

# 1. A 'Roaring Decade': Listening to the Australian gold-fields

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Unlike lions or trade winds, decades do not, in general, roar. An obvious exception is the 1920s. The roar of the Twenties came from new technologies such as radio and talking pictures, new art forms such as jazz, a more strident and intense urbanism and new personal freedoms. Sound was listened to as inescapable and affirmative, the language of machines, experiment, consumption, pleasure. Except for such rare cases, it is not sufficiently appreciated how our experience of sound influences our interpretation of time. The notion of the 'Roaring Twenties' is, to be sure, a metaphor, but historians and other social analysts have not been sensitive enough to time's aural dimension. Certain periods have an intensity of change linked to popular experience that is aural as much or more than it is visual. We must therefore explore 'aural time': the conceptualisation and periodising of history according not merely to visual and material changes reflected in documents and artefacts but to the experience of sound.

The deeper exploration of aural time casts light on the nature of modernity. Cultural critics have taken the intrusion of industrial sound as part of the distinctive contribution of the 1920s and of the movement of modernity.<sup>1</sup> Historians of Australia can provide a different perspective. What if these ideas of the link between sound as a revolutionary signifier of modernity were applied to key changes in Australian society?

Certainly, the experience of sound in pre-industrial society was different from modern technological civilisation. Much attention has been devoted to the sound-scapes of traditional European society, while the models of modernity assumed for Europe do not necessarily work for Australia.<sup>2</sup> There were, and are, multiple modernities and the coming of the new was a protracted, uneven and problematic process. In some senses, at least, the 1920s relived much earlier historical experiences of sound as rupture. Seventy years earlier, for example, in Australia, another decade also roared and, as in the 1920s, this roar was linked to new material environments and new behaviours.

This discussion listens to a range of 1850s gold-field acoustics: industrial and social noise, silence, body sound-scapes and music. I am interested in the general relationships of gold-field sounds to the emergence of modernities, the contestation over the meaning of gold-field sound-scapes and the way some sounds have been silenced or recalled as memory. The processes of absorption

increasingly involved—in recollections or immediate experiences of the gold-fields—a refusal to hear what Malcolm Gillies has called ‘alternative Australias’.<sup>3</sup> Who recalls, for example, that one of the most obvious additions to the sound-scape of colonial Australia in the gold-rush period was the ubiquitous sound of gun-fire? In this regard, I have sought to listen particularly to the silencing of guns in the ways that the gold-fields were portrayed and remembered.

Most problematic were the messages drawn by contemporaries from the gold-fields’ tumultuous auditory world. With up to 30,000 diggers on some alluvial gold-fields, large diggings were heard long before they were seen or felt. Nearing the Sofala strike, Godfrey Mundy’s companion suddenly cried, ‘Stop and listen.’ Mundy heard what he imagined was the ‘rushing of some mighty cataract’. The extraordinary noise came from stones grating on the metal sifters of 500 cradles, box-like devices designed to separate gold from the surrounding sand and gravel. So ‘unforgettable’ was the ‘uniform and ceaseless crash’ that he marvelled that it came from ‘the agency of human beings, not one of whom was visible’.<sup>4</sup> On reaching the diggings, gold-seekers heard other discordances: the clanging of picks and shovels in shafts, the wheeling of barrows, the slurp of water in thousands of gold pans. But while the diggings were acknowledged universally as a distinctive acoustic spectacle, the gold-field positioned listeners in complex and contradictory ways. Even the diggings’ industrial sound-scape produced, for example, the same deep ambivalences of the larger gold-rush period. For some listeners, the sonic intensity spurred a positive revaluation of the natural sound-scapes of Australia, a desire to escape not from, but into, the quiet of the natural world. Ellen Clacy and her brother eagerly left the gold-field one Sunday morning intent on wandering into spots ‘where the sound of the pick and shovel, or the noise of human traffic, had never penetrated’. They found the scene ‘harmonious, majestic, and serene’. The mighty forests ‘hushed in a sombre and awful silence’ and the ‘soft still air’ led Clacy ‘from the contemplation of nature to worship nature’s God’.<sup>5</sup> As he left the diggings, Thomas McCombie heard the ‘sounds of riot and debauchery’ die gradually away and he entered ‘with pleasure, the open glades of the forest, where not a sound was to be heard’.<sup>6</sup> For some, even the ‘sharp wiry notes’ of some of Australia’s more dissonant birds sounded ‘far more agreeable than the barking of dogs and the swearing of diggers’.<sup>7</sup> While hardly congruent with modernity’s rejection of naturalism, this change in environmental sensibility was an important emotional and aesthetic progression in the inscription of value on Australian landscapes.

Acoustically, modernity gained definition by the continual creation of new silences as well as new sounds. In the 1920s, for example, Paris was depicted popularly and simultaneously as an icon of the roaring decade and as ‘a quiet

and uneventful village', the two discourses so integral to each other as to collapse the dichotomy between avant and rearguard, modernity and reactionary modernism.<sup>8</sup> In the 1850s Victorian gold-fields, we can listen to an earlier working out of this interplay. Because of the tight knit between acoustic and social calm, the din of gold did promote a backwards listening, an idealising of the imagined quiet and order of pre-modern pastoral sound-scapes. But there was no retrospectivity in the way gold-fields' cacophony retuned the colonial ear to hear new meaning in one of the most ubiquitous and troubling aspects of colonial Australia: the gnawing silence of the land.<sup>9</sup> Explorers had heard this silence as void, a corrosive muteness that mocked the psyche's search for meaning. But this was a silence of the mind and, when heard in contrast with the bedlam of the gold-field, men and women found in this apparent noiselessness a source of uplift. In silence, they now heard not emptiness but moral, aesthetic and even spiritual affirmation.

If the once corrosive silence of the bush was transformed, for some, into a sound-scape of refuge and uplift, it is clear that not everyone listened to the noise of gold-seeking as nuisance or discordance. For many, mining was an aesthetically satisfying acoustic. The 'sound most pleasing to the digger's ear was the rattle of the cradle as it rocks'<sup>10</sup> 'It's great to listen to the miner's cradle, rattle, rattle from side to side,' remarked one adventurous female digger, '...and with anticipation wonder if there is gold at the bottom of it all.'<sup>11</sup> An immediate explanation was that gold-seeking represented the satisfying sounds of human enterprise. But the frenetic activity at the auction rooms in Ballarat evoked images of 'dreadful hubbub'<sup>12</sup> and there was not much about gold-seeking that resembled the idealised acoustics of manufacture, the 'quiet, plodding' spirit of 'regularly rewarded industry'.<sup>13</sup> Rather, the relentless acoustic of alluvial mining was heard as opportunity, as evidence that the economic and moral trajectory of the nineteenth-century economy could be release. The miner was an independent labourer who gained rewards through hard but mostly honest toil and owned the wealth he produced. So every rattle, every shake, chorused the possibility of individual transformation, of an escape from destiny to freedom.

For many visitors to the gold-fields, the most audible noise was not, however, the deafening crash of the miners' cradles but the social sound-scape. The meaning of this sound-scape was contested especially with conservative listeners likely to hear only a moral din that pointed to deepening social degeneracies: alcoholism, collapsing domesticity, godlessness and avarice. But whether listeners were censorious or approving, the gold-fields were heard as a modernity in which the auditory environment signalled less a technological transformation than a re-engineering of the sound-scapes of the self. As economic independence translated into social independence, and migration loosened customary bonds, linguistic and bodily behaviours were redrawn. Like the search for gold, this

independence required announcement, a public claim. The much commented on prevalence of blunt greetings, swearing, rude jests, plain speech, hearty laughter and loud, direct, unapologetic conversation on the gold-fields record the extent to which the digger staked out a newly perceived autonomy by democratising the realm of sound.<sup>14</sup>

A number of historians have paid attention to the politics of language in early colonial Australia. The demographic and economic disorder of the 1850s gold-fields created the circumstances for an intense experiment with sound, propriety and power. Not only was a once essentially transgressive use of language and acoustic gesture increasingly assimilated into individual behaviour, the instability of aural relationships contributed to the 'problem of the diggings'. The infamous licence hunts revolved around a succession of acoustic gestures in which miners and police played out notions of law and legitimate resistance in a vivid theatre of sound.<sup>15</sup> Within the diggings, the law enforcers, in particular, seem to have envisaged their duties as aural combat. 'To perform their duty quietly,' one of the gold commissioners subsequently remarked of the diggings police, 'without bouncing, bullying and swearing at everyone; to ask a man quietly whether he had a licence was out of the question, it must be accompanied by some low life expression.'<sup>16</sup> The lack of respect for police on the diggings and the problems this posed were tied intimately to the law enforcer's own disruptive sound-scapes. In Victoria, conflict was as surely rooted in the contest over aurally constructed systems of deference and hierarchy as in the government's administration of the diggings.

In the preference for clear, functional and direct sound, the diggings' acoustic etiquette was characterised by qualities integral to the modernising of the social landscape and the self as sound. But while the 1920s increasingly constructed choice, consumption and desire through auditory cultures, the 1850s meshed sound, liberty and subjectivity in a more elemental relationship. From the miner's point of view, acoustic freedom was heard as part of the Enlightenment's rights discourse and din was inherent in the transition to the broad spectrum of democratic forms. In this, the roar of the gold-fields resembled the auditory conflicts of the revolutionary era as much as the dissolutions of the Twenties. For a time in the 1760s and 1770s, American colonists, for example, similarly demanded that 'the elocution of gentlemen was to be replaced...by the genuineness and candour of common speech'.<sup>17</sup> For a time, at least, this assertion of the 'plain language of free men'<sup>18</sup> was fundamental to the search for a revolutionary sensory model that could sustain the claims for republican citizenship.

In different historical circumstances, gold-field diggers also sought to define the acoustic personality and aural culture required of a free economic, as much as political, man. The importance attached to the acoustic assertion of a more

aggressive and self-conscious citizenship is measured not only by the diggers' words and body language but by a continual resort to aural props that gave the digger's 'voice' additional authority and menace. As much as through the adoption of more direct forms of speech and auditory gesture, it was these strategies for extending the physical limits of voice that amplified gold-field experiments with the emancipation of the self.

Every digging, for example, was marked by the prevalence of 'hosts of mongrel dogs of the most noisy and snappish breed'. Memories of incessant dog barking survive in all reminiscences of 1850s gold-seekers and the impact of this canine artillery was clear. The uncompromising blend of viciousness and volume not only made the dogs useful security guards as well as companions but, in a world where the barriers between the public and private were flimsy, dog barks were more effectual than tent walls in defining and enlarging the sense of private space. A dog's bark was a sonic barrier, the breach of which was trespass. The ownership of these dogs was also part of the diggers' usurpation of the trappings of gentility since, for centuries, dog-keeping formed part of aristocratic culture.<sup>19</sup> While visitors often found the yapping intensely aggravating, from the diggers' point of view the barking of dogs was a noise resonant with ambivalence, an admission of insecurity and loneliness and a belligerent enactment of new autonomy.

The most crucial item in a miner's sonic ammunition was not, however, barking dogs but guns. Although every gold-field resounded with the sound of gun-fire, posterity's image of the gold digger in a cabbage-tree hat, intently bent over a gold pan, blots out the centrality of firearms. Antoine Fauchery noted that every digger was 'armed to the teeth'.<sup>20</sup> John Sherer advised his Old World readers that 'pistols—deadly revolvers—ought to be the companion of all emigrant diggers'.<sup>21</sup> Like many gold-seekers, Arthur Polehampton regretted that he had not brought several dozen ordinary pistols with him since he could have sold them for a substantial profit. Many new arrivals were, he observed, armed to such an extent 'that they might very easily have been mistaken for bushrangers'.<sup>22</sup> Though many firearms were expensive and in short supply, the less-efficient 'miner's pistol' could be bought for 5/6d. Imported from Belgium, this single-fire gun could be loaded with ball, pebble, shot or stones. Many miners carried such pistols stuck in their belts though Americans were more likely to sport Colt 45s.<sup>23</sup> Since theft was common and crime widespread, firearms offered the digger protection and defence from the ubiquitous fear of robbery.

The prevalence of guns explains one of the most characteristic sounds of Australia's gold-field: the discharge of guns every evening. This ritual fusillade began with occasional shots, growing in intensity until the sound more resembled flanking fire. The 'perpetual thunder' lasted well into the night until, eventually,

the shots became more widely spaced, finally ceasing, as it began, with occasional discharges.<sup>24</sup> The practice ('as if Royal Princes were being incessantly born')<sup>25</sup> also gave the diggings a decidedly military air. One observer noted: '[A] stranger coming to the mines at night would fancy that he was approaching a battle-field. The numerous groups of armed men congregated around their camp-fires, and the incessant rattle of discharging arms for hours together, form no bad emblem of a war-scene.'<sup>26</sup> Fauchery considered that every evening during this 'veritable insurrection', the diggers fired more rifle and pistol shots than were fired in the European revolutions of July 1830.<sup>27</sup>

There was a utilitarian explanation of this practice. Guns were fired and reloaded in order to keep them clean and functioning. William Howitt, however, thought that, except in rainy weather, the powder was unlikely to become damp and found just as convincing the idea that the diggers, like children, were simply 'immensely delighted with the noise of gun-powder'. The 'abominable' din was, he believed, simply 'for the sake of noise', a view bolstered with claims that, in the Old World, very few of the diggers would have ever handled a gun. Here, however, they all had them and 'are out, and firing at everything they see'.<sup>28</sup>

Howitt was not alone in this assessment. Seweryn Korzelinski likewise thought the firing away of old cartridge and reloading a 'superfluous activity' if the arms were kept dry. In an environment where gold-seekers were drawn from the four corners of the globe, shooting seemed more about unambiguously announcing to robbers that there was a gun in the tent or, alternatively, of manufacturing Dutch courage, self-assurance from the need to worry about an assault.<sup>29</sup> But the practice made Miska Hauser uncomfortable as—like Howitt—he considered many diggers were 'dilettantes' with no more experience with firearms than he had with changing babies. Hauser also regretted the diggers' propensity to fire randomly in all directions, including into miners' tents—a practice that had resulted in sleeping miners being killed by stray bullets.

An enchantment with gun-fire pervaded the Australian gold-fields of the 1850s. Men traditionally precluded from the ownership of firearms exulted in their possession of an object once so firmly associated with aristocratic culture. Many diggers' guns hardly rated as reliable armaments and this also encouraged the theatrical use of firearms. Guns became most valuable as sound, as a ritualised auditory demonstration of the way in which gold renegotiated deference and independence. Amid the linguistic and cultural diversity of the gold-fields, gun-fire functioned as a shared language, serving as a militarisation of private voice and also as evidence that the highly individualised voices of the gold-field could coalesce into a community of independent speakers. But gun-fire was more than a rival expression of authority, a refusal to accept subordination. Like other acoustic gestures, the theatre of gun-fire, in privatising the display of power, underscored the gold-field as an experimental democracy of sound. It is no

wonder that visitors explicitly compared the diggings with such emblematic sites of sonic disorder as Pandemonium, Hades, Bedlam and the Greenwich and Donnybrook Fairs.

In the shifting, socially diverse but visually homogenous world of the gold-fields, modernity's sensory hierarchy was disrupted. In communicating conceptions of self and society, community and difference, sight surrendered primacy to sound. Yet the sound-scape was tumultuous. Theorists sometimes claim that, unlike the eye, the ear is an indiscriminate receptor. But to hear sound as social knowledge, the gold-field's resident had to engage in a good deal of selective listening. A character in the gold-rush novel *Clara Morison* observed, for example, that voice 'is the great means of recognition all over the diggings'.<sup>30</sup> While this sound became the most immediate source of information about a man or woman's background, sound—organised as music—also became crucial in the search for meaning. On one level, music functioned as community. The much remarked on nightly camp-fire songs provided release from the patent monotony and frustration of mining life and, like gun-fire, gained currency as a democratic acoustic. Because diggers often congregated in national groups, gold-field songs and instrumental music were also listened to as a way of narrating difference. Within a culture marked by fragmentation and dislocation, music was heard to speak of origins and the result was a sonic delineation of identity in which listening was sometimes tied to imaginings of race but, more often, to a construction of identity in which the tribal and national were fused. Gold-field music was thus heard as a diasporic sound in which nationality was frequently more audible than tune. But in this listening, the dissonance of nations could also be harmonised to represent less difference or conflict than the auralities of a possible future cosmopolitanism.

The capacity of music to organise subjectivity<sup>31</sup> made music an acute barometer of the tension between abandonment and belonging inherent in many nineteenth-century and colonial explorations of identity. Returning to his tent in Kangaroo Gully, W. Craig listened to a song that touched him deeply. A party of four miners sat around their camp-fire, one of their number singing the latest popular ballad, *Ben Bolt of the Salt Sea Wave*. The miner sang feelingly in a deep, rich voice that reverberated through the gullies of Bendigo:

There's a change in the things that we loved, Ben Bolt;  
There's a change from the old to the new.

Fifty years later, Craig remembered the moment:

Of all the crowd that assembled then  
There's only you, mate, and I.<sup>32</sup>

In this song, the wider meaning of gold-field independence sounded most acutely. Old securities and relationships fell away suddenly and in their place was the

aloneness of each digger. Of course, not all the music on the gold-fields came from miners in their tents. Against the nostalgic assertions of lost folk communities, commercial musicians such as Charles Thatcher commodified new colonial identities through songs that fused gold-seeking and colonial experience, sound and place. Miners could, however, be an unsympathetic audience. When the violinist Miska Hauser, whose violinist father was a friend of Beethoven, visited Australia, his concerts at Ballarat produced noisy disapproval whenever he departed from the anticipated repertoire: *Carnival*, *My Little Bird* and *The Song of Tahiti*.<sup>33</sup> For all the talk of digger independence, there also operated a vicious exclusionary ethic that demanded conformity to certain aural (and visual) practices that gave identity to miners as a group.

Sounds provided not only the architecture of identity on every diggings, but much of the substance of gold as memory. Poems, short stories, a television series and the recent musical *Eureka!* recapture the 1850s as a decade in which sound was essence (the most evocative aspect of the TV series was the theme music). Typical of early acoustic memorialisation is Henry Lawson's short story *Golden Gully*, published in 1887. More than the gold had gone from the gully. 'The "predominant note" of the scene' was a 'painful sense of listening, that never seemed to lose its tension, a listening as though for the sounds of digger life, sounds that had gone and left a void that was intensified by the signs of a former presence'.<sup>34</sup> In Lawson's recollection of the gold-fields, the visible evidence of the rush remained but could not be understood without the lost sound-scape. Without sound, neither memory nor the viewer could truly perceive.

Since sound was more transitory than image it seems likely that, in Australia and California, the 'very early appearance of nostalgia for the days of gold'<sup>35</sup> was tied specifically to recognition of aural change so extensive that it ranged from environmental sound to language. When Mark Twain visited Ballarat 45 years after the great rushes, he noted that a post-gold process of linguistic cleansing had produced 'Ballarat English', a speech free from Americanisms, vulgarisms or any kind of emphasis.<sup>36</sup> Like the 1920s, the gold-fields roared louder and more vividly because the years immediately following were listened to as a quieter and leaner acoustic time. As an affirmative site of acoustic memory, the gold-fields became notable for symbolising not the paradigmatic yearning for a vanished rural quiet but for an alternative rather than counter urbanism. This was a world of dense and constant sound in which the incompatibility of men and machine dissolved, listening realigned with possibility and the solitary introspective voice existed within a fellowship of sound, a multiplicity of voices, yet each distinct, each capable of being heard.

It is a further irony that when historians re-listened to the gold-fields they remained silent about a range of sounds. Among historians, the gold-fields were constructed through numerous acoustic omissions in relation to alternative



sound-scapes—including race, environment and gender—but one of the most provocative examples of subsequent historical deafness is, arguably, the silencing of gun-fire. In historical writing, this sound was virtually forgotten. For example, 1963 saw the publication of Geoffrey Serle's *The Golden Age*, which was and is the major work on Australia's gold-rush period. The book contains no index entry for guns and only fleeting textual references. The same year saw a new edition of the *Australian Encyclopedia*. This impressively comprehensive publication contains no entry on guns or firearms. *Gold Seeking*, David Goodman's revisionist 1994 study, pays even less attention to this subject, while the 2001 work *Gold: Forgotten Histories and Lost Objects of Australia*<sup>37</sup> sustains historical amnesia on the topic. An unashamed gun lobbyist has produced the only explicit if essentially amateur work on gold and firearms.<sup>38</sup>

Nor does the subsequent attention to Eureka contradict this general acoustic amnesia. Despite later songs and poems, it is telling that this rare instance of armed and fatal resistance to the colonial state has been assimilated into memory so strongly as sight not sound, as the image of the Eureka flag. To the extent that Eureka's gun-fire remains part of historians' accounts it is because of its exceptional status, its association with bloodshed. The deeper sounds of Eureka are, however, related less to the romance of nation than to Australia's evolution as an English polity. Unlike the Americans and some Europeans, the English were a disarmed people.<sup>39</sup> Australian history was similarly heard as free of any acoustic glorification of an armed citizenry able to act outside the State. In this highly strategic listening, gun-fire, in particular, was later remembered largely in moments when it could be sanctified, as with the distant shell-fire of World War I, as national sound. Though bursts of gun-fire could also be heard among the criminally inclined, gold-rush evidence of a larger acoustic narrative relating guns, an incipient individual rights culture and violence to the emergence of the nation was virtually extinguished.

Inevitably, the relationship between gold-rush sound and modernity is imprecise. Resonances of future technological sound-scapes were stronger when deep shaft-mining came to predominate, bringing the throb of steam engines to the gold-fields and mine whistles to mark shift changes. Alluvial mining was more acoustically ambiguous since the tools were relatively primitive, often dependent on muscle power and, in some cases, still tied to the cycle of human breath. And, after work had ceased, one of the most dominant sounds on an alluvial gold-field was, as in pre-industrial times, the human voice. It was the silencing of these voices, of a sense of acoustic community, that made many memories of the golden era so melancholy. Although modernity's separation of work and play was also heard on the diggings, the sounds of play remained linked to a time when amusement was more out-of-doors, communal and self-made. Diggers created most of their entertainment and music-making remained central to entertainment. But, in opposition to the piano in the parlour—the iconic symbol of

nineteenth-century domestic music—the gold-field was a world in which flutes and accordions predominated. These were instruments of less settled and technologically simpler societies and, in many ways, the sound-scape of the diggings clearly hark back to nomadism. Yet, this wandering now took place in a genuinely global context and the acoustic tensions between individualism, community and state, fragment and core, ephemerality and permanence were heard on every diggings. In this, and other ways, the gold-fields' sound-scapes were tied most closely to the emotional history of modernity.

The 1920s roared because of the decade's relationship to the immediate past as well as to coming sounds, especially those of the Great Depression. Instead of the gun-fire of World War I—the sound of death, destruction and human sacrifice—came the sounds of technologies of pleasure. The 1850s roar gained resonance from contrast with the harsh and disciplining sound regimes of the preceding convict era. But the roar of the 1850s came also from a heady experiment with the senses. In diverse ways, the gold-fields' private and public sound-scapes became agents for an exploration of modernity's emerging 'rights' culture and also its slowly deepening preoccupation with subjectivity. Acoustically, the 1850s did encourage a new hearing of the silences of Australia but, on the gold-fields, human and manufactured noise was also, for a short while, not only celebrated but aestheticised as freedom. Then, as in the infant American republic, there was a return to moderation and sedateness as conservatives reasserted the virtues of tranquillity. Peter Hoffer has drawn attention to the ways in which, in the United States, social sounds were homogenised and flattened and discourse desensitised.<sup>40</sup> In post-1850s gold-rush Australia, incipient colonial democracies no longer clanked with convict chains but acoustic fetters now bound more tightly the impulse for social experiment and especially the embrace of individualism, the privileging of personal liberty above collective stability as social good.<sup>41</sup>

This chapter is a small part of a larger study of sound in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Australia. Many further questions—about the relationship between gender, gold and sound, for example—could be asked. But it is clear that, in gold's roaring decade, sound and history stood in a close relationship. In this decade, the meaning of 'modern' time was both ruptured and intensified by sound. Some commentators have argued against too glib an equation between modernity and the uninterrupted privileging of the visual. This argument is drawn from technological evidence. The emergence and development of loud artillery and a myriad inventions such as the telephone, gramophone, subway train and automobile are offered as proof of the primacy of the aural in some modern periods, such as the years between 1870 and 1914.<sup>42</sup> While there is much to persuade in this analysis, such an approach neglects the impact of other types of social change. In gold-rush Australia, mineral discovery proved as

powerful as loudspeakers or electric motors in challenging and advancing modernity and its imagined relationship to the senses.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Thompson, Emily 2002, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America 1900–1933*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., and London; Erlmann, Veit (ed.) 2004, *Hearing Cultures: Essays on Sound, Listening and Modernity*, Berg, Oxford and New York; Morton, David 2000, *Off the Record: The Technology and Culture of Sound Recording in America*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ, and London; Golan, Romy 1995, *Modernity and Nostalgia: art and politics in France between the wars*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London.

<sup>2</sup> On Euro–American sound-scapes, see Corbin, Alain 1998, *Village Bells: Sound and Meaning in the Nineteenth-Century French Countryside*, Columbia University Press, New York; Smith, Bruce 1999, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-factor*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago; Schmidt, Eric Leigh 2000, *Hearing Things: Religion, Illusion and the American Enlightenment*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.; Smith, Mark M. 2001, *Listening to Nineteenth-Century America*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill and London; Rath, Richard Cullen 2003, *How Early America Sounded*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London; Hoffer, Peter Charles 2003, *Sensory Worlds in Early America*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London; White, Shane and White, Graham 2005, *The Sounds of Slavery: discovering African American history through songs, sermons and speech*, Beacon Press, Boston.

<sup>3</sup> Gillies, Malcolm 2001, 'Alternative Australias: Fates and Fortunes', *Proceedings of the Australian Academy of the Humanities*, Canberra, pp. 134–50, at p. 142.

<sup>4</sup> Mundy, Godfrey Charles 1853, *Our Antipodes: or residence and rambles in the Australasian Colonies*, 3 vols, Vol. 3, Richard Bentley, London, pp. 369–70.

<sup>5</sup> Clacy, Mrs Charles [Ellen] 1963, *A Lady's Visit to the Gold Diggings of Australia in 1852–53*, Landsdowne Press, Melbourne, first published 1853, p. 72.

<sup>6</sup> McCombie, Thomas 1861, *Australian Sketches*, W. Johnson, London, p. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Howitt, William 1972, *Land Labour and Gold*, Lowden, Kilmore, first published 1855, pp. 269–70.

<sup>8</sup> Golan, *Modernity and Nostalgia*.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Collins, Diane 2006, 'Acoustic journeys: exploration and the search for an aural history of Australia', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 37, pp. 1–17.

<sup>10</sup> Sherer, John (ed.) 1973, *The Gold Finder of Australia*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, first published 1853, pp. 39, 35.

<sup>11</sup> Tyler, Mary Ann 1985, *The Adventurous Memoirs of a Gold Diggeress, 1841–1904*, published privately by Kate Gibbs, p. 38.

<sup>12</sup> Hauser, Miska 1988, *Letters from Australia 1854–1858*, edited by Colin Roderick and Hugh Anderson, Red Rooster Press, Maryborough (Vic.), p. 61.

<sup>13</sup> Kelly, William 1977, *Life in Victoria*, Vol. 1, Lowden, Kilmore, first published 1859, p. 38.

<sup>14</sup> Sherer, *The Gold Finder of Australia*, p. 75.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, *Among the Diggers* 1999, Ballarat Heritage Service, Ballarat, p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> Read, Charles Rusdon in Geoffrey Serle 1963, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria 1851–1861*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, p. 99.

<sup>17</sup> Hoffer, *Sensory Worlds in Early America*, p. 242.

<sup>18</sup> John Dickinson, 1781, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 224.

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of dogs and European culture in the nineteenth century, see: Kete, Kathleen 1994, *The Beast in the Boudoir: Pet Keeping in Nineteenth-Century Paris*, University of California Press, Berkeley; Ritvo, Harriet 1987, *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.

<sup>20</sup> Fauchery, Antoine 1965, *Letters from a Miner in Australia*, Georgian House, Melbourne, first published 1857, p. 53.

<sup>21</sup> Sherer, *The Gold Finder of Australia*, p. 173.

<sup>22</sup> Penzig, Edgar 1993, *Guns and Gold: Stories, Artifacts and Crime on the Australian Diggings 1850–1900*, Tranter Enterprises, Katoomba, p. 45.

- <sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 13.
- <sup>24</sup> Hauser, *Letters from Australia 1854–1858*, pp. 64–6; Howitt, *Land Labour and Gold*, p. 188.
- <sup>25</sup> Burchett, F. quoted in Serle, *The Golden Age*, p. 79.
- <sup>26</sup> Sherer, *The Gold Finder of Australia*, p. 182.
- <sup>27</sup> Fauchery, *Letters from a Miner in Australia*, p. 53.
- <sup>28</sup> Howitt, *Land Labour and Gold*, pp. 188–9.
- <sup>29</sup> Korzelinski, Seweryn 1979, *Memoirs of Gold-Digging in Australia*, edited by Stanley Robe, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, p. 64.
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- <sup>31</sup> Steinberg, Michael P. 2004, *Listening to Reason: Culture, Subjectivity and Nineteenth Century Music*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford.
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- <sup>33</sup> Hauser, *Letters from Australia 1854–1858*, p. 67.
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- <sup>40</sup> Hoffer, *Sensory Worlds in Early America*, pp. 243–4.
- <sup>41</sup> For a discussion of the re-quietening of Australia see Goodman, *Gold Seeking in Victoria and California in the 1850s*.
- <sup>42</sup> See, for example, Schwartz, Hillel 2003, 'The Indefensible Ear: A History', in Michael Bull and Les Black (eds), *The Auditory Culture Reader*, Berg, Oxford and New York, pp. 487–501.