

**CELEBRATING INDEPENDENT THOUGHT
ISAA TWENTY YEARS ON**

2015 CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

INDEPENDENT SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC

Celebrating Independent Thought: ISAA Twenty Years On

2015 Conference Proceedings

Independent Scholars Association of Australia Inc

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Note on cover image: *This old river red gum near Wilpena Pound in the Flinders Ranges was photographed by prominent Australian photographer Harold Cazneaux, who made the well-known and popular photographic print 'Spirit of Endurance' in 1937, included in most histories of Australian photography. The tree and its location have attracted many artists over the years, including Hans Heysen, all seeking what they regarded as a uniquely Australian visual experience. Cazneaux's spirit of artistic independence is evident in his final print of the old tree because he actually reversed the negative, feeling this made a much better picture. This photograph by Catherine Rogers (2013) shows the same, older, tree in the landscape, not horizontally reversed as Cazneaux imaged it, but as visitors today see it, albeit from behind a fence.*

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Views expressed in these papers are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the editor or by ISAA.

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Independence is a two-edged word which can mean isolation as well as freedom.
—Pringle¹

The Independent Scholars Association of Australia, founded in 1995 through the initiative of Ann Moyal and support of David Headon, aims and has served to mitigate the isolation and enhance the freedom of an Australia-wide diaspora of individuals researching and writing outside the support of academe and other institutional structures. The 2015 ISAA Annual Conference, held in Canberra at the National Library of Australia on 1 and 2 October, began with a panel session where founding members reflected on twenty years of the Association. As recorded in these published proceedings, Gretchen Poiner and Auriol Weigold noted that belonging to the Association has brought them welcome friendship and a sense of collegiality, while Doug Cocks and Mike Austin observed that ISAA activities have provided horizon-extending introduction to ideas and investigations outside their particular disciplines and fields of research.

The other side of the coin, freedom—for independent scholars to express views and research findings independently of external influence, authority and control—has been enhanced through the activities organised by local chapters and groups formed in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne, through the twice-yearly *ISAA Review* and, not least, through presentations to the national Annual Conference and the subsequent publication of the proceedings. In line with one of ISAA's stated purposes, namely, the 'supporting knowledgeable dissent and independent opinion', more active participation in public debate in addition to the established outlets for expression is being advocated by a number of members, including panellists Gretchen Poiner, Doug Cocks and Mike Austin, who spoke on this lively and as yet unresolved matter.

As demonstrated in this volume, the 2015 Conference speakers explored the theme, 'Celebrating Independent Thought', in individual, group, national and international contexts, with the presenters themselves

¹ John Pringle, *Australian Accent*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1958, p. 170.

displaying incisive, critical, frequently dissenting thought. All ten papers presented are included here with minimal changes, preceded by summary notes of the (unrecorded) Conference Annual Lecture, 'Independence and Integrity in the Public Domain', delivered by Professor Julian Disney AO. His strong endorsement of contributions from scholars outside institutions and industries accompanies his broad canvassing of multifarious threats to independence, serving to emphasise that it is not simply a given, passive condition of 'freedom from/freedom' to but a stance requiring vigilant, assertive integrity.

Four essays in this volume each deal with the life and achievements of an independent individual—one man, three women. My 'case study in the pluses and minuses of being independent', looks at autocratic, innovating David Syme, chiefly responsible for making the Melbourne *Age* a leading daily newspaper of the British Empire. Patricia Clarke's study of Flora Shaw, another nineteenth-century journalist, shows how this female English roving correspondent for *The Times* of London (her travels included Australian colonies), 'broke through gender barriers to gain financial independence and influence'. Another independent woman to challenge gender roles of the time, and suffer for it, was botanist Sarah Hynes, shown here by Christine Yeats to have made a valuable contribution to botanical studies and have a 'well earned place in the pantheon of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Australian feminists'.

Moving to today's world, Susan Steggall's illustrated exposition examines the 'photographic scholarship' of Catherine Rogers, showing her powerful pictorial commentary to range 'across environmental, social and aesthetic concerns' and reminding that Rogers has, for the past five years, produced singularly appropriate cover images for ISAA publications.

A different take on feminism is provided by Ian Willis. Examining Red Cross activities during World War I and acknowledging the important contributions from the home front, he argues that while women Australia-wide were joining and working for the organisation and thus independently exercising their agency outside their given domestic sphere, this voluntarism was an extension of the ideology of 'ministering angel' and motherhood, that has been termed maternal feminism.

Three essays focus, in socio-historical contexts, on independent ideas. Julie Marcus ventures into a sensitive area, propounding a view alternative to received attitudes and thus exemplifying Disney's injunction to be 'willing to disclose unwelcome facts and express unpopular views'. She outlines, in a historical context, infanticide as a crime, juxtaposes this with observations of pre-assimilation indigenous practices of infanticide that she interprets and explains as socially responsible rather than barbaric, presents cases in contemporary Australian society that call for compassion rather than condemnation, and implies and argues for decriminalisation under Australian law today.

Glenn Burns takes a considered look at the Japanese people today, through his sampling and surveying finding the opposite of independence in expressed attitudes and behaviour—a subservience to authority that would equate with Disney's warning about 'blind adherence to dogma', and which, Burns argues, has inhibited economic and social progress.

Stephen Horn presents an independent, philosophically grounded, historical view of contemporary instability in the Middle East, relating it to Iran's Islamic Revolution of 1979, and discussing models of war and peace that represent if not fully explain these events.

Light-hearted by contrast, Bernadette Hince's essay relates her experiences as an unauthorised and unfinanced (but ultimately successful) dictionary-maker, providing a window onto the life of one independent scholar, and illustrating the isolation-versus-freedom duality.

In the final essay by an independent scholar, Jim Windeyer explicitly defines his stance, independent of research support and family and academic constraints before embarking on a masterly critique of one segment of a prestigious, amply funded academic project. Under his scrutiny and with modest understatement, glaring errors, small and large are exposed, amounting to a dismal failure to measure up to several of Disney's criteria for independence and integrity in research (such as: rejection of adherence to dogma; accuracy; fairness; reliance on, in this instance, not consultancy firms but presumably insufficiently supervised delegation to research assistants). A win for independent scholarship!

Authors of the three concluding essays on 'Scholarship of the Future'

were invited speakers at the Conference. Colin Steele (on ‘Publishing Futures’) discusses the persistence of the printed book, especially the academic monograph, in the face of digital developments and associated worsening economic conditions for print, and explores the potential benefits of ‘Open Access’ monographs, being offered by some Australian university presses. Presenting evidence that that university libraries are more important than ever, Roxanne Missingham (‘The Library of the Future’), sketches several scenarios, demonstrating much scope for adapting to online and digitisation communication challenges. Based on her experience with a large-scale digital humanities project, Katherine Bode (‘Digital Scholarship Futures’) outlines challenges faced and innovative possibilities offering. All three, experts in their respective fields, provide information and opinion vital for independent scholars who, by virtue of their ‘isolation’ from institutions, may be less aware of the developments covered in this session.

ISAA in 2015 exists in a less propitious environment than at the time of its founding—‘in the midst of a decade that promised so much’, as David Headon observes in his introduction to the first session of the Conference. Nevertheless, the papers presented and essays based thereon, demonstrate that independent scholarship is alive and well, corroborating Ann Moyal’s forecast for ISAA, also expressed in the panel session—a ‘long and interesting future ahead!’

ELIZABETH MORRISON

DAVID HEADON



PANEL

REFLECTING ON TWENTY YEARS OF ISAA

Introduction

When ISAA began in the mid-1990s, twenty years ago, Australia was a different place. The world was a different place.

In our country, we were in the midst of a decade that promised so much, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and for all Australians. The Wik and (earlier) Mabo High Court decisions seemed harbingers of better times ahead, reinforced by a Murdoch press which, back then, consistently produced journalism of the highest quality on black/white relations. Paul Keating’s leadership as Prime Minister, 1993–96, characterised by several genuinely visionary speeches (especially those penned by Don Watson), created a (false) dawn that must have had independent scholars Australia-wide licking their lips at the prospect of new opportunities, new possibilities and bold new, national thinking. With the Centenary of Federation looming, an Australian republic at the forefront of public debate and an Australia Council at the peak of its mentoring powers, ISAA was formed.

Then John Howard won the 1996 election with a big majority. Ultra-cautious in his dead-hand approach to the job at first, successive election victories produced a steadily more assertive PM. It enabled him to promote a reactionary social, cultural and political agenda. The history wars began; black Australia (literally, on one occasion) turned its back on Howard; support for arts and heritage sharply declined; and we were all told, sometimes with fridge magnets, to be alert, not alarmed. Refugees were not welcome. The doors were closed.



The horror of 9/11 was a pall over just about everything, in Australia and globally. The massive demonstrations for the cause of reconciliation that took place on the city bridges of Australia in the year 2000 turned out to be the last gasp of oxygen of an era that had passed. The folly and lies of the Iraq invasion produced an altered landscape. Optimism gave way to pessimism; plans for a progressive future collapsed into the paranoia of the present. Howard was in his element, but then so too were George Bush and Tony Blair.

The good news is that we got a new National Museum. The bad news, that the first Director, Dawn Casey, found herself under immediate political pressure to tell a national story that might have played well in the 1950s—woven through white picket fences and faces, the Queen's visits and men in grim suits opening causeways—but was absurd in the more sophisticated Australia of the new millennium.

And yet despite all of this, ISAA, powered by a small, vigorous engine, found a way to survive and multiply. It needed leaders with a strong work ethic, and it got them. I have the pleasure of introducing five of them in this milestone session, a celebration of ISAA twenty years on.

PANEL

REFLECTING ON TWENTY YEARS OF ISAA

Foundations

It is great to be celebrating ISAA's twenty years of existence. As David Headon has outlined, it came into being during an intellectually challenging and interesting period. The founding of the Association in 1995 was, initially, the outcome of discussions I had with him and Patricia Clarke at the Centre for Australian Cultural Studies, which he established. I broached with these two members of the Centre my concept of a 'hidden intelligentsia' of scholars working independently, that is, outside academic and other institutional structures—scholars who, in Charles Darwin's words, were virtually 'building theories and accumulating facts in silence and solitude', and who could benefit greatly from the company of their fellows.¹

David and Pat agreed that there was a diverse body of thinkers spread over many fields—history, literature, politics, science and technology, media studies, anthropology, cultural studies, and so on—who represented a valuable part of society and were less recognised than they should be. In short, we arrived at the notion of an independent academy and began to plan for its implementation. I was fortified by a speech given by Nugget Coombs on ABC radio in that year when much was happening. He asserted that the battle of ideas was being won by 'an uncaring society with no sense of community' and that 'the intelligentsia had sold out'.

And thus, ISAA was born, with the twin goals of providing an independent academy and bringing independent scholars into the public sphere. Hence I became president and Pat Clarke the nourishing secretary for the first five years, which saw also the formation of New South Wales and ACT Chapters and a Victorian Group. One of our first members was



Phillip Adams who, for five years, interviewed me on his Late Nite Live Program immediately before the ISAA Annual Conference. Such media interest was important publicity, and we attracted 100 members at our first meeting, which we called 'Against the Grain'. Other crucial support, secured early in ISAA's history, came from the then Director-General of the National Library, Warren Horton. Convinced of the relevance of our organisation, he initiated sponsorship comprising free use of the Library Conference Room for our Annual Conference and an annual donation of \$1000 that, through his successors, has continued to this day.

We attracted a distinguished body of early members: John Mulvaney, Don Baker, Sol Encel, Judith Wright, Rosemary Dobson, Veronica Brady, Max Charlesworth, John Iremonger, Joy Hooton, John Moses and a medley of former diplomats and international scholars. The current Federal Member for Indi, Cathy McGowan, then an agricultural consultant, joined very early and is still a member. And there has been a strong flow of interesting scholars who remain with us today.

While ISAA was conceived as apolitical, our Annual Conferences embraced significant and arguably 'political' topics as 'How Free is Speech?' in 1996 and 'Downsizing and the Contended Society' in 1997.

Over the past twenty years there have been some changes to the criteria for ISAA membership. Originally, eligibility depended on publication, in some form, of work in literature, history, politics, theatre or radio—this being an attempt to define a 'working scholar'. Later the definition was extended to make ISAA more of a broad church, including 'those who are committed to and interested in scholarly ideas and critical debate'.

In conclusion I feel proud that I took the initiative in founding ISAA. In its Conference Proceedings, its *Review* and its *Newsletter*, the Association has made many contributions to the spread of ideas and debate, while for a period from 1999 ISAA offered a book prize of \$15,000.

I believe the Independent Scholars Association of Australia has a long and interesting future ahead!

PANEL

REFLECTING ON TWENTY YEARS OF ISAA

In 1995 a small and quite diverse group of people gathered in the State Library of New South Wales to hear Ann Moyal outline the proposal for establishing an independent scholars' association—one that would provide a network of support and intellectual nourishment for scholars working in relative solitude and silence outside established academic institutions.

We were variously invited to speak of our reactions to the idea. I recall reporting that I was drawn to it since it seemed to me that universities—my recent intellectual home and one I had seen as a primary locus of scholarship—had largely lost their bearings. Sad to say I still hold that belief.

At that time ISAA was already being crafted into form and soon after formally came into being. The New South Wales Chapter was born of that early meeting. Those salad days were charged with a level of energy and enthusiasm unsustainable over time but ultimately—and there were highs and lows—settled into relatively stable (but not I hope complacent) maturity. Since that first meeting my thinking about the role of ISAA has developed along more complex lines. I don't question our objectives—initially formally natted out one night at Robertson—they remain relevant and compelling. But they don't tell all, nor do I think that we should expect an elaborate credo to be spelt out.

One of our stated objectives is to foster collegiality and community, and I have observed and experienced that working well. I have made strong friendships that I value dearly. And I have been intellectually stimulated by ISAA colleagues and educated by them. But with the doors that ISAA opens comes responsibility. Another clearly stated objective is to engage in dissent. Not contrariness or mindless opposition but informed dissent.

¹ Charles Darwin, Letter to Emma Wedgewood (Darwin), 20 January 1839.

And while too many unexamined attitudes might hold scholarship as fairly arid, a reclusive past time, seemingly ungrounded, even irrelevant in daily living (just look at federal funding levels that reflect and recreate a fairly impoverished view of its social significance) scholarship has the capacity and the promise to be creative, imaginative, passionate and compassionate, and it can be courageous. In our critiques, our analyses and our narratives these are the positions from which we should speak out. I am reminded of Phillip Adams (one of our members) delivering our annual ISAA lecture; it was in 2003. He was exhorting us to speak out, always, on matters of conscience.

In this context there have been moments in ISAA's short history that have led to some dissension—a matter of the few speaking for the absent many. In themselves these have not been unhealthy debates; they do not, for a start, interfere with any actions individuals might seek to take. What ISAA can do, has done, is to bring into the public arena issues that have a moral dimension, that bear on questions of social justice, on the significance of science—issues that may be unquestioned, unexamined or perhaps essentially contested in society, some perhaps not even raised. So many of the national and state (and here I speak of New South Wales) conferences and seminars, held as public events, have had just that focus and have stimulated discussion and provoked critical thinking.

Let me remind you of some of the titles of these events that, in a sense, speak for themselves and that are heavy with potential for critical analysis. Among national conferences for example we presented 'Blurred Boundaries', 'The First Necessity: Access to Learning in the 21st Century', 'Perversions of Prejudice: How Bias Distorts', 'Language and Power' and, perhaps slightly more opaque in their titles but not in their content, the trilogy, examining the National Estate.

Even serious presentations can have their funny moments—I am reminded of how, quite early in its existence (2001) the New South Chapter organised a conference 'Relaxed, Comfortable and Stupid' (very pointedly critical) at which Barry Jones baffled us all with what was actually a logical and insightful diagram of socio-political system interactions; although at first blush it looked like spaghetti junction and triggered disbelief and

laughter—he took it well. 'Looking for Forests, Seeing Trees', 'Moral Responsibility', 'Sweet Charity' and 'People like Us: the Politics of Difference' also numbered among New South Wales conferences. These are simply selections, ISAA's record of bringing matters of what should be social conscience into the public arena is sound and scholarly. We can always do more.

I have derived a good deal of pleasure, some pain and the chance to reflect further on papers given at our conferences since, for a good many years, I have edited the Proceedings of both the national conferences and those of the New South Wales Chapter. I won't dwell on hanging clauses or errant apostrophes—they can happen to anybody—and split infinitives no longer excite attention. Revisiting the conference offerings as texts has allowed me to enjoy the ideas, appreciate the arguments and the skilful, entertaining and often riveting writing.

ISAA is something of a fringe association and, as such, has its strengths and its weaknesses. Independence, and ISAA is independent, gives a measure of licence in its activities; we are not party political but we can certainly be political. Then, while there are criteria for eligibility for membership, they are not overly prescriptive, but are open to and attract people with a range of interests and talents—some of whom might be cast as verging on the wacky. Possibly because of the wide geographic spread of ISAA members, such intellectual idiosyncrasies may be little known beyond a small local group, only coming to broader light through work produced in the *ISAA Review* or conference papers. Yet, whether we agree with them or not, these seemingly wayward perspectives, often confronting, have the potential to cause us to examine, debate, even rethink comfortable and unchallenged positions. In this they can be valuable. Not that ISAA is, or should be, a refuge for weird, vapid, sloppy, unsustainably biased thinking or quasi faith-based opinions—rather it provides an opportunity to assert intellectual independence and original thinking. Our first conference (1995) was entitled 'Against the Grain' and that registers with me as summative of ISAA's philosophic intent.

This takes me to consider the words 'scholar' and 'scholarship'. They define our purpose and character but have stood as sticking points for



some who see the message as elitist and exclusive. And perhaps there is a sense in which this can be seen as true. There are certainly cautions to be heeded in separating scholarship out as a 'chosen' mode of enquiry, a privileged activity, a kind of closed shop open only to a few. We need to guard against making it precious, self-serving and inaccessibly stuffy. I know that I am not comfortable with dictionary definitions that go along lines of 'learned' and 'erudite' and suspect that many other members might wear these descriptions uneasily. But, in the context of our Association, I am happy with the notion scholarship as the rigorous pursuit of, furthering if you like, knowledge and understanding.

Many years ago John Iremonger gave the address at a national conference dinner. He commented in his usual acerbic, provocative way (and he was speaking as a publisher) that if, as scholars, we wanted our works to attract a wider readership we had to abandon what he argued was the tedious, eye-glazing convention of appending many and lengthy footnotes. These may not have been his precise words but that was certainly the burden of his message. I can't recall if that message also included the use of scholarly jargon—the language particular to a discipline or profession that excludes the untutored, but it might well have.

From time to time we lament the grey character of ISAA. The concern is with the age profile of membership—an incontestable observation. And there are good reasons for that ageing profile. The social structure and organisation of our society—very much oriented by neo-liberal values—is such that younger people, scholars or no, are necessarily focused on advancing their education, their career and/or are thoroughly occupied with family responsibilities and obligations. They may also be financially strapped. The challenges are not ours alone. It is really only in later years that we are somewhat relieved of these pressures and can turn to membership of an association that is not aimed at focusing exclusively on the material conditions of our life and future. This is not something to lament but in which to revel.

PANEL

REFLECTING ON TWENTY YEARS OF ISAA

Always an Independent Scholar

My spell as what I regarded as 2-I-C to Gretchen when we shared the 'Presidency' seems a long time ago. Succeeding Ann and keeping ISAA on the track set seemed to be my principal task as an office bearer and member of ISAA's National Council.

Working at the University of Canberra on a part-time basis allowed me to be a member of ISAA as an associate or friend, as the then constitution permitted. Thus I enjoyed the best of both worlds—a working one and, on a research front, being something called an independent scholar. I did not then reflect on what it meant to be an independent scholar.

In recent years, since I walked away from my work as convenor of the University of Canberra's BA in International Studies in 2009, a victim of that insidious movement called 'generational change', and from a few dust ups with the university's powers that be—those that dwelt at a level well below that of the Vice-Chancellor—I have enjoyed being both a member of the alumni and an adjunct. But being in a faculty that, unfortunately, makes no demands on its erstwhile staff members, only emphasises one's independence.

In relation to the question, is one always an independent scholar? my answer is yes. Despite ISAA's aims, the friendships one forms with ISAA members, and the special pleasure of involvement with ISAA's Canberra Chapter, I nevertheless define an independent scholar as one whose scholarly work is researched, written and published as a solitary process isolated rather than collaborative.



Since completion of my doctorate, my teaching life and writing life have been firmly separated. As a historian, a discipline that sees little shared enterprise, essentially one works alone. For the Arts and Humanities disciplines are not ‘hands on’, whereas ‘scientists’ collaborate in their work and in the publication of it. It is not unusual to see maybe six authors’ names on an article in a scientific journal. This is not so for writers of history—in my experience it’s a lone occupation, delivering new shades of opinion and analysis, often on familiar events, and seldom in collaboration with anyone else. How can an independent scholar break out of his or her garret to find companionship if not collaboration?

ISAA members see each other at libraries, at talks and at events. I argue that this is companionship; independence in work remains.

My answer to the isolation of independent scholarship lies in Fellowships held in subject-compatible institutions. My Fellowships have been with the Australian Prime Ministers Centre at the Museum of Australian Democracy located at Old Parliament House and I commend this to all independent scholars who have an interest in, or a small part of the jigsaw to add to the store of knowledge about Australian prime ministers. The great merit is discussion from time to time in the very pleasant Research Library This is not collaboration, but a shared interest in prime ministers’ working lives. It means a great deal to me as an independent scholar and I commend Fellowships of which there are many available.

But one remains an independent scholar—grateful for the companionship that ISAA provides. Thanks to you, Ann.

PANEL

REFLECTING ON TWENTY YEARS OF ISAA

I have quietly enjoyed being a member of Independent Scholars for much of its life. This has largely come from the opportunities ISAA has provided to meet, talk to, listen to a considerable number of people whom I can respect personally and whose scholarship I can admire. While I don’t think ISAA has exposed me to any ideas which have ‘blown my mind’, meaning ‘restructured my world view’, I have on numerous occasions had my perceptions changed, if not dramatically, in a revelatory way as to how portions of the world work or previously worked or have changed over time. We all know that ‘Aaahaa’ feeling when previously unconnected ideas are suddenly connected or, better still, when a new idea appears unannounced. Such is the joy of scholarship.

Dipping into a kitbag stuffed with examples, let me be concrete and name several contributions which opened my eyes:

- Campbell McKnight’s introduction to the history and mechanics of the Indonesian language Bugis;
- John Moses’ several heterodox talks on German designs on Australia during the World Wars;
- Sybil Jack on the roles of various Anglo-Celtic groups in Australia’s history;
- Laila Haglund on fascist tendencies in Swedish society;
- Jill Bough on feral donkeys and why we should love and respect them.

Such a small sample. When I look back through various *Conference Proceedings* and copies of the *Review* (thanks Gretchen, Lesley, Sue and



Ian), there are so many articles I would like to read again—the ultimate accolade.

It was Alison Broinowski who enticed me into joining ISAA after I invited her to address my research group at CSIRO on what we can loosely call futurology. And it was Richard Broinowski's push to give ISAA, a bunch of mildly progressive conservatives, a more political voice which, when the dust had settled, propelled Mike Austin and me into co-chairing ISAA for several years. We tried but, in the end, and I mustn't speak for Mike, I felt we were just place-holders.

ISAA seems to be moderately healthy at the moment and that's good ... Let's enjoy it. But, like all mature institutions, we need to keep reworking ourselves—deciding what to keep and what to change. For example, it is important that ISAA continues to welcome eccentrics, provided they are not barking mad. I have learned a lot from reviewing submissions on several paradigm-challenging ideas. Ether drift theory is supposedly long dead but it turns out that there is a body of supporting evidence that has been suppressed or forgotten.¹

I am not here to make suggestions but let me leave you with just one thought bubble. Think tanks are an idea in good currency. While ISAA proper retains its serenely apolitical stance could we spin off an autonomous think tank with a name like 'Honest History', which actively advocates on political issues? We have the brains and the knowledge and the shared values. Just a thought.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dayton_Miller.

PANEL

REFLECTING ON TWENTY YEARS OF ISAA

Doug Cocks introduced me to ISAA in 2002. Since then I have enjoyed the diversity of topics presented at meetings and the scholarship brought to bear on such a diversity of subjects.

Past

My experience of these activities, my time on the National Council and briefly as president convinced me of the need for such an organisation as ISAA.

Coming from a research background publishing in scientific journals I was not aware of the difficulties facing lone independent scholars when trying to publish their work.

A classic example of what may happen even when the work is published is provided by the experience of one of our members, Peter Trickett. He published a book, *Beyond Capricorn*, arguing that the Portuguese discovered Australia in the early 1500s. The result was overly enthusiastic media hype on the one hand and dismissive treatment by academics on the other. Independent scholars deserve a fair go.¹

What internal difficulties did ISAA face in the past in achieving its aims? In my experience three problematic responses can be identified:

- a) Avoid any activity which might be considered controversial (see Council Minutes 9/8/2007);
- b) Produce public statements on issues relevant to independent scholars (see Minutes of AGM 20/10/2006);
- c) Re-orientate ISAA activities to promote narrow personal agendas.

Fortunately major conflicts between advocates of these responses were



avoided. The aims of ISAA are clear, but effective strategies to achieve those aims have yet to be developed.

Present

ISAA now is successfully maintaining services to its members but failing to expand them. I suggest there are some general problems that we should also be considering:

- a) The independence of scholars is under threat in many of our national institutions; The standards of scholarship are also in danger due to the misinformation and poor scholarship appearing on the Internet;
- b) C. P. Snow's 'Two Cultures' is still hampering communication about the problems our community faces, for example, current debates on climate change.

Future

Questions about our future need to be posed:

- a) Does the Internet offer an opportunity or a problem for achieving our aims?
- b) Are the growing numbers of retirees likely to provide a potential pool of new members?
- c) Do we need to recruit younger people, and is it possible?

ANNUAL LECTURE

INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

A SUMMARY¹

Independence in research, communication and decision-making affecting the public interest involves:

- *avoiding conflicts of interests*, whether financial or related to one's profile, status, etc. For example, conflicts were at the heart of the statements and decisions by credit rating agencies, financial institutions, stock exchanges and media pundits that triggered the global financial crisis and remain far too common in business and media circles today.
- *being willing to disclose unwelcome facts and express unpopular views*. This may require, amongst other things, risking painful disapproval by one's peer groups rather than just 'following the herd' or 'preaching to the converted'.
- *rejecting blind adherence to dogma*, such as rigid economic theories or simplistic ideologies.

Independence in these activities must also be exercised with integrity, especially:

- *accuracy*: thorough, careful stating of facts without being misleading, either by commission or omission. Expressions of opinions should be clearly presented as such rather than as facts.
- *fairness*: being as objective and even-handed as is reasonably possible and not being unnecessarily offensive. A degree of offence may sometimes be legitimate and even desirable, but it should never be gratuitous.
- *steadfastness*: persistence in the face of being ignored, misrepresented or abused. This may call for considerable courage and sacrifice of advancement.

¹ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beyond_Capricorn.

Contemporary issues of independence and integrity in the government sector include:

- *job security*: there is often not enough security in higher echelons of the public service, where it is most important to protect independent advice, and perhaps too much in the lower reaches, where incompetence and laxity can be unduly tolerated.
- *ministerial advisers*: their growing number and power (not always matched by adequately mature experience) too often displaces or coerces public servants who wish to preserve the tradition of accurate, objective and far-sighted advice to Ministers and information to the public.
- *reliance on consultancy firms*: the size of the major firms and their widespread commercial clientele create a multiplicity of conflicts of interest in the provision of advice for governments. This applies also to the access which they get to confidential government information and plans while preparing the advice.
- *freedom of information*: this very important principle must also be fairly weighed against other factors, including the danger of impeding frankness and originality in internal and external advice to decision-makers.
- *privatisation*; transfer of public functions to the private sector often removes the protection that the administrative review and ombudsmen systems can provide for users and providers of public sector services.

Independence and integrity in the media environment have become increasingly problematic.

- This is due partly to the increasing tendency for powerful publishers to have a wide range of commercial interests in other spheres, especially entertainment industries. It is also due to the severe job insecurity facing most journalists today, particularly if they diverge too widely from the views and interest of their employer.
- Many journalists and readers lament the extent to which severe financial pressures, and competition to publish first, have eroded basic values of accuracy and fairness in their publications. The ability of new digital publishers and social media to offset these problems in traditional

media is often exaggerated; indeed, they are often subject to even greater financial and competitive pressures.

- Some of these concerns are aggravated by the growing dominance of political reporting from the Press Gallery, embedded in Parliament House. It has contributed to an unhealthy intense focus on personal machinations within the building, often dependent on exchanges of favours with key sources, rather than on objective analysis of issues of greater long-term importance ‘outside the Beltway’.

Against this background, the strength, independence and integrity of other sources of research and public communication have become increasingly important. Yet independent university-based research is limited by heavier teaching loads, less secure tenure and greater pressure to secure sponsors for research projects. Accordingly, the contributions made by independent scholars outside these institutions and industries, often facilitated now by the availability and usefulness of the Internet, have become even more important to a well-functioning democracy.

¹ This summary of Professor Disney’s unrecorded address was prepared by Christine Jennett and Elizabeth Morrison, with the assistance of Professor Disney.



**‘A MAN MUST MAKE
HIS OWN DECISIONS’
THE INDEPENDENCE OF DAVID SYME,
PRESS SUPREMO**

Years spent in academe aroused research interests that I then had limited opportunity to pursue. All changed in 1997 when I became unemployed at last and my own person, an independent scholar. Independent of an employer, but absolutely not of libraries and archives, with their free access to historical documentary treasures. In using the Syme Family Papers for my biography of David Syme, my debt to the State Library of Victoria is immeasurable. Such access to information and knowledge is not to be taken for granted. Not to be found in all parts of the world, it is relatively recent, having evolved in the nineteenth century along with and seen as a necessary part of representative parliamentary democracy, making for an educated, informed electorate, as the theory went.

Along with libraries, and even more centrally, the newspaper press was a component of this democratisation. The term fourth estate, now a cliché synonym for the press, was coined in early nineteenth-century England and came to stand for the growing influence of the press in the parliamentary political process. It gained general currency in 1850 as the title of Frederic Hunt’s ground-breaking history of English newspapers.¹ Thereafter, fourth estate rhetoric and ideology were firmly entrenched in journalistic discourse in the UK and echoed in the Australian colonies. Earlier in the nineteenth century, in both the imperial heartland and the far-flung colonies, newspapers were generally seen by governing authorities as threatening to the social order. By contrast, the latter half of the century saw the evolution of a ‘free press’, with repressive measures giving way to acceptance and encouragement.

In the newly created colony of Victoria, separated from NSW in 1851

and almost immediately receiving floods of goldrush immigrants, and with responsible government instituted in 1856, newspapers mushroomed and flourished. David Syme was on the Melbourne newspaper scene at a promising time, becoming associated with the Melbourne daily *Age* newspaper business in 1856, taking charge of it in 1860 and running it for forty-eight years, to his death in 1908.²

I was present at Syme's induction inducted into Victoria's newly created Media Hall of Fame in December 2012, when he was described as 'the most influential journalist in Victorian history'.³ I expect the Australian Media Hall of Fame now in the making will give him similar recognition. His importance received widespread public expression from the late nineteenth century and is evident in the hundreds of obituaries for him in newspapers throughout the Australian colonies and beyond, following his death on 14 February 1908. Victoria's oldest non-metropolitan newspaper, the *Geelong Advertiser*, on 17 February saw that he 'succeeded in making the "Age," whose policy he controlled to the last, the most powerful newspaper in Australia ... He was unquestionably the greatest journalist Australia has known', words that were relayed through many country papers. One of several English newspapers to mark his passing, the *Manchester Guardian* on 15 February termed him 'perhaps the most notable journalist that our colonies have produced ... a political thinker of originality ... founder of colonial liberalism'.

'Journalist' is generally understood today to be one who puts words together for media outlets, whether newspapers, radio, television—and sometimes, controversially, also applied to social media (the fifth estate). Journalist has also a wider meaning, denoting a person engaged in editing and having responsibility for content, for policy, for production. This wider meaning applies to Syme, who rarely wrote for his newspapers, although he was a noted author of scholarly books and articles.

Central to his avowed pre-eminence was the man's independence. His great-grandson Ranald Macdonald, managing director from 1964 to 1983 of David Syme & Co. Ltd, the successor of the *Age* family business, has stressed this, in a lecture delivered in 1981: 'Syme was convinced ... that a man must make his own decisions and remain true to them.'⁴ As did the

writer of a biographical sketch in the new Australian literary monthly, the *Lone Hand*, in June 1907, seeing Syme as 'a law unto himself, and with will and strength to enforce that law on others', thus emphasising also the effect of his independent decision-making.

Some examples of what Syme did to deserve the eulogising:

- After taking over the *Age* in 1860 when its daily circulation was barely 2000, a poor third to the dominant established *Argus* and the popular *Herald*, he built it up so that by 1881, at 45,000, it was claimed to be largest of any daily in the British Empire out of London. The rival *Argus* was only a quarter of the figure, the *Sydney Morning Herald* little more, and no other Australian paper remotely near. Overseas colonial comparisons show the *Montreal Star* and the *Toronto Globe* to be each less than half. In the UK, outside London, circulations of leading Liverpool, Birmingham, Newcastle and Glasgow papers, so far as I can verify, in the early 1880s were less than that of the *Age*, though some were not far behind. In 1892 the *Age* circulation was 100,000 and rising, and still way ahead of its colonial contemporaries. The exponential increase is highlighted when expressed as a paper per head of population ratio—in 1860 one copy of the daily *Age* had to do for 265 persons in Victoria; in 1887 the market had been so penetrated that there was 1 paper per 13 persons; and a similar differential applies if circulation figures are set against the population of Melbourne.

- In addition to publishing the daily *Age*, Syme continued and introduced weeklies and a monthly for which he believed there was a market. Just a few months after his takeover in 1860 he started the weekly *Victorian Farmers and Horticulturists Journal*, the first such newspaper in the colony, an experiment to meet the growing need of miners-turned-settlers for agricultural information, a need eventually replaced by sections in an enlarged *Leader*, which Syme increasingly directed to a rural readership and which continued until 1957. In 1861 he began the monthly *Illustrated Australian News*, initially published to catch the monthly mailboat as it was directed at a 'home' readership. Arguably it left competing Australian nineteenth-century illustrated newspapers in the shade; certainly it outlasted them all, ceasing only in 1896. From

1875 for twenty years he brought out the *Age Annual*, a work of invaluable reference before the appearance of various yearbooks and directories such as the *Victorian Municipal Directory*. And in 1903, with the onset of modernity, he introduced a new style of cosmopolitan, catchy magazine, *Every Saturday*, sold to a Sydney counterpart by his beneficiaries in 1912.

- He amassed enormous wealth, not only from newspaper profits but also through the clever acquisition of real estate and prudent investments in shares and debentures, profiting from the 1880s boom and riding the bust of the early 1890s. He had arrived in Melbourne with only modest funds to tide him through till earning. He left an estate of almost one million pounds (£979,480), about half representing the total value of the newspaper business, the rest private investments. Depending on conversion rate, this could equate to at least a billion dollars today. In any case vastly more than his Australian contemporaries.

- And there is his literary legacy, dealt with below.

What did he think about praise and fame? Not a lot, it would seem, of conventional recognition. In 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, he was offered a knighthood, the first Australian press personage to be so recognised. He turned it down. The following year his intercolonial press counterparts John Langdon Bonython of the Adelaide *Advertiser* and James Reading Fairfax of the *Sydney Morning Herald* were so honoured. Syme, however, was in good company, in that politician and chief justice George Higinbotham had declared a knighthood 'a base, contemptible distinction' and Alfred Deakin, in youth mentored by Syme, later prime minister, rejected the honour outright.⁵ Syme's move is one of many instances of his not toeing the line, not conforming but behaving idiosyncratically, independently, if you like.

When did this trait first manifest, do we know? There is scant documentation of his life before arriving in Australia, virtually only his words, penned in his final months. He was born in 1827 in coastal North Berwick on the southern side of the Firth of Forth some forty km from Edinburgh. The youngest of five children, he was educated at home by his authoritarian, dissenting Presbyterian minister turned schoolteacher. David looked up to his older, university-educated brothers George and

Ebenezer, and when their father died and there were not the means for seventeen-year-old David also to attend university, he accompanied them to an unorthodox theological academy. However, unlike them at the time, he could not countenance a clerical career. By contrast his brothers each spent several years as clergymen before renouncing the pulpit for the press. David's next known move was to travel in Europe during 1848 and 1849, a heady period of revolutionary movements. At the University of Heidelberg he attended some classes, probably to do with Hegel's philosophy, his only exposure to formal higher education. In undertaking this Continental tour, David, although not acknowledging this in his memoirs, was following in the footsteps of his brother George, who had covered much of the same ground the year before.

While earlier sometimes shepherded by his older siblings, David by his early twenties was clearly his own person, making his own decisions, as he would do for the rest of his life. Returning from the Continent, he got work as a proofreader on one of the new Glasgow dailies. Reading of gold discoveries in California, in 1851 he took himself prospecting there; in 1852 he headed across the Pacific to goldfields new, in Victoria, where for some four years, with mixed fortunes, he prospected. Not a lone operator, but on a larger scale, often with a partner and employees, and investing in machinery. While sympathetic to the miners' objections, he held a miner's licence. Always law-abiding, any radical and rebellious ideas he would express in words, not deeds.

Eventually, like the bulk of the goldrush immigrants, he looked for another occupation. In September 1856 he became a partner with Ebenezer in the two-year-old *Age* business, which his brother had bought three months earlier, with a heavy mortgage. Ebenezer, who migrated to Victoria a year after David, had joined the *Age* in 1855. David, however, was little involved in the newspaper business. Instead, in 1857 he began tendering for government contracts to build roads and bridges (sorely needed) and developed a prospering business. But when in March 1860 Ebenezer died from tuberculosis leaving a struggling unsaleable newspaper concern, David abandoned his lucrative and promising road-building enterprise and took over the newspaper business to support his late brother's widow

and her five young children, as well as his own smaller but growing family (wife, one child, and another on the way).

What preparation did this thirty-two-year-old Scotsman have? Although he had virtually no experience of newspaper management, he had been an employer and had dealt with equipment in other occupations—relevant experience that, say, an apprentice in a family newspaper business would have not have had. And as a proofreader in Glasgow he'd at least have got some idea of scale, layout, operations, staffing levels, equipment of an urban daily newspaper concern. How then did he manage?

He continued the editorial reformist policies instituted by his more radical brother, pursuing the 'unlock the lands' cause and opposing privileges vested in the Upper House, the Legislative Council. He had tariff policies advocated in the *Age*, but was not the 'father of protection' as has often been claimed, for the doctrine had been propounded earlier in the *Geelong Advertiser*. Over the ensuing decades he promoted education, opposed the exploitation of workers, corruption, and public extravagance—with a huge campaign in the 1880s against wasteful railway development that brought a series of huge libel actions in the 1890s, which he fought and won. In the lead-up to Federation he was investigating and giving support to the introduction of an old age pension. Much has been written about his and his newspapers' involvement with and powerful influence on politics, most notably in biographies by Pratt in 1908 biography and Sayers in 1965 and in an extended essay by Macintyre in 1991, although La Nauze in 1949 suggested that perhaps 'Syme did not always create waves, but sometimes rode on their crests'.⁶

Turning from politics and policy to running the business, one sees that getting a good grasp on this took Syme several years. However, he did manage promptly to discharge the mortgage and turn profits, albeit small. His launching of two new papers, in his first two years could be seen as foolhardy—but also visionary. At the end of 1865 the strain of his position was telling on his health and the future of the whole enterprise was not assured. Dramatic change came after many months spent in the UK, the first of regular, extended trips 'home', in later years often made via the US. In both countries he took note of press practices, and innovations, and

made useful contacts. An outstanding example of the fruits of investigation and consultation was his importation and installation in 1872 of a rotary printing machine, the first in the Australasian colonies, setting an example to be followed. Copies of his outward correspondence reveal his intense, persistent and within months successful efforts to get the machines operating satisfactorily, resulting in vastly increased production capability and the mass circulation I've mentioned.

He transformed the content of the *Age* and the weekly *Leader*. In 1872 he introduced serial fiction into the *Saturday Age*, the first Australian daily to do this regularly. He sponsored expeditions and overseas tours to be reported at length in his papers. He fostered agricultural journalism as key part of economic development. He forged syndication arrangements with similarly liberal reformist intercolonial dailies. And the list could go on. He gained ascendancy for the *Age* over rival Melbourne dailies, neutralising the *Herald* after its proprietors put the business on the market late in 1868. Syme used a front man to purchase it, turned it into the evening newspaper that it would be for the next 120 years, and quietly on sold it a couple of years later.

As for the rival daily *Argus*, its absentee proprietors, Edward Wilson and Lauchlan Mackinnon in England, were in disagreement with each other and in any case out of touch and complacent during the rise and rise of the *Age* in the later 1860s and the 1870s.

Syme was ill-served by some journalists inherited from Ebenezer's time, but his own selection was uncannily good, starting with Scottish polymath James Harrison, former owner and editor of the *Geelong Advertiser*, who from 1867 for six years was *Age* editor and science writer. One infers that he was also a de facto general office manager who taught his employer by example much that he needed to know. Syme took on talented leader-writers such as Alfred Deakin and Charles Pearson. He recruited correspondents near and far—from Melbourne suburbs to Victorian country districts, colonial capitals; overseas first and always London, but also Paris, New York and, from the 1880s New Guinea and the Pacific.

Syme always ran his show, involved in all aspects from editorial policy to printing quality, as his correspondence attests. An autocrat, he was

often impatient, irritable and rude, but could be kind and generous to those in adversity. Often detested by those who had no personal dealings with him, he was accepted by most who did, recognising his talents and choosing to overlook his unfortunate manner. He could be unthinkingly tactless, losing the valuable services of artist Julian Ashton, when he surely offended his artistic sensibilities, writing at the time: 'I got Ashtons picture half finished & stopped him, & gave him a new idea which I liked much better.'⁷

Syme benefitted from family involvement. A brother-in-law, his sister's husband, was a reliable paymaster for decades. His brother George, shy and retiring but with a good intellect and writing talent, edited the *Leader* for many years. Three of five sons came into the business, and would carry on after their father's death. Family loyalties were always strong for Syme, though formidably tested by Ebenezer's widow Jane living in England and for some eighteen years receiving half of the newspaper business profits. For when he eventually learned that she had a clandestine relationship and five more children, the knowledge of her deception soured his relations with her son Joseph, who was a junior partner for some twelve years.

The day to day editorial policy that he directed was underlain with a bedrock of beliefs, developed in the 1860s and 1870s when he was in tune with the needs of the settler class. A man of ideas, a thinker, he was the author of several weighty theoretical articles and books published in reputable English outlets. In one he argued against large private land-holdings—at odds with his own later huge acquisitions. In others he propounded an unorthodox approach to political economy. In another work he presented what he saw as the evils of political party government in England—somewhat at odds with his fierce championing of liberal reformist factions in Victoria. In yet another he presented the case for tariff protection rather than free trade. While his publications received fair and sometimes enthusiastic reviews at the time, neither he nor his works formed part of an ongoing discourse. He was an outsider, and knew it, writing to philosopher Frederic Harrison: 'I am so far off here that find I cannot join in the discussion.'⁸ Distance was one factor. Perhaps the lack of formal education was another, for this autodidact and independent thinker.

Yet he continued to think and write. Averse to organised religion, in 1889 he wrote to expatriate Arthur Patchett Martin, rejecting his articles on religious subjects: 'We have quite enough to do when we confine ourselves to social and political subjects, without stirring up odium theologicum.'⁹ Yet throughout his adult life he pondered existential truths, in the 1870s dallying with spiritualism. In 1890 he authored a scientific monograph that proposed a theory of evolution alternative to Darwin's and which began to explore the spiritual nature of human existence. This was the central concern of his last book, *The Soul*, published in 1903, which argues for its immortality. This is perhaps a clue to the clause in his will making provision for 'a family vault ... in the form of a ... temple'.¹⁰ His grand tomb may be seen today in the Boroondara Cemetery at Kew, a puzzlingly impressive edifice modelled on the beautiful Egyptian Temple of Phylae. Not exactly a family vault, it houses his and his wife's remains only, though latterly plaques of some much later descendants have been affixed. Is this how he wished to be remembered, or did he perceive some significance beyond the veil?

His death was a sad dying of the light, after a final independent fling, when he rejected the advice of medical specialists that his oesophageal cancer was incurable and spent fruitless weeks being treated upcountry by a useless quack before going to die, basically of starvation, over some eight weeks.

With his assertiveness, power, independence, David Syme may have some affinity with media tycoons of the twentieth century. But in crucial aspects he differs. He published several newspapers, but did not have an inter-city empire. He was head of an unincorporated family business, and left a restrictive will that would keep it that way and which had to be varied in mid-century through a Supreme Court action. Successful in his day, in relation to the future of the great concern he had grown, he was no visionary; nor, seemingly, could he come to terms with his mortality but sought to exercise control beyond the grave. What he did leave, and which his descendants to this day acknowledge, was an internationally esteemed daily newspaper with a strong tradition of investigative journalism that endured throughout the twentieth century.



Tracing the course of David Syme's life has been a case study in the pluses and minuses of being independent, revealing a cussed man of talent and achievement, of foibles and frailties as well as ruthless persistence. I think of him saying, of his life's work, the words sung by Frank Sinatra and which I used as an epigraph for my biography of this extraordinary man of the press: 'And more, much more than this, I did it my way.'

FLORA SHAW

A 'LADY FROM LONDON' IN 1890s QUEENSLAND

Flora Shaw, a notable late nineteenth-century journalist, achieved an extraordinarily important position on the *The Times* of London in an era when it was difficult for women to become journalists, and usually impossible for them to gain positions of great influence. She is an exemplar of an independent woman, which ties in well with the celebration at this conference of twenty years since the formal beginning of the Independent Scholars Association of Australia. Both before and after the founding of ISAA, I've researched and written about independent women who have broken from their expected role in society. Because of my own career as a journalist, these have been mainly women writers and journalists. Even when I became a journalist in the 1950s, women journalists were rare and often restricted in scope. Female journalists of an earlier era were necessarily extremely independent women, prepared to seek careers in a field in which they were pioneers. This paper complements my view of ISAA, as an organisation of mutual support for people who work and write independently, who pursue independent thought and action and celebrate independence.

Flora Shaw in Western Queensland

In October 1892 a 'Lady from London' appeared at the shearing shed on Portland Downs, a huge sheep station on the Barcoo River in western Queensland. She was a remarkable sight to the shearers, who rarely saw any women while shearing in the outback, much less a woman of 'style and dress' from London.¹ Their visitor was Flora Shaw on assignment from *The Times*, who was travelling by buggy through sheep stations scattered through western Queensland, to write articles on the pastoral industry.

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- ¹ Frederick Knight Hunt, *The Fourth Estate: Contributions Towards a History of Newspapers and of the Liberty of the Press*, D. Bogue, London, 1850.
 - ² Information about David Syme and his achievements is drawn from my biography, *David Syme: Man of the Age*, Monash University Publishing and State Library of Victoria, 2014.
 - ³ Mark Baker, 'Honouring the Newsbreakers of a Nation', *Age*, 8 December, p. 17.
 - ⁴ Randal Macdonald, *David Syme*, Vantage House, Cheltenham, Vic., 1982, p. 37.
 - ⁵ Morrison, *David Syme*, p. 312.
 - ⁶ Ambrose Pratt, *David Syme: The Father of Protection*, Ward Lock, London, 1908; C. E. Sayers, *David Syme: A Life*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1965; Stuart Macintyre, *A Colonial Liberalism: The Lost World of Three Victorian Visionaries*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1991; J. La Nauze, *Political Economy in Australia: Historical Studies*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, Vic., 1949, p. 8.
 - ⁷ Morrison, *David Syme*, p. 180.
 - ⁸ Morrison, *David Syme*, p. 168.
 - ⁹ Morrison, *David Syme*, p. 247.
 - ¹⁰ Morrison, *David Syme*, p. 392.

The stations, from Ilfracombe through Blackall and Tambo to Charleville, were often a day's ride apart. Earlier she had travelled by coastal steamer from Cairns to Rockhampton stopping at each port on the way to write about the sugar industry and northern political questions and to make inland trips to Charters Towers and Mount Morgan to cover gold-mining, and to visit a cattle fattening station and irrigated plantations on the Burdekin delta.

She came to western sheep stations at a volatile time in the shearing industry, just a year after the 1891 shearers' strike, a recent and bitter memory for the shearers, some of whose leaders were still in gaol. The strike was a defining event in Australian history, leading to the founding at Barcaldine of the Australian Labour Party, soon to become a major political force.

There are two very different published reports of Flora Shaw's meeting with the shearers: one her report in *The Times* and the other by the union organiser published in the *Worker* in Brisbane. There are also much more revealing accounts in the letters she wrote to her sister, Lulu, in London and in her private diary. I've been able to get copies of this material, which is preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, but not previously accessed for this purpose. They contain Shaw's scarring account of this event.

In her private diary, Shaw described the union organiser at the shearers' shed, Drake Wood, as

one-eyed, hare-lipped with the narrow brainless forehead of degraded races, false teeth prominently white in a countenance naturally sullen, bloated [and] reddened by circumstance ... [an] idiot with neither brains eloquence nor character', unable 'to put a sentence together in English which conveyed a meaning of any kind' and speaking with 'the snuffle of a country street preacher'.²

She was more restrained in her published article in which she described him as a man who was 'absolutely inept' and 'mouthed big nothings'.³

Drake Wood's very different account of this meeting was published on the front page of the *Worker* under the heading 'The Lady from London'. In this account, undoubtedly heavily edited, the meeting appeared to cover several issues reasonably coherently from very divergent points of views. Although the article began in satirical tone, it proceeded to questions and

answers in which Drake Wood rejected Shaw's entrenched position that shearers must abandon their stand against freedom of contract, the basis of the 1891 shearers' strike. He explained the problem with parliamentary representation of itinerant workers with no fixed address and argued against Shaw's view on the need to increase British migration.⁴

Shaw's Background

When she arrived in Australia, Flora Shaw was already a well-established journalist. Through family connections and her innate ability, she had become a valued correspondent for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *Manchester Guardian* and *The Times*, although its manager, Moberly Bell, had only managed to engage her at first by not revealing her gender. Later he was able to arrange to send her to South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Canada on a mission to gain first-hand colonial knowledge before appointing her to a permanent position on the paper. Her six articles on Queensland, the first stop on her Australian tour, were so successful that within a year they were published in book form as *Letters from Queensland*.⁵ They reflect the view the British Government and *The Times* shared: their invincible conviction that the colonies should remain inextricably linked to Britain politically and economically through trade and investment.

Flora Shaw's background prepared her for her role. Born on 19 December 1852, she was the fourth of fourteen children of Captain (later Major-General) George Shaw, Royal Artillery, and a granddaughter of Sir Frederick Shaw, who had represented Dublin in the House of Commons and was Recorder of Dublin (1828–76), a judicial office equivalent to Chief Magistrate in pre-independent Ireland. Her mother, Marie Desfontaines, was the daughter of the French governor of Mauritius. Flora was educated at home often at her grandparents' home in Dublin, and sometimes in France with the aristocratic connections of her mother. After her mother's death and her father's remarriage, she sought an income to gain financial independence for herself and some dependent sisters. Her first foray into writing was as the author works of fiction including a popular children's novel.⁶

Her newspaper career began in the only way possible for a woman in the

nineteenth century, as a freelance correspondent submitting articles. She had the advantage of being in a succession of newsworthy places and her family connections oiled her way. While staying in Gibraltar in 1886, her article on a political prisoner was a front-page sensation in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.⁷ Before the final part of her expanded series was published in the *Contemporary Review*, the British Government had released the prisoner, Zebehr Pasha, and allowed him to return to Cairo. Her biographer wrote that Shaw arrived in Gibraltar 'an amateur' and returned 'a professional with a reputation as a serious and capable journalist'.⁸

She was again fortunate when she visited Egypt, a newsworthy trouble spot, as an accredited correspondent for the *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Manchester Guardian*. In Egypt she made an extraordinary impression on the long-established correspondent of *The Times*, Charles Frederick Moberly Bell. Both were strong imperialists who shared 'a conviction of the civilizing mission of the British people'.⁹ When Moberly Bell was recalled to *The Times*, he engaged Shaw to write fortnightly columns on colonial subjects.¹⁰ During 1891 as a freelance writer for three papers she became well known as an imperial and colonial expert. It was at this point that Moberly Bell arranged for her to tour British colonies. Aged forty, she set out for South Africa, continuing after several months to Australia.

The principal impetus for her emphasis on Queensland was the influence of Sir Robert Herbert, who had been the first premier of the colony. When he returned to London he was appointed Permanent Under Secretary at the British Colonial Office. His advice and guidance were central in Shaw's emergence as a knowledgeable writer on colonial subjects, thoroughly indoctrinated with the views of the British Government. She also established a friendship with Cecil Rhodes who saw the value in her support. Whenever he was in London he made a point of seeing her and discussing his views on Africa which were similar to her own. Their meetings fuelled rumours of a romance but this was never likely.

Meeting with James Tyson

There were rumours of another romance during Shaw's visit to Queensland. While on a four-day train trip to farms and plantations within easy reach

of Brisbane, Shaw found herself in a railway carriage with the Australian millionaire and eccentric misogynist, James Tyson. The contrast between the pair was extraordinary, the rough, uncouth bushman, illiterate in speech, with Flora, the delicately nurtured urbane young woman, well-groomed, precise in speech, but they found they agreed on fundamental values. Although this was their only meeting, rumours swept Brisbane that there was a developing romance. Like the rumours regarding Rhodes, they reflect 1890s society's need to see an attractive woman married rather than competing in what was regarded as a male occupation. By the time they parted Tyson had told Flora he intended to leave his money and possessions to her unconditionally and it became generally known in Queensland Government circles that she was to inherit his millions. Flora made up her mind she would use the money to run a line of steamers to link the British colonies of Australia, Canada and South Africa, in unbreakable ties with each other and the mother country, economically and in trade.

James Tyson died intestate in 1898 and his fortune was divided among relatives in whom he had taken no interest. He became a character in Australian fiction, appearing in Rosa Praed's novel set on Curtis Island, *The Romance of an Island*, as Daniel Liss, a sinister, abstemious miser, who emerges as the buyer of the Praeds' station. Rosa's father Thomas Murray Lodge Prior knew Tyson well and left his daughter lengthy notes on stories about Tyson. At the fictional Moonbago on Curtis Island, Daniel Liss adopts a stunted child, Wunkie, the abused daughter of an overseer, Bully Balfour. Wunkie's only desire is to be educated. Although never articulated, a vague miasma of sexual abuse, male dominance and brutality hangs over these episodes. Wunkie looks after Liss but he does not make her his heir and she is last recorded as the mother of a 'large tribe' in western Queensland.¹¹

Flora herself appears in Rosa Praed's novel *Lady Bridget in the Never-Never Land* as the prototype for Joan Kildea, a journalist sent to London by 'the great Gibbs: a potent newspaper-factor in the British policy of the day' as Special Correspondent for the fictional *Imperialist*. Her mission is 'to report upon the political, financial, economic and social aspects of Australia, and upon Imperial interests generally'.¹²

Although the novel was not published until 1915, it was set in 1894 at the time of the second Queensland shearers' strike. This led to some anomalies. Praed has Kildea typing her copy (there is no mention of Flora Shaw using a typewriter) and, authentically, with a pile of Hansards as she sits on the verandah of her temporary residence at Emu Point (Kangaroo Point) looking out on a profusion of tropical growth and the busy Brisbane wharves. She has sheaves of manuscript, newspaper cuttings, photographs and sepia sketches (again, there was no use of these with Flora Shaw's articles) and notebooks held open by bananas. Kildea is a minor character; she has the attributes of Flora Shaw but is not portrayed as having similar intellectual ability.

To North Queensland

The Queensland Government regarded Shaw's visit as highly important because of the potential for her articles to increase British migration and investment, vital to the economy in the aftermath of the 1890s depression. Soon after she arrived in Brisbane the Premier, Sir Samuel Griffith, called on her, as did all his ministers. From then on she was, to use a modern term, 'duchessed'. The government arranged all her travel: she had the best cabins on ships, special compartments on trains and she was always met on arrival, whether at ports, railway stations or at bush outposts; and a driver was always on hand to drive her to her next destination, if necessary by relays of horses. Meetings were lined up with local civic leaders, senior public servants, technical experts, representatives of political organisations and employer and labour groups.

No amount of pre-arrangement, however, could overcome the exigencies of colonial travel, which she revealed in her private letters and in her diary.¹³ Her article on the Queensland sugar industry does not mention that, while inspecting the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's Victoria plantation at Ingham by cane train in searing heat, a spark from the engine set her dress on fire. Although she escaped with the loss of part of her dress, managing, as she wrote, to 'safeguard the dignity of the *Times* in the person of its correspondent by holding my truncated garments together as respectably as I could', her host, the manager Mr Farquhar, burnt his hands severely

putting out the fire. The thin silk dress and petticoat were among the few clothes she had with her as she travelled light through the north. Her tight schedule allowed no time to replace it.¹⁴ There is also no mention in her articles of being unable to sleep in the stifling heat of a coastal steamer travelling south from Cairns because of fear of rampant cockroaches,¹⁵ nor of battling across the flooded Barcoo, or of a buggy disaster caused by a shying horse near Charleville.¹⁶

Although she was conscientious in interviewing opposing sides in any controversy, the influence of the government's policies is apparent in her published articles. Earlier that year Griffith, reversing a policy he had previously endorsed, extended the recruitment of Polynesian indentured labourers for a further ten years. Shaw did not query this policy and wherever she inspected large encampments of Kanaka workers she reported a happy scene. At Hambleton plantation near Cairns where she talked with 'Kanaka mothers and nursed their fat babies' she told her sister she saw 'a rather pretty return of the workers from the cane fields', which reminded her of 'our own haymakers coming home on the top of a piled waggon'.¹⁷ Like Griffith she favoured the development of small acreage cane farms as a way of encouraging migration. She advocated the expansion of the British Empire through the migration of labour and capital but she saw the ultimate ideal as imperial federation of British colonies with representation in the United Kingdom parliament, an idea she found Griffith favoured.¹⁸ 'I never thought of my work exactly as journalism, but rather as active politics without the fame', she wrote.¹⁹

Her accounts of the sugar, mining and pastoral industries and her exposition of the political and economic issues of the early 1890s—the use of Kanaka labour in cane production and the separation of the north as a separate colony—were highly regarded at the time but are now mainly of historic interest. As she travelled down the coast of Queensland from Cairns to Rockhampton, stopping at each port of any significance with inland trips to gold mining centres and later through western sheep stations, her letters describe her reactions to events, her adventures and her frank opinions, while her diary reveals the names of properties and localities she visited, the identities of her hosts and the people who influenced her

opinions. Her travel schedule was strenuous, in the early part of her trip dictated by the weekly arrival and departure of coastal steamers allowing her only a day at each port.

During long days in stifling heat she visited large plantations and sugar mills at Cairns, Geraldton (later named Innisfail), Ingham, Ayr and Mackay; inspected the quarters of Kanaka indentured labourers and their families; talked with small scale planters and inspected co-operative mills, and everywhere discussed the live political issues of separation of north Queensland as an independent colony and the continued importation of South Sea Islanders as labour for the sugar industry.

Her article on the mineral wealth of Queensland was largely based on a trip from Townsville to Charters Towers and a visit from Rockhampton to Mt Morgan, then the world's richest gold lode that had made its major shareholder Rockhampton solicitor, William Knox D'Arcy, a millionaire who became a noted figure in the upper echelons of London society. From Townsville she travelled by train to Charters Towers, where she spent a day crawling down unfinished mine shafts and inspecting crushing mills. 'You can picture to yourself the state of dirt in which I returned to the hotel', she told her sister. Late that night she was still at work, poring over a geological map with the Queensland Government Geologist, Logan Jack, and talking with locals to get 'the feeling of a mining centre on separation and coloured labour'.²⁰ She concluded that further exploitation of Queensland minerals would need 'the combined labour of an immensely increased population'.²¹ She also expressed reservations about the cattle industry after visiting Woodstock, a fattening station owned by the North Australian Pastoral Company. She was impressed by the stockmen's skills when she observed mustering and cutting out in over 100°F heat: 'The riding of a good stockman puts all the circuses I have ever seen to shame', she wrote,²² but she concluded that the pastoral industry was a poor prospect for the employment of much labour.²³

She returned to her study of the sugar industry at Ayr and Mackay. At Pioneer plantation, on the Burdekin River near Ayr, she inspected an irrigated sugar plantation begun by the Drysdale brothers on country too dry for cane growing but which they had successfully watered from

lagoons through a system of centrifugal pumps. In the next few days she visited other cane farms to study the comparative economies of irrigated and non-irrigated production of sugar cane.

At Mackay Shaw met Englishman John Vincent Chataway, a brother of Ethel Bell, the wife of her mentor Moberly Bell, manager of *The Times*. Chataway was proprietor and editor of the Mackay *Mercury*, a prominent lobbyist for the sugar industry and a supporter of north Queensland separation linked with support for the importation of Pacific Islanders. The year after her visit Chataway was elected a member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly and was later a minister.²⁴ Planters like Chataway wanted the importation of coloured labour to continue so they could have the advantage of cheap labour. To labour representatives it was an assault on working conditions as well as undermining social and moral standards. Shaw concluded that as the south had a majority in the Legislative Assembly there was no chance of its happening.

West from Rockhampton

At Rockhampton, her last coastal stop, Shaw prepared for her journey to study the pastoral industry in western Queensland. The aftermath of the 1891 shearers' strike was still a major story and labour conditions and the economics of the industry were a focus of her trip. As always diligent in listening to both sides on contentious issues, she met two labour leaders, William Kidston, a principal Labour figure in Rockhampton in supporting the shearers and later premier of Queensland and James Stewart, later Member of Parliament for Rockhampton North and then ALP Senator for Queensland from Federation until 1917. It is clear from her record of the conversation that she was unable to entertain any argument in favour of collective bargaining for improved wages and conditions as it deprived employers of the right to negotiate individually with workers.²⁵ Shaw was to make her support for the squatters' demand for freedom of contract even clearer in a later conversation with a union organiser: 'we people in England lost all sympathy with you when you began to dictate to the employers whom they should employ', she said.²⁶ During her conversation in Rockhampton Kidston and Stewart described the life of shearers who

averaged only four to five months work a year and spent the rest of the year walking in the bush in search of work. It would make 'the Archbishop of Canterbury into a bit of a radical to tramp twenty or thirty miles a day with all his worldly possessions rolled up on his back ready to work and not knowing where to find occupation', they told her. She found Kidston 'liberal but restrained'; Stewart was 'sour tempered hot headed and ignorant'.²⁷

She heard the squatters' view from station owner George Fairbairn who accompanied her on the train journey west from Rockhampton to Ilfracombe, the stop before the end of the line at Longreach, which the railway had reached just a few months before. On the way she found the isolation and monotony of the countryside depressing and brutalising and the townships 'the ugliest things in the way of human habitation' without a redeeming feature not even 'the picturesque character of a native African settlement'. The bush inn she stayed in at Ilfracombe was 'hideously ugly'.²⁸

During the next two weeks she made an extraordinary journey of over 800 km in an open buggy in temperatures often over 100°F. Except when held up by rain that made tracks impassable or stopped her crossing the Barcoo, she left as soon as the horses could be rounded up to travel to the next station, usually a distance of about 80 km, occasionally up to 120 km. Travelling in a good season with abundant growth, she was impressed by the wide plains she drove through. She had many opportunities to hear views on the industrial situation and the economics of running huge stations from the owners and managers of those where she was an overnight guest, 'the high Tory side' as she described it. The first of her two articles on the pastoral industries contains detailed accounts of the operation, finances and the costs of employing and housing station hands and shearers.

Opportunities to see the living and working conditions of shearers and permanent station hands arose at Wellshot and Portland, at both of which she was delayed by rain. Shearers had first begun to organise at Wellshot (until 1890 the name by which Ilfracombe was known) following a strike in 1886 when they refused to accept reduced pay and conditions. After watching shearing at Wellshot with Mr Hopkins, the manager for the

owners of the Australian and New Zealand Land Company, where nearly half a million sheep were shorn that year, she wrote: 'A shearing shed in full swing is a stirring sight.'

After a day's delay she reached Portland Downs, another huge station where shearers were idle when rain made shearing wet fleece impossible. She watched as about seventy shearers, described as bare-armed and dirty, gathered round a table set up out of doors under an iron roof to eat 'copiously of joints, stews, bread, pickles, jams and cakes', their only utensils being tin plates, mugs and knives. 'It was a hugger-mugger of food on dirty boards, just one step removed from the well-filled troughs of swash and potatoes round which I have seen pigs crowd at home', she wrote.²⁹

She judged shearers as materially much better off than English labourers, 'well paid' and 'extremely well fed', but in decency of surroundings infinitely beneath them. She attributed 'a good deal of labour agitation' to the 'horrible dulness and roughness of their lives'. They had nothing to do but 'gamble, play cards and agitate'. She attributed the well-publicised shearer drinking out his cheque, or 'dissipation', as she described it, to the 'lack of wholesome pleasure' in his life.³⁰ She described the windowless shacks of the permanent hands, their mud floors, iron roofs, the furniture made from packing cases and reported to her sister with some astonishment that some of station hands living in these shacks were 'the sons of English gentlemen!'³¹

The meeting described at the beginning of this paper took place at Portland Downs that night at Flora Shaw's request.

The next day she drove through Springfield and Thornleigh, two smaller stations, the first settled by a former dam-maker, the second by a former shearer. To Shaw they were 'object lessons in possibilities open to reputable Australian labourers'. She was held up for two nights at Malvern, a bachelor establishment, until the Barcoo went down sufficiently to get to Blackall, where she heard of Jackie Howe's record shearing tally, and to Northampton Downs to the south. After a rest day she left the following morning at daybreak for a 120 km journey to Ravensbourne for lunch and on to Listowel, reaching there in the late afternoon to find the temperature 106°F on the verandah. She had time the next morning to see shearing in

action and note some record tallies before leaving for Minnie Downs, 80 km away.

On 4 November Shaw reached Tambo station where a group of 'red radicals and enthusiastic socialists' gathered at the blacksmith's forge to talk to her. She was impressed by the group, 'very decent and intelligent' but, she added, 'of course ignorant of facts on every subject and therefore not in a position to draw just conclusions'.³² Paradoxically she reported that every forge and shearing shed had copies of books on economics and politics, which the shearers wanted to discuss. They read the American political economist, Henry George, internationally famous for his espousal of a single land tax and author of *Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Causes of Economic Depressions*; the English politician Henry Hyndman author of *Socialism Made Easy* and founder of the Social Democratic Federation and Edward Bellamy, author of a utopian novel *Looking Backward: A Romance of 2000 AD*, in which he envisaged a future of equal distribution of wealth. But she did not connect this reading with their passion to change political and social structures and she found 'pathetic' their opinion that Bellamy's theories could be realised.³³

After Tambo her trip became a race to make up time, through Lansdowne to Oakwood one day and through Milly to Charleville the next day, during which the buggy overturned. Throughout the west, she wrote in her diary, she had been struck by the absence of pleasure and its civilising influences. The life was 'distinctly brutalizing in its tendency, nature rebels, the men take to drink and gambling, the masters become boorish'.³⁴

Return to Brisbane

That night she caught the 9.45 pm train for Brisbane. It was ten o'clock the following night before she reached Government House and the hospitality of the Queensland governor Sir Henry Norman and Lady Norman. She told her sister the journey had been 'rougher' than anything she had ever experienced and towards the end she was 'knocking up'.³⁵ It took such a toll of her health that she arrived in Brisbane exhausted and suffering bouts of illness. Staying at Government House was a mixed blessing as she

was caught up in official entertainment, accompanying Lady Norman on several engagements, attending many dinners at Government House, and receiving visits from the Premier and several ministers. She also had lunch with Sir Samuel and Lady Griffith at their Sandgate home. She travelled up the Brisbane River as the guest of Brisbane journalists on their annual picnic, which they had postponed for a week after receiving a telegram from her from Blackall that she was held up by rain and the condition of the roads. On 12 November she was a guest on their trip where she saw boomerang throwing, presumably a display by Aborigines staged for the overseas visitor, but she does not elaborate.³⁶ She spent two weeks in the cooler climate of Toowoomba at the Blue Mountain Hotel, where she was able, although still often ill, to write and dispatch her articles to *The Times*. She also heard news that her father had died, leaving her sisters dependent on an unsympathetic stepmother; she wrote long letters suggesting various relatives and friends they could visit until she returned and could arrange for them to live with her.³⁷

The enthusiastic response to her articles on Queensland rested on their promotion of the opportunities both for the investment of overseas capital and the employment of British migrants in a country open for development. She stressed the possibilities of water from artesian bores as the new hope for large scale irrigation and closer land settlement, the development of freezing works to support an expansion of the cattle industry and the encouragement of small-scale family cane farms.

Striking Absences: Women, Aboriginal People

There are some striking absences in her articles. Although she visited every major centre in the northern coastal area, travelled inland to mining sites and to outbreak stations and settlements she never mentions women except as unnamed providers of meals, unidentified except as a wife of a sugar planter or station owner, or as a housekeeper. The female suffrage movement did not exist in this world.

Her only mention of Aborigines comes after a comment on the 'lifeless trees in their sylvan graveyards', the ringbarking work of pioneer settlers. She likens this death to what she regarded as the dying out of the

Aboriginal people. When she saw a ‘black man of low type, with narrow forehead, thick lips and tufted hair’, she commented: ‘He is dying, too, with the virgin woods.’ Compared with the ghostly gums and the supposed remnants of the Aboriginal people, the British race had triumphed. The young Australia she saw was ‘infinitely more interesting than anything which it had occasion to displace’.³⁸ By contrast, when Anthony Trollope visited Queensland in 1871, he included a chapter on ‘Aboriginals’ in his book on his visit to Australia and New Zealand.³⁹

Southern Colonies

In December Flora Shaw continued her journey through the southern colonies. She arrived in New South Wales not fully recovered from illness and, in contrast to Queensland, she did not venture outside Sydney. Instead she relied on interviews with the government statistician, Timothy Coghlan, members of the Employers’ Federation Executive, and the president and secretary of the Amalgamated Shearers’ Union and of the Ship Owners’ Union to write articles covering finance, labour and the Federation Movement. She spent Christmas with Sir Richard and Lady Windeyer at Tomago.⁴⁰

By the time she reached Melbourne on New Year’s Day 1893, she was ill again. Despite this she undertook strenuous journeys studying Victorian rural industries during the intense heat of summer. Getting material on the fruit industry involved ten hours rail travel and five hours driving over farms; and studying the butter industry, a further two days’ trip in temperatures that reached 110°F. At vineyards she visited the temperature remained over 100°F overnight. She descended what she described as the deepest gold mine in the world at Bendigo.⁴¹

Her article on Victorian Finance stirred the most controversy of her tour. The grave economic depression of the 1890s, usually attributed to the collapse of the land boom and bank failures, was the outcome, according to Shaw, of ‘leaning against posts instead of ... standing upright’.⁴² The expression ‘lifters and leaners’ remains with us.

In South Australia she made an even more demanding three-day trip by train to Broken Hill to inspect mines, accompanied by Lady Downer,

wife of the South Australian premier Sir John Downer. She also visited the Barossa wine district. These journeys and investigations resulted in many articles.⁴³

Later Career

When she returned to London late in 1893 Flora Shaw was appointed Colonial Correspondent,⁴⁴ an extraordinary achievement for a woman, placing her at the centre of *The Times*’s imperial policies. Shaw grew into the role and became highly influential. In 1897, when a parliamentary Select Committee inquiry was held following persistent rumours that *The Times*, Cecil Rhodes and the Secretary of States for the Colonies, Joseph Chamberlain were complicit in the Jameson Raid, an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the Boer government in the Transvaal. When *The Times* was called to explain its role, the editor James Buckle decided that Flora should represent the paper. ‘What I am most concerned for is the reputation of the *Times*, and its interests’, he told her bluntly. ‘I am convinced it is of the utmost importance to keep [the Managing Director] Mr Bell’s name out of the matter.’⁴⁵ He implored her to take all responsibilities on her shoulders and ‘at all costs keep the *Times* and its personalities out of line’.⁴⁶ Shaw made her historic appearance, ‘a severe ordeal’, on 25 May 1897, the first woman ever to appear before a British parliamentary committee. She was closely questioned on telegrams she sent to Rhodes in December telling him delay was dangerous and relaying the view that Chamberlain wanted the uprising to occur immediately. Her adroit answers ensured *The Times* and the Colonial Office escaped censure and she was praised for her competence and readiness in parrying questions. ‘Without her keen sense of loyalty to her colleagues and her discretion, much embarrassment might have been caused to the “people” of the *Times*’, the paper conceded.⁴⁷

Realising that the paper was prepared to sacrifice her to save itself and the top management rankled for the rest of Flora Shaw’s career.⁴⁸ According to a fictionalised account of her life written by a relative, this ordeal apparently coincided with another blow—the end of a seven-year relationship with Sir George Goldie that Flora hoped would lead to marriage. Goldie was organiser of the Royal Niger Company that had established British rule on

the Niger River. When Goldie's wife died and Flora realised there would be no marriage, she became ill, as she had during other crises in her life.⁴⁹ There appears to be no other evidence for this alleged relationship.

In 1901 Flora resigned from *The Times* and the following year, at the age of 50, married Sir Frederick Lugard, later Lord Lugard, a British imperialist and colonial administrator in East Africa, Uganda, Hong Kong and Nigeria, who was a friend of Goldie's. During World War I, Lady Lugard was made a Dame of the British Empire for her work as a founder of the War Refugees Committee, which cared for Belgian refugees. She died in 1929.

Flora Shaw was a remarkable example of a woman who, through ability and courage in grasping opportunities, broke through gender barriers to gain financial independence and influence in a profession that was, and remained for nearly a century, a very difficult environment for women to achieve important positions.

¹ *Worker*, Brisbane, 14 January 1893, p. 1.

² Bodleian Library, Papers of Flora Shaw (Lady Lugard), diary, MSS Brit. Emp. s590, Box 6/7, 23 October 1892.

³ *The Times*, 2 February 1893, p. 6.

⁴ *Worker*, Brisbane, 14 January 1893, p. 1.

⁵ The Times Special Correspondent, *Letters from Queensland*, Macmillan, London, 1893. The letters were first published in *The Times* between December 1892 and February 1893: 'Queensland', Brisbane, 27 December 1892, p. 10; 'The Sugar Industry in Queensland', 7 January 1893, p. 12; 'The Mineral Wealth of Queensland', Rockhampton, 12 January 1893, p. 12; 'Pastoral Queensland', Blackall, Western Queensland, 31 January 1893, p. 3; 'Pastoral Queensland' (cont.), 2 February 1893, p. 6; 'The Queensland Separation Question', Brisbane, 9 February 1893, p. 3.

⁶ Castle Blair: *A Story of Youthful Days*, C. Kegan Paul, London, 1878.

⁷ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 28 June 1887.

⁸ E. Moberly Bell, *Flora Shaw (Lady Lugard, DBE)*, Constable, London, 1947, pp. 50–55, 59.

⁹ Mary Cumpston, 'The Contribution to Ideas of Empire of Flora Shaw, Lady Lugard', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 5, no. 1, May 1959, p. 66.

¹⁰ *The History of The Times*, vol. 3; *The Twentieth Century Test 1884-1912*, London, 1947, p. 139.

¹¹ Mrs Campbell Praed, *The Romance of a Station: An Australian Story*, Trischler, London, 1889, pp. 190–195.

¹² Mrs Campbell Praed, *Lady Bridget in the Never-Never Land: A Story of Australian Life*, Hutchinson, London, 1915, pp. 4–5.

¹³ Bodleian Library, Papers of Flora Shaw (Lady Lugard), Letters to Lulu, MSS Brit. Emp. s.590, Box 1/1.

¹⁴ Shaw papers, letter, Townsville, 9 October 1892.

¹⁵ Shaw papers, letter, Townsville, 9 October 1892.

¹⁶ Shaw papers, diary, 6 November 1892.

¹⁷ Shaw papers, letter, Townsville, 9 October 1892.

¹⁸ Shaw papers, diary, 8 November 1892.

¹⁹ Dorothy O. Hely and Helen Callaway, 'Journalism as Active Politics: Flora Shaw, *The Times* and South Africa', in *The South African War Reappraised*, ed. Donal Lowry, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2000, p. 50.

²⁰ Shaw papers, letter, on board SS *Peregrine*, Mackay, 15 October [1892].

²¹ *The Times*, 12 January 1893, p. 12.

²² Shaw papers, letter, 15 October [1892].

²³ Shaw papers, diary, 11 October 1892.

²⁴ K. H. Kennedy, 'Chataway, James Vincent (1852–1901)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 7, 1979, pp. 621–622.

²⁵ Shaw papers, diary, 20 October 1892.

²⁶ 'The Lady from London', *Worker*, 14 January 1893, p. 1.

²⁷ Shaw papers, diary, 20 October 1892.

²⁸ Shaw papers, diary, 25 October 1892.

²⁹ *The Times*, 2 February 1893, p. 6.

³⁰ *The Times*, 31 January 1893, p. 3.

³¹ Shaw papers, letter, Blue Mountain Hotel, Toowoomba, 18 November 1892; *The Times*, 31 January 1893, p. 3.

³² Shaw papers, letter, 18 November 1892; *The Times*, 2 February 1893, p. 6.

³³ *The Times*, 2 February 1893, p. 6.

³⁴ Shaw papers, diary, 5 November 1892.

³⁵ Shaw papers, letter, Toowoomba, 18 November 1892.

³⁶ *Queensland Times*, 3 November 1892.

³⁷ Shaw papers, letter, 18 November 1892.

³⁸ *The Times*, 27 December 1892, p. 10.

³⁹ Anthony Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand*, Chapman and Hall, London, 1873, vol. 1.

⁴⁰ *The Times*, 'New South Wales – Finance and Government', Sydney, 4 March 1893, p. 5; 'The Labour Question', Sydney, 18 July 1893, p. 3; 'New Unionism', Sydney, 26 July 1893, 13; 'Federation', Sydney, 2 August 1893, p. 3; *Queenslander*, 14 January 1893.

⁴¹ *The Times*, 'Victorian Finance', Melbourne, 30 March 1893, p. 13; 'Victoria: The Mallee Country', Hopetoun, 5 April 1893, p. 13; 'Intense Culture in Victoria',

Mooroopna, Vic., 8 April 1893, p. 15.

⁴² *The Times*, 30 March 1893, p. 13.

⁴³ *The Times*, 'The Wine Industry', Adelaide, South Australia, 24 May 1893, p. 3; 'Broken Hill', 14 July 1893, p. 3.

⁴⁴ E. Moberly Bell, *Flora Shaw*, p. 167.

⁴⁵ *The Times*, 4 March 1893, p. 5.

⁴⁶ *History of The Times*, p. 192.

⁴⁷ *History of The Times*, p. 206.

⁴⁸ E. Moberly Bell, *Flora Shaw*, p. 188.

⁴⁹ Jos Scharrer, *The Journalist: The Jameson Raid, The Klondike Gold Rush, The Anglo Boer War, The Founding of Nigeria, Flora Shaw was there*, Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, US, 2014 (Jos Scharrer is a descendant of Flora Shaw's youngest brother).



BATTLING THE BUREAUCRACY

PIONEER BOTANIST

SARAH HYNES'S WATERLOO?

I have never regretted following the advice of one of my professors Sir Richard Threlfall, the noted physicist of Helium gas fame, who said, 'If you desire an interesting career, take up science'. I did so, and loved my profession as a botanist, in spite of the difficulty which a pioneer encounters.¹

Sarah Hynes was proud of her career as a scientist and of her achievements. She was also proud of her links to other high achievers. This paper looks at the life of Sarah Hynes and the three separate Public Service Board enquiries culminating in her removal from the position as Botanical Assistant at the Botanic Gardens in 1910.

Who was Sarah Hynes?

Sarah Hynes was one of those complex feminists from the early twentieth century. She was politically conservative but she was forward thinking in areas such as women's education, scientific study, equal pay and conservation. Above all, she was prepared to stand up for herself.

Like others who can be described as the 'new women' of the generation which came to maturity in the 1890s,² Sarah Hynes has a well-earned place in the pantheon of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Australian feminists. While her name may not be as immediately recognisable as some of her contemporaries, her achievements are impressive. The following is only a selection of her personal firsts and the groups and committees on which she served:

- Committee member of the University Women's Society formed in 1891. 'Among other activities, members of the Society worked at Lewisham Hospital, Newington asylum for aged women, the Woolloomooloo girls'

club and the Harrington Street night school for girls at Millers Point. Now re-named Sydney University Settlement Neighbourhood Centre, it works primarily with the Aboriginal community and other disadvantaged groups in Chippendale, Redfern, Darlington and Waterloo.³

- first woman to join the Linnean Society of New South Wales in 1892;
- first woman to hold a government appointment in science in NSW when she accepted a position as botanical assistant at the Sydney Technological (Powerhouse) Museum in 1898;
- first president of the Field Botanists Society in 1899;
- at the forefront in raising funds for the building of the University of Sydney University Women's College;
- co-founder of the Sydney Forum Club, which raised funds for the Sydney University Women's College, serving as its senior vice-president in 1933;
- the driving force behind the Federal Government's agreement to purchase the botanical drawings of Marian Ellis Rowan in 1923, now housed in the National Library, and the commissioning of Rowan's portrait by Sir John Longstaff;
- radio broadcaster—delivering lecturettes—following her retirement in 1923;
- appointed a Member of the British Empire (MBE) in 1934, and
- while not the first women to own or drive a car, Sarah Hynes is said to be one of the earliest women to drive a Citroën in Sydney in the 1920s.

Although active in local party politics, whether Sarah Hynes was a suffragist is not certain. She was undoubtedly acquainted with feminist Millicent Preston Stanley, the first female member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, since they both attended the 1924 meeting of the Australian Federation of Women's Societies as representatives of the Sydney Feminist Club.

A Sydneysider, living in Randwick for most of her fifty-six years in Australia, Sarah battled the bureaucracy of the New South Wales Public Service in the first decade of the century and appeared to come off second best. But did she? No doubt she was bruised by the experience but, like

phoenix rising from the ashes, she went on to carve out a successful second career as a high school teacher of botany.

Sarah Hynes 1859–1888

Why Sarah was born 30 September 1859 in Danzig (modern day Gdansk in Poland) when her older brother and sister were born in Liverpool is not known. Her father, William John Hynes, was a captain in the merchant navy, so it is possible that the family were in Danzig because of his work. Whatever the reason, the family's time in Danzig was brief and by 1861 they were living in Leith, outside Edinburgh. They remained there until at least 1881, by which time they had moved to London.

Sarah Hynes was educated at Edinburgh Ladies College and later at Upton House, St John's Wood in London.⁴ Sarah went on to attend Chichester Training College in Sussex; obtaining a certificate second class in elementary botany when she sat for the training college examinations held on 11 December 1879.⁵

Sarah Hynes, her parents and older sister arrived in Sydney on the *Rockton* on 13 December 1882. Sarah's older sister had some form of mental disability. The details are not known but she was cared for at home until her death in 1947. The family first lived in the city at Wynyard Square; later they moved to Woollahra before finally settling at 6 Soudan Street, Randwick, just near The Spot.

We do not know what Sarah did between 1882 and 1888. She could have worked as a teacher or as a governess as she already held a teaching qualification. Sources such as newspapers and Sands Directories do not provide any information. Judging by her later life, she was not required to remain at home. In fact the opposite appears to be the case. Although never stated, it seems there may have been an economic imperative for her to work. This was reflected in her wish to remain in government employment following the third Public Service Board enquiry in 1910. Perhaps the ongoing cost of caring for her disabled sister at home was always a strain on the family finances.

Sarah Hynes 1888–1897

In 1888 Sarah Hynes enrolled in a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney, majoring in Botany. As she did not appear to have received a bursary or scholarship, Sarah and her family must have had sufficient funds to cover the fees. When Sarah graduated in 1891 she became one of the first twenty-one women to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts from the University.

After graduating Sarah formed a business or employment arrangement with Miss Lydia Yate, Principal of Macleay House School, located at 20 Billyard Avenue in Elizabeth Bay, and between 1892 and 1893 listed in newspaper advertisements as Vice-Principal of the school. The association was short-lived and it is not clear how Sarah earned a living between 1893 and her appointment to the NSW Public Service in 1897.

Miss Yate became bankrupt in 1897. In the Bankruptcy hearing she cites two of the causes—the Church of England Grammar School, which had opened in the vicinity of her school at Elizabeth Bay, and her own ill health. The school was probably SCEGGS Darlinghurst, which opened in 1895. Sarah Hynes was a member of the SCEGGS Darlinghurst Ladies Committee in 1894, which was involved in the school's establishment and she may have continued her connection with the school.

Sarah Hynes joined the New South Wales Public Service in 1897, accepting the position of Teacher of Botany at Sydney Technical College. In the following year she was appointed Botanical Assistant at the Sydney Technological Museum (today's Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences). With this appointment she became the first woman to hold a government appointment in science in New South Wales. This remains a significant milestone in the history of women's employment in New South Wales.

On 2 June 1900, Sarah was appointed Second Botanical Assistant at the Botanic Gardens Herbarium in the Educational Division on an annual salary of £130. By comparison the Botanical Assistant Ernest Betche, who was in the Professional Division, was receiving £250 per annum. Having previously worked with the newly appointed Director of the Botanic Gardens, Joseph Henry Maiden, while she was working at the Sydney

Technological Museum, Sarah's future seemed assured. A newspaper article describing the opening of the Herbarium says that Miss Hynes was 'quite in her element as she describes the classification and system of arrangement of the dried plants'.⁶ Despite these auspicious beginnings Sarah soon clashed with Director Maiden and her immediate supervisor Botanical Assistant Ernest Betche, over her demands for a higher grading and salary. As noted already Betche was receiving £120 more per annum.

The Public Service Board Enquiries

The first enquiry 1901: this, a demand for a higher grading and salary, was initiated by Sarah herself. She was successful and her salary did increase to £145 in 1901 and her grading was changed from Educational to Professional but harmony was not restored. Despite the increase in salary Sarah continued to be listed as Second Botanical Assistant until her position was promoted to Botanical Assistant in 1909.

The second enquiry 1905: in 1905 Sarah Hynes was suspended from her position when 39 charges of insubordination were levied against her by the Public Service Board. According to Dr Noeline Kyle, the 1905 inquiry included the 'hibiscus episode' where she was said to have been 'loudly and continuously insolent to Mr Betche on 8 March 1905'.⁷

The charges against her included using

insulting conduct to her superior officers, repeated disobedience of orders, laying a trap to catch an officer ... By wilfully misplacing a box of Antarctic diaceae in the Herbarium, eavesdropping at the Director's door, prying in the Director's room ... and habitually raising the question that she is independent of Mr Betche.⁸

She was also accused of using the expression 'a lowdown, dirty larrikin trick', said to be 'unladylike'.⁹ Sarah denied that this was an unladylike expression.

Ernest Betche gave evidence stating:

She is such an aggressive woman. She cannot take anything quietly. She must have her say, and I will not listen. This is a constant source of trouble. If I say I will not listen to her disturbances and complaints, she forces me to listen. I told Mr Maiden, and she was forbidden to enter my room, so that I could have quiet. I say I will not dispute with her, and she comes knocking at the door. I do not want her in my room, because if she comes in at any time with any of her complaints I

cannot get rid of her. I told her to leave me alone, to leave my room, and she would not. I have said if she would not go away I would call the Director.¹⁰

The 39 charges were dismissed.

The third enquiry 1910: this dealt a body blow to Sarah's career at the Herbarium. It included the charge that she was either incompetent or not properly qualified. Mr Maiden specifically stated that her certificate in botany was not a teacher's certificate.

According to Noeline Kyle, Sarah was so incensed that she submitted her certificate, obtained at the 1879 training college examinations, as evidence of her teaching qualifications.¹¹

Mr Maiden used the opportunity of the third inquiry to testify that he would have preferred a male and that he took Sarah under special circumstances.

'We want somebody who is a plants man ... I do not want a section cutter like they turn out at the University.'¹²

He also stated that she was not like 'other women' and argued that she had 'done ... untold harm to the employment of women in New South Wales'.¹³ He went on to suggest she was mentally unstable.

Sarah Hynes was not like others working in the New South Wales Public Service and certainly not like those working in the Botanic Gardens. She was a woman and she was qualified, as a teacher and as a botanist. Curiously, Mr Maiden saw her university qualifications as a disadvantage. Sarah may have been difficult but this is hardly surprising under the circumstances. Nevertheless, she was capable, confident and determined—conducted her own defence in 1910. Although the 1910 Public Service Board Inquiry found that no serious charges were proven against Sarah, the Board did find that she had been insubordinate. As a result she was suspended and fined two weeks salary.

Sarah Hynes was one of five women and seventeen men listed in the Education Department files relating to actions against teachers. As Noeline Kyle notes, any 'nineteenth century teacher who challenged the system or took on an unusual role, would be dealt with unkindly by the authorities'.¹⁴ Sarah Hynes was a mature woman, with little patience with what she considered to be sloppy work practices and who may also have

been difficult. Nevertheless, in reading the correspondence at Department of Education Subject files held by State Records NSW it was clear that Sarah was keen to remain working and furthermore that she was adaptable, welcoming the opportunity to take on the teaching role when it was offered.

Move to the Department of Public Instruction

After the events of the 1910 inquiry it would have been impossible for Sarah Hynes to remain at the Botanic Gardens. She was transferred to the Department of Public Instruction (Department of Education) and appointed as Teacher of Botany in Public Schools on 1 September 1910. Sarah taught botany at Cleveland Street and Petersham High Schools and in 1916 she was appointed to St George Girls High School, where she remained until her retirement in 1923. While not among the first teachers to be appointed to the school, she was taken on a few months after its 1916 opening.

It is to Sarah Hynes's considerable credit that she made a success of this change of career late in her working life. She was a well-regarded teacher, as one former pupil recounts:

Our Botany excursions were loved by all. Miss Sarah Hynes was a delight to us. How she loved her subject and tried so hard to instil the love of our own native trees and flowers into her girls. Another student ... recalled how this 'eccentric but a dedicated teacher who inspired her students' would lie on her stomach looking down into ponds in the Botanic Gardens and 'rapturously describe the water weeds'.¹⁵

Despite what must have been a challenging time for Sarah, she continued her active public life after 1910. She was involved in the local political scene, serving as the president of the United Australia Party (UAP) Randwick Women's Social Committee and the vice-president of the Randwick and Coogee UAP.¹⁶ In addition, she was honorary organiser of the 1921 campaign to request the Federal government to purchase the paintings by her late friend the artist, naturalist and explorer Marian Ellis Rowan. Sarah's campaign was successful and in 1923 the Government purchased 947 of Rowan's paintings for the modest sum of £5000. The Rowan collection is held at the National Library of Australia.¹⁷

Sarah Hynes also found time to be a leading member of the committee responsible for raising funds for the building of the Sydney University Women's College. She was a co-founder of the Sydney Forum Club, which raised funds for the College, and served as its senior vice-president in 1933. She was appointed a Member of the British Empire (MBE) in 1934.

Phoenix from the Ashes

In a newspaper interview reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in January 1937 Sarah made no reference to the circumstances under which she left the Herbarium, simply listing the various positions she was offered and stating that she ended her career as a science mistress in the Department of Education.¹⁸

Despite the controversy at the Botanic Gardens, Sarah Hynes left an indelible mark. Joseph Maiden acknowledged Miss Hynes's 'valuable aid' in the preface to his *The Forest Flora of New South Wales*.¹⁹ William Fitzgerald named a species of acacia (*Acacia hynesiana*) after her in 1912. This recognition and the support of her students from St George Girls High remain a fitting memorial to the extraordinary Sarah Hynes.

Sarah Hynes died on 27 May 1938, survived by her older sister. Among the various bequests in her will the Women's College received funding to establish the Sarah Hynes Prize for Botany.

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- ⁷ Noeline Kyle, 'Sarah Hynes and the Hibiscus Episode: A Policy of Keeping Women Teachers in Their Place,' in *Women as Educators in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Australia*, ed. N. Kyle, Occasional papers, no 1, School of Learning Studies, University of Wollongong, Wollongong, 1989, pp. 7–8.
- ⁸ Noeline Kyle, p. 8.
- ⁹ Claire Hooker.
- ¹⁰ SRNSW: NRS 3830, [20/13261].
- ¹¹ Noeline Kyle, p. 8.
- ¹² SRNSW: NRS 3830, [20/13261].
- ¹³ SRNSW: NRS 3830, [20/13261].
- ¹⁴ Noeline Kyle, p. 9.
- ¹⁵ Pauline Curby, personal communication, 8 October 2015.
- ¹⁶ The United Australia Party was founded in 1931, the political successor to the Nationalist Party of Australia and predecessor to the Liberal Party of Australia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Australia_Party.
- ¹⁷ Margaret Hazzard, 'Rowan, Marian Ellis (1848–1922)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/rowan-marian-ellis-8282/text14513>.
- ¹⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 January 1937, p. 20.
- ¹⁹ Joseph Henry Maiden, *The Forest Flora of New South Wales*, originally published by the Forest Department of New South Wales in 1902, Preface, p. iv.

¹ Sarah Hynes quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 January 1937, p. 20.

² Kathleen Fitzpatrick, 'Webb, Jessie Stobo Watson (1880–1944)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/webb-jessie-stobo-watson-9025/text15893>.

³ The Australian Women's Register, University Women's Society. <http://www.womenaustralia.info/biogs/AWE4300b.htm>.

⁴ Claire Hooker, 'Hynes, Sarah (Sally) (1859–1938)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hynes-sarah-sally-13000/text23499>.

⁵ State Records NSW (SRNSW): Department of Education; NRS 3830, Subject files – Teachers, actions against, 1876–2005, [20/13261].

⁶ *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 16 March 1901, p. 44.



AN INDEPENDENT WAY OF SEEING

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC SCHOLARSHIP OF CATHERINE ROGERS

The twentieth anniversary of the founding of ISAA has been an occasion to look at what it means to be an independent scholar. It is a question that arises regularly but there is no single, formal, definition. The range of interests in ISAA for example—mainstream or on the margins—and levels of expertise—university educated or self-taught—are as wide as our ‘brown land’. The idea of independence encompasses not only a ‘love for learning and passion for knowledge’,¹ but also an ability to look outside the square. As Gretchen Poiner wrote in her introduction to the *Proceedings of the 2006 ISAA Annual Conference*:

By its very nature, independent thinking can imply a critique of, or even a threat to, established beliefs and behaviour and so runs the risk of being presented as nuisance, eccentricity or even trouble-making. Yet we commonly accept—usually in hindsight—that many of the great advances in theory and practice have sprung from boundary-breaking independent imaginations.²

If perseverance and self-sufficiency are your *forte*, there are substantial benefits to working independently. You can dedicate your time to the research you find most compelling and the contributions you wish to make without the need to conform to the imperatives of an academy or an institution. This rewarding but often solitary career path depends on self-motivation to keep projects on the go.³ Merrell Noden puts it in a nutshell: ‘Do-it-yourself scholars. No backing from the ivory tower.’³ Plenty of grit.⁴

Combining Poiner’s ‘independent imagination’ with Noden’s ‘plenty of grit’ epitomises the work of Catherine Rogers—an image-based scholar whose subject matter ranges across environmental, social and aesthetic concerns.⁵ Over the past five years she has also created *ISAA Review* covers



1: Catherine Rogers, 2012

that not only complement the themes of the journal but also represent visual essays in their own right.

Catherine's photographic practice involves digital technologies as well as conventional and non-conventional analogue media. She uses a variety of equipment: from commercially manufactured cameras and old fashioned, light sensitive films, to self-made pinhole (lens-less) models, to photographs made without using a camera at all. In combining 'alternative processes' with sophisticated ink technologies and different kinds of paper she achieves a wide range of colour and tonal possibilities. In short, Catherine Rogers deploys her equipment and materials much as an artist wields brush, paint and canvas.

Although the written word—in the form of an essay, article, book or now, internet text—might be the major conduit for the dissemination of scholarship, the medium of photography is a powerful one for telling a story or getting a message across. As John Berger writes in the introduction to his book, *Ways of Seeing*, a book that includes three essays consisting entirely of photographs:

Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognises before it can speak. But there is another sense in which seeing comes before words. It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world.⁶

To visualise that world and establish her place in it, Catherine Rogers has also created photo essays, usually consisting of series of photographs either to be viewed in a particular order, viewed randomly or all at once. Some may even comprise a single image.

Her photograph of a lone weed (image 1), rearing its head through the join between wall and floor at the National Gallery of Australia was reproduced inside the back cover of my biography, *A Most Generous Scholar: Joan Kerr, Art and Architectural Historian* (2012). The image not only illustrates independence—standing out from the crowd in an unusual way—but also demonstrates Catherine's ability to evoke, in 'left-field', fashion something of Kerr's larrikin streak. It might also say something about Catherine's own personality.

Over three decades of research and innovation Catherine has created many remarkable series of images. An activist's concern for the environment,

wherever it may be, runs through much of her practice as a photographic historian. She has been documenting old-growth forest areas in Tasmania for the past twelve years to record what is being lost as a result of intensive logging, which she vigorously opposes. Putting these images to practical use, she has produced calendars, posters and cards. In so doing Catherine is tapping into the tradition followed by many organisations dedicated to preserving the natural environment that use photographs to alert the general public to what is at stake. She presented a paper on this subject, at the 2007 ISAA Annual Conference.⁷



2. *Secret River, Tarkine, Catherine Rogers*

Catherine's aim has been to photograph the beauty and grandeur of pristine landscapes that are threatened with destruction, to make a record of 'what was'. An important criterion for these photographs is that they be taken in areas that most people can visit relatively easily. In so doing she draws viewers into her conservation agenda. Once a location becomes familiar—be it coastline, forest, wetland or desert—visitors will invest something of themselves in it, in the effort to save it.

Although Catherine sometimes adjusts the colours and cleans up shadowy areas to give better definition, the final printed images are as 'true to nature' as possible.

Yet there is often an essence of mystery to them, for example, in *Forest Creek* (image 3). The dark foreground framing a watercourse lit by sunlight filtering through the trees creates a place where the imagination can roam free.



3. *Forest Creek*, Catherine Rogers

As well as picturing the idyllic nature of wilderness landscapes, photography can also reveal the extent of destructive changes more dramatically than words—as is the case of Rogers’ photographs taken in the threatened old-growth forests in central Tasmania.



4. *Upper Florentine Logging Road*, Catherine Rogers

In the Upper Florentine Valley she witnessed the destruction of the forests by clear-fell logging. This involved the devastation of every living



5. *Styx Valley: Tree Fern*, Catherine Rogers

thing in the vicinity with many ‘apparently useless’ trees and plants lying smashed and damaged. Catherine hoped that by taking these photographs she could ‘somehow contribute to the campaign to stop this madness’.

Yet the madness continues. Here (image 5), a fallen tree fern shows an eerie resemblance to the paw of a giant animal, clinging futilely to life in a broken land.

Rogers has also developed a body of work centred on the sites of the British nuclear bomb testing at Emu in 1953 and at Maralinga from 1956 to 1963. She won the Alice Art Prize (2014) with a photograph entitled *Fallout*, taken at the now abandoned Maralinga test site (image 6).

Today it is almost inconceivable to view the Australian desert as an empty landscape suitable for blowing up by another nation. In image 7 Catherine has documented this shameful episode in Australia’s history in a chilling yet beautiful image.

Leaving the environment, I move into the studio to look at some of Catherine’s still-lives whose composition, colour and artifice are as much the result of the artist-photographer’s manipulation as those of any painter.



6. *Fallout*, Catherine Rogers, Alice Prize
(National Contemporary Art Award), 2014



7. *Maralinga Bomb Lines*, Catherine Rogers

Her work sits easily within a genre that dates back to and beyond the Flemish and Dutch schools of painting of the seventeenth century.

Inspired by the work of the inventor of negative/positive photography, William Henry Fox Talbot, Catherine placed fruit and vegetables directly onto large sheets of watercolour and printmaking paper coated with an

iron-based, cyanotype solution—a light-sensitive mixture she made herself from commercially available materials. She experimented with cool and warm background colours that altered the ambience of the scene in subtle ways.

We used one of her ‘Talbot’ images for the cover of the *ISAA Review* (Volume 10, Number 2, 2011) on the theme: ‘Found in Translation’ (image 9).



8. *Still Life with Fruit*, Catherine Rogers



9. *Detail from Still Life with Two Pineapples*,
Catherine Rogers, 2007

exact copy of the surrounding world, as happened in 1839, is a challenging one for us to contemplate today’.⁸

Still Life with Two Pineapples (2007) replicates how Talbot’s light-sensitive materials would have recorded the scene, being most responsive tonally to the blue end of the light spectrum, and less so to reds and greens at the other end. Although not possible to reproduce here, the pinkish-beige colour used on this cover was an attempt to copy one of the many colours in which Talbot’s prints appeared. In an essay on Talbot’s work Catherine reminds us that if, in the twenty-first century, ‘the photograph, and photography, is so ubiquitous, so utterly familiar’, it was not always so and ‘the idea of being confronted with an entirely unfamiliar image that appears to be an

Talbot was a scientist rather than an artist and Rogers feels his work has an ‘artless’ aspect to it in that he piled silverware and china on tables without much thought to composition.



10. *Clutter I*, Catherine Rogers

A similar sense of ‘artlessness’, or perhaps anti-art’, can be seen in this example of Catherine’s ‘table arrangement’ experiments.

Yet there is nothing artless about Catherine’s designs for the covers of the *ISAA Review*. The image chosen needed to distill the theme of an issue that might contain articles across diverse scholarly disciplines. Even though not a commercial publication, an *ISAA Review* had to entice readers to pick it up and, hopefully, read its contents. The cover also needed to have a certain gravitas, in keeping with the scholarly agenda.⁹

The process whereby Catherine and I came to agree on the choice of image to complement a particular issue, went something like this: I would send her an email detailing the theme, together with titles (and if possible a brief summary) of essays to be included. She would reflect on

this information and then send me several photographs for consideration. We also discussed a range of colours that might suit the theme.

An image of the open sea— open to all possibilities— is an appropriate one for the intellectual challenges of keeping an open mind (*ISAA Review*, Volume 11, Number 1, 2012).



11. *Tasman Sea*, Catherine Rogers, 2010

The subject of *Tasman Sea* is the apparent meeting of sea and sky. Waves rolling back from the shore rush to meet the incoming swells in a patchwork of foam and dark water. In the centre of the photograph a band of choppy sea forms a negative image of the foreground and in the sky above, roiling banks of clouds build above the horizon. The sea extends, limitless, beyond the frame on either side, inviting the viewer to imagine rocky headlands or perhaps a sandy spit, to contain the scene. Yet without landmarks it remains anonymous. All we know is that it is the Tasman Sea.

Catherine Rogers has been photographing oceans since 1978, exhibiting them on several occasions. Most of her photographs are of the oceans that surround Australia, including the meeting of the Indian and Southern



12a. Pacific Ocean; image 12b. Sky, Catherine Rogers

Oceans in the west. It is a never-ending project, she says, because the sea and sky are always changing.

Rogers takes photographs in all kinds of weather, at any height or distance from, on or in the sea. Despite the seemingly fixed parameters of a seascape that appear to eliminate much of the aesthetic decision-making, the challenge for Catherine is to see how she can play with those parameters.

ISAA Review, Volume 11, Number 2, 2012, looked at the idea of ‘Home Sweet Home’.



13. Inside a Display Home in an Exhibition Village, Catherine Rogers, c.1997

This photograph of a dining room comes from a black and white series begun in 1997, taken inside display houses in exhibition villages at Glenmore Park Estate and Homeworld at Kellyville on the outskirts of Sydney. The large window reveals

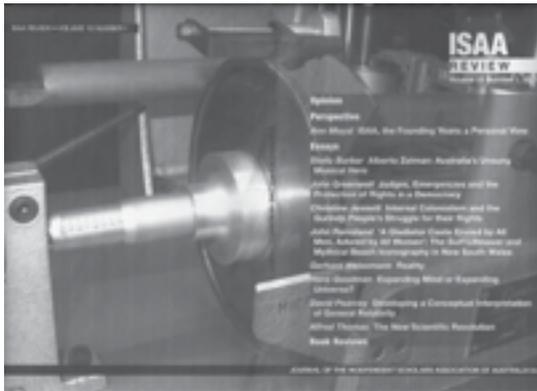


14. Castle in Denmark, Catherine Rogers 2008

similar ‘MacMansions’ across the road, also in the process of construction. The traditional design of the dining-suite, hinting at an heirloom passed down through generations, sits oddly in a barely completed house in a suburb that is only just coming into being. The ‘tea rose’ colour of the cover was chosen to epitomise the rosy optimism of the aspirational, usually young, couples who invest in such homes in new estates regardless of the availability of the most basic civic services.

Rogers’ fascination with rooms extended well beyond Australian’s shores. Taken on the other side of the world and in a location that could not be further away from suburban Sydney, *Castle in Denmark* (image 14, from the series ‘Picture for Waiting Rooms’) depicts a space, severe in its plainness. Diffuse light enters through semi-transparent curtains; daylight hovers outside the open window on the right of the image. Yet, like Rogers’ ocean photographs, there is nothing in the room to identify either its function or location apart from its name.

To illustrate ‘The Evolution of the Complexity of Science’ (*ISAA Review*, Volume 10, Number 1, 2011) we used the photograph *Ultramicrotome of 1964* (image 15). In the mid twentieth century the development of electron microscopy for the observation of material at cellular level not only opened up the biological and medical sciences but also created a need for new

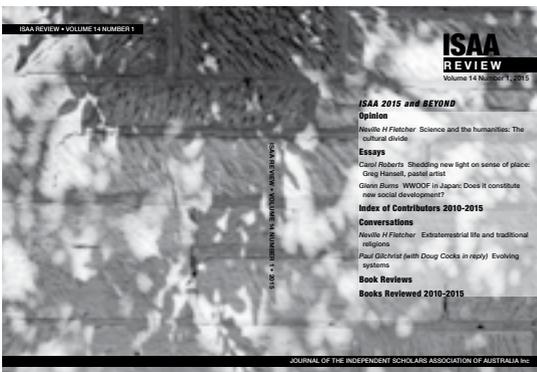


5. Ultramicrotome of 1964,
Macleay Museum, University of Sydney,
Catherine Rogers, 2011

equipment to cut the ultra thin sections required for this technology. The exponentially increasing complexity of science however means that this bulky assemblage of rods, cylinders and instrument panels is now a lumbering behemoth from a bygone era. Although Catherine took the photo especially

for this issue, it sits easily within her project of documenting the changing face of industry in urban society.

‘ISAA 2015 and Beyond’ (*ISAA Review*, Volume 14, Number 1, 2015) was a difficult theme to visualise and cause for considerable reflection. Catherine’s enigmatic image of sandstone masonry—it could be any building but here it is *Rozelle Hospital, Exterior Boundary Wall* (1992, image 16)—acquires an extra layer of meaning through the dappled patterns thrown by the foliage of the old trees surrounding the building. I interpret the shadows as evoking nostalgia for times past, the sunshine as lighting the way to the future.



16. *Rozelle Hospital, Exterior Boundary Wall*,
Catherine Rogers 1992

The photograph comes from a series in which Catherine documented the built environment (including hospitals, prisons and asylums) along the banks of the Parramatta River. In the 1990s most of the large riverside industries such as petro-chemical, gas and tar sites, slaughter-



17. *Darling Harbour 1*, Catherine Rogers



18. *Darling Harbour 2*, Catherine Rogers

houses, tanneries and metalworks that had depended on the river for transportation and as a means of getting rid of effluent, were being knocked down. They were replaced with medium and high density housing thus transforming the Parramatta River, ‘from an essential, useful waterway to an aesthetic one’.

Thirty-five years ago Joan Kerr wrote that ‘minerals, machinery and maltings [were] as vital to the fabric of our past as grand houses or cathedrals.’¹⁰ Catherine Rogers would surely concur. For thirty years she has been documenting Sydney’s disappearing institutional and industrial heritage. In 1987 the area now known as Darling Harbour was almost entirely obliterated. In images 17 and 18 Catherine charts the massive transformation of Darling Harbour from wasteland to a tableau evocative of the work of minimalist painters and sculptors.

Last, and probably my favourite *ISAA Review* cover, is one based on a particular moment in the historiography of modern art (*ISAA Review*, Volume 13, Number 1, 2014, ‘Historiography in the 21st Century’).

From 1915–1923 Marcel Duchamp worked on a curious artwork made of two sheets of glass, lead wire and oil paint. He called it *The Bride*



19. *Digital Dust Breeding*, Catherine Rogers, 2014

Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even. It was also known as *The Large Glass*. In 1920, Dada artist and photographer, Man Ray photographed *The Large Glass* after it had been covered with a year's worth of dust. He called his photograph *Dust Breeding* thus creating an early example of postmodern appropriation.

Digital Dust Breeding (image 19) brings the story into the twenty-first century. Catherine's image is a 'take' on Man Ray's photograph of Duchamp's artwork. Instead of glass, Catherine used a personal computer (PC) memory board from the early 1990s, photographed it and then covered it with 'digital' dust— courtesy of Photoshop—rather than real dust.

The cover for *A Most Generous Scholar: Joan Kerr, Art and Architectural Historian* (image 20) presented another interesting challenge. How does one 'illustrate' the life of an art and architectural historian? A portrait perhaps? An artwork? A rainbow swirl of paint? A piece of sculpture?

Joan Kerr had a particular love of nineteenth-century gothic architecture. Catherine came up with the idea of using a photograph of the stonework of the Edmund Blackett-designed Holy Trinity Church in Berrima, a building Kerr greatly admired. To encompass Kerr's work on twentieth-century architecture, Catherine suggested adding a swathe of the 'bush-



20. Cover for *A Most Generous Scholar: Joan Kerr, Art and Architectural Historian*, Catherine Rogers, 2012

hammered', chipped concrete surface of the National Gallery of Australia, which Joan Kerr loathed. For Kerr, a technique carried out by a man with a drill and involving 'thousands of hours of totally mind-destroying work' was an 'extra-ordinary perversion of technology' and 'too expensive a price to pay for a surface against which to hang pictures or enjoy because of its subtlety'.¹¹

Surface and subtlety ... The eye-catching primary colours of this cover belie the seriousness of its inherent artistry. Once again Catherine Rogers has created an enigmatic and playful image that leaves plenty for the viewer to think about and appreciate.

Photographs alert us to what is worth looking at, wrote Susan Sontag. They provide 'a grammar and, even more importantly, an ethics of seeing ... to give us the sense that we can hold the whole world in our heads'.¹² To take a photograph of an object, place or person, and give it a name, is to assume a kind of ownership.

Rogers has long been interested in this relationship between photography and language—the photographing of 'named' objects, things and places. 'How can you tell where it was taken without a name?' she asks. In naming her ocean photographs, for example, she is giving them a specific location although precisely where one body of water ends and the next begins is entirely conjectural.

I leave the final word to the horizon (image 21), forever moving, to stand for an indefinable essence that encourages Catherine Rogers to continue to seek the perfect reality, the perfect photograph.



21. *Horizon: Line between Two Points*, Catherine Rogers

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- ¹ Kristina Busse, 'How to be an Independent Scholar', *Antenna*, 8 November 2011, <http://blog.commarks.wisc.edu/011/11/08/how-to-be-an-independent-scholar/>.
 - ² Gretchen Poiner, 'Introduction' in *Independent Voices: 2006 ISAA Annual Conference Proceedings*, Canberra, 2006, p. 4.
 - ³ 'Independent Scholars', Department of History, University of British Columbia, <http://www.history.ubc.ca/content/independent-scholars>.
 - ⁴ Merrell Noden, 'Do-it-yourself scholars', *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, 22 April, 2009, <https://paw.princeton.edu/issues/2009/04/22>.
[www.catherinerogers.com.au/about the work](http://www.catherinerogers.com.au/about-the-work).
 - ⁵ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Penguin, London, 1972, p. 7.
 - ⁷ Catherine Rogers, 'Picturing Destruction: Wilderness and Landscape, Logging and Photography', in *Australia: A Work in Progress—the Natural and Built Environment: 2007 ISAA Annual Conference Proceedings*, Canberra, 2007, p. 56. The essay is also reproduced on her website: www.catherinerogers.com.au/.
 - ⁸ 'Reconciling Image and Reality in W H F Talbot's Early Photographs', *ISAA Review*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2011, p. 35.
 - ⁹ Delphine Hirasuna, 'The Art of Book Cover Design', www.atissuejournal.com/2013/06/06/the-art-of-book-cover-design.
 - ¹⁰ Joan Kerr, 'Making it New: Historic Architecture and its Recent Literature', *Meanjin*, vol. 39, no. 3, 1980, p. 366.
 - ¹¹ Joan Kerr, 'Does Art need Bush-Hammering? The Australian National Gallery Building and Its Rationale—an Architectural and Philosophical Discussion', *Artlink*, vol. 3, no. 6, 1984, p. 7.
 - ¹² Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, 1977; Penguin Books, London, 2002, p. 3.

IAN WILLIS



GUARDIAN ANGELS THE RED CROSS ON THE WARTIME HOME FRONT

At the beginning of the First World War in August 1914 women across Australia independently exercised their agency and joined the newly formed Red Cross. Lady Helen Munro Ferguson, the Edwardian wife of the Australian Governor-General, who had extensive experience in the Scottish Red Cross, appealed to Australian women to form local branches. At a time when patriarchy was the norm thousands of women joined up and through their efforts created one of Australia's most important community organisations.

In the small New South Wales dairying town of Camden, amongst the fifty or so women who founded the local Red Cross branch in August 1914 there were those who had done all of this before. During the Boer War Camden's Edwardian female elite had encouraged local women to send off soldier comforts to the local unit of the New South Wales Mounted Rifles. They put together a list of useful items including stationery, tobacco, pipes, pencils as well as hand-made including socks, shirts, mufflers, belts and caps. Led by the Macarthur Onslow women of Camden Park these women undertook patriotic fundraising, as their forefathers had done in the Crimean War, and established a local branch of the New South Wales Patriotic Fund (1899). While their wartime spiritual needs were met by joining the newly formed branch of Mothers' Union, a prayer group that also made comforts and undertook hospital visiting.

The Boer War experiences of Miss E. J. 'Nellie' Gould encouraged her to try and establish a Red Cross branch within the Women's Liberal League in 1911, similar to the Red Cross League formed by the Duchess of Montrose and Princess Christian in Scotland.¹ Miss Gould had been the

Lady Superintendent of the New South Wales Army Nursing Service that served in South Africa in 1900. The Women's Liberal League, which had 11,000 members by 1907, was one of the earliest women's organisations in New South Wales with an extensive branch structure,² which was later critical to the success of the Red Cross across the country. Miss Gould felt that as women had acquired the vote they should also make an equal contribution in the defence of the country by being trained to look after wounded soldiers, and proposed that Red Cross depots be established in preparation for war.³ In the end her proposals went nowhere. Miss Gould was later given charge of the Central Depot of the Red Cross in Sydney in 1914 and she served on the divisional executive committee for many years.

In mid-1913 there was a meeting in the library of the British Medical Association in Sydney to set up a branch of the British Red Cross, but nothing eventuated.⁴ The following year there was more success at the home of a Woollahra resident when Dr Roth, an early promoter of the Red Cross, gave a lecture on first aid and stretcher work for the wounded. This was followed up in July by a talk given by Lady Helen Munro Ferguson on the work of the Voluntary Aid Detachments and in August she sent out her national appeal to form local branches. There was a strong response of support and the New South Wales headquarters opened for business in Sydney city, and local committees appeared, starting in the city with the Women's Liberal League (11 August), the Sydney Lyceum Club (12 August), followed by suburban branches at Westmead (12 August) and a meeting at North Sydney Town Hall aimed to set up Red Cross activities between Manly and Hornsby (12 August).⁵

In the New South Wales Southern Tablelands country town of Goulburn 150 women attended a meeting convened by Mrs Betts, the mayor's wife, to form a local Red Cross branch. Those present recalled their efforts during the Boer War and immediately started Red Cross fundraising and organised a weekly sewing meeting at the Goulburn Guild Hall.⁶ Out at Wellington in western New South Wales forty-five women attended a meeting convened by the mayor, T Kennard, and decided to form a Red Cross branch, collecting £48 for Red Cross purposes.⁷ Up in the New England area at Tamworth Mrs Green chaired a meeting of eighty

women at the council chambers that established a Red Cross branch and drew on their Boer War experience.⁸ In the Camden district the first Red Cross branch at Camden was quickly followed across the district by village branches at Menangle, Narellan, The Oaks and later at Bringelly-Rossmore. By the interwar period the Camden Red Cross branch had become the largest in New South Wales and district Red Cross activity extended to Voluntary Aid Detachments, the Junior Red Cross and Red Cross hospitals.

By mid-1918 there were 632 Red Cross branches across New South Wales, country branches outnumbering city branches seven to one with 45,800 registered members. In other states Victoria had 886 branches, South Australia 369, Queensland 225, Western Australia 148 and Tasmania 175. This made an Australian total of over 2,400 local branches, from the country's population of just over five million.⁹

The Red Cross in Australia, which was initially a branch of the British Red Cross, was established with a three-tier structure—the national council in Melbourne, six state divisions and local branches. During World War I Red Cross headquarters was located in Government House in Melbourne under the watchful eye of Lady Helen Munro Ferguson. The national Red Cross was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1941, with the Governor-General as the national patron and state governors as divisional patrons. The Australian Red Cross only became a truly national organisation in 2005 after much angst following sustained public criticism in 2003 around its fundraising activities.¹⁰

This paper argues that there are a number of overriding themes that dominated the Australian local branches in the Red Cross movement during World War I, namely, agency, service, motherhood and place. The story of the Australian Red Cross and its local branch network is a study of independent voluntary activism of conservative women in place. Women were empowered by joining the Red Cross, creating their own social space and gaining considerable social authority around wartime patriotic work that had a national agenda. These women created what American historian Kathleen D. McCarthy has called 'parallel power structures' where women forged an array of opportunities for themselves by gaining

access to public roles that provided ‘peaceful, gradualist change’.¹¹ The Red Cross provided opportunities for voluntary action for women across the social spectrum, especially in rural areas that functioned within the tight familial and personal contact networks of small closed communities. This type of voluntary activism did not challenge patriarchy, gender expectations, class, conservatism or Protestantism.¹²

Training and efficiency were a hallmark of the Red Cross from its foundation and by the interwar period the society had absorbed aspects of modernism, and the associated scientific principles linked with medical and social work. This was particularly evident in the Voluntary Aid Detachments, which were the paramilitary wing of the British Red Cross. First aid and home nursing training were pre-requisites for men and women joining detachments, which dated from the 1880s in Great Britain. They were first registered with the Australian military in 1917 and were, according to historian Melanie Oppenheimer, to provide trained men and women in the Red Cross to nurse wounded soldiers in wartime.¹³ During World War I voluntary aids provided a labour force at a variety of Red Cross convalescent and rehabilitation hospitals across the nation.

The Red Cross was a place-based activity with transnational links, led by intelligent, wealthy, powerful, conservative Edwardian women who were part of imperial networks that had an impact from the local branch to London. Australian women, like Sibella and Enid Macarthur Onslow of Camden Park, copied the example of Lady Helen Munro Ferguson, who saw social action in the Red Cross as an alignment of patriotism, duty, class, gender, Christianity and motherhood. These women, who were committee members of the New South Wales divisional Red Cross as well as the national body in Melbourne, understood that the Red Cross in Australia successfully captured the essence of place by organising locally and advocating nationally. Red Cross branches and their wartime patriotic activities made a significant contribution to the development of community identity and a sense of place. Red Cross organisers understood the nature of parochialism and how it was an extension of a highly formalised sense of community, revolving around social obligation and reciprocity. Red Cross branches were a form of self-help through neighbourly assistance, a form

of mutuality. The branches provided a source of close and positive social interaction in a time of crisis, according to Canadian historian Elizabeth Kenworthy Teather. She has demonstrated how the stories of place are intimately linked to family and friends, the values and traditions that they fostered and the ability of people to express their attachment to place.¹⁴

Red Cross branches helped maintain morale within the community and allowed individuals to do ‘their bit’ for the war effort through patriotic activities and fundraising. For those on the home front, being patriotic meant supporting ‘their boys’ from ‘their community’, and not to do so was seen as being unpatriotic. The branches helped develop a sense of community through close bonds of identification around the construction of place, where intimacy, parochialism and localism created a closed community. Wartime home-front activities for the Red Cross contributed to people’s experience, loyalty to an organisation and their story of attachment to place. The stories of women’s families are embedded in the landscape and are reflected in their heritage, memories, celebrations, rituals and ceremonies, and are the essence of place.

Red Cross authorities promoted the society to volunteers and the community as the soldier’s metaphorical ‘mother’ and guardian angel on the battlefield. The mother metaphor was used in the *N.S.W. Red Cross Record* as early as December 1914 in an article called ‘Mothers of Men’.¹⁵ The metaphor of the ‘guardian angel’ appeared in Australian newspapers in August 1914 when the *Sunday Times* (Sydney) called Red Cross volunteer workers ‘Angels of Mercy’, and Red Cross nurses had ‘the touch of Christ’.¹⁶ Earlier in the year Lady Helen Munro Ferguson had referred to Red Cross workers using the biblical allusion of ministering angels.¹⁷ By 1918 the metaphor of the Red Cross as an angel was well entrenched and the Hobart *Mercury* ran a story about the Red Cross under the heading of ‘A Ministering Angel’, while in Adelaide the *Register* published an article under the headline ‘The Ministering Angel, Tribute to Red Cross Work’.¹⁸ By 1918 the Red Cross was identified in the English speaking world in posters and other publicity as the ‘Red Cross, Mother of all Nations’ and the ‘Greatest Mother in the World’.¹⁹ The work of Canadian historian Sarah Glassford has shown how these features also characterised the

American and Canadian Red Cross. The role of the fictive mother was not new, as American historian Ellen Ross has noted, with the example of a volunteer doctor assigning the mother's role towards British children to the Women's Labour League at a 1912 conference.²⁰

The Red Cross as mother and guardian angel was an extension of the notion around the ideology of motherhood and the anxieties about declining birth rates across the Empire in settler societies. Motherhood was seen as a national duty,²¹ and was linked with concerns over the decay of the home and family life by a number of women's groups, especially those associated with evangelical Christianity. They included the Mothers' Union, the National Council of Women, and later the Women's Institutes, the Country Women's Association in Australia and the Red Cross. The Red Cross encouraged local branch volunteers, who were mostly women, to immerse themselves in the ministering angel mythology and serve 'their boys' by volunteering as Red Cross workers for God, King and Country throughout World Wars I and II. The concerns of Edwardian women were overwhelmingly centred on the family, home and their religion. Australian historians Marian Quartly and Judith Smart have called this maternal feminism and have maintained that it was the justification for women's entry into public life.²²

The metaphor of the ministering angel, I would argue, was a mix of femininity combined with notions of patriotism and service, discipline and training, motherhood and purity, stoicism and selflessness, all wrapped up in events surrounding war and death. The Red Cross as mother and guardian angel was the expression of moral purity and Christian charity in the face of the violence, destruction and devastation of war—symbolism that was still used by the Australian Red Cross in the 1990s. The Red Cross worker as mother figure and guardian angel paralleled a similar narrative associated with the nursing profession and the Australian male Anzac legend, both of which developed during World War I. Much of the rhetoric that emerged around the themes of motherhood and the ministering angel was based on a type of biological determinism that maintained 'nurturing was more natural for women and viewed aggression as inherently male'.²³

From the beginnings of the Red Cross in 1914, volunteering had a

practical purpose and fits Hilary M Cary's ideology of 'female collectivism', where women believed in 'collective action as a force for change'.²⁴ More than this, Edwardian women were interested in organisations that, according to Julia Bush, had visible results, efficiency, attention to detail and were personal in nature, and the Red Cross fitted the purpose.²⁵

Practical Red Cross work with a purpose was an extension of women's domesticity and Red Cross workers developed their own spaces through sewing and knitting activities. Australian historian Emma Grahame has called these 'semi-public/semi-domestic spaces' that empowered women through their agency, combined with charity work. Women were 'cultural producers' undertaking an activity that did not conflict with their commitment to their family or, according to Grahame, their co-operative styles or their practical intuitive working methods.²⁶

Local Red Cross branches set up sewing circles in local halls in a quasi-industrial production-line setting. At Berry on the New South Wales South Coast Red Cross workers held weekly sewing circles and made shirts, balaclava caps, flannel belts, cholera belts, mufflers, towels and pillowcases, and other items. Between 1914 and 1919 the Berry Red Cross workers made over 6,600 articles that were sent to Sydney Red Cross headquarters. Local branches gave regular updates on their sewing efforts in the country press. In the Victorian Goldfields town of Ballarat Mrs McDonald, the secretary of the Ballarat Red Cross, reported at the 1915 June meeting on their efforts. One pair of socks had been received from Miss Tanner, Mrs Eyres, Mrs Williams, while Mrs Ross supplied seven pairs, Miss Turner six pairs, and Mrs Walker had made one flannel shirt, one pair of socks and one washer, Miss Nicholls thirteen pairs of slippers and Miss Parker had made twenty-six washers. In total over eighty-five individual women had hand-made socks, shirts, washers, slippers, pyjamas, scarves, bandages, cholera belts, caps and other articles.²⁷

Red Cross branches across New South Wales made a huge effort and Red Cross work involved an enormous amount of 'emotional labour', according to historian Bruce Scates.²⁸ Up to mid-1916 country branches supplied more to Red Cross headquarters in Sydney than metropolitan branches. Casino Red Cross topped the state with 17,990 items, followed

by Hay Red Cross with 13,681 articles, Walcha 11,436, then Lithgow 10,937, Goulburn 7,500, while in the Sydney Metropolitan Area, Vacluse Red Cross supplied 10,100 individual items, Willoughby Red Cross sent in 9,993 articles, Manly 7,358, and Wahroonga 9,242. By the end of the war women at Hay in Western New South Wales had sent in over 30,000 articles while in the Camden district Red Cross workers had supplied around 20,000 articles to Red Cross headquarters.²⁹

Red Cross work making hospital supplies required a strong cash flow, as Lady Helen Munro Ferguson had foreshadowed in 1914, and branches embarked on patriotic fundraising. Activities included all the traditional forms that many of these women undertook on church committees, such as stalls, fairs, gymkhanas, raffles, donations and other activities. A wide range of community organisations also provided Red Cross branches with considerable financial support, while Red Cross workers used their social networks to leverage additional community support, especially in rural areas. Consequently rural branches raised higher amounts than city suburban branches. The most successful fundraising efforts across New South Wales up to mid-1916 were country branches at Moree £2,787, Camden £2,483, Tamworth £2,127, Walcha £2,110 while the most successful branches in the Sydney Metropolitan Area were Vacluse £1,954, Rozelle £1,296, and Ashfield £1,010.³⁰

The sewing and fundraising efforts of Red Cross branches were sent to Red Cross headquarters in Sydney, which then provided supplies to a range of military hospitals in Australia and overseas, as well as Red Cross convalescent and rehabilitation hospitals. In New South Wales alone in 1916 the New South Wales Red Cross had responsibility for seven military hospitals and twenty-two field and camp hospitals. By 1918 the New South Wales Red Cross managed and financed eight hospitals, nineteen convalescent homes and four sanatoria for soldiers suffering from tuberculosis.

In conclusion, from the outbreak of war in 1914 Australian women used their Boer War experiences and participated in independent voluntary activism across Australia by setting up Red Cross branches. The place-based nature of Red Cross work was an extension of the women's private

space where their concerns centred on family, church and community. The Red Cross used the allegory of motherhood, wrapped up with notions of Christian charity, as a way of encouraging the participation of women.

Women used their domestic skills from the private sphere and became Red Cross workers, sewing, knitting and fundraising for patriotic to support 'their boys' in patriotic housekeeping. Red Cross volunteering became synonymous with matters of soldier welfare and national patriotism. Fundraising became a major community event, where parochialism was linked to national wartime priorities and by 1918 many local Red Cross branches effectively controlled most of the home-front war effort. Voluntarism allowed women, particularly those in closed rural communities, to create parallel paths for themselves within tightly controlled social networks in a form of maternal feminism. The study of Red Cross branches is one example of a local study that can provide a window into the wider national and transnational perspective of one of the world's most important welfare organisations.

¹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 July 1911.

² Margaret Fitzherbert, *Liberal Women Federation to 1949*, Federation Press, Sydney, 2004, pp. 25–27.

³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 May 1911.

⁴ NSW Division, ARCS (BRCS), *Annual Report 1914*, p. 4.

⁵ *Ballarat Courier*, 11 August 1914; *Ballarat Star*, 12 August 1914; *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate* (Parramatta), 12 August 1914; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 August 1914.

⁶ *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, 15 August 1914.

⁷ *Wellington Times*, 20 August 1914.

⁸ *Tamworth Daily Observer*, 13 August 1914.

⁹ Melanie Oppenheimer, *The Power of Humanity, 100 Years of Australian Red Cross 1914–2014*, Harper Collins, Sydney, 2014, p. 26; NSW Division, ARCS (BRCS), *Annual Report 1917–1918*, p. 36.

¹⁰ Oppenheimer, *Power*, pp. 248–258.

¹¹ Kathleen D. McCarthy, 'Parallel Power Structures: Women and the Voluntary Sphere', in *Lady Bountiful Revisited, Women, Philanthropy and Power*, ed. Kathleen D. McCarthy, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 1990, pp. 1, 11, 23.

¹² Ian Willis, 'Wartime Volunteering in Camden', *History Australia*, 2004, vol. 2, no. 1, 2004, p. 5.



INDEPENDENT THINKING AND DIFFICULT IDEAS

A FEW PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ON INFANTICIDE

In a recent article, the distinguished anthropologist Sherry Ortner called for the reconsideration of the concept of patriarchy that had been central to feminist analyses of western social practices during the 1970s.¹ What concerned her was that patriarchal practices that she considered as nasty and pervasive had strengthened since then, becoming so naturalised that they were now passing unnoticed, carrying the aura of truth.² For many women today, she says, patriarchy has become unseeable; and most certainly the term is pretty well unsayable if you don't want to identify yourself as an intellectual dinosaur. Yet the evidence being presented to the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse along with women's efforts to draw attention to what appears to be a rising number of women and children killed by their male partners have opened up to scrutiny the ways in which just two of the pillars of patriarchal patterns of control—those embedded in the churches and those governing intimate relationships—remain institutionalised and accepted.³ Ortner believes that the concept of patriarchy—patriarchy as structured macro-systems of male power—needs to be brought back into view, and I agree with her. Patriarchy needs to be recalled, spoken of, identified, revitalised and reinstalled within our feminist thinking in ways that will make its parameters and damages visible to younger generations of scholars and political activists. It will help them to scrutinise anew the cultural assumptions and truths that make male power over women seem natural, normal and inevitable. For many, patriarchy will remain a difficult idea. The theme of this conference has provided a timely opportunity to discuss it.

- ¹³ Melanie Oppenheimer, *Red Cross VAs, A History of the VAD Movement in New South Wales*, Ohio Productions, Walcha, 1999, pp. 3–5; *N.S.W. Red Cross Record*, vol. 13, no. 7, 2 July 1917, p. 15.
- ¹⁴ Elizabeth Kenworthy Teather, 'Voluntary Organizations as Agents in the Becoming of Place', *Canadian Geographer*, vol. 41, no. 3, 1997, pp. 226–234 and 'The Double Bind, being Female and being Rural: A Comparative Study of Australia, New Zealand and Canada', *Rural Society*, vol. 8, no. 3, 1997, p. 215.
- ¹⁵ *N.S.W. Red Cross Record*, December 1914, p. 19.
- ¹⁶ *Sunday Times*, Sydney, 30 August 1914.
- ¹⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 July 1914.
- ¹⁸ *Mercury*, Hobart, 23 April 1918; *Register* (Adelaide), 12 July 1919.
- ¹⁹ 'Emblems of Liberty and Humanity. The Red Cross, Mother of All Nations', World Digital Library, <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/4631/>; Sylvie Pomiès-Maréchal, '“A white city of desolation”: Verdun as Seen by Three British Nurses', *Revue Française de Civilisation Britannique*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2015, <http://rccb.revues.org/294>.
- ²⁰ Sarah Glassford, '“The Greatest Mother in the World”, Carework and the Discourse of Mothering in the Canadian Red Cross Society during the First World War', *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2008, pp. 219–232; Ellen Ross, 'Good and Bad Mothers: Lady Philanthropists and London Housewives before the First World War', in *Lady Bountiful Revisited*, p. 182.
- ²¹ Anna Davin, 'Imperialism and Motherhood', *History Workshop*, vol. 5, no. 1, 1978, p. 13.
- ²² Marian Quartly and Judith Smart, *Respectable Radicals, A History of the National Council of Women of Australia 1896–2006*, Monash University Publishing and National Council of Women of Australia, Melbourne, 2015, pp. 53–54.
- ²³ John Connor, Peter Stanley and Peter Yule, *The War at Home, Volume 4*, in series *The Centenary History of Australia and the Great War*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2015, p. 182.
- ²⁴ Hilary M. Cary, '“Doing Their Bit”: Female Collectivism and Traditional Women in Post-Suffrage New South Wales', *Journal of Interdisciplinary Gender Studies*, vol. 1 no. 2, 1996, pp. 101, 108–109.
- ²⁵ Julia Bush, *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power*, Leicester University Press, London, 2000, p. 74.
- ²⁶ Emma Grahame, 'Making something for myself': Women, Quilts, Culture and Feminism, PhD Thesis, UTS, 1998, pp. 9, 92–95.
- ²⁷ *Ballarat Courier*, 19 June 1915.
- ²⁸ Bruce Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War', *Labour History*, no. 81, November, 2001, p. 31.
- ²⁹ NSW Division, ARCS (BRCS), *Annual Report 1914–1916; Riverine Grazier*, 28 March 1990.
- ³⁰ NSW Division, ARCS (BRCS), *Annual Report 1914–1916*.

A lot has happened since the 1970s when Ortner first discussed the subordination of women. The concept of patriarchy utilised at that time drew on a long history within European political thought, most of it deriving from biblical precedents, utilising biblical imagery. Most clearly expressed in Robert Filmer's book of 1680, *Patriarcha or the Natural Power of Kings*, the notion that a family consisted of a patriarch governing his wife and children as God and King governed his children on earth was embedded within Christian theologies and practice. While Ortner argues for moving away from the earlier feminist critiques of patriarchy that focused so strongly on the family, I believe that much can be gained from looking at family again, particularly as the nature of the family and its articulation with heterosexuality seems to be changing so rapidly. I want to look at its gendered hierarchies from an anthropologist's perspective—that is to say, to see the family not only as a site of power involving its individual members, but as a focus for the comparisons by which Australian social practices and cultural assumptions come to seem superior to those found in other societies. In other words, the family is a site of moral critique. In Australia, a good deal of what Ortner would define as patriarchal power continues to be implemented through the prism of an imagined normative family that is inflected with the assumptions of race.

Racism in Australia constantly asks non-Indigenous Australians to think of themselves by contrasting their thought and practices with those of Aboriginal people who are said to be living in moral and economic disarray. A collapse of family and its norms figures in a great many public justifications for the removal of human rights from Indigenous Australians that took place in 2007 under the rubric of the 'Emergency Response Intervention'. In other words, Australian society as a whole remains indelibly marked not just by the racialised practices of a colonial past but also by a continuously re-colonising present. In that present, the family—the ordering of its gendered relations, its sexual controls and the management of children—operates as a visible, potent, definitive site of powers that are not simply gendered as in earlier concepts of family, but racialised (as it is expressed in claims regarding moral decay and normative violence in the Indigenous family). It goes without saying that the newer

sites of cultural production identified and analysed by Ortner in America (corporate practices and the film industry) are equally important in Australia. But even as it is extended beyond the bounds of heterosexuality family remains too important to patriarchy and to feminist critique to walk away from its analysis. I look at patriarchy from within the context of colonial racialism by focussing on just one element of it, infanticide.

Because of its moral potency within discourses of race and colonisation, and because of extensions of the sciences of the body in the arena of life and death, infanticide remains as difficult to write about now as it was in the 1970s, yet it seems to me a crucial and enlightening issue. In Australian law infanticide is defined as a crime, one most commonly committed by a woman (just as 'domestic violence' is generally a male crime committed against women and children).⁴ But what if infanticide were not to be a crime punishable in law? In most of the colonial records of Indigenous practices, but most certainly in those of the colony of South Australia in the 1840s, infanticide was not a crime but a customary practice.⁵ As such it could operate as a clear marker of cultural difference—it marked their barbarity and their need for colonial Christianisation by the colonising, civilised, us.

What I want to do here is to look at some of the ways in which infanticide operates around the margins of liberal democracy, throwing up questions about liberalism's basic assumptions about the nature of the world—about life and death, power and control, and about individual rights. I hope to demonstrate that when we talk about infanticide, that is to say, about *women* killing babies at or shortly after birth, we are also always talking about the practices by which men control women—practices that Ortner refers to as patriarchy. As liberalism's assumptions about human nature and gender came into play in Australia during the processes of colonisation, I draw on aspects of my current work on the initial colonisation of South Australia in the summer of 1836–37.

Infanticide in the Colony

What was visible in the colony—in South Australia—is that the customary practice of infanticide among the Karna, Ngarrindjeri, Tatiara,

Buandij, and Murray river peoples, to name just those few the colonists encountered in their first decade, implies a quite different mechanism for the male control of women, one that did not revolve around male control of women's reproductive capacities in the way that the English colonists were familiar with. Among the Australians of the Adelaide plain, infanticide was 'women's business'. Their form of 'women's business' was not limited to matters menstrual, nor to forms of 'love magic' aimed at attracting the object of one's heart's desire, nor even to women's procedures designed to bring death or disaster upon another. It was the serious business in which women engaged directly in producing and controlling the welfare of present and future generations, engaging in crucial decisions of life and death.

The diaries and publications of the Lutheran missionaries based in Adelaide from October of 1838, Clamor Schürmann and Christian Teichelmann, show that their attempts to stop infanticide, to 'save the children', were regarded with a polite, puzzled, lack of interest.⁶ Schürmann and Teichelmann thought it was a horrible thing to do, against the laws of their god as well as forbidden by English law. It was a crime as well as a sin.

Understandings of the Colonists—Infanticide in England

Although the colonists of South Australia saw infanticide as an abomination, English custom, English law and the enforcers of that law had not always been overly concerned about the deaths of newborns. Social and legal focus on infanticide rose and fell. Historians working in the field often comment that attitudes to infanticide are ambiguous; although infanticide was criminalised as a murder, they note that death sentences were often commuted and that eventually a lesser charge was created ('concealment of birth') that generously had no death penalty attached to it at all.⁷

Many of those writing on the topic consider also that it was a crime likely to have been substantially under-reported. The corollary of that belief is that infanticide was a reasonably common practice, or if not so much common, at least known of. It was 'thinkable' and by no means always abhorred. I should say perhaps that in the 1950s when I was growing up in Adelaide, there was a subterranean stream of understanding that a woman

might well do away with a newborn, and a certain sympathy for such an act, just as there was sympathy for women driven to applying too much discipline to a young child, and for abortion (then illegal). I don't recall anyone among my parents' friends being identified as having given up a child in that way, but cot deaths were not investigated closely and were understood as accidental (referred to as a mother 'over-laying' the baby in her bed) or in medical terms as mysterious.⁸ Those were also years in which new babies with physically visible problems were allowed to die quietly in hospital. This was understood as compassion—compassion for the child, for the mother, for the other members of the family. The focus was on the prospects of the living rather than those just arrived. So that was one form of discourse, sentiment and moral evaluation to be found in that place, at that time. The conjunction of scholarly opinion with popular discourse among women on the practice of this women's crime is intriguing. One might almost be led to think that from the eighteenth century into the 1950s, there was a covert recognition that patriarchal powers over the production of children could reach certain limits even when men's usage of women's bodies had very few.

In the new settlement of Adelaide during the 1830s and 1840s though, when English law entered the colony, concern had come to focus more sharply on newborns. A rising wave of hysteria in England, increased police powers, concerns arising from demands for female chastity, fear of women's sexual enticements, unconcern over the age of sexual partners (the age of consent was ten years), and an increasing focus on patriarchal blood lines had already produced prosecutions in England that saw more and more women hunted down and going to the gallows for murdering a newborn child. Similar forces were at work in Germany, a country that supplied enough Jewish and Lutheran colonists to make early South Australia almost bilingual. In this context, it is important to note that the few men before the English courts in connection with infanticide usually appeared as accessories rather than as joint perpetrators—rather as Michael Chamberlain appeared as an accessory in the prosecution concerning his wife's supposed murder of their child, Azaria (born 11 June 1980, died 17 August 1980), thereby avoiding imprisonment.

The rising wave of infanticide accusations in England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and possibly its actual commission, needs to be seen in a context heavily inflected with colonial concerns that I shall come to shortly. It carried on throughout much of the Victorian era, peaking at around 1864, just when evolutionary concerns with race were solidifying.⁹ After that, concerns about children shifted from infanticide to infant mortality—to hygiene, a rather Foucauldian twist.¹⁰ Data provided by Annie Cossins for England in the middle of the nineteenth century illustrate the way in which social facts can remain unchanged while concerns about them change. Her data indicate that recorded incidents of infanticide paled into insignificance when compared with child deaths from hunger, disease and overwork and that when medical and public attention made the shift to child mortality, infanticide did not cease.¹¹

In referring to the situation in England, I am trying to generate a picture of how the South Australian colonists, arriving with their huge families, thought about the killing of a newborn child, of how their Englishness and their Protestant, usually evangelical, Christianity governed their understanding of the infanticide practiced in Australia during the 1830s and 1840s. For what they saw when they looked out from their tents upon the Kurna was *customary* infanticide, an un-hidden practice marked as neither a crime nor a sin, but a woman's right, part of her duty to her family. That custom appeared to the colonists as unnatural, as needing an explanation. To many people it still appears in this way.

As far as South Australia's governing officials were concerned, English law could not really be applied to a people who knew nothing of it; they were a people who were as intelligent and quick to learn as any other, but a people whose supposedly savage and uncivilised customs justified the moral righteousness of the colonial project. So while the missionaries might exhort and the populace deplore, Kurna infanticide was not a police matter. Its open practice operated instead as a kind of pivot around which colonial observations of local Indigenous custom could circulate. It became a moral marker of the need to rescue Indigenous women from the barbarity imposed upon them by the powerful and violent men of the tribe. It is not so surprising, then, to see accounts emerge in which

'women's savagery' became allied with criticisms of the use of male force against them. Their violent men made them do it. At the same time, in the context of rapid settlement and the violence it involved, accounts of infanticide became joined to cannibalism to provide a powerful image of Indigenous horror and colonising righteousness.¹²

Infanticide around Adelaide

There is little doubt that until colonisation most Indigenous women chose to rear one child at a time; nor that the almost continual pregnancy found among English women was entirely untenable in an economy highly geared toward mobility. As mentioned earlier, pleas to refrain from infanticide by Schürmann and Teichelmann met with Kurna puzzlement and disregard. In writing about such matters, the colonists often translated the practice into one in which women simply could not be bothered rearing an extra child, 'to avoid the bother of nursing it', as Christina Smith would say of Buganditj women.¹³ This is a misreading, a misunderstanding that was very common, and one that has persisted into the present.

For Indigenous Australians, the spacing of children was a socially responsible way of dealing with the natural and economic opportunities available to them. It was the foundation of survival of both mother and child, as well as of the good life that so many people recall when thinking about their time of living beyond the restrictions of colonisation, mission discipline and government interference. So there is no doubt that Indigenous Australian women had both the right and the duty to make sure that children came into a kin group and a relationship with their mothers that gave each child the best possible chance of growing up healthy, that gave each mother a chance to thrive, maintain an independent productive life, and to bring the next living child into a *good* life.

Infanticide and Patriarchy

When the German missionaries, the Protestant clergy and the other colonists found themselves dealing with a society in which women's bodies and women's sexual services were not controlled by men through male control of reproduction, they were unsettled to an unusual degree. They

looked out upon a society that they believed was thoroughly patriarchal in the older and biblical sense of the word, one in which men were gods with limitless power over women, to the point of beating them very badly at whim, they believed, or even of killing them. Such a society they considered to be incurably violent in its nature.

What I think they sensed, though, was that women's absolute control of whether a 'man's' child should live or die was a total upsetting of the natural order of normal, male superiority—an upending of the structures of sentiment through which women's natural, right and proper behaviour was defined through maternal love, submission and sacrifice of self. An upending, too, of the right to kill, to grant life or deliver death, that European culture assigned to men and men only. Indigenous women appeared to the colonists as monsters, just like the monstrous cannibal tribes they believed lived along the violent frontiers of the colony. The murderous women stood at the frontiers of the normative sex and gendered order of the new moral world being installed by the colonists. I think that it was the threat to liberal versions of masculinity, its structures, rights and powers, that made the cannibal mother, popularised by Daisy Bates, a believable monster and an extra incentive to those who would remove her rights.¹⁴ To me, the cannibal mother of frontier mythologies appears as the precursor of the monstrous death-dealing mother of the 1980s epitomised by Lindy Chamberlain whom I have already mentioned, an image so compelling in her case that even now there are many who cling to the belief that Lindy Chamberlain murdered her tiny baby.

Ortner has asked feminists to look again at patriarchy, to re-engage in ways that will expose and undermine its obscured politics. It seems to me that in the highly sexualised and brutal gender relations characteristic of the neo-liberal régimes operating today, particularly the extensions introduced into both the beginnings and endings of life, women still lack control of their own bodies. The neutral 'foetus' of the past has become the 'unborn child' of the present; the newly-born has been given rights to live regardless of the consequences for others; and more particularly, control of whether a woman wishes to bear a child, or not, is caught up in a discursive web circulating around the nature of humanity that always

privileges the life of the immanent or newborn over the life and future of the adult woman. The Kaurna of the Adelaide plain did not do this.

Today's murderous mother has lost her ambiguity; the hunt for her has intensified. The intensification has come in part through the intensified misogyny of radical Christian theologies, through the attempts of medical science to discover the origins of 'cot deaths' so as to distinguish possible murders from the fog of 'unknown causes'; in part it has come through deregulated masculinity within a neo-liberal economy; in part from new policing technologies that allow the tracking of women and clearer diagnoses of any tiny bodies that come to notice. The effort put into locating these mothers, always 'for their own good', is phenomenal. As I was preparing the first draft of this paper, the NSW Police were trawling through all hospital records in order to find a birth that might be attached to the decomposing body located in the sand at Maroubra beach in Sydney, and thus to find the baby's mother.¹⁵ For her own good, of course, as she may need help. Inevitably, any help given will help her into court and thence to prison. Meanwhile, police in Victoria were prosecuting a young girl, 'accused of killing her newborn baby and leaving her under a tree'. This young girl, raised as Catholic and not knowing she was pregnant until the last minute, gave birth unassisted in the early hours on plastic bags that she put on the floor of her home. There has been no media commentary at all on who the father was. The DPP, John Champion SC, pursued this case relentlessly saying only that they would drop the murder charge if the girl pleaded guilty to 'child homicide' or manslaughter.¹⁶

In the event, this young woman was helped by the state laws of Victoria. She was able to plead guilty to infanticide, a crime that carries a maximum penalty of five years in jail. The judge accepted the defence that a rare but recognised mental disorder called pregnancy denial had led to the death of the child and that the birth and subsequent death of her daughter was extremely traumatic. Her shock had significantly impaired her ability to respond to the infant's distress. ' "The loss of a child is a life sentence in and of itself", Rush said.'¹⁷

There is much that might be said about this case, including both the demand for a guilty plea and the maximum penalty of five years in jail,

but the case demonstrates the way in which infanticide is a crime that criminalises vulnerable and ignorant women. This fundamental plank of the current deployment of male powers was of concern in the 1790s, in the 1890s, in the 1980s and again today, now as then, bearing all the hallmarks of a witch-hunting, cleansing operation. Making infanticide a crime might also be seen as the other side of patriarchal practices that make much male violence against women either legal, unpunishable, unseizable or unprovable.

The criminalising of infanticide means that women do not control their fecundity; they do not decide if they want to raise a child, they do not decide if they want a child, they do not control their bodies. I do not know why it should be that women should be forced to raise children that they do not want or cannot support. As reported in Lesley Gore's obituary:

During the 2012 presidential campaign [in America], [she] turned [her hit song] 'You Don't Own Me' into an online video public service announcement demanding reproductive rights for women.¹⁸

But all too often, they do own us. The contemporary spike in the killing of women and their children by the men who think they own them has not been produced by occasional incidents of men who have somehow gone wrong but are very public expressions of the realities of Australian versions of the structures of patriarchy.

Australia's Indigenous practices of infanticide should stand as a reminder of a possibility for women, a possibility that is not found within the present anti-woman laws favouring always the life of the child over the already-living woman. Those laws are not 'normal' or 'natural' and there are no rational grounds for saying that they are. The rights of women living now need to be extended, reviewed and supported. Today's feminists might look at whether decriminalising infanticide—decriminalising a practice that remains a matter of ambiguity and often of necessity—could help to undo some of the gross indignities that extreme forms of neo-liberal governance continue to visit upon women, the processes and practices of male powers that will undoubtedly determine the well-being of the children of the future. Decriminalising infanticide is a difficult idea that needs some truly independent thinking.

- ¹ Sherry B. Ortner, 'Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?' in *Woman, Culture, and Society*, eds M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1974.
- ² Sherry B. Ortner, 'Post-Feminism and Other Historical Conundrums' [interview], <http://aotcpres.com/articles/postfeminism-historical-condundrums/#sthash.Dmv7KwRM>. Ortner states: 'I began from a sense, an almost paranoid sense, that patriarchy is everywhere still and yet nobody is talking about it. And it's there in some particularly nasty forms, too, it seemed to me, worse than ever'. See also her, 'Too Soon for Post-Feminism: The Ongoing Life of Patriarchy in Neoliberal America', *History and Anthropology*, vol. 25, no. 4, 2014, pp. 530–549.
- ³ For the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse, see, <http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/about-us>.
- ⁴ Robyn Lansdowne, 'Infanticide: Psychiatrists in the Plea Bargaining Process', *Monash University Law Review*, vol. 1, no. 9, 1990, pp. 41–63.
- ⁵ Mentioned by Schürmann and Christina Smith in their respective diary entries. See: Edwin A Schürmann, *I'd Rather Dig Potatoes. Clamor Schurmann and the Aborigines of South Australia 1838-1853*, Lutheran Publishing House, Adelaide, 1987; Mrs James (Christina) Smith, *The Booandik Tribe of South Australian Aborigines: A Sketch of their Habits, Customs, Legends, and Language*, 1880; Libraries Board of South Australia, Adelaide, 1965.
- ⁶ Schürmann, 1987, p. 96: 'even a few weeks ago ... the youngest wife of King John [Mullawirraburka] killed her second child in Adelaide'.
- ⁷ Helen Jones, *In Her Own Name. A History of Women in South Australia from 1836*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986; in 1803 English law shifted the onus of proof of innocence from the woman by changing the charge to murder so that the Crown had to prove its case; R. Sauer, 'Infanticide and Abortion in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Population Studies*, vol. 32, no.1, 1978, pp. 81–93.
- ⁸ I am grateful to Elspeth Browne for pointing out the use and significance of the term 'over-laying'. For a discussion of cot deaths and the role of specialist pediatricians see Anne Cossins, *Female Criminality. Infanticide, Moral Panics and The Female Body*, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndsmills, Basingstoke, 2015, pp. 216 ff.
- ⁹ Rosemary Gould, 'The History of an Unnatural Act: Infanticide and "Adam Bede"', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, vol. 25, no. 2, 1997, pp. 263–277. Cossins places a peak of public concern operating between 1861 and 1870 (p. 1).
- ¹⁰ Jones, p. 37, identifies infant mortality as 'one of the great public questions of the late nineteenth century in western countries.'
- ¹¹ Cossins, *Female Criminality*.
- ¹² For a careful account of the significance of the cannibal in the Australian colonies see, Andrew Lattas, 'Savagery and Civilization: Towards a Genealogy of Racism', *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice*, vol. 21, 1987, pp. 39–58.
- ¹³ Smith, *The Booandik Tribe*, p. 5.



INDEPENDENT THOUGHT AND SCHOLARSHIP RAMIFICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT WHEN IT IS SUPPRESSED

- ¹⁴ Early allegations of cannibalistic infanticide have had a long life. Daisy Bates made much of it in her book, *The Passing of the Aborigines*, first published in 1938 and republished as late as 1966. If her claims carried weight among the general populace, they infuriated the anthropologist and political activist, Olive Pink, causing a permanent breach in a formerly respectful relationship. ‘Cannibalism in South Australia’, *South Australian Register*, 4 September 1847; Daisy Bates, *The Passing of the Aborigines. A Lifetime Spent Among the Natives of Australia*, John Murray, London, 1966, p. 144.
- ¹⁵ ‘Australian Police Have Urged the Mother of a Baby Found Dead and Buried in the Sand at Sydney’s Maroubra Beach to Come Forward’, *BBC News*, 1 December 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-30271698>. See also: ‘Brisbane Mother to Stand Trial for Murder over Newborn Deaths’, *ABC News*, 29 January 2015.
- ¹⁶ Mark Russell, ‘Meeting to Decide if Mother Will Stand Trial’, *Age*, 21 March 2015, p. 16.
- ¹⁷ ‘Melbourne Teenager Who Killed Her Newborn Baby Avoids Jail Sentence’, *Guardian Australia*, online edition 20 September 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2015/sep/30/melbourne-teenager-who-killed-her-newborn-baby-avoids-jail-sentence>.
- ¹⁸ ‘Lesley Gore, Singer of It’s My Party, Dies Aged 68’, *Guardian Australia*, online edition, 17 February 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/feb/16/lesley-gore-singer-of-its-my-party-dies-aged-68>.

This article is about the top-down and concentrated nature of power in Japan, its abuses, the ramifications for social development, and the attitudes of citizens towards the same. The central thesis is that in using a top-down approach to development and narrowly adopting Western liberal measures of an economic nature to achieve substantial initial economic success, Japan has failed to give attention to aspects of social development central to that liberalism—such as allowing the growth of a vibrant and independent civil society, and an independent media. The lack of the latter has stagnated the former and is undoing it. This paper draws on twenty years of observation in Japan.

Power is central to social development.¹ Government resides at the top of society on the basis that it legislates to itself power to compel its citizenry to behave in ways that it wants them to behave, including a monopoly on the use of physical force: the ultimate form of power.² Thus, because government exists at the top of society, the development that it undertakes is also top-down.

Social development is defined as activity of a nationwide dimension including that associated with new economic initiatives, new livelihood and new education, in addition to making it easy for people, rural and urban populations of all age-groups, to move to different locations in order to benefit from improvements.³

After producing spectacular economic development following World War II, Japan is now in its third decade of overall poor social development outcomes, unprecedented amongst developed nations.⁴ This is seen in ballooning unemployment, increasing disparities of wealth—especially

between rural and urban, and between young and old populations—and rising homelessness.⁵ It is seen in ongoing recession, periods of deflation, and spiralling debt.⁶ The post-WWII single-party-democracy monopoly continues, emblematic of which was that the main opposition party fielded insufficient candidates to win at the last election.⁷ Old men dominate most positions of power in and between government and big business, and generations of young people struggle to find quality career employment.⁸

As attested by a wide body of academic literature, these poor development outcomes derive in the main from an archaic top-down and narrow approach to development, notwithstanding that such an approach worked spectacularly well following World War II, starting from a low base that was broadly shared.⁹ Eisenstadt ascribes a proclivity for top-down development to Japan's Confucian roots.¹⁰ Goodman understands the same in terms of a 'groupism', conformity and hierarchy associated with Japan's wet-paddy rice-farming history and an associated compulsion to cooperate in order to maximise shared optimal outcomes.¹¹ Ogawa corroborates this in terms of a lack of non-government-controlled civil society in Japan.¹² Hall emphasises that a functioning civil society exists in opposition to government, and that government can endeavor to limit civil society in concentrating power to itself.¹³ Hori sees it as a function of state-sponsored political religion in Japan, in which citizens are groomed from childhood to have an unquestioning and blind faith in government and its apparatus: an observation I find especially cogent.¹⁴ Harari attests to the overwhelming influence such social constructs have on societies, and Sugimoto argues that those outlined here continue to dominate in Japan because government maintains them to keep an arbitrary power over the population.¹⁵ Finally, Gamble and Watanabe outline roles that government-controlled media play in perpetuating the status quo.¹⁶

Fawcett articulates a theory capable of accounting for the initially good economic development that, without sufficient social development, has led to poor and regressing economic development.¹⁷ Four central tenants of political liberalism are that: conflict is constant; power tends to accumulate and should be diluted; all people deserve inclusion and respect; and—facilitated by the preceding three—a dynamic political order leads

to progressive reform. A reasonable corollary of this is that in liberal societies different sources of power, at different times, drive different social development outcomes. When government is the sole source of power, and when that government finds itself for whatever reason ineffective in producing good social development outcomes, with no other actor to take over—the situation in contemporary Japan—development is ripe for stagnation and existing gains are prone to atrophy.

The ramifications being experienced by citizens as a consequence of corruption and from ineptitude that derives from the concentration of power in Japan are staggering. This is exemplified in the 2011 Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster (Fukushima disaster).¹⁸ The nuclear power plant operator (Tepco) and government together opted to build the plant without safety measures sufficient to cope with the earthquakes and tsunamis for which the region is renowned. While the Japanese government, in denial, reported that 'no one died and no one's health was damaged', others write of 600,000 premature deaths.¹⁹ In the face of this—with tens of thousands of Fukushima residents losing their land and home, and compensation being paid by Tepco to the Narita Airport Corporation, and no organising to make government and corporations more accountable in future—hundreds of elderly Japanese people offered to clean-up in the radiation zone, fully aware that they would be poisoned and their lives thus shortened.²⁰

In his insightful book *What Makes Life Worth Living: How Japanese and Americans Make Sense of their Worlds*, Mathews explains that Japanese find life's meaning in linkages with and recognition from others, compared with Americans, who find it in individual achievement.²¹ This benign circumstance amongst Japanese people becomes problematic however, when power is taken into consideration, and especially when social development outcomes are poor, causing exasperated resource scarcity as is the case in contemporary Japan. Logically, it is self-defeating for people to be compelled to find meaning in life through recognition from others when the record shows that those others are in the main being exploitative of them. On a personal scale, needing recognition from one's oppressor has been called the Stockholm Syndrome.²² Pertaining to the same

phenomenon on a national scale – of a kind that I argue here is seen in contemporary Japan—I would like to call it the Japan Syndrome.²³ Below I provide data in support of this claim.

The ‘Japan Syndrome’ is of course not unique to Japan. An example elsewhere is seen in the Appalachian Mountain region of The United States, where poor peoples with no health care and little prospects of getting it themselves, scorn President Obama’s universal health care initiatives, and instead vote for the Republican Party that gives tax cuts to the rich and keeps a minimum wage for a family with one child below the poverty line.²⁴ Japan though does seem to be unique in terms of the behaviour being adopted by the overwhelming majority of the population in a developed country.

Living in Japan from 1990 to 2013, I witnessed circumstances of this nature—the passive acceptance of outcomes disadvantageous to citizens and the active defence by citizens of people in positions of power responsible for it—in public life, and in the personal lives of Japanese people. Most attempts to research outcomes brought about by people in positions of power that disadvantaged citizens were met with closed doors. In contrast, outcomes relating to the health system were easy to research, because it is by its very nature necessarily open to people. On the basis that few things are more essential to peoples’ lives than government-provided health care, the quality of its delivery is a reasonable means by which to make assessment of the quality of government in terms of its regard for the people whose best interests it claims to represent. Towards that end I have collected and offer analysis of the following data.

I worked at an English language school in Japan for nine years between 1993 and 2001. The school brought teachers to Japan on twelve-month contracts. In 1993 there were two teachers, and that number gradually increased year-on-year, so that by 2001 there were ten. My responsibilities included taking those teachers to a doctor during times of illness, and interpreting between Japanese and English for them. Doing this on average for each person approximately once in the year, I recorded the events relating to fifty-three incidents.

That powerful people were ignoring those they are claiming to help was

clear from the outset. I would explain the symptoms the patient said they felt to the doctor, and afterwards be sent to a waiting room in order to receive a prescription for medicine. Then at the pharmacist to whom the prescription-dispensing person sent us, we would see that the medication prescribed included that for conditions other than those explained. For example, in the case of diarrhoea, there was in addition medication for headache, insomnia, dizziness and backache. On future occasions—using the same example—I stated explicitly that the patient had only diarrhoea and no other symptoms. But the extraneous medication continued to be prescribed. I changed hospitals numerous times, spelling out that the patient did not have headache, insomnia, dizziness or backache, but found the same outcome. Next, I instructed the pharmacist to exclude extraneous medication. But the pharmacist refused, saying they must dispense what doctors prescribe. In response, I asked the pharmacist to telephone the doctor, and reiterated to the doctor that the patient only wanted medication for the symptoms described. On each occasion the cognitive dissonance caused by the break with a normal flow of events seen in the behaviour of the pharmacist was palpable, and I asked: ‘Have in your experience patients done this before?’ On all except two occasions the answer was ‘no’, thus tending to indicate that patients commonly accept this over-prescription of medication at unnecessary cost and potential detriment to their health.

Similarly, in regard to the over-treatment of patients, I was witness to and directly associated with four cases where patients were or feared being sedated in order to unnecessarily keep them in hospital. Three cases stand out. First, the doctor admitted the patient to hospital and insisted she must remain there for some months. Against much resistance from the doctor I obtained details of the said medical condition, and relayed it to the woman’s regular doctor abroad. With the weight of her regular doctor’s support, the patient was able to leave the hospital and subsequently needed no other medical care.

Second, a colleague’s wife went to see a doctor, and was unexpectedly admitted to hospital. The husband saw her being increasingly medicated such that she became almost entirely unresponsive. After approximately

one month of what the husband said was obfuscation by the doctor, without notice on a given day he insisted that he was taking his wife home and promptly did so. She immediately began to return to normal and needed no other medical care.

Third, an elderly man was speaking with a group of people that included myself about the prospect of going into a hospital to have minor surgery done. The man explained that, although he wanted to have the surgery, he did not want to go into the hospital, and that he would rather put up with the pain. All the other men solemnly concurred, in response to which I asked incredulously, ‘why?’ The men in concert explained that elderly people who go into that hospital—no matter for a small ailment—usually do not come out, because ‘the hospital had to make money in order to stay in business’.

Between 2005 and 2013 I explained these goings-on to twenty-five doctors, nineteen of whom gave twofold responses. First, that the over-prescription of medication was the norm in Japan. Second, that between half and two thirds of doctors in Japan gain their qualifications fraudulently—typically by paying money to get access to their university examination questions in advance of the exam; and many of these go on to take over their father’s privately owned hospital—and thus tend to be at best poor doctors. The remaining six doctors refused to comment about the quality of doctors. All twenty-five doctors openly pleaded a case that doctors had to make their hospitals profitable. And all implored me to call them personally if my family or I needed medical care, and that they would introduce me to a ‘good doctor’.

Reported in the media were numerous events that raised questions about the culpability of government, such as: teachers closing gates on students arriving late to school resulting in their injury or death;²⁵ police forcing people to confess to crimes;²⁶ sitting Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama avoiding penalty for failing to report a said gift to himself of 11 million US dollars on the basis that he did not know;²⁷ the continuing poor quality of Japanese housing—‘rabbit hutches’;²⁸ the security that Germany had created in Europe since 1945 vis-à-vis the insecurity that Japan continued to create in Northeast Asia;²⁹ false evidence being given by police;³⁰ and

the arrest of the whistleblower who exposed the illegal sale of whale meat.³¹

During the 18 years from 1995 to 2013, in regard to these and similar events I asked the question of 4,710 people (interviewees)—approximately 5 people per week—‘Do you think the government is culpable?’ and invited an answer of ‘Yes’, ‘No’, or ‘I cannot say’. In response, 86% replied, ‘I cannot say’. Moreover, 81% of those people exhibited cognitive dissonance in their demeanor. Corroborating the work of Hori and Sugimoto outlined above on political religion in Japan—in which citizens are groomed from childhood to have an unquestioning and blind faith in government—it was palpable that no matter what the circumstances, they were unable to make a judgment that government was culpable or bad. For them, ‘government’ and ‘good’ were synonymous and the idea of ‘bad government’ to them was oxymoronic. Commensurate too with Mathews’ view that Japanese people find life’s meaning in linkages with and recognition from others, it follows that a critical assessment of others, and especially of others in authority, is problematic.

In relation to the Emperor, I observed the manifestation of blind faith in government and its apparatus. During the thirteen years from 2000 to 2013, I sought a second response from 3,391 interviewees. In regard to an event impacting on citizens deriving from government ineptitude or corruption, I spoke of a view that the Emperor should himself personally share in civilian suffering. For example, in the case of the Fukushima disaster I said: ‘The Emperor as head of state should get down there and help clean-up’. In 83% of cases the interviewee asserted in a pedagogic tone that my suggestion was wrong, bad or both. Most became agitated. Although I kept no data on reasons when they were given, they were overwhelmingly unsubstantiated assertions indicative of a blind faith: for example, ‘The Emperor cannot do that because he is the Emperor’.

Between 2006 and 2013 I conducted research at a primary and junior high school in Japan. Two situations stand out as emblematic of arbitrary applications of power that at best diminish Japanese citizens. First, at enrolling in the school. As part of new enrolments, parents were presented with ‘conclusive proof’ that emissions from the government-run trash incinerator situated nearby were benign. The conclusive proof consisted

of results from a number of days earlier in the year when the air had been tested for dangerous gasses. Here, there was clear potential to cause children, parents and teachers physical harm. At a subsequent meeting with the principal I asked why the measurements were not ongoing, and was told ‘Because they are not’. I explained that this was a formula for children, teachers and parents to be damaged, because clearly over time the nature of emissions and wind directions could change. The principal replied with deep conviction that ‘Government is looking after children and parents, and we must trust the government’, corroborating Hori’s work.

School events I witnessed concisely reflect the same attitudes. They are held in a room that doubles as the school gymnasium, typically rectangular in shape, with a stage at the narrow end furthest from the main door. From the outset at events the application of power is the issue. The school principal and senior staff sit at the front of the room immediately adjacent to the stage, but facing across the room parallel with the stage and at 90 degrees to parents and children. Facing inversely across the room looking back towards the principal and senior staff, sit elderly volunteers who assist children at the school pedestrian crossing before and after school. These volunteers take the symbolic role of the male monarch: currently Tsugunomiya Akihito. They can be anybody as long as they are nobody of importance capable of making a claim to power themselves, and are readily substituted when an event is held over a number of days. All parts of the event commence and end with a power ritual, in which the two sides bow back and forth exclusively between themselves. Only after the ritual is completed, and after a pause of silence to punctuate its claim to importance, are the parents and children invited to address each other. Parents and students do not participate in the ritual between principal and senior staff and the volunteers: representatives of power at the school, and of the nation state, respectively. Citizens—in this case parents and students—are thus made physically and symbolically subservient and passive.

This passive subservience to authority resonates with the data I have outlined above in relation to Japanese citizens facing public policy issues such as the Fukushima disaster and in everyday life such as seeing a medical

doctor. I feel it constitutes a fundamental explanation as to why Japan is experiencing its third decade of poor development outcomes. As long as this religiously orchestrated top-down concentration of power—The Japan Syndrome—is perpetuated in Japan it is reasonable to anticipate that social development outcomes will continue to be poor and worsen, leading to a further erosion of previously achieved economic development outcomes and thus to the detriment of citizens’ quality of life.

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1979 AND ALL THAT¹

STRUCTURAL STABILITY IN WORLD AFFAIRS

Context

Prior to 1979 the evolution of events in East Europe and the Soviet Union attracted serious scholarly attention; not as the wrestle between first and second world for moral dominance, but because of the urgent appeal to a theoretical idea of peace amidst the existential threat posed by this confrontation. Involved were scholars and humanists not bound by the ideological codes that then prevailed (and were progressively stifling any chance of a co-existent future for Europe).

1979 changed all that. It was a shock of a different order to the oil shocks of that decade (that had in retrospect brought about a major economic realignment of their own). The 1979 shock set the stage to a new shape in world affairs and a new location for conflict, the full flowering of which we now see. But do we understand this correctly?

My thesis is that historic exculpation, moral, theological or cultural interpretation, or hegemonic fear or comfort are, each in their own way, dangerously reactive as guiding principles in understanding and acting in the unfolding of events. Certainly each lens is useful in bringing into play the multiplicity of contingencies involved. And each requires scholarly discourse, in the way that the Alpbach community forums supplied in the Cold War context.²

But just as Alpbach rested on pre-modern values—inclusiveness, learning, tolerance—that had been nurtured in sixteenth-century Europe, and arguably had never left the European mind, we require an Alpbach equivalent to tease out this multitude of epiphenomena in scholarly life

and see how they may focus on the urgent task of building the footings of a stable world peace.

The idea of a permanent state of peace replacing a standing state of conflict was the germ that fired philosophers from the seventeenth century onward, culminating in the pan-European project, whose flowering we can observe today. This essay will use the Khomeini moment as the threshold event for an alternative discourse on world affairs: the other side of the end of history as it were.³

Introduction

Is there a fit-for-purpose allusive language to guide geo-strategic affairs? I apply the frame of dynamic systems (lightly) to the peculiar pace and characteristics of events, unfolding since the emergence in 1979 of a Middle-Eastern-inflected ‘suspended settlement’ from one contained entirely in the dualistic modernity of the preceding fifty years, in its turn a legacy of the European ‘Great Game’, punctured in the two great wars of the twentieth century.⁴

This speculative excursion alludes to the work of two Frenchmen—the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, moral theologian and utopian, and Professor René Thom, a mathematician who turned his attention to how living creatures acquire form, but left open the interpretation of a singular geometric result to a more general account of form in nature. I will explore how this might help us understand the evolution of geopolitical conflict.

The voyage of a senior Persian cleric from exile in Paris to head a revolution in his home country in 1979 is my jump-off point. What holds the world together? What drives it apart? How much is the (distant) past conditioning the future, and how much is the future a function of independent action and circumstance?

The drama to be observed as a creature takes form, driven by its genetic inheritance, place in the world and access to resources, has a counterpart in the way that some founding event sees the convulsion and reconstitution of nations. Yet while the first is god-like in its orderliness, the second is dangerously messy, with no guarantee of a contained safe landing. The vision of a pacific future—as propounded presciently by Saint-Pierre at

great length in the aftermath of the messy war of Spanish Secession, but inspired by similar speculation following the horrendously destructive Thirty Years War of the previous century—can be used to steer the parties implicated in the current battle for the Middle East barely surviving thirty years of destabilising conflict. At the least this common language should allow us, if we are of that mind, to entertain the possibility.

Mathematical Models of Morphogenesis

The structures Thom refers to in his fertile contribution to foundations of science are mathematical, specifically topological, that is, entirely abstract.⁵ In this context topology deals with the supple geometry of manifolds—locally smooth surfaces on which dynamic system trajectories are traced. The properties of dynamic systems were elucidated through Thom’s breakthrough theorem limiting their possible manifestations to a small number of discrete forms, springing thinking on ‘complex systems’—whether biological, social or biophysical—out of its determinist trap. This theorem was popularised as ‘catastrophe theory’.

The study of structural stability is an outgrowth of this result—applied to the generation of form in living creatures through an encounter between Thom and developmental biologist C. H. Waddington.⁶ Waddington had contemplated why multi-cellular organisms take on constant shape after the collision between haploid cells sourced from different individuals. In the absence of evidence—by pure cogitation—Waddington extended the language of biology to this gravity-defying passage from genetic collision to somatic existence; the most observed and yet unobserved of all biological phenomena; the immediate consequence of the sexual reproduction of individuals.

In his own time Thom had been experimenting in a limited way to show how his result as applied in four-dimensional space may be represented in nature.⁷ For this he used the device of light caustics—the strange twinkling that you see on any sunny day over a piece of broken water—a simple and accessible dynamic process that yet could evoke the result—and what it might mean for our general understanding of natural phenomena played out in real time and space. Alternately fine observation of the breaking of

a normal ocean wave becomes at once more natural when interpreted, not as some messiness in an uncontrolled application of the erratic force of tide or wind on the surface of a fluid, but as different topological expressions of a law of geometry.

The Villa Serbelloni symposia held between 1966 and 1969 among other speculative exercises bridged ideas of Waddington's, and Thom's insights into the structure of things. A substantial study by Thom interpreting Waddington's theory of morphogenesis—how organisms take shape—ensued within the context of Thom's results on the geometry of dynamic systems. The study was first published in 1972 and an English edition in 1975 with preface by Waddington, who declared it to be 'a very important contribution to the philosophy of science and to theoretical general biology in particular'.⁸ At that stage Waddington was the sage—he had urged the need for a topology of biology in his 1940 *Organisers and Genes*—yet he conceded the broader scope of Thom's work ('an essay on a general theory of models').⁹

These events had generated a flutter of interest in mathematics and its offshoots, with champions and popularisers alike using or writing about 'catastrophe theory' and how it could be applied to a variety of problems, from controlling prison riots to Walrasian economics. It appeared useful wherever phenomena could not be easily explained by the hard laws of science.

Thom's insights into structural stability serve as marker in the transition from general systems built on immutable physical and chemical laws to a more useful model that sees natural phenomena as governed by laws of space and time itself—evolving in surprising ways from well-understood starting points; or reaching well-understood end points from obscure points of initiation. While this insight was to be overshadowed in public imagination by chaos theory, which characterised apparently haphazard consequences of state shifts, a dynamic stability lens remains highly fruitful for understanding disrupted regularities that defy causative explanation.¹⁰

While it may be not obvious how the course of world events can be modelled as a dynamic system—and we allude to this only in passing—Crucé and Leibniz (seventeenth century), Saint-Pierre and Rousseau

(eighteenth century), Kant and Hegel (nineteenth century), and (arguably) Rawls in the twentieth century, counter the far from orderly world of their times using convergent utopian or ideal models that fit the curious phenomenon of 'structural stability' in Thom's philosophical writing.¹¹ It seems reasonable, taking advantage of the abstract confirmation that is now available, to test the model against the evolution of geopolitical conflict in the Middle East that we are now observing.

Abbé de Saint-Pierre and the Project for an Everlasting Peace

The original project of a general lasting peace in Europe goes back to Émeric Crucé and the Duc de Sully at the turn of the seventeenth century.¹² A hundred years later Saint-Pierre drew on both for his extravagant project for a lasting peace in Europe.¹³ The project attracted the critical attention of thinkers and statesmen but, despite ridicule, served to ignite a defining thread in international affairs up to the present. His prescriptions, promulgated tirelessly, drew serious attention in the blossoming years of the Enlightenment, albeit attracting considerable scorn along the way. Voltaire, Frederick the Great and Rousseau, all caught up in one way or another in applying reason to problems of state, use Saint-Pierre as a foil. His older contemporary Leibniz corrected him on his faulty analogies, but it was Kant in a new century who, in conciliating the project of Saint-Pierre and the savage criticism from Voltaire, completed the model for the peace that these men dreamt of. What distinguishes Saint-Pierre from those others of his age and later is not the quality of his thought, let alone political insight, but his setting up a way of thinking that brought together sufficient elements so that new institutions could be formulated.¹⁴

There is no question here that we refer to the ends of a universal peace, and not the means. This according to Archibugi exposes Saint-Pierre, together with his intellectual coevals reacting to the costs of war, as politically naïve.¹⁵ Realist strategic thinking has failed to foresee and avoid conflict—the only institutional advance away from war has been through this long tradition of idealist constructivism, which for convenience, is typified by Saint-Pierre. To quote Archibugi:

Comparison of Erasmus and Machiavelli, Crucé and Hobbes, Saint-Pierre and

Voltaire, Kant and Hegel, Saint-Simon and Engels makes it clear that realist philosophers provide a far more profound and penetrating image of the causes of war; so much so that they conclude nothing can be done about [avoiding] it. However, the contemporary international community demonstrates that realism has led us up a blind alley. It is therefore necessary to seek other and intentionally more ingenuous approaches in tackling our planet's most important problem, survival.¹⁶

The project is not one of curbing sovereignty or enforcing order; but rather of articulating a code that applies universally to the relation between people and the state. This new order can attract events evolving outside the control of individuals and states that would otherwise be resolved by descent into violence, authoritarianism of the state, or intolerance of the population. Saint-Pierre in his time used the self-interest of princes and his own attachment to the status quo to devise a world free of war. Rousseau reconfigured Saint-Pierre by transferring sovereignty to the citizen, so inspiring the French Revolution and presaging a pan-European citizen's democracy. Kant advocated a cosmopolitan over-layering of the law of the state that has become the framework of UN agencies today, and potentially the superstructure to receive shifts into a different settlement. The long march to a world accepting universal worth is clarified when seen in this abstract fashion.

The Islamic Revolution—A Case in Point¹⁷

The Shah of Iran was a modern emblem of the emergence of oil as a geo-strategic element for the European powers at the break up of the Ottoman Empire. He was a reconstituted emperor, secularist and cut off from the population, delivering a foreign version of modernity dressed as an instinctive emblem of the distant past. The revolution when it came had little trouble excising the episode, reframing freedom within a system of belief that ran deeper than the trappings of past grandeur, but to the core of contemporary existence, however strange this may have been seen to observers or actors conditioned to the contemporary ineluctable advances of the age.¹⁸

It became apparent at that point that there were viable alternative attractors in the geopolitical landscape. Liberation from an order ring-fenced by an entrenched elite, whose outward appearance was variably

late colonial, hegemonic or nakedly kleptocratic, marked the first half of the century.¹⁹ The mid-century ushered in a flowering and fading in the aspirations of peoples once again to control their destinies, only to be reabsorbed in the crucible of ideological confrontation.

What emerged was the apotheosis of modernism—a world either in the process of development (dimly aware of its destiny and reliant on direction from others), or already developed (and so above moral scrutiny). This order built on resource competition, a common aspiration to material abundance and escape from the dead weight of the past. Its collapse was sudden and prosaic.

From a peacock throne, Pahlavi was removed by mass movement as absolutist as the claims of newly hatched emperors to authority, but invested in a moral code fully formed in the way that the genetic code determines an organism's outward appearance. This was not the language of the various charters guaranteeing peaceful conduct of world affairs, nor the promise of a better world built on the universal rights and freedoms of man, but it performed the same role.²⁰ Least of all could it be dismissed as a melodramatic backdrop to the real business of progress, like events that preceded it in the Horn of Africa.

What was observed in the streets of Tehran was a singular calibration of the compact between governed and governing. Unlike contemporary struggles for the national soul in Eastern Europe that were to lead the next year to Solidarity defying the state, and a year later to martial law and the final collapse of socialist Poland ahead of its march into Europe, Iran through its revolution, for better or worse, defined its exceptionalism itself, not through a regional re-righting of the world order.

Since this moment, we have come to take fundamentalism into the lexicon of global discourse.²¹ Action taken without outside reference but as a mass eruption is now a reality in geo-strategic calculation. This was the world Saint-Pierre addressed: one where beliefs strongly held in concert brought fear and madness into the world of the conventionally powerful. He, as Thom, could see a way to read the code that might capture the restless surges of humanity, while avoiding the catastrophes that have rocked our age.

Conclusion

It is foolish to offer so simple a framing of recent history as complete, or indeed accurate. It is a model and, like all models, wrong (but useful).²² The use I see is both to draw attention to the remarkable collaboration between Waddington and Thom and the remarkable prescience of Saint-Pierre, an otherwise obscure figure but whose motivations as those of his contemporary Leibniz were in the common humanity in all of us, albeit masked by Candidean blindness to its darker sides.²³

As I write, a solution to the tragic conflicts overtaking the ancient territories of the Tigris and Euphrates valleys may well be being worked out in an Iranian prison. Will this too have its moment?

¹ The allusion to the parodic introduction to English history—W. C. Sellar and R. J. Yeatman, *1066 and All That: A Memorable History of England, Comprising All the Parts You Can Remember, Including 103 Good Things, 5 Bad Kings and 2 Genuine Dates*, Methuen, London, 1930—is not accidental entirely: 1096 marked the announcement of the first Crusade thirty years after William claimed the throne of England from his cousin, taking advantage of the incumbent's attention being diverted by an invasion of Danes. The Crusades set the geopolitical moral landscape just as much as Khomeini's revolution was to reset it. The Thirty Years War, with a destructive ferocity equal to the Crusades, had epochal consequences in the Treaty of Westphalia. It is exactly this 'code of nations' that Saint-Pierre, deferring in turn to Sully, predicted needed to be transformed for a lasting settlement, and that is hindering a peaceful resolution in the Middle East today.

² The Alpbach forum—first held in August 1945—is sponsored by the Austrian federal government's ministry of foreign affairs. Its flavour is perhaps best conveyed by the publisher's foreword to the 1978 forum proceedings: 'we will try to pose questions on the so called crisis of legitimacy from scientific, social, political and cultural viewpoints; shed light on a theory of legitimation from all sides; and offer an analysis from multifaceted consequent positions of the legitimacy of democratic, political, and social structures', *Wissen und Macht: Europäisches Forum Alpbach 1978*, ed. Otto Molden, Vienna, 1979, p.9, [author's translation]. The government's position is clarified in the next sentence: 'our most critical goal is the stabilisation of free, democratic, human systems of society and state whenever such systems are threatened by ideologies or political groups, but also whenever reforms become necessary.'

³ Emigré Russian philosopher turned French diplomat, Alexandre Kojève 'thought that it was the creation of the European Union that marked the end of history, being the concrete instantiation of the Napoleonic vision of rational French administration being adopted by the free peoples of Europe in order to bring an end to international

violence' —The Virtual Stoa, *Perpetual Peace and European Union*, 12 October 2012, <http://virtualstoa.net/2012/10/12/perpetual-peace-and-european-union/>.

⁴ See note 17.

⁵ René Thom, *Modèles Mathématiques de la Morphogénèse*, Union Générale d'Éditions, Paris 1974, subtitle translating 'A Compilation of Texts on Catastrophe Theory and Its Applications', carries Thom's mathematical ideas into general readership'.

⁶ The encounter is recorded in respective contributions to the 4-volume proceedings of the IUBS symposium that Waddington organised 1966–1969, appearing as *Towards a Theoretical Biology*, ed. C. H. Waddington, University Press, Edinburgh, 1968–1972.

⁷ René Thom, 'The Morphology of Breakers', pp. 93–99, in his *Structural Stability and Morphogenesis*, Benjamin, Reading, Mass., 1975—a translation by D. H. Fowler of *Stabilité Structurelle et Morphogénèse: Essai d'une Théorie Générale des Modèles*, Benjamin, Reading, Mass., 1972.

⁸ Thom, *Structural Stability*.

⁹ See C. H. Waddington, preface to Thom, 1975, p. xxi.

¹⁰ Chaos theory comes out of a different corner of mathematics entirely and has fuelled large interest in 'complexity'; in intent the antithesis of Thom's work by emphasising instability.

¹¹ See for instance Rousseau as discussed and quoted in The Virtual Stoa: 'the countries of Europe did form "a sort of system among themselves which unites them by one single religion, the same international law, morals, literature, commerce, and a sort of equilibrium that is the necessary effect of all this, and which, without anyone in fact thinking about preserving it, would not be as simple to break up as many people think." But this European civil society isn't robust enough to forestall war, in a world of multiple sovereignties'.

¹² The 1648 Peace of Westphalia that concluded both the Thirty Years' War (alignments within the Holy Roman Empire and opposing Papal alignments) and the Eighty Years' War (Spain and Dutch Republic) recognised for the first time the sovereignty of individual States, thereby setting the pattern for European affairs until the transformation of the European (trading) Community into a true Union with some federalist characteristics.

¹³ See for instance Charles Irénée Castel de Saint-Pierre, *A Project for Settling an Everlasting Peace in Europe*, J. Watts, London, 1714.

¹⁴ '[according to Kant] 'the abbé's Project might have "always been ridiculed by great statesmen, and even more by heads of state, as pedantic, childish and academic", it was still "valued in theory" and therefore "valued in practice" ' —Patrick Riley, 'Abbé de St Pierre and Voltaire on Perpetual Peace in Europe', *World Affairs*, vol. 137, no. 3 Winter 1974–75, p. 193.

¹⁵ Daniele Archibugi, 'Models of International Organization in Perpetual Peace Projects', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 18, 1992, pp. 295–317.

¹⁶ Archibugi, p. 317.

¹⁷ As Peter Ormonde comments, on an article by Greg Barton, 'Iran makes an excellent



THE MAKING OF AN INDEPENDENT DICTIONARY-WRITER

I started writing this piece a fortnight ago at the desk which used to be my mother's in the room that is mine when I visit my father in central Victoria. It was late afternoon and I was eating plum paste from the fruit in my Queanbeyan garden. A few minutes earlier I had been lost in an Arctic world of whitefish, laavus, pulkas and pachnolite, flipping between electronic files, Google, Trove, the Oxford English Dictionary online, and a pile of 6 by 4 inch cards, formulating definitions, adding quotations and tidying format.

In the back of my mind was a feeling which probably first lodged there about forty years ago. One day, I was thinking, as I ate the plum paste and wondered what to cook for tea, I'll do this properly. I will sit at a desk in an institution and get on with it. This is despite the evidence of those years that, as far as research and writing go, I do not work in anything resembling this manner, and rarely have. The feeling might be no more than an indication that ambition outstrips achievement. And must do, for after all, ambition is nothing more than the urge to accomplish what has not yet been grasped.

My Arctic dictionary is a historical dictionary, an old-fashioned term but one without any real alternative. With each word in these dictionaries (best exemplified by the Oxford English Dictionary), examples of quotations using the word defined are laid out after each definition, like sheets of pressed plant specimens. The quotations inform the dictionary-maker's definition, though there's a freedom in writing definitions, which might not be obvious to anyone new at such work.

In 1983 that was me. The Australian National Dictionary's pedestrian name reflects that of the institution in which it sits, Canberra's Australian

case study [of] ... the corrosive effects of foreign interests and oil in the early part of the 20th century ... the Great Game continued ... plots, coups, all driven by global geopolitics—power and greed—rather than anything of concern to the poor folks living in the place', *The Conversation*, 3 March 2016, <https://theconversation.com/out-of-the-ashes-of-afghanistan-and-iraq-the-rise-and-rise-of-islamic-state-55437>.

¹⁸ Ghobadzadeh quotes President Carter in 1978: 'Iran is an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world' and goes on 'This was just one year before the 1979 revolution, which transformed Iran from a key US ally into the region's most troubling actor. But today it is not unreasonable to claim that Iran's ruling clergy has fulfilled Carter's wishful thinking after almost 37 years', Naser Ghobadzadeh, 'Iran: How a Troubling Actor Could Transform into a Stabilising Factor', *The Conversation*, 17 September 2015, <https://theconversation.com/iran-how-a-troubling-actor-could-transform-into-a-stabilising-force-46878>.

¹⁹ 'I'd suggest that we live in a time of relative moral clarity compared, let's say, to what Eric Hobsbawm called the "Age of Catastrophe"—the period in Europe between 1914 and 1950 that brought a sense of moral collapse and, along with it, the deep sense of absurdity captured by philosophers and artists from Camus to Beckett'—Carlos Fraenkel, 'Imagine His Dismay', *London Review of Books*, 18 February 2016, review of Salmon Rushdie's novel *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights*. This review (as does Rushdie's book) contrasts two medieval Muslim theologians Ibn Rushd and Al Ghazali, pointing out the influence of both on the thinking of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Arguably this thread of thought mirrors in its course that from pre-Enlightenment through Revolution to the Universal Rights of Man, at times childlike, at times darkly authoritarian, but united in addressing the destructiveness of war. As Fraenkel remarks, it is likely that Ibn Rushd, whom Rushdie idolises would have approved the fatwa he attracted from Tehran's rulers.

²⁰ Ghobadzadeh, 'Iran', following a full election for the two houses of parliament, grudgingly accepts the progression from a theocracy to a functioning quasi-modern state, with secure borders and a potentially stabilising role in regional affairs.

²¹ The terrorism of belief *in se*, free of the exercise of martial force, confounded the dogma of overwhelming external force projecting freedoms of the citizen constrained by naked interests of state.

²² A maxim attributed to the statistician George Box.

²³ 'What then is Europe [of the late 17th century]? A cockpit, a seething cauldron of neighbours fighting one against another ... Leibniz, seeing it was useless to try to keep the Europeans from fighting one another, suggested that it would be a good thing to divert their bellicose activities to places beyond the ... continent. ... The Abbé de Saint-Pierre did not deem it sufficient merely to extra-domiciliate war.'—Paul Hazard, *The European Mind, 1680–1715*, Hollis & Carter, London, 1953, p. 491; a translation of *La Crise de la Conscience Européenne*, Paris, 1935. Both made personal appeals to the contemporary powers—Leibniz to Louis XIV and St-Pierre forty years later to the Prussian King Frederick (but not before trying them out on Leibniz, who was sceptical).

National University, but gives no hint of the excitement it holds. As dictionary staff, we all rued the name. It would have been easier to call it what we invariably ended up saying when we tried to explain the project — ‘It’s like an Australian supplement to the big Oxford English Dictionary’.

My domain was Australia’s natural history, and the three years I spent on this dictionary became an apprenticeship to life as a dictionary-writer. Like many things which are obvious only with the ability to look back, the way in which the work was setting my course for life was not clear at the time.

Words like casuarina, blue gum, tiger snake and kangaroo fell to my sword. The dictionary had five fulltime staff. We stopped every morning for tea, assembling in the bibliographer’s office, the largest and sunniest room in our university cottage.

We always stopped for tea. A short morning tea was half an hour; a long one could exceed the hour. We read out quotations, asked questions, discussed possible definitions, shared problems. If anyone had found a particularly funny or diverting quotation, we’d hear it at teatime. ‘The present government consists of the finest set of fuckwits seen since federation’, Joan Hughes read out, and we roared with laughter.

If the work wasn’t heaven for someone who relishes words, history and drinking tea, I don’t know what would be. It was before the Internet. In order to write the definitions, I accumulated a library of Australian natural history. Books held all the details I needed. If it was a fish name—King George Whiting, for example—the definition included its current scientific name, size, colour, other common names, habitat and distribution. Because we can now find all this on the Internet, there’s not the same need for comprehensive definitions—but dictionaries and those who make them live on.

I started to identify experts willing to check the draft definitions—entomologists, mammalogists, fish specialists, reptile specialists. Botanists, who knew about banksias, eucalypts, wattles, orchids, weeds or crops. Ethnobotanists, geologists, historians, anthropologists, farmer—the list got longer and longer.

A small team of part-time workers called ‘readers’ spent their time

shuttling back and forth between the dictionary cottage and the National Library of Australia across Lake Burley Griffin, taking bundles of questions to answer for us, and sometimes returning with unasked for treasures—an earlier quotation for lyrebird, perhaps, or a variant spelling of gidgee. The National Library’s Pauline Fanning had advised on the dictionary’s original reading program, which generated the six by four inch cards held in our wide bank of filing cabinets. As one of the two main sub-editors, I had to chew through four metres of cards every three months, either rejecting the word under consideration as being un-Australian, or accepting that it was and producing a definition with some selected quotations.

The whole process, not only the defining, depended utterly on books and other printed resources. These were used initially by the readers who had assembled the thousands of quotations, then by the dictionary’s ‘editors’—as we were known—who surveyed the quotations, consulted other dictionaries and wrote our definitions, producing text that would eventually be printed in book form.

We met our quarterly deadlines, and in three years I defined Australia’s natural history from A to Z. By this time I was clasped more firmly by the alphabet than I realised even then, but I did know that reaching Z was not just a triumph for our team but a catastrophe for me. Apart from any intellectual considerations, I was out of a job.

I found work as a science editor, and have worked as one more or less ever since. After only a short time, pining for the dictionary world, I started filling the evenings with a project of my own lunatic devising, a historical dictionary of the English words of the Antarctic. This provided plenty of space for stalking words, and because it was such a crazy idea, it was a lively topic of conversation. I wasn’t sure there were enough words in Antarctica to make a dictionary, and there was no publisher on the horizon, even if the words were there. Would it also achieve what I considered to be a primary aim, by providing enough rationale for a visit to Antarctica?

Perhaps all independent researchers feel that their work falls between stools—the academic and the commercial, science and the arts, the intellectual and the personal. When I applied to go to Antarctica, the Australian Antarctic Division accepted my proposal for the dictionary,

putting it onto their list of approved projects for the year's research program, along with those of Antarctica's real researchers—the scientists who were measuring albatross eggs or Southern Ocean currents or body weights of penguins before and after feeding.

But there were problems with that hoped-for journey to Antarctica. The division's social sciences committee found the idea of my dictionary too natural-history based, and the scientists found it too literature-based. The one thing on which both groups agreed was that it wasn't necessary for a dictionary-writer to see Antarctica in order to define Antarctic words.

My saviour came in the shape of a seal biologist at the Antarctic Division in whom the physiognomy, tastes, and turn of phrase of an Edwardian gentleman were combined with a marked fondness for unconventional ideas, and whose every room at home was full of books. Without Harry Burton I would never have managed to 'go south'. He sent me there as a volunteer biologist, working on the stages of moult of Weddell seals. As things turned out, I would be there for four months, not the three-week round trip I had envisaged in my initial and unsuccessful application.

At Davis, one of the three Australian bases on continental Antarctica, there was a large library, and the science lab had runs of old serials, so I could keep on collecting Antarctic words—episodically, between collecting seal jobbies, doing slushy duty and feeling homesick. It was my first chance to be part of an Antarctic community, but feeling out of place even when you are in it is normal (at least for me), and as a lonely volunteer it felt as though I had less right to be in Antarctica than my fellow paid workers—the PhD students, the meteorologists, the diesel mechanics, electricians, cooks, communications experts, doctor, station leader, and others who kept the base going.

The 2015 ISAA conference raised the importance of having a sense of community even when engaged in works of solitary research—one compelling reason for the existence of the association. And Glenn Burns talked about the importance in Japan of acknowledgement from one's peers. In Antarctica—as elsewhere, I admit—my project almost uniformly evoked the same reaction—it was laughably ridiculous, and could I possibly be serious about doing such a thing?

A few years after my first and longest Antarctic visit, I accepted a job in Kenya. It was a demanding one in a challenging environment. I slept badly, and soon expanded my writing time into the night's small hours. Conference speaker Elizabeth Morrison noted the access to information we have today, something which she reminded us not to take for granted. In Nairobi there were none of the resources Canberra offers—no National Library, no Australian National University, no extended research community to lean on. In torrential tropical rain our house flooded, and some of my sodden books opened like flowers, never to return to their shapely bookish selves. Phone connections were unreliable, power failures were normal. I learned to save document files every few minutes when I was at the computer.

I had a limited number of reference books, a set of the Oxford English Dictionary, and my Antarctic quotations on six by four inch cards, with an increasing number that I had found and held electronically. These were my tools and my primary sources for the dictionary. There was nothing else to hand. Although at first I failed to understand the advantage of this, the lack of resources was a gift. It forced me to think closely about the quotations I had in front of me, and to rely utterly on them in formulating the definitions. There was no-one to lean on—in many cases, the words I defined did not even appear in the Oxford English Dictionary.

Within a year and a half I had finished the dictionary, which was published in the year 2000 after we returned to Canberra.¹ Because the North Pole was a logical companion, and to fill my persistent yearning for alphabetical pursuits, I began work on the English words of the Arctic. It slowly became clear that in publishing the Antarctic dictionary I had become part of the polar community. I revisited Antarctica. I worked on projects connected with it, and did my PhD on the environmental history of subantarctic islands. I realised that there were many researchers who felt, just as I did, that they were not truly part of the community. But we were.

Although I kept on editing science to pay the bills, the currency of my research remained largely what it had always been, one of books. It hasn't been hard to accumulate books in my life—as the daughter of a bookseller

and the sister of another one, and as someone whose working life had revolved around publications in one form or another, it would have been harder not to accumulate them. When the time came recently to move to a smaller house, and I had to shed more than half of my library, I was sharply reminded of the devaluation of the book.

Inevitably in the days of the 2015 ISAA conference, many speakers queried what an independent scholar is. My life has been spent largely institutionalised in one way or another, as a student for an inordinate number of years, and as a salaried worker for university or government. Research time has never been tidily separated, and the independence of my work is a qualified one. It has benefitted from, if not relied on, support given in terms of fellowships from universities, learned bodies, museums and libraries. If an independent scholar is one whose life lacks the support of an academic institution, then this has probably been true more often than not, but not always, for me.

Any ability I have to compare the freedom of my research with others comes from living with a fulltime teaching academic in the 1980s and 1990s, a committed teacher so overloaded with teaching duties that he had no time for research of any sort himself. It is impossible to know whether this would have been my story too, if I had ever wanted an academic appointment, but is it possible to say that administrative burdens on teaching academics have only become greater since then, and that the academic environment is one increasingly at odds with scholarship, especially when—like mine—it has no demonstrable return of any financial kind and is of probable interest to very few people.

My one piece of evidence of the occasional advantages of independence came in my search for a publisher. After working on two historical Oxford dictionaries, an Australian and a New Zealand one, I had always thought of my Antarctic dictionary as an Oxford dictionary, and had modelled it on the conventions used by the Oxford English Dictionary.

One morning during that first visit to Antarctica, I woke to see an icebreaker, the *Aurora Australis*, parked outside. It was April. The dark orange ship, lights blazing, had broken its way through the thick white sea ice, practically up to the doors of the station. It was there to take home

the last of the summerers, including me, and it carried something which is now of almost historical interest—our mail.

One of the letters in my stack was from Oxford University Press, who were declining to publish the Antarctic dictionary. This was a bitter blow, not only because I needed a publisher, but also because I had assumed they would enfold the dictionary and receive its words into the Oxford English Dictionary. Once I got over the disappointment, I understood that the rejection had given me the freedom to write entirely as I liked. This freedom, I suppose, is what makes us independent scholars.

¹ Bernadette Hince, *The Antarctic Dictionary: A Complete Guide to Antarctic English*, CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne, 2000.



INDEPENDENCE MEETS SCHOLARSHIP

MONASH UNIVERSITY'S WORLD WAR I 100 STORIES PROJECT¹

Independence can mean many things. In this case I am using it to describe the fact that in my research into members of my family I am not subject to any family sensibilities or restrictions, am in the pay of no academic institution and have no research assistants.

The scholarship I will talk about is the 100 Stories project emanating from Monash University and described as ‘an instance of scholarship in the service of the community’. It consists of the stories of 100 individuals who were each in their separate and different ways involved in and affected by World War I. As the university website says, ‘Amongst the cast of the 100 stories are not just soldiers, airmen and nurses, but parents who lost their sons, wives who struggled with shell-shocked husbands, children who never knew their fathers ... Indigenous servicemen and groups of diverse ethnic origin’.² It is designed to tell the story of the war and its impact, with truth and not mythology. Extensive use has been made of the files of the Repatriation Department, which add a significant dimension to an individual’s war experience that is missing from the standard service records and that are now all available. There are some very poignant stories.

The project has been extensively publicised especially around the time of Anzac and Remembrance Days in recent years; articles in the press especially the *Melbourne Age*, on ABC radio, FM and RN, and even the BBC World Service³—links to all of which can be found via the Monash University website.

It is in two parts or formats. First, an online version of each story—a series of PowerPoint slides, lasting about five minutes, slowly and silently done, not too much text, the content and message easily absorbed. The first

fifty were ‘launched’ in October 2014 at the time of the commemoration of the departure of the first contingent from Albany, Western Australia. They form part of the permanent exhibition in the National Anzac Interpretative Centre there and the Victorian ones part of the exhibition at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne. The final fifty were to be out by last Anzac Day and ‘simultaneously exhibited in Turkey, France, Belgium, the UK and Aotearoa/New Zealand and available thereafter online’.⁴ They have yet to appear but you can watch the first fifty—just Google ‘100 Stories Monash’.

The second format is in book form published by Penguin and launched on Remembrance Day 2015. That version of each story, which is reviewed in *Honest History*, is both more extended and gives references to sources and further reading. But, as the publicity says, ‘First and foremost the 100 stories are an educational resource’. They come with suggestions on the website as to how they can be used in the classroom.⁵ A sample of twenty was sent on a promotional disc to every secondary school in Victoria.

All this needs to be said to establish that what I am talking about is wider and more important than any one of the individual stories.

And it is appropriate to state from the Monash website: ‘The project is led by Professor Bruce Scates, a leading scholar of the Great War, and (2011–13) chair of the Military and Cultural History panel advising the Anzac Centenary Board in Canberra’, Chair of History and Australian Studies at Monash University, Director of the National Centre for Australian Studies and since last November a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences of Australia. He is currently the leader on three ARC grant projects investigating soldier settlement, the meaning of Anzac Day, and pilgrimage to battlefields.⁶ He is assisted by two Monash PhD students.

So much by way of introduction.

In November 2014 shortly after the launch of the first fifty stories at Albany I heard that they were ‘up’ and that my grandfather’s story was included.

The first four stories are entitled:

A deeply damaged man—Noble Black

A Duntroon man—Tom Elliott

A guardian angel of the Anzacs—Ettie Rout

A labour of love—Mary Chomley

About number twelve was:

A gruesome trade in the dead—W. A. Windeyer

I knew he was to be included at some stage. Professor Scates had written to me asking for permission to use a couple of pictures from the biography I had written. He was complimentary about my book; I was flattered and rang to speak to him. I wondered why Windeyer should be included. He didn’t go to the war although he tried to enlist. Perhaps it was his strong public support for conscription as the Mayor of Hunters Hill. No, it was to illustrate the aspect of postwar pilgrimage to the battlefields and cemeteries. Consequently you will understand that I was rather taken aback by the title linking him to ‘a gruesome trade in the dead’. Perhaps there were aspects of him that the family chose not to speak about.

On my pressing ‘play’ to see his story, things did not improve. In the first slide his birth and death dates were both wrong (they were those of one of his brothers); in slide 4 ‘dotted’, (as in cemeteries dotted on the Western Front) was spelled ‘doted’ and ‘sown’, as in flower beds, was spelled ‘sewn’. I wrote drawing attention to these, perhaps minor things, but expressing disquiet at the title and seeking evidence for other things said in the slides, for example, that he found ‘the grave or memorial of every man killed from his suburb’, and ‘whispered a prayer over each’. I was confident I knew most of the sources. I questioned the embellishment by which flowers ‘growing in most of the cemeteries’ as in the source, became poppies ‘growing in the killing fields’ on the slide. I suggested the language was not only a distortion but also unnecessarily sensational.⁷ The story was quickly taken down from the web for revision and significantly it and the second fifty are now not scheduled to appear until the end of the year (i.e. 2015).⁸

In December I was sent a revised copy of the slides together with a revised copy of the text version.⁹ Professor Scates was surprised I had not seen the original version of the text.

I made extensive corrections, comments and suggestions in reply.

What is the gruesome trade referred to? The French government paid

for French bodies found in the battlefields to be brought in for proper burial. And hence according to the source, stories were developed of bodies being dissected to claim a double reward. In the slide 'double' is magnified to 'multiple' rewards. Indeed a gruesome trade. Windeyer visited many battlefields and cemeteries when he was overseas in 1921. He was concerned that many British bodies were simply being covered over, but he specifically said he was 'discounting the gruesome stories' of dissection. Together with some other Australians, he took a delegation to the Australian High Commission in London. The first version said he led 'one protest after another'. There is evidence of only one.¹⁰

This is the revised version of the visit to the High Commission:

They demanded
that each and every battlefield
be searched again 'by Britishers'
and made to yield up its harvest of dead.

We ask that rewards be paid to the Belgians and
the French for the discovery of Australian bodies,
as other nations paid for such information.

Cost should be no object
to the decent burial of our dead.

In the source they 'emphasised the necessity': they did not 'demand' and they used no expression like 'harvest of dead'. From the source it was the Acting High Commissioner, not the Windeyer delegation, who referred to cost saying, 'The question of expense did not come into consideration' and certainly no one was so confused as to say cost should be no 'object' when they meant the opposite, that is 'obstacle', to the decent burial of our dead.¹¹

The question of language leads not only into the distortions already noted but also to a significant inaccurate ascription. The text version initially said Windeyer claimed that 'Belgian peasants ... ploughed bodies into the earth like manure'. He made no such claim. That expression was used by someone entirely different, a Mr Hempenstall, when interviewed

by the *British Australasian*. Hempenstall concluded 'Australians and New Zealanders will receive with the greatest dismay and indignation, the news that the bodies of their fallen sons and brothers are being ploughed in as manure'.¹²

The first text version of the Windeyer story began:

Assembled in a corner of the room were all the things a man of his age and status was likely to need for many months abroad—a battered suitcase, a sturdy hat box, an umbrella, camera and notebook. Windeyer looked skeptically at a dark woolen overcoat, sagging beneath the weight of itself ... This was a garment fashioned for another place and another climate, made to cheat the icy winds of the Somme and the drenching rain of Flanders.

Further on in the text, reference was made to his dipping the 'silver' nib of his pen in ink to write the list of those from Hunters Hill whose graves he sought to visit.

This is not *The Secret River* or *Wolf Hall* but it has, and the book explains, pieces of historical imagination. The opening passage after revision begins: 'We can imagine' Windeyer looking at the suitcase etc. The silver nib has gone, as have the whispered prayers. That is good, but one must wonder whether there are other undisclosed and undetectable examples of historical imagination in the other forty-nine stories and is historical imagination appropriate in this project.

My grandfather's story for the publisher is now essentially accurate and his words unembellished. Importantly the title is 'denouncing' the gruesome trade. But some of the sensationalism in the language remains.¹³ As I said, I have yet to see a further amended version of the slides.

However, his story is not the problem. It is simply an indication of problems in the project. I know about him. About a month before Anzac Day I thought to look at the other forty-nine stories. I know little about any of the subjects but I did know that the line, 'Justice Higgins founder of Australia's High Court', in one story was simply wrong. He was not even one of the initial three judges. And I knew that saying one of the causes of deaths of civilians in Turkey was 'genocide' was perhaps unwisely controversial. The web is brilliant for spreading ideas and information and inaccuracies.

During the process of revising the Windeyer story it was taken down from the website but it remained with all its inaccuracies as part of the exhibit at the Centre at Albany: it remained there for four months until I thought to check with those in Western Australia, found it was still up and asked for it to be taken down.¹⁴ Higgins and genocide have been altered on the web¹⁵ but they remained there in their original problematic form for five months: indeed for a month after their problems had been drawn to the attention of the Vice-Chancellor as well as Professor Scates. It was only after some follow-up phone calls and letters to the Vice-Chancellor that any move was made to correct them. And they too remained uncorrected at Albany for a further three and a half months, again until followed up by me—ten months in total. As at the beginning of September they were also uncorrected at the exhibit at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne.¹⁶ There are still matters of English expression in the forty-nine that I believe should be changed but which remain unaltered; for example, of Bernard Walther it says, ‘Over seven months in the line he survived disease—dysentery, fever, cholera.’ His service record says he never suffered from any illness. I suggested ‘he avoided’ might be more accurate than ‘survived’ dysentery etc. It was to be changed but has not been.¹⁷

Reactions to my comments, corrections and suggestions have been various. As I said, the web version of the Windeyer story was quickly removed for review—but Albany was not told. There was surprise that I had not seen the book version. It came with the revised version of the slides and a covering letter from Professor Scates: ‘We have corrected the couple of typographical errors you noted (the death date was still wrong) ... [and] I must admit we are still trying to master this technology.’¹⁸ Further on he says: ‘as you can see we can verify in published and archival sources all of the claims we have made in this account ... [and the term] killing field was often used at the time.’ A search via Trove of Australian newspapers of the time reveals no such usage. Truth without mythology?

There were some sources listed in the text version including two articles in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, one by me ascribed to J. M. Bennett and one by Bennett ascribed to me, and neither of them of any real relevance. And references to the *British Australasian* that show the

origin of the manure version—as Hempenstall not Windeyer.

As I said, I replied with suggested corrections and amendments.¹⁹ Professor Scates acknowledged ‘a number of minor amendments’ he was happy to make but which he considered involved ‘a slight change of emphasis rather than matters of fact’; adding ‘I take it you have not read the *British Australasian* yourself, it is not available in many archives and I don’t believe it has been digitised yet’.²⁰ As it happens, it is in the National Library and I had checked his references and they did not support the statements made.²¹

I have been told that ‘Historical inquiry is a matter of constant review as well as careful research’;²² that as a history graduate I ‘will understand that there is scope for debate, different interpretations and writing genres in history’; and that Higgins was not the founder of the High Court was ‘a question of semantics’.²³

Among the innumerable historians of World War I is the late Barbara Tuchman whose wonderful works include *August 1914*. In an essay in *Practicing History* she says she does not invent anything ‘even the weather’.²⁴ I am not in her class but of the same school.

Does it all matter?

I believe ‘Yes’—in the context of current debates

- about standards in our universities;
- about ‘What is history?’ and the distinction and connection between history and fiction;
- about how we understand and remember World War I—not just VCs, sacrifices, mateship, and the birth of the nation;
- and about how the national story is told via history in schools.

And all especially so in an age in which communication of information and misinformation is equally instantaneous.

In conclusion let me remind you: ‘First and foremost the 100 stories are an educational resource’, produced within and published by one of the Group of Eight Australian universities.



PANEL
SCHOLARSHIP OF THE FUTURE
ACADEMIC PUBLISHING FUTURES

The scholarly communication and research evaluation landscape is locked into historical paradigms that inadequately reflect the opportunities of the digital era. Why hasn't the Internet disrupted the practices and the economics of scholarly publishing? University library budgets have been taken over in the last decade by the 'big deals' of a small number of multinational serial publishers. As a result of their drive for profits and their increasing domination of university library budgets, the purchasing of print books has declined dramatically in the last decades.¹

Academic publishing is intrinsically conservative because it is still dominated by 'print' models of research evaluation that flow on to scholarly behaviour patterns. These metrics are used in a variety of ways by universities, research councils and, not least, by commercial providers of university league tables. The metrics of publication in these league tables are increasingly used by universities as a major marketing tool to recruit overseas students. Thus the historical concept of creating and disseminating research through publications for the public good has become subverted into an output that ultimately plays a part as a marketing mechanism to recruit students. The fact that this student income is partly diverted within university budgets to enhance research resulting in publications that are rarely read is another matter.

It is no longer as important what you publish as it is where you publish, and how often you are cited. The 'publish or perish' syndrome is still as prevalent as ever in universities. The printed book is still the gold standard for research evaluation. This causes major problems for young academics, not only in finding a press who will publish them, but also because their

- ¹ An earlier version of this paper was published in *Honest History* 1 December 2015, as was my 'What is History?', a review of Scates et al., *World War I: A History in 100 Stories*, <http://honesthistory.net.au> (search 'Windeyer').
- ² Monash University, Faculty of Arts, *One Hundred Stories: Creating the 100 Stories*, <http://future.arts.monash.edu/onehundredstories/creating-the-100-stories/> accessed 29 Dec 2014.
- ³ e.g. ABC, RN, 'Life Matters', 25 April 2013; BBC World Service, 9 December 2012; *Age*, 7 November 2013, 23 April 2015; *Sydney Morning Herald* 11 November 2012.
- ⁴ <http://future.arts> etc., accessed 29 Dec 2014.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Monash University, Researcher Profiles, (Professor Bruce Scates), <http://monash.edu/research/people/profiles>; Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, Professor Bruce Scates, <http://www.assa.edu.au/fellowship/fellow/100179>, both accessed 19 July 2015.
- ⁷ Windeyer to Scates, 14 November 2014; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 August 1922.
- ⁸ As at March 2016 they have still not been posted.
- ⁹ Scates to Windeyer, 16 December 2014.
- ¹⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 October 1921; *Register*, Adelaide, 15 Oct 1921.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² *British Australasian*, 29 September 1921.
- ¹³ Windeyer / Scates, emails, 10–13 March 2015.
- ¹⁴ Windeyer / Wegerhoff, emails, 13 March 2015.
- ¹⁵ As at 24 April 2015.
- ¹⁶ Windeyer to J. McAuslan, Director Exhibitions and Collections, Shrine of Remembrance, 9 September 2015.
- ¹⁷ Bernard Walther story as at 31 July 2015.
- ¹⁸ Scates to Windeyer, 16 December 2014.
- ¹⁹ Windeyer to Scates, 28 December 2014.
- ²⁰ Scates to Windeyer, 14 January 2015.
- ²¹ *British Australasian*, 20 January and 29 September 1921.
- ²² Scates to Windeyer, email, 14 Jan 2015.
- ²³ Scates to Windeyer, email, 30 April 2015.
- ²⁴ B. W. Tuchman, *August 1914*, Constable, London, 1962; 'In Search of History' in her *Practicing History: Selected Essays*, Knopf, New York, 1981, p. 18.

initiatives in wider digital or public frameworks are not taken into account in research evaluation.

Manuscripts in the humanities and social sciences (HASS) with an Australian focus are often rejected by northern hemisphere publishers as not being commercially viable. Within Australia, commercial trade or university trade publishers look for books that will sell. One major Australian publisher told me that the ideal academic book would be on the sex lives of the Taliban!

John B. Thompson's *Books in the Digital Age*, which actually didn't go into much detail on digital books, defines a monograph as 'a work of scholarship on a particular topic or theme which is written by a scholar or scholars and intended for use primarily by other scholars'.²

In this context, my recent experience of judging academic book prizes, such as those for the Prime Minister's Non-Fiction and History Awards and the Council of Humanities and Social Sciences Academic Book Prize, confirms that the best books are those that mix academic scholarship with accessibility and are not simply written, as Thompson implies, for the limited audience of a particular academic discipline. The question of public impact as required by the current research evaluation framework (REF) in the UK is likely to be taken up in Australia, albeit with less detail and cost, as government seeks evidence of impact and engagement.

The current print run of a large number of academic books is estimated to be 200–300 copies. This limits a book's accessibility, although it still allows, with high prices, for some publishers to be very profitable. High profit margins are confirmed by the increasing purchase of smaller firms by the multinationals. For example, the 2015 purchases by the large Informa publishing conglomerate, which includes Taylor & Francis and Routledge. Informa paid £45 million for the publishing firms Maney and Ashgate. Its operating profit for the six months to June 30 2015 was £190.4 million.

The monograph is thus in crisis only for some. The output of monographs from the Big Four UK-based imprints (OUP, CUP, Routledge/Taylor & Francis, Palgrave Macmillan) has more than doubled in the last decade.³ Emeritus Professor John Sutherland of University College London once termed the Oxford and Cambridge University Presses as the 'kangaroos' of

academic publishing as they bounced over every other publisher. In 2014, OUP had a turnover of £767 million with a pre-tax profit of £104 million. CUP had annual sales to April 2015 of £269 million and an operating profit of £6.7 million.

The top American presses such as Harvard and Yale have more in common with Oxford and Cambridge do the majority of American university presses. In 2015, of the 105 members of the American Association of University Presses, only nine have annual sales of more than \$6 million and most have revenues of under \$1.5 million.

Few authors receive significant royalties from monographs and, more often than not, authors are asked to provide costs towards the monograph publication. Thus, one Australian press recently requested \$15,000 towards the cost of publishing an Australian political studies manuscript, with an extra \$5,000 if tables were included.

The trend towards 'Gold' Open Access publication, which means that academics find funds to make a publication publicly accessible on the web, has now moved into the monographic area. Figures quoted in 2015 include the following from these major publishers: Cambridge £6,500 for titles up to 120,000 words; Manchester University Press £5,900 up to 80,000 words; Palgrave Open £7,500 – £11,000; and Springer Open Depends on size of work – €15,000.⁴

Perhaps we need a new debate as to what constitutes 'vanity publishing'. The Australian National University Press, which was re-founded in 2003, has published nearly 550 Open Access (OA) books. Some have called its practice of largely publishing ANU scholars, 'vanity publishing', despite the fact that this was the original mission of Oxford University Press in the seventeenth century and many others in the early twentieth century, such as the University of California and the University of Manchester.

Open access monographs are an effective way of disseminating scholarship more widely. This model makes a digital version available free on the net, with the opportunity to purchase a print copy through print on demand (POD). The new, or reconstituted, university presses, at Sydney, Adelaide, Monash, ANU and the University of Technology, Sydney are located in their university libraries and are part of the scholarly infrastruc-

ture of the university, rather than being a stand-alone commercial entity either within or without the university.

These five presses publish significantly more 'academic' books than the more established university presses at the Universities of Melbourne, Queensland, Western Australia and New South Wales. Australia is a world leader in this area of open access monograph publishing but its achievements are often overlooked by northern hemisphere commentators. The recently publicised UCL (University College London) Press, termed by its Provost, Michael Arthur, as 'A twenty-first century approach to the dissemination of knowledge', has much in common with the ANU open access monograph model.⁵

If an academic monograph, published by a commercial firm, averages 200–300 copies printed, of which only a fraction will be held in Australian libraries, then the statistics from some of the Australian Open Access presses are impressive. Thus Adelaide UP averages 10,000 downloads from each of its 47 titles, while ANU Press had 608,722 complete or partial downloads of Press books from January to August 2015.

It has recently been estimated that there have been over 2.5 million downloads per annum from the 'new' Presses in recent years.⁶ Downloads are also a useful metric that can be used in research evaluation processes within the university. The new models of university publishing were highlighted at the Council of Australian University Libraries (CAUL) seminar in March 2015, 'Reinventing University Publishing'.⁷

The Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge, Professor David McKittrick, termed his 2014 Charles Holden Lecture at the University of London, 'Academic libraries in the early twenty-first century are candidates for metamorphosis or dissolution'. Certainly the global trend is for the printed book to be relegated to off-campus stores to free up space for teaching and learning digital spaces. In addition, less money has been allocated for the purchase of print books, a situation exacerbated by the recent devaluation of the Australian dollar.

Most university libraries spend the majority of their book and serial acquisition in northern hemisphere currencies with a significant proportion of funds being tied up in the so called science serial 'Big Deals',

which ensure increasingly large profits for the six or seven multinational publishers each year. The fact that most of the articles in these serial 'Big Deals' are relatively little used is another issue to be tackled in the future.

The crucial long-term question is who owns scholarly knowledge. Universities and research institutions that create it or publishers who take possession of that knowledge and sell it back to the creators at ever-increasing profits? Scholarly content has thus moved from an historical relatively open information commons, for example, the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* in 1665, to the current expensive, firewalled, multinational publishing environment, which can be termed 'information feudalism'.

E-books are not the simple answer for a variety of reasons, including ownership of the content, differing access frameworks and conventional, inflexible formats. E-books purchased by many academic libraries usually only allow a limited number of users and are restricted by excessive digital rights management frameworks. Nonetheless, many university libraries are increasing their intake of e-books for a variety of reasons, such as cost options and less space requirements. The same criteria that university libraries apply to legacy print need to be similarly applied to e-books. Interestingly, in recent surveys students still prefer print to digital.

E-book sales, moreover, have arguably plateaued. Thus the UK Nielsen Bookscan, for the first 36 weeks of 2015, shows print book sales up 4.6%, the first rise since 2007. In the US, e-book sales fell 10% up to May 2015 (AAP figures from 12,000 publishers). E-books in 2015 were 20% of US market. Amazon even opened a print bookshop in Seattle in October 2015.

Vincent Cerf, 'Father of the Internet', in the Carnegie Mellon University Distinguished Lecture Series in February 2015, argued that the printed book is still an essential resource and that we need 'digital vellum' book repositories.⁸ There are numerous examples in Australia of retired academics wishing to donate valuable printed material to university libraries but being rejected because of lack of space, scholarship, or funds to house and process the collections. If significant research is still being embodied in the print volume, there is surely an obligation to retain it for research purposes, even if in off-campus storage.

It was interesting that in November 2015 a whole week was devoted



in the United Kingdom to debating the 'Academic book of the future'. This is at a time when the new Australian Book Council has ignored academic books in its initial terms of reference. The question that remains is that, while books remain a critical part of the scholarly infrastructure in analogue form, how do we integrate and evaluate books into the wider digital environment, both public and scholarly?

Open Access is one major pathway. In November 2015 Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull commented on the need for innovation and criticised the current focus for academics to 'publish or perish'.⁹ There is a direct correlation between innovation and open access to knowledge. Making research more widely available through open access, within suitable peer-reviewed guidelines, will encourage a wider dissemination of Australian research and scholarship, and ensure public engagement.

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- ¹ Colin Steele, 'Scholarly Communication, Scholarly Publishing and University Libraries', *Australian Academic and Research Libraries*, December 2014, pp. 1–21, <https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/11944/1/Steele%20Scholarly%20Communication%202014.pdf>.
- ² John B. Thompson, *Books in the Digital Age*, Polity, Cambridge, 2005, pp. 84–85.
- ³ Richard Fisher, 'The Monograph: Keep on Keepin' on, Part One', *Scholarly Kitchen*, 10 November 2015, <http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2015/11/10/guest-post-richard-fisher-on-the-monograph-keep-on-keepin-on-part-one/>.
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PANEL SCHOLARSHIP OF THE FUTURE THE LIBRARY OF THE FUTURE

I, who had always thought of Paradise in form and image as a library
—Borges²

The vision of the library as paradise has inspired many to conceive of the nature of the relationship of text and libraries as one of eternal value. The concept of the value of libraries has, however, become hotly contested with challenges to budgets, changes in publishing and new needs of an online generation.

In the modern world of academic libraries, we see evolution in demand and a need for new thinking to reduce the gap between the knowledge required for a digitally literate citizen or researcher and that of for the average student. Academic libraries are constantly evolving both services and collections to meet client needs. There is urgency in seeking to envisage a future where the flowering of knowledge will result in an era of great scholars, whose skills and access to resources support a nation that truly contributes to the world.

Happily, there is evidence that the changes libraries are making are having a significant impact—in the past three years at the Australian National University there has been increase in the use of our services and library buildings. Students talk of being 'inspired to study' in ways that other learning spaces cannot support.

For academic libraries, the changing roles and needs of the community within a university are both exciting and challenging. Changing methods of education including MOOCs and online courses, the revolution of the

online environment with the growth of the Internet and the development of new approaches research have led to a reconceptualisation and fundamental change.

The wider recognition of the role of libraries is reflected in arguments for national and international developments. Reading and literacy have never been more important. Capabilities to read and comprehend in the online and print environment are being seen as essential for all.

Literacy is more important than ever it was, in this world of text and email, a world of written information. We need to read and write, we need global citizens who can read comfortably, comprehend what they are reading, understand nuance, and make themselves understood.³

Visions of Times Past

When the community think of libraries, they often envision deep historic collections and vaulted reading rooms. Images of Trinity College Library in Dublin, the British Library and the Library of Congress spring to mind. These views of libraries are not limited to those with long library experience and distinguished research careers.

A recent report by OCLC found that students and parents alike think of the concept of physical collections when asked what they associate libraries with.⁴

In fact, from 2005 to 2014, the perception of the book brand has cemented. Sixty-nine percent of online users indicated that their first thought of a library was 'books' in 2005, 75% in both 2010 and 2014. Even as most consumers have moved online for much of their information needs, they continue to strongly associate libraries with the physical—books and buildings.

Modern researchers see the physical form of the material they need to access changing and at times lament the passing of the great monuments of libraries holding paper collections. The renovating of libraries, or developments such as pop up libraries, brings community comment and passion. The idea of our physical collections remains fundamental to the community's understanding. Even in science fiction the physical shape of collections defines libraries. In the *Doctor Who* episode 'Silence in the

Library', the possession of the library's temporary inhabitants takes place in corridors and reading rooms filled with physical works.⁵

Connecting individuals to physical collections in new and different ways has been a topic that sees academics consider the nature of the relationship of knowledge and communities. Anthony Mandal, Reader in Print and Digital Cultures, Cardiff University, has postulated that the physical form is central to communicating the role of libraries but that 'the library is no longer a space that we can reliably perceive and compute but a vast abstraction that has more in common with the boundless night sky than any terrestrial architecture'.⁶

Visions of Times Present

If the physical form is the key to the general identity, the question arises as to what the actual roles of the library are. The perceptions of the value provided by the library's roles and the nature of the evolution of library services provide a background to understanding the shifts in academic libraries that set the scene for the future library. Many of these trends reflect fundamental changes in scholarly communication in the networked age that contribute to scholarship, often in anticipation of shifts in the academy and changes in scholarly communication.

In Australia, the Group of Eight comprises Australia's eight leading research universities: The University of Melbourne, the Australian National University (ANU), the University of Sydney, the University of Queensland, the University of Western Australia, the University of Adelaide, Monash University and the University of New South Wales. Evaluations of the needs of academics and higher degree students undertaken in recent years suggest that the fundamental role of the library is multifaceted and increasingly supporting scholarly activities beyond physical collections.

Five of the university libraries undertook a study of current client needs and perceived roles using Ithaka S+R, a US based not-for-profit organisation with a tool that evaluates libraries. In answer to the question 'How important is it to you that your university library provides each of the functions below?' the study, conducted primarily of academics and postgraduates, found that the primary roles of the academic library were:⁷

1. Buyer: 'The library pays for resources faculty members need, from academic journals to books to electronic databases'
2. Archive: 'The library serves as a repository of resources; in other words, it archives, preserves, and keeps track of resources'
3. Gateway: 'The library serves as a starting point or 'gateway' for locating information for faculty research'
4. Research: 'The library provides active support that helps increase the productivity of my research and scholarship'
5. Teaching: 'The library supports and facilitates faculty teaching activities'
6. Student support: 'The library helps students develop research, critical analysis, and information literacy skills'

The study found a high value for the libraries as collectors and repositories, with strong emerging needs for research skills and support for education. These newer roles are even more significant in an online world where a single keystroke can delete a lifetime's work. The complexity of the scholarly communication system is creating a need for new services. Interestingly, the nature and quality of services provided by libraries in the print environment translates to the capabilities required to support online scholarship. Expertise in dissemination of research, publishing expertise, managing research data as an archival asset are highly value added skills, fully applicable in the online environment.

A different set of insights has been obtained from a study of academics and postgraduates undertaken by Professor Carol Tenopir, School of Information Sciences at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and the Director of Research for the College of Communication and Information, and Director of the Center for Information and Communication Studies. A recent study at ANU added to the substantial research already undertaken as part of the Lib-Value project.

The overarching project has found that Australian university libraries are the strongest source of readings for academics and postgraduates.⁸ For comparison, while UK and US libraries are also the primary sources

for journals (67% and 55% respectively), Australian libraries are the source of 69% of journal articles. Postgraduates overall have 69% of their journal article readings sourced from libraries with 51% of books read from library collections. The Australian results are higher than the use of library collections in the US; journal article use is 9% higher and book use is 6% higher.

The study at ANU provided a deep dive into information behaviours. The impact of libraries was significant. Academic staff who published 5–10 items in the last two years read the most books and other publications.⁹ The fundamental importance of the library is revealed in the time devoted by academics to reading. Academic staff on average spend 133 hours per year with library-provided material, equivalent to 16.6 eight-hour days annually reading material provided by the library.

Postgraduate students could well be analysed as living in the library.¹⁰ Postgraduate students, on average, spend 254 hours per year of their work time with library-provided material, or the equivalent of 31.75 eight-hour days annually. One hundred per cent of postgraduate students used the library collections online.

Both these sets of studies point to a set of library services that are building and communicating knowledge in print and increasingly in digital form. The fundamental capabilities of libraries are being recognised as vital by students and academics challenged by the digital environment.

Future Scenarios

While the present is unmistakably a hybrid scholarly environment with print and digital threads in the scholarly communication matrix, questioning the likely future scenarios has brought an opportunity for libraries to work with broader communities on complex social predictions.

Two recent studies suggest that, while there is a range of scenarios, the successful blending of library skills and services into learning could provide an opportunity to create a successful environment for the academic community. The American Library Association has put together a set of articles on future libraries.¹¹ One by Joan K. Lippincott proposes transformation in academic teaching as an opportunity to embed archival

and library knowledge and skills within the curriculum. This integrative theory builds on a pedagogical approach that positions the students as the new creators of content and as partners in their education. Reaching out into the classroom can support both contextual knowledge co-creation and the implementation of the learner as a researcher. Embedding skills programs will increase utilisation of scholarly resources and the analytic skills that are vital for researchers for the future.

The State Library of New South Wales project on futures for public libraries suggests complexity is essential for the survival of all libraries.¹² The focus groups developed literary metaphors for the changes needed to create libraries that contributed to their communities. The two axes of developments were to the physical spaces offered by libraries and to virtual spaces. Understanding the trends including the democratisation of knowledge (think of the revolution caused by Trove), the changes with social media and the thirst for knowledge was fundamental to the development of scenarios.

This forecasting provides a blunt challenge to libraries. In a 'Silent spring' the scenario suggests that there will be a slowdown in digital technology and public libraries may thrive and restore print-based learning. But would that enable scholarship to thrive? An alternative scenario of learning buildings forecasts hyper technology and a coalescence of all services, with the library 'brand' less differentiated. A 'Necromancer' scenario sees serious economic challenges, with a retreat to libraries as places of slow reading and access to knowledge that is otherwise unaffordable. In the final scenario, 'Fahrenheit 451', the world is fundamentally online, but it is a post-literate world where print is dead and space is at a premium. This would have serious implications for social science and humanities scholarship and communication.

With such a range of possibilities academic libraries are at a crossroads. Reinventing services and collections to position ourselves for a positive future enables both the testing out of propositions of value and the engaging and creating of literate students and academics to create a new world with us.

The following sections outline initiatives that are unlocking scholarly

communication for the digital era, with the three main dimensions of library services as reference, physical spaces and collections.

Reinventing Reference Services

Simply helping our clients access and develop capabilities to use scholarly resources has been a traditional role of libraries, and archives. With the transition to the digital environment, support for finding relevant resources in a tsunami of information resources has been challenging to students and academics. The assumption that the right information is a click away has never been less true. Concerns about our clients being overwhelmed by information resources has led to a re-evaluation of how we can assist knowledge seekers in this increasingly online world.

At the ANU a program has been developed to reach out and strengthen the capabilities of postgraduate students using the online world. Those commencing postgraduate studies are in a unique position. They combine a desire to find everything related to their study with the challenges of having timeframes defined during their study and of starting without a map of the knowledge resources that can help them.

The Personal Library program began as an outreach program to higher degree research students and indeed to course work students, commencing as close as possible to the time they commenced their study. Because postgraduates enrol throughout the year, the program needed to be untangled from the orientation weeks for each semester. It also needed to be strongly focused on building students as researchers in order to provide capabilities for their future research careers. The Yale University personal librarian program provided the inspiration for a trial in 2013.¹³ Developed as a low cost program to engage students actively, the evidence showed that students were highly satisfied with the electronic outreach, and access to relevant research resources improved significantly through the program.¹⁴

The goals of the project were to:

- reach out to students using email and electronic means (including a LibGuide¹⁵) to introduce them to the library's services
- be a referral point to link students to experts
- build a knowledge of scholarly communication

- build relationships between the library and students
- focus on co-construction of knowledge.

For phase one of the project library staff volunteered to be the personal librarian contacts and were provided with training and skills. Seventy-three postgraduate students were contacted, with two monthly emails and follow-ups regarding relevant training and collections. Referrals were a well-used part of the service. In phase two 2,338 postgraduate students were contacted, with a online program focused on relevant skill development programs and resources

The evaluation of the service found steady use and increasing awareness. The 2015 statistics indicate that almost all of the postgraduates in the program had used many library resources shortly after the emails were sent out. At this point 435 students in the program were participating in the program.

Statistics from Personal Library service campaign email #1 (May 2015)

Subject contacts webpage	426 hits
Increasing your research impact guide	231 hits
Library training (ILP courses) webpage	49 hits
EndNote how to guide	36 hits
Finding these how to guide	34 hits
Library news	26 hits
Academic Skills & Learning Centre	20 hits
Library homepage	14 hits
Library opening hours	12 hits
Library twitter	10 hits
Library branches webpage	10 hits

Table 1. Impact of message to personal Library scheme participant

These statistics are gathered counting the click throughs from the emails sent to the students. It is a simple but effective way to find out what items were of interest to the receivers of the emails.

Having proved that the electronic communication method and content developed particularly for postgraduates was achieving greater use of resources and the development of research skills in the students, the service has been integrated into the daily workflow of Library staff.

Feedback from individual students indicates a thirst for knowledge and digital competencies and that the service is making a significant impact. Two recent comments are:

‘Sam, I love you so much just now. I should have come to the Library earlier.’

‘Wish I had asked earlier.’

Reinventing the service to an active online outreach program suggests that the technology available can be used effectively to support better postgraduate student experiences.

Reinventing Physical Libraries: Libraries Anywhere Anytime

The vision of a physical library as a treasure trove of knowledge is but a part of the puzzle of understanding the importance of our physical spaces. Consistently, research finds that those entering the halls of our libraries discover that they become inspired to study. There is a complex psychological response to studying within a library. Within a university, students speak of being liberated from the isolation of residences, from the noise of housemates and from the grind of everyday activities. The importance of the supportive environment of the library cannot be expressed simply in terms of the resources we make available. There are complex forces behind supporting individuals and small groups to come to grips with the intellectual issues they are pursuing.

Students’ lives are also increasing complex; balancing part time jobs, study, field trips and other demands means that much study is done at very different hours of the day. In seeking to provide a high quality experience for students, ANU developed a proposal for opening Level 2 of the Chifley Library on a 24/7 basis, to support study by opening the

library in a new way. A paper with several different options on service delivery and information on experiences of other research libraries was prepared. Advice was sought from the whole ANU community including students, academics, library staff, service areas and student associations. The feedback indicated that the community was seeking a solution that would enable some access to a library, not necessarily the full collection. Chifley Library is the most visited branch library, centrally located and very accessible. Thus began our adventure in opening up access.

A pilot run in late 2014 found that the demand was strong. All floors were open 24/7 for two weeks with over 13,000 students using the library in the extended hour period. The extended hours were the hours that the library had previously been closed—midnight to 8 am Monday to Thursday; 6 pm Friday to Saturday 1 pm; Saturday night 7 pm to Sunday morning 10 am. A great deal of preparatory work was undertaken, very capably led by the Branch Manager, Helena Zobec.

After considerable building work a new model of 24/7 access to a single floor, with access via swipe card, has been established. The figures demonstrate the success of the program:

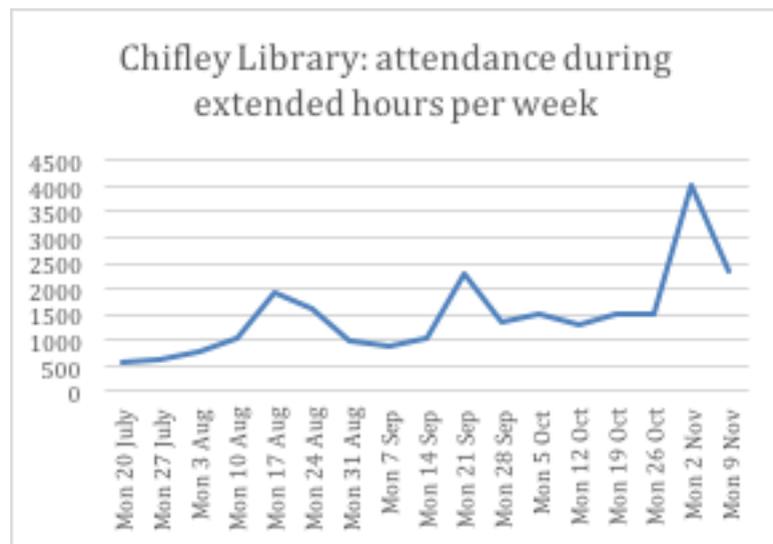


Chart 1. After hours use of Chifley Library

The service is notable for the opening up of support, in particular to postgraduate students. While undergraduate students are undoubtedly the highest users during semester, the library’s hours in the semester breaks have been 9–5 Monday to Friday. Many postgraduates use these periods for intensive writing and analysis, combining writing with research work. They have been particularly disadvantaged by not having access to a library outside the limited hours and find the need for quiet study space is very important.

Reinventing the physical spaces had brought an environment to support learning that is much more than a study hall. It supports learning in a new way, creating a space that allows inspiration to occur 24/7, together with access to facilities including printing, computers and basic reading material. The student reaction has been overwhelmingly positive.

Reinventing Collections

Research libraries create access to print and electronic knowledge. The nature of our collections has changed significantly with increasing availability of digital resources. Barriers to digital access are primarily cost and copyright. With the fall in the Australian dollar our purchasing power is shrinking; however, at ANU well over 90% of the collection building is of new digital materials.

Studying the use of the collection provides a perspective on how client needs are met, but tells only part of the story. At present the use of electronic titles compared to print is approximately 18:1. Although the use of print is declining, at around 13% this year, the value of print for deep study, in particular rare materials, has never been higher. Our collections are now highly accessible, through catalogues and databases, with over 60% of the finding aids for the ANU archive collections now online.

Digitising resources provides the opportunity to create access to our great print collections. Opening up access meets the needs of the research community, allowing students and academics and indeed the wider community access anywhere anytime. Unsurprisingly, studies of academic clients find that online access to resources and metadata increases visibility

and use.¹⁶ The title of the most recent report, ‘We love the library, but we live on the web’, says it all.

Commencing a digitisation program was complex and requires an understanding of copyright, technology and the use of new systems. Acquisition of a book scanner is but one part of a complex process. While it may take over a decade at the present rate to digitise all ANU theses, one of the major threads of the digitisation program, beginning this journey, unlocks scholarship for which there is a strong demand. The average number of downloads per digitised thesis is about ten each per annum. Some have been downloaded thirty times. The readers of these works are from universities around the globe. The print paradigm inhibited access and many theses remained undiscovered, potentially leading to duplication in research and did not support researchers careers as visibly. Appropriate measures are taken to restrict theses when they contain information that needs to be confidential for example for the development of commercial products or because of sensitive data, and they are but a small part of the digitisation program.

The Scholars of the Future

To sum up, reinventing library reference, buildings and collections is enabling a strengthening of the library’s role in supporting the scholars of the present and future. The complex nature of collections and resources means that scholarly communication knowledge is never more needed.

These new roles for the library position the flourishing of research capabilities and knowledge that support the next generation of policy makers, researchers and community members.

Creating a world where knowledge and scholarly communication capabilities are greater will remain a major challenge for the future. Too much knowledge is currently locked up and inaccessible to many researchers, particularly independent scholars. At the recent Scholarly Communication Beyond Paywalls conference, it was clear that the current model of control of scholarly outputs is insufficient to support an innovative, knowledge-based world.¹⁷ While open access policies and

movements have achieved much, the majority of scholarly works remain inaccessible to many.

A new set of scenarios for 2030 must include a reinvention of the whole of scholarly communication, which will create different roles for libraries and publishers. There are already signs of change. A study of university library publishing in Australia this year found that one in four university libraries in Australia is publishing original scholarly works in some form (mostly journals), most are available online and are open access and the publications are read widely (over 3.4 million downloads this year) and internationally.¹⁸

A partnership between researchers and libraries is fundamental to this reinvention. The contribution of ideas from the members of the Independent Scholars Association of Australia is vital.

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- ¹ Heather Jenks, Associate Director, Information Services, ANU, contributed to the analysis of the Personal Library program.
 - ² J. Borges, ‘Poem of the Gifts’, in Jorge Luis Borges, *Selected Poems 1923–1967*, ed. N. T. di Giovanni, Allen Lane, London, 1972.
 - ³ N. Gaiman, ‘Why Our Future Depends on Libraries, Reading and Daydreaming’, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/oct/15/neil-gaiman-future-libraries-reading-daydreaming>.
 - ⁴ Cathy De Rosa et al., *At a Tipping Point: Education, Learning and Libraries, A Report to the OCLC Membership*, OCLC, Dublin, Ohio, 2014.
 - ⁵ http://www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho/s4/episodes/S4_08.
 - ⁶ Anthony Mandal, ‘What Fiction Has to Say about the Libraries of the Future’, <https://theconversation.com/what-fiction-has-to-say-about-the-libraries-of-the-future-36314>.
 - ⁷ Ithaca S+R, Group of Eight Survey of Academics 2013–14, New York, Ithaca, S+R, 2015. Copy (pdf) available from caul@caul.edu.au.
 - ⁸ R Missingham, ‘Scholarly Reading in the Digital Age by Professor Carol Tenopir (a review)’, <http://roxannemissingham.blogspot.com.au/2013/04/scholarly-reading-in-digital-age-by.html>.
 - ⁹ Carol Tenopir, Rachel Volentine, Lisa Christian, and Miranda Orvis, *Lib-Value Report: Australian National University Academic Staff, Center for Information and Communication Studies University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2013*, http://library-admin.anu.edu.au/intranet/_resources/survey-results/ANU-Academic-Staff-Final.pdf.
 - ¹⁰ Carol Tenopir, Rachel Volentine, Lisa Christian, and Miranda Orvis, *Lib-*



PANEL
SCHOLARSHIP OF THE FUTURE
DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP FUTURES

Digital technologies are transforming how research is conducted. This paper will focus on one part of that transformation: in the humanities broadly, and in literary and historical studies in particular. Using a range of projects to illustrate each, I will discuss three broad trajectories in this context: regarding the new forms of access, curation, and engagement that digital technologies make possible. I will also show how each of these trajectories relates to my own research with the National Library of Australia's Trove's database of digitised historical newspapers. My focus will be on the possibilities that digital technologies hold out for humanities research, as well as the challenges this presents to the way we think about scholarship, and its requirements, aims, and outcomes.

Access

It has become almost commonplace to note that digital technologies dramatically transform our relationship to the humanities archive, in particular by increasing the range of materials we can access, and the ways in which are able to access them. Where once a scholar would have had to travel to the site where a document was located, perhaps make an appointment to see it (maybe even requiring a letter of introduction to do so), now many documents are available online. One example of such a resource is the British Library's 'Discovering Literature' portal, which provides high-quality digitised versions of rare editions of famous Romantic and Victorian literature, as well as a range of materials helpful in assessing and understanding these documents, such as historical essays and podcasted interviews with academics.¹

Value Report: Australian National University Postgraduate Students, Center for Information and Communication Studies University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2013, http://library-admin.anu.edu.au/intranet/_resources/survey-results/ANU-Postgrad-FinalReport.pdf.

- ¹¹ M. Figueroa, 'Forecasting the Future of Libraries', <http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2015/02/26/forecasting-the-future-of-libraries-2015/>.
- ¹² State Library of New South Wales, *The Bookends Scenarios: Alternative Futures for the Public Library Network in NSW in 2030*, State Library, Sydney [2015]. Copy (pdf) available from State Library of NSW.
- ¹³ Yale University Library, Yale College Personal Librarian Program, <http://www.library.yale.edu/pl/>.
- ¹⁴ Judy M. Spak and Janis G. Glover, 'The Personal Librarian Program: An Evaluation of a Cushing/Whitney Medical Library Outreach Initiative', *Medical Reference Services Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 4, 2007, pp. 25–30.
- ¹⁵ Australian National University Library, Personal Library Service, 2014, http://libguides.anu.edu.au/personal_library_service.
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- ¹⁷ The Sydney Conference, 2015, <https://sydneyconference2015.wordpress.com/about/>.
- ¹⁸ R Missingham, *University Presses Decline to Decline—New Models Down Under*, CAUL Publishing, Canberra, 2015, <https://caullibrarypublishing.wordpress.com/2015/11/30/university-presses-decline-to-decline-new-models-down-under/>.

One consequence of the digitisation of our cultural record is a transformation in the type of evidence used in humanities research: scholars are increasingly seeking to explore that record not by looking at individual items, however far away they are, but by abstracting those documents and investigating them on a large scale. A notable project of this type is ‘Mapping the Republic of Letters’, based at Stanford University.² Drawing on digitised copies of letters to and from key Enlightenment figures, this project visualises correspondence networks of the period, and provides new historical insights on that basis. One such analysis includes a comparison of John Locke’s and Voltaire’s correspondence networks. We are accustomed to thinking of their correspondence networks as cosmopolitan; and Enlightenment writers positioned themselves in this context. In contrast, the visualisation suggests that Locke’s correspondents were heavily focused in the Anglo-Dutch area, while England was a surprising ‘coldspot’ for Voltaire.³

This theme of increased access to the documentary record via digital resources and methods is central to my own project. In the past three years, I have led a project to discover serialised fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers. Literary and periodical historians have always recognised these newspapers as major publishers of literature in the colonies. But until now, the archive has been too extensive to test that assumption, except by indexing particular newspapers. Trove’s digitisation of a large number of historical Australian newspaper pages (almost 19.5 million at the time of writing)⁴ changes that situation profoundly. Its search interface allows us to use terms such as ‘chapter’ and ‘our novelist’ to identify fiction, while its Application Programming Interface (API) enables us extract the results of this process. So far I have discovered over 15,000 fictional titles published in Australia in the nineteenth century, including almost 10,000 serialised stories. Much of this fiction comes from overseas: from Britain and America, as might be expected, as well as Canada, France, Germany, New Zealand, South Africa, Russia, and beyond. But this project has also discovered a number of Australian titles not previously identified, and even brand new Australian authors: some of whom—such as Tasmanian author, John Silvester Nottage—are well

worth including in our existing literary canon. Without the type of access that digital technologies provide it would have been impossible to identify and amass this extensive corpus of fiction.

My discussion, thus far, has focused on documents—or textual artefacts—partly because that is the area I work in, but also because the technologies of access currently available are typically designed for use with text. However, the new modes of access that digital technologies enable extend beyond text to sound and image. In terms of visual collections, the Rijks Museum in Holland offers an innovative interface for exploration, providing access to astonishingly beautiful and high-quality digital images of all its objects.⁵ Researchers associated with the multi-institutional ‘Digital Music Lab’ are experimenting with new ways of analysing and visualising music, including exploring the internal dynamics of different genres.⁶ However, these new possibilities for access bring challenges for humanities research. Some especially pressing challenges include:

- What scale of evidence do we now consider necessary for a humanities argument?
- How do we interpret new types of evidence—such as data—in the humanities, and what should be done about enhancing the technical abilities of humanities researchers?
- How do we deal with the challenges presented by the potential gap between the access we think we are achieving and the access we actually achieve?

In respect to this last question, the ‘googlisation’ of society has accustomed us to believing that entering a term in a search box provides access to all information about that topic. In fact, complex algorithms manage and order that access, making it difficult to gauge the relationship between what we seek to access and the access we actually achieve.

Curation

Part of the answer to the challenges posed by new forms of digital access is the return of the curatorial role in humanities scholarship. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, curation was a recognised sphere of activity

for humanities scholars. It was not unusual for a professor to be responsible for a collection of documents or artefacts in their area of expertise. The mid-twentieth century saw a decline in this practice as the number of academics expanded, as curation became a specialised profession, and as many fields of research moved from what might be seen as a scholarly paradigm to a research or theory framework.⁷ In the field in which I work, of literary studies, there has been a dramatic decline in people working on bibliographical and editorial projects in the latter part of the twentieth century.⁸ The entry of digital technologies into humanities research is bringing curation to the forefront of humanities scholarship once again. Multiple digital curatorial and editorial projects have arisen, although there is still little sense of what to call them. As Kenneth M. Price noted in 2009, in a claim that remains true today: ‘*Project* is amorphous; *archive* and *edition* are heavy with associations carried over from print culture; *database* is both too limiting and too misleading in its connotations; and *digital thematic research* collection lacks a memorable ring and pithiness.’⁹

Leaving terminology aside, many of the longest-running digital projects in the humanities are curatorial. One example is Price’s own Walt Whitman Archive, which brings together the published and unpublished works of this author, as well as multiple essays, biographical resources, and other commentary.¹⁰ Multiple other curatorial projects exist, and in fact, this process of bringing together related documents or artefacts—or rather, representations of those documents or artefacts—is one of the key ways in which humanities scholars are engaging with digital scholarship.¹¹ I am performing this curatorial role with my study of serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers. It is one thing to amass a collection of over 15,000 fictional works, but the question remains: beyond analysing it for my own purposes, what does one do with such a collection?

While it would be a waste if this rich literary corpus were not made available, entering into the role of curator brings its own, major challenges, including:

- Who should perform this role—who has responsibility for humanities data?

- Should all data be freely available? What about culturally sensitive data? How do we manage the protocols of access in this respect, and who should take responsibility for enacting these?
- If data are to be made freely available, who takes responsibility for the sustainability of those datasets into the future?
- Should humanities scholars try, if possible, to give their data to some organisation or institution to manage, and if so, how can they be expected to deal with the complexity of that data and the challenges of making it available to others?

Where scientific datasets are often very large, humanities datasets are frequently small, multiple, and with hierarchically complex organisations. For instance, my serial fiction data describes the multiple different versions in which the same literary works are published in nineteenth-century newspapers. Humanities datasets thereby present a particular challenge for existing data repositories, which often—understandably—have a one-size-fits-all system for storage and discovery. Protocols are emerging for management of humanities data, but no clear consensus exists yet; accordingly, this emerging curatorial role for humanities scholars is yet to be controlled and sustained by agreed upon principles.

Engagement

Curation invites a form of engagement, in that scholars make a collection available to researchers and the general public. But digital scholarship also presents exciting opportunities to engage the community in the research process in new ways through crowdsourcing. In the scholarly context, crowdsourcing typically involves inviting members of the general public to undertake tasks that computers cannot yet do effectively (such as the pattern recognition involved in reading handwriting—or nineteenth-century newspaper print). Thus far, the sciences have been more successful than the humanities in this area, not least of all because they often have the funding required to enable such engagement. Zooniverse is a website for predominantly scientific crowdsourcing projects, that invites members of the public to—for instance, ‘help us identify individual humpback whales by cluing our computer algorithms in to patterns on their tails’.¹²

However, a number of humanities projects are taking advantage of crowdsourcing to enhance the scholarly environment and encourage public engagement with such research. Trove is recognised internationally as a major leader in the crowdsourcing arena, and it is estimated that text correction by members of the community has saved the Australian government more than 12 million dollars.¹³ Another humanities project that has effectively involved the community is ‘Your Paintings Tagger.’ Recognising that a large proportion of the oil paintings held by cultural institutions in Britain were in storage, the researchers behind this project digitised these paintings and invited the public to identify—or ‘tag’—features in them.¹⁴ In the future, these descriptions will be used to facilitate access to and analysis of oil paintings. The New York Public Library’s ‘What’s on the Menu?’ project is likewise using the power of the ‘crowd’ to transcribe the over 45,000 historical menus held by that cultural institution.

For my own project, much more fiction remains to be discovered: in already-digitised newspapers, and in the many hundreds of newspapers yet to be digitised. Not only had I hoped to implement my own crowdsourcing project to enable this ongoing discovery, but I had assumed it would be fairly easy to implement because Trove already provides some of its essential ingredients including: an excellent text-correction interface; an API for linking that interface to other projects; and a large, and engaged public, some of whom are already involved in finding and correcting serial fiction.¹⁵ For the moment, however, the challenges presented by this new form of engagement have prevented my move into this area. In particular, developing a successful crowdsourcing project requires significant expertise and funding. The tasks involved in such a project must be carefully scaffolded and integrated, and this is a difficult exercise requiring considerable experience and knowledge. Users are sophisticated in their digital engagement, and expect sophisticated interfaces to work with. These interfaces must be adapted to mobile devices as well as desktops, and be both attractive and easy-to-use to secure the interest of people for whom many other projects are available. Because of the expertise involved, crowdsourcing projects are expensive to develop, even if—once up and running—they can significantly extend the scope of research.

While the challenges of digital scholarship are considerable, so are its possibilities. In this respect, all of the emerging trajectories I have described—of access, curation, and engagement—require new skills, knowledge, and protocols. But they also present exciting opportunities, to enrich and invigorate the humanities, both for scholars and the general public.

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- 1 British Library, *Discovering Literature: Romantics and Victorians*, <http://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians>.
 - 2 Stanford University, *Mapping the Republic of Letters*, <http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/>.
 - 3 Stanford University, *Mapping the Republic of Letters, Voltaire and the Enlightenment*, <http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/casestudies/voltaire.html>.
 - 4 National Library of Australia, *About Digitised Newspapers and More*, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/about>.
 - 5 Rijks Museum, *Explore the Collection*, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/explore-the-collection>.
 - 6 Digital Music Lab, *About*, <http://dml.city.ac.uk/about>.
 - 7 For discussion of this historical curatorial role and its contemporary resurgence in the digital humanities see Anne Burdick et al, *Digital Humanities*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2012, esp. pp. 17–18, 33–35, https://mitpress.mit.edu/sites/default/files/9780262018470_Open_Access_Edition.pdf, Open Access Version.
 - 8 See Carol Hetherington, ‘Old Tricks for New Dogs: Resurrecting Bibliography and Literary History’, in *Resourceful Reading: The New Empiricism, eResearch and Australian literary Culture*, eds Katherine Bode and Robert Dixon, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 2009, pp. 70–83.
 - 9 Kenneth M. Price, ‘Edition, Project, Database, Archive, Thematic Research Collection: What’s in a Name?’ *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2009, <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/3/3/000053/000053.html>.
 - 10 *The Walt Whitman Archive*, eds Ed Folsom and Kenneth M. Price. <http://www.whitmanarchive.org/>.
 - 11 Other curatorial projects in the field of literary studies include: Lehigh University, *The Vault at Pfaffs: An Archive of Art and Literature by the Bohemians of Antebellum New York*, <https://pfaffs.web.lehigh.edu/>; and King’s College London, *Jonathan Swift Archive*, <http://jonathanswiftarchive.org.uk/index.html>.
 - 12 Zooniverse, *Whales as Individuals*, <http://daily.zooniverse.org/2015/07/03/new-project-whales-as-individuals/>.
 - 13 Marie-Louise Ayres, *Digging Deep in Trove: Success, Challenge and Uncertainty*, 4 September 2012, <https://www.nla.gov.au/our-publications/staff-papers/digging-deep->

in-trove-success-challenge-and-uncertainty.

¹⁴ Public Catalogue Foundation, *Your Paintings Tagger*, <http://tagger.thepcf.org.uk>.

¹⁵ New York Public Library, *What's On the Menu?* <http://menus.nypl.org/>.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

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Patricia Clarke OAM is a writer, editor, historian and former journalist, who has written extensively on women in Australian history and on media history. Several of her twelve books are biographies of women writers and others explore the role of letters and diaries in the lives of women. She is an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities and a Fellow

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Doug Cocks worked for the Victorian Department of Agriculture and as a pioneering agricultural consultant in the private sector before completing a Masters in Agricultural Science then moving to the University of Cambridge where he carried out research in farm planning methods and taught first year economics. Subsequently he taught regional economics at the University of California, Davis where he completed a PhD on the topic of Discrete Stochastic Programming. For many years he worked for the CSIRO Division of Land Research, where he is now an Honorary Fellow. His lifetime output of scientific research results is large but he regards his five books on Australian resource use and Australian/global futures with special affection. He was awarded the CSIRO Lifetime Achievement Award in 2003. He has been joint President of ISAA and a member of its National Council.

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Julie Marcus is an anthropologist and writer. She worked with the Arrernte people of Alice Springs as they documented their sacred sites, then as the senior curator of social history at the newly established National Museum of Australia. She established a school of cultural heritage studies at Charles Sturt University, teaching there until 2004. Spanning a number of disciplines, her published analyses of both Islam and the nature of Australian culture have been underpinned by an interest in the ways in which cultural differences operate in the ordinary and often unnoticed practices of daily life. In addition to her scholarly writings, she is the author of *The Indomitable Miss Pink: A Life in Anthropology* and most recently, a family memoir, *The Flavour of Her Years: Culinary Memories of Mother and Domestic Life in the 1950s*.

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Elizabeth Morrison researches and writes about Australian newspaper, publishing and literary history. She has a PhD from Monash University, where she lectured in the Graduate School of Librarianship and was a Research Fellow in the National Centre for Australian Studies. She has contributed to many publications and given papers at conferences in Australia and overseas. Her latest book is *David Syme: Man of the Age* (2014).

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Gretchen Poiner joined ISAA at its inception and is honoured to have been made a Life Member. She was elected ISAA's second President and served on both the National Council and the New South Wales Chapter for many years. For over a decade and a half she edited the Proceedings of ISAA's National Conference and the New South Wales seminars, a responsibility she found both educative and pleasurable—albeit often challenging. Gretchen remains an Honorary Associate in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Sydney.

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Christine Yeats is a historical researcher and archivist. For many years she was Manager, Public Access at State Records NSW. She is the Senior Vice President of the Royal Australian Historical Society, has always had a wide-ranging interest in Australian history and is an active supporter of local history. She has contributed to a wide range of publications; spoken at national and international conferences and continues to present talks and workshops for local and family history groups across NSW. Christine has been Secretary of ISAA since 2014.