uniquely difficult to analyse. Historians working in these areas both 'recognize potentially non-harmful relationships between adults and youths within narratives of identity and subculture' and also 'consider their evidence within narratives of gendered exploitation and abuse'.⁵⁴ As such, there remains an ambivalence to the relationship between Keith and Clarence that cannot ever be fully understood.

Self-Reflexivity and the Gibson Case

In this case, the inherent challenges of harnessing the past for use in the present context were highly visible and emphasised the importance of self-reflexivity in historical practice. I began with an intention to draw attention to past narratives that emphasised the unwarranted criminalisation and demonisation of gay men—all in an effort to bring about a deeper understanding and awareness of marginalised voices. But what I found was evidence that only served to reinforce negative stereotypes.

51 'Keith Edwin Gibson', *Daily News*, 19 September 1932, 1.

52 '£325 in Betting Fines', *Daily News*, 30 June 1936, 3.

53 'Inquest', *Northern Times*, 18 November 1948, 1.

54 Smaal, 'Boys and Homosex', 222.

Indeed, approaches to historical research that utilise the past for the purposes of the present have been suggested by other scholars as problematic. As Alya Aglan has noted:

The use of the present to ask questions of the past is perfectly legitimate, but the past is also increasingly called upon to provide answers for the present, which is much more controversial. Unfinished business in the present, such as the pain suffered by the victims of past persecution, has led to a mobilisation of the past in a particular way to highlight persecution and oppression, for which apology, compensation and justice are demanded in the present. The past becomes not an objective account of 'how things happened', but a moral drama in which champions of right and perpetrators of wrong are held to account for the benefit of a contemporary audience in search of redress.⁵⁵

Such research approaches are necessarily subjective in their analysis and scope, calling into question their value as a source of historical 'truth'. Yet, as the application of the philosophical linguistic turn to the discipline of history has made clear, the pursuit of true historical objectivity is a futile endeavour. The adoption of discourse analysis in history assisted historians 'to imagine and construct alternative pasts in terms of their ethical and political commitments in the present and their visions of alternative futures'.⁵⁶ This adaptation was also linked to the rise of social history and its relationships to 1960s political and social movements. So, while research that pre-empts outcomes can always be considered problematic, all research, whether so acknowledged or not, has an agenda. Using research to seek outcomes in the present is not, therefore, necessarily ahistorical.

In teaching terms, my analysis of the Gibson case did present a problem, however. On the surface, it was not an appropriate case study for teaching about gay and lesbian history in Australia because the likely sexual assault in the case only served to reinforce negative stereotypes about homosexuality. However, the case was an example of how important self-reflexivity is to successful historical research. That message was one that *could* be communicated to students.

⁵⁵ Alya Aglan, 'An Excess of the Present in the Past', in *Writing Contemporary History*, ed. Robert Gildea and Anne Simonin (London: Hodder Education, 2008), 170.

⁵⁶ John E. Toews, 'Linguistic Turn and Discourse Analysis in History', in *International Encyclopedia of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 2nd edn, volume 14, ed. James Wright (Elsevier, 2015), 206, doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.62143-8.

It was to this end that I discussed my own research experience in looking into the Gibson case with third-year history students who were themselves engaging in their first major local history projects. Much of my work in the context of teaching these specific students involves practical instruction and discussions around source analysis and the challenges of research. The seminar format allowed for open conversations between myself and students. Such conversations were in themselves self-reflexive because they necessitated the internal analysis of process, inherent bias and researcher assumptions. But they also encouraged ongoing self-reflexivity in both the students and myself as an instructor. In this context, self-reflexive practice became about conscious questioning of research choices. For example, students were encouraged to ask themselves: Why have I chosen this topic for my research project? What contemporary influences am I bringing to my analysis? Why have I privileged one primary source over another? Such questions are very important for all researchers at any stage of instruction.

In my case, I explained that my own passion for LGBTQI+ history coupled with my commitment to social justice and efforts to 'queer' the history curriculum had created a situation in which my research began by pre-empting outcomes. Through my preparedness to be open about my intentions for my research into homosexual subcultures in interwar WA, I was able to explain to students how my process had, in effect, 'gone wrong'. Beginning research with presumptions about what you will find and with intentions for the contemporary uses of that research can lead to problematic results. Open conversations like these take on a unique power for students when a teacher shares their own research failings. We do, as McGrath rightly suggests, have a responsibility to share the ups and downs of our research journey with our students and doing so can lead to richer and more fulfilling teaching experiences.

The application of self-reflexivity in my teaching is an ongoing and evolving process that was sparked into action through my experience with researching the Gibson case. In future iterations of my third-year class, self-reflexivity will be given a more prominent place in discussions around process and methodology. The experience has also necessitated a continuing self-reflexivity that has required deeper questioning of how I choose to situate myself as a teacher, historian and LGBTQI+ ally. My positioning as a white, middle-class, cis-gender woman gives me access to, among other advantages, higher education and a privileged position as

a tertiary teacher, but it also gives me an understanding of the structural and institutionalised nature of sexism and this has allowed me to relate to the experiences of outsider identities.

Knowing and working closely with colleagues and friends who identify as queer and actively pursuing my role as a straight ally has fed into my desire to work actively against queer silencing in my teaching. In her discussion of history teaching and the use of vignettes, education scholar Philippa Hunter utilises Wendy Lutrell's concept of 'reflexive knowing' to explain her own pedagogical approaches.⁵⁷ In a similar way, my own 'knowing' in relation to the 'discursive tensions that embed power relations in curriculum and pedagogy'⁵⁸ has led me to pursue restorative work in my history teaching. My recognition that my positioning gives me privilege spurs me on to use that privilege in ways that allow me to work as an advocate for LGBTQI+ people. Yet, self-reflexivity in this context also requires a recognition that my intimate connection and passion for these restorative pedagogical approaches can, and in this case did, lead to problematic outcomes.

Conclusion

Research into queer histories that seeks to shine a light on untold stories is highly important in our current context and links up with contemporary efforts to 'queer' curricula at primary and secondary level. My study of homosexual subcultures in interwar WA thus formed part of my commitment to both queer history and more inclusive pedagogical approaches. In investigating a unique Western Australian 'unnatural offence' case, I was hoping to address gaps in historical knowledge, include previously marginalised perspectives in my teaching work and offer students alternative stories of homosexual subcultures of the past.

The Gibson case did not easily lend itself to this type of analysis, however. Instead, the case brought my research decisions and aims into question, necessitating the introduction of a process of self-reflexivity that will continue to influence my work as both teacher and researcher. While the events of the Gibson case reinforced negative stereotypes about

57 Philippa Hunter, 'Using Vignettes as Self-Reflexivity in Narrative Research of Problematised History Pedagogy', *Policy Futures in Education* 10, no. 1 (2012): 93, doi.org/10.2304/pfie.2012.10.1.90.

58 Hunter, 'Using Vignettes', 93.

homosexuality, thus making the case a problematic historical case study to bring to students, I did find a path that allowed me to put the case and my contradictory findings to good use in the classroom. Through discussion of my research experience as well as encouragement for students to engage in conscious questioning of their own role in their research, I was able to introduce students to the notion of self-reflexivity and demonstrate my own engagement with that ongoing work. As such, encouraging self-reflexivity in student historians was an unexpected side benefit of the failures of the Gibson case to provide what I needed for my contemporary agenda.

A Life Triumphantly Well Written: Producing the Hawke Legacy, 1979–2019

Joshua Black
The Australian National University

Abstract: *In recent decades, there has been an increase in scholarly attention to biographical political writing in Australian national culture. In particular, there have been several biographies and televisual 'biopics' about Australia's 23rd prime minister, Robert James Lee Hawke. In this article, I argue that Hawke demonstrated a proclivity for managing or contributing to historiographical projects that were intended to build or buttress his personal and political legacy. That legacy has been one in which Hawke is considered 'legendary', and his government potentially the best that Australia has had. In addition to archival and oral research, I conduct a close reading of several major biographical and autobiographical texts concerning Hawke. I conclude that Hawke's legacy-building initiatives occurred in three distinct phases: a foundational myth-making phase, a post-prime ministerial reactionary phase and a twenty-first-century ascendant phase. Throughout each, Hawke was supported by meaningful and collaborative partnerships with biographer and partner Blanche d'Alpuget, private secretary Jill Saunders, loyal former colleagues, close friends and project-specific co-creators. This research acts as a reminder that politicians have historically had a vested interest in legacy building, and that audiences must be encouraged to critique rather than accept by default the laudatory narratives that politicians generate about themselves.*

The scent of Great Man history was in the air at the memorial service to Australia's 23rd prime minister at the Sydney Opera House on 14 June 2019.¹ Friends, loved ones and former colleagues, mostly Australian Labor Party (ALP) figures, rose to offer their reflections on Robert

1 The author thanks Professor Melanie Nolan, Professor Frank Bongiorno and Jessica Urwin for their comments and reflections on this paper, as well as staff at the National Library of Australia for granting permission to quote letters from Blanche d'Alpuget's personal papers. This research is supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship (AGRTP).

James Lee Hawke, many of which were both idolatrous and irreverent. Though some speakers, such as Paul Keating, one of the five former prime ministers in the house, were politely reserved, others shared anecdotes and drew conclusions that reflected the popular image of the man and his character. For Kim Beazley, a Hawke protégé and former Labor leader, 'Bob exemplified Bagehot's view of great prime ministers as men of commonplace opinions and uncommon administrative abilities'. For Bill Kelty, former Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) secretary and Hawke confidant, Hawke was a 'person who raised the aspirations of this nation'. Craig Emerson, former Hawke adviser and Gillard government minister, told the lighthearted story of having once forgotten to put a bet on a successful horse on Hawke's behalf, the purpose of the gag being 'to celebrate Bob's life and the wonderful, inspiring, decent human being he was'. For Blanche d'Alpuget, Hawke's widow and biographer, the memorial was 'the transition from the grief of loss to the celebration of a life triumphantly well lived'.²

There were a range of narratives on show at Hawke's memorial, most of them laudatory, some of them already in print. Many of the statements and passages were derived from d'Alpuget's two major biographies of her husband, Hawke's own memoirs, the multiple tele-documentaries or films about Hawke and a raft of other favourable historical accounts of his life and work. Indeed, I argue that Hawke's legacy building was a deliberate and long-term project spanning four decades and involving three main phases: a *foundational* phase in the 1980s, a *reactive* phase in the 1990s and an *ascendant* phase in the new millennium.

Though a large variety of texts could be considered influential in terms of Hawke's reputation—including key speeches and interviews—this paper deals exclusively with published literary and visual products that can be considered major historiographical undertakings. That there are so many of these to begin with testifies to the sustained efforts of publishers, producers and the former prime minister himself to curate and massage his

2 Kim Beazley, 'Bob Hawke Governed with His Cabinet, Kim Beazley Tells Memorial Service', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 June 2019, accessed 18 July 2019, bit.ly/2XTDZ88; Bill Kelty, 'Bill Kelty Tells Memorial Service How Bob Hawke Fixed the Economy', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 June 2019, accessed 18 July 2019, bit.ly/2O2QVJd; Craig Emerson quoted in ABC, 'Hawke Memorial: Craig Emerson Gives Tribute to Bob Hawke with an Anecdote', YouTube, accessed 17 July 2019, www.youtube.com/watch?v=6iYkg71z3Pk; Blanche d'Alpuget quoted in ABC, 'Hawke Memorial: Hawke's Family Speaks on His Life Well Lived', YouTube, accessed 18 July 2019, www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMAmSPgtH1w.

reputation for posterity. In analysing these literary and filmic productions, I draw on a range of sources available from the contemporaneous public record, such as press reports, critical reviews, published extracts, opinion polling and sales figures. The resulting narrative is a revealing example of a politician dictating to posterity what has become, at least for the moment, the dominant historiographical narrative about himself.

The Foundational Phase, 1979–84

By 1979 Hawke was already one of the most renowned and controversial public figures in the nation. The popular president of the ACTU was regularly in the news, had developed a prolific national profile and was often touted as a future prime minister. Other biographers, namely John Hurst and Robert Pullan, had already begun to evaluate Hawke's career and contribution to the labour movement.³ The development of what could be termed the 'Hawke cult of personality' was gradual, but in the early 1980s one project went further than any other to capture the essence of Hawke's character. *Robert J. Hawke* was written by biographer and former lover Blanche d'Alpuget, and it is with this work that the pair began what would ultimately become a joint mission both to record and create Hawke's legacy over multiple decades. The idea for a Hawke biography developed out of another project d'Alpuget was researching, a biography of Sir Richard Kirby, president of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, which she published in 1979. Derek Rielly records that Hawke 'had appeared innumerable times before Kirby' and, therefore, d'Alpuget decided to pursue him for an interview.⁴ Having already commenced an affair prior to the Kirby book, the pair broke up, but subsequently reunited to create a biography of Hawke that would yield historical value and political impact. The research consisted of scores of interviews with Hawke and his family, friends and associates, and archival material from the National and Parliamentary libraries. Several people read the manuscript prior to publication, including d'Alpuget's editor Elizabeth Douglas, her mentor Peter Ryan, who was director of Melbourne University Press, a number of political psychologists

3 Robyn Ferrell, 'Entertainer's Biography of Bob Hawke', *Canberra Times*, 28 July 1982, 16. For more, see John Hurst, *Hawke: The Definitive Biography* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1979); Robert Pullan, *Bob Hawke: A Portrait* (Sydney: Methuen Australia, 1980).

4 Bob Hawke and Derek Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan, 2018 [2017]), 254.

in Melbourne and Hawke himself.⁵ Notwithstanding the supposedly ‘warts-and-all’ nature of the study, Hawke’s editorial involvement reflected that the likely political consequences of the book could substantially effect his subsequent career.⁶

Robert J. Hawke reveals some of the depths and hidden complexities of Hawke’s personality. Readers were told that Hawke’s mother, Edith, intended on him being Elizabeth Hawke, a daughter, and that Edith reminded her son of her disappointment for some years.⁷ As a result, writes d’Alpuget, a ‘defiant masculinity was a central aspect of Hawke’s personality’, which led to ‘displays of swashbuckling virility’ and, when pushed to excess, ‘womanising’.⁸ She describes Hawke’s as a ‘double life’:

On one side there was the gregarious student leader, already sexually experienced, a beer-garden king who when indignant would throw punches. On the other there was the minister’s son who abhorred violence, who went to church on Sundays.⁹

Even today, the reader may find it difficult to reconcile the two faces of the Hawke personality, though many revel in his combination of ‘larrikin’ and ‘leader’ qualities.

The biography is also effective in outlining the extent to which Hawke’s path to the nation’s parliament was long and laden with both opportunities and setbacks. Hawke’s life-threatening motorcycle accident at age 17 is given as an inspiring date with destiny: having survived, ‘I decided I was going to live my life to my utmost ability’.¹⁰ His tertiary education journey is neatly mapped from his law degree and economics major at the University of Western Australia, to his Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford, to his incomplete doctorate at The Australian National University (ANU).¹¹ He is described at various stages of the character progression as a ‘larrikin’ and a ‘Wild Colonial Boy’, and is shown to have indulged in drunken escapades at both Oxford and ANU.¹² In his first appearance at the

5 Blanche d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke: A Biography* (Port Melbourne: Mandarin, 1994 [1982]), viii–ix.

6 d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, xi.

7 d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 6.

8 d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 6.

9 d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 39.

10 Hawke quoted in d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 32.

11 d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 51.

12 Wheeldon quoted in d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 24, 59. For Hawke’s Oxford misdemeanours, see pages 59–60; for his embarrassing episode at ANU, see page 66.

ACTU, Hawke is portrayed as ‘highly strung, restless in his gestures’. But, by 1961, Hawke is praised as ‘a hero’ of the union movement as a result of his advocacy for ‘wages justice’.¹³

Fundamental to the construction of Hawke’s image within *Robert J. Hawke* are a number of pivotal moments in his life. These include the death of his and first wife Hazel’s infant son, Robert; Hawke’s defeat at the 1963 election as the ALP candidate for Corio; and his shattering defeat in the 1965 wage case.¹⁴ By 1970, Hawke was president of the ACTU and, in 1971, he was named ‘Victorian Father of the Year’, which even the recipient acknowledged must have been an affront to his wife.¹⁵ The remainder of the book narrates Hawke’s years as dual president of both the ACTU and the ALP, a role that brought him into direct conflict with Prime Minister Gough Whitlam and that made Labor appear ‘a two-headed calf’. Many of the biographical storylines followed here are valuable insofar as they have been sidelined in the contemporary Hawke mythology. The book records Hawke’s experiences in 1970s Arab–Israeli conflict management, encapsulates the ‘blur’ of the Whitlam dismissal, explains the left-wing ‘Stop Hawke’ campaign in the late 1970s, and recounts the politically and personally vexed debate over uranium mining.¹⁶ *Robert J. Hawke* even grapples with scenes of a suicidal Hawke traumatised by the difficulties of negotiating with the USSR over the Jewish *refusenik* question, showing the union leader in ‘the weakest negotiating position he’s ever been in’.¹⁷

D’Alpuget’s work was intended not just as fodder for the historical record, but also as a political primer. In particular, the final chapters were intended to promote Hawke as a reformed man marching towards his prime ministerial destiny. On alcohol, he is quoted as saying, ‘I knew what the minuses were, and I just had to admit them’.¹⁸ The closing pages follow Hawke’s trajectory from the ACTU to the Labor frontbench, where leadership tension with Bill Hayden, ALP Opposition leader, became inevitable. It is clear that Hawke wanted to use this biography to position himself as the future Labor leader, a rejuvenated man ready to rejuvenate his country. The pressure he brought to bear on the manuscript is evident in the letters d’Alpuget sent to her editor, Elizabeth Douglas, in the later

13 d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 82, 99.

14 On the death of Robert James Hawke junior, see d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 100. For the 1963 election, see pages 102–09. For the 1965 wage judgement, see pages 119–22.

15 d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 197.

16 d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 243–44; Hawke quoted on pages 289, 303, 317.

17 Liebler quoted in d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 368.

18 Hawke quoted in d’Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 396.

stages of the writing process. In late April, Blanche wrote, '[Hawke] wants more said about what a reformed character he became when he gave up the grog'.¹⁹ Four days later, she wrote again to Douglas claiming that Hawke was 'unhappy about the last chapter', and that she would 'have to do a bit of re-writing on this, possibly in the final paragraph'.²⁰ There is little doubt that, despite the professed desire for a warts-and-all biography, Hawke preferred that it maximise his leadership prospects in the immediate future.

In this period, of course, Hazel Hawke remained central to the effort to get her husband elected and to bolster his standing with the Australian electorate. Despite the fissures in their marriage, by 1980 Hazel remained pivotal to Hawke's ascendancy, partly because a divorce would have been electorally problematic.²¹ In the context of campaigns, she was 'loved by the women's magazines for the long-suffering way in which she stood by her husband'.²² Behind the scenes, she was also deeply involved in the efforts to frame Hawke's biography for the electorate. D'Alpuget's book begins with an acknowledgement of Hazel:

Her desire to protect [their children], and not to have re-published matters which have already appeared in the Press, has been a price worth paying for her help and unflinching frankness, both in giving information and in reading the manuscript for accuracy.²³

Following Labor's victory, Hazel declared, 'I will commit myself to the job with responsibility'.²⁴ At key moments in the life of the government, Hazel would honour this commitment, most obviously in September 1984 as the Hawkes were rocked by the revelation of their daughter Rosslyn's drug addiction. Speaking publicly about the personal crisis at the time, she said: 'It is very much a family process, and it just so happens that I am the spokesman.'²⁵ Further, she defended Hawke's public tears at a press conference earlier that month when asked about his family's

19 Letter from Blanche d'Alpuget to Elizabeth Douglas, 29 April 1982, National Library of Australia (NLA), MS 7348, Papers of Blanche d'Alpuget, [4].

20 Letter from Blanche d'Alpuget to Elizabeth Douglas, 3 May 1982, NLA, MS 7348, Papers of Blanche d'Alpuget, [4].

21 Patricia Edgar, 'Hazel Hawke Written Out in Biased History', *Age*, 21 July 2010, 13.

22 John Huxley, 'Political Wives Must Be Clean and Not Heard', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 October 1997, 11.

23 d'Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, xi.

24 Hazel Hawke quoted in 'Hazel Hawke Intent on Staying Sane', *Canberra Times*, 7 March 1983, 11.

25 Hazel Hawke quoted in 'PM's Wife Tells of Daughter's Heroin Addiction', *Canberra Times*, 25 September 1984, 1.

drug challenges. ‘What matters is that you come back after the blow’, she said, ‘and he always has’.²⁶ Directly and indirectly, Hazel proved essential both to Hawke’s political ambitions, and—in her capacity as family ‘spokesman’—to his cult of personality as well.²⁷

Though it is difficult to assess the impact of *Robert J. Hawke* on political circumstances in 1982, I agree with historian Christine Wallace’s assessment that this biography constituted ‘a political intervention to help Hawke’ on the path to power.²⁸ Richard Kirby launched the book on 5 October 1982 at Canberra’s Lakeside Hotel alongside d’Alpuget and Hawke, who, just a few months earlier, had challenged for the leadership and lost. In his speech, Kirby said that Hawke would ‘be proud to be a leader in the national team, even if the actual number one job eludes him. I personally hope it does not.’²⁹ The *Canberra Times* marked the release of the book with a highly partisan headline over a review by a former Labor deputy prime minister, Jim Cairns: ‘Warts-and-all portrayal of a man who “could make a good PM”’.³⁰ The commercial success of the biography, much speculated about before publication, became rapidly assured; claims circulated that the first 15,000-copy print run had sold out before the official launch date.³¹ According to d’Alpuget, Morry Schwartz’s commercial capacities were essential for ensuring the book’s success in both political and market terms:

It was his idea to make the cover black and white, because the eye is naturally drawn to white, so the book would stand out from others on the shelf ... [He] persuaded the most prestigious book shop in Melbourne, Hill of Content, to fill its entire window with nothing but the Hawke biography.³²

26 ‘PM’s Wife Tells of Daughter’s Heroin Addiction’, 1.

27 Hazel Hawke quoted in ‘PM’s Wife Tells of Daughter’s Heroin Addiction’, 1.

28 Christine Wallace, ‘The Silken Cord: Contemporaneous Australian 20th Century Political Biography & Its Meaning’ (PhD diss., The Australian National University, 2015), 366.

29 Sir Richard Kirby, Launching Speech at the Lakeside Hotel, Canberra, 5 October 1982, National Archives of Australia (NAA): M4363/4.

30 Jim Cairns, ‘Warts-and-All Portrayal of a Man Who “Could Make a Good PM”’, *Canberra Times*, 5 October 1982, 2.

31 Alison Broinowski, ‘Blanche d’Alpuget: Finding Challenge Irresistible’, *Australian Women’s Weekly*, 20 October 1982, 10.

32 Testimonial from d’Alpuget in Blanche d’Alpuget, ‘Robert J. Hawke: A Biography’, *blanchedalpuget.com*, 2019, accessed 2 December 2019, www.blanchedalpuget.com/index.php/en/books/robert-j-hawke-a-biography (site discontinued).

Commercial success begat the book's political acuity. By d'Alpuget's account, the book convinced John Button and Lionel Bowen, two critical members of the ALP National Executive and two critical votes in Caucus, that Hawke had 'the depth of experience necessary to become leader'.³³ Of course, political manoeuvres rarely pan out according to grand design, but within four months, Hawke was the leader of the Australian Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, and within five was prime minister of Australia.³⁴ At the very least, it is clear that the book was conducive to Hawke's ascension, and that this major contribution to the Hawke canon was an undisputed success.

More than simply framing Hawke's life in a dramatic historical narrative, d'Alpuget was careful to analyse critically Hawke's character in the tradition of the Melbourne school of psychobiography, which famously combined 'an historical narrative approach with political psychology'.³⁵ She acknowledged Michael Epstein, Ross Martin, Angus McIntyre and Graham Little for their disciplinary influence on the manuscript, an influence that underscores many of the analytical passages about Hawke's character development. On his struggle against alcohol abuse, for instance, she writes:

The enemy was himself ... he had to smash up the old Bob Hawke and create a new one, stalked by the anxiety that if he succeeded it may be at the cost of his magic touch.³⁶

With its emphasis on catalysts for character development and its subtle use of psychobiography, the book remains the definitive account of his pre-parliamentary career.

The Reactive Phase, 1993–99

In 1983 Hawke was the stuff of Australian legend. By 1993 that initial glamour had been displaced by cynicism. The Australian economy was groaning under the pressure of a recent recession, Hawke had abandoned the infamous 'secret' Kirribilli pact whereby he promised to vacate the

33 Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 258.

34 Wallace, 'The Silken Cord', 392.

35 Kate White, 'Towards an Assessment of Australian Political Biography', *Politics* 16, no. 1 (1981): 134, doi.org/10.1080/00323268108401793.

36 d'Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke*, 336.

prime ministership for Keating, and the press were aware of Hawke reneging on the deal. In December 1991, Hawke became the first Labor prime minister to be removed by his own party, beaten by Keating 56–51 in a Caucus ballot. In the aftermath, Hawke and his peers began to proselytise their version of political history. Given the immediacy of the hurt and disappointment of 1991, this effort was more than a little coloured by a thirst for revenge and retribution. By d'Alpuget's account, this period was one of immense emotional turbulence for Hawke.³⁷ From 1992 to 1994, Hawke sought to safeguard his legacy in the context of a more hostile political and media environment than he had previously faced. Another major disruption came with the breakdown of Hawke's marriage to Hazel in late 1994, and subsequent wedding to Blanche in 1995. As news of the Bob–Blanche affair surfaced, the *Sydney Morning Herald* predicted 'a further elevation in Hazel's standing ... and a corresponding further fall in Bob's'.³⁸ For some, the issue was not the love affair itself, but rather its performative nature. The new couple were allegedly paid \$200,000 for interviews with *60 Minutes* and *Woman's Day*, with the latter publishing the now-infamous photos featuring 'towelling robes and glistening eyes'.³⁹ All things considered, the 1990s saw the nadir of Hawke's public standing, a trajectory that began while Hawke was still in office, and long before the end of his first marriage.

Hawke and d'Alpuget's biographical narrative came under siege at the same time as the Hawke prime ministership began to collapse. In October 1991, as Hawke battled to keep the Keating forces at bay, Melbourne academic Stan Anson published a singularly unsympathetic psychoanalytical study of the prime minister, entitled *Hawke: An Emotional Life*. Journalists highlighted Anson's most Freudian portraits of Hawke, including 'the young Bob Hawke's narcissism, oedipal exaltation and castration anxiety'.⁴⁰ The author claimed at the outset that Hawke was both 'narcissistic' and 'realistic', intensely ambitious and prone to 'grandiose fantasy'.⁴¹ His politics, in Anson's estimation, was fuelled by both 'knee-jerk utilitarianism and pragmatic acceptance' of the status quo.⁴² This was a far cry from the popular portrait of the

37 Blanche d'Alpuget, oral history interview with the author, Sydney, 21 February 2020.

38 Sue Williams, 'Hawke's Fine Romance', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 January 1995, 3.

39 Moira Rayner, 'Dignity in Short Supply For Bob and Blanche', *Age*, 13 February 1995, 10.

40 Jane Sullivan, 'Literary Battle for PM's Mind', *Age*, 12 October 1991.

41 Stan Anson, *Hawke: An Emotional Life* (Ringwood: McPhee Gribble, 1991), 3, 9.

42 Anson, *Hawke An Emotional Life*, 64.

consensus-driven leader in love with the Australian people, though much of the book involved reinterpretations of d'Alpuget's earlier work. Upon the book's release, d'Alpuget was sufficiently outraged to write to Anson's publishers requesting that it be 'withdrawn in its present form'.⁴³ When this was rejected, she took legal action against parent company Penguin Publishing, arguing that 'Anson's interpretation relied too heavily on her own biography'.⁴⁴ Though a private settlement was later reached between all parties,⁴⁵ the book nonetheless proved that 'sensitive revelations of the self could be turned into political bullets for one's enemies'.⁴⁶

In response to changed political circumstances and Anson's assault on the 'legend', Hawke contributed to two major historiographical projects in the mid-1990s, neither of which commanded for him great respect among the public audience. The first was a much-anticipated tele-documentary entitled *Labor in Power*, screened over five weeks in mid-1993. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) dedicated five hours of airtime to the project, which earned leading journalists Phillip Chubb and Sue Spencer a Gold Walkley media award.⁴⁷ The series comprised archival news footage and interviews with 60 prominent members of government and their staff, former members of the public service and a few outside observers.⁴⁸ The narrative arc spanned the rise of Hawke to the Labor leadership, right through to the Keating ascendancy and the quest to win the 1993 election, a period of both major reform and major personality clashes. Public commentary emphasised the 'astonishing frankness' of the interviewees, who made little or no secret of the animosities that brewed between Hawke and Keating supporters up to 1991.⁴⁹ Recorded before Labor's 1993 election victory, participants were candid on camera in the expectation that it would go to air as 'Labor's governmental obituary'.⁵⁰ Nielsen estimated that over 189,000 Australian households tuned into view the program.⁵¹

43 Sullivan, 'Literary Battle'.

44 Judith Brett, 'Introduction', in *Political Lives*, ed. Judith Brett (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1997), ix–x.

45 Caroline Wilson, 'Chapter Closes on Bitter Battle of the Publishers', *Age*, 1 March 1992, 2.

46 Wallace, 'The Silken Cord', 399.

47 "'Labor in Power" Takes Out Walkley', *Canberra Times*, 2 December 1993, 5.

48 Raymond Gill, "'Labor in Power"—A House Divided', *Age*, 3 June 1993, 1.

49 Tim Dodd, 'The Ministerial Wing—Where the Action Is', *Australian Financial Review*, 8 June 1993, 3; Gerard Henderson, 'The Laborious Business of Making History', *Age*, 8 June 1993, 18.

50 'Annus Mirabilis—A Hard Slog for Labor', *Age*, 29 December 1993, 9.

51 Robin Oliver, 'Sports Scores Well For Nine', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 June 1993, 4.

The series did nothing to further Hawke's reputation. Robert Manne wrote in the *Age* that 'Bob Hawke was the embodiment of political narcissism'.⁵² Raymond Gill described a 'sleazy portrait of a party in power'.⁵³ According to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, in the battle for historical control, 'Keating won hands down'.⁵⁴ Not all were as scathing of Hawke. Les Carlyon described the Labor government as 'a clutch of vain politicians ... playing a power game among themselves', but went on to say that the 'only participant who does not leave this impression is Bob Hawke. No wonder they kicked him out.'⁵⁵ Hawke was personally 'disappointed at the outcome' of the series, and perceived it as 'dishonest and biased'.⁵⁶ Ultimately, *Labor in Power* made for engrossing television but did little to improve either the standing of the Keating Labor government or Bob Hawke's personal legacy.

The following year, Hawke published *The Hawke Memoirs* with the help of a cast of supporting actors. Hawke credits d'Alpuget with abandoning her own occupation 'to work as my editor as the deadline approached'.⁵⁷ D'Alpuget recalled that her role was a purely literary, 'nuts and bolts' contribution to the book.⁵⁸ Hawke's private secretary, Jill Saunders, was said to be 'heavily involved' in bringing the memoir to fruition, and several former staffers including Craig Emerson and Hugh White were named personally for their contributions.⁵⁹ The publisher Louise Adler was thanked 'for her gentle but constant pressure and assistance'.⁶⁰ Importantly, Hawke recognised the contribution of his researcher, Garry Sturgess, who laboured over much of the original manuscript.⁶¹ With the support of this team, Hawke intended that his book would explain 'the story of how and why' the ALP had 'made Australia a better place'.⁶² The result was a remarkably sanitised version of Hawke's history.

52 Robert Manne, 'The Real Villains', *Age*, 23 June 1993, 17.

53 Gill, "Labor in Power", 1.

54 Mike Steketee, 'Rewriting the Hawke Ascendancy', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 July 1993, 10.

55 Les Carlyon, 'Carlyon Column', *BRW*, 25 June 1993, 16.

56 Garry Sturgess, oral history interview with the author, Manuka, Canberra, 7 February 2020; Blanche d'Alpuget, oral history interview with the author, Sydney, 21 February 2020.

57 Bob Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs* (Port Melbourne: William Heinemann Australia, 1994), xi.

58 Blanche d'Alpuget, oral history interview with the author, Sydney, 21 February 2020.

59 Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, xi.

60 Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, xi.

61 Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library, Bob Hawke Collection, Papers, *Hawke Memoirs*, Draft of Hawke's Speech at the Launch of *The Hawke Memoirs*, 16 August 1994, RH45/2.

62 Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, xv.

The text recounts key episodes in Hawke's early years, such as his brother's death and his own motorcycle accident, both of which convinced his family that he was 'destined for a special life'.⁶³ Hawke outlines his higher education journey and his rise to the ACTU presidency, and goes on to justify his stalking of Hayden by noting that there were 'polls regularly showing me as preferred leader of the party'.⁶⁴ Though proud of his record-breaking capacity to drink as a younger man, he makes a very brief acknowledgement that he 'behaved badly in drink', hence the pledge of sobriety in 1980.⁶⁵ He crystallises the secret to his 1983 electoral victory in breathtakingly reductionist terms: 'The simple fact is that I like people.'⁶⁶ His early Cabinet is dubbed 'the best' since 1901, and he is careful to remind his reader that this was 'the Hawke Government, not the Hawke–Keating Government', lest anyone be in any doubt about who was in charge.⁶⁷ Extensive space is dedicated to Hawke's interest in Indigenous political causes, arguably to conceal his government's failure to legislate either national land rights or a treaty with the First Australians.⁶⁸ Hawke's greater policy achievements are outlined, such as the Prices and Incomes Accord; the floating of the dollar and other financial deregulation; the successes in environmental policy; the foreign policy initiatives, especially concerning the sanctions against South African apartheid; and the anti-mining Antarctic Treaty.

The critical reviews heavily publicised two major defects in the book: Hawke's egocentric approach to history and his obsession with reducing the reputation of Paul Keating, who was treasurer throughout Hawke's prime ministership. On the latter point, it is revealing that there are more entries associated with Keating than with Hawke himself in the index of the book.⁶⁹ Michelle Grattan declared that too much of Hawke's narrative was aimed at 'portraying Paul as a bastard'.⁷⁰ James Walter, a political

63 Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, 14.

64 Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, 97.

65 Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, 28, 103.

66 Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, 136.

67 Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, 156, 159.

68 Hawke includes a four-page appendix listing his achievements in the field of Indigenous affairs, Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, 590–93. Criticism of Hawke's vacillations on land rights and treaty are offered in Stuart Macintyre, *A Concise History of Australia*, 4th ed. (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2016 [1999]), 277; Frank Bongiorno, *The Eighties: The Decade that Transformed Australia* (Carlton: Black Inc., 2017 [2015]), 77–78, 250.

69 Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, 612–13.

70 Michelle Grattan, 'Bob Hawke: No Warts and All', *Canberra Times*, 17 August 1994, 13.

psychologist, accused Hawke of 'fantastic egotism'.⁷¹ On the egocentric properties of the narrative, one contemporary reviewer's interview with Hawke seemed revealing. Asked by Sebastian Faulks if it was acceptable for a 'dinky-di bloke' to 'bang his own drum' to this extent, Hawke replied, 'where there's something to be genuinely modest about, then you should be modest; but if you've got things done then you should be proud of it'.⁷²

It is striking that many Labor Party stalwarts sharply rebuked the former prime minister for his book. ALP President Barry Jones noted that 'there was disappointment and regret within the party about the book'; backbench MP Wayne Swan said that Hawke's vituperative claims 'did not go down well with the troops'.⁷³ Hawke sold 75,000 copies of the book, a figure highly acclaimed among the publishing community, yet much of the public rejected the book. A Newspoll survey in August 1994 found that an outright majority of responders approved of Hawke publishing his record, but just 31 per cent approved of what he actually included, compared with a 37 per cent disapproval score.⁷⁴ Few begrudged Hawke's right to publish, but readers and critics clearly rejected the score-settling pockets of the narrative.

These figures make greater sense in the context of two particularly explosive claims contained in the book, both of which relate to Keating. The first was remarkably targeted, and has echoed through other texts such as the *Hawke* telemovie: Hawke asserted that, in a heated argument with Keating in January 1991, the latter had described Australia as 'the arse-end of the world'.⁷⁵ This claim and the ensuing press coverage did nothing to lift Keating's public standing as prime minister. A Newspoll conducted in the wake of the revelation indicated that 52 per cent of respondents believed Hawke's claim, while just 13 per cent felt that Keating's denial was honest.⁷⁶ Even d'Alpuget felt that the book would have been better without this quotation.⁷⁷ More explosive, however, was Hawke's claim

71 James Walter, 'The Transformations of Mateship: Autobiography and Politics', *Voices: The Quarterly Journal of the National Library of Australia* 5, no. 3 (1995): 111.

72 Hawke quoted in Sebastian Faulks, 'Unexpurgated Bloklore', *Guardian*, 3 September 1994, 25.

73 Keith Scott, 'Mates Back off 'Bitter, Sad' Hawke', *Canberra Times*, 16 August 1994, 1; Norman Abjorensen, 'Making Sure History Is Writ in Your Favour', *Canberra Times*, 25 June 1994, 16.

74 Newspoll survey conducted 19–21 August 1994, accessed 4 July 2019, bit.ly/33e2e4E (site discontinued).

75 Keating quoted in Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, 501.

76 Newspoll survey conducted 24–26 June 1994, accessed 4 July 2019, bit.ly/31p5qIZ (site discontinued).

77 Blanche d'Alpuget, oral history interview with the author, Sydney, 21 February 2020.

that Keating had initially opposed the Hawke government's decision to join the United Nations-sanctioned First Gulf War against Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in late 1990. Hawke claimed that Keating had remarked: 'What has the US ever done for us?'⁷⁸ Keating sprang to action, describing the allegation as 'a straight lie, a straight distortion'.⁷⁹ The Opposition, however, saw Hawke's allegation as an opportunity to score a serious political hit on Keating. Liberal leader Alexander Downer and National Party leader Tim Fischer moved to suspend the standing orders of the House during question time that day in order to berate Keating.⁸⁰ The issue remained alive until former Senate leader John Button made a personal statement taking ownership of the remark, which seemed to have its inspiration in a joke about the Roman Empire in the Monty Python film *The Life of Brian*, thereby defusing Hawke's political bomb.⁸¹ Hugh White, the collaborator responsible for drafting most of Hawke's Gulf War chapter, acknowledged his likely error in an oral history interview: 'I am now persuaded that I got it wrong, and that it was in fact Button who said that.'⁸² Both of the punishing anecdotes published by Hawke landed their blows, though ultimately the prime minister in exile hardly re-enamoured himself with the electorate at large.

The 1990s were clearly a reactive phase in historiographical terms for Hawke; however, they need not have been. The response to another publication about Hawke reveals that there was a market ready for an honest and dignified treatment of Hawke's achievements. Prior to both *The Hawke Memoirs* and *Labor in Power*, former speechwriter Stephen Mills published *The Hawke Years: The Story from the Inside*. Launched in mid-1993, the book was judged by one of Australia's leading historians as 'an informative account', and made it to the top 10 list of recommended reads in at least one metropolitan newspaper.⁸³ In a couple of published extracts, Mills deployed particularly heroic scenes of Hawke at his best, one in which he 'set out to prevent the war' in the Gulf in 1991, and another involving the final weeks of Hawke's leadership and his 'departure

78 Keating quoted in Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*, 517.

79 Keating quoted in Ian McPhedran and Ross Peake, 'Weak Hawke Lied: Keating', *Canberra Times*, 12 October 1994, 1.

80 Cth. House of Representatives, *Parliamentary Debates*, 12 October 1994, 1801, 1805.

81 Ross Peake, 'Fiery Keating Has Button Admitting it Was Him Flying a Rhetorical Kite', *Canberra Times*, 14 October 1994, 3.

82 Hugh White, interview with the author, The Australian National University, Canberra, 14 November 2019.

83 Stuart Macintyre, 'Prime Minister and the Dragon', *Age*, 19 June 1993, 8; 'Top Shelf', *Sunday Age*, 27 June 1993, 9.

of enduring dignity'.⁸⁴ It is worth noting that Hawke was given the opportunity to vet this book before publication.⁸⁵ At a breakfast for the Evatt Foundation in early August 1993, Mills and Phillip Chubb publicly discussed the legacy of the Hawke years, and the *Sydney Morning Herald* interpreted the positive tenor of their discussion to represent 'something of a comeback' for the former prime minister's reputation.⁸⁶

The memoirs, however, firmly scotched that prospect. Reacting to the outrage with which his book was received, Hawke gave a launch speech at the National Press Club on 17 August 1994. The speech was embittered and agitated, the orator repeatedly thumping the lectern like the union leader of old. Hawke hectored the assembled media for overemphasising the Keating dimension of his book, and attacked the 'precious self-appointed guardians of proper behaviour in the Labor Party' for their attacks.⁸⁷ As public reaction to the ABC series and the *Memoirs* continued to roll on, it became clear that a reputational 'comeback' was not destined for Hawke in the mid-1990s. In deliberate pursuit of vindication, Hawke ultimately starved himself of the adulation that he still craved.

The Ascendant Phase, 2010–19

In the first decade of the new millennium, Hawke allowed his political career to recede into history while he continued pursuing a host of other interests in the arenas of business and foreign affairs. By 2010 the professional years of Hawke's life were drawing to a close. D'Alpuget recorded that, as her husband turned 80, he 'hit his third hole-in-one, snorkelled for the first time, went swimming with dolphins ... and learned to waltz'.⁸⁸ This retirement period afforded Hawke much time to think, reflect and facilitate efforts to curate his reputation for posterity. Notwithstanding some periodic bouts of illness, Hawke involved himself actively in the last decade of his life in the pursuit of a mythology that is

84 Extract from *The Hawke Years* published as 'Bridging the Gulf', *Canberra Times*, 22 May 1993, 3; Extract from *The Hawke Years* published as 'Hawke—The End of the Affair', *Age*, 22 May 1993, 4.

85 Hawke's margin comments on the manuscript are contained in the Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library, Bob Hawke Collection, *Papers, Hawke Memoirs*, Draft Manuscript of Stephen Mills, *The Hawke Years*, RH45/17.

86 Tony Stephens, 'Hawke Back in Heroes' Battle', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 August 1993, 4.

87 Bob Hawke, Speech to the National Press Club Luncheon [Series 94, Episode 25], 17 August 1994, NAA: C475/1718262.

88 Blanche d'Alpuget, *Hawke: The Prime Minister* (Carlton: Melbourne University Publishing, 2010), 371.

now deeply and firmly entrenched in public consciousness. He remained relevant as a public figure, and a sense of Hawke nostalgia emerged in representations of him in this period, increasing over time. Even in this phase, however, the Hawke–d’Alpuget legacy-building process was not without controversy.

The ascendant phase began with a shaky start. Building on her earlier successful biography of Hawke, d’Alpuget in 2010 produced a second volume entitled *Hawke: The Prime Minister*. When first approached by Louise Adler of Melbourne University Press (MUP) to write the book, d’Alpuget confessed to some concern about the likely pressure of the project; nonetheless, she agreed to produce the book with MUP.⁸⁹ The book was highly adulatory, and was launched by Prime Minister Julia Gillard, who declared that Hawke was ‘a model for all of us’.⁹⁰ Notwithstanding this auspicious start to the life of the book, its publication proved disruptive in a number of ways. First, it received a public thrashing from Hawke’s own daughter, Sue Pieters-Hawke, who said:

Personally, I think that glib observations of character and events, or the ill-informed and tawdry dwelling on deeply personal dimensions of a family’s life, demean public conversation, political commentary, and the people who indulge in them.⁹¹

This remark led to some tense exchanges and even a physical altercation between Blanche and Sue.⁹² Second, the book reopened Hawke’s feud with Keating, who swiftly sent an open letter to the *Australian*, in which he wrote, ‘yours and Blanche’s rewriting of history is not only unreasonable and unfair ... it is grasping’.⁹³ The reopening of the old feud was the subject of much commentary for several days, and the consensus appeared to be that both former leaders were simply ‘brutal, forceful and endlessly creative’ in their mutual antagonism.⁹⁴

89 Blanche d’Alpuget, oral history interview with the author, Sydney, 21 February 2020.

90 Julia Gillard quoted in ‘Gillard Praises “Role Model” Hawke at Book Launch’, *ABC News*, 13 July 2010, accessed 23 July 2019, ab.co/2Tcoln.

91 Sue Pieters-Hawke quoted in Nick Ralston, ‘If Only Hazel Could Speak for Herself’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 July 2010, 1.

92 Annette Sharp, ‘How Bob-Blanche Book Saga led to 5-star Air Lounge Spat: Inside Hawke Family Feud’, *Sunday Mail*, 3 July 2011, 34. D’Alpuget confirms that this happened in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 265.

93 Keating, ‘Keating Hits Back: “Hawke Only Survived as PM with My Help”’, *Australian*, 15 July 2010, 2.

94 Tom Dusevic, ‘Resumption of Hostilities’, *Australian*, 15 July 2010, 13.

With many of the wounds in the public and private spheres of Hawke's life now open for all to see, the media were left to reflect on the historiographical merit of the biography. The *Sydney Morning Herald* described the brawl 'an unedifying scrap'; the *Age* mused that 'neither man has a monopoly on bitterness'; Ross Fitzgerald, however, described the book as 'extremely insightful'.⁹⁵ The most scathing criticism came later from Gareth Evans, a senior minister in both the Hawke and Keating governments, who described the book as 'a work of second-rate hagiography'.⁹⁶ In the face of these critiques, d'Alpuget remained steadfast in her account: 'Hawke's brilliant political career is over but the long tail of its comet still shines.'⁹⁷ It must be said that the book included some valuable material for the historic record. For one thing, it offered a window into the collaborative way that Hawke's private office as prime minister functioned.⁹⁸ For another, it reflected critically on his sexual behaviour as prime minister, which included the resumption of his relationship with d'Alpuget in the late 1980s.⁹⁹ However, the author's proximity prompted scepticism: with Hawke beside her, d'Alpuget was questioned about how a wife could write an 'objective' account. Thus, the book was clearly designed to be another brick in an already expanding Hawke nostalgia wall.

Even as *Hawke: The Prime Minister* was creating headlines, another influential cultural product was being unleashed upon the Australian audience. On 18 July, just days after the launch of d'Alpuget's book, Channel 10 broadcast the widely anticipated *Hawke* telemovie, starring Richard Roxburgh as the leading man. An impressive audience of 1.6 million Australians tuned in to watch the show, far outstripping the sales units of any book ever written about Hawke and the earlier television audience for *Labor in Power*.¹⁰⁰ Though accounting for his extramarital affair with d'Alpuget and his earlier alcoholism, the film to some extent idolised the Hawke years, even concluding with a list of the

95 'What They're Saying ... about the Bob Hawke Biography', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 July 2010, 22; Ross Fitzgerald, 'Portrait of a Folk Hero', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 August 2010, 32.

96 Gareth Evans quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 145.

97 d'Alpuget, *Hawke: The Prime Minister*, ix.

98 d'Alpuget, *Hawke: The Prime Minister*, 67–76.

99 d'Alpuget, *Hawke: The Prime Minister*. For discussion about Hawke's infidelities as prime minister, see page 232. For discussion on the relationship with private secretary Jean Sinclair, see pages 338–39. In her later commemorative edition, d'Alpuget subtly suggested that Hawke had even been unfaithful during his marriage to her, remarking that their wedding vows spoke to 'a spiritual union rather than a fleshly one'. See Blanche d'Alpuget, *Bob Hawke: The Complete Biography* (Camberay: Simon & Schuster, 2019), 915.

100 '1.6m Watch Hawke Movie', *Northern Territory News*, 20 July 2010, 16.

Hawke government's achievements. Once again, a heroic Hawke was directly contrasted with a highly villainous Keating (Felix Williamson), whose dialogue included the infamous 'arse-end of the world' remark.¹⁰¹ Hawke and d'Alpuget agreed to cooperate with producer Richard Keddle in the pre-production phase.¹⁰² Channel 10's success was complemented by an interview with Hawke and d'Alpuget that aired immediately after the telemovie, and reportedly more than 800,000 viewers 'hung around to watch "Hawke: The Interview"'.¹⁰³ The response was not uniformly positive, of course; one reviewer in the *Herald Sun* pointed out that the film 'does not capture the character or importance of Hazel Hawke'.¹⁰⁴ Further, Hawke and d'Alpuget were themselves surprised by the somewhat 'salacious' nature of the final product.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, there was clearly a receptive audience awaiting the telemovie, which reportedly outstripped the plethora of crime shows airing simultaneously and hooked 60 per cent of the 16–54 age demographic.¹⁰⁶ Screened less than a month after the ousting of Rudd, this film arguably fed an audience that was increasingly both cynical and nostalgic.

In the three years immediately before Hawke's death, two textual products were particularly powerful in their effort to cement his legendary politico-cultural status. Importantly, both were contributed to and authorised by Hawke and his supporting cast. The first was a two-part documentary entitled *Hawke: The Larrikin & The Leader* (2018) directed by Bruce Permezel and aired on the ABC. Hawke and d'Alpuget contributed directly to the project, and private secretary Jill Saunders was personally acknowledged by the creators, as was the Hawke Prime Ministerial Library in South Australia.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, Derek Rielly's high-profile publication *Wednesdays with Bob* (2017) depended on the approval of Hawke and d'Alpuget, as well as Saunders's organisational cooperation; Blanche is quoted as saying to the journalist, 'you'll have to get it past his office manager!'¹⁰⁸ A point worth noting is that the list of interviewees is remarkably similar across both projects: wife and biographer Blanche,

101 *Hawke*, directed by Emma Freeman (Victoria: The Film Company, 2010).

102 Darren Devlyn, 'Hawke—The Movie', *Sunday Mail*, 16 August 2009, 10.

103 '1.6m Watch Hawke Movie'.

104 'What They're Saying', 22.

105 Blanche d'Alpuget, oral history interview with the author, Sydney, 21 February 2020.

106 'Hawke Movie Smashes the Opposition', *Herald Sun*, 20 July 2010, 12.

107 Credit listing found at ABC, 'Hawke: The Larrikin and the Leader', *ABC.net*, 2019, accessed 7 July 2019, www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/hawke-the-larrikin-and-the-leader/.

108 d'Alpuget quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 12.

Cabinet colleagues Gareth Evans (possibly forgiven for his comments on the 2010 biography) and Kim Beazley, and former sparring partner John Howard. For the book, Rielly also engaged with close friends of Hawke such as Richard Woolcott, John Singleton and Col Cunningham, alongside long-time Hawke ally and former staffer Ross Garnaut. For the biopic, an even larger collection of followers was gathered: Kelty and Greg Combet from the ACTU; former minister Susan Ryan; former Hawke staffers Craig Emerson, Bob Hogg and Dennis Richardson; and one-time factional ally Graham Richardson. Though hardly surprising, the common interviewee lists indicate the collective and organised nature of the legacy-building mission.

The narrative framing of the ABC bio-documentary was mostly full of praise, designed for a nostalgic audience. Roxburgh's narration began the biopic with an appeal to populist nostalgic sentiment: 'Australians have never been so distrusting of politicians, but there was a time when things were different.'¹⁰⁹ Frank Bongiorno, in reviewing the series, remarked that it was 'rather generous'.¹¹⁰ The stand-out sound bites are typical of the conventional Hawke mythology: 'Bob was always a leader' (Kelty), 'he really liked ordinary people and being with them' (Richardson), 'he worked very well with the people immediately around him' (Howard) and 'conviction overrode polls, and that's the missing ingredient today' (Rod Cameron).¹¹¹ Both episodes of the biopic opened with iconic Australian anthem 'The Boys Light Up', and the narrator's contributions helped thread together a narrative intended to idealise Hawke's character; the introduction to the first part described him as 'one of us', while the second part concluded with Hawke's betrothal to Blanche and the cliché of him returning from political heights to 'being part of the mob'.¹¹² The lexis was not unlike that heard at Hawke's funeral, intended chiefly to support and sustain the Hawke cult of personality among the viewing public.

109 *Hawke: The Larrikin and the Leader*, episode I, directed by Bruce Permezel (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2019).

110 Frank Bongiorno, 'The Larrikin as Leader: How Bob Hawke Came to be One of the Best (and Luckiest) Prime Ministers', *Conversation*, 9 February 2019, accessed 4 December 2019, theconversation.com/the-larrikin-as-leader-how-bob-hawke-came-to-be-one-of-the-best-and-luckiest-prime-ministers-91152.

111 *Hawke: The Larrikin and the Leader*, episodes I and II.

112 Roxburgh quoted in *Hawke: The Larrikin and the Leader*, episodes I and II.

Scattered through this documentary were veiled snippets of a more critical commentary, one that has been somewhat concealed in the public consciousness in recent years. Two quotations, in particular, should have given greater cause for reflection. The first came from Richardson, a factional kingmaker who backed Hawke and then Keating before backing out of parliament himself amid considerable scandal. Reflecting on Hawke's pre-prime ministerial follies, Richardson said: 'He did some appalling things when drunk ... Let's face it: a Bob Hawke today, behaving in the same manner, would never become prime minister.'¹¹³ While the statement might reflect something of the uneasiness between Hawke and a man who did more than most to bring his career undone, Richardson's remark also points to the more forgiving political context in which Hawke operated. The comment demonstrates an awareness of context that has the capacity to demythologise the Hawke persona and remind overawed viewers that Hawke's rise to power defies contemporary sensibilities towards civic expectations of politicians. The second comes from Neal Blewett, Hawke's minister for health, who effectively called out Hawke's much neglected impact on Labor's parliamentary culture during his campaign to replace Hayden:

I think that was a point at which the morality of the Labor Party was undermined, and I think that the philosophy which lay behind Hawke's decision—whatever it takes to win—triumphed at that point, and in a way the Labor Party has suffered from that decay in its morality ever since.¹¹⁴

The implications of Blewett's comment are quite severe. If we accept his assessment, then we see the actions of Hawke in 1983 as prefiguring as well as influencing those of Keating in June and December 1991, Beazley in 2003, Rudd in 2006 and 2013, and Gillard in 2010. That is to say, Hawke's trajectory to the top pioneered and legitimised the undermining of a serving leader that has characterised most leadership transitions within the Labor Party since then. One can hardly imagine any prime minister, let alone Hawke, rushing forth to claim this as their legacy. None of this, of course, dominated the media discourse about Hawke as the documentary aired; the tone of coverage was as nostalgic as the biopic itself. Troy Bramston, writing in the *Australian*, said: 'It is a pity there is

¹¹³ Richardson quoted in *Hawke: The Larrikin and the Leader*, episode I.

¹¹⁴ Blewett quoted in *Hawke: The Larrikin and the Leader*, episode II.

no Hawke in politics today, or on the horizon.’¹¹⁵ Amid this framing, neither Richardson nor Blewett are likely to shift the gravity of the Hawke legacy on this point.

Derek Rielly’s unique project *Wednesdays with Bob*, in which the subject was credited as co-author, was equally predicated on a desire to pay homage to Hawke and his government. D’Alpuget and Saunders were explicitly acknowledged for approving the project, and credit was given to the likes of Beazley, Evans and Garnaut for their enthusiastic participation.¹¹⁶ Equally important were the reviewers and journalists who helped popularise the unorthodox publication. *Wednesdays with Bob* was the subject of a major piece for the *Australian* by Trent Dalton, which was followed by the publication of an extract about Hawke and d’Alpuget’s complex relationship in the *Daily Telegraph*.¹¹⁷ A number of favourable reviews were published following the launch of the book, and several papers listed it among their top recommendations.¹¹⁸ That said, not every review was adulatory. The publisher Richard Walsh, writing in *Australian Book Review*, was backhanded in his compliments when he was not just scathing:

Rielly has served up a curate’s egg as some kind of dog’s breakfast. But, for Hawkophiles, it will be a must read. For others, there may well be enough gems sprinkled throughout to make the hagiography tolerable.¹¹⁹

Nevertheless, the book reportedly ‘recorded high sales’ throughout 2018, while other political reads by Jacqui Lambie and Barnaby Joyce languished on the shelves.¹²⁰

115 Troy Bramston, ‘Oh, for a Hawke in Canberra Now’, *Australian*, 6 February 2018, 12.

116 Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 289.

117 Trent Dalton, ‘Hawke’s One and Only Weakness’, *Weekend Australian*, 17 November 2017; Derek Rielly, ‘For the Love of Bob’, *Daily Telegraph*, 18 November 2017, 34.

118 See, for example, Troy Bramston, ‘Silver Bodgie Still Refuses to Hold Back’, *Australian*, 9 December 2017, 22; Jenny Wheeler, ‘Review of Wednesdays with Bob’, *North & South*, no. 385, April 2018; ‘Top Ten Biographies’, *Sunday Age*, 11 February 2018; Patrick Durkin, ‘The 3 Best Leadership Books for 2018’, *Australian Financial Review*, 2 January 2018, 8; Stephen Jeffrey, ‘In Short Non-Fiction: Pick of the Week’, *Canberra Times*, 20 January 2018, 17.

119 Richard Walsh, ‘Richard Walsh Reviews ‘Wednesdays with Bob’ by Bob Hawke and Derek Rielly’, *Australian Book Review*, no. 397, December 2017, accessed 19 July 2019, bit.ly/2Tcg5nG.

120 Natassia Chrysanthos, ‘“Crazy” Growth for Self-Help Books in 2018’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 December 2018, 22.

Rielly's work—that of a journalist—is written in prose that is crisp enough to engage a wide audience, but it shares the same core weaknesses as the ABC biopic; that is to say, the Hawke legend is rarely nuanced and, where it is, the audience is quite clearly positioned to endorse its glowing account of Hawke's legacy and to have their detestation of their current representatives confirmed. The author is prudently clear about his purpose:

I tell Hawke that I hope these interviews will lasso his legacy and, by virtue of what I presume is still the sparkling intellect I witnessed growing up, demonstrate the drudgery of modern politics.¹²¹

The entire narrative is subordinated to that overarching goal. From the outset, Hawke is described as Australia's 'greatest living politician' who had 'a connection to the Australian people that was never severed over four elections'.¹²² A concise list of the Hawke government's achievements is proffered, including 'four election victories'; 'the floating of the dollar' and 'deregulation of the financial system'; the Labor–ACTU Accord, which developed a limited partnership between employers and the union movement; 'reinventing Medibank as Medicare'; 'saving Antarctica from mining for fifty years'; saving the Franklin River from damming; 'compulsory superannuation'; a 40 per cent increase in secondary school retention rates; and a central role in the dismantling of apartheid.¹²³ In turn, Rielly also acknowledges the recession over which Hawke presided, but does not question its causes at great length.¹²⁴ He unearths the occasional jarring note, such as Richard Woolcott's claim that the Antarctic Treaty to protect the ice continent from mining was inspired by electoral opportunism.¹²⁵ But few of the other standard elements of the Hawke phenomenon are interrogated critically.

In personal terms, Walsh is perhaps right to describe this book as a work of hagiography in which the familiar tenets of the Hawke mythology are recycled. The well-versed (and not unreasonable) argument that Hawke was the best overseer of Cabinet government in Australia is proffered by Beazley, who describes Hawke's 'belief that he shone brighter when

121 Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 18.

122 Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 3–4.

123 Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 21–22.

124 Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 22, 236.

125 Woolcott quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 48.

other people shone with him'.¹²⁶ Hawke's intelligent political style is deemed almost to transcend the trappings of the vocation itself. Asked about the Machiavellian nature of political leadership, Hawke dismisses any suggestion that he, either as trade unionist or prime minister, ever employed cunning strategies, or indeed blatantly lied.¹²⁷ His history of alcoholism is effectively neutralised in Col Cunningham's euphemistic statement that 'when [Hawke] was drunk he was a bit different'.¹²⁸ Hawke's extramarital affairs are also discussed somewhat leniently. The upshot of these approaches is that the book conveys an image of Hawke that is consistently idolatrous in its tone and much of its content.

More so than in the ABC biopic, the shadow of Keating falls across the narrative woven throughout *Wednesdays with Bob*. A number of quotations are included simply to contrast hero Hawke with villain Keating, not least of which is the written sound bite from Paul Kelly: 'Keating was a saboteur, pure and simple'.¹²⁹ Hawke himself makes the contrast implicitly but clearly in his admission, 'I'm not a hater'.¹³⁰ Even former adversaries jump into the ring. Howard accurately describes the Hawke government's decision to float the Australian dollar in December 1983 as 'correct and courageous', though he is careful to write Keating out of that narrative.¹³¹ Garnaut pays tribute to Hawke for being able to advocate successfully on behalf of non-discriminatory immigration policies at a time of rapid economic change, but feels compelled to make the point that 'Paul couldn't have done it because Paul was a different personality'.¹³² In Hawke's view, '[Keating is] such a hater. He just hates! And he just wants to claim a bit more than he's entitled to'.¹³³ That statement in and of itself reflects a degree of possessiveness about the legacy of the reforms of the 1980s. For the critical reader, the book is highly consumable but its narrative must be read with scepticism. Beyond that readership, the intimacy and accessibility of the narrative will no doubt further enamour Hawke to an increasingly disillusioned and nostalgic body politic.

126 Beazley quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 85.

127 Hawke quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 98–99.

128 Cunningham quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 211.

129 Kelly quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 23.

130 Hawke quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 34.

131 Howard quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 183.

132 Garnaut quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 243.

133 Hawke quoted in Hawke and Rielly, *Wednesdays with Bob*, 280.

It is important that these narratives were supported by powerful accompanying images, many of which have been essential to the propagation of the ‘Hawke legend’. Sean Scalmer has argued that modern politicians have been ‘screened and groomed like the celebrities of film’.¹³⁴ This was especially the case for Hawke, who carefully managed his pictorial and televisual screen performances. Consider, for instance, the iconic picture of Hawke celebrating Australia’s victory in the America’s Cup sailing contest in 1983; this image has been reproduced in *The Hawke Memoirs*, *Hawke: The Prime Minister*, *Hawke* (the movie) and elsewhere. Famous pictures of Hawke crying, including over his own daughter’s drug affliction in 1984 and over the atrocities at Tiananmen Square in 1989, are incorporated in the Anson and d’Alpuget biographies, as well as in the ABC biopic. Video footage of the ageing Hawke sculling beers at cricket festivals served to capture the attention of younger audiences. Even the aforementioned February 1995 image of Hawke and d’Alpuget in their plush bathrobes was reconstructed ex post facto by the couple, who happily performed a recreation of the image in 2017 for *60 Minutes*.¹³⁵ With their empathetic power, images of Hawke actively serve the historiographical goals of those curating his legacy.

Conclusion

There have been successful and problematic attempts to shape and solidify the Hawke legacy over the past four decades. In print and on screen, the grand narratives that foster the Hawke legend—the ‘larrikin’ prime minister who loved ordinary people and who was prepared to overcome his own deep flaws for the good of the nation—have been successfully seared into the historical consciousness of the nation, and there they will likely endure. The Hawke government’s record appears legendary, and the personal and political dimensions of Hawke’s story are fundamentally

134 Sean Scalmer, ‘The Rise of the Insider: Memoirs and Diaries in Recent Australian Political History’, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 56, no. 1 (2010): 103, doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8497.2010.01543.x.

135 ‘Bob and Blanche Recreate their Famous “White Robe” Photo Shoot’, Nine Entertainment Co., *60 Minutes*, accessed 4 December 2019, www.9now.com.au/60-minutes/2017/clip-ciyl9n93x001n0gp5sq20nzi0.

intertwined in the public's adoration of him. Hawke himself remained politically relevant to the end of his life, starring in a series of Labor advertisements about Medicare in the 2016 election with great effect.¹³⁶

At the end of Hawke's life, there were intimations of what could become a new phase in his legacy. At the ALP campaign launch in June 2016, he appeared alongside his old foe Keating in support of Bill Shorten's electoral gambit; in May 2019, just a week before his passing, Hawke drafted a joint statement with Keating to claim shared ownership of the economic reforms of the 1980s, making the bold declaration, 'the economy is Labor's'.¹³⁷ Indeed, in her updated commemorative biography of Hawke published in late 2019, d'Alpuget wrote of the reignited 'bond of camaraderie' between the two former leaders.¹³⁸ If a fourth phase of the Hawke legend is impending, it will surely be characterised by a sense of Hawke–Keating unity lacking in earlier treatments.

That said, Hawke's passing has also liberated those in his family to tell *their* stories with much greater freedom. The aforementioned Sue Pieters-Hawke, already the author of two substantial books about her mother, moved swiftly to publish an edited collection of reminiscences about her father in late 2019.¹³⁹ Importantly, these reflections were mostly as idealistic as *Wednesdays with Bob*; former Hawke media adviser Barrie Cassidy, for instance, writes, 'somehow I reckon Bob Hawke was never more popular than he was in his fading years. That's when people reflected on what once was, and may never be again.'¹⁴⁰ These placid reminiscences have, to some extent, been offset by the bitter legal feud surrounding Hawke's estate. Indeed, controversial allegations raised by daughter Ros Dillon in relation to a sexual assault incident in the early 1980s involving a union official and Hawke ally could cause further historical debate about Hawke.¹⁴¹ It is for biographers—and the courts—to test these allegations.

136 Pamela Williams, 'Federal Election 2016: How Labor's Medicare Plot was Hatched', *Australian*, 4 July 2016.

137 Bob Hawke and Paul Keating, 'Scott Morrison is Flying in the Face of History with his Fallacious Claim', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 May 2019. For more on this, see Peter Hartcher, 'Bob Hawke and Paul Keating Reunite for the First Time in 28 Years to Endorse Labor's Economic Plan', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 May 2019.

138 d'Alpuget, *Bob Hawke*, 916.

139 Sue Pieters-Hawke with Hazel Flynn, *Hazel's Journey: A Personal Experience of Alzheimer's* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan, 2004); Sue Pieters-Hawke, *Hazel: My Mother's Story* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan, 2011); Sue Pieters-Hawke, ed., *Remembering Bob* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2019).

140 Barrie Cassidy in Pieters-Hawke, ed., *Remembering Hawke*, 155.

141 Bob Hawke as quoted by Ros Dillon, in Matt Bungard, 'Hawke Urged Daughter to Keep Rape Allegations Secret: Report', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 December 2019.

In forging his public mythology for 40 years, Hawke was greatly assisted by a loyal team of associates and supporters. D'Alpuget is owed much credit for her role in facilitating the love affair between Hawke and the Australian public through her biographies. Her stellar 1982 biography helped propel him towards the prime ministership in early 1983 and, with their marriage in 1995, her approval and contributions were provident in all projects thereafter. However, d'Alpuget's role should not prevent us from observing other loyalists involved in Hawke's biographical canon. Logistically, Saunders is widely recognised as the major gatekeeper to Hawke's reputational preservation and, by the 2010s, a familiar list of contributors was forming, with the likes of Beazley, Evans, Howard, Emerson, Garnaut and Kelty. Some are less surprising than others, but all are committed to particular components of the Hawke legend, and have been crucial in ensuring its success.

Further, the combination of written and filmed productions has ensured that Hawke's narrative was able to reach the largest possible audience. That audience, in turn, though briefly alienated in the 1990s, has increasingly favoured idolatry and nostalgic treatments of Hawke, contrary to the displeasure they feel towards the political generation succeeding him. This will no doubt have the effect of entrenching our deep sense of political nostalgia in the present, and will further blind us to the fact that the Hawke government grappled (and sometimes failed to grapple) with some of the socioeconomic dilemmas that continue to face Australia today, most notably the political plight of the First Australians. Additionally, Hawke's adeptness at packaging his biographical narrative for a public audience cannot be endlessly repeated, for Australians are increasingly wary of the life stories that their politicians display. At her husband's memorial, d'Alpuget spoke of a 'life triumphantly well lived'. In no small measure due to her, we may also speak of a life triumphantly well written.

The Internal and External Manifestations of Cultural Nationalism: A Borobudur Case Study

Chelsie Baldwin

The Australian National University

Abstract: *This essay investigates how the Buddhist monument Borobudur has been used to develop Indonesia's national identity through the process of cultural nationalism. Indonesia is an expansive archipelago that unites a diverse range of ethnic and religious groups under a singular national identity. Its heterogeneous cultural heritage has been appropriated since gaining independence in 1945 to unite the state under a collective history. The Borobudur temple complex was constructed by the Sailendra dynasty in c. 800 CE. A minority of Indonesians hold a religious affinity to the site, and fewer still are descendants of the Sailendra dynasty. Yet the temple is considered a national monument of Indonesian cultural heritage. The construction of a shared past has been studied as a broad concept in relation to nationalist ideology. However, considering the specific case study of Borobudur within the context of cultural nationalism in Indonesia allows for an in-depth consideration of the malleability of cultural monuments to meet a specific agenda. This article aims to highlight the significance of cultural consciousness to an understanding of how nationalist ideology is disseminated in Indonesia. It will consider how successive Indonesian governments mobilised Borobudur to suit a sociopolitical purpose, and how these were manifested internally, within the Indonesian nation, and externally, within the international community.*

The development of cultural nationalism in Indonesia is bilateral. It denotes the unification of heterogeneous populations within national borders, while concurrently asserting a place for the Indonesian nation-state within the global community. The seemingly paradoxical manifestations of internal and external Indonesian nationalism can be comprehended by exploring the cultural nationalist discourse surrounding the Buddhist *stūpa*, Borobudur. Constructed in c. 800 CE under the Sailendra dynasty,

Borobudur fell into a state of disrepair with the spread of Islam across the archipelago in the fifteenth century.¹ It was subsequently disinterred during the colonial period through archaeological inquiry. While these historical implications may ostensibly confine Borobudur's contemporary role to that of an archaeological spectacle, this article contends that the modularisation of the site that occurred during the twentieth century has facilitated its mobilisation for the perpetuation of a national Indonesian identity. It should, however, be considered that there is, in practice, considerable variety in how Indonesians assert and assimilate nationalist ideas. Nationalist ideology is unique in its manifestations both within a nation itself, and within the global community. Accordingly, it can be described in comprehensive terms. By considering the manifestations of both internal and external nationalism through a historiographical survey of Borobudur, the temple's role in the perpetuation of a national Indonesian identity will be made explicit. This will thereby posit a deeper understanding of the historical manifestations of cultural politics in Indonesia.

Nations, Nationalism and Culture: Definitions and Concepts

An understanding of the historiographical concepts and definitions of nation and nationality are essential to the consideration of cultural nationalism presented in this article. The concept of the nation, and its various sub-branches, are terms that are not inherently self-evident. These terms are limited by virtue of their interpretation. Benedict Anderson defines a nation as an imagined political community that is both limited and sovereign.² The limitations Anderson refers to denote the fixed yet changeable geographic borders, beyond which other nations lie. Anderson's concept of sovereignty, born from Enlightenment and Revolutionary thought, inherently necessitates the nation-state to be free, albeit in some instances under a religious structure.³ The nation-state in an administrative sense is not inherently bound by shared

1 R. E. Jordaen, 'The Sailendras: The Status of the Ksatriya Theory, and the Development of Hindu-Javanese Temple Architecture', *Bijdragen Tot De Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 155, no. 2 (1999): 210, doi.org/10.1163/22134379-90003875.

2 Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 7.

3 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7.

ideology or ethnicity. Thus, a cooperative legitimacy has to be established for nationhood to unite diverse groups under a shared administration. The Republic of Indonesia typifies this diversity. The Indonesian archipelago subsumes groups of different religious, linguistic and cultural ideologies over a vast geographical region. For the Indonesian nation-state to exist cooperatively in spite of these differences, an emotional legitimacy towards the nation must be established. Within this case study the way in which Borobudur has been mobilised behind Indonesian nationalism to perpetuate this legitimacy will be considered.

Anderson articulates how narratives are established to consolidate the nation-state through a shared past. He suggests that ‘amnesias’—a loss of collective memory brought about by a collective change in consciousness (e.g. colonial occupation or independence)—are susceptible to being filled by narratives set in a ‘homogeneous, empty time’.⁴ Eric Hobsbawm considers these narratives through the concept of ‘invented traditions’. He considers that invented traditions are legitimised by historic reference and repetition, and utilised to unite diverse communities through a shared national identity.⁵ Anderson suggests that these historic references can be remembered, adapted or invented to meet a specific agenda.⁶ He argues that the emotional legitimacy attributed to a nation (by both its citizens and the global community) is apparent when considered within the context of cultural heritage. Through a dual consideration of Anderson’s and Hobsbawm’s concepts of imagined communities and invented traditions, respectively, this case study of Borobudur will allow for a means of testing and extending their theoretical positions.

The emotional legitimacy attributed to the Republic of Indonesia, and the sentiments of nationhood and nationalism that manifest from this legitimacy, can be considered through the concept of cultural nationalism. Cultural nationalism is the process by which the aesthetic manifestations of human achievement are mobilised to legitimise and glorify a specific nation-state. It is imperative to the process of national unification as it establishes a shared affiliation (invented or otherwise) to an aesthetic tradition. Considerations of Borobudur tend to be limited to the aesthetic or archaeological implications that can be deduced through

4 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 24.

5 Eric Hobsbawm, ‘Introduction: Inventing Traditions’, in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 4.

6 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 179.

the site itself. These readings of the site are articulated in A. Foucher's *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art and Other Essays in Indian and Central-Asian Archaeology*, Luis Gomez and Hiram W. Woodward's *Barabudur: History and Significance of a Buddhist Monument* and F. D. K. Bosch's *Selected Studies in Indonesian Archaeology* to name but a few. The tendency to omit the sociopolitical implications of the Borobudur temple within successive societies necessitates this study. By departing from the conventional interpretation of Borobudur as an art object in favour of an examination of its relation to its material culture, this study will facilitate understanding of how the Republic of Indonesia manifests its nationalist discourse through its appreciation of an esteemed monument of cultural significance: the Borobudur temple.

Internal Nationalism: The Unification of Indonesia

The disinterment of ruins, and their subsequent transformation into archaeological monuments, has created a united past beyond colonial occupation. The visual legacy of the Sailendra Empire is emphatic. At the acme of its power, the Sailendra Empire is thought to have significantly subsumed the South-East Asian mainland and the Indo-Malay archipelago. Following the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition, the Sailendras erected a number of religious monuments throughout their domain: Borobudur was among them.⁷

A cosmogram of concentric square and circular stone terraces, Borobudur's pyramidal structure mimics the surrounding mountainous landscape of the Central Javanese region. H. N. Seiburgh was the first to consider the site for its cosmogram architecture, and illustrated a series of drawings mapping the temple floor plan in 1837–38.⁸ The temple structure is consistent with the mandala of Buddhist symbolic architecture and design. Borobudur's floor plan encourages a circumambulation of the site, starting at a disinterred basement. The square terraces of the lower temple form four galleries, depicting a succession of *Jātaka*, *avadāna* and *sūtra* that inform the experience of the site. The action of pilgrimage is mirrored in the reliefs of the second gallery, which depict the journey of

7 Jordaen, 'The Sailendras', 210.

8 H. N. Seiburgh, *Plattegrond van de Borobudur*, 1838–1837, ink on paper, 35.5 x 51 cm, Leiden, Museum of Ethnology, RV-37-903-7.

Sudhana as articulated in the *Gandavyūha sūtra*, composed in Sanskrit by the fourth century. A series of illustrations from around 1814 depict the architectural details of the second gallery.⁹ The illustrations are attributed to Dutch engineer H. C. Cornelius and his team. There are five iconographic depictions of the wisdom of Buddha represented at Borobudur, with four articulating one of the four sides of the temple structure. These Buddhas are illustrated in *Drawing of the Five Buddhas Depicted on Candi Borobudur* (1837–38) by H. N. Seiburgh. Akshobya is illustrated on the eastern temple wall, Ratnasambhava articulates the southern, Amitabha the western and Amoghasiddhi the northern wall. Above the didactic levels are three stages of circular terraces. The terraces are adorned with 72 bell-shaped *stūpa* (hemispherical structures typical of Buddhist architecture). Inside these *stūpa*, the fifth Buddha, Vairocana, is conscealed, obscured in the most part by *stūpa* wall. A latticed fenestration of the *stūpa* (diamond on the lower terraces and square on the upper) reveals a glimpse of Vairocana inside. The implications of archaeology, pillaging, tourism and time have resulted in damage to a number of the *stūpa*, and the Buddhas enclosed to varying degrees. At the acme of the Borobudur temple is a central *stūpa* with an unfinished Buddha inside. The Borobudur temple typifies an iconographic depiction of Buddhist Mahāyāna philosophy.

The spread of Islam across the archipelago by the fifteenth century cultivated an attitude of superstition towards the monument by the Central Javanese people. The significance of Hindu-Buddhist temples across the region was lost to ideological amnesia, and Borobudur fell into a state of disrepair until colonial occupation. Dutch trade arrived in the region during the late sixteenth century, reigniting the prestige with which Borobudur was considered through the colonial affinity towards archaeological investigation. The condition of the *stūpa* as the Dutch revived it is depicted in a series of photographs in the National Museum of World Cultures in the Netherlands. The images juxtapose the mountainous landscape of the region with the rubble of the fragmented monument.¹⁰

9 H. C. Cornelius, *Hoekfragment van de Borobudur*, 1814, ink on paper, 20 x 31 cm, Leiden, Museum of Ethnology, RV-1403-3563.

10 Unknown, *Uitzicht Vanaf de Borobudur*, 1890–1910, photograph, 16.2 x 21.9 cm, Netherlands, National Museum of World Cultures, 7082-nf-332-9; unknown, *De Borobudur*, 1890–1910, photograph, 15.7 x 21.7 cm, Netherlands, National Museum of World Cultures, 7082-nf-332-10; unknown, *De Borobudur l.o. Nr 87*, 1890–1910, photograph, 16.2 x 21.8 cm, Netherlands, National Museum of World Cultures, 7082-nf-332-11.

Affinity with archaeological inquiry during this period was not unique to the colonial experience within Indonesia nor colonially occupied lands more broadly. Within Great Britain, for example, the archaeological excavation of Stonehenge was used as a marker of cultural uniqueness.¹¹ The Indonesian archipelago was united under Dutch hegemony and, by the 1920s, the Dutch East Indies was at its geographical apogee. The geographical boundaries at the acme of the Dutch East Indies most closely delineate the region that would become the independent Republic of Indonesia in 1945.¹² Dutch colonisers used archaeological monuments to create alternative legitimacies for their regime in this region.

‘Rediscovered’ under the authority of Sir Thomas Raffles in 1814, Borobudur was subsequently surveyed through a number of state-sanctioned commissions.¹³ German photographer Adolph Schaefer was commissioned to produce daguerreotypes of the site in 1845. In 1851, under the authority of F. C. Wilsen, a systematic study of Borobudur’s bas-reliefs was produced. Dr C. Leemans, in his role as director of the Public Museum of Antiquities, Leiden, published Wilsen’s handwritten recollections and descriptions of this study, as well as documents by J. F. G. Brumund, in the first academic manuscript on Borobudur in 1874.¹⁴ Javanese court photographer, Kassian Cephas, produced a thorough photographic survey of the site prior to the turn of the nineteenth century. Cephas’s photographs from this series, *Bas-Reliefs van de Verborgten Voet van de Borobudur* [*Bas-Reliefs of the Hidden Foot of the Borobudur*], can be seen in the Museum of Ethnology collection in Leiden.¹⁵ The collection and publication of these sources through Dutch institutions is significant. These studies revived the ancient prestige of the site and allowed the Dutch metropole to emerge as the guardian of generalised local traditions within the colony. Through this process Borobudur was assimilated into the map of the colony, linking its prestige to the colonial homeland and

11 Linda Marie Zimmerman, *Representations of Stonehenge in British Art (1300–1900): Antiquity, Ideology, and Nationalism* (Ann Arbor: Stanford University, 1997).

12 Bernard Lewis, *History: Remembered, Recovered, Invented* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 12; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 11.

13 Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff, ‘Exchange and the Protection of Java’s Antiques: A Transnational Approach to the Problem of Heritage in Colonial Java’, *The Journal of Asian Studies* 72, no. 4 (2013): 893, doi.org/10.1017/S0021911813001599.

14 C. Leemans, *Bôrô-Budour: Dans l’île de Java, Dessiné par ou sous la direction de Mr F. C. Wilsen, avec texte descriptif et explicative, rédigé, d’après les mémoires manuscrits et imprimés de Mm. F. C. Wilsen, J. F. G. Brumund et autres documents* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1874).

15 K. Céphas, *Bas-Reliefs van de Verborgten Voet van de Borobudur*, 1890–1891, photolithograph on paper, 16 x 22 cm, Leiden, Museum of Ethnology, RV-1403-3788-1 – RV-1403-3788-160.

creating a historical depth to the imposing regime.¹⁶ An example of the mapping process is evident in Folio Atlas 553 in the Grand Atlas of the Dutch East India Company. Engineer H. C. Cornelius described the map, presently in the collection of the Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, as a figurative plan of the location of Borobudur.¹⁷ The map in reality shows little topographical data, with roads, mountains and rivers scarcely and inaccurately depicted on the map. Yet, its appearance in the Grand Atlas of the Dutch East India Company asserted Borobudur as regalia for the colonial state. The charting of occupied territories through this process established unified boundaries, thereby collating diverse communities under one administrative centre.

Archaeological practice also enabled the restoration of ruins, transforming them into regalia for the colonial state. This is apparent through a series of studies by H. N. Seiburgh. Seiburgh produced an illustrated survey of Borobudur, as well as the Central Javanese temples of Prambanan and Candi Sewu, at the time of their excavation by colonial archaeologists.¹⁸ The restoration of Borobudur in the early twentieth century facilitated its nationalistic reinterpretation. Converted through a process of ‘museum-isation’, the modularised site could be adapted as a state emblem irrespective of regime change.¹⁹ The Dutch added fences, manicured lawns, explanatory tablets and promenades to the complex. These additions to the site are depicted in the aerial photograph *Luchtfoto van de Borobudur* (1921–39) taken by the Luchtvaart Afdeeling [the Aviation Department of the Dutch East Indies], which displays the roads and lawns surrounding Borobudur at the time.²⁰ The secularisation of the site with the prohibition of religious ceremonies and pilgrimages augmented this process.²¹ Through the archaeological processes of mapping and museum-isation,

16 Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff, ‘Conserving the Past, Mobilizing the Indonesian Future: Archaeological Sites, Regime Change and Heritage Politics in Indonesia in the 1950s’, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volk* 167, no. 4 (2011): 408, doi.org/10.1163/22134379-90003578.

17 Unknown, *Kaart*, 1814, ink on paper, 32 x 50 cm, Leiden, Museum of Ethnology, RV-1403-3550.

18 H. N. Sieburgh, *Plattegrond van de Candi Sewu*, 1837–1838, paper, 51.5 x 35.5 cm, Netherlands, Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, RV-37-903-12; H. N. Sieburgh, *Halve opstand en doorsnede van de hoofdtempel van Loro Jonggrang* 51.5 x 35.5 cm, Netherlands, Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, RV-37-903-15.

19 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 181.

20 Luchtvaart Afdeeling, *Luchtfoto van de Borobudur*, 1921–1939, cellulose acetate photograph on paper, 9 x 12 cm, Amsterdam, Tropenmuseum, TM-10015635.

21 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 181.

Borobudur became modular—capable of conforming to a multiplicity of ideological agendas.²² The Dutch regime had thereby set the precedent for the mobilisation of Borobudur by their independent successors.

The ideological mobilisation of Borobudur in post-independence Indonesia exhibited marked continuities with its colonial predecessors. The government of the newly independent nation attempted to imbue on its citizens that they shared a ‘common past, a unified present, and a hopeful future’ in an attempt to supplant the potentially tenuous loyalty often afforded to administrations of newly established nations.²³ The geographic expanse of the Indonesian archipelago—coalescing diverse communities within its national borders—ensured that a legitimate collective history was absent. The collective experience of the Indonesian nation-state in its geographic entirety amounts to colonial oppression and the subsequent struggle for independence.²⁴ Shared histories therefore had to be invented beyond this to establish a comprehensive and collective national past.²⁵ The inheritance of an already modularised and secularised archaeological monument afforded Indonesian nationalist proponents the ability to perpetuate cultural nationalism that utilised the Borobudur site.²⁶ This manifestation of cultural nationalism was multidimensional, delineating a shared struggle in addition to a shared cultural history.

The Republic of Indonesia upheld a particular vision of its colonial past that extended beyond historical progression. The anti-colonial sentiments employed by nationalists in the Dutch East Indies were sustained into the period following independence to unite the archipelago.²⁷ The imposed authority of the Dutch East Indies subsumed an array of communities who had not previously shared a unified political identity. Examples

22 Hobsbawm, ‘Inventing Traditions’, 4.

23 Michael Wood, *Official History in Modern Indonesia: New Order Perceptions and Counterviews* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 2.

24 Hobsbawm, ‘Inventing Traditions’, 2.

25 Hobsbawm, ‘Inventing Traditions’, 4.

26 National identity in Indonesia has taken numerous forms beyond the cultural nationalism perpetuated through the case study of Borobudur. Brown, for example, considers the implications of the Indonesian National Games on the construction of nationalism in autonomous Indonesia. While discourses such as these fall beyond the scope of this case study, they are of significance to the cultural nationalism propagated in the Indonesian nation state. Colin Brown, ‘Sport, Modernity and Nation Building: The Indonesian National Games of 1951 and 1953’, *Bijdragen Tot De Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 164, no. 4 (2008): 431, doi.org/10.1163/22134379-90003650; Joshua Barker, ‘Beyond Bandung: Developmental Nationalism and (Multi)cultural Nationalism in Indonesia’, *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (2008): 527, doi.org/10.1080/01436590801931496.

27 Edward Aspinall, ‘The New Nationalism in Indonesia’, *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* 3, no. 1 (2015): 76, doi.org/10.1002/app5.111.

of this can also be seen with British colonies in Zimbabwe, Botswana and Ghana; and German colonies in Tanzania. In these instances, as in Indonesia, colonialism enabled a recognisable and figurative authority over annexed spaces as a means of legitimising authority and bolstering unity. Political leaders of these nations following independence—Botswana's Sir Seretse Khama, Ghana's President Kwame Nkrumah and Tanzania's President Julius Nyerere—have each expressed sentiments regarding the need to recover an 'African past'.²⁸ Zimbabwe is named after the regions most renowned archaeological site, Great Zimbabwe.²⁹ This asserts a connection between the nation-state and the great empire of the past. These sentiments echo the response to the colonial experience in independent Indonesia. Sukarno, Indonesia's first president (1945–67) and a nationalist proponent, generalised the experience of colonial occupation, suggesting that *Indonesia* had endured 350 years of colonialism (despite the fact that the region was geographically united only in the 1920s, and administratively united as an independent nation-state in 1945).³⁰ Sukarno thereby extended Indonesia's national history beyond its twentieth-century origins, creating historic depth to the unification of the nation. The logical continuation of this is that the ancient past that predated colonial occupation united the Indonesian nation. Sukarno considered the geographical scope and political power of the Sailendra dynasty impressive, as it delineated an idyllic past that both preceded and contrasted the oppression of Dutch control.³¹ By implying connections between the Republic of Indonesia and the Sailendra Empire, a unified national history was established. This pre-colonial memory, while not historically consistent, united the communities that fell within the territorial boundaries of the late Dutch East Indies under a shared past.

An invented narrative confined largely to archaeological histories, as outlined by Anderson, has filled this historical amnesia.³² These narratives can be considered through Hobsbawm's concept of repetition and reference to the past as a means of legitimising invented traditions. Reference to Borobudur's collaborative history is apparent in a speech

28 Paul Lane, 'Possibilities for a Postcolonial Archaeology in Sub-Saharan Africa: Indigenous and Usable Pasts', *World Archaeology* 43, no. 1 (2011): 12, doi.org/10.1080/00438243.2011.544886.

29 Brian Raftopoulos and Alois Mlambo. *Becoming Zimbabwe. A History from the Pre-Colonial Period to 2008* (Harare: Weaver Press, 2009): xix, doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvk3gmpr.

30 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 11; Wood, *Official History in Modern Indonesia*, xii.

31 Wood, *Official History in Modern Indonesia*, 41.

32 R. E. Jordaan, 'Why the Sailendras Were Not a Javanese Dynasty', *Indonesia and the Malay World* 34, no. 98 (2006): 25, doi.org/10.1080/13639810600650711.

made by Tien Suharto—the wife of Indonesia's second president, Suharto (1967–98)—to the Working Conference of Provincial Governors on 1 December 1975:

If in the olden days, our ancestors worked co-operatively together to create the Borobudur, which now commands the attention of the whole world, today we too can work co-operatively to build the *Taman Mini Indonesia Indah* (Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Project) [A culture-based recreational park that encapsulates the collections of Indonesian architecture, clothing, and performing arts].³³

Tien Suharto used language that conveyed a collaborative and glorified history through mention of ancestors, cooperation and the global importance of the Borobudur monument. The audience of provincial governors is significant, as Hobsbawm posits that imagined historical discourse emanates from top-down approaches.³⁴ The monumentality of Borobudur is further reified through its presence in the Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Project more generally, as its inclusion in the park legitimises its centrality to the Indonesian past through its significance to Indonesian cultural tourism. The equivocal nature of Tien Suharto's assertion is evocative of a fabricated past, which attests to the mobilisation of Borobudur behind a national identity that extends beyond historical and geographical continuity.

Nationalist sentiments and self-censorship were not limited to political discourse; Indonesian historians also recorded them in an academic capacity. Dutch involvement in the Indonesian Archaeological Service continued until 1957 and, further to this, the writings and teachings of Dutch scholars were seminal for the early generations of Indonesian archaeologists and historians.³⁵ Dutch archaeologist Bernet Kempers was director of the service until 1953. The Indonesian archaeologists and directors who inherited the Indonesian Archaeological Service, such as R. Soekmono and Satyawati Soerjono Soerjo, were educated by their Dutch predecessors. As a consequence, understanding of the Sailendra dynasty's origin is convoluted by historiographic uncertainty and invented histories inherited by colonial archaeological practice. Palpable

33 Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 176.

34 Hobsbawm, 'Inventing Traditions', 9.

35 Bloembergen and Eickhoff, 'Conserving the Past', 430.

implications and imaginings from Borobudur itself are preferred over academic readings of the site, as they could easily illustrate the nationalist vision.³⁶ Indonesian archaeologist and historian Soekmono infers abstract connections between the Indonesian citizenry and the Sailendra dynasty:

The modern Indonesians are directly descended from the builders of the *candi* [Hindu-Buddhist temple], and are therefore heirs to these remains of the noble works of their ancestors. Such a conclusion is hard to disagree with: the *candi* still occupy a special place in the hearts of the Indonesian people. Their value is difficult to explicate, for it is not a rational, normative quality but an emotional and spiritual one, and can only be truly felt by the heirs themselves.³⁷

Soekmono's assertion that the affinity felt by Indonesian visitors to Hindu-Buddhist temples is a testament to the Javanese builders of the sites exemplifies Hobsbawm's definition of invented traditions. An implication of this assertion is that the already limited understanding of the Sailendra dynasty's origins are further convoluted. This facilitates the acceptance of such invented histories, as the lack of extant evidence available from the sites becomes diluted in historiographic writings of the invented histories. Therefore, a consideration of Borobudur highlights the unification of heterogeneous populations within national borders not only ideologically but also historiographically.

The national historical discourse associated with Borobudur was disseminated through the reproducibility of the site inherited from colonial archaeological survey. Technological developments in print and photography made this reproducibility possible, while the dissemination occurred as a continuation of the colonial tendency to present Borobudur as state regalia. Through the production of technically sophisticated archaeological reports, photographic and lithographic reconstructions, and illustrated books for educational and public consumption, Borobudur was iconised to promote an identifiable signifier of the riches of the Dutch colony.³⁸ A collection of 'early Indonesian postcards' collated by Leo Haks and Steven Wachlin highlights how an iconised Borobudur was disseminated globally during colonial occupation through this

36 Bloembergen and Eickhoff, 'Conserving the Past', 431.

37 R. Soekmono, 'The Candi as a Cultural Pusaka', in *Art of Indonesia*, ed. H. Soebadio (London: Tauris Parke, 1993), 51.

38 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 181.

medium. With the postcards published by companies such as Firma Sigrist and Grand Hotel 'De Djokja' (1918),³⁹ this collection articulates the importance the Dutch colonial power attached to the dissemination of Borobudur as an important cultural symbol.

Manifestations of Borobudur as an icon following independence are multifaceted continuations of this phenomenon. Images of the site are depicted on postage stamps, the national currency, modern and contemporary Indonesian art, and school textbooks. Artists central to Indonesia's artistic canon, such as Affandi and Srihadi Sudarsono, explored iconographic representations of Borobudur in multiple iterations throughout their oeuvres.⁴⁰

From a contemporary perspective, the exhibition of Dyan Anggraini's series entitled *Perempuan (di) Borobudur* [*Women of the Borobudur Temple*] (20 February – 5 March 2018) promotes this iconological reading. The exhibition, displayed at Galeri Nasional Indonesia [National Gallery of Indonesia] offers a social critique of the women supporting the temple through an iconological articulation of the working conditions they are subjected to.⁴¹ The display of the exhibition at the Galeri Nasional Indonesia is a testament to the centrality of Borobudur to Indonesia's national identity. The marketisation of the monument is a modern progression of the phenomenon of dissemination through iconisation. Borobudur-themed hotels and fast food chains mark the unconscious lineal descendant of colonial archaeology.⁴² By repeatedly mobilising Borobudur as a national symbol both at an institutional and societal level, the site is easily recognisable as an Indonesian monument maintained by a unified Indonesian society.

As Islam maintains its status as religious majority in Indonesia, the role of Borobudur in the perpetuation of cultural nationalism has at times been contentious. In 1985 Islamic extremists bombed Borobudur.⁴³

39 Leo Haks and Steven Wachlin, *Indonesia: 500 Early Postcards* (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 2004), 164–65.

40 Sardjana Sumichan, *Affandi* (Jakarta: Bina Lestari Budaya Foundation, 2007), 313; Srihadi Sudarsono, *Borobudur II*, 1982, oil on canvas, 95 x 140 cm, Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta.

41 Suwarno Wisetrotomo, *Dyan Anggraini: Perempuan (di) Borobudur* (Jakarta: Galeri Nasional Indonesia, 2018).

42 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 181.

43 Mark P. Hampton, 'Heritage, Local Communities and Economic Development', *Annals of Tourism Research* 32, no. 4 (2005): 737; Anonymous, 'Asia: Arrest of a Smiling Extremist; Terrorism in Indonesia', *The Economist* 32 (14 August 2010): 396.

While the incident had no casualties, the bombing damaged nine *stūpas*.⁴⁴ Authorities used the attack as justification for vigilance against the Islamic militancy, attributing the bombing to the 'extreme right'.⁴⁵ Perpetrators of the attack were purportedly acting in retaliation for the Tanjung Priok massacre of September 1984.⁴⁶ Official reports suggest that the incident resulted in 24 fatalities.⁴⁷ President Suharto's condemnation of the attack in a *United Press International* article published on the day of the bombing is indicative of the administrative response:

President Suharto denounced those responsible, saying they 'stand for people who have no sense of *national pride*, considering that the Borobudur temple constitutes a *national*, even a *world monument*'.⁴⁸

Suharto's statement secularises the incident, placing precedence on the monumentality of Borobudur over the religious implications of the attack. Bloembergen suggests political leaders whose national consciousness was formed during colonial times were insouciant about the presence of Hindu-Buddhist iconography and sculpture at such temples.⁴⁹ Moreover, Anderson contends that the Buddhist iconography at Borobudur required neutralisation to fulfil its role in modern Indonesian heritage politics.⁵⁰ The bilateral response by the Suharto administration, both using the attack as a means to denounce Islamic militants as well as secularise the site on a global platform, highlights the ability of the site to be used to meet a variety of political agendas.

44 While the perpetuation of extremist terrorism does not necessarily depict universal sentiments towards the site by the Islamic community, that there is religious dissent towards the site, albeit at the most extreme level, is worth noting.

45 R. William Liddle, 'The Islamic Turn in Indonesia: A Political Explanation', *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55, no. 3 (1996): 622, doi.org/10.2307/2646448.

46 Military troops fired on demonstrators at Tanjung Priok in Jakarta's dockland. The demonstrators were demanding the release of local mosque officials that were being held by troops after a confrontation at As Saadah Mosque. The mosque officials had been told to remove brochures and banners critical of the government and, upon their refusal, violent confrontation ensued, leading to the aforementioned arrests. There is discrepancy between accounts of the Tanjung Priok Massacre, with eyewitness accounts suggesting that up to several hundred people were possibly killed. Carmel Budiardjo, ' Militarism and Repression in Indonesia', *Third World Quarterly* 8, no. 4 (1986): 1233.

47 Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, 'The Anti-Shi'a Movement in Indonesia', *Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict*, no. 27 (2016): 7.

48 'Bombs Explode at Buddhist Temple', *United Press International*, 21 January 1985 (emphasis added).

49 Bloembergen and Eickhoff, 'Conserving the Past', 431.

50 Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, 'Cartoons and Monuments: The Evolution of Political Communication under the New Order', in *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia*, ed. Karl D. Jackson and Lucian W. Pye (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 179–81.

Borobudur's transformation from religious *stūpa* to national monument, according to Shelly Errington, was completed with opening of the Taman Wisata Candi Borobudur dan Prambanan [Temples of Borobudur and Prambanan Tourist Park] in 1983.⁵¹ With the opening of the park, President Suharto announced that Buddhist ceremonies could no longer be held at Borobudur.⁵² Although this is the case, Borobudur continues to be marketed as a site for pilgrimage, and a number of both domestic and international Buddhists still observe Waisak (Vesik or Buddha Jayanti) at the site. Waisak observes the birth, enlightenment and death of Siddhārtha Gautama, otherwise known as Gautama Buddha, on whose teachings Buddhism was founded. The annual celebration of Waisak at Borobudur therefore contradicts the secularisation of the site. The celebration of Waisak has precedent at Borobudur irrespective of its intermittent suppression. A *Star Weekly* article printed in 1959 stated that the 'modern' Waisak tradition began in the 1930s, with pilgrims 'held to a confined environment'.⁵³ The role of Borobudur as a religious sanctuary in contemporary times arises from the modularity of the site that allows it to be mobilised for a multiplicity of purposes. However, it should be considered that, in practice, there is considerable variety in how Indonesians integrate, articulate and act upon cultural nationalist ideas and, by extension, ideological discourses more broadly.

The unification of diverse ethnicities under the Indonesian nation-state necessitates a reconsideration of the history of multicultural exchange in Indonesia. The cross-cultural exchanges that have occurred historically between Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and animist ideologies across the archipelago have had consequences on the site beyond merely temporal implications. Multiethnic religious exchanges manifest as part of a shared, collaborative past, rather than as separate histories connected through religious-political conflict.⁵⁴ Therefore, the site generates a bilateral religious environment, consisting of the Buddhist site itself, and the greater multicultural connotations of the surrounding region in general.⁵⁵

51 Shelly Errington, 'Making Progress on Borobudur: An Old Monument in New Order', *Visual Anthropology Review* 9, no. 2 (1993): 45, doi.org/10.1525/var.1993.9.2.32.

52 Errington, 'Making Progress on Borobudur', 45.

53 Keng Po, 'Borobudur Hidup Kembali Dalam Tjahaja Lilin: Djemaah Membandjir Sebagai Dalam 10 Abad Jang Lampau Perajaan Jang Berlangsung Semalam Suntut' ['Borobudur Alive in Tjahaja Candle: Congregation Flooded as in the Past 10 Centuries, the Pilgrimage Lasted All Night Long'], *Star Weekly*, no. 701 (1959): 21.

54 Bloembergen and Eickhoff, 'Conserving the Past', 426.

55 Snjezana Zoric, 'The Stupa of Borobudur—A Place of Inner Pilgrimage', *Spatial Practices* 14 (2012): 32, doi.org/10.1163/9789401208130_003.

To the local Muslim population, Borobudur is a site of celebration during the Idul Fitri festival that takes place at the end of Ramadhan. The Muslim community provide offerings to the Buddhist monument and perform traditional ceremonies, including *wayang* (shadow) puppet shows.⁵⁶ The multidimensional identity of Borobudur therefore remains, for the most part, undisturbed, in spite of the oscillating nature of religious censorship by the relevant authoritative powers.

Although autonomous Indonesian governments utilised Borobudur to propagate and maintain a national identity, they were at times unsuccessful in their endeavours. A consideration of the relationship between state administration and the local community of the Borobudur region reveals the implications of cultural nationalism at the expense of local tradition. Daud A. Tanudirjo and R. Soekmono agree that, after colonial archaeological excavation, the apprehension felt towards Borobudur by those from surrounding communities was replaced with a sense of pride at the architectural accomplishments of their ancestors.⁵⁷ The Indonesian Government established a centralised management policy in which the local people were marginalised. Soon after Indonesian independence, the structural integrity of Borobudur was compromised by water seepage. Borobudur was consequently declared an endangered monument. In 1972, UNESCO began an international campaign for the restoration of Borobudur. Through this campaign, a policy for the management of the site was established. The local communities surrounding Borobudur were relocated as a result of this policy and, consequently, their mosques, kiosks, cemeteries and gardens were lost. The people received minimal compensation for their requisitioned land.

Tanudirjo defines the loss of local cultural and spiritual identity as a type of landscape spoliation.⁵⁸ The establishment of an invented national identity occurred at the expense of a legitimate local one. The local community's 'grounds for discontent' were illustrated in an article published in

56 Masanori Nagaoka, 'Buffering Borobudur for Socio-Economic Development', *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development* 5, no. 2 (2015): 144, doi.org/10.1108/JCHMSD-11-2013-0049.

57 Daud A. Tanudirjo, Jurusan Arkeologi and Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, 'Changing Perspectives on the Relationship between Heritage, Landscape and Local Communities: A Lesson from Borobudur', *Transcending the Culture—Nature Divide in Cultural Heritage* (Terra Australis 36), ed. Sally Brockwell, Sue O'Connor and Denis Byrne (Canberra: ANU Press, 2013): 66, doi.org/10.22459/TA36.12.2013.05; R. Soekmono, *Chandi Borobudur: A Monument of Mankind*, English ed. (Paris: UNESCO Press, 1976), 4.

58 Tanudirjo, Arkeologi and Ilmu Budaya, 'Changing Perspectives', 70.

Inside Indonesia, reprinted with amendments from the Human Rights Forum of January 1985. The article highlights the contention between the centralised management of the Taman Wisata Candi Borobudur dan Prambanan and surrounding communities. Director of the park H. Boediardjo offered conflicting purposes for the relocation of local communities. Initially, he suggested that the establishment of the park was primarily for tourism; however, he subsequently contradicted this sentiment, suggesting it was for the preservation of the monument and the projection of historical appreciation.⁵⁹ In a declaration titled ‘The Voice from the Heart of the Borobudur People’, residents from surrounding villages expressed their support for the preservation of the temple for the common or national interest.⁶⁰ They suggested, however, that the park be constructed on the uninhabited land to the temples north, south and west.⁶¹ Constructing the site there would ensure the occupied land to the east would not be disturbed, and the surrounding communities would not be dispossessed. Ancient building patterns situated the temple as eastern facing, and historical homage was prioritised over the petition of the local inhabitants. The stipulation of land rights repeal is articulated in *Ndang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 1961 [Laws of the Republic Indonesia No. 20/1961]*.⁶² The law outlines that land rights can only be repealed in an emergency. It is significant that the local communities were removed from their land in spite of this legislation, particularly when alternative uninhabited sites were available. The conflict between the local communities and the Indonesian Government that has resulted has had a negative impact on the propagation of a form of cultural nationalist ideology.

The modularity of Borobudur has allowed the site to be mobilised, consciously or otherwise, behind various philosophies and interests. These mobilisations occur irrespective of period—being passed consecutively via administration and simultaneously within sociocultural fields. While this consideration of the internal manifestations of cultural nationalism within the case study of Borobudur is by no means exhaustive, it articulates a contextual understanding of how Indonesia has mobilised the monument to achieve varying ideological agendas.

59 Kelompok Studi dan Bantuan Hukum (KSBH), ‘Borobudur: Tourism Pushes out Villagers’, *Inside Indonesia: Bulletin of the Indonesia Resources and Information Programme* (1983): 7.

60 KSBH, ‘Borobudur’, 7.

61 KSBH, ‘Borobudur’, 7.

62 KSBH, ‘Borobudur’, 7.

External Nationalism: Indonesian Identity and the Global Community

Cultural diplomacy aids in the assertion of an Indonesian identity within the international community of nation-states. By allowing foreign nations to develop a mutual understanding and foster relations of trust with these nations, archaeological sites appear to be effective as a means of elevating the status of post-independence Indonesia within an international context.⁶³ Borobudur has been mobilised through cultural diplomacy to legitimise Indonesia as an independent nation-state since the early 1950s. A number of distinguished political leaders have visited Borobudur in an official capacity: Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, the King of Cambodia Norodom Sihanouk, Filipino President Elpidio Quirino, Prime Minister of Burma U Nu, US presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson and US Vice-President, Richard Nixon each visited the site following Indonesian independence.⁶⁴ Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating attended Borobudur in 1992. Ross Peake, a political correspondent in Surabaya during Keating's visit, reported that the Australian prime minister touched a Buddha figure that, according to local folklore, would grant a wish. When asked what he hoped for, Keating said: 'Good relations between Indonesia and Australia.'⁶⁵ Keating's appreciation of Indonesian culture was an attempt to improve bilateral relations between the two nations. Presented publicly, both within Indonesia and in the global media, these performances aided in the legitimisation of Indonesia as a modern independent state. Through the mobilisation of Borobudur behind Indonesian cultural diplomacy, Indonesian leaders have asserted a place for the Indonesian nation-state within the global community.

Cultural diplomacy does more than simply facilitate an awareness of Indonesia's maintenance of its Buddhist heritage. Artistic experience acts as a vehicle for cross-cultural communication. Highlighting the commonalities of aesthetic awareness inspires respect and trust between nations. Borobudur's sui generis architecture, bas-reliefs and sculpture typify an artistic experience of the national history that Indonesia is

63 John Lenczowski, 'Cultural Diplomacy, Political Influence & Integrated Strategy', in *Strategic Influence: Public Diplomacy, Counterpropaganda, and Political Warfare*, ed. J. Michael Waller (Washington: The Institute of World Politics Press, 2008), 89.

64 Bloembergen and Eickhoff, 'Conserving the Past', 406.

65 Ross Peake, 'PM touches Buddha for Luck', *Canberra Times*, 24 April 1992, 2.

attempting to portray to a global audience. The museum-isation of the temple allows the site to act as an exhibition space in the field of cultural diplomacy. Borobudur goes beyond the aforementioned visible aesthetic awareness, connoting elements of culture, science, technology, commercialisation and local customs.⁶⁶ These connotations can be used to convey interpretations of Indonesian national identity and foster a deeper level of understanding between nation-states. Emphasis is placed on cultural diplomacy, as it allows for agendas to be perpetuated without the preconceptions of political discourse.⁶⁷ By opening Borobudur as a diplomatic site, Indonesia is able to legitimise its status as a modern nation while simultaneously perpetuating a national image based on tradition.

Nationalism is central to Indonesia's worldview. A culmination of anti-colonial discourse and the subsequent struggle for independence and cultural unification form Indonesia's national identity. Paige Johnson Tan suggests that, by virtue of Indonesia's location, cultural heritage and expansiveness, its leaders have sought political and economic progression in the pan-Asian context.⁶⁸ Former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004–14) described Indonesia's foreign policy as its 'international identity'.⁶⁹ The role of Borobudur in asserting a place for the Indonesian nation extends beyond its cultural associations. The religious significance of the site and its connection to ancient Indian civilisations through the Sailendra dynasty simultaneously strengthen and complicate the politics of nation building. The aforementioned diplomatic visitors attended the site to honour the new nation-state; however, the associations of Borobudur with Buddhism and ancient Indian civilisation may supersede the national identity being perpetuated.⁷⁰ This association is apparent when considering the illustrations of *Jātaka*, *avadāna* and *sūtra* depicted on the walls of the Borobudur temple. The articulations of these reliefs facilitate a connection with Buddhist literature and iconography beyond the site itself. The Sanskrit verse from the *Bhadracarī*, illustrated on the uppermost series of reliefs at Borobudur, is also articulated didactically on the base of the Nālandā monastery in northern India. As these are the only

66 Lenczowski, 'Cultural Diplomacy', 88.

67 Lenczowski, 'Cultural Diplomacy', 88.

68 Paige Johnson Tan, 'Navigating a Turbulent Ocean: Indonesia's Worldview and Foreign Policy', *Asian Perspective* 31, no. 3 (2007): 147.

69 Tan, 'Navigating a Turbulent Ocean', 148.

70 Bloembergen and Eickhoff, 'Conserving the Past', 406.

known articulations of the text architecturally, the sites are able to inform a deeper understanding of each other. The historical implications of cross-cultural exchange that transferred Buddhist philosophy throughout the region create emotional legitimacies between Borobudur temple and the Nālandā monastery. This exchange has implications more broadly for Indonesian and Indian Buddhist archaeology and architecture beyond geographical parameters. These historical and religious associations may also establish complex understandings between Indonesia and these transnational visitors. Borobudur therefore establishes historical and religious affiliations with nations who share this heritage. The implications of this in the perpetuation of a national identity are equivocal, establishing mutual understanding between these nations but also diluting the significance of the site within Indonesian borders.

International tourism plays a significant role in perpetuation of a national identity, portraying how a country wishes to be perceived through highly contested and carefully constructed realities. During the mid-1990s, Borobudur received around 2.5 million visitors annually.⁷¹ While 80 per cent of these tourists were domestic, Borobudur's tourism and heritage administration focused primarily on international visitors.⁷² The classification of Borobudur Temple Compound as a UNESCO world heritage site in 1991 asserted a place for the Indonesian nation-state within the global community at the expense of local support. The aforementioned UNESCO management policy fostered parochialist sentiments between the central authoritative bodies that govern the site and the local communities that surround it.⁷³ These sentiments have the capacity, in certain instances, to undermine Indonesia's reputation within the global community. This is apparent through a consideration of the 1985 article, 'Borobudur: Tourism Pushes Out Visitors', printed in the Australian-based journal *Inside Indonesia* and written in response to the centralised management policy.⁷⁴ By disseminating these sentiments and bringing the legal and ethical injustices experienced by local communities to the attention of an international audience, articles such as this highlight the impact of Borobudur's centralised management program globally. The importance successive Indonesian administrations have attached to

71 Hampton, 'Heritage, Local Communities and Economic Development', 736.

72 Hampton, 'Heritage, Local Communities and Economic Development', 736.

73 Tanudirjo, *Arkeologi and Ilmu Budaya*, 'Changing Perspectives', 66.

74 KSBH, 'Borobudur', 7–8.

the site's global respectability is a legitimating factor of their nationhood. Yet, when it occurs at the expense of the local community, the results can be counterproductive.

Borobudur has a central role in the perpetuation of a legitimate Indonesian nation-state within the global community. The importance attached to cultural diplomacy and cross-cultural exchange by successive administrations, as well as the emphasis on tourism, has portrayed Indonesia as the custodian of a glorified past to a global audience. The propagation of Borobudur as an Indonesian icon on a global scale has allowed the Republic of Indonesia to legitimise its status as a modern nation.

The modularisation of Borobudur that occurred during the colonial period has facilitated its use for cultural nationalism. Through the establishment of a concurrently inward- and outward-facing nationalist identity, Borobudur has maintained the unification of heterogeneous populations within national borders while concurrently asserting a place for the Republic of Indonesia within the global community. The disinterment of the site, and its subsequent transformation into an iconised archaeological monument by the Dutch, created a recognisable heritage easily inherited by the Indonesian nation-state. From an internal perspective, Borobudur has been mobilised by successive—and, at times, simultaneous—groups and administrations to bolster a nationalist identity and create emotional legitimacy for the Indonesian nation-state. Borobudur has a fundamental role in authenticating Indonesia within the global community. Cultural diplomacy aids in the assertion of an Indonesian identity within the international community of nation-states. The site is therefore utilised to emphasise and legitimise multiple variants of a national consciousness on a local, national and global scale.

Although historical implications may confine Borobudur's contemporary role to that of an archaeological monument, this consideration incites an interpretation of cultural nationalist identity as it manifests in Indonesian society beyond that of accepted historical continuities. By considering this with regard to the nationalist ideology more broadly, it becomes apparent that a greater cultural consciousness is imperative in an understanding of how nationalist ideology is disseminated in nation-states and how heritage sites are utilised by administrations to achieve a specific agenda.

The 'Housewife Syndrome': An Indicator of Madness or Oppression?

Keeley Adams
The Australian National University

Abstract: *This article analyses the change in perceptions of the medically diagnosed 'housewife syndrome' in America from 1940 to 1970, which shifted from an indication of personal mental illness to societal issues of female subjugation. Recent academic interest in the women's liberation movement has mainly focused on its origins and the link between women, hysteria and madness throughout history, overlooking the shift in medical perceptions of the 'housewife syndrome', which provides much-needed insight into female discontent preceding the emergence of second-wave feminism. This article helps to fill gaps within existing scholarship by examining the impact of the suppressed, private discontent among American housewives that was misleadingly categorised as female neurosis by many psychological and physiological professionals. Although initially psychiatrists, psychologists and gynaecologists identified women's unhappiness as a result of rejected femininity, the increasing publication of female discontent up to 1970 allowed women to become aware of their unhappiness as a valid, widespread issue. Due to this growing rejection of the 'housewife syndrome', these spheres eventually considered the cause of housewives' unhappiness as the result of 'oppression' rather than 'madness'.*

The 'housewife syndrome' was a mental disorder diagnosed in many American housewives suffering from supposed bouts of madness and enigmatic conditions, such as hysteria or neurosis, that plagued women who showed unhappiness in their stereotypical role of homemaker in the mid-twentieth century.¹ It was commonly used as an umbrella term for other common diagnoses such as 'housewife's nerves', the 'trapped

1 Ali Haggatt, *Desperate Housewives, Neuroses and the Domestic Environment, 1945–1970* (New York: Pickering & Chatto Limited, 2012), 2.

housewife', 'housewife's blight' and the 'unhappy housewife syndrome'.² These synonymous diagnoses were used interchangeably by both physiology and psychology professionals to refer to the same phenomenon of the dissolution of the 'happy American housewife'.³ For the purpose of this article, the term the 'housewife syndrome' will be used to describe the diagnoses of these women.

Not all American women were as likely to be diagnosed with this disorder. African American feminist bell hooks noted that non-white households could not commonly afford to keep wives at home and claimed that only white women were complaining about what African American women considered a privilege.⁴ According to hooks, the 'housewife syndrome' was a phenomenon that actually referred to 'the plight of a select group of college-educated, middle and upper class, married white women—housewives bored with leisure'.⁵ Low-income women were rarely diagnosed with the condition. Middle-class women were much more likely to be diagnosed with 'housewife syndrome' because, during this period, psychiatry and psychotherapy were expensive, and only those who could afford them used these 'socially approved' institutes.⁶ As psychological researcher and clinician Phyllis Chesler suggested in 1971, fields of psychology and psychiatry exercised significant control in society because they could offer their medical knowledge and advice to women for a price.⁷ Non-white and low-income women's unhappiness was labelled 'psychotic or dangerous' and they were more likely to be sent to asylums than receive 'therapeutic illusions' in private offices.⁸ Thus, women's happiness was supposedly attainable, but only for those who could afford it.

The unhappiness of white, middle-class women was medicalised to become synonymous with the 'housewife syndrome'. As Chesler asserted in 1972, what medical professionals considered as 'disturbed' behaviour in women were often commonplace expressions of emotional distress.⁹

2 Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1963), 16.

3 Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 16.

4 bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1984), 10.

5 hooks, *Feminist Theory*, 1.

6 Phyllis Chesler, 'Patient and Patriarch: Women in the Psychotherapeutic Relationship', in *Woman in Sexist Society: Studies in Power and Powerlessness*, ed. Vivian Gornick and Barbara K. Moran (New York: Basic Books, 1971), 260.

7 Chesler, 'Patient and Patriarch', 262.

8 Chesler, 'Patient and Patriarch', 262.

9 Phyllis Chesler, *Women and Madness* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1972), 39.

Chesler claimed that, in the mid-twentieth century, it was difficult for women to expel their frustrations via 'sexual, physical, or intellectual exercises' and that men were 'generally allowed a greater range of "acceptable" behaviors' than women.¹⁰ For example, during the 1950s and 1960s, Dr Nathan Rickels theorised and diagnosed the 'angry woman syndrome' as a behavioural disturbance among women who expressed their frustrations via conventionally 'masculine' traits such as swearing, anger, jealousy or promiscuity.¹¹ Women, more than men, were seen to behave in ways that were deemed 'disturbing' because common expressions of frustration such as swearing were considered 'unfeminine'. Thus, women conveying their unhappiness were treated as social deviants and were discredited by being diagnosed as neurotic, mad or suffering from mental disorders such as the 'housewife syndrome'. This notion can be seen in the following quotation from the psychiatric text *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex* (1947): 'Most unhappy people—the depressed, the vaguely discontented and dissatisfied, and the multitudes of overtly hostile adhering to one extravagant movement or the other—are mentally ill.'¹² In such accounts, women's unhappiness became medicalised and synonymous with having a mental disorder.

An upsurge of academic interest in the women's liberation movement in America has led to increased scholarship on the origins of second-wave feminism, the transition from happy to unhappy housewives, and the link between hysteria, women and madness throughout history. Scholars such as Sara Evans, David Farber and Van Gosse have examined the mid-century origins and resurgence of feminism, including the second wave, asserting that it was inspired by movements of previous decades such as the Black civil rights movement and the sexual revolution.¹³ Others, such as Glenna Matthews, Maxine Margolis and Ali Haggett, have suggested that the transition from happy to unhappy housewives in America began in the nineteenth century due to industrialisation and labour-saving technologies that allowed household chores to be

10 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 39, 44.

11 Nathan Rickels, 'The Angry Woman Syndrome', *Archives of General Psychiatry* 24, no. 1 (January 1971): 91, doi.org/10.1001/archpsyc.1971.01750070093014.

12 Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia F. Farnham, *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1947), 141.

13 Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Random House, 1979), 23; David Farber, ed., *The Sixties: From Memory to History* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 174; Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretative History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 156.

completed in a shorter amount of time, leaving housewives bored and unsatisfied.¹⁴ Nevertheless, these authors unanimously claim that Betty Friedan's renowned book, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), was the spark that fired the women's liberation movement, as it validated and publicised 'the problem that has no name', in which women suffered collectively from societal oppression and sexist gender roles.¹⁵ As Marecek and Kravetz explain, 'rigid sex-role stereotyping limits women's freedom to choose the lifestyles most suited to their needs and abilities'.¹⁶ Even in the mid-twentieth century, it was legal for jobs to be advertised as 'men only', women to be fired once they became married, and for professors of law and medicine to refuse the entry of women in their courses.¹⁷

Another distinct barrier to gender equality was the separatist notion that women should learn 'feminine' things at college (i.e. home economics) because, after graduation, they were not expected to be anything more than housewives and mothers.¹⁸ These ideals were put forward by men such as Ashley Montagu who, in an article for *Saturday Review* in 1958, professed that:

It is through the agency of education, and particularly college education that women have been especially trained in a confused perception of their roles ... The effect of such misguided education is that women are encouraged to develop aspirations which were designed exclusively to meet the needs of men.¹⁹

Even though women were permitted to attend educational institutions, barriers to equality still existed in the form of social prejudices that held that college degrees were useless for women as they would not need them for cooking, cleaning or other household duties. While the oppression

14 Glenna Matthews, *'Just A Housewife': The Rise and Fall of Domesticity in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 189; Maxine L. Margolis, *Mothers and Such: Views of American Women and Why They Changed* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 135; Haggett, *Desperate Housewives*, 60.

15 Matthews, *'Just A Housewife'*, 224; Margolis, *Mothers and Such*, 85; Haggett, *Desperate Housewives*, 11.

16 Jeanne Marecek and Diane Kravetz, 'Women and Mental Health: A Review of Feminist Change Efforts', *Psychiatry: Journal of the Biology and the Pathology of Interpersonal Relations* 40, no. 4 (November 1977): 323, doi.org/10.1080/00332747.1977.11023945.

17 Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left*, 155–56.

18 Douglas T. Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1977), 160.

19 Ashley Montagu, 'The Triumph and Tragedy of the American Woman', *Saturday Review*, 27 September 1958.

of women has been analysed in existing scholarship, no author has specifically analysed the 'housewife syndrome' or its link to the emergence of the collective women's movement.

Other themes, including the link between women, madness and hysteria, have been explored in works such as *The Female Malady* by Elaine Showalter, which theorises that the 'female malady' was the cultural history of associating women who acted defiantly against patriarchal society with madness.²⁰ Showalter examined the origins and decline of the diagnosis of hysteria in England from 1830 to 1980.²¹ She argued that women were more likely to be categorised as mad in previous centuries, as they were a gender separate from men who dominated the principles and ethics of society. According to Showalter, women 'are typically situated on the side of irrationality, silence, nature, and body, while men are situated on the side of reason, discourse, culture and mind'.²² In this way, the word 'woman' became synonymous with 'madness'. Showalter considered the large percentages of female insanity throughout history as women simply exhibiting their frustrations and subsequently having their voices extinguished in mental asylums.

The higher percentages of females to males who were diagnosed as mentally ill was explored by Chesler in 1972. Using primary evidence from the US National Institute of Mental Health, Chesler showed that the majority of patients in private psychotherapy and psychiatric wards in the 1960s were women.²³ Between 1964 and 1968, there were over 125,000 more female than male patients in all psychiatric offices and institutions.²⁴ Preceding Showalter's arguments about women being considered inherently 'irrational', Simone de Beauvoir, in her cornerstone feminist text *The Second Sex* (1949), theorised that women were regarded as the 'Other' in all aspects of society. According to de Beauvoir, women were constantly regarded 'with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential ... She is the Other'.²⁵ It follows that, by the mid-twentieth century, any woman

20 Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830–1980* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 5.

21 Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 195.

22 Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 4.

23 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 119.

24 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 120.

25 Simone de Beauvoir, 'Volume 1: Facts and Myths', in *The Second Sex*, trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (New York: Vintage Books, [1949] 2010), 6.

who thought differently, behaved 'abnormally' or did not conform as the 'Other' was considered to be both physically and mentally ill, and could be diagnosed with the 'housewife syndrome' as the replacement term for hysteria.

Few collective groups have ever held as much power in America as medical professionals. They maintain a tight claim on authority and legitimacy as a consequence of doctors' close connections with the prestige of modern science.²⁶ Historically, the specialised nature of medical fields has meant that patients were not likely to share much of their doctor's knowledge or experience, and were reliant on these professionals to dispense prescriptions and provide impartial advice.²⁷ The spheres most involved in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses, including the 'housewife syndrome', were psychology, psychiatry and gynaecology. By the 1920s, psychiatry had established itself as a major medical field and it began developing private practices that offered alternatives to previous treatments of confinement in asylums.²⁸ Following on from this, a federal initiative of the US National Institution of Mental Health allowed for the expansion of private treatment by both psychologists and psychiatrists that was funded and marketed towards everyday people.²⁹ Psychotherapy, considered the 'talking cure', was a form of these private treatments that could be practised by both psychologists and psychiatrists.³⁰ Regrettably, due to the perceived legitimacy and authority of medical professionals, psychologists and psychiatrists could dictate what was best for their patients who had few alternatives to their advice and treatment options. Phyllis Chesler estimated that 75 per cent of psychologists in the American Psychological Association and over 90 per cent of psychiatrists in the American Psychiatric Association in 1960 were men.³¹ Thus, institutions of mental health in America during this period were male-dominated spheres. This unequal power balance was especially problematic when, according to the 1974 report of the Task Force on Sex Bias and Sex-Role Stereotyping in Psychotherapeutic Practice, psychologists in earlier decades had imparted

26 Paul Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine* (New York: Basic Books, 1982), 4.

27 Eliot Friedson, 'The Impurity of the Professional Authority', in *Institutions and the Person: Papers Presented to Everett C. Hughes*, ed. Howard S. Becker et al. (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1968), 28.

28 Roderick D. Buchanan, 'Legislative Warriors: American Psychiatrists, Psychologists, and Competing Claims over Psychotherapy in the 1950s', *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 39, no. 3 (Summer 2003): 227, doi.org/10.1002/jhbs.10113.

29 Buchanan, 'Legislative Warriors', 227–28.

30 Buchanan, 'Legislative Warriors', 245.

31 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 62–63.

their own personal biases and values in relation to gender roles on their female clients during diagnostic and treatment processes.³² Professionals in institutions of mental health did not commonly ruminate over the opinions of their female patients; instead, they continued to cement society's dominant gender constructions through personal biases and the legitimacy of mid-twentieth-century medical fields.

Prior to the 'housewife syndrome', 'hysteria' was the most frequent medical diagnosis for women. It stipulated that unexplainable ailments such as headaches, seizures, joint pain or nervousness stemmed from the womb, leading medical authorities to believe that some mental illnesses could only be suffered by women.³³ This belief emanated from the root of the word 'hysteria' (meaning 'womb' in Greek) and its use in fourth-century BC Hippocratic texts that reflected exclusively female ailments.³⁴ While some women diagnosed with hysteria may have been neurotic or mentally ill, these instances do not invalidate the experiences of women who were diagnosed with hysteria because they acted against conventional gender roles.³⁵ It is worth emphasising the unequal morphology of the word 'hysteria', which aims to discredit one particular gender in society, as no similar medical term exists for the madness of men (e.g. 'testeria'). Thus, while diagnoses such as hysteria and 'housewife syndrome' may have been valid in some cases, the morphology of these disorders is certainly skewed towards associating madness to one specific gender: women. The number of women diagnosed with hysteria declined during the 1940s and it was eventually retracted as a legitimate medical condition by the American Psychiatric Association in 1952. However, the phenomenon of female neurosis gradually resurfaced as men returned from World War II and women were thrust back into their role as the homemaker.³⁶ Although existing scholarship examines the women's liberation movement and hysteria, insufficient attention has been paid to the diagnosis of mental illnesses such as the 'housewife syndrome' among American women in the mid-twentieth century.

32 American Psychological Association, 'Report of the Task Force on Sex Bias and Sex-Role Stereotyping in Psychotherapeutic Practice', *American Psychologist* 30, no. 12 (December 1975): 1169, doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.30.12.1169.

33 Sabine Arnaud, *On Hysteria: The Invention of a Medical Category between 1670 and 1820* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 9, doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226275680.001.0001.

34 Andrew T. Scull, *Hysteria: The Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 21–26.

35 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 60.

36 Rachel Maines, *The Technology of Orgasm: 'Hysteria', the Vibrator, and Women's Sexual Satisfaction* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999), 2, 196.

The medical field of gynaecology is critical in understanding the diagnosis and treatment of the 'housewife syndrome'. By the seventeenth century, a shift towards modern considerations of mental health was made in the sense that forms of hysteria were considered to be psychosomatic, wherein disturbances of the mind could also cause disturbances of the body.³⁷ This shift was analysed by Michel Foucault in *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, in which the concept of madness was investigated from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. Foucault explained that, although madness was previously correlated with *physical* symptoms, in more recent centuries, it began to be identified as a *psychological* issue that could cause physiological symptoms.³⁸ It is no coincidence, then, that the 'housewife syndrome' diagnosis was associated with the same symptoms as hysteria, such as anxiety, nervousness, depression, headaches, insomnia, fainting or fatigue.³⁹ Thus, as psychologist Julian B. Rotter determined in 1954, many women who sought treatment in psychological or psychiatric offices had initially visited—and been referred by—physiological professionals, such as gynaecologists, who could determine whether the source of their ailments was organic or psychosomatic.⁴⁰ The specific relationship between gynaecology and the 'housewife syndrome' is explored later; for now it is enough to recognise the critical link between physiological and psychological symptoms of mental illness established in previous centuries.

The diagnoses of female neurosis, including the 'housewife syndrome', is made clear in 1940s psychiatric and psychological texts. A work of scientific literature integrating theories from the natural and social sciences, *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex* by Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia Farnham, hypothesised that the 1940s American woman was 'psychologically disordered' because she sought a career and life outside the home.⁴¹ Women who did not desire 'feminine' objects such as lipstick, mirrors and girdles but instead wanted to work in 'masculine' fields such as science, construction or medicine were considered divorced 'from solid reality ... into a semi-fantasy full of resounding echoes and an infinity of psychic pain and illness'.⁴² Lundberg and Farnham determined that

37 Scull, *Hysteria*, 26.

38 Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), 198.

39 Haggett, *Desperate Housewives*, 8.

40 Julian B. Rotter, *Social Learning and Clinical Psychology* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1954), 232, doi.org/10.1037/10788-000.

41 Lundberg and Farnham, *Modern Woman*, v.

42 Lundberg and Farnham, *Modern Woman*, 14–15.

women's unhappiness and subsequent illness was derived from their aspiration to become feminists and/or maintain careers.⁴³ They claimed that 'work that entices women out of their homes and provides them with prestige only at the price of feminine relinquishment, involves a response to masculine strivings'.⁴⁴ Further, they theorised that career-driven women, by encroaching too far into 'masculine' spheres that existed outside the realm of the home, were abolishing their own femininity. Therefore, striving towards 'masculine' roles would always lead to a lack of fulfilment, unhappiness and fractured minds among women—not because of societal oppression but because of the trespass into spheres conventionally dominated by men.

Lundberg, a sociologist, and Farnham, a psychiatrist, compiled original case studies and empirical evidence to argue their case to both medical professionals and society at large. The extent of their influence can be seen in a 1947 review of *Modern Woman* by Edwin Boring, a well-known and respected psychologist known as 'Mr Psychology' at Harvard University.⁴⁵ Boring found many of the arguments convincing; certainly, having an authenticated and experienced psychiatrist as one of the authors increased the book's credibility.⁴⁶ While he criticised *Modern Woman* for not providing enough clinical data, he ultimately agreed with Lundberg and Farnham's central argument that society needed to 'bring back the importance of the home [and] of the women in it'.⁴⁷ The book was popular with mainstream audiences due to its themes of psychiatric anti-feminism, which contributed to the text selling over 30,000 copies in the first few years of publication.⁴⁸ While previous works had also blamed women for the rise of unhappiness in America, *Modern Woman* was notable for its authorship (a psychiatrist who, alongside a sociologist, presented clinical evidence and extensive medical experience) and audience (general public as well as medical professionals).⁴⁹ Clearly, many psychiatric and psychological professionals of the 1940s agreed that the primary cause of mental ailments among women was a rejection of femininity, as

43 Lundberg and Farnham, *Modern Woman*, 143, 235.

44 Lundberg and Farnham, *Modern Woman*, 235.

45 David C. Devonis, *History of Psychology 101* (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2014), 96, doi.org/10.1891/9780826195715.

46 Edwin Boring, 'Review of *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex*', *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 42, no. 4 (October 1947): 481, doi.org/10.1037/h0053461.

47 Boring, 'Review of *Modern Woman*', 481.

48 Mari J. Buhle, *Feminism and Its Discontents: A Century of Struggle with Psychoanalysis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 178.

49 Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 153.

they sought to reinforce stereotypical gender roles in American society by way of discrediting women's unhappiness and aspirations for a more modern role in society. However, during the same decade, individual women were already vocalising the difference between being neurotic and being oppressed.

In 1947, marriage counsellor Sophie Drinker directly opposed the arguments of *Modern Woman* by asserting that the true cause of social unrest in American housewives was 'the degradation of womanhood into a state inferior in value for civilisation to that of manhood'.⁵⁰ Pearl Buck's 1941 collection of feminist essays, *Of Men and Women*, provided crucial evidence of women's awareness of their social inequality to men in the mid-twentieth century. Buck wrote over 70 books and received many accolades: she was the first American woman to win the Nobel Prize in literature (1938) and her work featured as a Book-of-the-Month Club choice 15 times.⁵¹ The latter was especially influential, as the subscription service, which began in 1926, had amassed over 3 million members by 1946 and had become a staple of middlebrow culture.⁵² In direct contrast to psychiatric publications of the 1940s, which described the 'housewife syndrome' as a case of personal neurosis, Buck identified this phenomenon as a societal issue born from social inequality and oppression. She argued:

If all women would be born with inferior minds and men superior ones, the scheme of women for the home would doubtless be perfectly satisfactory, [however] the misfortune is, of course, that women are quite often born with brains.⁵³

Buck lamented that, while previous decades of industrialisation and national progress had changed the roles of men and children, women were forced to remain in the home due to the 'sickening cry of tradition'.⁵⁴ Even though some fortunate women were allowed to be educated in the modern ways of the world, they were always thrown back into the domestic sphere to fulfil their roles as mothers and wives.⁵⁵ Buck stated:

50 Sophie Drinker, '[Review of *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex*]', *Marriage and Family Living* 9, no. 3 (August 1947): 75, doi.org/10.2307/347912.

51 Peter Conn, *Pearl S. Buck: A Cultural Biography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), xii, doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316036457.

52 Charles Lee, *The Hidden Public: The Story of the Book-of-the-Month Club* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1958), 11–12.

53 Pearl S. Buck, *Of Men and Women* (London: Methuen & Co., 1942), 17.

54 Buck, *Of Men and Women*, 36, 57.

55 Buck, *Of Men and Women*, 44.

If the intelligent woman obeys the voice of tradition and limits herself to the traditional four walls, she joins the vast ranks of the nervous, restless, average American woman ... In short, she becomes a neurotic.

The fate of such women was to be told by medical professionals that their unhappiness was completely unwarranted.⁵⁶ Thus, Buck called for an awakening among housewives to recognise that they were not alone and nor were they suffering from a mental disorder; instead, their collective suffering was caused by a patriarchal society that did not allow for the progression of modern women.

This perception aligned with the lynchpin of second-wave feminism: 'the personal is the political'. Carol Hanisch coined this phrase, which established that there were political aspects within women's personal lives, in 1968. Within leftist debates, women's groups advocating for social change were often labelled as 'personal' groups when they should have been recognised as 'political' groups.⁵⁷ As Hanisch explained:

One of the first things we discover in these groups is that personal problems are political problems. There are no personal solutions at this time. There is only collective action for a collective solution.⁵⁸

If the issues raised by Buck, Hanisch and other women were 'personal', they could have found solutions within the home. However, as their dissatisfaction was derived from societal problems, they could only be addressed and altered through 'political' advocacy and collective reform. Unfortunately, Buck's *Of Men and Women* became somewhat forgotten over the following decades due to the 'age of anxiety' in media that called for social conformity and chose to publish adventure novels rather than controversial, philosophical works.⁵⁹ Although Buck found it increasingly difficult to publish her standalone literature in later years, this does not discredit or diminish her impact. As one of the first women to denounce society's treatment and medicalisation of unhappy housewives, she returned as a key figure during the women's liberation movement of the 1970s.

56 Buck, *Of Men and Women*, 55.

57 Carol Hanisch, 'The Personal Is Political', in *Radical Feminism: A Documentary Reader*, ed. Barbara A. Crow (New York: New York University Press, [1969] 2000), 113.

58 Hanisch, 'The Personal Is Political', 144.

59 Conn, *Pearl S. Buck*, 330–31.

Buck reviewed Betty Friedan's book *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963, praising and promoting the previously unknown author.⁶⁰ Subsequently, *Of Men and Women* regained in popularity alongside Friedan's work

Until this juncture, this article has predominantly discussed clinical research and theories in excess of clinical practice. However, it is important to distinguish not only how fields of psychology, psychiatry and gynaecology differ in procedures and purpose, but also how subsets of research and practice exist as separate entities. The purpose of clinical research is to theorise and test knowledge that can be useful in assisting clinical practitioners and their patients, while focusing on broad populations to generalise knowledge.⁶¹ Meanwhile, medical practitioners focus on individual cases and have the medical authority to assess, diagnose and treat patients.⁶² Clinical professionals have the option to work from theory or a more 'scientific' base for diagnosis by collecting facts and data and attempting to explain the correlations between them.⁶³ However, while both of these subsets share the same common goal of achieving benefits for patients, psychologist Julian Rotter asserted in 1954 that a main value of clinical research and theories to the clinical practitioner was that it 'furnishes him with an additional tool for making evaluations in areas where experimental evidence is missing or extremely difficult to obtain'.⁶⁴ Therefore, in the case of the 'housewife syndrome', it can be assumed that this diagnosis derived from spheres of clinical research, wherein theories and notions of women as the 'Other' were reflected in society's stereotypical gender role designations and then projected into clinical offices. As Rotter argued, because clinical psychologists were expected to diagnose patients immediately, they were frequently pressured to rely on their own experience or to refer to theories of clinical research to elucidate unexplainable phenomena.⁶⁵ Further, because psychologists, psychiatrists and gynaecologists all agreed that the 'housewife syndrome' was caused by a deviation in the patient's behaviour and personality, treatment usually involved discouraging the traits that caused these disturbances.⁶⁶

60 Conn, *Pearl S. Buck*, 349.

61 José A. Sacristán, 'Clinical Research and Medical Care: Towards Effective and Complete Integration', *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 15, no. 4 (January 2015), doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-15-4.

62 Sacristán, 'Clinical Research and Medical Care'.

63 Rotter, *Social Learning*, 6.

64 Rotter, *Social Learning*, 9.

65 Rotter, *Social Learning*, vii.

66 Rotter, *Social Learning*, 233.

In this respect, Rotter determined that the major treatment for the 'housewife syndrome' was reverting behaviours that were deemed socially unacceptable by advising the patient of behaviours that would 'bring greater satisfaction' and be 'more constructive from the point of view of the society of which [she] is a member'.⁶⁷ This approach was also shared by gynaecologists who treated the malady by either referring patients or discouraging deviant behaviour themselves.

Although many gynaecologists referred their patients to psychologists or psychiatrists when they discovered supposed conflicts of the mind, some would treat patients themselves by educating women of the underlying source. Gynaecologist Floyd Rogers described the connection between psychiatry and gynaecology in his article 'Emotional Factors in Gynecology' in 1950. He stated: 'Of all the medical specialities, there is perhaps none so closely allied to psychiatry as gynecology ... [Woman's] illness represents a psychic conflict sailing under a gynecological flag.'⁶⁸ As such, he advised that the gynaecologist should first examine the patient for any physical abnormalities and, if none were found, pinpoint and discourage any behaviours involving the rejection of femininity in an attempt to cure the patient himself—unless more extensive psychotherapy by a psychiatrist was deemed necessary.⁶⁹ In this way, physiological fields of medicine such as gynaecology continued to reaffirm stereotypical gender roles alongside psychological fields over the course of the 1950s.

By diagnosing, and thereby discrediting, unhappy women as having the 'housewife syndrome', gynaecologists also reflected the opinions of the mainstream American public in the mid-twentieth century. The causes of female-specific ailments such as menstrual pain, infertility, morning sickness and miscarriages were prominently labelled as the result of women's scorned femininity.⁷⁰ Rather than consider the unequal distribution of power and rights between men and women, some medical professionals recommended potential cures such as moving to the suburbs or having more children.⁷¹ For example, Dr Jacob Greenhill, a senior obstetrician and gynaecologist in 1959, stated: 'The woman who is at odds with her biologic self develops serious conflicts and tension, often

67 Rotter, *Social Learning*, 397.

68 Floyd S. Rogers, 'Emotional Factors in Gynecology', *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 59, no.2 (February 1950): 321–22, doi.org/10.1016/S0002-9378(15)33171-9.

69 Rogers, 'Emotional Factors in Gynecology', 327.

70 Margolis, *Mothers and Such*, 248.

71 Margolis, *Mothers and Such*, 251.

leading to psychogynecic [sic] symptoms.⁷² He believed that women's unhappiness was the 'sum total of the individual's reaction to biologic and sociopsychologic factors', and that the 'housewife syndrome' was simultaneously a psychological disorder that affected the body and a bodily disorder that affected the mind.⁷³ This rationale demonstrates a clear conflation of sex and gender, which de Beauvoir would undoubtedly have contested. She argued: 'One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman ... it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature.'⁷⁴ Therefore, while many gynaecologists such as Greenhill endorsed the Freudian doctrine that 'biology is destiny', and suggested that women who rejected their femininity had also rejected their physiology, key feminist thinkers such as de Beauvoir opposed these notions.

Other gynaecologists of the time, such as Dr Rogers, also subscribed to the notion that the relationship between psychological and physiological ailments was a fluid boundary, arguing: 'Disturbances of menstruation may be directly associated with an unconscious repudiation of femininity.'⁷⁵ Referring to one case study, Rogers described a female patient who was committing adultery and suffering from dysmenorrhoea (painful menstruation).⁷⁶ He claimed that after thoroughly discouraging this 'illicit romance, her dysmenorrhoea ceased'.⁷⁷ In another case, he discouraged a young woman who presented no physical abnormalities from working as a cure for dysmenorrhoea, as he believed she was 'unsuited to her job'.⁷⁸ Many gynaecologists and mental health professionals used their authority to reinforce socially dominant gender roles (such as women remaining predominantly in the home) and societal principles of female sexual morality (such as the antipathy of infidelity) through the notion that any deviance in regard to these conventions could cause physiological afflictions and disorders. Exploiting the fluid boundary between ailments that were considered mental and those that were considered physical, these health professionals remained insistent that the 'housewife syndrome' was attained through a rejection of stereotypical gender constructions—a rejection of femininity.

72 J. P. Greenhill, *Office Gynecology*, 7th ed. (Chicago: Yearbook Medical Publishers, 1959), 158.

73 Greenhill, *Office Gynecology*, 158.

74 Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H. M. Parshley (London: New English Library, [1949] 1970), 9.

75 Rogers, 'Emotional Factors in Gynecology', 323.

76 Rogers, 'Emotional Factors in Gynecology', 325.

77 Rogers, 'Emotional Factors in Gynecology', 325.

78 Rogers, 'Emotional Factors in Gynecology', 325.

Such opinions reflected ideas within broader mid-century American society. These can be seen in the writing of authors such as Ashley Montagu who asserted in 1958 that:

Any feelings of frustration, of inadequate fulfilment, of dissatisfaction with one's lot, [are] due to the confused understandings of what her lot should be, [and] creates a state of unhappiness.⁷⁹

Clearly, the sentiments of medical professionals coincided with those projected by Montagu. Psychologist Phyllis Chesler claimed that most psychiatrists and psychologists of the mid-twentieth century were no more sexist than the rest of American society.⁸⁰ Rather, these professionals simply reflected existing sexism in society and, as Chesler stated, '[used] traditional psychoanalytic and therapeutic theories and practices [to] perpetrate certain misogynistic views of women ... as "scientific" or "curative"'.⁸¹ These sentiments were also shared by other members of the general public, such as the husbands of unhappy housewives. Chesler conducted interviews between 1950 and 1970. One of her interviewees, a housewife named Carmen, was forcibly admitted to a mental asylum by her husband for at least four months after she experienced symptoms of what could now be identified as postpartum depression.⁸² Carmen stated:

I was so sad and so tired [after my baby's birth]. I couldn't take care of the house right anymore. My husband told me a maid would be better than me, that I was crazy.⁸³

Ruth claimed that when she became angry during an argument with her husband he told her she was 'sick and needed a doctor'.⁸⁴ After this outward expression of her marital frustrations, Ruth's husband convinced her she was insane and she received psychiatric treatment for the next six years.⁸⁵ The hypocrisy of diagnosing women as having mental disorders when they displayed 'masculine' traits is clear; in men, traits such as anger and frustration were considered by doctors as an 'exaggeration of the expected masculine-feminine roles'.⁸⁶ Thus, during the 1950s, some

79 Montagu, 'The Triumph and Tragedy', 1958.

80 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 60.

81 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 61.

82 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 164.

83 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 165.

84 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 166.

85 Chesler, *Women and Madness*, 166.

86 Rickels, 'The Angry Woman Syndrome', 94.

medical spheres of psychology and psychiatry continued to reflect the opinions present in American society by projecting stereotypical gender roles onto women and medicalising unhappiness.

At the same time, medical and other professionals could also *contest* the attempted reconfiguration of social norms by directly criticising groups such as feminists. In *Modern Woman*, Lundberg and Farnham proclaimed: 'Feminism, despite the external validity of its political program and most (not all) of its social program, was at its core a deep illness.'⁸⁷ Here we see a correlation between mental illness and everything that feminists advocated, including the right to work without discrimination and to be treated as equal to men. Lundberg and Farnham also believed that, by centring feminist movements around 'equality', women had reduced this word to a 'fetish'.⁸⁸ These professionals contested the attempted reconfiguration of social norms by feminists while reflecting mainstream views of social roles based on gender. However, alongside the counterculture and social movements of the 1960s, there was a rapid increase in the number of female voices that rejected the 'housewife syndrome' in America.

In the early 1960s, the perception of the 'housewife syndrome' made the transition from a personal to societal issue as women began to recognise their collective discontent in various journals and newspaper articles that featured the voices of unhappy housewives. One such medium was *Newsweek*, a magazine that had been founded in 1933. By 1976, its audience of 3 million rivalled that of *Time* magazine.⁸⁹ *Newsweek* became a cultural staple in American print media largely due to its ability to identify the importance and significance of upcoming trends and movements before other news sources.⁹⁰ For example, in the 1960 edition, both the cover art and feature articles focused on the conflicting aspirations of modern American women. The cover showed the silhouette of a woman behind two competing symbols: a diaper pin (representing her socially dominant role as a mother and wife) and a Phi Beta Kappa pin (symbolising women's aspirations for a higher education and a career).⁹¹ The magazine suggested that women were realising that they did not

87 Lundberg and Farnham, *Modern Woman*, 143.

88 Lundberg and Farnham, *Modern Woman*, 147.

89 Laurence Arnold, 'Editor Transformed Newsweek Magazine', *Times Colonist*, 29 September 2008.

90 Arnold, 'Editor Transformed Newsweek Magazine'.

91 John Denson, 'Young Wives With Brains: Babies, Yes—but What Else?' *Newsweek* 55, no. 10 (March 1960): 15.

yearn for education and a career because they wanted to be men, but because they wanted to be individuals. Similarly, in a 1961 *Atlantic Monthly* article titled 'The Captivity of Marriage', Nora Johnson rejected the common perception that the 'housewife syndrome' was a *personal* issue of mental illness. Instead, she argued that women had been made to feel so ashamed for their unhappiness that they remained silent, simply giving the impression that women were alone and unjustified in their discontent.⁹² Johnson stated:

Young wives, particularly those who feel that their minds are rotting and their backs are aching, should remind themselves that maturity is more than simply accepting one's present condition and somehow muddling through until things are better.⁹³

She believed women could not wait for society to change. Rather, *they* needed to change *society*. Thus, while the 'housewife syndrome' was used by many medical professionals in the 1940s and 1950s to marginalise, suppress and discredit growing discontent, by the 1960s, many women had become aware of their collective unhappiness through growing voices in print media.

This collective female consciousness would, in due course, have its effects on psychology, psychiatry and gynaecology. In response to the growing voices of discontent among women, many psychological and physiological professionals began to recognise that the unhappiness of predominantly white, middle-class housewives was a societal issue rather than a phenomenon of female neurosis. This was the experience of American housewife Herma Snider who, in a volume of *Redbook*, stated that, after developing symptoms such as nausea, fatigue, headaches and aching joints in 1960, she sought the advice of a medical practitioner who diagnosed her as having 'housewife's nerves'.⁹⁴ However, shortly after this diagnosis, Snider was surprised by the new treatment option of going out and gaining a part-time job.⁹⁵ Although she was initially hesitant, she eventually agreed and claimed that getting a job was the cure to her brand of the 'housewife syndrome', as she was intellectually stimulated and had a sense of individualism.⁹⁶ She claimed:

92 Nora Johnson, 'The Captivity of Marriage', *Atlantic Monthly* 207, no. 6 (June 1961): 40.

93 Johnson, 'The Captivity of Marriage', 41.

94 Herma L. Snider, 'I Stopped Feeling Sorry for Myself', in *The Female Experience: An American Documentary*, ed. Gerda Lerner (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1977), 132.

95 Snider, 'I Stopped Feeling Sorry For Myself', 133.

96 Snider, 'I Stopped Feeling Sorry For Myself', 134.

For the time being I know that as long as I am not confined to the premises, my house is a home instead of the place I once dubbed my 'chintz prison'.⁹⁷

In 1964, Dr Michael Lattey was one of the first medical professionals to publicly denounce the 'housewife syndrome'. Instead of a personal issue of mental health, he argued that the housewife 'does not have an easy life in our culture'.⁹⁸ Lattey theorised that the typical housewife gained symptoms of headaches, panic attacks, nervousness and gynaecological problems due to not being intellectually stimulated or happy in her role that had not progressed alongside that of men.⁹⁹ He stated that it was no longer acceptable for medical professionals to try and 'make these women accept the role of being "only a housewife"', as they had grown tired of these conventions.¹⁰⁰ Most significantly, Lattey rejected that women suffered from the 'housewife syndrome' due to a rejection of femininity; rather, he claimed that they suffered the '*intelligent* housewife syndrome' due to the patriarchal nature of society that undervalued, undereducated and oppressed them. He recommended that new forms of treatment for women who had previously been diagnosed with the 'housewife syndrome' should be to allow them the same rights and privileges as men; if women wanted to work, they should be allowed to work, and if women did not want to marry or have children, they should not be ostracised or labelled ill for such resolutions.¹⁰¹ Additionally, Lattey directly criticised the psychiatric practice of previous decades:

Psychiatric teaching has placed great emphasis on the effects of emotional disturbances in producing neurotic and psychosomatic disorders; however, too little attention has been paid to the effects of frustration on women.¹⁰²

Therefore, it can be argued that many professionals in the medical spheres of psychology and psychiatry in the 1960s were beginning to recognise, through the accumulative discourse of second-wave feminist thinkers and female clientele, that the 'housewife syndrome' was the result of a society that treated women as inferior to men, rather than personal issues of mental illness.

97 Snider, 'I Stopped Feeling Sorry For Myself', 134.

98 Michael Lattey, 'The Intelligent Housewife Syndrome', *Canadian Medical Association* 91, no. 3 (September 1964): 717.

99 Lattey, 'The Intelligent Housewife Syndrome', 717.

100 Lattey, 'The Intelligent Housewife Syndrome', 717.

101 Lattey, 'The Intelligent Housewife Syndrome', 717.

102 Lattey, 'The Intelligent Housewife Syndrome', 717.

Accordingly, diagnoses of the 'housewife syndrome' also began to decline over the 1960s as the more appropriate term 'mental health' was progressively applied in medical publications by researchers and educators. For example, one study in 1962 by Leo Srole et al. analysed the 'mental health' of married women in comparison to married men without making reference to female neurosis, hysteria or the 'housewife syndrome'.¹⁰³ Additionally, *Harper's Magazine* dedicated a special supplement in October 1962 to generating discourse regarding the transition of the American woman who wants a life 'beyond the bedroom or nursery'.¹⁰⁴ The issue featured the advice of Bruno Bettelheim, a well-known professor of psychology and psychiatry at the University of Chicago, who supported the outcry of female patients.¹⁰⁵ Bettelheim stated: 'The grievance is very real, and very justifiable, although it is barely understood.'¹⁰⁶ He claimed that the medical community of previous decades had done a great injustice by disregarding and discrediting the woes of female patients: 'In trying to help women—to "accept the womanly role", for example—they often seem to [have aggravated] the grievance, rather than cure it.'¹⁰⁷ In fact, he was dismayed that many of his fellow psychoanalysts had diagnosed women as having 'housewife syndrome' and treated them by advising them to be more sexually active with their husbands.¹⁰⁸ He lamented:

Until parents, teachers, and psychoanalysts honestly perceive the prejudice in their assumptions about the proper role of growing girls, equal education of the sexes will continue to be a mockery.¹⁰⁹

In addition to the cumulative devaluation of diagnoses such as female neurosis and the 'housewife syndrome', the prevalence of social movements and new media in America during the 1960s also contributed to these declining notions.

According to David Devonis, prejudice and institutional sexism declined in the 1960s, in part because of the existence of television in America. The rapid growth of print media and journalism for the masses also helped.¹¹⁰ Devonis elaborated:

103 Leo Srole et al., *Mental Health in the Metropolis* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962), 178.

104 Bruno Bettelheim, 'Growing up Female', *Harper's Magazine* 225, no. 1349 (October 1962): 117.

105 Bettelheim, 'Growing up Female', 117.

106 Bettelheim, 'Growing up Female', 120.

107 Bettelheim, 'Growing up Female', 120.

108 Bettelheim, 'Growing up Female', 126–27.

109 Bettelheim, 'Growing up Female', 128.

110 Devonis, *History of Psychology*, 101, 111.

Psychology lagged behind the events in civil rights ... [because it] had no large accumulation of research findings that could support the mobilization of either nonviolent demonstrations or aggressive public protest to gain social goals.¹¹¹

The 1960s were a critical decade of change due to the prevalence of various social movements. Consequently, professionals who had not changed their biased or sexist practices were presented with a fait accompli wherein they would have to accept changing social norms first and study them later.¹¹² Clinical psychologists Joy and David Rice asserted in 1973 that, while many mental health professionals had criticised the women's movement as a 'passing fad of upper-middle-class females or unmarried neurotics', they believed it was valid as these fields had been systematically sexist for decades.¹¹³ By the end of the decade, many American psychiatrists and psychologists had changed their view on the cause of the 'housewife syndrome', finding it to be a societal issue, wherein the modern aspirations of women did not coincide with antiquated gender roles, rather than a rejection of femininity. This growing female consciousness and shift in support from American medical professionals ultimately aided the emerging women's liberation movement against patriarchal society in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

As existing scholarship commonly upholds, Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* publicised this 'problem that has no name' to a mass audience to garner a collective women's movement against gender inequality.¹¹⁴ It is not surprising that Friedan went on to become the first president of the National Organisation for Women (NOW), which was a highly influential organisation in the women's liberation movement. NOW's Statement of Purpose in 1966 declared: 'We reject the assumption that these problems are the unique responsibility of each individual woman, rather than a basic social dilemma which society must solve.'¹¹⁵ By the late 1960s, the 'problem that has no name' was no longer dealt with in private or considered a mental illness. It was considered to be a product of oppression.

111 Devonis, *History of Psychology*, 112–13.

112 Devonis, *History of Psychology*, 131.

113 Joy K. Rice and David G. Rice, 'Implications of the Women's Liberation Movement for Psychotherapy', *American Journal of Psychiatry* 130, no. 2 (February 1973): 191, doi.org/10.1176/ajp.130.2.191.

114 Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 11.

115 Betty Friedan, 'Statement of Purpose' (The National Organization for Women, 1966), accessed 5 June 2020, now.org/about/history/statement-of-purpose/.

Between 1940 and 1970, a major change in perceptions of the medically diagnosed 'housewife syndrome' occurred. While many psychiatrists, psychologists and gynaecologists of the 1940s and 1950s attempted to reinforce dominant gender constructions in their diagnosis of the 'housewife syndrome' and similar maladies, growing female voices of discontent for a more independent and equal role in society prompted such medical professionals to renounce these diagnoses in the 1960s. This article has built on existing scholarship on the origins of the women's liberation movement, the transition from happy to unhappy housewives, and the link between hysteria, women and madness. Moreover, it has shown the significance of exploring and utilising medical texts and terminology to shed light on lesser known topics, which can give perspective to historical subjects and movements such as the private discontent among women preceding the emergence of the women's liberation movement. Evidently, through the mid-twentieth century, the perception of the 'housewife syndrome' in America shifted from an indicator of personal mental illness to a collective recognition of female subjugation that continued into the second wave of feminism. Ultimately, as these feminists would agree, housewives' unhappiness was rooted not in wanting to be *men*, as many medical professionals had previously claimed, but in wanting to be *equal*.

National and Personal Stories: Anzac and Forming a Sense of the Past for ‘Ordinary Australians’

Lucinda Fretwell

The Australian National University

Abstract: *At the conclusion of its World War I centenary commemorations, Australia's history has become increasingly politicised and militarised as governments and their agencies have mobilised national stories such as Anzac to define an Australian identity. Concerned by this development, some Australian historians have been searching for ways to counter this trend. This article explores how 'ordinary Australians' form their understandings of the past. Bringing together scholarship on how people engage with history, the history wars, Anzac and commemoration, it argues that 'ordinary' people form diverse ideas and impressions in response to their engagements with history in both the public and private spheres. It is through the intertwining of these public and private engagements, and national and personal stories, that they develop a historical sensibility. Consequently, 'ordinary' people are not so easily swayed by politicians and government organisations. Thus, historians have opportunities to engage with 'ordinary Australians' and encourage more complex understandings of both Australian history and identity.*

At around 12 pm on 11 November 2018 the guns fell silent on Australia's Anzac centenary commemorations. Lasting for about five years and costing almost \$600 million, these commemorations aimed to impress on all Australians the significance and enduring legacy of our military history, and particularly our involvement in World War I (WWI).¹ Speaking a few

1 See, for example, 'The Anzac Centenary National Program', Australian Government, Department of Veterans' Affairs, accessed 15 June 2019, www.anzaccentenary.gov.au/anzac-centenary-national-program; 'The National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary—Report to Government', Australian Government, Department of Veterans' Affairs, accessed 8 June 2020, anzacportal.dva.gov.au/resources/national-commission-commemoration-anzac-centenary-report-government.

months earlier, Brendan Nelson, former leader of the Liberal Party and then director of the Australian War Memorial (AWM), underlined this aim when he stated that WWI 'is our story'; that 'no events so deeply wounded, divided, changed and ultimately defined us'; that 'we emerged [from it] with a greater belief in ourselves and a deeper understanding of what it means to be, an Australian'; and that a national character—an Anzac spirit—'binds us' together today.²

In the lead up to the centenary commemorations, the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary and the federal Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) commissioned research into the understandings of and attitudes towards Anzac, commemoration and the impending centenary by 'ordinary Australians'. Focus groups were conducted around Australia in regional and metropolitan areas; with people of various ages, ethnicities and household structures; and with people with varying levels of engagement with Anzac Day.³ Within these diverse groups, the resulting report claimed, there was near 'unanimous' support for commemorating Australia's military history 'in some form', even among those who were 'staunchly opposed to violence and war'. The report argued that this is because our military history, and particularly WWI and the Anzac Day tradition, have helped to '[craft] and [define] what it means to be an Australian'.⁴

This report, and the centenary commemorations as a whole, illustrate how the Australian Government has increasingly claimed ownership of the Anzac story and mobilised it to fashion a national identity. Both suggest that the government sees itself as the primary keeper, shaper and disseminator of WWI history and memory. In the public sphere, politicians, government officials and sympathetic public commentators have created and promoted an official national narrative that privileges Anzac at the expense of other nation-defining movements and moments. This overt politicisation of national history—in which the past is manipulated for party and ideological interests—extends beyond what might be considered history's inherently political nature.

2 Brendan Nelson, 'Address to the National Press Club: We're All Australians Now: 1918 and the War that Changed Us', Australian War Memorial, accessed 15 June 2019, www.awm.gov.au/commemoration/speeches/AllAustraliansNow.

3 See Colmar Brunton, 'Department of Veterans' Affairs, "A Century of Service" Community Research', 11–12, accessed 8 June 2020, anzacportal.dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/anzac-century-service-part1.pdf.

4 Brunton, 'Department of Veterans' Affairs', 1, 13–14.

This politicisation has resulted in a growing conflation of Australia's national identity with an 'Anzac spirit', as illustrated by Nelson's speech and the research report discussed above. For many historians—such as Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, who noted this conflation in their impactful *What's Wrong with Anzac?: The Militarisation of Australian History*—this is deeply concerning.⁵ Yet, it is not a new phenomenon. Australian historians have been questioning the increasingly overt politicisation of history since it became embroiled in the cultural wars ignited by then Prime Minister John Howard in the early 2000s. As historians' authority was challenged by politicians and public commentators, important questions such as 'who owns the past?', 'what narratives should history tell?' and 'what forms should history take?' were hotly debated.⁶ Given the increasing politicisation and mobilisation of the Anzac story, how can historians engage 'ordinary Australians', communicate their disciplinary expertise and counter the militarisation of Australian history and identity?

'Ordinary Australians'

Several historians have explored the concept of 'ordinary Australians', how they engage with history, and the impact of history's politicisation on their ideas and impressions about their past.⁷ But who are 'ordinary Australians'? Since the end of World War II (WWII), the idea of the 'ordinary person' has gained currency in popular discourse and political journalism, leading to a turn towards the 'ordinary' in history and other social sciences.⁸ In the public sphere, politicians and the popular press use the idea of 'ordinary Australians' to both refer and appeal to an imagined

5 Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, eds, *What's Wrong with Anzac: The Militarisation of Australian History* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2010).

6 Inga Clendinnen, 'The History Question: Who Owns the Past?', *Quarterly Essay*, no. 23 (2006).

7 For example, Anna Clark, 'Ordinary People's History', *History Australia* 9, no. 1 (2012); Anna Clark, *Private Lives Public History* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2016); Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton, 'At Home with the Past: Initial Findings from the Survey', *Australian Cultural History Special Issue: Australians and the Past: A National Survey*, ed. Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton, no. 22 (2003); Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads: Australians and the Past* (Sydney & Canberra: Halstead Press, 2010).

8 Claire Langhamer, "'Who the Hell Are Ordinary People?'" Ordinarity as a Category of Historical Analysis', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 28 (2018): 175–95, doi.org/10.1017/S0080440118000099; Judith Brett and Anthony Moran, *Ordinary People's Politics: Australians Talk about Life, Politics and the Future of Their Country* (Melbourne: Pluto Press Australia, 2006), 1.

general public.⁹ This is the imagined constituency that political leaders such as Howard and Nelson, and government organisations such as the AWM and DVA, try to influence when they politicise and militarise Australian history and identity.

But ‘ordinariness’ is not only an identity imposed upon Australians, it is also one many claim for themselves. This is what Anna Clark, and Judith Brett and Anthony Moran, argue in their studies of how ‘ordinary Australians’ engage with history and politics. Many Australians have ‘a deep commitment to ordinariness’; it is how they often ‘see, and describe, themselves’. Thus, this understanding of ‘ordinary Australians’ encompasses ‘multiple dimensions of social difference’ and includes Australians ‘from all walks of life’.¹⁰ However, while this understanding is useful in that it allows us to examine a broad range of people whose diverse views have often been neglected in public debates over history, it is also problematic in that it raises questions about who actually considers themselves part of this elusive group. Do Indigenous Australians or those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds see themselves as ‘ordinary’ or typical? What about those who have studied history but do not practise it? Or those with other experiences that may make them feel ‘extraordinary’? As Claire Langhamer argued in her recent study of ordinariness as a category of historical analysis, what is deemed ‘ordinary’ is open to multiple contextually dependant interpretations.¹¹ Its very vagueness means that it can ‘encompass nearly everyone or ... describe no one at all’.¹²

Despite its obvious ambiguities, this article persists with the idea of ‘ordinary Australians’ and, in the process, unpacks it. I acknowledge the political use of the term to refer to an imagined general public whose historical consciousness is fought over in the public sphere because it is believed to be politically valuable. Yet, I argue that ‘ordinary Australians’ are much more than an imagined general public. They are a real group, though one that evades precise definition. For the most part, the ‘ordinary

9 See, for example, commentary on John Howard and his ‘battlers’ and Scott Morrison and his ‘quiet Australians’ in Judith Brett, ‘Relaxed and Comfortable: The Liberal Party’s Australia’, *Quarterly Essay*, no. 19 (2005): 30; Mark McKenna, ‘Scott Morrison’s Quiet Australians’, *Monthly*, July 2019, accessed 10 October 2019, www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2019/july/1561989600/mark-mckenna/scott-morrison-s-quiet-australians.

10 Clark, ‘Ordinary People’s History’, 202–03; Brett and Moran, *Ordinary People’s Politics*, 2, 8.

11 Langhamer, “‘Who the Hell Are Ordinary People?’”, 177–78, 182–83.

12 Langhamer, “‘Who the Hell Are Ordinary People?’”, 85.

Australians' I examine are people from all walks of life who do not have specialised knowledge, and who are not formal, active participants in history or public policy; they are not the historians, politicians and public commentators who try to shape responses to history, but they nevertheless have strong historical sensibilities. They include newspaper readers, school students, museum visitors, television watchers and travellers. At the same time, I do not wholly exclude historians or policymakers from the 'ordinary'; they too read newspapers and visit museums. Further, they are capable of self-appointing this identity, forming personal responses that reflect their authority as 'ordinary people' rather than as part of an 'elite'.

In this article, I bring together work on the ways that 'ordinary' people engage with history and scholarship on Anzac, identity and commemoration. I argue that 'ordinary' people engage with history in myriad ways, and that the ideas and impressions they form in response to these engagements are diverse and subjective, rather than conforming to an overarching official narrative. This article explores people's public and private engagements with history, using debates about the nature and significance of Anzac as a case study. First, it examines how people engage with history in the public sphere, specifically through schools, museums, public commemorations and the mainstream media. Second, it explores people's private engagements with history, which for many are far more influential in forming their ideas and impressions of their past. In particular, it explores the roles played by personal and family stories and by 'experiential' or 'immersive' history—fiction, film, television and visits to sites of historical significance. In this way, it illustrates that individuals' diverse ideas and impressions about their histories are shaped by the intertwining of public and private engagements, and national and personal stories. Thus, this article suggests that, while governments may try to dominate the official public narrative, the intertwined way in which 'ordinary Australians' develop their understandings of history and identity means that their ideas and impressions do not necessarily conform to this official narrative; hence, there are opportunities for historians to engage with 'ordinary Australians', and to encourage more complex and nuanced understandings that help to counter narrow and militaristic interpretations of Australian history.

Public Engagement

Public engagements with history are one of the main ways in which ‘ordinary Australians’ develop a historical sensibility and form ideas and impressions about national history. However, over the past 20 years, this national history has been increasingly politicised through a series of public debates that have become known as the ‘history wars’. These debates have been battlegrounds upon which politicians, academics, public commentators and ‘ordinary Australians’ have contested or advanced national narratives.¹³ In the early 2000s, the most hotly debated topics—race relations, the Stolen Generations, the White Australia policy and the influence of the British legacy—were encompassed in what then Prime Minister John Howard called the ‘black armband’ view of history.¹⁴ Howard claimed that the ‘liberal-left intelligentsia’ was promoting an ‘unpatriotic and negative’ view of Australian history and that Australians deserved to feel ‘comfortable and relaxed’ about their past.¹⁵ To counter this, he strove to enforce ‘a positive, nationalistic’ interpretation of our history, focusing particularly on Anzac—that is, the story of the Australian Army’s role in the WWI Gallipoli campaign—which quickly regained its earlier dominance as the ‘creation myth’ of ‘White Australia’.¹⁶

The meaning and relevance of the Anzac story has been interpreted and reinterpreted over the last 100 years, waxing and waning in the public imagination. As Carolyn Holbrook has argued, drawing on E. P. Thompson, memory of Anzac ‘is ... “a relationship and not a thing”’.¹⁷ Each generation has made Anzac its own, influenced by the political, historical and ideological shifts that have bent and moulded the narrative to meet society’s current needs.¹⁸ In the period immediately after WWI, the narrative that was constructed framed Gallipoli and the war in general

13 Andrew Bonnell and Martin Crotty, ‘Australia’s History under Howard, 1996–2007’, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 617, no. 1 (2008): 150, doi.org/10.1177/0002716207310818; Clark, *Private Lives Public History*, 98–99.

14 Bonnell and Crotty, ‘Australia’s History under Howard’, 152.

15 Bonnell and Crotty, ‘Australia’s History under Howard’, 153; Brett, ‘Relaxed and Comfortable’, 30.

16 Bonnell and Crotty, ‘Australia’s History under Howard’, 153; Marilyn Lake, ‘Introduction: What Have You Done For Your Country’, in *What’s Wrong with Anzac: The Militarisation of Australian History*, ed. Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2010), 1.

17 Carolyn Holbrook, *Anzac: The Unauthorised Biography* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2014), 207.

18 Clendinnen, ‘The History Question’, 10–14; Mark McKenna, ‘Anzac Day: How Did It Become Australia’s National Day?’, in *What’s Wrong with Anzac: The Militarisation of Australian History*, ed. Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2010), 111, 120–21; Holbrook, *Anzac*, 3, 6, 118–19, 207.

as a 'nation-making' event fought by 'legendary' and 'furious' 'bushman-soldiers' for the maintenance of the British race and empire.¹⁹ After WWII, this version declined and by the Vietnam era had almost completely fallen out of favour, condemned as militaristic and politically conservative. For this generation, WWI was 'a tragic debacle that was glorified each Anzac Day by a group of racist chauvinist old boozers'.²⁰ However, the 1980s and 1990s saw the beginning of an Anzac revival that reframed the myth around the 'tragedy and sacrifice' of individual soldiers and 'stories of mateship, courage and trauma'.²¹ By the time Howard re-centred Anzac and Gallipoli as Australia's 'nation-making' creation myth, it had already regained a significant place in Australian understandings of nationalism and identity.²² Many people, such as historian Bill Gammage and Labor prime ministers Bob Hawke and Paul Keating, and events, such as the 1988 bicentenary of white settlement and the 2001 centenary of Federation, contributed to and shaped this revival.²³ In addition, Hawke and Keating politicised Australia's military history and mobilised it to develop particular national identities. However, it was under Howard that Anzac became entrenched as 'the key pillar of national pride' and that federal departments like DVA and Defence became protectors of memorials, 'promoters' of ceremony and, most significantly, 'patron[s] of history'.²⁴

This new interpretation of the Anzac myth, supported and funded by government, entered public consciousness through schools, public commemorations and museums, and the mainstream media. It claimed that the Anzac spirit was the backbone of Australian national identity; that WWI and the Gallipoli campaign represented 'the supreme test of nationhood' and the birth of our nation; and that our 'innocent, brave young men' sacrificed themselves for the freedoms that we enjoy today.²⁵ Schools have performed a central role in inculcating this nationalistic and militaristic interpretation of Australian history. From the early 2000s, DVA has bombarded them with learning resources, essay prizes and other funding to encourage ever more commemoration and education about Australia's

19 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 6, 139; McKenna, 'Anzac Day', 120–21.

20 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 6, 46, 116–22.

21 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 135–43.

22 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 6.

23 Bonnell and Crotty, 'Australia's History under Howard', 151–52; McKenna, 'Anzac Day', 113–16; Holbrook, *Anzac*, 166–206.

24 McKenna, 'Anzac Day', 124; Ken Inglis, *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, 3rd ed. (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008), 555.

25 Brunton, 'Department of Veterans' Affairs', 14–15; McKenna, 'Anzac Day', 2, 24, 110, 153, 158.

military history.²⁶ This has led to a partial reinvigoration of Australian history in the classroom. In her research, Anna Clark found that, while Australian history as a whole still languishes in schools, Anzac stands out as a topic that most students are enthused about.²⁷ For many, their personal interest in Anzac is fuelled by the ‘sense of national identity it evokes’.²⁸ Clark’s interviews indicate that many students equate ‘being Australian’ with an ‘Anzac spirit’ or ‘national character’ that was forged on the battlefields of WWI.²⁹ They often uncritically regurgitate the myth that Anzac represents ‘our birth as a nation’ and ‘what it means to be Australian’.³⁰

Public institutions like museums and memorials are also instrumental in transmitting this myth in the public sphere, particularly the AWM. This national memorial forms the ‘core of the nation’s tribute’ to Australian service personnel through its dual commemorative and pedagogical roles. Its primary purposes are to ‘commemorate the sacrifices of those Australians who have died at war’ and to help Australians ‘remember, interpret and understand’ the experience and impact of war in Australian society. Therefore, it plays a significant role in informing individual Australian’s ideas and impressions of this part of their national history.³¹ However, the way it fulfils these purposes is shaped by its political, social and cultural context, especially considering it is a national institution, bound by legislation and dependent on government funding.

In recent years, there has been a decided shift towards a more ‘conservative ethos’ and a ‘cautious traditionalism’ in the way the AWM constructs history.³² Its interpretation and presentation of Australia’s experiences of

26 Marilyn Lake, ‘How Do School Children Learn about the Spirit of Anzac?’, in *What’s Wrong with Anzac: The Militarisation of Australian History*, ed. Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2010), 144–49; Inglis, *Sacred Places*, 556–58.

27 Clark, *Private Lives Public History*, 72–73; Anna Clark, *History’s Children: History Wars in the Classroom* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2007), 44.

28 Clark, *History’s Children*, 46. Similar sentiments are expressed in Bruce Scates, ‘Walking with History: Children, Pilgrimage and War’s “Restless Memory”’, *Australian Cultural History Special Issue: Australians and the Past: A National Survey*, ed. Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton, no. 22 (2003).

29 Clark, *History’s Children*, 45–47.

30 See Morgan from Canberra, Robert from Perth, and Edie, Anthony and Beth from Central Australia, quoted in Clark, *History’s Children*, 43, 45, 47. A similar point is made by Henry Reynolds, ‘Are Nations Really Made in War?’, *What’s Wrong with Anzac: The Militarisation of Australian History*, ed. Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2010), 24.

31 ‘About the Australian War Memorial’, Australian War Memorial, accessed 28 June 2018, www.awm.gov.au/about; ‘History of the Australian War Memorial’, Australian War Memorial, accessed 28 June 2018, www.awm.gov.au/about/organisation/history.

32 Peter Stanley, ‘War without End’, in *Australian History Now*, ed. Anna Clark and Paul Ashton (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2013), 93–94. A similar point is made by Inglis, *Sacred Places*, 496.

war is distinctly nationalistic and militaristic, privileging battle-driven accounts and national myths over more collective, universal stories of war that have become common in other war museums around the world. This interpretation is evident in the recently refurbished First World War galleries, where many of the displays emphasise Australian military might and glorify the values that have come to be associated with Anzac. It is also evident in the nightly Last Post Ceremony, which enforces a national narrative that reflects the current Anzac mythology. This ceremony follows a strict formula, drawn from the script of traditional remembrance services: national anthem, piper's lament, the laying of wreaths and the reciting of the Ode.³³ Each ceremony tells the story of an individual soldier and concludes with the words:

This is but one of the many stories of service and sacrifice told here at the Australian War Memorial. We now remember [individual's name], who gave his life for us, for our freedoms and in the hope for a better world.³⁴

The First World War galleries and Last Post Ceremony illustrate how the AWM transmits and reinforces the current version of the Anzac myth. The AWM tends to avoid controversial topics and presents commemoration as a 'sombre celebration', leaving visitors with an 'uncritical account of Australia's involvement in war'.³⁵ This militaristic and nationalistic interpretation of Australian history concerns historians such as Clark, Lake, McKenna and Reynolds who consider that, rather than generating genuine historical understanding, it encourages 'nationalist sentiment' and incomplete understandings of the past.³⁶ This, in turn, discourages critical engagement with history and promotes the view that Anzac is 'sacred' and thus above questioning.³⁷

33 'Last Post Ceremony', Australian War Memorial, accessed 5 July 2018, www.awm.gov.au/commemoration/last-post-ceremony.

34 'AWM Last Post', YouTube, accessed 8 June 2020, www.youtube.com/channel/UCKmio2JTTLpxC3gniK1f2IA.

35 Guy Hansen, 'Museums and the Great War: A Curator's Perspective on the History of Anzac', in *Nation, Memory and Great War Commemoration: Mobilising the Past in Europe, Australia and New Zealand*, ed. Shanti Sumartojo and Ben Wellings (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014), 245–46. A similar point is made by Inglis, *Sacred Places*, 501.

36 Reynolds, 'Are Nations Really Made in War?', 25–27; Lake, 'How Do School Children Learn', 137, 153; Clark, *History's Children*, 45–46, 51.

37 Reynolds, 'Are Nations Really Made in War?', 24–35; Mark McKenna quoted in Clendinnen, 'The History Question', 9.

Nevertheless, Anzac *is* questioned, discussed and debated openly in the public sphere by historians, public commentators and ‘ordinary Australians’, revealing the diversity of responses to this national story and the deep divisions that they imply. Critical engagement with Anzac grew in the lead-up to, and throughout, the WWI centenary commemorations, becoming the latest iteration of the history wars. Although many ‘ordinary Australians’ (those who are not actively involved in shaping national narratives) may not be familiar with the term ‘history wars’ or the details of Australia’s military history, most would be aware that our national history is contested and many would have their own ideas and impressions about Anzac.³⁸ Often these do not conform to the official national myth discussed above.

The mainstream media, and particularly discussion forums on items published by these media, have allowed ‘ordinary’ people to contribute to wider public debates about the meaning and relevance of Anzac. For example, an essay written by prominent historian Marilyn Lake and published by the *Age* in 2009 inspired a diverse range of responses. Many passionate and patriotic responders were outraged that Anzac’s authority and relevance were being critiqued and questioned. They expressed indignation with Lake’s use of the term ‘Anzac myth’ and decried her as ‘un-Australian and disrespectful’.³⁹ However, other responders were more reflective, seeming to welcome the opportunity to question what has become a dominant myth, and offering their own critiques of Anzac and the ways it has been incorporated into national history and identity.⁴⁰ For example, one person wrote that:

Australia needs to drop the sentimental garbage that ANZAC day has become. The soldiers of Gallipoli must be honoured however they are not apostles to be given religious reverence.⁴¹

38 Clark, *Private Lives Public History*, 100–01; Brunton, ‘Department of Veterans’ Affairs’, 1, 37.

39 Lake, ‘Introduction’, 4. See, for example, comments by Sinistra (24 April 2009, 10:32 am), Anne Rinkin (24 April 2009, 12:14 am), David (24 April 2009, 12:40 am), Neville (23 April 2009, 7:32 pm), Mother of Four (23 April 2009, 3:40 pm), in Marilyn Lake, ‘Creation of a Nation?’, 2009, accessed 1 May 2019, blogs.theage.com.au/yoursay/archives/2009/04/creation_of_a_n.html?page=fullpage#comments (site discontinued).

40 See, for example, comments by LeonT (24 April 2009, 11:58 am), mel (23 April 2009, 4:49 pm), I drink lattes and I vote (23 April 2009, 4:27 pm), in Lake, ‘Creation of a Nation?’.

41 Quoted in Lake, ‘Introduction’, 4.

Another argued that honouring and reflecting on 'the grief and horror' that characterised many people's experiences of WWI has 'absolutely nothing to do with honouring sacrifices ... to safeguard [our] freedom ... That is a myth created by outsiders'.⁴² Some responders demanded the acknowledgement of different interpretations, such as the internationalism of the Gallipoli campaign; that the Gallipoli landing was an invasion rather than a defence of our nation, freedom or way of life; and that Anzac represents not a moment of national autonomy on the world stage, but an expression of our subservience to Imperial Britain.⁴³

Similarly, and notwithstanding their key role in promoting the Anzac myth, schools also act as sites of critique, allowing both teachers and students to question or reject the official story in favour of more critical engagement. Although many of the school students Clark interviewed expressed an 'emotive national pride in the past' some, such as Ophelia from Adelaide and Jiang from Brisbane, welcomed the opportunity to explore the topic from a variety of perspectives, indicating that their interest was motivated by 'discussion and critique rather than sentiment'.⁴⁴ For some, the international perspective was particularly appealing. Two students in Clark's study, Ramah and Yasmin from a Sydney Islamic school, thought that this international element made Australians at war 'one of the *best* subjects'.⁴⁵ The increased importance of this international perspective could reflect Australia's large multicultural population. Being able to place Australian history within a broader global context could allow students to form more complex impressions of Australian history and how it contributes to their own identity. However, some students also explicitly rejected the link between Australia's military history and national identity, struggling to see how it speaks to their contemporary experiences in which war has played a minor role.⁴⁶ Wary of the risk of jingoism, many teachers aim to introduce these critical reflections and balanced interpretations in the classroom to help students form their own ideas and impressions about their histories.⁴⁷

42 Leigh (24 April 2009, 4:45 pm) in Lake, 'Creation of a Nation?'.

43 See comments in Lake, 'Introduction', 4, 9, 10. See also comments by Strange (24 April 2009, 11:13 am), I drink lattes and I vote (23 April 2009, 4:27 pm), Mikey (23 April 2009, 11:12 pm), in Lake, 'Creation of a Nation?'.

44 Clark, *History's Children*, 57–59.

45 Clark, *History's Children*, 59–60.

46 See comments from Hugh and Maddison from Perth in Clark, *History's Children*, 60.

47 Clark, *History's Children*, 58–59.

As critical engagement grows, some public institutions such as the National Anzac Centre (NAC) in Albany, Western Australia, are also trying to shape people's ideas and impressions to accommodate new, more nuanced interpretations of Anzac. Established in 2014 as part of centenary initiatives, the NAC has consciously developed contemporary approaches to commemoration and pedagogy. From its inception, its curators wanted to avoid a celebratory or nationalistic interpretation of history. They felt sceptical about trying to 'evoke' the 'Anzac spirit' or 'Anzac legend'. Instead, they wanted to focus on 'reality and remembrance', and telling the story of war 'as it was, no more, no less' through the primacy of individuals' personal stories and testimonies.⁴⁸ These individuals are the heart of the NAC's curatorial vision; they act as visitors' guides, allowing the museum to tell a diverse story of war. The NAC's narrative acknowledges the different and shared experiences of Anzac combatants and non-combatants (Australian *and* New Zealand, including Indigenous servicemen) as well as some of their Allies and former enemies, both during and after the war. Extending beyond the battlefield, the NAC also presents diversity through its exploration of civilian experiences and emphasis on the enduring impact of war on Australian society, particularly in the postwar period.

In contrast to the AWM, the NAC departs significantly from traditional ways of commemorating and teaching about WWI. It works within a context of contemporary museum practice that privileges the authority of personal testimony and the value of immersive experiences, and thus provides ways for people to engage critically with history.⁴⁹ In addition, while initially funded by government, the NAC is now an independent body, which undoubtedly influences the style of history it can present. Therefore, while public engagements with history tend to be the primary transmitters of the official, government-endorsed Anzac myth, they also allow people to develop complex, critical and diverse ideas and impressions about their history that are not confined to the official version.

48 Stephen Anstey, National Anzac Centre, Albany, interview by Lucinda Fretwell, April 2019.

49 For changes in contemporary museum practice and the rise of the witness see Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War Between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2006), 6–8, 27–28, 238–71; Steffi de Jong, *The Witness as Object: Video Testimony in Memorial Museums* (New York & Oxford: Berghahn, 2018); Karen Shelby, *Belgian Museums and the Great War: Politics, Memory, and Commerce* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

Personal Engagement

Individual responses to public engagements with history are inextricably linked to personal contexts. Factors such as age, education, values, experiences, political positions, and family, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, undoubtedly influence people's opinions and attitudes towards history in profound and subjective ways. This can be seen in the online discussion about Lake's essay in which people often explicitly linked their ideas about the Anzac story to their own contexts. For example, 'graham' identified himself as a member of the anti-Vietnam War generation with his reference to Eric Bogle's song 'And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda'. This context, combined with his memories of his uncle 'coughing blood ... and being a perpetual drunk and absolutely refusing to talk about his experiences on the Western Front', influenced his view that WWI was a 'folly' and that Anzac commemorations have been 'blown out of all proportion', becoming more exclusionary and celebratory in recent years.⁵⁰

Similarly, people's contexts and personal connections to national history influence how they engage with public commemorations such as Anzac Day. Older Australians, such as the historian Inga Clendinnen, have memories of Anzac Day in the interwar period, when war was still fresh, mourning was still an integral part of the practice and it was still very much a *sacred* day. For Clendinnen, Anzac Day was 'a personal possession' that held her 'childhood memories of family and neighbourhood'.⁵¹ This, along with the fact that her father served in WWI, undoubtedly shaped her attitude towards its legacies and her disdain for modern commemorations that have 'displaced the mournful dignity of "[her]" Anzac Day'.⁵² Indigenous Australians also have specific experiences of Anzac Day. For some communities, it stands in contrast to Australia Day as a 'collective moment' that connects them to the national story.⁵³ But, for others, the historic lack of recognition of the military contribution of Indigenous servicemen and women makes Anzac Day feel like 'a party that we have not been invited to'.⁵⁴ It is also the case that a substantial number of 'ordinary Australians' come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. While respectful of their adopted

50 graham (24 April 2009, 4:28 am) in Lake, 'Creation of a Nation?'.

51 Clendinnen, 'The History Question', 12–13.

52 Clendinnen, 'The History Question', 13.

53 Clark, *Private Lives Public History*, 91.

54 Brunton, 'Department of Veterans' Affairs', 3, 15.

country's traditions, these Australians generally do not share the same personal connection to this part of Australia's national history and so are often disengaged from it.⁵⁵ A Vietnamese migrant, Thanh, explained that Anzac is generally *understood* by multicultural groups 'but not *felt*'.⁵⁶ The nature of these personal connections, or lack thereof, influence the ways people think and feel about their history.

By the same token, the changing nature of both the official Anzac myth and public commemoration of it can influence people's ability to form personal connections with this national story—in some instances engaging broader demographics and in other cases alienating them. Graeme Davison has argued that Anzac became more 'universal' in the late twentieth century, focusing on 'a generalised sense of goodwill' that has allowed it to become 'what you want to make of it'.⁵⁷ This has opened it up, allowing more people to relate the national story to their own experiences and identity. In contrast to Thanh, Sarah Noori, an Afghani refugee who experienced war from a young age before arriving in Australia, described how her experiences illustrate that 'the spirit of Anzac—determination, generosity and kindness—is still relevant [to] Australians today'.⁵⁸ Similarly, Dan Vo, a first generation Australian whose parents were Vietnamese refugees, described how 'everyone has something of the Anzac spirit inside them'.⁵⁹ This indicates that new, more universal, interpretations of the Anzac myth have allowed it to speak to broader experiences, helping some Australians—even those with no obvious personal link to Anzac—to create a sense of Australian identity and make deeper personal connections to national stories.

At the same time, these new interpretations of Anzac have alienated parts of the population, most notably current service personnel. The elevation of Anzac to the sacred, and the intensity of the myth, 'paints glory and honour so thickly on those in the military that it almost suffocates them', argues ex-serviceman James Brown.⁶⁰ In current commemoration, the 'Anzac' soldier is often deified, transformed into

55 Brunton, 'Department of Veterans' Affairs', 1–3.

56 Clark, *Private Lives Public History*, 91.

57 Graeme Davison, 'The Habit of Commemoration and the Revival of Anzac Day', *Australian Cultural History Special Issue: Australians and the Past: A National Survey*, ed. Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton, no. 22 (2003): 80.

58 Noori quoted in Clark, *History's Children*, 44.

59 Vo quoted in Davison, 'The Habit of Commemoration', 80.

60 James Brown, *Anzac's Long Shadow: The Cost of Our National Obsession* (Collingwood: Black Inc., 2014), 3.

a 'heroic giant', a 'tough, fearless egalitarian digger' who embodies the very values of what it means to be Australian.⁶¹ As a result, current service personnel may come back from active service feeling 'ashamed' that they have not 'measured up' to the legend.⁶² When this occurs, the current Anzac myth denies them 'a rounded human complexion', a normalcy that accommodates both 'courage and cowardice, compassion and cruelty, stoicism and vulnerability'.⁶³ The deification of Anzac also means that contemporary commemoration tends to focus on the heroics of Gallipoli and WWI at the expense of other conflicts and peacekeeping missions. A commenter on Lake's discussion forum explained how, as an 'ex member of the Australian Defence Force', they felt 'disturbed' when an Anzac Day ceremony they attended focused exclusively on Gallipoli and made no mention of the servicepeople currently 'in Iraq, Afghanistan and East Timor' nor the 'countless Vietnam and Korean War vets present'.⁶⁴ For some current and ex-service personnel, the focus on Gallipoli, the sacredness of the Anzac legend and the almost celebratory nature of contemporary commemoration alienates them from it, acting as a barrier to forming positive personal connections with their history and national stories, which influences the ideas and impressions they form.

The official Anzac story is undoubtedly politicised and mobilised in the public sphere to enforce a particular Australian identity. However, while it may be prevalent, it is not universally accepted. Individual Australian's ideas and impressions of this history and the ways it influences their personal identity are diverse and subjective, influenced by a mixture of their unique engagements and personal contexts. This suggests that there are opportunities for historians to engage with 'ordinary Australians' in the public sphere and to generate more complex understandings of history that challenge narrow, militaristic interpretations.

While public engagements are important, private engagements with history are also a significant way in which 'ordinary Australians' develop a historical sensibility and form ideas and impressions about their pasts. In fact, research by Clark, and Hamilton and Ashton, indicates that most Australians' *primary* connections with their history occur in the private sphere—through activities such as family discussions, looking at old photos or heirlooms, studying family trees, watching films and television,

61 Brown, *Anzac's Long Shadow*, 4.

62 Brown, *Anzac's Long Shadow*, 4.

63 Captain Ashley Judd and Paul Daley quoted in Brown, *Anzac's Long Shadow*, 109–10.

64 Troy Dafter (23 April 2009, 12:40 pm) in Lake, 'Creation of a Nation?.'

reading books or visiting places.⁶⁵ These private engagements are arguably more important in shaping people's thoughts, ideas and impressions about their pasts and identities than official national histories; this is because the emotional and imaginative appeal of such engagements enables people to connect with them and relate them to their everyday lives and sense of self more easily. Although seemingly removed from the influence of official narrations of the Anzac myth, the following examples illustrate how some Australians adopt and internalise these interpretations, allowing them to influence their private engagements with history. However, this also means that historians—and particularly public historians working with what Hamilton and Ashton call 'the past for public consumption'⁶⁶—can influence private engagements in similar ways.

Personal and family stories are among the principal ways that individual Australians connect with their history in the private sphere. The Anzac revival—the reinterpretation of the myth and the increasing political interest in Anzac in the 1980s and 1990s—coincided with 'a profound shift in the way that memory' of WWI was transmitted. The passing of the original Anzacs and the declining influence of the Returned and Services League left a void in which family historians emerged as 'significant custodians of Great War memory'.⁶⁷ At the same time, two other major shifts fundamentally changed how we remember and commemorate war. First, the 'witness' emerged as a valuable bringer of a 'truth more "truthful"' than the official histories—that of direct personal experience and individual memory.⁶⁸ Second, a proliferation of new social and cultural histories gave rise to a more democratised history that placed victims, whether soldiers or civilians, at the centre of the narrative.⁶⁹ These changes in public understandings of commemoration and remembrance allowed 'ordinary' people to see their personal and family histories as part of a larger national story and as legitimately informing national history.⁷⁰

Similarly, changing public ways of thinking about war influenced by memory studies and psychology have led to new ways of interrogating family stories. Family historians are now far more likely to read against the grain when studying their relations' diaries or letters, asking new questions

65 Hamilton and Ashton, 'At Home with the Past'; Clark, *Private Lives Public History*.

66 Hamilton and Ashton, 'At Home with the Past', 6.

67 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 144.

68 Winter, *Remembering War*, 7, 27, 50, 238; Shelby, *Belgian Museums and the Great War*, 85–86.

69 Winter, *Remembering War*, 6.

70 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 151–52, 164.

about 'trauma, shell shock and psychological well-being'.⁷¹ In turn, these new interpretations have helped to rehabilitate the public image of the Anzac story, transforming the diggers into 'traumatised victims worthy of our sympathy, rather than bloodthirsty warriors or (in their later years) elderly men with antiquated ideas'.⁷² One family historian, Julie Cattlin, who was once part of the anti-war movement inspired by the conflict in Vietnam, has developed more complex views about war since working on her family history. She now marches on Anzac Day, believing it is 'not so much about allies and enemies' or 'overt displays of nationalism', but rather about 'human beings who have been destroyed by war'.⁷³ Here we can see a reciprocal relationship in which changes in public understandings of Anzac influence private ways of engaging, in turn influencing the public again.

Family histories such as these contribute to both individual and collective understandings of the past. Ashton and Hamilton argue that family history is about 'developing self awareness ... and locating one's identity in space and time' rather than 'understanding' broader history.⁷⁴ But, as Jay Winter notes, war is one of the key ways individuals connect their family or local stories with 'bigger, more universal narratives', and thus family histories that centre on war are about the personal and the national.⁷⁵ Another family historian, Lynette Oates, felt that, through her personal history project exploring her uncle's wartime experiences, she not only went on a 'journey of self-discovery', developing 'a greater understanding of who I am, and sometimes, why I am as I am', but also gained 'enormous pride in my nation and the values that have come down to me'.⁷⁶ Therefore, engaging with family history shapes both individual and collective identities and sense of belonging. Its emotive and personal nature allows individuals to make deep personal connections to their history, which in turn shapes their ideas and impressions about it.

Many 'ordinary Australians' also create personal connections with their pasts through 'experiential' or 'immersive' history, such as fiction, films, television and visits to sites of historical significance. According to Hamilton and Ashton's 2003 study, fictional and televised history are key

71 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 165.

72 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 165.

73 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 163–64.

74 Ashton and Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads*, 27, 34.

75 Winter, *Remembering War*, 6, 40.

76 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 153, 160.

ways that people engage with the past.⁷⁷ This is even more the case today, with the increasing abundance of, and access to, these media in recent decades. In a 2010 study, Hamilton and Ashton identified the possible role of historical computer games in influencing and shaping ‘historical understanding’.⁷⁸ A decade later, with the development of ever more immersive technology, such as virtual reality, it is becoming increasingly possible to ‘see’ and ‘experience’ history, and it will be instructive to follow what effect this has in shaping people’s ideas and impressions of the past.

Although many historians have expressed concern about the accuracy of these kinds of experiential or immersive history, their appeal is undeniable.⁷⁹ Fictionalised history can be ‘history given life and flesh’; stories and narratives can ‘enliven’ the past and impart more than just ‘facts’.⁸⁰ Visual media, such as television and film, offer an immediate and tangible connection with the past and thus can have incredible ‘visceral power’.⁸¹ In other words, fictional and televised history give ‘ordinary’ people a sense of what it *might* have felt like to ‘be there’. By providing such personalised insights, these forms of history generate more personal connections with the past than formal or official history. For some people, this helps them better understand family stories. For example, one man whose father never talked about his war experiences reflected that, as a child, he ‘couldn’t give a shit about documentaries or why my dad was the way he was’, but, as he aged, these became a key way to try to understand his father and his experiences.⁸² In this way, fictional or televised history can mediate between personal memory and experience and public or collective memory, generating ‘everyday forms of historical understanding’ that coexist with, rather than supplant, more formal or official history.⁸³

Similarly, places and sites of historical significance offer ‘ordinary’ people an opportunity to ‘*experience* the past’, see where ‘*real* history’ took place and gain ‘emotional understandings’.⁸⁴ For example, people visit WWI battlefields to “‘connect” with Australia’s history’, feel a ‘nostalgia’ and

77 Hamilton and Ashton, ‘At Home with the Past’, 11.

78 Ashton and Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads*, 120.

79 For example, see Clendinnen, ‘The History Question’; Jay Winter, ‘Museums and the Representation of War’, in *Does War Belong in Museums?*, ed. Wolfgang Muchitsch (Transcript Verlag, 2013).

80 Clendinnen, ‘The History Question’, 17; Tony Birch, ‘The Trouble With History’ in *Australian History Now*, ed. Anna Clark and Paul Ashton (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2013), 235–37.

81 Michelle Arrow, ‘“I Want to Be a TV Historian When I Grow Up”: On Being a *Rewind* Historian’, *Public History Review* 12 (2006): 81, 83, doi.org/10.5130/phrj.v12i0.199.

82 Ashton and Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads*, 119.

83 Ashton and Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads*, 115.

84 Clark, *Private Lives Public History*, 122, 126–27.

gain a sense and appreciation of 'the harsh reality' of that experience.⁸⁵ These motivations are evident in Bruce Scates's study of high school students who visited the battlefields of Gallipoli and the Western Front in a kind of pilgrimage. For some students, it represented an opportunity to connect with both national history and identity, like Dave who saw the Gallipoli peninsula as 'the Australian Mecca, a place where we can reflect upon ourselves and what it means to be Australian'.⁸⁶ For Erika, whose 'great-great-uncle was killed at Gallipoli when he was only eighteen', it offered an opportunity to gain deeper understandings of their personal and family history. Through her pilgrimage, Erika hoped to be able to understand 'what drove him to offer his life so willingly'.⁸⁷ These personal and family connections, and the emotional engagement they created, were powerful influencers in shaping students' responses to their journey:

Elise found her uncle's name chiselled in the cold white stone at Lone Pine. She traced her fingers, softly, deliberately, along each of the letters. 'Strange', she scribbled in her diary, this is 'my own flesh and blood'. Rebecca thought part of herself lay in the heavy clay of France; Todd crumbled down by the grave of his great-uncle: 'It's my name', he spluttered, 'my name on the headstone'.⁸⁸

However, where personal connections are not pre-existing, pilgrimages can offer the opportunity to develop them. Students on Scates's pilgrimage talked about how the stories of the soldiers they commemorated would 'stick with [them] for the rest of [their] lives'. It was these personal connections with individual stories that made their pilgrimage 'meaningful'.⁸⁹ Students found the pilgrimage strengthened their personal connections to the nation, with many recording feelings of patriotism and national pride, especially in response to Anzac Day ceremonies at Gallipoli.⁹⁰ In this way, journeys or pilgrimages to sites of historical significance are both 'collective narrative[s]' and 'deeply personal journeys'.⁹¹ They speak to 'family identity', 'national identity' and 'a broader "human identity"', and they offer an opportunity both to deepen personal connections with history and to forge new ones.⁹²

85 Brunton, 'Department of Veterans' Affairs', 16.

86 Dave quoted in Scates, 'Walking with History', 83.

87 Erika quoted in Scates, 'Walking with History', 83–84.

88 Scates, 'Walking with History', 90.

89 Quoted in Scates, 'Walking with History', 91, 92.

90 Scates, 'Walking with History', 97–98, especially Erika's response, 87.

91 Scates, 'Walking with History', 84.

92 Holbrook, *Anzac*, 157.

Engaging with personal or family stories and experiential or immersive history are therefore significant ways 'ordinary Australians' develop their historical sensibilities. What makes these types of engagements so influential is that they tap into emotions as well as intellect, and this emotional connection to the past—whether it is historically accurate or not—plays a significant role in shaping individuals' ideas and impressions about their histories. This then offers an opportunity for historians, and especially those working in public history, to be more involved in influencing everyday forms of historical understanding that people develop in the private sphere.

Conclusion

People's ideas and impressions of their history and how it informs their identity emerge through the intertwinement of both public and private engagements and national and personal stories, meaning that these ideas and impressions are diverse and subjective. Importantly, this also means that, while official narrations of the Anzac myth are influential, they are not omnipotent. Politicians and government organisations do not have a monopoly on the Anzac story. By engaging with 'ordinary Australians' in both the public and private sphere, historians can encourage more complex and nuanced understandings of Anzac that counter narrow and militaristic interpretations. Of course, Anzac is not the only part of Australian history that is politicised. Our Indigenous and colonial histories are tense and controversial because they remain politicised and unresolved. Further, Anzac does not represent the epitome of our national identity. Here too, historians can, and should, try to engage all Australians to counter the ideological production of mythologies and militarised national histories by politicians and public commentators. Because of the complex and intertwined way that individuals develop their sense of history and identity, politicians cannot wholly claim history for their own interests. Historians always have opportunities in both the public and private sphere to reclaim history, assert their disciplinary expertise, and influence 'ordinary' people's ideas and impressions about the past.

How John Howard Positioned Himself as Indigenous Australia's Champion

Tim Rowse

The Australian National University

Abstract: *As prime minister from 1996 to 2007, John Howard found it necessary to try to project himself as sympathetic to Indigenous Australians, but this was not easy for the leader of a government committed to the conspicuous reversal of policy wins by Indigenous Australians under the Hawke and Keating governments (1983–96). Howard's summary term, in Lazarus Rising, for the policy paradigm from which he wished his government to break was 'separate development'. In this article, I argue against taking Howard at his word. Howard pragmatically reconciled his government to much that could be called 'separate development': amending (rather than repealing) the Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993, retaining the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) (after cutting its budget), building up Keating's Indigenous Land Fund, revising (rather than extinguishing) the distinct statutory regulation of Indigenous corporations and initiating the Indigenous Protected Areas program. At the same time as he made these concessions to 'separate development', Howard sought and cultivated allies among an increasingly differentiated cast of Indigenous leaders—not least, those who had become disenchanted with ATSIC and those whose power base was distinct from it. Central to Howard's appeal to these men and women was his sincere 'compassion' for Indigenous suffering and his commitment to ameliorating their 'disadvantage'—what he called 'practical reconciliation'. By March 2004, with the Opposition abandoning ATSIC, and with a growing critical commentary on Indigenous affairs from Indigenous leaders themselves, it was possible for Howard to act more boldly against the norms of 'separate development'. As well as abolishing ATSIC in 2004–05, he authorised the Northern Territory Emergency Response in June 2007, with sufficient Indigenous support that opinion (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) was now divided as to whether he had shown himself to be Indigenous Australia's champion.*

According to his personal and political autobiography *Lazarus Rising* (published in 2010), it took John Howard (Prime Minister of Australia from March 1996 to November 2007) until June 2007 to actualise his preferred approach to Indigenous affairs. Howard recalled this as ‘a paradigm change. It was as if the dam had finally burst and much of the approach which had held sway for a generation or more was swept away.’¹ Howard is referring to his government’s taking over of Indigenous affairs in the Northern Territory—known as the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER)—a program whose controversial elements included un-negotiated amendments to the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* and restrictions on welfare recipients’ choices about spending money. In what ways was the Northern Territory intervention ‘paradigmatic’ of a new approach, and why was it not until the eleventh hour of Howard’s prime ministership that Howard achieved this break from the past?

In answering this question, I depart from previous treatments of Howard’s Indigenous policies that emphasise his ideological consistency; his dogged emphasis on national unity; his insistence that equality means sameness; and his attempts to discredit the idea that Indigenous Australians, as a colonised people, are entitled to make distinct, rights-based claims on the nation in the name of social justice.² While I agree with such commentaries’ descriptions of what Howard said and did, I distinguish my approach by accepting promptings that I find in *Lazarus Rising*. There, Howard presents himself as uneasy when handling Indigenous policy—a point not inconsistent with three political scientists’ views that Indigenous affairs was less important to Howard than economic policy, including industrial relations policy. Paul Strangio, Paul ‘t Hart and James Walter argue that Howard’s ‘distaste for climate activists, welfare advocates

1 John Howard, *Lazarus Rising: A Personal and Political Autobiography* (Sydney: HarperCollins 2010), 283.

2 Before the 2007 Northern Territory intervention triggered its own large commentary literature, there was a corpus of critical analysis of Howard’s Indigenous policy record. A themed double issue of the *Journal of Australian Indigenous Issues* 9 (2007) included Sarah Maddison, ‘A Decade of Lost Opportunities: The Howard Government and Indigenous Policy’, 2–26; Dominic O’Sullivan, ‘John Howard and the Politics of Reconciliation’, 27–42; Will Sanders, ‘Indigenous Affairs and the Howard Decade: Administrative Reform and Practical Reconciliation Or Defying Colonization?’, 43–54; Andrew Gunstone, ‘The Impact of the Howard Government upon the 1991–2000 Formal Australian Reconciliation Process’, 55–69; and Jane Robbins, ‘Policy, Populism and Public Opinion: Indigenous Issues in the Howard Decade’, 71–91. As well, I note Jane Robbins, ‘The Howard Government and Indigenous Rights: An Imposed National Unity?’, *Australian Journal of Political Science* 42 (2007), 315–28, doi.org/10.1080/10361140701320042; Will Sanders, ‘Never Even Adequate: Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs’, in *Howard’s Second and Third Governments*, ed. Chris Aulich and Roger Wattenhall (Sydney: UNSW Press 2005), 152–72.

and the “Aboriginal industry” hindered open-minded engagement with their claims for most of his term’.³ Howard recalled in 2010: ‘I did not have a politically correct approach to Aboriginal issues. I did not believe in separate development for the Indigenous people of Australia.’⁴ *Lazarus Rising* conveys Howard’s uncomfortable awareness of the legacy of his predecessor as prime minister, Paul Keating. Howard needed to find his own terms in which to present himself as a champion of Indigenous Australia, though, as I will argue, not believing in ‘separate development’ did not mean that he banished from government some practices that can well be described as ‘separate development’.

In characterising Howard’s ideological difficulties, I take full measure of a change in Australian political culture wrought by successive governments’ commitment to ‘reconciliation’ since 1990: the rise of Indigenous Australians’ moral status as the nation’s aggrieved interlocutor.⁵ ‘Reconciliation’ has intensified the necessity for any leader of Australia to show that Indigenous Australians (or at least many of them) believe in his/her commitment to social justice. The High Court’s *Mabo* judgment in 1992 gave Keating an opportunity to achieve substantial reforms (native title legislation) after negotiating with Indigenous leaders who were widely respected, including some who held senior office in a Commonwealth statutory authority, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

After illustrating Howard’s sensitivity to the challenge that Indigenous affairs offered, I will argue that, notwithstanding his evident wish to distinguish himself rhetorically from Hawke and Keating, his policies until 2004 (not least his qualified embrace of the *Native Title Act 1993*) were in substantial continuity with the Australian Labor Party’s (ALP). That is, I will argue that Howard found it necessary to accept much that could be called ‘separate development’ (a term that lacks clear definition in his writing and speaking). I will then suggest that what was novel about the ‘paradigm shift’ was the evident endorsement of many Indigenous leaders.

3 Paul Strangio, Paul ‘t Hart and James Walter, *The Pivot of Power: Australian Prime Ministers and Political Leadership 1949–2016* (Carlton: The Miegunyah Press, 2017), 224.

4 Howard, *Lazarus*, 271. On page 282 he refers to ‘separate development’ as ‘almost the dominant thought stream about Indigenous Affairs in Australia’.

5 See Tim Rowse and Anna Pertierra, ‘From White Nation to White Caution: Non-Indigenous Reflections on Indigenous Difference’, *Journal of Australian Studies* 43, (2019): 283–98, doi.org/10.1080/14443058.2019.1640769; Tim Rowse, ‘Reconciliation as Public Culture: Taking Cultural Studies Beyond Ghassan Hage’s “White Nationalist”’, *Cultural Studies Review* 25 (2019): 104–08, doi.org/10.5130/csr.v25i2.6884.

Indigenous Affairs as a Challenge to National Leaders

How Australia's leaders position themselves on Indigenous affairs has become an important criterion of the quality of their leadership. When Prime Minister William McMahon (1971–72) failed to satisfy the increasingly popular demand for recognition of Aboriginal land rights on Australia Day in 1972, Aboriginal activists responded by forming the Aboriginal Tent Embassy. Opposition leader Gough Whitlam was able to visit the Tent Embassy with the assurance that the ALP had 'land rights' in its platform. The contrast between a defensive McMahon and a challenger perceived as just and generous helped to define the electoral contest of 1972, and the Whitlam government (after getting expert advice from Justice A. E. Woodward in 1973 and 1974) introduced a Bill for Northern Territory land rights in 1975. The Bill was modified by the succeeding Fraser (Liberal–National Country Party) government in 1976, and the resulting law confirmed that legislated land rights in the Northern Territory had become bipartisan policy.

The lesson of this transition from McMahon to Whitlam to Fraser was that a prime minister looked better if he could be seen to uphold some conception of Indigenous Australians' rights. One important task for Australian leaders since then has been to form a sympathetic public relationship with a demanding Indigenous constituency. Articulate and morally urgent, the Indigenous Australian demand for a fair go submits each leader to a test that some politicians fail. In *Lazarus Rising*, Howard presents a vignette of an 'unnerving performance' by Alexander Downer—Liberal Party leader from May 1994 to January 1995. When speaking to a Liberal Party meeting in Western Australia and then to Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory, Downer had seemed inconsistent on the issue of native title. According to Howard, his floundering 'precipitated a big fall of 17 per cent in his approval rating'.⁶ Howard came to power knowing that it would be better for him to be able to present himself not only as consistent but also as committed to socially just dealings with Indigenous Australians. He did not find this easy.

6 Howard, *Lazarus*, 204.

Paul Keating had won admiration for his Redfern Park speech in December 1992, in which Keating told a national story that resonated with revisionist scholarship and with the critical history recited in June 1992 by the High Court of Australia in the *Mabo* judgment. Keating's speech challenged non-Indigenous Australians to empathise with Indigenous suffering; he committed the nation to the repair of an historically damaged relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Then, after negotiations with state and territory governments and with Indigenous leaders (including those elected to lead ATSIC), Keating legislated the Native Title Act and the *Indigenous Land Fund Act 1995*, presenting them as major reparative steps. No prime minister since Whitlam had enjoyed such an opportunity to present himself as the author of a revised settler colonial compact. The Coalition parties, under John Hewson, opposed the Commonwealth's legislative recognition of native title in 1993. They had not seen the *Mabo* judgment as a provocation to revise their account of Australian ideals, and they had wanted each state and territory merely to validate titles to non-Indigenous people, with the Commonwealth paying compensation to any native title holders who could prove, in the courts, that a government's administration of titles had extinguished a ('native title') property right. Though Keating's approach to native title was not universally supported, he gained stature from the contrast between seeing native title as a fixable problem for non-Indigenous property interests (the Opposition approach) and seeing native title as a means to repair the Indigenous–non-Indigenous relationship through national legislation.

To present a more sympathetic Coalition posture on native title was an ideological necessity for the non-Labor parties after 1993, lest Labor continue to distinguish itself as Indigenous Australia's only champion. It did not escape Howard's notice that, in the years leading up to the Coalition's electoral victory in March 1996, Keating's handling of native title had won credit for the Labor Party. In a 1995 speech, Howard protested that 'no side of politics in Australia has a mortgage on compassion'.⁷ Later, in a 1998 speech, Howard recalled Keating 'talking about how the native title bill was going to nourish the Labor Party for two generations'.⁸ In *Lazarus Rising*, Howard recalls being offended by the ideological bond—as he saw it—that had formed between the press, the Aboriginal leadership and the Keating Cabinet in the period 1992–96.⁹

7 Howard, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives* (henceforth CPD HoR), 2 March 1995, 1410.

8 Howard, CPD HoR, 3 July 1998, 6050.

9 Howard, *Lazarus*, 189–90, 273, 587–88.

Howard Differentiates Himself

As prime minister, Howard sought to undermine the assumption that Labor's policies had come to define social justice for Indigenous Australia—that is, Labor MPs' evident belief that they 'hold some kind of monopoly of concern about the Aboriginal people of Australia'.¹⁰ To break this apparent monopoly, Howard had to give his own meaning to 'reconciliation', which he described as 'an unstoppable force'.¹¹ In 1991, the Coalition parties had voted for the Bill that established the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation; in government, Howard sought to control the meaning of that 'unstoppable' idea.¹² In May 1997, Howard aligned his approach to 'reconciliation' with what he called 'the spirit of the 1967 referendum': 'If the 1967 referendum spoke of anything it spoke of a need to remedy in a practical way the disadvantage of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.'¹³ I have counted 16 uses of the word 'practical' in 10 parliamentary statements about Indigenous affairs that Howard made from 1996 to 1999. In Howard's view, while there was debate on some Indigenous policy issues, there was wide agreement that to relieve disadvantage reconciliation must include policies that were 'practical'; this consensus meant that 'nobody has any kind of moral monopoly of concern about Indigenous people'.¹⁴

The alternative to being practical, in Howard's terms, was to be guilt ridden and morally vain. In 1989 Howard had characterised Prime Minister Bob Hawke as 'guilt ridden'.¹⁵ In 1995 he vowed: 'I am not going to be party to the guilt industry.'¹⁶ In 1996, speaking on a motion about 'racial tolerance', he complained of a climate of 'excessive political correctness in political debate in this country'.¹⁷ Denying in 1998 that Coalition policies were stuck in a racist posture, he rejected what he called Labor's

10 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 3 July 1998, 6050.

11 John Howard, *Howard: The Art of Persuasion Selected Speeches 1995–2016*, ed. David Furse-Roberts (Cleveland [Qld]: Jeparit Press 2018), 252.

12 Angela Pratt has exhaustively documented the many references to 'reconciliation' in the Australian parliament and the contest over whether 'Indigenous rights' were central to, or a distraction from, reconciliation. Angela Pratt, *Practising Reconciliation? The Politics of Reconciliation in the Australian Parliament, 1991–2000* (Canberra: Parliament of Australia Department of Parliamentary Services 2005).

13 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 27 May 1997, 4111.

14 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 27 May 1997, 4112.

15 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 11 April 1989, 1330.

16 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 2 March 1995, 1412.

17 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 30 October 1996, 6158.

'phoney claims of racism'.¹⁸ In *Lazarus Rising*, he scorns Labor's criticism of himself as 'McCarthyist smear tactics'.¹⁹ He was deeply offended by the 'vitriol' of an *Age* cartoon depicting himself and Peter Reith mounted on horses and shooting Aboriginal people. He recalls his pleasure at Robert Tickner losing his seat in 1996, as Tickner had epitomised 'the politically correct left of the Labor Party'.²⁰ Howard made no secret of his dislike of 'the abjectly apologetic language so often used by the Labor Party and others'.²¹ It seems to have troubled Howard that Aboriginal leaders and many other Australians expected his and his government's 'abjection'. His refusal to apologise to the Stolen Generations, after the tabling of the *Bringing Them Home* report in April 1997, showed his distaste for the 'abject' position. For that refusal, he was punished by the open disdain of Aboriginal leaders and many in the press, as the stories of the Stolen Generations attracted much public sympathy. Televised images of his May 1997 confrontation with a largely Indigenous audience 'played strongly to the view that I was at permanent loggerheads with Indigenous Australians', he recalls.²² Patrick Dodson's refusal of reappointment to the chair of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation was a public rebuff. In October 1997, Noel Pearson called Liberals 'racist scum'.²³ It seemed to Howard that, from 1996 until after the 2004 election, 'the bulk of Australia's Aboriginal leadership was unwilling to accept our legitimacy'.²⁴

In its first budget (for 1996–97), the Howard government cut the appropriation to ATSIC. The Coalition parties in opposition had very often characterised Indigenous affairs expenditure as wasteful and ill-directed. On 2 March 1995, Howard told the House:

There is also within the Australian community a growing impatience with what seems to it to be the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars, with precious little advancement and, in some cases, actual regression.²⁵

18 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 3 July 1998, 6050.

19 Howard, *Lazarus*, 259.

20 Howard, *Lazarus*, 225.

21 Howard, *Lazarus*, 276.

22 Howard, *Lazarus*, 277.

23 Howard, *Lazarus*, 283.

24 Howard, *Lazarus*, 277–78.

25 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 2 March 1995, 1411.

The cut to ATSIC was part of a total reduction in the real value of Commonwealth funds identified as expenditure on Indigenous Australians, from \$2.45 billion in the 1995–96 (Keating) budget to \$2.35 billion in the 1996–97 (Howard) budget—a fall (in real terms) of about 4 per cent. In making such cuts, the Howard government repeated—but in milder form—what the Fraser government had done: the 1976–77 Commonwealth budget had reduced the real value of Commonwealth funds devoted to Indigenous programs by 22 per cent. By limiting itself to a 4 per cent cut in 1997, the Howard government can be interpreted as accepting that the Commonwealth should annually spend on Indigenous programs an amount equal to about one-third of 1 per cent of GDP. This level of spending was achieved under the Keating government in 1992–93 and remained, with small fluctuations, throughout the Howard government.²⁶

Notwithstanding that ATSIC's cuts seemed to confirm that the Coalition would undermine much that the Hawke and Keating governments had achieved, there are more continuities than differences between what the Labor and Coalition governments did over the period 1989–2004. These continuities further underline Howard's ideological problem: how to project a distinctly conservative (non-‘abject’) approach to social justice in Indigenous affairs? In 1989 he had opposed legislating ATSIC, warning that to take ‘the principle of self-determination for Aborigines to the point of creating completely separate representative structures ... is a very bad step for the long term unity of this country’.²⁷ Although Howard tried to subject ATSIC to greater accountability to the relevant minister, the Coalition did not abolish ATSIC until after the Labor Party, in Opposition, had announced in March 2004 that it had lost faith in ATSIC. Other continuities between Labor and the Coalition in Indigenous affairs include the Native Title Act and the regulation of the Indigenous sector. These continuities could be explained by saying that there is a limit to how many reforms a new government can tackle at once (the basis of much ‘path dependency’ in public policy). Eventually, one might argue, Howard got what he wanted. However, I wish to explore the possibility that, in Australia, Indigenous affairs policy is more bipartisan than Howard's rhetoric (and critics of that rhetoric) have noticed.

26 The financial data in this paragraph are drawn from John Gardiner-Garden and Malcolm Park, ‘Commonwealth Indigenous-Specific Expenditure 1968–2008’, Parliamentary Library Research Paper, 26 September 2008, no. 10, 2008–09, Table 1.

27 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 11 April 1989, 1332.

The problem for Howard was to find an Indigenous affairs ideology that addressed conservative disquiet about the gains made by Indigenous Australians under Keating while reaching out to Indigenous Australians as their champion—all the while maintaining a high degree of legislative and institutional continuity in what the government actually did.

Amending and Accepting the Native Title Act, 1996–98

In 1993 Howard and other Liberals and the National Party had opposed Keating's Native Title Bill in its entirety. The Coalition had responded defensively to the High Court's recognition of native title. The challenge that the Coalition sought to meet was that some issued titles were possibly invalid: where there was any doubt, the state and territory and Australian governments should combine to pass validating legislation, with compensation in cases where validation extinguished a proven native title right. Each state and territory would be free to establish its own processes for judging assertions of native title to lands not yet under any other title. Howard did not speak in the 1993 debate over the Bill, but his leader, John Hewson, denounced the Native Title Bill as:

Bad legislation because it goes way beyond what the High Court decided in the *Mabo* case. It is bad because it creates enormous complexity, delay, uncertainty, and division in Australian society. It is bad because it assumes a mistaken view of the root cause of Aboriginal and Islander disadvantage. It is bad because, without good reason, it constrains future opportunities for national development to the detriment of all Australians, and it creates future financial liabilities, the scale of which no-one can predict.²⁸

The flaw in the Opposition's stance was that no one knew how much the Commonwealth would have to compensate those who could prove that the proposed 'blanket' validation law extinguished native title. In government, the Coalition was prepared to admit this problem, as Howard explained in May 1997:

The government has not opted for the blanket extinguishment route because, in our view, blanket extinguishment would involve unnecessarily expensive and protracted litigation. It could be

28 John Hewson, *CPD HoR*, 23 November 1993, 3406.

exposed to constitutional challenge and it would *in symbolic terms also be seen as a far greater affront* to what the indigenous people of Australia had achieved in the native title area than other approaches.²⁹

Howard's acknowledgement that 'native title' was an issue with a 'symbolic' aspect implicitly conceded much public sympathy for native title. The Howard government knew that any change perceived as reducing native title holders' rights would face hostile scrutiny in the Senate, where the Coalition's 37 seats after the 1996 elections did not amount to a majority.

Howard committed to amending the Native Title Act in ways that would conciliate miners and pastoralists. On 17 June 1996, the government presented an amending Bill and, in October 1996, an exposure draft. The amendments would give the minister more discretion over how native title holders could negotiate mineral exploration proposals, and would increase the rights bestowed by a pastoral lease, including allowing perpetual rights to be conferred in such a lease. Not all of Howard's proposed amendments were in the miners' and pastoralists' favour; the enlarged responsibilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative bodies, and the stricter test for registering an interest in asserting native title, arguably contributed to empowering bodies acting for native title holders, and some amendments were designed to make it more attractive to negotiate land use agreements, which were helpful to Indigenous interests who were well organised and well advised.

Before the amendments could be legislated, another decision by the High Court stimulated the Howard government to revise the amending Bill. Ruling on *The Wik Peoples v. Queensland* in December 1996, a 4:3 majority of judges confirmed that native title might coexist with a pastoral lease over the same land, conferring distinct rights on native title holders and on leaseholders. If a pastoral lease extinguished only those native title rights with which the specific terms of the pastoral lease conflicted, some native title rights were likely to continue: a pastoral lease was not necessarily a right of exclusive possession. These residual native title rights—however trivial—could be the basis of a native title holder's procedural right, such as the right to negotiate with a miner who wished to explore for minerals on a pastoral lease. Because pastoral leases did *not* give the pastoralist a right to negotiate with miners, the *Wik* judgment created the possibility that native title holders and pastoral lessees, facing

29 Howard, CPD HoR, 27 May 1997, 4113, emphasis added.

a mining company seeking exploration rights, would be negotiating from different positions; the pastoralists would find themselves with only a right to compensation for land disturbance, while those holding residual native title rights could conceivably negotiate to share in the fruits of the miner's discovery. As well, the *Wik* ruling said that, when a pastoral lease expires, the rights do not necessarily revert in full to the Crown. This meant that a pastoralist wishing to renew a lease might have to make an agreement not only with the Crown but also with anyone identified as holding a native title interest. Finally, the *Wik* judgment produced no clear answer to the question of how the Commonwealth *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* should apply to surviving native title rights—reopening the question of how to validate pastoral leasehold. The *Wik* judgment created enough uncertainties to warrant legislation giving clear definition to the rights of each party.³⁰ The political question was whether native title rights should be further circumscribed by such clarification.

Responding to *Wik*, the Howard government revised its amending Bill in April and May 1997. In the face of criticism by the National Indigenous Working Group (NIWG) that the amendments would increase pastoralists' rights at the cost of reducing native title rights, Howard agreed that the amendments 'deliver great certainty to the pastoralists and the miners of Australia'.³¹ However, 'it is a question of achieving a fair balance'. Howard told the Reconciliation Convention on 26 May 1997 that his amendments would respect both:

The principles of Native Title, as laid down in the *Mabo* decision, and the very legitimate interests of pastoralists and others in securing certainty in carrying on and planning their activities.³²

The NIWG, backed by Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation, found the non-government senators sympathetic. The parliament debated the Bill three times between September 1997 and June 1998, before passing most amendments. In this way, Howard found a way to work with native title as an established feature of policy. By reshaping a Commonwealth law, binding states and territories, the Coalition felt

30 Frank Brennan, *The Wik Debate: Its Impact on Aborigines, Pastoralists and Miners* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1998), 48–49.

31 For a summary of criticism of Howard's amendments see Sarah Pritchard, 'Native Title from the Perspective of International Standards', *The Australian Yearbook of International Law* 18 (1997): 133, doi.org/10.22145/aybil.18.4; Howard, *CPD HoR*, 27 May 1997, 4113.

32 Howard, 'Transcript of the Prime Minister the Hon John Howard MP: Opening Address to the Australian Reconciliation Convention Melbourne', 1997, 6, accessed 17 January 2020, pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00010361.pdf.

they now ‘owned’ an Act that, in 1993, they had voted against. Further, by realigning the Coalition so that Liberals and Nationals could accept the Commonwealth’s authority over states’ and territories’ handling of native title, Howard opened ideological space for the Coalition to accept the native title regime and to adapt it.

Another part of Keating’s native title legacy was the Indigenous Land Fund, which the Keating government had legislated in 1995 to meet some of the territorial needs of Indigenous Australians whose native title had been totally extinguished. As required by Keating’s legislation—which the Howard government did not seek to amend—Howard’s budgets paid increasing amounts into the fund every year of his prime ministership, building its power to purchase assets for Indigenous Australians.³³ However, we should note that Patrick Sullivan has argued that, during the Howard years, the goal of land acquisition—the original and singular mission of the Indigenous Land Corporation (the spender of revenues generated by the fund)—was compromised by other objectives designed to increase the employment and income of Indigenous Australians.³⁴ One more example of the Howard government’s adaptation to the reality of a Commonwealth native title policy is that, in 1997, the Commonwealth initiated the Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA) program, in which native title holders sign nature conservation agreements with Commonwealth and state/territory agencies and receive public funding for land management programs that employ Indigenous Australians. The IPAs enable Australia to meet its obligations under global conservation agreements.³⁵

Let us pause to examine the terms in which Howard justified his version of the Native Title Act. Rejecting the amendments to his Bill that were imposed by the Senate in December 1997, Howard represented his government as being above all competing interests:

We have not surrendered to all the blandishments of the indigenous community; we have not surrendered to the blandishments of the farmers; and we have not surrendered to the blandishments of the mining industry. We have tried to provide a framework

33 Section 193 of the *Land Fund and Indigenous Land Corporation (ATSIC Amendment) Act 1995* stipulated a formula for calculating what the Commonwealth should credit to the Land Fund each year.

34 Patrick Sullivan, ‘Policy Change and the Indigenous Land Corporation’, AIATSIS Research Discussion Paper, no. 25, July 2009, 11–12.

35 Jon Altman and Francis Markham, ‘Burgeoning Indigenous Land Ownership: Diverse Values and Strategic Potentialities’, in *Native Title from Mabo to Akiba*, ed. Sean Brennan, Megan Davis, Brendan Edgeworth and Leon Terrill (Annandale: The Federation Press 2015), 137–38.

and a pathway which will guarantee certainty, which will deliver workability, which strikes a fair and decent balance in an extraordinarily difficult situation.³⁶

As well as claiming the Bill to be politically neutral—displeasing all interests ('blandishments') to some degree—Howard claimed that the Act would now adhere to a 'sacred principle' of equality under the law. That is, in the eyes of the Howard government, pastoralists and native title holders should be equal in their rights to negotiate with a third party (such as a mining company). It would be:

Wrong in principle that there should be a right to negotiate over pastoral leaseholdings subject to mining applications in the hands of indigenous claimants, yet that right is not available to farmers and pastoralists. We do not believe that that right should be available to one group and not available to others.³⁷

Let us note a significant difference between these two justifications: the claim to be strong (finding the neutral path between clamorous sectional interests) is not the same as the claim to be honouring a 'sacred principle'.

Whether boasting of his strong neutrality or pointing to his respect for 'equality', Howard was not able to present himself as being Indigenous Australia's champion. Far from it. He had to admit that, for the greater good (as he saw it), he was winding back Indigenous gains. On the 30th anniversary of the 1967 referendum (27 May 1997), Howard conceded that his proposed amendments to the Native Title Act were intended to *reduce* the rights of native title holders whose ancestral country was under pastoral lease. He defended this reduction of rights as a restoration of equality under the rule of law because 'the pendulum had swung too far' towards Indigenous rights.³⁸

36 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 6 December 1997, 12337.

37 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 9 April 1998, 2959.

38 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 27 May 1997, 4113. Critical assessment of the Native Title Act from an Indigenous point of view must seek to distinguish problems attributable to the original Act from problems added by the 1998 amendments on Indigenous interests. This is too big a topic to be squeezed into this paper. However, let us note that David Ritter, after working for a Native Title Representative Body subsequent to Howard's amendments, argued that the amendments, the Federal Court's interpretations in particular cases and the perspective of the National Native Title Tribunal in arbitration combined to establish a native title system in which miners and pastoralists felt secure in clearly defined rights, making them more likely to negotiate with native title interests. 'The cumulative consequence was a clear trend upwards in the rate of resolving native title claims by consent.' See David Ritter, *Contesting Native Title* (Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin, 2009), 137.

Politicising Compassion

Openly to reduce Indigenous rights was to court another possible ideological option: appealing to sections of the Australian public that were expressly hostile to the 'privilege' of Indigenous Australians. Accusations of Indigenous 'privilege' had recently been emboldened by the rise of One Nation, whose leader Pauline Hanson entered parliament as the independent member for Oxley in March 1996. Her claim that Indigenous people were privileged seemed to appeal to some voters. Thus, it would have been a tempting tactic for the Coalition to justify the winding back of native title rights as the cancelling of Indigenous privilege. Indeed, it would have been possible to fight an election on whether 'native title' was a privilege (to be curbed) or a right (to be upheld). The possibility of an electoral contest arose because, under Section 57 of the Australian constitution, any government whose legislation is thwarted twice in the Senate is entitled to dissolve both Houses (a 'double dissolution') and to call an election in which all (not half) the senators must stand. An election on Howard's amendments to the Native Title Act could have enabled the electorate to say whether the government was right to curtail Indigenous privileges or wrong to reduce Indigenous rights. Howard's tactics towards the Senate, between the Senate's first (December 1997) and second (April 1998) amending debates, included allowing the prospect of double dissolution to enter into the minds of all senators. According to a chronicler of the period, on 6 February Howard released a specially produced broadcast to rural television and radio stations in which he argued that the Senate's amendments to his Bill were unacceptable because they unreasonably gave 'superior rights' to native title claimants over pastoralists. On 16 June, National Party leader Tim Fischer warned that the government would take the Native Title Bill 'to the people'.³⁹

Speculation about an 'election on race' (as pundits were then calling it) aroused fear on both sides of the native title debate—not only that some MPs might lose their seats but also that One Nation, seen by many as an openly racist party, might increase its parliamentary strength at the Coalition's expense. According to Ian Ward, senior Liberals were talking to Indigenous leaders about how to avoid an election in which native title would be a central question. When the government finally won the

39 Ian Ward, 'Political Chronicles: Commonwealth of Australia January to June 1998', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 44 (1998): 568, doi.org/10.1111/1467-8497.00037.

vote of a key senator, Brian Harradine, on 21 June, it may well have been because Harradine was aware of opinion polls predicting that One Nation would increase its Senate representation in such an election.⁴⁰

Howard was sensitive to the observation that, in winding back native title rights, he was pursuing a One Nation agenda and thus legitimising anti-Indigenous feeling. On 3 June 1998, he told the ABC's Fran Kelly that in some of Hanson's criticisms of Indigenous rights she was 'fanning racist sentiment'.⁴¹ In *Lazarus Rising*, Howard continued to distinguish himself from Hanson: while in attacking 'multiculturalism, ATSIC and separatist policies for black and white Australians' he and Hanson were in tune with 'community sentiment', they differed on whether Indigenous Australians 'were the most disadvantaged group in our midst'.⁴² Howard says that what distinguished him from One Nation was that he always presented Aboriginal people as the deserving disadvantaged.

Certainly, this was his theme. He asserted 'compassion' for Indigenous Australians in a 1995 speech.⁴³ In 1996 he named Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders as 'the most profoundly disadvantaged within our midst'.⁴⁴ In May 1997 he rebuked those who denied the reality of Aboriginal disadvantage:

Anybody who argues that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not as a group more profoundly disadvantaged than other sections of the Australian community are flying in the face of reality. People who argue that are substituting fiction for fact. They are substituting selective anecdotes for irrefutable statistical proof and they are also ignoring the realities that are around us to see.⁴⁵

Howard developed the theme of compassion for the disadvantaged as his defining approach to Indigenous policy.

40 Ward, 'Political Chronicles', 568–69.

41 'John Howard Calls Pauline Hanson "Deranged"', AustralianPolitics.com, accessed 17 January 2020, australianpolitics.com/1998/06/03/howard-calls-hanson-deranged.html.

42 Howard, *Lazarus*, 256.

43 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 2 March 1995, 1411–12.

44 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 30 October 1996, 6158.

45 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 27 May 1997, 4111.

Howard and Indigenous Corporations

The theme of 'disadvantage' is subtly present in Howard's approach to the regulation of the Indigenous sector. It has been a continuing expectation by both Coalition and Labor governments since the 1970s that Indigenous Australians will become skilled functionaries in what has become known as the Indigenous sector.⁴⁶ Under policies described as 'self-determination' and 'self-management', Australian governments had encouraged Indigenous Australians to form corporations in order to hold title to Indigenous property, advocate their needs, deliver services and manage employment programs (particularly the Community Development Employment Projects, or CDEP). The Fraser (conservative) government passed the *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act* (henceforth ACA Act) in 1976, with Labor's support. The advocates and legislators of the ACA Act justified it as acknowledging overlooked Indigenous political capacity by giving it a formal vehicle; acknowledging cultural difference in Indigenous ways of associating; bringing order, transparency and accountability to Aboriginal peoples' collective action; and sparing Aboriginal people the burden of understanding the complexities of mainstream incorporation laws. The ACA Act was accepted and used by the Hawke and Keating governments. The Howard government had no quarrel with this legacy when it replaced the ACA in 2007 with the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act* (henceforth CATSI Act). Both Acts have authorised the Office of the Registrar of Aboriginal/Indigenous Corporations to examine the conduct of registered corporations, but the CATSI Act is notable for declaring that the office's purposes are not only disciplinary but also tutelary.

Indigenous Australians have sometimes felt that their customary ways of doing business were under pressure from these Acts' oversight.⁴⁷ When ATSIC was asked by the Keating government in 1994 to comment on proposed amendments to the ACA Act that would strengthen the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations, the commissioners persuaded the minister to defer changes, pending a review of the ACA Act to be

46 Tim Rowse, 'The Indigenous Sector', in *Culture, Economy and Governance in Aboriginal Australia: Proceedings of a Workshop of the Academy of Social Sciences*, ed. Diane Austin-Broos and Gaynor Macdonald (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2005), 207–24.

47 For an Indigenous scholar's critique, see Terry Widders, 'On the Dreaming Track to Citizenship: Indigenous People and the Ambivalence of Citizenship', in *Martung Upah: Black and White Australians Seeking Partnership*, ed. Anne Pattel-Gray (Blackburn: HarperCollins, 1996), 212–29.

conducted by ATSIC. The review was conducted by Dr James Fingleton for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. While the Fingleton review was in process, the Howard government's March 1996 election brought to power MPs still sceptical about the delegation of government program spending to Indigenous corporations. When the registrar annually reported the exercise of his powers, he always brought to light some instances of dishonesty and/or incompetence that reinforced the conviction that government oversight, tuition and, occasionally, discipline were needed by Indigenous Australians who engaged in formal collective action. Submissions to the Fingleton review cautioned against presuming that all Indigenous custom was a problem to be solved by firmer adherence to non-Aboriginal norms. Fingleton recommended a relaxation of restrictions on the design of Indigenous corporations, so that they could align better with Indigenous custom; he sought to reconcile the ways of organised Indigenous Australians with the wider society's norms of good governance. Without abjuring the principle that legislation should keep Indigenous corporations accountable to members, clients and governments, his recommendations acknowledged the risk that imposed practices of governance could alienate Indigenous Australian members, clients and staff, eroding their confidence that the corporations really belonged to them and were responsive to them.

The Howard government did not change the ACA Act in response to Fingleton's review. Meanwhile, the registrar continued to seek amendments to further empower oversight and corrective intervention. The registrar noted two significant changes in the ACA Act's environment in the 1990s. One was that a High Court ruling had obliged Australian lawmakers to reconstruct all corporate regulation, resulting in the *Corporations Act 2001*. The other change was that the implementation of the Native Title Act was giving rise to many Prescribed Bodies Corporate, as title-holding entities. In November 2000, the registrar commissioned a review of the ACA Act by a multidisciplinary team headed by lawyers Corrs Chambers Westgarth. The review's consultation paper asked whether a specific Indigenous incorporation statute was still necessary, and (if so) whether it should be for all Indigenous corporations, regardless of size. Consultations found widespread support for such a statute with no restriction on size. As well, according to the registrar, supporters wanted the Act to be both 'more flexible' about the design of corporations and more consistent with the Corporations Act, while enabling the registrar's office to focus more on 'capacity building and assistance'.

According to the 'Final Report and Recommendations' of the Corrs review (released in December 2002), the rationale for continuing an Indigenous-specific incorporation statute was that most Indigenous corporations had social rather than commercial objectives. The review sought to recognise greater diversity among those social purposes: it acknowledged that there could be different constitutions and reporting requirements, and it recommended that the registrar have discretion to modify the latter. Meanwhile, the responsibilities of directors and officers could more closely align with the Corporations Act.

The Howard government acted on the Corrs review, with a Bill that largely followed its recommendations. The intent of the CATSI Act is to be 'a special measure to advance and protect the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their respective cultures'.⁴⁸ Labor voted for the Bill, though warning that regulation must strike a delicate balance between securing good governance and allowing Indigenous clients and members to feel that their corporations belonged to them.⁴⁹ The CATSI Act is further evidence that Indigenous public policy is bipartisan in its aspiration to recognise a distinct Indigenous institutional order in order to develop certain capacities within it.

The Howard Government and ATSIC

Although John Howard and his Coalition colleagues had vigorously opposed the legislation of ATSIC in 1989, the Howard government waited until it was almost at the end of its third term before announcing that it would abolish ATSIC, and it did not make that decision until after the Labor Party, in Opposition, announced that it had lost confidence in ATSIC. To explain the demise of ATSIC we need to understand how it lost the support of both the Coalition and Labor.

Affording ATSIC greater autonomy, the Howard government in 1999 enabled that the chair of ATSIC be elected by the Board of Commissioners. In December 1999, the board elected Geoff Clark. Howard and Clark

48 Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Bill 2005, Parliamentary Library BILLS DIGEST (Information analysis and advice for the Parliament), 31 January 2006, 82.

49 See House of Representatives Hansard 11 October 2006 for the debate on a package of Bills: the Corporations Amendment (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations) Bill 2006; the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Consequential, Transitional and Other Measures Bill 2006 (the transitional Bill); and the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Bill 2005 (the amendment Bill).

were opposed in their views about the place of Indigenous rights in 'reconciliation'. The appeal of 'practical reconciliation' was Howard's most potent counter to Clark's and ATSIC's insistence that Indigenous Australians be empowered to enact their distinct rights, including the right to negotiate a treaty. While they agreed that 'reconciliation' included reducing Indigenous Australians' socioeconomic 'disadvantage', ATSIC under Clark argued that the key to overcoming disadvantage was greater government recognition of Indigenous Australians' right of self-determination as distinct peoples within the Australian nation. One occasion for Clark to assert the 'rights' approach was Corroboree 2000, on Saturday 27 May, at the Sydney Opera House. There the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation presented the *Australian Declaration towards Reconciliation*, proposing legislation that would commit the Australian Government to negotiate a comprehensive agreement with Indigenous Australians. Howard's speech at Corroboree 2000 deflected this idea with emollient words:

Reconciliation will mean different things to different people. There is a spiritual component to reconciliation just as there is a practical component to it. And you cannot achieve reconciliation without acknowledging as I do and the Government I lead does, the self-evident fact that the indigenous people of Australia are the most profoundly disadvantaged within our communities. And part of the process of reconciliation is to adopt practical measures to address that disadvantage.⁵⁰

This was typical of the Howard government's dismissal of an approach to reconciliation that accorded importance to distinct Indigenous rights.⁵¹

The reputations of Clark and his deputy chair Ray Robinson soon diminished for reasons that had nothing to do with Howard's rhetorical deflection of 'rights'. In July 2002 police in Victoria decided not to prosecute Clark for rape, after 12 months of investigating well-publicised accusations. He was also being prosecuted for 'riotous behaviour' after a fight in a hotel. Some observers questioned the political judgement of

50 John Howard, 'Corroboree 2000 Speech', AustralianPolitics.com, accessed 14 January 2020, australianpolitics.com/2000/05/27/john-howard-address-to-corroboree-2000.html#more-10691.

51 For critical accounts of Howard's selective rejection of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation's 'Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation' at Corroboree 2000, see Gunstone, 'The Impact', 63–64, and Robbins, 'The Howard Government', 321–22. For Clark's response to this event, reiterating the demand for a treaty, see Geoff Clark, 'Not Much Progress', in *Reconciliation: Essays on Australian Reconciliation*, ed. Michelle Grattan (Melbourne: Black Inc., 2000), 228–34.

ATSIC's Board of Commissioners in covering the costs of his defence by a top Melbourne QC. In Queensland, ATSIC Commissioner Ray Robinson began legal proceedings against the *Courier Mail* for alleging his improper financial dealing, while ATSIC's own internal Office of Evaluation and Audit investigated the claim.⁵²

Without referring to these problems of individual reputation, Minister for Indigenous Affairs Philip Ruddock announced in June 2002 that ATSIC would be reviewed. Ruddock presented the inquiry as his response to Indigenous disquiet. In July 2002 even Clark acknowledged that some Indigenous Australians were so alienated from ATSIC that they might not participate in ATSIC's fourth election (scheduled to be held on 19 October 2002). Voter registration, he acknowledged, was a test of ATSIC's significance to Indigenous Australians.⁵³ The October election produced a new board and, in December 2002, Clark and Robinson were successful in persuading commissioners that they should continue as chair and deputy chair.

Meanwhile, criticism of ATSIC continued, from Indigenous people whom the minister could not ignore. Patrick Dodson was reported as calling for ATSIC to be phased out; ATSIC was tarnished, he reportedly said, by the actions of its leaders.⁵⁴ At the same time, newspapers reported a court case in which Clark's predecessor as chair, Gatjil Djerrkura, was accused of sexual harassment. Commissioner Jenny Pryor was quoted as saying that a woman should lead ATSIC, given the behaviour of its male leaders.⁵⁵ In November 2002, Ruddock announced rules that would allow him to remove a commissioner 'for a variety of behavioural offences, including causing public embarrassment to an Aboriginal organisation, seriously disrupting meetings and sexual harassment in or out of the workplace'.⁵⁶ Lowitja O'Donoghue wrote to Ruddock asking him why he was not sacking Clark.⁵⁷

52 Chris Graham, 'ATSIC Launches Inquiry; Robinson Claims Innocence', *National Indigenous Times*, 31 July 2002, 1, 4.

53 Chris Graham, 'ATSIC Enters Election Mode', *National Indigenous Times*, 31 July 2002, 1, 17.

54 Chris Graham and AAP, 'Dodson Comments Sour Grapes: Sugar', *National Indigenous Times*, 23 October 2002, 1.

55 'Pryor Says ATSIC Needs a Woman at the Helm', *National Indigenous Times*, 23 October 2002, 10.

56 Chris Graham, 'Tough New Rules for ATSIC Board', *National Indigenous Times*, 20 November 2002, 1, 11.

57 'ATSIC under Fire', *National Indigenous Times*, 30 April 2003, 4.

On 12 November 2002 the minister announced the ATSIC inquiry's terms of reference and the panel that would conduct the review: Bob Collins, John Hannaford and Jackie Huggins. They delivered their report 12 months later, recommending a number of reforms to make ATSIC more accountable to Indigenous Australians. Explaining Indigenous Australians' estrangement as an effect of ATSIC's concentration of power at the national level, the panel sought more power for elected regional councils. The Opposition's response was to announce on 30 March 2004 that it would abolish ATSIC if it won the 2004 election and replace it with a directly elected national Indigenous body. This emboldened the Howard government to announce on 15 April 2004 that it would abolish ATSIC, and so it did in the final months of its third term.

Evidently, not all Indigenous voters were displeased by the government's action. In the absence of studies that constitute a sample of Indigenous Australians of voting age, it is possible to get an idea of changes in Indigenous party preference by examining returns from booths where the voters were almost entirely Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. At 37 such booths across 12 electorates, in the 2004 election, one-third (4,294 out of 12,919 voters) of voters chose Coalition candidates—a 'massive swing to the federal Coalition', according to the *National Indigenous Times*.⁵⁸

The Northern Territory Intervention

The emergence of Indigenous critics of ATSIC was symptomatic of a growing diversity in public statements by prominent Indigenous Australians. Howard noted and welcomed the thawing of his relationship with Indigenous Australia. In his first term, he had made it difficult for Indigenous leaders to bond publicly with him when he was openly diminishing the property rights of native title holders, and for 10 years (1997–2007) he refused to apologise to the Stolen Generations (while expressing his 'very deep sorrow for indigenous people who suffered under the injustices of policies pursued by past generations').⁵⁹ When Howard saw signs that Indigenous leaders were moving closer to him, he pointed them out. In a speech to the House on 3 June 1999, he approvingly noted

58 Chris Graham, 'Wild Swings Amid Black Payback in Qld and SA', *National Indigenous Times*, 13 October 2004, 6. Graham also suggested that regional variations in the size of swing owed much to Indigenous voters' hostile responses to actions by state Labor governments.

59 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 27 May 1997, 4113.

the critique of 'welfare dependency' voiced by Noel Pearson—'a person who has not always been complimentary about the policies of the government I lead'.⁶⁰ On 26 August 1999, Howard thanked Senator Aden Ridgeway for helping to formulate a motion expressing:

Deep and sincere regret that Indigenous Australians suffered injustices under the practices of past generations, and for the hurt and trauma that many Indigenous people continue to feel as a consequence of those practices.

Howard mentioned Ridgeway warmly four times in his speech, representing Ridgeway's cooperation as symptomatic of Indigenous leaders starting to meet him 'halfway'.⁶¹ In the context of such a conciliatory moment, we can better understand the Howard government amending the ATSIC Act so that, from 1999, the chair of ATSIC was no longer appointed by the minister for Aboriginal affairs but elected by the other ATSIC commissioners. The commissioners chose Geoff Clark in 1999 and in 2002 to Chair ATSIC; this added to the diversity of Indigenous voices with an opportunity to address the public, as some prominent Indigenous figures did not agree with Clark. By the time he abolished ATSIC in 2004, Howard was confident that he could pick his own team of Indigenous advisers. Notwithstanding that around 200 Indigenous people gathered in Adelaide (11–14 June 2004) to call for a new *elected* national Indigenous representative body, the Howard government *appointed* a small, advisory National Indigenous Council (NIC), chaired by the Western Australian magistrate Sue Gordon, to advise the Ministerial Taskforce on Indigenous Affairs. The NIC's first meeting on 8–9 December 2004 set priorities for government action: early childhood intervention, safer communities and reducing 'passive welfare'.⁶²

The currency of the latter term showed the take-up of Noel Pearson's critique of Indigenous Australians' acquired irresponsibility. Noel Pearson from 1999 onwards presented an historical thesis: that one unintended consequence of the Indigenous right to welfare was the collapse in the cohesion and moral strength of the Aboriginal family. The scandal surrounding Clark and Robinson in the period 2002–04 had helped

60 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 3 June 1999, 6017.

61 Howard, *CPD HoR*, 26 August 1999, 9205.

62 NIC members were Sue Gordon, Wesley Aird, Archie Barton, May Ann Bin-Sallik, Miriam Rose Baumann, Joseph Elu, Robert Lee, Adam Goodes, Sally Goold, John Moriarty, Warren Mundine, Joe Procter, Michael White and Tammy Williams.

to dramatise the problem as a public crisis of Indigenous masculinity. Were the (apparent, alleged) failings of Indigenous communities a symptom of unresolved tensions between Indigenous men and women? From this Indigenous discourse about Indigenous society there emerged new and urgent figurations of Indigenous 'disadvantage': the battered woman, the neglected child.⁶³ These stories of 'disadvantage' were more vivid than the statistics of Indigenous–non-Indigenous disparity, and they raised the question of who was responsible for defending women and children from further harm.

The Howard government's answer to that question was the Australian government. The opportunity to give that answer came in 2007 when the Northern Territory Government responded cautiously to a report, *Little Children are Sacred*, that represented children in remote Aboriginal communities as neglected and/or abused. The Howard government seized on this exposé of Indigenous vulnerability, announcing the NTER. This package, presented on 21 June 2007 by Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Mal Brough, included the following items:

- alcohol restrictions on Northern Territory Aboriginal land
- controls on welfare recipients' expenditure
- linking welfare payments to parental performance in getting their children to school
- compulsory health checks for Aboriginal children
- acquiring certain townships on Aboriginal land, through five-year leases
- increasing police presence in certain communities
- new rent and tenancy arrangements for households
- additional funds for housing
- banning X-rated pornography in prescribed communities
- ending the permit system for defined areas within Aboriginal lands
- phasing out the CDEP scheme to encourage people into 'mainstream' employment
- appointing managers of all government business in certain communities.

63 This Indigenous public auto-critique began to emerge in the 1980s and grew in strength. See Sarah Maddison, *Black Politics* (Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin 2009), 185–205; Tim Rowse, *Indigenous and other Australians since 1901* (Sydney: UNSW Press 2017), 406–13.

That many of these measures were frankly paternalistic constituted what Howard, in *Lazarus Rising*, called a 'paradigm change'. They were politically possible not only because Howard's fourth term benefited from a conservative majority in the Senate, but also because Howard had, by then, secured some Aboriginal leaders' public endorsement of his response to what was widely acknowledged as an 'emergency' in remote Indigenous communities. Of course, there were many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander critics of the NTER, as coverage by the *National Indigenous Times* and *Koori Mail* made clear, arguing that the NTER disempowered community leaders who had long been struggling against family violence.⁶⁴ But the 'Taskforce' appointed by the Howard government to oversee the NTER was chaired by the Aboriginal magistrate Sue Gordon, who had also been foundation chair of the government-chosen NIC. Aboriginal politician Adam Giles, soon to contest unsuccessfully the Northern Territory seat of Lingiari as the Country Liberal Party candidate in the 2007 election, expressed his support for the NTER.⁶⁵

Conclusion

Assessing whether the Northern Territory intervention was a 'paradigm change' depends partly on how we describe the policy orthodoxy from which, in Howard's view, it broke. In *Lazarus Rising*, Howard labels that orthodoxy as 'separate development, with a heavy overlay of guilt and shame'. This orthodoxy was supported by 'the old guard of the Aboriginal leadership, the ALP' and much of the press.⁶⁶

I have argued that Howard's 2007 break from policy orthodoxy should not be described as his repudiation of 'separate development'. Whatever that poorly defined term might mean, it arguably includes acknowledging in legislation that Indigenous Australians have distinct rights to land and seas and a distinct suite of formal representative institutions. The Howard government, in practice, endorsed both: it fashioned a version of legislated native title that made native title acceptable to the Coalition, supported ATSIC until its Labor champions and many Indigenous

64 Muriel Bamblett, chairwoman of the Secretariat of National Aboriginal Child Care (SNAICC)), rehearsed the history of SNAICC's own fruitless lobbying of Labor and non-Labor governments in August 2007: 'Heartbreak Hill', *National Indigenous Times*, 23 August 2007, 16–18.

65 Interviewed by Graham Ring, 'Doing the "Right" Thing', *National Indigenous Times*, 26 July 2007, 33.

66 Howard, *Lazarus*, 280.

leaders had lost faith in it, and renewed the distinct regulatory regime that gives the Indigenous sector incentives to self-discipline. Further, although Howard congratulated himself for making an eleventh-hour break from 'separate development' by initiating the NTER in June 2007, it is relevant to point out that the succeeding Labor government did not repudiate the NTER, but largely embraced it in a 'bipartisan' commitment to actions that could be shown to attain 'the objectives which have been set' (in Kevin Rudd's words).⁶⁷

Since the Whitlam government, there has been more continuity between Labor and Coalition governments in Indigenous affairs policies, though each side has an interest in playing down continuities and overstating philosophical differences. When each side of Australian politics has a chance to govern Indigenous affairs, it seeks distinct terms in which to cast its commitment to much the same set of statutes, institutions and programs. To flag the distinct worth of a government's approach, it helps if Indigenous Australians *publicly endorse* what the government is doing and echo the government's stated reasons for its actions. Therefore, a big part of governing Indigenous affairs is to establish conspicuous Indigenous allies. For Howard this was not easy, as a rhetorically skilful Keating had clothed himself in the new national narrative (the Redfern speech of December 1992), demonstrated empathy with rights-talking Indigenous leaders and legislated a 'right' of native title. Howard's difficulties in portraying himself as a friend of Indigenous Australia are evident in the resentful expressions I have quoted from Howard's first term, phrases recycled in *Lazarus Rising*. In his refusal to apologise to the Stolen Generations from 1997 to 2007, Howard was prepared to distance himself emotionally from many Indigenous Australians, as long as this stance assured his distinction, as well, from the 'object' and 'guilty' non-Indigenous Australians who aligned with Labor.

The terms in which a leader can present him/herself credibly as a champion of Indigenous Australia have changed from decade to decade. The High Court's *Mabo* judgment gave the government of the day no choice but to make the customary Indigenous right to land and sea the defining issue

67 As quoted by Will Sanders, 'Ideology, Evidence and Competing Principles in Australian Indigenous Affairs: From Brough to Rudd via Pearson and the NTER', *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 45 (2010): 312–13, doi.org/10.1002/j.1839-4655.2010.tb00182.x. The promotion of Rudd's parliamentary apology to the Stolen Generations (February 2008) as if it defined his leadership has obscured the substantial continuity between the Howard and Rudd governments' Indigenous affairs policies.

of a just relationship. It was Howard's fate to do what he could with the rights-based policy that eventuated. Not without difficulty, he persuaded his side of politics that it was best to embrace a modified version of the native title package, while seeking to shift the public's attention to as yet unmet Indigenous needs and away from perpetually distinct rights. His tireless rhetorical mission ('practical', 'compassion') met with more and more success largely because there was an emerging Indigenous constituency ready to endorse his terms as their own deeply felt concern. It helped Howard that some of those insisting on a 'rights' approach seemed, for a few years, conspicuously irresponsible in personal and financial matters. The morally charged focus on 'responsibility' dramatised a distinction *within* Indigenous Australia between the flourishing and the vulnerable—a gap with roots in Indigenous ways of reckoning with each other.

The 'paradigm shift' that Howard celebrates in *Lazarus Rising* must be understood not only in terms of its program innovations (such as the imposed 'Basics Card') but also in terms of its novel political alliances: the actions justified by Howard as an expression of 'compassion' towards the most vulnerable Indigenous people were now publicly endorsed by one side of an increasingly divided Indigenous constituency. To understand the politics of the NTER we need to consider not only the overstated competing party ideologies but also the under-analysed diversity that has emerged in Indigenous understandings of 'social justice' and 'responsibility'.

Some Sources of Technological Novelty: An Essay

Carroll Pursell

The Australian National University

***Abstract:** By the end of the eighteenth century, the unfolding Industrial Revolution was seen to be based, in large part, on a rapidly evolving technological base. At the same time, the source of these innovations was thought to be the work of a new social type: the inventor. For a long century this font of change was encouraged by both public policies and cultural celebration. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the growth of industrial corporations and the increasing power of science to predict and control natural processes had led to the eclipse of the 'lone' inventor and the rise of teams working in industrial research laboratories. The inventor lived on for a time as a semi-comic figure in popular culture but no longer as a popular folk hero.*

Mark Twain's tale *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* tells the story of a Hartford mechanic who attempted to reproduce American government and technology in sixth-century England; it was a classic effort at modernisation—what some scholars might now call an example of the Enlightenment Project. When he took over the kingdom and titled himself 'Sir Boss', he related:

The very first official thing I did, in my administration—and it was on the very first day of it, too—was to start a patent office; for I knew that a country without a patent office and good patent laws was just a crab, and couldn't travel any way but sideways or backwards.¹

A few years before, the future president, Abraham Lincoln, then an Illinois attorney who handled patent cases and held one himself, proclaimed that 'the Patent System ... added the fuel of interest to the fire of genius in the discovery and production of new and useful things'.² So powerful and

1 Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (New York: Signet Classics, 1963), 58.

2 'Second Lecture on Discoveries and Inventions', *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 3, accessed 24 June 2019, quod.lib.umich.edu/l/lincoln/lincoln3/1:87?rgn=div1;view=fulltext.

widespread has this belief become that, in 2018, the United States Patent Office issued patent number 10 million while, in the previous year alone, China had granted 1.8 million patents.³

Gyro Gearloose, Walt Disney's cartoon inventor, is popular in Brazil, where he is known as 'Professor' Gearloose. The honorific is undeserved but significant. Brazilians explain that, since Gyro is an inventor, and inventions come out of scientific research, and scientific research is done in universities, he obviously is a professor. In the American original, however, Gearloose is an 'independent' inventor, so impractical that he must tie his hat on his head or lose it. While his inventions always do *something*, they never do exactly what he intends. In contrast to Walt Disney's evil scientist Dr Kronos, who works for illegitimate power (the criminal Mr Big), Gearloose often works for legitimate power, the fabulously wealthy capitalist, 'Uncle' Scrooge McDuck.

That simple premise, and its Brazilian variation, tell us a great deal about the popular beliefs that surround inventors. First, inventions do not come from nowhere; they come from someone. Second, inventors need support from somewhere. It is (and always has been) an expensive and complicated process to move from an idea to a product. The inventor is seldom 'alone'.⁴ Third, nothing has only one use, and even the inventor is not always the best person to predict the possibly many ways in which an invention might be used. Surprises are always to be expected. Fourth, inventors in our own time have acquired a reputation for, at the very least, eccentricity and, at the extreme, a kind of madness. Finally, the perception of where inventions come from shifted in the last century from the individual genius to the trained expert, usually working in a scientific laboratory that is a part of some larger, usually corporate or government, organisation.

Gyro Gearloose's eccentricity and lack of institutional attachment point to one final truth: often, new products, processes and attitudes must come from outside the status quo. Marginality, defined in any one of a number

3 'Patents Through History', United States Patent and Trademark Office, accessed 24 June 2019, 10millionpatents.uspto.gov; Lulu Yilun Chen, 'China Claims More Patents Than Any Country—Most Are Worthless', *Bloomberg*, 27 September 2018, accessed 21 June 2019, www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-09-26/china-claims-more-patents-than-any-country-most-are-worthless.

4 See Carroll Pursell, 'The American Patent Agency: The Embedded "Lone Inventor" in American History', *Icon* 17 (2011): 31–39.

of ways, is not always a bad quality in an inventor: outside the industry or firm, outside the academy or court, outside the standards of bourgeois respectability, ignorant, perhaps, of accepted practice.

Three myths misinform our notions of the source of invention. The first of these, and the most difficult to refute because it is based on a semi-religious faith in the inevitability of progress, is the belief that technology comes out of its own logic, inevitably and irresistibly. This view is neatly summed up in the truism that 'if it can be done, it will be done'. The notion is that a kind of invisible hand guides technology ever onward and upward, using individuals and organisations as vessels for its purposes but guided always by a sort of divine plan for bringing the greatest good to the greatest number. Ever since the battle of the ancients and the moderns, technological improvement has, perhaps, been the best evidence for progress in this otherwise disappointing world, where virtue and wisdom seem no further along than they were two millennia ago.

Stripped of its mystical faith, however, the proposition can best be tested by the citation of technologies that, while possible, are still not widely in use. Passive solar design of buildings, for example, goes back at least as far as the ancient Greeks, but even now is resisted as exotic and somehow futuristic. Active solar devices, like those for heating water, were commercially available in the United States in the late nineteenth century and widely used in Southern California early in the twentieth century.⁵ They too, however, are widely considered untested and possibly practical only sometime in the future. Solar voltaics, the direct conversion of sunlight into electricity, is increasingly used today, but receives only a small fraction of the research and development attention that is lavished on such *truly* speculative power sources as laser fusion. There are no doubt a number of reasons why all this is so, but the fact remains that, while all these kinds of solar technology 'can' be done, they are only recently being adopted on a large scale.

A second myth is summed up by the saying 'necessity is the mother of invention'. One commentator has charged that, in fact, the 'reality, more often than not, is almost exactly the reverse: Invention is the mother of necessity'. Not only were some inventions not 'needed', but also they may have been absolutely rejected by society when they first appeared.

5 Ken Butti and John Perlin, *A Golden Thread: 2500 Years of Solar Architecture and Technology* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1980).

Often this rejection comes from manufacturers who see no reason to introduce 'better' ways of doing whatever their regular products do already. Other times, manufacturers market the inventions but nobody buys. The telephone with a small television screen, allowing speakers to see each other, was a resounding failure when it was first introduced, though today's smart phones are a rethinking of this old idea.

The parking meter usefully demonstrates the complexity of the idea that inventions respond to 'needs'. In 1993, the city of San Francisco was home to 464,100 vehicles, constituting a density of 10,313 vehicles per square mile of city. The city also had 21,000 parking meters. Why were they there? One can imagine that, originally, some inventor 'needed' to make an invention, because that is the way they make a living. The devices themselves, clever and straightforward combinations of clocks and coin-operated vending machines, are manufactured by firms that 'need' products to sell.

The city of San Francisco 'needs' the revenue produced, although the \$10,891,000 raised in 1991–92 was partially offset by the \$5–6 million spent to repair vandalised machines and in lost revenue. Local merchants 'need' the meters to keep some motorists, perhaps commuters, from taking up the space in front of their shops for the entire day, and shoppers 'need' them so that, after several futile circles of the block, they may eventually find a place to park their cars.⁶

Many of these 'needs', of course, derive from the fact that people drive cars rather than walk or use public transport, and all these needs could be met some other way besides using parking meters. Many modern 'needs' are themselves inventions, the product of an economy that stimulates consumption so that it can make and market things for profit.⁷ To dignify these with the term 'needs' is simply to obscure rather than explain where inventions come from. The word 'need' carries vague implications of inevitability, and its 'filling' by business seems somehow tinged with public service.

'Inventiveness', the historian Brooke Hindle has written, 'was, of course, responsive to needs, but it often looked for the need after a possible invention had arisen in the mind'. With organic evolution, he concluded:

6 *San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 May 1993.

7 For an excellent example, see Robert Friedel, *Zipper: An Exploration in Novelty* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994).

Positive mutations are selected for perpetuation; just as inventive ideas may be selected for development when they prove applicable to social and economic needs—or even when such needs can be aroused.⁸

The third presumed source of invention is the classic inventor: a ‘genius’ who, like the Romantic artist, draws on springs of creativity both noble and mysterious. This idea is firmly entrenched in popular culture and, in 1941, became a part of American patent law through the concept of the ‘flash of genius’ that legally defines the moment of inspired design, as opposed to mere tinkering or technical skill. Like the artist too, inventors have often been seen as misunderstood dreamers, half mad perhaps, thriving in isolated workshops and sometimes rewarded only long after their deaths.

The inventor as a social type appeared only in the eighteenth century. For millennia, technological change had been slow and anonymous: the truly great inventions such as the wheel and the corn mill, have no names, or even dates, attached to them. In part this was because, while science had always been associated with the court and church, practised by learned scholars often known to history, new technologies arose from humble workers and artisans, usually illiterate and socially anonymous.

Beginning with the Industrial Revolution, such names as Newcomen and Watt, Arkwright and Cort leap from the accounts of industrial progress as people who, through their individual genius and perseverance, created tools, machines and processes that had not existed before. The nineteenth century, of course, was the great age of heroes, and romantic notions of genius were grafted onto an older Renaissance celebration of the individual. This was especially true in America, which bragged that its national heroes were not kings, generals and demented religious leaders who gained a place in history through conquest, destruction, cruelty and similar villainies, but simple inventors, risen *from* the people to bring great benefits *to* the people.

The scientific study of genius flourished in the nineteenth century, allowing one enthusiast to claim in 1896 that:

8 Brooke Hindle, *Emulation and Invention* (New York: New York University Press, 1981), 128.

Looking at this campaign of progress from an anthropological and geographic standpoint, it is interesting to note who are its agents and what its scenes of action. It will be found that almost entirely the field [of invention] lies in a little belt of the civilized world between the 30th and 50th parallels of latitude of the western hemisphere and between the 40th and 60th parallels of the western part of the eastern hemisphere, and the work of a relatively small number of the Caucasian race under the benign influences of a Christian civilization.⁹

Of the idols of Anglo-American Victorian culture, only capitalism was unacknowledged. Not surprisingly given the times, these paragons were assumed to be white males. No doubt most were, but it is also true that women, and in the United States African Americans, struggled for acknowledgement of their inventive activities as well.¹⁰

In fact, rather than paragons of Victorian virtue and respectability, inventors often turned out to be misfits, ill-suited to polite society. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology historian Elting Morison reported that, of some 30 or so nineteenth-century inventors he once studied informally:

A surprising number turned out to be people with little formal education, who drank a good deal, who were careless with money, and who had trouble with wives or other women.¹¹

The out-of-control masculinity in this description is palpable. If indeed inventors exhibited these characteristics more commonly than other men of their time (which may or may not be true), then perhaps Morison is correct in suggesting that we can:

Look upon invention as a hostile act—a dislocation of existing schemes, a way of disturbing the comfortable bourgeois routines and calculations, a means of discharging the restlessness with arrangements and standards that arbitrarily limit.¹²

9 Edward Byrn quoted in Robert Friedel, 'Perspiration in Perspective: Changing Perceptions of Genius and Expertise in American Invention', in *Inventive Minds: Creativity in Technology*, ed. Robert J. Weber and David N. Perkins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 16.

10 For women see, for example, Carroll Pursell, 'Women Inventors in America', *Technology and Culture* 22 (July 1981): 545–49, doi.org/10.2307/3104389. For African American inventors, see Carroll Pursell, ed., *A Hammer in Their Hands: A Documentary History of Technology and the African-American Experience* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), especially 165–73.

11 Elting E. Morison, *Men, Machines, and Modern Times* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966), 9.

12 Morison, *Men, Machines, and Modern Times*, 9.

If it all sounds now a bit bohemian, we should remember that the words ‘artist’ and ‘artisan’ have a common root in the Latin word *ars*, suggesting the two share common traits.

In the spring of 1993, newspapers reported that ‘a British inventor has stunned military and scientific experts by creating a plastic tough enough to withstand heat from nuclear explosions’. Perhaps it was the physical properties of this ‘variety of 21 polymers, copolymers, ceramic and additives’ that ‘stunned’ the experts, but just as surely their surprise sprang in part from the fact that the inventor, one Maurice Ward, was said to be a businessman and ‘a former hairdresser with no university training’.¹³ One thinks of that other hairdresser, Richard Arkwright, whose eighteenth-century water frame was a key invention in the shift from hand to power spinning in the transformation of the textile industry. Like those who find it difficult to believe that Shakespeare could really have written his plays, doubters often are ‘stunned’ to find new ideas coming from inappropriate sources—from people too far outside the loop. And that collective of inappropriate sources could be defined in many ways.

Engineers were often inventors as well, designers of the new machine society, and they too came to prominence as civil builders first in the eighteenth century. The first generation or two made up what historian R. A. Buchanan has called ‘a motley crew’. Most of them, he points out, ‘were artisans, practical craftsmen from humble homes and lacking in any formal education, although many of them had served apprenticeships as millwrights, mechanics, instrument makers, or stonemasons’.¹⁴

We are informed by Samuel Smiles that the great James Brindley, a member of the first generation of British civil engineers:

Could scarcely read, and he was thus cut off, to his own great loss, from familiar intercourse with a large class of cultivated minds, living and dead; for he could not share in the conversation of educated men, nor enrich his mind by reading the stores of experience found treasured up in books. Neither could he write, except with difficulty and inaccuracy.¹⁵

13 (Cleveland) *Plain Dealer*, 2 May 1993.

14 R. A. Buchanan, ‘Gentlemen Engineers: The Making of a Profession’, *Victorian Studies* 26 (Summer, 1983): 410–11.

15 Samuel Smiles, *Selections from Lives of the Engineers, with An Account of Their Principal Works*, ed. Thomas Parke Hughes (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966), 166.

It was perhaps for this reason that, according to his brother-in-law:

When any extraordinary difficulty occurred to Mr. Brindley in the execution of his works, having little or no assistance from books or the labours of other men, his resources lay within himself. In order, therefore, to be quiet and uninterrupted whilst he was in search of the necessary expedients, he generally retired to his bed; and he was known to be there one, two, or three days, till he had attained the object in view. He would then get up and execute his design, without any drawing or model. Indeed, it was never his custom to make either, unless he was obliged to do it to satisfy his employers.¹⁶

These stories about Brindley, albeit filtered through the imagination of the nineteenth century's preeminent celebrant of technical genius, are revealing in several ways. Like many inventors, he was a person of humble origins and limited formal education, more comfortable communing with things than with people, and at his best when withdrawn from social interaction and distraction. The historian Thomas Hughes, in sketching the characteristics of independent inventors at the turn of the twentieth century, observes that:

Aware of the unorthodoxy of their ideas, inventors and [avant-garde] artists intensified their feelings of being outsiders by their physical withdrawal. Working in their retreats, intellectual and physical, they created a new way, even a new world, to displace the existing one.¹⁷

This trope of isolation has often been invoked by authors when they have dealt with inventors. In the Capek brothers' play *R.U.R.*, the invention, development and manufacture of robots take place on an unidentified island far from Europe and the markets for their machines. In Franz Kafka's story *The Penal Colony*, the terrible and complicated machine for bringing enlightenment and death to offenders is designed, constructed and used in a typically Kafkaesque landscape that, while nowhere, could be anywhere. In the film *Things to Come*, based on the H. G. Wells novel, scientists and engineers withdraw from England to an isolated island after a great world war, there to design and build a great air armada capable of recapturing the country from the barbarian hordes that roam its blighted landscape.

16 Quoted in Smiles, *Selections from Lives of the Engineers*, 168.

17 Thomas P. Hughes, *American Genesis: A Century of Invention and Technological Enthusiasm, 1870–1970* (New York: Viking, 1989), 24.

Besides the desire for isolation, the other striking element in the Brindley story is his ability to visualise his technical problems and their solutions, to the extent, even, that he had no need to make drawings or models. Again, the classic stories of inventors often emphasise this same element. The Romanian-American inventor Nikola Tesla claimed that he could design, test, alter and perfect a new device entirely in his visual imagination, so that the resulting machine, when built, would operate perfectly. Robert Fulton, 'father' of the steamboat, was an artist by training, and Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the electric telegraph, was a professor of art in New York City.

Whether these inventors drew more on the right hemisphere of the brain (seat of visual, auditory and tactile inputs) than from the left (which handles speech and mathematics), Hindle has pointed out that they drew upon their artistic talents and training to enable them to choose among numerous design solutions. Further, it was a distinct advantage to be able to picture spatially the way in which design components might be put together in systems—that is, how they could be connected. The 'contriving mind' is the characterisation Hindle put upon this configuration of advantages.¹⁸

Eugene Ferguson, a mechanical engineer turned historian, studied a similar advantage among the great engineers of the past. He maintains that:

Until the 1960s a student in an American engineering school was expected by his teachers to use his mind's eye to examine things that engineers had designed—to look at them, listen to them, walk around them, and thus develop an intuitive 'feel' for the way the material world works and sometimes doesn't work.¹⁹

The ability to 'see' with the 'mind's eye' is being lost, Ferguson fears, with the result that the art of design (perhaps in invention, as well as engineering) is losing out to a mindless dependence on mathematics and computer models. 'Nearly all engineering failures', he warns, 'result from faulty judgements rather than faulty calculations'.²⁰

18 Hindle, *Emulation and Invention*, 128.

19 Eugene S. Ferguson, 'How Engineers Lose Touch', *American Heritage Invention and Technology* 8 (Winter, 1993): 16.

20 Ferguson, 'How Engineers Lose Touch', 20.

The popular notoriety and adulation once enjoyed by inventors has now, it seems, all but disappeared. By the early 1900s, as the historian Robert Friedel has shown, the popular image of the independent genius inventor was being replaced by a new social type, the 'expert'.²¹ With the steady elaboration of professions, increasing access to higher education and soaring prestige for science, the genius was displaced by the well-trained; likewise, information was privileged over insight, science over experience, numbers over pictures and the rational over the intuitive. The social goals of rationalisation and efficiency changed the ways in which natural resources were exploited (conservation), labour was marshalled (scientific management), and even the way in which technological change was accomplished (industrial research).²²

The process can be seen clearly in the transformation of the electrical industry in the United States during the last years of the nineteenth century. As independent inventors like Thomas Edison attempted to develop, manufacture and market their new devices, they came to need the talents of business management and salesmanship, as well as large amounts of capital investment.²³ At the same time, competing inventions made it increasingly difficult to put together the best technical systems and to integrate systems without patent pools or some other form of consolidation.

In this climate, inventors bought each other out, and when they turned to finance capitalists, like J. P. Morgan, the latter provided money only on condition that they have a significant say in the resulting enterprises. The firm of Thomson-Houston, for example, was the result of the merged interests of those two pioneer electrical inventors. Using Morgan money, this firm bought out Edison and changed its name to Edison General Electric, although the world's most famous, and arguably successful inventor, lost control of his inventions in the process. The new giant firm controlled as well the patents of Frank Sprague, the 'father' of American streetcar technology, and Charles Brush, who had developed the nation's first successful arc-lighting system.

21 Friedel, 'Perspiration in Perspective', 16.

22 See Carroll Pursell, 'The Coming of Science and Systems', in *The Machine in America: A Social History of Technology*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007).

23 For the role of one inventor in this process see Carroll Pursell, 'Lewis Latimer and the Role of Black Inventors', in *Technology in America: A History of Individuals and Ideas*, ed. Carroll Pursell, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2018), 125–34.

General Electric, or Edison General Electric as it was originally called, heavy with patents from some of America's most ingenious electrical inventors, had cut those inventors out of the loop, thereby isolating itself from the very wellsprings of its technological advantage. To ensure that funds were spent on production and sales, not simply on endless 'progress', inventors found their freedom severely limited. Most had no desire to become corporate bureaucrats in any case, and went on to invent in other fields. This large corporation then, was left with a market share based on inventions that were likely someday to be replaced—but by what, and invented by whom? The initial strategy was to remain alert to the light bulbs going off over the heads of inventors all over the world, with the intention of buying the resulting patents or at least the American rights to the new devices. It was by definition a chancy and unpredictable business.

In 1900, General Electric established its famous research laboratory in Schenectady, New York. It was to be, in a sense, an organised, rationalised, predictable analogue to the creative geniuses who had made the original inventions upon which the firm's product line was based. The laboratory, in the words of one historian, both reflected and reinforced the:

Modern notion of technical change owing more to institutions and less to individuals, of invention as being the province of corporations and not of wizards, of human minds and knowledge making a difference in the way people live and work and die not through creative brilliance but through organization and control.²⁴

It was an institution, perhaps, not entirely unlike the workshops of Renaissance Italian artists or those of early modern Holland.

But progress seems to still need genius as well as expertise. At a critical point in Fritz Lang's classic expressionist film *Metropolis*, the master of the city visits a half-mad inventor who lives not in one of the shiny skyscrapers of the metropolis but in a tiny wooden dwelling nestled between them, a cottage better suited to the deep woods than the city of the future. The inventor, wild of hair and eye, has one metal hand, to replace the natural one amputated in the course of his work; his humanity had been reduced, and replaced by the very technology that had destroyed it. The master had reached a crisis in his relations with his workers and, he tells the inventor, he has turned to him for help since his 'experts' had failed him.

²⁴ Friedel, 'Perspiration in Perspective', 22.

Yet, as the neoliberal economists Jewkes, Sawyers and Stillerman pointed out in their 1958 book *The Sources of Invention*, committees do not invent, people do. In a series of charming case studies of twentieth-century invention, they show how, time after time, new ideas came from individuals, however necessary large institutions were in getting the ideas through to production and market.²⁵ The historian George Wise has usefully pointed out that new ideas came from people positioned along a spectrum, not clustered at the polar opposites of independent genius and corporate bureaucrat:

The 'outside' inventors were more dependent on, and the 'inside' inventors were more independent of, corporate policies and choices than previous accounts have depicted. Their choice of targets, the marshalling of support, the use of resources and information, differed in degree, not in kind.²⁶

Even the most 'independent' inventors did contract work for, or sold their ideas to, corporations. At the same time, Wise finds throughout the giant electrical firms 'pockets of invention and innovation', often led by workers who appeared on the official personnel lists as 'shop superintendent', 'consulting engineer', 'mechanical engineer' or under some other job title that did little to reveal their true activities. Such people 'enjoyed the patronage, support, and protection of a high-level executive' and practised what Wise calls 'intrapreneurship': 'playing the role of entrepreneur within the corporation'.²⁷

Wise does well to remind us that ideas still have to come from someone, and that the people who have those ideas need the help of others to put them to practical use. But the world of Rube Goldberg, the engineer turned cartoonist-inventor of such devices as that to remove cotton from aspirin bottles and the classic 1942 'Automatic Hitler-Kicking Machine', was gone long before he himself died in 1970.²⁸

25 John Jewkes, David Sawers and Richard Stillerman, *The Sources of Invention* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1958).

26 George Wise, 'Inventors and Corporations in the Maturing Electrical Industry, 1890–1940', in *Inventive Minds: Creativity in Technology*, ed. Robert J. Weber and David N. Perkins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 293.

27 Wise, 'Inventors and Corporations', 299.

28 Peter C. Marzio, *Rube Goldberg: His Life and Work* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973). See also the English cartoonist of 'invention' in W. Heath Robinson, *Inventions* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1973).

Today, the names of inventors do occasionally come to public attention. The 11 May 2008 edition of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, for example, carried an obituary of Hugh Brander, a physicist at the University of California (Berkeley) who had worked on the World War II Manhattan Project producing the first atomic bombs. By 1951 he was a consultant for the US Naval Ordnance Laboratory where he developed a wetsuit, made of neoprene, for the use of Navy SEALs. He did not patent it, he later explained, because he thought ‘maybe fifty people in the country’ would ever use it. A year later the same wetsuit was ‘invented’ by Jack O’Neill who operated the Surf Shop in San Francisco.²⁹ To complicate matters further, in 1953 two brothers who ran the Dive ‘N Surf shop at Manhattan Beach invented what they called the ‘Body Glove’.³⁰ Brander had missed out on the chance to profit from the millions of surfers who would go on to use his invention.

The ‘inventor’, whether of the wetsuit or steam engine, seems to have largely disappeared from both popular culture and serious literature, despite such celebrated cases as Steve Jobs and Elon Musk. But, if we can no longer easily recite the names and tell the stories of recent inventors, perhaps we can begin to turn to more realistic studies of how and why things change. Or perhaps, even more importantly, we can wean ourselves from the prejudice that it is the design of new technologies, whether by inventors or engineers, that is the most glamorous and important element in the history of technology. Perhaps we can begin to value persistence of design and use as well as change, and the use, servicing and maintenance of machines as well as their design. And, when changes are looked at, we would do well to pay more attention to those introduced through repair and suggested by use. Indeed, the historian David Edgerton has provided a convincing account of the persistence and reintroduction of old technologies in the face of constant novelty.³¹ Perhaps with invention placed in its proper context, we can begin to understand it better.

29 ‘History of the Wet Suit’, accessed 7 July 2019, 360guide.info/wetsuits/wetsuit-history.html (site discontinued).

30 ‘The Story Behind the Body Glove’, DivingHistory.com, accessed 7 July 2019, divinghistory.com/id20.html.

31 David Edgerton, *The Shock of the Old: Technology and Global History Since 1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

LECTURES

ANU Allan Martin Lecture 2019—Trump’s Republic: An American History

David Farber
University of Kansas

Proponents of ‘American exceptionalism’, from Thomas Jefferson to Dick Cheney, have argued that the United States is an ‘empire of liberty’, a nation uniquely dedicated ‘to the preservation and progress of freedom’.¹ Donald Trump, for better and most certainly for worse, has stripped away this sort of self-serving optimism about the meaning and history of the United States. Trump speaks to another American vision, a far darker one that has never before been so boldly articulated by an American president. In Trump’s republic, order, security, power, hierarchy and ‘America First’ nationalism rank far higher than America’s creedal virtues of liberty, freedom and equality. This vision of America, too, has a history and a powerful constituency within the United States.² Trump did not invent the reactionary nationalism that swept him into the presidency, he inherited it and marketed it anew for an American electorate at the crossroads of its national destiny. Trump and Trumpism are, as the saying goes, as American as cherry pie.

Plenty of others, just in the twentieth century, had cooked up a similar stew of nativism, protectionism and populist right-wing, anti-elitist nationalism. Well before Donald Trump threw his hat into the presidential ring, there had been 1968 presidential aspirant George Wallace, the segregationist governor of Alabama, who had not only championed white supremacy but also a fierce disdain for the ‘pointy headed’ intellectuals who, he said, were tearing the nation’s traditional social fabric apart.

1 The literature on American exceptionalism is broad, if not always deep. For former vice president Dick Cheney’s version, see Dick Cheney and Liz Cheney, *Exceptional: Why the World Needs a Powerful America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015). The quoted passage appears on page 259. For Jefferson’s version, see Richard Immerman, *Empire for Liberty* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

2 I write on this aspect of American political culture in David Farber, *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

Six weeks before the presidential election, Wallace led in polls of the American South with the support of 45 per cent of the electorate (he ended up winning five of those states).³ And, back when a middle-aged Donald Trump was narrowly focused on two-timing his first wife for the woman who would eventually become his second, though not final, wife, Texas billionaire Ross Perot told Americans that ‘the giant sucking sound’ they were hearing was the multitude of jobs flowing from the United States to Mexico.⁴ Perot ran as a third party presidential candidate in 1992, gaining nearly 20 per cent of the vote. And, well before Donald Trump was born, even before his father, Fred Trump, fleeced his first New York City tenants, another billionaire right-wing populist, Henry Ford, had sounded out many of the same themes candidate Trump would try out nearly a century later. Ford’s zealous supporters hoped he would run for the presidency in 1924 but, in those pre-primary election days, Republican Party leaders put a stop to that notion.⁵ Of course, none of these men won the presidency: Donald Trump did.

In thinking about Trump’s republic and its antecedents within the United States, I want to consider three interrelated American histories. First, I will give a brief historical outline of the cultural underpinnings of the modern American conservative movement—a dynamic, fractious political culture that Trump has fully embraced and refashioned for the contemporary political moment. Second, I will more briefly examine a linked, overlapping but not congruent political formation, right-wing populism, that Donald Trump championed most visibly during his 2016 campaign and that he continues to foreground in his presidential rallies, Twitter feed, and in his general contempt for such constitutionally protected institutions as Congress and the free press. Finally—and very much linked to the performance of Trump’s right-wing populism—I will ponder the history of humbuggery and spectacle both in American culture and in American politics, and consider how and why in contemporary times Trump has been able to use such venerable tools of democratic and market culture to such powerful effect.

3 The best account of George Wallace’s rise to national prominence remains Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism and the Transformation of American Politics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995).

4 Harley Shalken, ‘The “Giant Sucking Sound” of NAFTA’, *Conversation*, 12 July 2019, theconversation.com/the-giant-sucking-sound-of-nafta-ross-perot-was-ridiculed-as-alarmist-in-1992-but-his-warning-turned-out-to-be-prescient-120258.

5 Steven Watts, *The People’s Tycoon: Henry Ford and the American Century* (New York: Knopf, 2005).

To understand Trump's republic and how Donald Trump succeeded electorally where others of his kind failed, I think we need to see not only why Trump's political messaging has resonated with tens of millions of Americans but also how our current historical moment has enabled Trump's leadership style to be so persuasive, recasting American political culture in directions America's founding fathers wrote about with dread and foreboding. In the United States, President Trump is sometimes perceived as an outlier, an unprecedented figure who has disrupted conventional politics—and he is. But he is also very much a product of American political culture, which makes him a far more significant and powerful actor on the national and world stage.

So, first, a brief history of modern American conservatism, Donald Trump, and Trump's republic. Conservatism, as practised by Donald Trump but also by his major political antecedents in the United States, is a kind of odd job word—a dynamic, flexible political term of art more than a definitive ideological set of principles. Trump, like those before him, has put his own spin on what it means to be a conservative Republican. Still, even the never-read-a-book-by-a-conservative-writer-in-his-life Donald Trump shares in several loosely applicable notions of American conservatism, a broad dispositional cast or set of political beliefs conditioned by decades of political struggle.⁶

Political conservatives in recent decades have tended to embrace, as I have already said, traditional social hierarchies and to scorn those who would overturn them. Broadly, they have also embraced the free market as the best adjudicator of Americans' economic life course while distrusting the benevolent hand of the federal government. Many, though not all, conservatives have trusted faith, faith-based knowledge and family, rather than secular knowledge or experts, as the primary provider of moral truths and practical wisdom. Further, most have scorned a multilateral approach to foreign policy or any sense that the United States is but one nation among many; instead, most conservatives pride themselves on an unyielding and unalloyed love of country and a firm belief in unilateralism in foreign affairs. Not surprisingly, given the everyday meaning of the term conservatism, self-avowed conservatives seek to conserve, they tend to look to the past for guidance—to a time when society and culture 'were as they

6 This overview is derived from Farber, *The Rise and Fall*. The literature on American conservatism is voluminous. For a more glowing assessment of that history, see Donald T. Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2011).

should be’—when they were, one might say, ‘great’. Thus, conservatives have tended to fear challenges to the standing order. Conservative leaders have often used such fears to make and mobilise new constituencies who feel themselves threatened by specific social and cultural changes.

In response to liberals’ claims that the state needs to discipline the capitalist marketplace, conservatives have overwhelmingly argued that, in fact, it is individuals that need disciplining through the rigours of the free market and the enduring claims of religious faith and traditional family values. Such an assemblage of principles and practices did not emerge all at once nor did—or do—all conservatives embrace every aspect of it. Conservatives have struggled over several generations to create a broad-based movement flexible enough to exercise national political power. The constituent elements of modern American conservatism I have just listed are the result of that political process more than they are the predetermined outcome of a rigorous philosophical exegesis of first principles. Donald Trump, in his own pursuit of political power and public prominence, has pushed against some of these contingent conservative prescriptions—but not much.

Even in those areas of national life where he is often criticised by conservative pundits and so-called ‘Never-Trumpers’ within the Republican Party for having forsaken core conservative ideals, he could—if he cared, which I am confident he does not—find prior conservative icons who championed his more controversial policy preferences. And—a more substantial point—some of what Trump has proffered to the American people is very much in a long American conservative popular policy tradition—a popular tradition that perhaps was only temporarily, if powerfully, disrupted by the 50-year-long duration of the elite-managed Cold War.

One of President Trump’s most emblematic phrases—which he used to great effect in the 2016 presidential campaign, continues to use in his political rallies, and plays a fundamental role in shaping his approach to international alliances and economic relations—is ‘America First’. Trump’s use of the phrase in his early presidential campaigning days shocked most historically well-informed listeners (a paltry number it need be said) in the United States. An educated remnant knew that ‘America First’ was the slogan of organised isolationists who sought to keep the United States from coming to the aid of the British Empire against the Nazi onslaught in the dark days of 1940 and 1941.

America First's most renowned champion was the aviator-hero Charles Lindbergh, who wrapped his opposition to intervention with a cheerful respect for Adolf Hitler and an undisguised contempt for Jews. In the Fall of 1941, Lindbergh warned Jewish Americans to stop seeking America's entry into the war:

Jewish groups in this country should be opposing it ... for they will be the first to feel its consequences. Tolerance is a virtue that depends upon peace and strength.⁷

Lindbergh was saying that, if Americans were forced to fight, Jews, whose pro-war views he insisted were motivated for 'reasons that were not American', would properly be blamed by the American people for the cataclysm that followed.⁸

Once America did join the war against the forces of fascism and militarism, the term 'America First', mostly disappeared. At war's end and during the advent of the Cold War, internationalists of all stripes—a group that included post-World War II Republican leaders such as Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon—rejected the term, perceiving it to be an ignorant, even immoral shorthand for an ill-conceived approach to America's role in the world. Yet, despite the seeming banishment of 'America First' from conventional political lexicon, within both the Republican and Democratic parties during the post-WWII and Cold War years, some important critical figures—Donald Trump's direct antecedents—carried the 'America First' torch forward.

Among the most prominent was Ohio Senator Robert Taft, known in his time as 'Mr Republican' and a major progenitor of modern American conservatism. Taft hated America's postwar internationalist turn. He despised NATO. Above all, he fought reciprocal trade agreements between the United States and its anti-communist Cold War partners. Taft—like President Trump—was an unabashed supporter of capitalism but he was no follower of libertarian economists and their unalloyed faith in free trade. Taft believed in state support of *American capitalists* not international capitalism: in other words—American First.⁹

7 Charles Lindbergh, 'Des Moines Speech', 11 September 1941, accessed 9 June 2020, www.charleslindbergh.com/americanfirst/speech.asp.

8 Lindbergh, 'Des Moines Speech'.

9 David Farber, 'America First and International Trade Policy in the Early Cold War', *Passport: The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Review* (September 2018): 39–41.

Taft was not an outlier in his party. Such strong opposition to free trade and internationalism had been a fundamental tenet of the Republican Party since its origins in the 1850s. However, with the advent of the Cold War, the Republican Party had split over the issue. Dwight D. Eisenhower, a fervent internationalist, proudly championed a new 'modern Republicanism'.¹⁰ Between 1946 and well into the twenty-first century, this internationalist policy of economic support and openness to free trade, even trade that advantaged other nations, became fundamental to American policy elites' approach to global management. International trade, they believed, helped create a stable international order in which the world's wealthiest and most powerful nation—the US—would reap substantial economic and geopolitical benefits. The Taftian anti-free trade, anti-multilateral America First persuasion was out of vogue in both the Republican Party and the conservative movement throughout most of the last decades of the twentieth century, but it was not forgotten. In 1992, during the first post-Cold War election campaign that followed the implosion of the Soviet Union, Taftian American First conservatism was reincarnated in twin form.

Ross Perot, a billionaire Texan, ran a third party presidential campaign on a single issue. President Bush's attempt to create a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Mexico and Canada, Perot twanged, would be a disaster for American workers. Free trade, he argued, was a problem not a solution for America's post-Cold War economic challenges. In a similar vein, George H. W. Bush's competitor for the 1992 Republican nomination, former Nixon speechwriter and media pundit Pat Buchanan, also condemned the entire logic of Cold War economic internationalism:

We call for a new patriotism, where Americans begin to put the needs of Americans first, for a new nationalism where in every negotiation, be it arms control or trade, the American side seeks advantage and victory for the United States ... America first.¹¹

10 William Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018).

11 'Pat Buchanan Presidential Campaign Announcement', 10 December 1991, C-Span, accessed 9 June 2020, www.c-span.org/video/?23289-1/pat-buchanan-presidential-campaign-announcement.

Buchanan knew exactly what resonances ‘America First’ brought forth—besides attacking NAFTA and other free trade policies, he echoed Charles Lindbergh; he blamed the influence of cosmopolitan Jewish Americans for America’s turn to a global economic regime.¹²

Pundits dismissed Buchanan as a ‘paleoconservative’, contrasting his protectionist, anti-internationalist stance to that of ‘modern Republicans’ such as Bush and some of his closest advisers, who championed an ever greater role for America in the international area. These conservative internationalists had been rebranded as ‘neo-conservatives’. In 1992, Bush easily defeated Buchanan. Forty years after Taft had lost his bid for the Republican presidential nomination to Eisenhower, American First conservatism seemed to have again been marginalised.¹³ We know now that it had not been; it was a popular conservative policy position only awaiting a better spokesman operating in a more welcoming political and economic moment.

A second point on Trump and his place in the conservative political movement: if Donald Trump has revived an older kind of conservatism (a ‘paleoconservatism’) when it comes to matters of international trade and America’s broader role in the world, he is much more in the conservative mainstream in his divisive, nativist and at times vitriolic views on national identity—of who really counts as an American citizen. From the origins of modern American conservatism as an organised political force in the anti-New Deal big business circles, conservative activists have sometimes gingerly and often exuberantly aligned themselves with the most intolerant of Americans. The targets of that intolerance have changed in saliency over time but conservatives’ principal claim has remained the same: some people are more deserving of the rewards of American citizenship than are others. Most elite economic conservatives who aligned themselves then and thereafter with such ‘deplorables’ often did so for a simple reason: welcoming such people into the conservative movement broadened their ranks across class lines and made a winning electoral coalition possible.

12 For an overview of Buchanan’s history of anti-Semitic remarks see James Kirchick, ‘Pat Buchanan and His Enablers’, *Columbia Journalism Review*, 23 February 2012, archives.cjr.org/campaign_desk/pat_buchanan_and_his_enablers.php.

13 For Pat Buchanan and the politics of the 1990s, see the detailed account in Steve Kornacki, *The Red and the Blue: The 1990s and the Birth of Political Tribalism* (New York: HarperCollins, 2018).

One can smell this unpleasantness permeating American conservatism for a good many decades. The economic libertarian big business leaders who sought to organise a conservative coalition to defeat Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s aligned themselves, cynically, with white supremacists and anti-Semites.¹⁴ In the late 1950s, conservative champion and subsequently Republican nominee for the presidency, Senator Barry Goldwater, found new supporters when he toured the South and spoke out against government-mandated civil rights enforcement. In 1964, Goldwater voted against the landmark Civil Rights Act (despite strong Republican Party support for it) and he told his aides that, if he and the conservative movement had any chance of winning the presidency that year or thereafter, they had to ‘go hunting where the ducks are’, meaning that conservatives had to convince white supremacists in the South—and anywhere else in the United States—that conservatism was opposed to mandating equal citizenship for Black Americans. Goldwater had an ideological apology for his anti-civil rights stance. He opposed most federal action that sought to regulate market actions, but his vocal opposition was, above all, politically motivated: he needed to broaden the base of the conservative movement that he led.¹⁵

Ronald Reagan, generally remembered in the United States for his sunny ‘morning in America’ sort of conservatism, nonetheless pursued that same racially exclusionary logic with a vengeance. To open his campaign for the presidency, after winning the Republican nomination, he gave a speech on states’ rights before an all-white crowd in Neshoba County, Mississippi. White supremacists, as well as Black Americans, got the unsubtle message; 16 years earlier, Neshoba County had made the nation’s newspaper headlines when members of the Ku Klux Klan, supported by local law enforcement, had lynched three civil rights activists. Reagan needed to win the South and he was more than willing to reach out to white supremacist voters to clinch his victory against his opponent, the former governor of Georgia Jimmy Carter, who had swept the South in winning the presidency in 1976.¹⁶

14 I discuss this odd alliance in David Farber, *Sloan Rules* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 183–84.

15 Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001).

16 Farber, *The Rise and Fall*, 190–91.

Conservative activists in the 1960s, '70s, '80s and '90s found new constituencies and electoral victories by championing intolerance, attacking each and every new iteration of calls for equal rights—first of African Americans, then of feminist women and then of members of the LGBTQI+ community. As attacks on each group's demands for full equality and inclusion became less accepted by ever more Americans, mainstream conservatives toned down the blatancy of their vitriol, turning instead to so-called 'dog whistle' attacks, even as more extreme conservative groups, especially in the age of social media, kept up their calls for a return to a time when racial exclusion, heteronormativity and patriarchy ruled the nation.

In the early twenty-first century, more and more so-called establishment conservative politicians had walked away from that kind of hateful intolerance. George W. Bush, running in 2000, insisted that he was, on those grounds, a new kind of conservative. Just as 'Modern Republican' Dwight Eisenhower had broken with 'Mr Republican', Robert Taft, in the 1950s, so Bush was making a break with the successful Republican leaders who had preceded him, including his own father. Bush explained that he was a 'compassionate conservative'. Whereas his father had run for the presidency in 1988 by deploying an infamous, racially charged television commercial featuring a recidivist Black rapist to delegitimise his opponent, the younger Bush insisted that he believed in an equitable, inclusive society.¹⁷

After the 9/11 attacks, President Bush was as good as his word. At a time when anti-Muslim hysteria was exploding in the United States, Bush flanked himself with Muslim Americans and told the American people that 'Islam is peace':

Those who feel like they can intimidate our fellow citizens to take out their anger don't represent the best of America, they represent the worst of humankind, and they should be ashamed of that kind of behavior.¹⁸

Here was creedal Americanism at its best.

17 'Fact Sheet: Compassionate Conservatism', 30 April 2002, The White House: President George W. Bush, accessed 9 June 2020, georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/04/20020430.html.

18 "'Islam is Peace', Says President", 17 September 2001, The White House: President George W. Bush, georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010917-11.html.

Senator John McCain, when he ran against Barrack Obama in 2008, maintained this inclusionary vision of Republican Party conservatism. Famously, when one of his supporters at a rally fulminated against Obama, asserting that he could not be trusted because he was not really an American, that he was an Arab, McCain cut her off. He took the microphone out of her hands and emotionally, if somewhat problematically, retorted: 'No, ma'am. He's a decent family man [and] citizen that I just happen to have disagreements with on fundamental issues ... He's not [an Arab].'¹⁹ Leading establishment conservative Republicans had turned towards decency, inclusivity and equal rights for all. In this turn, Donald Trump saw political opportunity.

If leading Republican conservatives would not deploy racial and exclusionary politics, Trump would. He believed that McCain had been too easy on Obama and it had cost him the 2008 election. Trump looked, instead, to the playbook of intolerance that had greatly expanded the conservative Republican base and worked so well electorally for both Ronald Reagan and the first George Bush. Just as Trump had resurrected the America First canon of an earlier conservative movement, so too would he return to its reactionary populist tradition of intolerance and reactionary inequality in his hunt for a new winning electoral coalition. Trump's use of these tropes of intolerance is not new but he embraced them with an unprecedented zeal. And, in his use of them, he found a welcoming populist conservative base of support.

In 2011, Trump introduced himself to millions of conservative Americans as a sympathetic political figure by leading the anti-Obama 'birther movement'. Trump was already a national celebrity, first for his bestselling books that extolled avarice and chicanery in the pursuit of wealth, and then for his blockbuster television show, *The Apprentice*. But, until then, very few thought of him as a potential political leader, let alone president.

Trump first broadcast his claim that President Obama was lying about his American origins on the FOX network's *Laura Ingraham Show*. 'He doesn't have a birth certificate', Trump explained:

19 Jonathan Martin and Amie Parnes, 'McCain: Obama Not An Arab, Crowd Boos', Politico, 10 October 2008, accessed 9 June 2020, www.politico.com/story/2008/10/mccain-obama-not-an-arab-crowd-boos-014479.

Or if he does, there's something on that certificate that is very bad for him. Now somebody told me—and I have no idea if this is bad for him or not, but perhaps it would be—that where it says 'religion', it might have 'Muslim'.

Then, on CNN, he escalated his claims: 'if he wasn't born in this country, he shouldn't be president of the United States'.²⁰ Trump continued in this vein for the next six years. He appeared regularly on conservative cable television and conservative talk radio and tweeted message after message to cast aspersions on the legitimacy of America's first Black president. Obama, Trump repeated over and over again, was not a real American.

Trump saw the anti-Obama birtherism message as a political winner. He mocked 2012 Republican nominee Mitt Romney's refusal to use the issue, tweeting in August 2012: 'Why do the Republicans keep apologising on the so-called 'birther' issue? No more apologies—take the offensive!' At least among the Republican Party base, Trump had a point. Prior to the 2012 election, a majority of them told pollsters that they did not believe that Obama was born in the United States and thus was not a legitimate president; only 28 per cent disagreed with the claim. Trump had found his political voice and, to be blunt, a racist base of support.²¹

When Trump announced his run for the presidency from the lobby of one of his gilded towers, he pivoted off his birtherism claims to an even more harsh rhetoric of intolerance. In a stream of consciousness address—a style to which people around the world would soon grow accustomed—Trump led with the anti-Mexican immigrant claim that would become one of his trademarks:

When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best ... They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with them. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists.²²

20 An excellent overview of Trump and birtherism is available online, see Charles Sykes, 'A Short History of Trump's Birtherism (And How the GOP Reacted)', 29 November 2017, *The Contrarian Conservative*, accessed 9 June 2020, www.thecontrarianconservative.com/blog/2017/11/29/a-short-history-of-trumps-birtherism-and-how-the-gop-reacted. Sykes is a well-known conservative (he ran a popular talk radio show in Wisconsin for 23 years) who never supported Trump.

21 Trump's Romney tweet and the statistics are quoted in Sykes, 'A Short History'.

22 Michele Ye Hee Lee, 'Donald Trump's False Comments Connecting Immigrants and Criminals', Fact Checker, *Washington Post*, 8 July 2015, accessed 9 June 2020, www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2015/07/08/donald-trumps-false-comments-connecting-mexican-immigrants-and-crime/?utm_term=.579824be3e2a.

Soon thereafter, countering President Bush and the United States' explicit constitutional ban on any form of government-mandated religious discrimination, Trump added immigrant Muslims to his list, telling supporters that he would institute 'a complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what is going on'.²³

In his presidential campaign, conservative stalwart Barry Goldwater had targeted African Americans struggling for full citizenship in hopes of winning over racist whites. Ronald Reagan built on that base and successfully added anti-feminist and anti-gay constituencies. In that grand tradition, in the 2016 presidential race, Trump found new groups to demonise: Mexican immigrants, Muslims and then Central Americans, further expanding his base by ginning up the fears of his supporters. Hillary Clinton would impolitely tell a campaign audience that half of Trump's supporters belonged in a 'basket of deplorables'. While theatrically taking great umbrage at the accusation, Donald Trump hoped she was right. At a time when a segment of white Christian Americans feared that the demography of the United States was fast changing, leaving them less powerful and privileged than they had before been, Trump fed their anxieties. No 'compassionate conservatism' for Donald Trump—he wished to go back to the whiter, more Christian, more patriarchal times when, he and his supporters would argue, America was great.

Donald Trump's brand of conservatism, pundits have noted, differed from that of more establishment conservatives such as John McCain, Mitt Romney, Jeb Bush, Senate Majority leader Mitch McConnell and the erstwhile House Speaker Paul Ryan, in its explicit populist message. And, in substantive ways, they are right. Trump's rhetoric is decidedly more populist. At his rallies and on his ubiquitous Twitter feed he is fervently anti-elitist, sneeringly anti-intellectual, proudly plainspoken and ostentatiously vulgar. In his policy claims, he often proclaims himself to be a defender of the common folk. Unlike many conservative Republicans, he has repeatedly promised to safeguard major government programs that protect working-class and middle-class Americans, such as the social security system, and to fight big corporations' offshoring

23 Steve Holland and Emily Stephenson, 'Donald Trump Urges Ban on Muslims Entering United States', 7 December 2015, Reuters, accessed 9 June 2020, www.reuters.com/article/usa-election-trump/donald-trump-urges-ban-on-muslims-entering-united-states-idUSKBN0TQ2QT20151208.

of industrial jobs and factories. Trump prides himself on being a populist champion of American workers and certainly in the 2016 election that image contributed to his victory.

In the United States, and quite often in almost any democratic nation, such appeals to the common man are par for the course. In the United States, back in the late 1820s, the rough-hewn but wealthy Tennessean slave master Andrew Jackson—Donald Trump’s favourite president—broke precedent by running for the presidency as the tribune of the common man. He lambasted what he called the ‘aristocrats’ who had long controlled the White House. His opponent, fittingly enough, was John Quincy Adams, son of America’s second president—a kind of early nineteenth-century antecedent to both Hillary Clinton and the Bushes. Jackson promised that, if elected, he would (referencing Hercules’s mighty mythic deed) ‘sweep the Augean stable’; in other words, he would, in Trumpian terms, ‘drain the swamp’ of the corrupt and well-born men who had taken over the people’s government in Washington DC.²⁴ Jackson was the first but by no means the last to run an explicitly populist, anti-elitist campaign. Indeed, in 1840, William Henry Harrison took the man-of-the-people routine to new heights—heights of hypocrisy, that is—running as the ‘log cabin and hard cider’ candidate, while decrying his opponent as a wealthy snob. Harrison, of course, was actually quite wealthy and his opponent, incumbent president Martin Van Buren, came from a poor, hardscrabble family. Harrison, need it be said, won.²⁵

Trump was thus, in some ways, just one more in a very long list of men—many of whom were wealthy—who ran for the presidency as a populist outsider, claiming they would clean out the corrupt elite insiders who ran the United States. But Trump is not just a run-of-the-mill populist. His populism is of a more distinct, if not typically, US kind. Trump embodies a populist leadership style more common in the other America—Latin America, that is—though certainly the United States has had its share of what might best be called reactionary populist leadership.²⁶ Back in the

24 Donald B. Cole, *Vindicating Andrew Jackson* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009); Lynn Hudson Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics: Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, and the Election of 1828* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), doi.org/10.1111/j.1542-734X.2009.00722_17.x.

25 The 1840 presidential race has been called the first ‘image campaign’. See Ronald G. Shafer, *The Carnival Campaign: How the Rollicking 1840 Campaign of ‘Tippecanoe and Tyler Too’ Changed Presidential Elections Forever* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2016).

26 I borrow here from Omar G. Encarnación, ‘American Caudillo: Trump and the Latin-Americanization of U.S. Politics’, 12 May 2016, *Foreign Affairs*, accessed 9 June 2020, www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2016-05-12/american-caudillo.

mid-1950s, in response to the populist appeal of the demagogic, anti-Communist Senator Joseph McCarthy, the historian Richard Hofstadter wrote a scathing assessment of American populism.²⁷ Much but not all of Hofstadter's historical critique could be applied to Donald Trump.

Focused on the late nineteenth-century rise of the populist movement and its great champion William Jennings Bryan, Hofstadter condemned populists for their provincialism, embrace of anti-Semitic conspiracy mongering and virulent nativism. He mocked their yearning for a return to a golden, imaginary time when, they insisted, their kind—white Christian farmers—were seen as the critical backbone of the nation. Historians since the time of Hofstadter have tended to treat the late nineteenth-century populist movement more sympathetically, but for our purposes his critique is telling.²⁸ Populist leaders and their followers have almost always blamed their relative loss of status and perceived economic insecurity on a corrupt elite who have turned the nation away from its proper path, away from the traditions and beliefs—the culture—that had long kept the righteous people safe, secure and stable. Donald Trump certainly fits that bill. But Trump also represents a sort of populist appeal that Hofstadter did not see as characteristic of historic American populist leaders.

The typical American populist spoke in the name of the people, as their servant leader. In what is still one of the most famous speeches given by an avowed American populist, the 'Cross of Gold' speech by William Jennings Bryan, the people not the leader are given primacy of place. Bryan speaks almost only in the plural voice: 'It is for these that we speak ... We are fighting in the defense of our homes, our families, and posterity.'²⁹ Bryan's voice and his cause are given strength by all those with whom he is allied: 'the commercial interests and the laboring interests and all the toiling masses'. The rich men who seek to exploit those masses, he intones, 'shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns. You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.'³⁰

27 Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (New York: Knopf, 1955), chapters 1–3.

28 For the current historiographical approach, see Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

29 William Jennings Bryan, 'Cross of Gold', 9 July 1896, History Matters, accessed 9 June 2020, historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5354/.

30 Bryan, 'Cross of Gold'.

Trump is no populist servant leader. Trump is populist as caudillo, as the unsullied, incorruptible warrior. ‘I alone can fix it ... I am your voice’, he famously decreed.³¹ Trump’s critics heard in such grandiose claims a kind of demagoguery too often associated with authoritarian rulers and not with traditional democratic practices. His devoted followers heard something else. Trump’s reactionary populism—like that of many of his favourite leaders around the world—depends on his supporters’ willingness to dismiss civility, propriety and even legal boundaries as tools of the cosseted elite and their pet minorities that impede the need—the people’s demand—for decisive action to protect their interests against those they deem undeserving and the corrupt.

Trump insisted in his presidential inaugural address that America was at a precipice, overrun with venality, corruption and murderous violence. ‘This American carnage’, he intoned, ‘stops right here and stops right now’.³² The fact that violent crime in the United States was just a fraction of what it had been 20 years earlier, that America’s big cities were, overwhelmingly, the safest they had been in generations, did not matter. Trump promised he would use whatever means were necessary to pursue his objectives and safeguard his supporters. Two years after his inauguration, frustrated by Congress’s refusal to do his bidding on immigration policy, President Trump declared a national emergency and rejected America’s constitutional precept that only the House of Representatives could appropriate federal money. More recently, he has decreed that he and his administration can simply reject Congress’s constitutionally guaranteed right to exercise oversight on the presidency. Trump’s supporters and conservative members of Congress have, in all instances, cheered him on.³³

31 For Trump’s acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention and its critics, see Yoni Applebaum, “I Alone Can Fix it”, Breaking with Two Centuries of Political Tradition’, *The Atlantic*, 21 July 2016, accessed 9 June 2020, www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/07/trump-rnc-speech-alone-fix-it/492557/.

32 Donald Trump, ‘The Inaugural Address’, 20 January 2017, accessed 9 June 2020, www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/the-inaugural-address/.

33 In an extraordinary act of institutional self-abnegation, during the early 2020 impeachment trial, Senate Republicans, in near unanimity, acceded to President Trump’s claims that he did not have to cooperate in any way with Congressional investigations if he did not want to. For a pithy overview of Congress’s investigatory powers see ‘Investigation and Oversight’, United States House of Representatives, accessed 9 June 2020, history.house.gov/Institution/Origins-Development/Investigations-Oversight/.

Trump understands how a sizeable segment of the American people actually feel about their constitutional republic with its checks and balances and its elegant Bill of Rights. At times of trouble, a majority of Americans have dismissed such pieties. In 1970, after years of political polarisation marked by mass demonstrations, unruly protests and violent upheavals, Americans told pollsters that they had had enough. They wanted order, regardless of what the constitution said: 76 per cent of those polled said the first amendment right to assemble and dissent from government policies should be rolled back. A clear majority blamed, somehow, the mass media for egging on protesters and told the same pollsters that they did not support the freedom of the press, either.³⁴ Back in 1933, as the Great Depression raged in the United States, Franklin Roosevelt told the American people that, if Congress did not accede to the need for 'bold action', he would be forced to act without them. Few doubted that the American people would have supported him. The constitutional republic and the republic of fear have long been in tension in the United States.

In Trump's republic, every day is a fearful emergency, and the need for bold leadership, unhindered and unimpeded by America's often slow-moving constitutional machinery of governance, is, therefore, a necessity. America's intellectual elite, whether liberal or conservative, has voiced alarm at the fragility of America's constitutional order under President Trump. President Trump, every day, is not unlike President Richard Nixon in his last days. Nixon famously defended his Watergate improprieties by declaring that: 'Well, when the president does it [whatever 'it' is], that means that it is not illegal.'³⁵ Trump, as well as his attorney-general, would seem to agree.³⁶

America's founding fathers understood the fragility of the constitutional order they had created; they worried about the demos and its susceptibility to demagogues. In particular, they had debated the power and place of a democratically elected president upon whose shoulders so much responsibility was placed. Still, it is unlikely that they could have predicted a Donald Trump. Alexander Hamilton, who argued most

34 'Most in Poll Favor Limiting Freedoms', *New York Times*, 16 April 1970, 37.

35 Nixon made the statement in a televised interview with David Frost, 19 May 1977.

36 For a brief scholarly overview of Attorney-General William Barr's approach to executive power, see Bradley D. Hays, 'What William Barr Misses about Presidential Accountability', *Made by History*, *Washington Post*, 5 May 2019, accessed 9 June 2020, www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/05/05/what-william-barr-misses-about-presidential-accountability/?utm_term=.44ea4deac79b.

strongly for a powerful executive, countered the fears of his colleagues who, influenced by classic texts, worried that a populist demagogue could win the presidency and therefore corrupt or even destroy the American republic. ‘Talents for low intrigue, and the little arts of popularity’, he conceded, ‘may alone suffice to elevate a man to the first honors in a single State’. He insisted, however, that the multiple constituencies, conflicting interests, free press and sheer intelligence of the national electorate would protect the United States from a demagogue:

It will require other talents, and a different kind of merit to establish him [a presidential candidate] in the esteem and confidence of the whole Union, or of so considerable a portion of it as would be necessary to make him a successful candidate for the distinguished office of President of the United States.³⁷

Alexander Hamilton died well before Andrew Jackson ran his populist-orientated campaign.

A strong case can be made that Hamilton was wrong and that ‘talents for low intrigue and the little arts of popularity’ have repeatedly seduced the national American electorate. Trump is by no means the first presidential candidate or president to deploy such arts. Indeed, the American electorate has long enjoyed sussing out the veracity of their politicians’ various and varying rhetorical claims. At the same time, the electorate has long judged political rhetoric not simply—or at all—on its adherence to empirical reality but to its value as entertainment, as well as to its ability to stir the passions and bond its listeners to some kind of community, be it partisan or otherwise.

In nineteenth-century America, when cultural authority in the chaotic United States was diffuse and uncertain and government oversight over the flow of marketplace information and claims was nearly non-existent, Americans regularly struggled in the public arena to tell lie from truth. Confidence men, practitioners of fraud and swindle, were a regular staple in both real life and in the writings of America’s leading authors, men such as Herman Melville and Mark Twain.³⁸ P. T. Barnum became America’s leading showman by playfully challenging his mass audience to detect the difference between his genuine spectacles (such as the 3-foot-tall General

37 Alexander Hamilton, ‘The Federalist Papers: No. 68’, 14 March 1788, Yale Law School, accessed 9 June 2020, avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed68.asp.

38 Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

Tom Thumb) and his artful humbuggery (most famously, the so-called Fiji mermaid). His bestselling account of his endeavours, well before Trump but perfectly Trumpian, was *The Art of Money Getting*. He also wrote another bestseller, *Humbugs of the World*, in which he explained that, having fooled so many people for so long, only he could teach people how to avoid being fooled again. Sound familiar? Barnum, like Trump, often let his audience in on the joke. And people in the know enjoyed explaining the operational aesthetic behind Barnum's humbugs.³⁹

In the twenty-first century, the breakdown in cultural authority—in the United States and in many other nations that enjoy access to 24-hour news stations and an uncensored if also unhinged internet and social media universe—has again created an unadulterated world of humbuggery and confidence men. The cultural and institutional guardrails that had deterred, if never stopped, such rampant humbuggery have lost their power. Technical change drives some of that loss. News organisations that took pride in professional standards of journalism have lost their audiences as they compete against more populist, crowd-sourced, click-based, spectacle-driven forms of infotainment, which is then distributed globally by anyone, including malevolent, wilfully destructive government actors. Then, too, at least in the United States, the deceit and lies of government officials, going back to the days of the Vietnam War and forward to the Bush administration's false claims of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, have undercut the ability of authorities of all kinds to be trusted by a rightfully sceptical, even cynical, populace.

Donald Trump, who had long made his living humbugging investors, bankers, customers, contractors and anyone else within his wobbly orbit, saw in this chaotic cultural realm an opportunity to reach for the political stars. Not unlike P. T. Barnum and other spectacular flim-flam men then and now, he had an advantage over most, though not all, people who sought public office—he was without shame or conscience. Trump was the demagogic figure of 'low arts' that the founding fathers feared. He was also the demotic figure that the authors of America's constitution believed they had fenced in: Congress, the Supreme Court and the Bill of Rights were all aimed at checking and balancing the power of an unhinged demagogue. One bad actor, even if president, America's founding fathers believed, could not destroy the republic. Of course that malevolent

39 Neil Harris, *Humbug: The Art of P. T. Barnum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

actor could only be checked if a sufficient number of empowered figures acted with courage and integrity. As the 2020 Senate impeachment trial demonstrated, in the era of Trump's republic those checks and those figures of courage and integrity within the national government have been fewer, I think, than the founding generation would have believed possible.

Alexander Hamilton wrote of the dangers of 'a temper fond of despotic power and hostile to the principles of liberty'. In his defence of the constitution that had yet to be ratified, he warned readers to be wary of those who lurk behind the 'specious mask of zeal for the rights of the people' and who spew a 'spirit of narrow and illiberal trust', for those are the 'men who have overturned the liberties of republics, the greatest number begun their career by paying obsequious court to the people; commencing demagogues, and ending tyrants'.⁴⁰ Donald Trump appears to lack the discipline and capacity, if not the will, to cast a republic in his own image, a republic of fear in which liberty, equality and freedom are subservient to the needs of order, security and traditional social hierarchies. Trump's republic of fear, so far, is more spectacle than tyrannical reality. Still, the founding fathers of America's constitutional republic never doubted the fragility of their undertaking. The most witty and prescient of them, Benjamin Franklin, when exiting the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, was asked by an anxious group of citizens what sort of government he and his compatriots had devised. Franklin replied: 'A republic, if you can keep it.'⁴¹ Well, we shall see if people around the world devoted to republican forms of democracy can keep them in the daunting years ahead.

40 Alexander Hamilton, 'The Federalist Papers: No. 1.', n.d., Yale Law School, accessed 9 June 2020, avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed01.asp.

41 The famous remark and its historical context is explained by Richard Beeman, 'Perspectives on the Constitution: A Republic If You Can Keep It', National Constitution Center, accessed 9 June 2020, constitutioncenter.org/learn/educational-resources/historical-documents/perspectives-on-the-constitution-a-republic-if-you-can-keep-it.

REVIEWS

Governing Natives: Indirect Rule and Settler Colonialism in Australia's North by Ben Silverstein

(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 228 pp

Conversation between Jessica Urwin and Ben Silverstein
The Australian National University

Jessica: To begin with, I wanted to ask you what aspect of your research most intrigued you, provided you with the most conceptual challenge or surprised you the most?

Ben: One of the more intriguing elements of the research, to me at least, was the imperial frame within which many Australians located themselves in the first half of the twentieth century. In some ways this research project began with my puzzling over a proposal, made in the late 1920s by the Adelaide-based Aborigines' Protection League, for a model Aboriginal state in Arnhem Land that would be governed by Aboriginal people largely according to their own laws and customs.

Trying to think the proposal through, I couldn't quite make sense of it other than by analogy with Bantustans in apartheid South Africa. This seemed apposite but also didn't quite seem to fit. A few other historians had written of the model state plan as a benevolent effort to grant a kind of self-determination, mirroring the way it was positioned by some in the 1920s.¹ But this was a form of self-determination that was fabricated

1 Kevin Blackburn, 'White Agitation for an Aboriginal State in Australia (1925–1929)', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 45, no. 2 (1999): 161–62, doi.org/10.1111/1467-8497.00060; Michael Roe, 'A Model Aboriginal State', *Aboriginal History* 10 (1986): 44; Tim Rowse, 'What if the Federal Government had Created a Model Aboriginal State?', in *What If? Australian History as It Might Have Been* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2006).

without the work or even input of those who would be gifted rights were it to be introduced. In that sense, it seemed like something of a container for what we might call self-determination or perhaps even sovereignty.

It made sense once I began working in the Aborigines' Protection League's papers and found its members to be thoroughly embedded, in part via Mary Bennett, in imperial networks of liberalism and humanitarianism. They were reading Jan Smuts and Lucy Mair, following British Government inquiries and reports into Kenya, and were attuned to Australia's imperial role in Papua and New Guinea. They distilled from these a sense of how best to govern a colony, and the model state proposal came from their reading of the ways indirect rule worked in British colonies in Africa and the Pacific. Their plan drew on these ideas, just as South African ideologues would draw on these traditions to describe Bantustans a few decades later.

What the Aborigines' Protection League and its supporters were trying to do in Australia was to introduce a form of 'native administration'; for them, it was in the Northern Territory and, specifically, in Arnhem Land, that this could be done. This revealed, among other things, some of the ways ideas of race and authenticity worked in their thinking as a local iteration of knowledges that circulated through varied imperial networks. The more I researched, the more I found that other white Australians were drawing on similar influences and were understanding their colonising role in the Northern Territory in the context of the British Empire.

Thinking in this way helped put Australian settler colonial specificity in its proper context in relation to other colonialisms, as well as in relation to different Indigenous formations. And it helped make sense of some of the ways Indigenous people have been subject to a range of governing projects in the different regions of Australia.

Jessica: What I find intriguing about your response, and *Governing Natives* more broadly, is that you are dealing with examples of imperialism and various colonialisms in a period considered by many to be 'post-imperial' or 'post-colonial'. As you note, the interwar period retains many of the imperial sentiments of the preceding period, with perhaps more influence from humanitarianism and growing internationalism. In highlighting this, you make an important comment on periodisation in historical research. To what extent do you understand colonialism and imperialism

to be persistent on both a global and national scale? Or was the Northern Territory simply unique in terms of being a late arrival to the colonial experiment in Australia?

Ben: ‘Post-colonial’ in a sense, but decolonisation was an emergent project in much of the world in the interwar period, not yet having achieved the transfer of state power outside of a few exceptions. But the question of periodisation, I think, is so crucial in centring different kinds of historical experiences. We see this really clearly in settler colonial situations—for example, in national histories in which American independence in 1776 marks the end of a colonial period and the inauguration of a new republican era; or, in the Australian context, in histories in which Federation in 1901 forms a crucial hinge for histories of the nation. But to periodise in these ways is to centre American or Australian settlers’ sense of themselves as attaining freedom by becoming independent of British control. I’m thinking here of Aziz Rana’s work on the American revolution, or Ann Curthoys and Jessie Mitchell’s study of settler self-government in Australia, and the different ways they show that settler autonomy emerged through Indigenous and Black subordination.² In this sense, the so-called end of the colonial period marked an intensification of settler domination, if anything.

As a result, Indigenous experiences are of a different order. We can learn here from the many Indigenous writers and historians who have emphasised continuity, reminding us that little changes for them when settlers are freed from overseas suzerainty. The experiences of land theft, of confinement, of political erasure and so on persist irrespective of moments of settler liberation. And, while the forms in which these experiences take shape change over time and across space, they won’t end until they are transformed by a process of meaningful decolonisation.

We might also recall here that even the formal decolonisation experienced across Asia, Africa and the Pacific has not changed everything. Building on earlier thinkers like Nkrumah, Lumumba, Hau’ofa and others, Tracey Banivanua Mar described decolonisation not as an event but as a long and unfinished process of Indigenous dialogues with colonisation and

2 Aziz Rana, *Two Faces of American Freedom* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010), 20–98, doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjhzrjm; Ann Curthoys and Jessie Mitchell, *Taking Liberty: Indigenous Rights and Settler Self-Government in Colonial Australia, 1830–1890* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), doi.org/10.1017/9781316027035.

international responses to their agitation.³ The political transfer of power doesn't mark a rupture but rather a moment within a longer history. Until that history comes to fruition, thinking in terms of colonial continuities—and Indigenous persistence—remains, I think, essential.

Jessica: I couldn't agree with you more, but I am aware that defining both the colonial and the 'post-colonial' has been fundamental to scholarly debates for decades, not least within Australian history. However, a 'post-colonial' framework is perhaps not the most useful frame for thinking about Australia's history. You suggest that a settler colonial framework yields greater analysis. And what *Governing Natives* demonstrates so starkly is that many of the ways in which settler colonialism operates—especially in the Northern Territory—relies on both its contradictory and fragile nature. Its intention appears as unintentional. For example, in Chapter 3 you address the Northern Territory's desire to pursue a White Australia at all costs—including the assimilation of Aboriginal Australians into this social structure through the eradication of Indigenous culture. Yet, White Australia relied fundamentally on the exploitation of a Black labour force, upheld through the maintenance of aspects of Aboriginal culture. What role do these contradictions play in the successes and/or failures of the settler colonial experiment in Australia's north?

Ben: I think you've turned us here to a key element of historical analyses of settler colonialism—that is, their commitment to transforming our current dispensation, rather than seeking out what works within it. What I was trying to show in this book was that, despite the current-day persistence of settler colonialism, we don't know what's going to happen: its end is neither impossible nor unimaginable. In fact, settler sovereignty is unstable, is based on unresolved and often unacknowledged antagonisms and is continually revised in response to Indigenous articulations. It is historical and incomplete, and it can be overcome.

The argument I presented in discussing the Northern Territory pastoral industry was an attempt at a conjunctural analysis. As you point out, white occupation of the Territory was effected through pastoralism, a cattle industry that was encouraged—along with its mainly Black workforce—by a Commonwealth Government explicitly concerned to produce a white north. This represents an ideological contradiction in

3 Tracey Banivanua Mar, *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139794688.

which white settlement, with its commitment to white workers, rested upon Black labour. And this reliance points us to a material contradiction, as the pastoral industry was dependent on both the work of Aboriginal labour and a rate of exploitation so severe as to render the survival of those workers precarious.

The specific way administrators recognised and represented the crises that emerged from these contradictions as they coalesced in the 1930s conditioned the trajectory of settler colonialism in the Northern Territory and its turn to a new form of government. But these representations weren't all-determining, and were in constant dialogue with Aboriginal people's struggles to maintain and reinvent their communities in circumstances not of their own choosing. I do not want this to be seen as unique, as a case of north Australian exceptionalism: settler colonialism is always contradictory and always faces inventive Indigenous persistence.

One might point to the history of Coranderrk station in late nineteenth-century Victoria, where Kulin peoples gathered and responded to assimilationist pressures by creatively generating new and successful ways of relating with country as an Aboriginal community. But settler colonial assimilation policies were designed to produce Aboriginal disappearance, not Aboriginal survival and resurgence. In response, Victoria instituted a punitive managerial regime, stripped Coranderrk residents of the land they farmed, and turned to a more explicitly racialised practice of biological assimilation that would split up Kulin communities. Settler strategies are always reactionary, produced in response both to the contradictions in prior practices and to Aboriginal negotiations. Now, a part of Coranderrk is back in Wurundjeri hands, testifying to the possibilities that result from Indigenous persistence and resurgence.

Jessica: I want to draw out the discussion of acknowledging Aboriginal agency a little more, as you allude to it throughout *Governing Natives*. In particular, you focus upon Aboriginal labour and the role of capitalism in organising the Northern Territory. But you also point to work as a way for Aboriginal people to exercise agency and remain connected to country. In what ways did you find labour, capitalism and settler colonialism intersecting in your research? And in what way is labour central to the Northern Territory's enactment of indirect rule in the twentieth century?

Ben: Indigenous labour is often marginalised in discussions of settler colonialism that rest too heavily on the distinction Patrick Wolfe drew between colonial formations that extracted value through the exploitation of native labour on the one hand, and those that produced value through the expropriation and use of native land on the other. Wolfe insisted that, in settler colonial situations, exploitation of native labour was subordinate to projects of land dispossession.⁴ But this has often been read as a claim that Indigenous labour was, in fact, irrelevant as a strategy of settler domination, effacing the reliance on that labour that has characterised most instances of settler colonialism. This is a scholarly problem that recurs whenever we examine settler colonial situations in their empirical and regional specificity, including in Australia's north where, as we have discussed, white occupation of land relied upon Aboriginal workers.

Indirect rule provided colonial administrators with a way of thinking about managing that labour. I've argued that we can conceptualise indirect rule as the government of what anthropologists termed 'native society' by conducting their social forces to guide their customary institutions. It was used to manage articulations between those 'native societies' and colonising production; in much of Nigeria, for instance, it took constitutional form through granting customary chiefs powers to compel their subjects to work to produce raw commodities for British-owned trading companies and factories. This locally specific form aside, it was in general a way of mobilising customary institutions to generate labour. And this was transferrable to the Northern Territory.

There, settlers neither found nor appointed customary chiefs; but they did recognise the presence of 'native societies' whose traditions they tried to conduct towards the provision of labour. In this sense, the form of indirect rule that was implemented in the Territory in the late 1930s was intended to secure an Aboriginal labour supply for white-owned pastoral stations.

We need to think about that labour in its specific form, both as a settler colonial strategy of Indigenous erasure, and as Indigenous experiences of both land dispossession and a means of assuring ongoing relationships with country. What Glen Coulthard calls the settler colonial relation was here marked by multiple projects of government, by the exploitation of

4 Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London: Cassell, 1999), 29.

Aboriginal land and labour, and by emergent and multiplying Indigenous articulations and practices of resurgence.⁵ The resultant dispensation was complex, and was differentiated across the Northern Territory, demanding complexity in our historical analysis.

Jessica: Your reference to ‘emergent and multiplying Indigenous articulations and practices of resurgence’ makes me think of another significant theme that emerges throughout *Governing Natives*: space. Space is conceptualised as fluid; it is used effectively by settlers and Aboriginal people alike. The reader is left with the sense that space and its shifting iterations were central to indirect rule under settler colonialism. While you have already touched briefly on Aboriginal resurgence in relation to labour and country, can you comment on the politics of space for both Aboriginal communities and white Australians in this period in the Northern Territory’s history?

Ben: Ordering complexity through ordering space was one of the key problems of colonial government. Thinking historically, it brings together a range of questions, including those of legal pluralism, Indigenous mobilities and the production of race.

Race, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, so often became expressed in a spatial register. As I’ve noted elsewhere, the South African Prime Minister B. J. Vorster claimed, in 1973, that: ‘If I were to wake up one morning and find myself a black man, the only major difference would be geographical.’⁶ He was, entirely disingenuously, defending a system of segregation in which differences were, of course, much more than geographical, but there is nonetheless something worth thinking about behind the claim. Colonial states tended to work to constitute race and space together as a way of ordering people and territory.

We see this in the establishment of so-called inviolable reserves, in the planning and mapping of buffer stations on their borders and pastoral stations beyond them, and in the marking out towns with prohibited

5 Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816679645.001.0001.

6 Ben Silverstein and Patrick Wolfe, ‘Ideologies’, in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Modern Imperial Histories*, ed. Philippa Levine and John Marriott (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 484.

areas. This emerges in a place like Australia as a project of transforming Indigenous country to be related to into settler territory to be governed. Space would be used to stage and manifest difference.

But instituting impervious separation was unsustainable. People moving over imagined frontiers and other demarcated lines of containment consistently disturbed the spatial imagination of colonial segregation. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal spaces overlapped in relations that were not always those of complete domination. Pastoral stations, for instance, were mapped on the presumption that territory was objectifiable and entirely understandable, including the Aboriginal waterholes to which pastoralists were led. In the same space, Aboriginal people continued to relate to a country that was rich with cultural as well as economic meaning. Wandering cattle left tracks that stamped down, but did not erase, that country. When Aboriginal people were noticed practising their laws in spaces like pastoral stations, their action generated governmental problems that were ultimately unresolvable.

I say little in the book about specific Aboriginal country and its characteristics, perhaps a failing of the overall work. But we can note here that different spaces were articulated together and transformed by each other, and that the establishment of indirect rule was an attempt to order this articulation.

Jessica: Towards the end of your book—and in relation to the notion that different spaces were articulated together—you introduce several themes that have become incredibly important in Aboriginal history: agency, survival and political engagement. You articulate these throughout the book in terms of both individualism and collective agency, irrespective of the repressive nature of white administration in Australia's north. What role do you see the historical acknowledgement of agency, survival and political engagement playing in contemporary discussions about settler colonialism?

Ben: Indigenous people have always worked out, and will continue to work out, ways of eluding, confounding, obstructing and resisting the logic of elimination characteristic of settler colonialism. Historians need to tend to these practices, alongside those Indigenous practices of working within and accommodating the social and political artefacts of settler colonialism in ways that substantially complicate our analysis. These are all forms of engagement or refusal that we should think carefully about. Often, it is

these efforts that render Indigenous elimination a project or attempt rather than a fait accompli; Indigenous survival is less a result of settler or governmental benevolence as it is an effect of Indigenous persistence and resistance that emerges from sovereign Indigenous communities.

If we are trying to write in solidarity with decolonising projects, we need, I think, to develop useful ways of understanding the nature of settler colonialism and its contradictions. But I also think it's true, as Shino Konishi has recently pointed out, that we need to historicise settler colonialism and Indigeneity together.⁷ The way we do that remains contentious.

One productive way forward might be to account for Indigenous cosmologies and philosophies of spatiality and temporality, for the many ways Indigenous peoples have articulated their societies with encroaching others, and for the ways Indigenous people have acted upon and towards those others: negotiating, refusing, resisting, accommodating, transforming and so on. We can usefully frame this problematic in terms of what Coulthard, quoting Marx, describes as 'modes of life'— 'interconnected social totalit[ies]' encompassing the 'economic, political, spiritual, and social'.⁸

I'm not sure a concept of agency, often used in the liberal sense of self-determining individualism, quite gets us there, though it would be worthwhile considering how the kind of 'collective agency' you refer to might emerge and what it might look like. A focus on modes of life, though, might lead us to a sense of the settler colonial social formation as an often unpredictable articulation that can only be understood by looking to entangled but relatively autonomous settler and Indigenous societies. Thinking through the characteristics of these social totalities and their articulations might prove to be a way of unsettling colonialism, of discerning contradictions and devising ways of pushing at them. And this might help us work towards decolonising futures of Indigenous possibility.

7 Shino Konishi, 'First Nations Scholars, Settler Colonial Studies, and Indigenous History', *Australian Historical Studies* 50, no. 3 (2019): 304, doi.org/10.1080/1031461X.2019.1620300.

8 Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 65.

***Taking Liberty: Indigenous Rights and Settler Self-Government in Colonial Australia, 1830–1890* by Ann Curthoys and Jessie Mitchell**

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 432 pp

Emma Cupitt
The Australian National University

Ann Curthoys and Jessie Mitchell combine two familiar histories of Australian settler colonialism to explore their interrelations. One of these is the history of how the Australian colonies attained self-government in the period 1830–90. This history has often been told proudly as a narrative of progression from convict and dependent origins to an independent liberal democracy. Alongside the attainment of self-government, the other history the book examines is that of the violent invasion of Indigenous peoples' lands and subsequent attempts to regulate Indigenous people's lives. Foremost among the questions *Taking Liberty* seeks to address is how the treatment of Indigenous people changed as greater autonomy was gained in the colonies. The book also considers how settler and British ideas about Indigenous people influenced the debates about whether the colonies should be self-governing. Questions about how Indigenous people should be governed in the colonies, and what Indigenous people's experiences in the colonies reflected about settler abilities to govern, were prominent in these discourses.

Taking Liberty is divided into four parts that traverse the specificities of each colony's transition to self-government across the period 1830–90. The first section of the book considers the period 1830–46, when the colonies were still largely governed by the British and settler expansion forced the British Government, settlers, missionaries and Indigenous peoples to attempt to reconcile their conflicting interests. The narrative extending through this

section of the book highlights increasing violence by both Indigenous people and settlers as the latter moved to procure more land. Within this context, humanitarianism, with a strong evangelical influence, is shown as a determined proponent for Indigenous protection. Here, Curthoys and Mitchell draw attention to the transnational history of the anti-slavery movement, demonstrating the links between abolitionism and growing humanitarian sentiments in the colonies—much of which called for the protection of indigenous peoples in Australia, North America and the Cape Colony. This deft change in focus—from extremely local events to the global trends that influenced them—is characteristic of *Taking Liberty* as a whole.

The late 1840s and early 1850s saw gradually increasing powers of self-government in the Australian colonies and the British withdrawal from imperial protection of Indigenous people. In the 1840s, humanitarian concern for Indigenous people declined as transnational ideas about racial hierarchies became more popular and, within Australia, there was a prevalent perception that attempts to ‘civilise’ Indigenous people had failed. In Part II, *Taking Liberty* provides a detailed account of the debates about the granting of self-government, with commentary on how the issue of Indigenous welfare was included or, more often, excluded from these discussions. An interesting part of this history is the connection Curthoys and Mitchell highlight between growing opposition to the transportation of convicts and continuing debates about Indigenous policy. Settler opposition to the transportation of convicts provided a large part of the impetus for self-government in the eastern colonies. Settlers considered the practice deplorable on a number of grounds, including the beliefs that homosexual sex was widespread among convicts, that convict labour undermined other workers’ wages and that settlers would have to pay for the extra cost of policing the convicts. Indigenous welfare was also at times raised as one of the reasons to stop transportation, as convicts were seen as responsible for frontier violence.

One of the most important contributions the book makes to histories of Indigenous experiences of settler colonialism is to draw Britain back into the sphere of responsibility for injustices experienced by Indigenous people. On the whole, *Taking Liberty* is not explicitly presentist, though it is extremely relevant to present political discourses. However, in their conclusion, Curthoys and Mitchell do draw attention to the lack of recognition in Britain for its participation in the dispossession of, and violence against, Indigenous people in Australia. Here, they draw on

historian Zoë Laidlaw's essay 'Imperial Complicity', in which she argues that: 'Historians of empire who write from an imperial British perspective have also reproduced the nineteenth-century tendency to distance metropolitan Britain, and Britons, from settler colonialism.'¹ Curthoys and Mitchell argue that 'metropolitan Britain shares with British-founded nation states like Australia a moral responsibility to acknowledge and respond to Indigenous claims for restitution, compensation, and sovereignty'.² In highlighting Britain's role in this history, Curthoys and Mitchell raise the possibility of Indigenous calls for recompense from Britain.

While *Taking Liberty* shows the various ways that Indigenous people's lives worsened in each Australian colony as these colonies became increasingly autonomous, it does not exonerate British administrators from mistreatment of Indigenous people or praise the British for their good governance of Indigenous people prior to the granting of self-government. The book avoids perpetuating an unhelpful historical binary between British governments who valued Indigenous welfare and violent settlers who valued the acquisition of new land. Rather, Curthoys and Mitchell show the contradictions and variations in British responses to Indigenous people. A striking example of these contradictions was the 1837 *Report from the Select Committee on Aborigines (British Settlements)*, which condemned the treatment of indigenous peoples in Britain's colonies but did not criticise colonialism itself.

The book clearly indicates that British administrators were aware that granting self-government to the Australian colonies was likely to enable greater violence against Indigenous people by the settlers. Curthoys and Mitchell devote a chapter ('Who Will Govern Aboriginal People?') in Part II of the book to describing the transfer of control over Indigenous policy from the British to the colonies. They introduce the chapter by stating their desire to explain why the British relinquished complete control over Indigenous policy in the 1850s, despite 'imperial government rhetoric from the late 1830s on the need for British, and not colonial, legislatures to manage Aboriginal policy'.³ Their explanation is that

1 Zoë Laidlaw, 'Imperial Complicity: Indigenous Dispossession in British History and History Writing', in *Emancipation and the Remaking of the British Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall, Nicholas Draper and Keith McClelland (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 142, doi.org/10.7228/manchester/9780719091834.003.0008.

2 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 412.

3 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 208.

the handover was a gradual process that had been occurring 'for some time'.⁴ The reasons for this gradual process, however, are not entirely clear. Curthoys and Mitchell imply a loss of interest on the part of the British for Indigenous people, perhaps because of a widespread idea that 'civilising' attempts had failed.

This reorientation of responsibility is perhaps a product of Curthoys and Mitchell's unwillingness to consider Australia in isolation. One instance where *Taking Liberty's* international perspective provides a particularly insightful contrast is in its description of the early 1850s, when the technicalities for the colonies' self-government were being finalised. Voting rights were restricted by gender and property requirements, but not by race. However, Curthoys and Mitchell write that, in Australia, 'the idea that Aboriginal people might actually become involved in political processes remained an opportunity for rhetorical scorn, not for serious consideration'.⁵ This disdain at the idea of Indigenous people voting is not surprising given the book's coverage of the dearth of Indigenous liberties in the Australian colonies and the racist dismissals of their ability to participate in British society. However, the book indicates that, at around the same time, the constitution approved in the Cape colony instituted a 'colour-blind franchise' that allowed all the Queen's subjects, regardless of race and class, to vote.⁶ Moreover, *Taking Liberty* includes details about calls for the inclusion of Māori in the New Zealand franchise. This indicates that settlers in Australia were not without international precedents that could have helped them imagine a more liberal inclusion of Indigenous people in the democracies they were creating.

Part III of *Taking Liberty* examines separately the colonies of Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia in the years following their attainment of self-government. Each colony had become responsible for the management of its Indigenous population and vast differences were evident in the ways each went about this role. At one extreme was Victoria's attempt to control all aspects of Indigenous lives. The Victorian approach was characteristic of 'institutionalisation and surveillance', with the confinement of Indigenous people to reserves and missions.⁷ Victoria's administration of Indigenous people was strongly

4 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 208.

5 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 233.

6 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 219.

7 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 269.

influenced by a continuation of humanitarianism and was a forerunner of the type of policies the other colonies would later adopt. In contrast, New South Wales was largely ambivalent towards the management of Indigenous people. In the late 1850s, debate over Indigenous policy centred on the frontier violence that was occurring in the northern districts of New South Wales. However, in 1859, the role of intervening in frontier violence in this region was transferred to the newly created colony of Queensland. Curthoys and Mitchell argue that New South Wales' minimalist approach to Indigenous policy allowed Indigenous people in that colony more freedom than they had in Victoria. In Tasmania, Curthoys and Mitchell write that the colonists' greatest priority was to forget their penal history and the past conflict with Indigenous people. As such their 'management' of Indigenous people in the colony was, like New South Wales, minimal.

At the other extreme, in terms of humanitarian concern, was Queensland, where the seizure of land was still underway and frontier warfare was rife.⁸ Queensland governments in the 1860s did not attempt to govern Indigenous people but did pay for a Native Mounted Police force that was mobilised by settlers in frontier conflicts. Meanwhile, South Australia's Indigenous policy was marked by a contradiction: the colony's pride in their history of progressiveness and liberalness existed alongside an advancing pastoral frontier and its attendant violence. South Australia resembled Victoria in some of its policies for governing Indigenous people, including humanitarian ideals and the establishment of a few missions. The colony was exceptional among its fellow Australian colonies for its early acknowledgement of Aboriginal rights to occupy the land. This recognition is evident in the 1836 Letters Patent that established the colony, as well as Governor Hindmarsh's first proclamation on 28 December 1836.⁹ Hindmarsh advised settlers of his intention to:

Take every lawful means for extending the same protection to the Native Population as to the rest of His Majesty's Subjects and of my firm determination to punish with exemplary severity, all acts of violence or injustice which may in any manner be practiced or

8 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 313.

9 The relevant clause in the Letters Patent reads: 'Provided always, that nothing in these our letters patent contained shall affect or be construed to affect the rights of any Aboriginal Natives of the said Province to the actual occupation or enjoyment in their own Persons or in the Persons of their Descendants of any Lands therein now actually occupied or enjoyed by such Natives.' Mandy Paul, 'Letters Patent', 2013, accessed 1 January 2020, adelaidia.sa.gov.au/subjects/letters-patent.

attempted against the Natives who are to be considered as much under the Safeguard of the law as the Colonists themselves, and equally entitled to the privileges of British Subjects.¹⁰

However, by the time the colony was self-governing, pastoral expansion in the state had resulted in violence against, and illiberal punishments of, Indigenous people that undermined the colony's idealism.

Western Australia's transition to self-government was different in many ways from that of the other colonies. It achieved self-government in 1890, well after the other colonies became self-governing in the 1850s. There are various reasons for this lateness, not least of which were its comparatively small population and its late-blooming convict transportation system. Due to its delayed attainment of self-government, and the attendant differences in the political context of the 1880s, Curthoys and Mitchell consider Western Australia separately from the other colonies in the final section of the book. During the 1880s, when many settlers were calling for it, a number of factors continued to deter the British Government from granting Western Australia responsible government. Accusations that Indigenous people were being used for slave labour in the north of the colony in the pearling industry and on pastoral stations, as well as harsh punishment of Indigenous people—often for stealing stock to feed themselves—were core parts of the debate over whether the colony was responsible enough to govern itself. Western Australia only attained self-government with the proviso that the colony's Aborigines Protection Board remain under the control of the governor, who was in turn responsible to the British rather than the Western Australian Government, demonstrating the continued connection between the Australian colonies and the metropole despite desperate attempts to attain self-government.

Threaded throughout *Taking Liberty* are references to the ongoing significance of the nineteenth-century events it details. In their conclusion, Curthoys and Mitchell dwell more specifically on *Taking Liberty's* present reverberations. I have already outlined the present significance of *Taking Liberty* to British historical memory. In the Australian political scene, the book is useful for understanding Indigenous political desires and the political traditions in Australia that have prevented the realisation of these desires. The most notable development within Indigenous

10 Margaret Anderson, 'The Proclamation', 2013, accessed 1 January 2020, adelaidia.sa.gov.au/subjects/the-proclamation.

politics in recent years has been the creation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. The Uluru Statement was endorsed on 26 May 2017 by Indigenous delegates from across the country at the First Nations National Constitutional Convention. It was a consensus response to a consultation process, initiated by then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Opposition leader Bill Shorten in 2015, that sought advice on constitutional recognition of Indigenous people.

The Uluru Statement calls for systematic change, not merely symbolic recognition. It recommends three areas of reform. First, a constitutionally enshrined First Nations voice to parliament that would influence and advise parliament on issues significant to Indigenous people. Second, a Makarrata (Treaty) Commission that would help facilitate treaties with First Nations and governments. Third, a process of truth telling about the past. The Uluru Statement asserts that Indigenous sovereignty existed at the time of British arrival and continues to exist. *Taking Liberty* shows how the foundations of Australia's democratic institutions were laid with the intention of excluding Indigenous people and ignoring their sovereignty. Curthoys and Mitchell argue:

As societies produced by a history of settler colonialism wrestle with the task of forging political structures that recognise dual forms of sovereignty, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, it helps to understand how and why we have the political system we do.¹¹

The book does not give a point-by-point description of the inner workings of the Australian political system and how these undermine Indigenous autonomy. Rather, it shows how self-government in Australia began with a refusal to acknowledge 'Indigenous prior occupation or indeed Indigenous people's very existence'.¹²

Another important aspect of *Taking Liberty* is the contribution it makes to histories of Indigenous political engagement in the nineteenth century. The book examines a number of forms of Indigenous political engagement. Notable among these were the use of governors as intercessors on behalf of Indigenous interests and the identification of members of the Royal Family as potentially sympathetic to Indigenous causes. In addition, Curthoys and Mitchell highlight literary forms of political engagement by Indigenous people, including the writing of petitions and letters.

11 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 408.

12 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 408.

These forms of Indigenous political engagement in the eighteenth century have been explored in work by other historians.¹³ However, the novelty of their inclusion in *Taking Liberty* is in the entanglement of these political actions with the broader history of the colonies obtaining self-government. By doing so, Curthoys and Mitchell avoid isolating Indigenous political desires from the other political agendas at large in Australia in the eighteenth century. For instance, in writing about Van Diemen's Land's pursuit of 'greater political representation', Curthoys and Mitchell describe 'parallel claims for liberty and independence' made by Indigenous people in the territory.¹⁴ Then, as now, Indigenous people were participating in the major political debates of their times.

On the writing of histories, Curthoys and Mitchell reflect that 'we can no longer write political history in isolation from Indigenous histories' since colonial politics were invariably linked with their contemporaries' attitudes about Indigenous people.¹⁵ Indigenous people were not a fringe issue for the settlers and administrators in nineteenth-century Australia, but an important influence on the development of ideas around 'liberty, security, self-determination, and independence'.¹⁶ Indigenous histories should not, therefore, be overlooked as a specialty interest in political histories. The ideas listed above are still with us, enshrined in Australia's political institutions and part of our political culture. Indigenous people are also still a major influence on, and topic in, Australian politics, in large part because of their continued political engagement. *Taking Liberty* is an important resource, then, for understanding Australia's settler colonial history, as well as our own political moment. It provides an invaluable precedent for settler colonial histories that are more considerate of Indigenous histories and less triumphant in their teleology.

13 Diane Barwick, *Rebellion at Coranderrk* (Canberra: Aboriginal History Inc., 1998); Jane Lydon, *Eye Contact: Photographing Indigenous Australians* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), doi.org/10.1215/9780822387251; Sarah Carter and Maria Nugent, *Mistress of Everything: Queen Victoria in Indigenous Worlds* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016); Maria Nugent, "'The Queen Gave Us the Land": Aboriginal People, Queen Victoria and Historical Remembrance', *History Australia* 9, no. 2 (2012): 182–200, doi.org/10.1080/14490854.2012.11668423; Penny Van Toorn, *Writing Never Arrives Naked: Early Aboriginal Cultures of Writing in Australia* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2006).

14 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 148.

15 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 405.

16 Curthoys and Mitchell, *Taking Liberty*, 405.

***Don Dunstan: The Visionary Politician Who Changed Australia* by Angela Woollacott**

(Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2019), 344 pp

Clare Parker
The University of Adelaide

It has been 40 years since Don Dunstan resigned as premier of South Australia (SA), and 20 years since his death. It is remarkable that it has taken so many decades for a comprehensive biography of his life to be published. There is certainly no shortage of content; Dunstan's political career and personal life are both ripe with colour and controversy. Yet, Angela Woollacott's excellent *Don Dunstan: The Visionary Politician Who Changed Australia* is the first attempt at a full examination of his life in its own right.

Woollacott's study of Dunstan's life is, in many ways, a classic biography, drawing upon elements of his upbringing and episodes from his childhood and young adult life to show how Dunstan's views developed and were shaped by the people and injustices he encountered. Much of the material regarding his political career, and some elements of his personal life, will be familiar to anyone who lived in Dunstan's SA or has some knowledge of his legacy, but Woollacott adds value to the re-telling with new (and sometimes surprising) sources. In other places, it is the simple act of linking events in his life—noting a recurring theme or allowing the chronology to juxtapose public and private events—that shows the true worth in the biography. Precisely because there is so much to remember Dunstan for, it is valuable to bring together the themes that dominate his life rather than examine them in isolation.

It is a rigorous and scholarly work, comprehensively referenced and never overplaying claims where evidence is lacking. Themes of social justice, belief in democracy and civil liberties are neatly highlighted as Dunstan's life unfolds, but the book is also eminently readable and easily enjoyed

and understood without ever checking an endnote. The reader who does venture into the extensive notes section will be rewarded with a rich array of sources: Woollacott has truly scoured Dunstan's collection of papers donated to the Flinders University Library, as well as many published sources. She has also drawn upon new and existing interviews with former friends, colleagues and family members. She interviewed Dunstan's partner Steven Cheng and son Andrew, and Dunstan's daughter Bronwen fact-checked the work and provided many of the photographs.

Woollacott provides a comprehensive account of Dunstan's political career and his championing of key reforms. She focuses in particular on his push for Aboriginal rights in a dedicated chapter, and highlights the long, slow path to electoral reform to end the state's gerrymander. Here, as elsewhere, she notes Dunstan's political nous: he was a politician willing to work over a sustained period in often tiny increments to shape the state to his vision. It was his electoral reform, she argues, that permitted so much of his other reforming work to come to fruition. Chief among these were his pioneering of women's rights, including the *Sex Discrimination Act 1975*, his championing of the arts, and economic measures such as the diversification of the state's industries and the development of overseas relationships with cities such as Penang. Woollacott also traces Dunstan's involvement with the Australian Labor Party on a national level and his work with Gough Whitlam—a relationship that suffered somewhat once a conflict between federal and state rights became apparent during Whitlam's prime ministership.

The Salisbury Affair is also considered in some detail, revealing how the dismissal of SA police commissioner Harold Salisbury reflected ongoing themes in Dunstan's public and personal lives, including his distrust of the police and his sexuality. Dunstan's fight against the SA establishment is a theme to which Woollacott regularly returns, while noting that he was, really, part of the same establishment himself due to factors such as his family connections and his schooling at St Peter's College. While the point is not laboured, the extent to which Dunstan was an astonishing contrast to the prevailing political atmosphere and social (especially masculine) norms of SA is apparent throughout. On almost every measure, he was a radical departure from the preceding generation of politicians who had personified the socially conservative, masculine-dominated and largely Anglophile society that had prevailed.

Dunstan's personal life is revealed in candid accounts of the open nature of his two marriages and the toll these arrangements took on the relationships. His other lovers, female and male, are discussed, but never gratuitously. Priority is given to consideration of Dunstan's sexuality in the context of its interaction with his political life, such as his employment of John Ceruto. Ceruto was clearly inappropriate for the job for which he was hired and his views on homosexual law reform made this appointment more controversial still. The chronological progression of Dunstan's life and relationships reveals the changing nature of how open he could be about his bisexuality. This, of course, neatly mirrors the wider experience of bisexual and gay men during Dunstan's lifetime. As Woollacott elucidates: 'Dunstan's life story helps us to appreciate just what a watershed era the 1960s and 1970s were in Australia.'¹ It does this in several ways: politically, by reminding us of the enormous social changes that came about in those decades and Dunstan's active role in them; and also by showing how Dunstan's own life was representative of the experiences of so many who found themselves newly liberated by the legal reforms and evolving social norms of the period.

One of the most original elements of the book is Woollacott's detailed exploration of the influence of Fiji on Dunstan's life. It is evident just how fully he was shaped by the years he spent in Fiji, the country of his birth. Woollacott's writing is at its most evocative as she weaves the Dunstan family's experiences with the nature of Fijian society at the time. It is clear that the rigid racial and class stratifications that framed young Don's friendships and early working life formed the foundation of his political convictions. Exact details of Dunstan's childhood are in parts difficult to come by, but Woollacott compensates by using other sources to flesh out the social and physical environment. Most creatively, she draws upon the memoir of Betty Friedman, a Fijian-born child of Australian parents, the same age as Dunstan, to illustrate the relationship that white children could have with their Indian and Fijian household servants. Surprisingly, some of the subsequent discussion is supported by Dunstan's own words in the form of an unpublished novel he wrote in the 1980s. Although disclaimed as autobiographical by Dunstan, Woollacott makes a convincing case for its basis in real life, often only superficially disguised. It is in this writing that the impact of Dunstan's Fijian upbringing is made most clear. The existence of the novel is also one of the most significant revelations

1 Angela Woollacott, *Don Dunstan*, ix.

of the book. Woollacott notes that it would surely have had more success with a publisher had it been written as a straight autobiography, and in that form would have provided a valuable counterpoint to *Felicia*, Dunstan's strictly political autobiography published in 1981.

The impact of Fiji extended beyond Dunstan's political views. His well-rounded life outside politics was also grounded in his Fijian years. His musical sensibilities and, importantly, his culinary tastes were developed among the singing, tropical fruit and Indian and Chinese cuisines of the diverse Fijian community. Indeed, food emerges as a constant theme in Woollacott's account of Dunstan's life, beyond his cookbook and restaurant, framing the book. The first words of Dunstan she quotes are his memories of banana mashed with sugar, papaya with lime juice, mangoes and mud crabs; her account of the final night of his life is punctuated by the arrival of a large pot of chicken curry brought to his house by, and for, his gathered friends. The immediate sensory engagement offered by descriptions of food serves to draw the reader closer to Dunstan's world. It also goes beyond a simple reminder that he was interested in food culture: as in his politics, much of his taste in food was ahead of its time and SA took a while to catch up. When Dunstan took a faintly condemnatory tone to his analysis of Australia's food tastes in his 1976 cookbook, it perhaps hinted at what he would like to have said about his constituents' views on some other matters. Yet, in his cookbook, as in his politics, he reveals a faith in the capacity of Australians to do better and make the most of the resources at their disposal.

It is this fundamental belief in improving lives by extending opportunity through equality that shines through in this account of Dunstan's life. His electoral reforms (eventually) granted equality of political representation, which in turn allowed him to enact his vision of greater economic and social equality for South Australians. Woollacott has done justice to the complexity of Dunstan's life, and provides the reader with a new understanding of his beliefs and how he went about using them to fundamentally change the state he led.

Our Corner of the Somme: Australia at Villers-Bretonneux **by Romain Fathi**

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 288 pp

Margaret Harris

Villers-Bretonneux is an important site in Australian commemorative imagination. It is there that the Australian National Memorial stands, and where—as Australia’s official historian Charles Bean would have it—Australian soldiers of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) single-handedly turned back the great German advance of 1918, preventing the loss of France.¹ Notwithstanding this, Villers-Bretonneux is marginalised in the public consciousness. While it has attracted its share of lionisation and bombast, it has not achieved the dense memorialisation of landscapes like Gallipoli or Kokoda. Further, unlike Gallipoli (and to some extent Kokoda), Villers-Bretonneux is a place where people lived, and continue to live, with their own national understanding about how war affected their landscape. This creates a tension. Bean’s history fails to stand against any serious scrutiny (the reality of the battle was much more complex) but, regardless, over time, Australians have ‘assembled, projected, and performed’ their vision of Villers-Bretonneux onto a place where the local French population had an active voice. They have rejected, accepted, moulded and shaped that narrative as they saw fit—or just ignored it outright.

Our Corner of the Somme sets about examining this tension between Australian remembrance activities and the lived context of the people inside Villers-Bretonneux. In spare, sometimes biting prose, with his arguments soundly demonstrated through a series of case studies, Romain Fathi explores how Australians have approached the area to commemorate and remember, and, in turn, how local residents have approached this

1 C. E. W. Bean, *The Official History of Australia During the War, Vol. V – the Australian Imperial Force in France During the Main German Offensive, 1918* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1945), 298.

Australian activity. In roughly chronological order, Fathi traces how this process influenced everything from the built environment of the village, to local education, to village politics, as well as the more obvious elements of tourism and economics.

It is immediately clear that the author is French. At the core of the analysis is a great quantity of French sources that have simply not been consulted in English-language research before. These include local French newspapers and church newsletters, as well as Villers-Bretonneux council documents and private letters. Fathi uses the vitality (and acidity) of these local sources to highlight how decisions made to enhance symbolism then flow into the lives of real people. Set against a close examination of Australian involvement in the area from 1918 to the present, these sources temper and test Australian claims about the significance of their wartime and postwar roles at Villers-Bretonneux, revealing how Australians have created an imagined 'French' view of their achievements.

To ensure there is no confusion, Australian desires are treated as central to the narrative. At all times, the book remains aware of its core audience, and Fathi engages with the strong legacy of work Australian scholars have made in commemorative literature. But Australian ideas about the meaning of the landscape are also inexorably painted as largely foreign to the desires and beliefs of the residents. It is clear by the final chapter that Australian interest in Villers-Bretonneux has been both a boon for residents and a grave nuisance.

Structurally, *Our Corner* is broken into eight chapters, each of which (apart from the first) span periods of roughly similar commemorative activity. The first chapter attempts to contextualise the rest of the book by laying out what might be called a 'battle history' of the Australians at Villers-Bretonneux. This discussion is factually accurate, but—while interesting to a lay reader—quickly proves marginal to the central point of the analysis. The core of this book is not about the battle; simply knowing Australian troops fought here is enough to set the stage. Regardless, after discussing how the Australians were actually a small part of broader Allied efforts in the area, and thereby moderating the expectations of any Australian lay reader, the discussion unceremoniously moves on from military manoeuvres and never returns.

It is once the French voices enter the narrative that the analytic value of the book truly begins to emerge. The initial few chapters, which interrogate the period immediately following World War I up to World War II (WWII), are especially excellent. The back and forth negotiations between local French leaders and Australian interests (as expressed by newspapers, governments and people with large amounts of cash to donate) are examined. The tension between French pragmatism and Australian romanticism is most clearly expressed in these chapters. Fathi identifies successive generations of Australians who have sought to make and find meaning in Villers-Bretonneux. At the same time, he shows how local residents have worked with, against and through this memorialisation activity to meet their own agendas.

Fathi's accounts of the efforts made to reconcile both French and Australian interests can be confronting. He makes the point that, in the immediate aftermath of the war, the village of Villers-Bretonneux was a ruin. The people there needed immediate, sustained and practical help. But this help was not particularly forthcoming from Australia. Fathi traces the ways that funds were sought from Australia by successive French residents, who began drawing on the language of Anzac to support their appeals. He notes that this charity was difficult for cash-strapped Australians, and, that when money was offered, it often came bundled with conditions set by Australians elevating symbolism over need. *Our Corner* charts one major example of Australian charity and the tensions it could cause. The construction of a donated school (the Ecole Victoria) was actively imposed upon a village that did not want it; not only was it too big, but also it reduced the amount of reconstruction money provided by the French Government. However, from the Australian perspective, the school project was generous, a morally correct use of money and also clever; future generations of French school children could learn and be impressed by the importance of the Australian contribution in the area. The final product came complete with 'DON'T FORGET AUSTRALIA' emblazoned on its side.

Through this and other case studies, it is clear that the lived reality of Australian donations during early reconstruction was one of French frustration. Fathi spares no one; he paints a picture of a people who appear to have had little interest in understanding the Australian fascination with their landscape. This can also be confronting in the text. In one striking

example, Fathi details how the Villers-Bretonneux mayor and council requested Australians donate money to fund a local abattoir—twice. Both requests were declined.

Following discussions of the immediate needs of the area, Fathi moves to the major site of remembrance at Villers-Bretonneux—and arguably the largest Australian commemorative project on the Western Front. This was, of course, the construction and concertation of the Australian National Memorial. Fathi's exploration of this memorial is superb, exploring how Australian identity was performed inside a wider sense of British imperial identity and how this created tensions in the design of memorial. For instance, while the Australian Government initially stipulated an Australian architect, in the end it was Sir Edwin Lutyens—a famous British architect—who designed most of the structure. The ceremonies performed around it also displayed this fundamental tension. Fathi juxtaposes Australian desires for glory against the reality of the inauguration ceremony: the memorial was opened by King George VI in a period of European tension, with most of the speeches alluding to the ties between France and Great Britain. Again, Fathi leans heavily on newspapers to demonstrate Australian desires and interests. Newspapers reported large crowds and praise for foreign dignitaries, 1,500 AIF veterans and 30,000 troops, global media interest (including the King) and visitors numbering in the hundreds of thousands. All of these figures were inaccurate. But, just as importantly, Fathi reminds us that accuracy hardly mattered in this instance. Indeed, he goes to some pains to show how the Australian Government played into the duality of the event, issuing pamphlets to Australian media outlets extolling the deeds of Australian fighting men while tactfully refraining from giving the same leaflet to the British and French journalists.

WWII exists in the book almost as an intermission, with the second half of its analysis interrogating the postwar slump in Anzac commemorative activity, followed by the explosion of activity (the so-called 'memory boom' period), starting roughly in the 1990s and lingering to the present day.

The postwar Anzac nadir is especially valuable. Fathi might well be unique in approaching this period through the lens of the French. Indeed, utilising such a frame elucidates potential pathways forward for alternative gazes that shed light on the mechanisms of the decline in Anzac practice. One way that the decline of symbolic commemorative activity is charted in this work is through an analysis of the composition

of visitors, as well as those who did not visit. For example, Australian Government officials delegated Anzac Day visits to military adjuncts, and few non-veteran visitors or family arrived. Further, veterans who did stop at Villers-Bretonneux tended to be soldiers with direct experience, often on tour, returning to the battlefields of their youth, and, importantly, the spaces they created were local. Local townspeople hosted them, and French veterans shared commemorative activities as a result.

But silence is ultimately less colourful than noise, and the lion's share of the post-WWII analysis is dedicated to the period after roughly 1990. Within the complex activities associated with remembering and forgetting, Fathi delights in detailing the differing agendas of many of the parties involved in commemorative activities of the modern time. The ambitions of both France and Australia are on naked display. Being bilingual, he provides such delights as commentary on differing translations of displays inside the French–Australian Museum now built in Villers-Bretonneux. He also briefly mentions Villers-Bretonneux attempting to stop the nearby construction of a major airport by alerting the Australian Government to the potential for the disturbance of Australian graves.

Alas, however, Fathi ultimately paints a picture of a modern local population buffeted by powerful forces. The French voices in the narrative seem increasingly dominated by Australian memory practices—in the museum, in visitor's books and in the activity that constitutes the town as its own economic entity.

If there is one note of caution to be sounded, it is in how one dimensional Australian narratives are presented to be. *Our Corner* assumes instances of Australian remembrance practice in France are monolithic. This is largely a product of using newspapers and government documents for the majority of the analysis. This paints a conventional picture; the modern Australian 'memory boom' activity is understood as derived in a straight line from the Howard government, back through a period of little interest, to a self-aggrandising interwar Australia, and, finally, to Charles Bean (and the desire for the mass death to have been meaningful). In actuality, remembrance practices are complex and multivalent, differing by state, social background, time of year and political leanings. Anzac activities are underpinned by very real emotions of grief and loss.

In the final section, Fathi moves to address this through the use of (by now de rigueur) notes written in visitor books. This approach has much to recommend it, and was pioneered in this context by such scholars as Jay Winter, Joan Beaumont and Bruce Scates. However, the approach is not as valuable as it might have been. Visitor books are tricky; they are as likely to mislead as enlighten. A stronger theoretical framework for their use would have served *Our Corner* well. Nevertheless, the intervention has opened up new questions; especially valuable might be scholarship about the composition of non-Australian comments in the museum, and how they contrast or emulate the standard English-language formulas.

A note here should be made on the support of the Australian Army in this work. *Our Corner* is by no means the first challenging work it has bankrolled, nor will it be the last. A lay reader might be worried that an official 'Rising Sun' badge on a book's dust jacket means that it will reflect conservative understandings of Anzac and military history. However, it should be noted that the Army aims to educate its personnel in ways that are realistic and that help its officers to draw useful lessons from the past, as the organisation has done here. It therefore funds some excellent scholarship.

In conclusion, this is a well-written, well-researched and valuable book. It fulfils the objective it sets out to achieve, that of localising commemorative activity into a landscape and a French village. What Fathi adds to the story of Anzac at Villers-Bretonneux is complexity and depth. By looking at sources outside the Anglosphere, he contextualises and (at times) even marginalises Australian voices in regard to Anzac, highlighting its essential 'otherness' to the people actually living in a site of remembrance.

***Convict Colony: The Remarkable Story of the Fledgling Settlement that Survived against the Odds* by David Hill**

(Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2019), 368 pp

Matthew Cunneen

The Australian National University

Australia's colonial history remains as relevant as ever. On 29 April 2020, the nation commemorated the 250th anniversary of Captain James Cook's landing at Botany Bay. It was Cook's fateful voyage on HMS *Endeavour* that led to the establishment of a British colony in Australia with the arrival of the First Fleet at Port Jackson on 26 January 1788. The Australian Government planned numerous events to mark Cook's arrival, but a global pandemic drastically limited the commemorations.¹ Still, there was debate in mainstream and social media over the meaning of Cook's arrival in 1770, with some of its themes echoing the perennial controversy over Australia Day (26 January)—the anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet—that has given rise to a 'Change the Date' movement. Given the continuing significance of this period of history in public debate, it seems timely that David Hill has published another work documenting the first decades of European settlement in Australia.

Hill, with his lively and engaging *Convict Colony*, joins a plethora of academic and popular historians writing in recent decades on the topic of Australia's early colonial past. *Convict Colony* covers the same period as Grace Karskens's *The Colony* (2010) and Alan Atkinson's *The Europeans in Australia, Volume One* (1997), spanning the period between the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 and the end of Macquarie's governorship in

1 Department of Communications and the Arts, '250th anniversary of Captain Cook's voyage to Australia', accessed 13 January 2020, www.arts.gov.au/what-we-do/cultural-heritage/250th-anniversary-captain-cooks-voyage-australia.

1821, but provides an account more suited to a popular audience. Hill's latest book remains in the territory of Australian history, as his previous eight books did. A significant drawback of this book is its lack of engagement with other historians, as this causes Hill's arguments to become rather one-sided. This is particularly apparent in his discussion regarding the selection of Botany Bay as a location for a future colony. However, a notable virtue of the book is its coverage of subjects that interest current academic historians and from which public audiences will gain a greater knowledge of the period. These are mainly the experiences of convict women and the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal Australians.

Accounts of Australia's early colonial history have historically tended to favour either the stories of male colonists or the plight of Aboriginal Australians. Despite there being a well-justified effort to understand colonisation from a purely Aboriginal perspective, there is also merit in acknowledging this position alongside the challenges encountered by colonists—both men and women—in pursuit of Britain's broader imperial mission. Hill facilitates a discussion of these issues by juxtaposing the problems of the colonisers with the severe consequences of their presence for Aboriginal communities. Further, Hill notes the peculiarities of being a woman in the early Australian colonies. By recounting this history with regular extracts from key primary sources, Hill vividly describes the many events and circumstances that threatened the survival of both the British colony and Aboriginal populations in Australia during the first decades of European settlement. In doing so, Hill addresses several arguments of critical importance to the historiography on European settlement in Australia. However, in the case of his discussion of the early colony's establishment, Hill unfortunately reveals his often-limited engagement with extant academic debates.

Hill argues that the British venture to colonise New South Wales was one of high risk, the failure of which could have been brought about by any one of several challenges faced by colonists during the first three decades of settlement. A central theme of *Convict Colony* is the adversity faced by all who were connected to the colony, including free colonists, convicts and Aboriginal people. Hill describes how the British faced problems before leaving England, including the logistical challenge of gathering enough supplies for the long journey and to sustain the new colony until it was self-sufficient. Upon its establishment in Australia, the new colony was subject to bushfires, floods and drought that, combined with the tough soil, made producing sufficient food near impossible for

the British. Unable to maintain sustainable food sources, and with limited contact with the outside world, the new colony was soon on the verge of starvation.

Hill demonstrates that a plethora of other problems also plagued the early colony. Initially, the arrival of women into the colony placed a greater strain on British supplies, as they were not generally assigned to work on farms to produce food and their presence was associated with the proliferation of prostitution and illegitimate children. This strain on supplies was exacerbated when the colony was later administered by the corrupt New South Wales Corps, which redistributed rations to favour non-convicts and assumed the powers held by magistrates. Problems regarding the governing of the colony escalated (first with an uprising of Irish convicts in 1804) until Governor William Bligh was overthrown by the corps in a coup d'état in 1808. The unstable governance of the colony left it vulnerable at a time when fears of imperial rivalry were heightened. The colonisation of Australia, and imperial expansion within it, were motivated by British fears of French imperial ambition in the region. Another competing interest came from the Spanish who, as early as 1796, had plans drawn up to invade Sydney. These issues of security and governance added to the domestic problems that threatened the survival of the colony, which included the inevitable escape of hundreds of transported convicts and conflict between Europeans and Aboriginal people.

While the regular and close integration of key primary sources is to be commended, too often Hill's arguments are presented without acknowledging the historical debates concerning the subject in question. For example, according to Hill, one source of adversity for 'the new settlement in Sydney was that many of the convicts—men, women and children—were totally unsuited to building a new life in the harsh Australian bush'.² He further argues that this was because the convicts transported on the First Fleet 'were not chosen with any regard to their fitness for the long voyage, or to their ability to build a new colony once they reached Botany Bay'.³ In making these claims, Hill firmly positions himself within a prominent debate in Australian historiography, one that rests on whether Australia was merely a 'dumping ground' for convicts or

2 David Hill, *Convict Colony: The remarkable story of the fledgling settlement that survived against the odds* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2019), x.

3 Hill, *Convict Colony*, 30.

was intended to survive to become an outpost of empire. Implicit in this debate is the question of whether those who embarked on the First Fleet had been selectively chosen and, if so, by what criteria.⁴

According to Frost, there is evidence to suggest that, for the male convicts at least, there was some selection according to skills and fitness. In February 1787, Sir Evan Nepean selected 100 convicts to be boarded onto the *Scarborough*. Of these, Captain Watkin Tench reported that the majority were husbandmen or mechanics who had been 'selected on purpose by order of Government'.⁵ Further, 44 of the 76 convicts transported on the *Friendship* were recorded as having trades, which included weavers, carpenters, brickmakers and farmers, all skills that would be needed in the new colony. Duncan Campbell, who was overseer of the convicts held on the River Thames hulks, excluded those who were sick or injured from transportation. When sending some to be loaded onto the *Scarborough*, Campbell held back seven out of 191 convicts selected for transportation. He maintained a careful watch over the convicts, ordering those 'who from sickness and other causes were thought unfit to be removed with the other prisoners'.⁶ In fact, a significant portion of convicts are believed to have had a rural background, with many having been farm labourers, servants, ploughmen, and shepherds, with the ubiquitous generic label 'labourer' likely to have also applied to farming work. The accumulation of individuals with these skills and experiences resulted in the creation of a workforce capable of transforming Australia into a primary producer.⁷

Another instance in which Hill's narration is hindered by his lack of reference to historical debates is the decision-making process behind the identification of Botany Bay as a site for a penal settlement. Historians have usually attributed this decision to four key factors: 1) that North America ceased to be a place for transporting convicts, 2) problems associated with the increasing number of prisoners in Britain, 3) the lack of any other viable place for sending convicts, and 4) that the distance from Botany Bay to Britain would make escape extremely difficult.⁸ To his credit, Hill commendably explains all of these factors in detail, regularly

4 Alan Frost, *The First Fleet: The Real Story* (Collingwood: Black Inc., 2012), 69–70.

5 Frost, *The First Fleet*, 70.

6 Frost, *The First Fleet*, 71.

7 David Meredith and Deborah Oxley, 'The convict economy', in *The Cambridge Economic History of Australia*, ed. Simon Ville and Glenn Withers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 107.

8 Alan Frost, *Botany Bay: The Real Story* (Collingwood: Black Inc., 2012), 216–217.

quoting from the relevant primary sources. There are, however, other variables that some historians argue had an impact on the selection of Botany Bay that are not addressed by Hill.

Historians such as Alan Frost and Geoffrey Blainey have argued that, aside from being a mere dumping ground for convicts, the decision to establish a penal colony in Australia was also influenced by military and economic motivations.⁹ Their main evidence comes from Lord Sydney's letter to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, dated 18 August 1786, which Hill also quotes from. In this letter, Sydney points out that another advantage of the Botany Bay site is that it would make it possible to cultivate the New Zealand flax plant. Doing this would further strengthen Britain's naval dominance, as British manufacturers were 'of opinion that canvas made of it would be superior in strength and beauty to any canvas made of the European material'.¹⁰ The Royal Navy would also benefit through 'procuring from New Zealand any quantity of masts and ship timber for the use of our fleets in India'.¹¹ Keeping in mind these other advantages of convict transportation to Australia, it is apparent that the Botany Bay scheme was not purely about establishing a dumping ground for convicts, but that the plan also catered to Britain's strategic and commercial aims in the South Pacific.¹²

A third group of historians argue that the First Fleet and the founding of a British colony in New South Wales was a direct product of Enlightenment thinking. The colonisation of Australia, as David Malouf writes, resulted from a mindset:

Interested in other forms of conquest, the conquest of time and the conquest of space ... It was a product of mind, in its active form as discovery rather than a by-product simply of empire.¹³

New South Wales was just one of a series of planned settlements throughout the British Empire that were designed in accordance with both domestic and imperial politics. At the core of these settlements was an Enlightenment notion, namely that bodies and souls could be

9 Frost, *Botany Bay*, 220.

10 'Lord Sydney to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, 18 August 1786 and Enclosures including Heads of a Plan', in *The Founding of Australia: The Argument About Australia's Origins*, ed. Ged Martin (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1978), 28.

11 Martin, *Founding of Australia*, 29.

12 Frost, *Botany Bay*, 227.

13 David Malouf, 'Australia's British Inheritance', *Quarterly Essay* 12 (2003): 33.

transformed and renewed, particularly through their displacement across vast distances. Elaborating on this position, Alan Atkinson argues: 'Such schemes [as Botany Bay] were the product of a pen-and-paper culture. They were part of a new science of human nature.'¹⁴ In writing his account of the lead up to Botany Bay, Hill missed an opportunity to discuss the possible connection between Australia's colonisation and the Enlightenment, a subject that he touches on in establishing the context in which the First Fleet was organised.

While Hill's work may be limited with respect to its lack of engagement with historical debates on certain topics, it is to be commended for the way in which it engages with subject areas of interest to current academic historians. One of these areas is Aboriginal history and the adversity faced by Aboriginal people as a result of colonisation, particularly through the frontier wars. Hill begins his chapter on this subject by forthrightly arguing that the European 'settlement in Australia was to have dire consequences for the Indigenous population' as Europeans 'dispossessed local peoples of their ancient lands, [drove] them from their traditional sources of food and exposed them to devastating diseases to which they had no immunity'.¹⁵

Hill's account of the experiences of Aboriginal people under European colonisation reflects the arguments made by several prominent historians in this area, including Richard Broome, James Miller, Henry Reynolds and Lyndall Ryan.¹⁶ These historians share Hill's contention that much of the conflict that occurred during the frontier wars was based around food, with Aboriginal people attacking settler property and stocks both as a means of sourcing food and in retaliation to European attacks.¹⁷ As well as the loss of their traditional lands, Hill further acknowledges that British expansion brought with it the 'abduction and rape of Aboriginal women and indiscriminate killings of local Aboriginal people across the hinterland', leaving Aboriginal people disposed of their traditional lands and culture.¹⁸ However, recounting the relatively amicable coexistence

14 Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia*, 51.

15 Hill, *Convict Colony*, 113.

16 Greg Blyton, 'Hungry Times: Food as a source of conflict between Aboriginal people and British colonists in New South Wales 1804–1846', *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 11, no. 3 (2015): 300.

17 Blyton, 'Hungry Times', 300.

18 Hill, *Convict Colony*, 134.

that occurred in the first few months of the Port Jackson settlement, Hill notes that there were limited times of peace between Europeans and Aboriginal people.¹⁹

While historians have been engaging with these issues for decades, there is evidence to suggest that, as a nation, we are yet to overcome what anthropologist Bill Stanner termed the 'great Australian silence'.²⁰ As historians Matthew Bailey and Sean Brawley have recently demonstrated, public knowledge and school education systems are yet to fully incorporate the violence and dispossession of Australia's colonial past.²¹ This suggests that popular understandings of Aboriginal colonial history are lagging behind that of contemporary academic historians, who are seeking to explore the ways in which Aboriginal people practised agency in the face of colonisation. An example of this can be found in the recent publication of a new biography on Truganini, in which the eminent historian Cassandra Pybus explores how this renowned woman was not simply a victim of her time but was someone who responded to the challenges she faced to make the best of her situation.²² While the absence of any discussion of Aboriginal agency in Hill's book is regrettable, the inclusion of an overview of the violence that occurred between Aboriginal people and Europeans in a work of popular history should reduce some of the ongoing ignorance of this subject. The inclusion of narratives regarding the various forms of Aboriginal agency and activism is a goal that future popular histories can work towards.

Another area of convict history featured in *Convict Colony* that is of interest to many contemporary historians is the experiences of women in the colonial period, with an emphasis on the challenges they both faced and posed to the colony's survival.²³ Hill argues that convict women were worse off than their male counterparts, as they faced limited chances of

19 Hill, *Convict Colony*, 117.

20 W. E. H. Stanner, 'The Boyer lectures: after the Dreaming' (1968), in *The Dreaming and other essays*, ed. W. E. H. Stanner (Collingwood: Black Inc. Agenda, 2010), 188–89, 191.

21 Matthew Bailey and Sean Brawley, 'Why Weren't We Taught? Exploring Frontier Conflict Through the Lens of Anzac', *Journal of Australian Studies* 42, no. 1 (2018): 19–33.

22 Cassandra Pybus, *Truganini: Journey through the Apocalypse* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2020).

23 Many of the works on the subject have been published by the Convict Women's Press, which include among many others: Lucy Frost, ed., *Convict Lives at the Ross Female Factory* (Hobart: Convict Women's Press, 2011); Lucy Frost and Alice Meredith Hodgson, eds, *Convict Lives at the Launceston Female Factory* (Hobart: Convict Women's Press, 2013); Alison Alexander, ed., *Convict Lives at the George Town Female Factory* (Hobart: Convict Women's Press, 2014); Lucy Frost and Colette McAlpine, *From the Edges of Empire: Convict Women from Beyond* (Hobart: Convict Women's Press, 2015).

finding paid employment and owning land. If they were not caring for children, convict women often worked for board and lodging, as hut keepers and domestic servants. Hill goes on to argue that the 'lack of any real opportunities for women and their dependence for survival on men led to large numbers of illegitimate children'.²⁴ This phenomenon has been documented by several historians, including Tanya Evans. In her book *Fractured Families*, Evans explains that, upon arrival in the colony, many convict women 'moved quickly from the ships into marriage, because a man provided [them] with the potential for economic security and personal protection in a land where men far outnumbered women'.²⁵

In addition to highlighting the challenges they faced, Hill posits that a minority of convict women were able to overcome their circumstances and build for themselves a successful life.²⁶ To illustrate this point, Hill outlines the well-known story of Margaret Catchpole. At 33 years of age, she was transported to New South Wales in 1801 for horse stealing. Once in Australia, Catchpole decided not to marry at a time when women were reliant on men for financial security, instead opting to work for several prominent farming families.²⁷ She boasted that her 'living all alone as before in a very honest way of life' meant that 'not one woman in the colony lives like myself'.²⁸ This was of course not the case, as there were other convict women who became independently successful. One such woman was Judith Simpson, who after a series of relationships later acquired a business and property. As well as owning land in Windsor, Simpson acquired a spirit licence for her property in Chapel Row, Sydney, and a beer licence in 1818 for Castlereagh Street. As historian Grace Karskens argues, Simpson's 'own talents and skills had left her well-off, propertied and respected'.²⁹ Another female convict who achieved success independently was Mary Reibey, a colonial business woman who, through 'persevering and enterprising in everything she undertook, became legendary in the colony' and 'rose to respectability and affluence in the new emancipist society'.³⁰ By exploring some of the challenges

24 Hill, *Convict Colony*, 146.

25 Tanya Evans, *Fractured Families: Life on the Margins in Colonial New South Wales* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2015), 26.

26 Hill, *Convict Colony*, 141.

27 Hill, *Convict Colony*, 141–43.

28 Hill, *Convict Colony*, 141.

29 Grace Karskens, *The Rocks* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 1998), 77.

30 G. P. Walsh, 'Reibey, Mary (1777–1855)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, adb.anu.edu.au/biography/reibey-mary-2583/text3539, published first in hardcopy 1967, accessed online 12 January 2020.

faced by European women in colonial Australia, Hill demonstrates the precarious nature of the early colony and the challenges faced by all who were involved.

In *Convict Colony*, David Hill has told the ‘remarkable story of the fledgling settlement that survived against the odds’ in a clear and interesting manner.³¹ As Frost argued, the venture to establish a colony in New South Wales was a ‘scheme that carried considerable risks’ but that nonetheless succeeded ‘despite the early difficulties’.³² With an easily digestible writing style that is complemented by regular extracts from detailed primary sources, Hill examines Australia’s colonial history in a way that provides the reader with a comprehensive overview of the ‘early difficulties’ hinted at by Frost. In doing so, he brings together several well-known aspects of this period and integrates them with subject areas of interest to current historians to produce a holistic and contemporary history of this period.

Just as this book looks back at Australia’s colonial history, so too will its intended audience. The 250th anniversary of Cook’s arrival and the continuation of the ‘Change the Date’ campaign will no doubt cause many Australians to reflect on the nation’s colonial past. The timely publication of *Convict Colony*, written as a popular history, will help to ensure that a wide audience is better informed of the complex history that underlies these events.

31 Hill, *Convict Colony*.

32 Frost, *Botany Bay*, 227.

Contributors

Jessica Urwin	PhD candidate in the School of History at ANU.
Madalyn Grant	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and Bachelor of Archaeological Practices student at ANU.
Tandee Wang	Bachelor of Philosophy (Hons) student at ANU.
Anthony Merlino	Bachelor of Arts graduate of ANU and Research and Project Officer at Menzies School of Health Research, Darwin.
Tom Gardner	PhD candidate in the School of History at ANU.
David T. Roth	PhD graduate of the School of History at ANU.
Lucinda Janson	Bachelor of Philosophy (Hons) and Diploma of Languages graduate of ANU.
Bri McKenzie	Lecturer in History and Coordinator of the History Major at Curtin University.
Joshua Black	PhD candidate in the School of History at ANU.
Chelsie Baldwin	Fourth-year Bachelor of Art History and Curatorship student at ANU.
Keeley Adams	Bachelor of Arts graduate of ANU.
Lucinda Fretwell	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and Bachelor of European Studies graduate of ANU.
Tim Rowse	Emeritus Professor at the Institute for Culture and Society, Western Sydney University, and Editorial Fellow in the National Centre for Biography, ANU.
Carroll Pursell	Adjunct Professor in the School of History at ANU.
David Farber	Roy A. Roberts Distinguished Professor at the University of Kansas.
Ben Silverstein	Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the School of History at ANU.
Emma Cupitt	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) graduate of ANU.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Clare Parker | Visiting Research Fellow in History at the University of Adelaide. |
| Margaret Harris | PhD graduate of Monash University. |
| Matthew Cunneen | Fourth-year Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Politics, Philosophy and Economics student at ANU. |



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The Australian National University
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Email: anupress@anu.edu.au

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ANU Historical Journal II
Coombs Building (9)
School of History
The Australian National University
Acton, ACT, 2601
anuhj@anu.edu.au

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