

L I M I N A *Reviews*

Mark J.P. Wolf and Bernard Perron (eds), *The Video Game Theory Reader*, Routledge, London and New York, 2003; pp.343; RRP \$45.00 paperback.

Sarah Kember, *Cyberfeminism and Artificial Life*, Routledge, London and New York, 2003; pp.272; RRP \$46.00 paperback.

Lisa Nakamura, *Cybertypes: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity on the Internet*, Routledge, London and New York, 2002; pp.192; RRP \$44.00 paperback.

The Video Game Theory Reader begins not with a bold statement or manifesto for interpreting video games but in a far more grounded manner with a foreword from Warren Robinett who is widely regarded as having revolutionised gameplay in 1978 with his design for the Atari 2600 *Adventure* game. Robinett opens with an obvious but inescapable question about the acceptability of video games: 'It is hard to say what ranks lower on the artistic food chain than video games. Comic books? TV sit-coms? X-rated films? These ratlike vermin at the bottom scurry to avoid the thunderous footfalls of the towering behemoths of the art world.' (p.vii-viii). Robinett argues that most new art forms require an 'enabling technology'—cinema had the motion picture camera—and now video games have the affordable home PC (preceded somewhat by dedicated gaming systems like the Atari, which seem to have come full circle with new console Nintendo, Playstation and Microsoft's Xbox systems). With the technology firmly entrenched and a large body of work (the games) available for analysis, it's time for the critics and theorists to pay attention. As video games become increasingly complex and, more to the point, socially entrenched, the humble video game has become a worthy subject for critical analysis and a new cultural studies field is emerging. Moreover, the fact that in the US, UK and

Australia video games sales outstrip the box office takings for first release films indicates that video games are playing an increasingly substantial role in our leisure hours and social interactions. While editors Mark J. P. Wolf and Bernard Perron may be overstating the case somewhat in claiming that 'the video game has recently become the hottest and most volatile field of study within new media theory' (p.1), this collection certainly goes a long way to ensuring that video game analysis will have firm critical footholds.

Wolf and Perron's excellent introduction goes a long way to illustrating that the field of video game study and theory does have both a lineage and its own proto-canon of important texts. As well as sketching the history of video game design and analysis, Wolf and Perron highlight four key elements of video games which distinguish them from the amorphous umbrella of new media: *graphics*, the changeable display almost always on a pixel-comprised screen; *interface*, the all-important connection between the game and player, which usually includes the graphics, but also speakers, microphones, keypads, joysticks, as well as onscreen elements such as sliders and menus; *player activity*, 'the heart of the video game experience' (p.15) and key to video game design; and *algorithm*, the program and procedures which must be to some extent unique for each different game.

Walter Holland, Henry Jenkins and Kurt Squire's first chapter 'Theory by Design' looks at the feedback loop between design, play and theory in the realm of 'edutainment'—educationally oriented games—and uses four case studies to illustrate how designing games-to-teach involves utilising, critiquing and extending video game theory. Wolf's own article in the collection looks at the role of abstraction in video games. He traces abstraction from a technological necessity, due to the processing and graphics power of the earliest game devices, to an exploratory artistic potential for current games which almost all now tend toward representational techniques and the digital holy-grail of photorealism. Alison McMahan's 'Immersion, Engagement, and Presence' then looks at methods for analysing 3-D video games as opposed to their 2-D predecessors, focusing on degrees of presence and immersion in different games and game types, including a useful case study of *Myst III: Exile*. Miroslaw Filiciak's 'Hyperidentities: Postmodern Identity Patterns in Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games' (MMORPGs) looks at the phenomena of MMORPGs

where hundreds or thousands of game users participate in a shared virtual environment and argues that MMORPGs actualise postmodern ideas of self more so than any other medium. Filiciak's chapter, while ambitious, tends to get stuck in explicating various postmodern theories of self rather than the specifics of MMORPG gameplay, making this the weakest chapter of the collection. By contrast, Bob Rehak's 'Playing at Being: Psychoanalysis and the Avatar' intertwines a rich knowledge and appreciation for the historical spectrum of video games with an equally broad knowledge of psychoanalysis and film theory to produce a provocative chapter which explores how the video game avatar operates from a mediated mirror stage through to far more nuanced and subtle notions of identity. Torben Grodal's chapter 'Stories for Eye, Ear, and Muscles: Video Games, Media, and Embodied Experiences' starts from the premise that video games are primarily 'different realisations of real-life activities' (p.129) and makes the argument that the best critical tools for engaging with video games are thus drawn from cognitive psychology. Maintaining a focus on embodiment, Martti Lahti's 'As We Become Machines: Corporealised Pleasures in Video Games' examines the oft-touted idea that video games and cyberspace fetishise a 'meatless' disembodied view of subjectivity. In contrast, Lahti argues that the technologies of video games complicate corporeal responses in a number of ways, not so much erasing the body as reincorporating it in a cybernetic system which to some extent actually re-emphasises the material body for game players. Mia Consalvo's 'Hot Dates and Fairy-Tale Romances: Studying Sexuality in Video Games' also delineates how video games can complicate aspects of identity, but this chapter focuses specifically on sexuality. Consalvo conducts tight focused readings of *Final Fantasy 9* and *The Sims*, exploring the ways sexuality is portrayed, the potential for non-heterosexual readings and activity, with the latter especially interesting in Consalvo's examination of the massively popular *The Sims*. Markku Eskelinen and Ragnhild Tronstad 'Video Games and Configurative Performances' add performative perspectives from theatre and drama studies, highlighting the role of pleasure in reading video games. Gonzalo Frasca's chapter 'Simulation versus Narrative: Introduction to Ludology' follows in which Frasca outlines ludology—the study of video games not anchored to analyses of narrative—and shows how useful Espen Aarseth's ideas of cybernetic texts are in studying video games as simulations

rather than representations. The following two chapters by Bernard Perron and Chris Crawford both focus on interactivity and narrative, the former from a more theoretical viewpoint and the latter more technical. The final chapter, Patrick Grogan's 'Gametime: History, Narrative, and Temporality in *Combat Flight Simulator 2*' examines similarities between gametime, gameplay and recent feature films, such as *Pearl Harbour*, and concludes that gametime is inherently ergodic; temporality is dictated by the episodic experiences of the game itself.

As this brief overview illustrates, the chapters in *The Video Game Theory Reader* range across a huge spectrum of academic disciplines, from new media studies to cognitive psychology to literary analysis and gender studies. Most of the articles are extremely well written, making firm arguments for the importance of analysing video games in contemporary society, and providing many theoretical tools with which future work can be performed. Video game analysis and ludology may be a newly emerging field, but *The Video Game Theory Reader* guarantees that it's a field which will have considerable theoretical groundings and provide important insight into contemporary popular culture.

Sarah Kember's *Cyberfeminism and Artificial Life* follows in the footsteps of Donna Haraway, N. Katherine Hayles and Alison Adams in extending substantial feminist theoretical engagements with the realm of science and technology. Unlike Haraway and Hayles, Kember's focus on artificial life no longer centres the work on human subjectivity *per se*, but rather broadens the realm of inquiry to life more generally. Moreover, while Alison Adam's *Artificial Knowing: Gender and the Thinking Machine* (1998) focused mainly on the scientific development and cultural resonances surrounding artificial intelligence (AI), Kember's work takes a similar political project but focuses on artificial life (ALife). The key difference between the two is that AI primarily focuses on electronically replicating a human-like mind, working from the top-down, whereas ALife attempts to simulate evolution in a digital system, starting from the smallest byte-size computational programs, attempting to synthesise 'life' from the bottom-up. Kember's stated aims in her book are clear: 'to trace the development of identities and entities within the global information network encompassing both human and non-human environments, and to offer a pluralised cyberfeminist engagement with artificial life as both a discipline and

cultural discourse' (p.vii). The differentiation between the scientific discipline and more popular cultural articulation of ALife ideas is particularly important, allowing Kember to make specific and separate analyses of the work of scientists and of ALife as imagined more broadly. However, this separation does not prevent a broad picture of ALife being constructed, and it significantly maps areas of both cultural and scientific intersection and divergence.

In her brief first chapter, Kember outlines two key points which will guide her reading of ALife. Firstly, that while ALife simulations may hold great potential for revealing information about life-as-we-know-it by examining the natural world's operations (weak ALife), ALife research often slips into arguing that the digital experiments actually illustrate life-as-it-could-be or real 'life' (the strong ALife claim). Secondly, Kember argues that in recent years there has been a 'biologisation of computer science' which entails digital and computational simulations being guided mainly by the biological sciences. While past scientific efforts, such as AI design, tended to view the body as a machine – the brain as a computer, heart as a pump, and so forth – ALife design appears to have come full circle. Kember argues further that this instils a 'new biological hegemony' in the computational and technosciences (pp.6-7). Chapter two, 'The meaning of life part I: The new biology' immediately explores Kember's claims, focusing on the well-known work of Richard Dawkins and his thesis on the selfish gene. Kember reads Dawkins as arguing from a perspective of genetic determinism. Moreover, she argues further that the shift in Dawkins' work genes to memes—seemingly self-driven culturally replicating ideas—is just a slight of hand which attempts to escape the eugenic overtones of genetic determinism, while actually reinscribing those ideas *en masse*. Dawkins' work is highly influential upon ALife designers as their goal is similarly to cause the spontaneous evolution of life from basic originary units (digital genes), and Kember concludes that the sociobiological genetic determinism of Dawkins is intrinsic to many current ALife design projects. The third chapter, 'Artificial Life', looks more specifically at scientific ALife designers and their work. While many of the ALifers that Kember discusses do appear to hold Dawkinsesque views, Kember makes a number of strong points about inconsistencies between such views and the actual operation of ALife simulations. Key among these is the role of the creator: while evolutionary theory may have 'killed God', ALife designers

who purport to model evolution necessarily involve the scientist-as-creator setting the original Garden-of-Eden-like parameters, in effect acting as God for their digital subjects. Similarly, Kember charts the more traditional feminist reading of ALife scientists as enacting parthogenic fantasies of masculine reproduction and birth without the need for women or mothers. The chapter concludes with a carefully balanced call for feminist engagement with ALife which is not exclusively about resisting the hegemony of the biological, but works productively with these trends.

Chapter four shares considerable ground with *The Video Game Theory Reader* as Kember examines contemporary computer games which use ALife theories, such as Maxis Inc's range of *Sim* games and *Creatures* which was actually designed by ALife scientist Steve Grand. Kember looks at most of the Sims franchise, but focuses on *SimEarth*, which is a planetary evolution simulator, and *SimLife* which emphasises genetics and evolution in more specific ways. Kember concludes that what 'Sim games do most effectively is naturalise genetic and evolutionary determinism in an environmentalist educational scenario and – in the case of *SimLife* – introduce ALife in to one area of popular culture' (p.91). Steve Grand's *Creatures* also provided some insights into the tensions between ALife / game designers and the public at large. Kember notes that while Grand's game was designed to emphasize kinship with the artificial life creatures, often the biggest appeal to gameplayers was to create hybrid creatures or to torture existing ones. These observations, Kember concludes, show a lack of kinship with ALife in the public consciousness. Chapter five, 'Network identities' expands the ideas of ALife beyond science and specific games to look at proto-ALife, such as 'Bots', which are tiny software agents spread across the internet for various purposes and which are sometimes self-editing. Kember also analyses Nick Gessler's computational anthropology work and his 'artificial culture' simulations which seek not only to synthesize life, but culture *per se* as well. Chapter six, 'The meaning of life part 2: Genomics', goes a step further, analysing transgenic organisms and so forth which Kember defines as 'wetware artificial life-forms' (p.147). Cloning (both human and non-human), the human genome project, as well as popular films such as *Alien: Resurrection* and *Gattaca* are all analysed as part of the broader cultural and genomic imaginary which is, in part, informed by ALife discourses. Kember is careful in these last two chapters to emphasise

the importance of dialogue between feminism and ALife (and related discourses) rather than make strongly judgemental claims.

The final two chapters attempt to bridge the so-called Science Wars, in which humanities and literary writing was (sometimes rightly) accused of engaging with scientific writing without taking the time to understand the scientific concepts. Kember argues strongly for a cyberfeminist engagement with ALife discourses and technoscience in general which keeps dialogue open and ethics firmly in sight. Kember concludes that it is at times necessary to escape the nature versus culture debates which have characterised the Science Wars, and which much feminist writing has relied upon, in favour of a 'bioethics of posthuman identity within ALife discourse which cyberfeminism might productively contribute to' (p.216). While Kember's conclusions are certainly pragmatic in terms of keeping dialogue open, they may be a bit open ended for some readers. However, there can be no doubting the significant contribution Kember has made in articulating the important dialogue between feminism and artificial life discourses. Moreover, Kember's work has considerable insights beyond its immediate target audience, making this an important text for those involved in research into posthumanism, cybercultural studies, feminist theory and ideas of subjectivity as they are rearticulated in the early twenty-first century.

Within the field of cybercultural studies no single writer is as widely recognised for exploring the oft-ignored categories of race and ethnicity in cyberspace(s) as Lisa Nakamura. Her writing is mandatory for any undergraduate course exploring identity online and her new book *Cybertypes: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity on the Internet* finally collects all of her articles under one cover. Of the five main chapters, each is based upon one or two previously published articles or chapters, although most have been reworked to some (usually minimal) extent. The additional framing elements of the introduction and conclusion, while brief, do contextualise and historicise Nakamura's work in important ways and provide important signposts for future work.

The first chapter, 'Cybertyping and the work of race in the age of digital reproduction', opens with an introduction of the term 'cybertype', built upon the nineteenth-century word stereotype, which originally referred to a machine which could easily mass reproduce specific images. Nakamura uses cybertype since 'identity online is still *typed*, still mired in oppressive roles', and expands the

term 'to describe the distinctive ways that the Internet propagates, disseminates, and commodifies images of race and racism' (pp.3-4). The chapter then deals with a number of cybertypes—including Indian Silicon Valley workers (cybertyped as efficient and cheap immigrants)—and also examines the theory that access to the internet equals equality online, a theory touted in much of the US government's 'digital divide' rhetoric. Nakamura also reworks and deploys some provocative terminology: for example, she uses the term 'remastered', which in technical terms describes the process of converting analogue media into digital, to mean the transference of previous racial stereotypes from the offline world into online contexts.

Chapter two, 'Head-hunting on the Internet' looks at three specific online environments: the text-based LambdaMOO and graphically oriented chat spaces The Palace and Club Connect. Nakamura examines how race is represented in these spaces, and specifically how racial identities are maintained or performed both by those people who are portraying their 'real' identity and those who are presenting their digital selves differently to their material lives. Nakamura discusses two main features of online identity: 'passing', whereby netizens can pass as having a different racial (or gender or class) identity online via avatars and textual descriptions; and 'identity tourism' which specifically looks at white users who 'try out' other racial identities online, thinking they have experienced being 'other', but have really done nothing of the sort due to the different ways race operates online and in the material world. While Nakamura's points are well made, she makes the unfortunate choice of comparing avataristic identity online with the television programmes *Fantasy Island* and *Quantum Leap*. This unproblematised cross-medium referencing detracts from Nakamura's very medium-specific insights about race online, and is hampered more so by an erroneous summary, explanation and thus analogies drawn from *Quantum Leap* (pp.58-59; for example, describing Sam Beckett's body leaping as a purposeful 'quest' when it was actually caused by an error during scientific experiments).

Chapter three, 'Race in the construct and the construction of race: the 'consensual hallucination' of multiculturalism in the fictions of cyberspace' examines four cyberpunk works—*Blade Runner*, *Neuromancer*, *Snow Crash* and *The Matrix*—and the racial politics of these cyberspace-related works. Nakamura argues that in the first two works from the 1980s there is an evident 'techno-orientalism',

whereby figures from the Japanese past become signifiers for a supposedly hip multicultural future. However, Japanese and other Asian characters still end up in peripheral or supporting roles, suggesting that cultural appropriation by no means ensures equality. The latter two texts are analysed as presenting more complex ideas of race and Nakamura's analysis of *The Matrix*, which still ultimately installs a white messiah above all else, is particularly strong. However, Nakamura's readings of *Neuromancer* and *Blade Runner* are both very straightforward, offering little new to readers familiar with cyberpunk criticism, making this the least inspired chapter of the collection. In direct contrast, the following chapter 'Where do you want to go today?' Cybernetic tourism, the Internet and transnationality' contains a much more focused reading of advertising campaigns for software and technology during the mid-nineties. Nakamura's argument for the paradoxical nature of these advertisements, which presented an image of digital boundlessness where race no longer matters while simultaneously using the exoticised other as something Western computer users could digitally visit, is made precisely and powerfully. With some disappointment, it is also the shortest chapter in the book.

The final chapter, 'Menu-driven identities: making race happen online' looks at specific ways that race happens on the web and then compares these findings with certain emailing practices. The drop-down menus and clickable boxes that are all too often used to categorically define 'race' online are traced back to the fact that race is a key marketing category. Along with gender, age and income, information about race is sought by websites in order to target advertising. Commerce is rapidly becoming the main regulatory backbone of life online. Moreover, Nakamura argues, rather than becoming more complex, these categories either perpetuate the status quo or try to simplify 'race' even further to establish an easily manageable and database-driven identity for marketing efficiency. In contrast, email is argued still to allow the greatest flexibility online. Email still facilitates flexible communication and rhizomatic formations, such as group emails and even email forwarding (which Nakamura focuses upon).

Cybertypes is not a perfect collection. Some of the material examined, especially secondary popular culture texts, is not mastered allowing poor analogies to occur. Also, some of the material reads as slightly dated, mainly due to the original publication dates of some

of the article being in the mid-nineties. However, as an introductory text on race and racism online, *Cybertypes* is still strongly argued and easily accessible. A plethora of cyberspaces are examined, and a host of useful ideas and concepts are deployed. While Nakamura argues against simplistic menu-driven identities, it is safe to say that in *Cybertypes* she has provided a smorgasbord of tools and perspectives with which to further examine race online.

TAMA LEAVER

University of Western Australia

Jill Nelmes (ed.), *An Introduction to Film Studies*, 3rd edition, Routledge, London, 2003 (1st edition, 1999); pp.500; RRP \$56.00 paperback.

The feature that immediately captures the reader's attention in Jill Nelmes' edited collection *An Introduction to Film Studies* is its comprehensive treatment of both theoretical and methodological approaches, supported by a wide range of case studies. (The third edition includes even more case studies than previous editions). The text not only explores the central conceptual tenets of film studies but also examines the film industries of Britain and India; Soviet cinema of the 1920s; the French New Wave; and critical approaches to Hollywood cinema. A glossary of key terms allows readers unfamiliar with the jargon of film theory to traverse the landscape of film studies without becoming bogged down – an aspect invaluable to students, yet also making the text accessible to those with only a general interest in the cinema. In addition to reading lists at the end of each chapter, further recommended viewing sources are included to encourage a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. Finally, a new feature of the third edition is the inclusion of questions for further study, 'with the aim of encouraging the reader to go beyond the chapter, to develop independent thinking and to encourage engagement with the book' (p.xxi).

The text is organised into five parts, each addressing a key aspect of film studies. The nature of cinema as both art form and industry is discussed in Part One: 'Institutions and Audiences'. Questions of film distribution and exhibition are explored in the context of both Hollywood and the British cinema industry, and the renaissance

in contemporary film industries is explained in terms of cinema attendance in the 1990s. A history of censorship in America and Britain is illuminated with contemporary examples from both countries: *Priest* (1995) and *Dogma* (1999) which caused moral outrage within Catholic groups in America; and a campaign led by the British press which stimulated criticism of David Cronenberg's 1996 film, *Crash*.

Part Two: 'Approaches to Studying Film Texts' looks at film form and narrative, spectatorship theory, and critical approaches to cinematic sources (including a comprehensive analysis of *auteur* theory). The 'critical approaches' chapter includes a fascinating case study of a more recent phenomenon in film production, corporate authorship, where cultural production is inextricably linked to 'technique, technicians and technology' (Andrew Darley, *Visual Digital Culture: Surface Play and Spectacle in New Media Genres*, Routledge, London, 2002, p.141, cited by Paul Watson, p.148).

The study of genre, Part Three: 'Genre Forms – Realism and Illusion' by Paul Wells, focuses on two extremes: documentary and animation. Although providing an insightful overview of both genres and incorporating a wide range of case studies, from Robert Flaherty's ethnographic studies to Dreamworks SKG's *Shrek*, the reader is not informed as to *why* these two forms have been emphasised, or what the significance of their similarities and differences may be for our understanding of form and the cinematic medium.

Jill Nelmes and Chris Jones respectively explore the topics of 'Gender and Film' and 'Lesbian and Gay Cinema' in Part Four. Nelmes follows the progress of feminist film theory in the 1970s and 1980s and discusses the expansion of the field to include studies of masculinity, cross-gender issues and the question of how sexuality is defined. An overview of women in the film industry, primarily Britain and America, and the growth of 'women's cinema as counter-cinema' (a phrase taken from the title of Claire Johnston's 1973 article on feminist film theory and practice), are illustrated with examples from the works of Sally Potter and Jane Campion. A fascinating look at issues such as 'male anxiety', and 'womb envy' – representative of masculinity in crisis – is completed with a reading of David Fincher's 1999 film *Fight Club*.

My own bias towards British cinema drew my attention to Amy Sargeant's section in the 'National Cinemas' chapter. In addition, this chapter also explores Indian cinema, Soviet montage cinema

of the 1920s and the French New Wave. An overview of the British cinema industry touches upon issues such as state intervention, the relationship with American industry, American stars and technicians – ‘ambivalence towards Hollywood’ – (p.327), European émigrés, European co-funding, and the attempt to pit a common European industry against Hollywood. Sargeant’s analysis of Britishness through cinematic representations of British geography and regional specificity would benefit from a sharper focus as she exhibits a tendency to list films rather than address the fascinating question of diversity, fluidity and conflict within national identities.

A comprehensive bibliography – including interviews, autobiographies, film history and theory – ensures that if any subjects aroused an interest in the reader he or she would be able to locate further sources without delay. In conclusion, this ambitious project – encompassing all facets of film studies – is a welcome addition to university syllabuses and will enlighten (and challenge) academics and film buffs alike.

TRACY MCDIARMID

University of Western Australia

Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga (eds), *The Anthropology of Space and Place*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2003; pp.422; RRP \$65.95.

In their introduction to the volume, Low and Lawrence-Súñiga, note that ‘[i]ncreasingly...anthropologists have begun to shift their perspective to foregrounding spatial dimensions of culture rather than treating them as background, so that the notion that all behavior is located in and constructed of space has taken new meaning’ (p.1). In an effort to represent the ‘changes in theory and method’ to studies of space and place in anthropology, the current volume, comprising twenty critical essays, includes ‘classics in cultural anthropology’ and new theoretical approaches under six thematic categories: Embodied Spaces, Gendered Spaces, Inscribed Spaces, Contested Spaces, Transnational Spaces, and Spatial Tactics.

Edward T. Hall’s essay on ‘Proxemics’, is the first in the section on ‘Embodied Spaces’. An introduction to the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of ‘proxemics’, or the study ‘of man’s perception and use of space’ (p.51), his essay discusses the

ways in which cross-cultural notions of distance effect interpersonal relations and the ways in which different cultures experience and perceive domestic and public spaces. Hall works from the basic premise that there is no universal experience of space. This is because '[p]eople from different cultures inhabit different sensory worlds', and attend to different aspects within their sensory field (pp.52-3). Hall seeks to uncover the 'infra-cultural' dimensions of behaviour, or, those behaviours which precede but become 'elaborated into culture' (p.53). His essay introduces the different research methods, strategies, concepts and measures integral to proxemics and the methodological problems encountered in the field. One of the central problems his essay elucidates is the difficulty in understanding another culture's spatial experience when the language within which anthropological research is conducted contains various cultural biases and assumptions. For example, his research suggests there is no one, universal concept attached to basic spatial terms such as 'boundary', 'near', or 'together', making question construction problematic. Whilst Hall's theorizing of 'experience' and its relationship to language and perception seems somewhat underdeveloped from a philosophical point of view, his essay provides an interesting introduction to the field and offers some important insights on different cultural perceptions of personal, inter-personal and public space.

In 'The Sweetness of Home: Class, Culture and Family Life in Sweden', the second essay in 'Gendered Spaces', Orvar Löfgren explores the 'gap between ideals and realities in home and family among Swedes during the last hundred years' (p.143). Löfgren contrasts the nineteenth-century bourgeois ideal of domesticity which focused on the demarcation of spaces, with early twentieth-century working class homes in which all domestic functions had to be carried out in one or two spaces (the kitchen and parlour). Löfgren discusses how these two opposing models of the home culminated in middle-class theories of the rationally organised home in the early twentieth-century, discourses which implied moral value judgements upon working-class domestic arrangements, judgements echoing a Victorian middle-class worldview and morality. Exploring how these contrasting class-based ideologies of domesticity were attached to other cultural notions such as codes of intimacy, hygiene, sanctuary, and family, community and class relations, Löfgren argues for the importance of analysing

ideas about the home in relation to the 'wider social and historical context' (p.158). While Löfgren's research is based upon research material from the 'Oscarian' period of Swedish history (1880-1910), in contrast to working class Swedish families in the 1920s and 1930s, his essay charts patterns in the development of domestic ideology across classes and their resulting conflicts during the past century which are applicable to other Western European countries.

Setha M. Low's 'The Edge and the Centre: Gated Communities and the Discourse of Urban Fear', is the final essay of 'Spatial Tactics' and the volume. Through conducting twenty interviews with residents living in two gated communities, one in New York, the other in San Antonio, Low explores the interconnections between discourses of urban fear, the loss of a sense of place, increasing class separation and anxieties about class and race difference (p.387). Low's article begins by summarizing existing research on the genesis of gated communities in USA and the general cultural misperception that cities are increasingly dangerous places in which to live, a misperception Low rightly attributes to media sensationalism. Out of the ten interviewees in New York, nine mention urban crime as the major reason for selecting a gated community (p.397). Nine of the interviewees in San Antonio mention crime and fear of 'others' as a reason for moving from their homes in the urban centre. In analysing the content of her interviews, Low seeks to isolate a number of what she refers to, following Dixon and Reicher, as 'disclaiming statements', that is, unarticulated discursive goals of the interviewees, which for Low are linked to anxieties of class and racial difference (p.401). While such interpretative strategies seem somewhat interest-driven, considering the kind of covert narratives researchers might seek to uncover, Low's study, though based on a fairly small amount of quantitative evidence, reveals the alarming misperceptions about urban communities prevalent in middle-class white America, and the extent to which gated communities serve only to perpetuate and increase any existing divide between different class and race groups. The obsession with spatial demarcation motivating the gated community projects in America recall those explored by Löfgren in nineteenth-century Sweden, if motivated by a different set of cultural fears and anxieties.

This is a diverse and scholarly volume with a strong emphasis on issues of methodology and practice, that explores space and place in their varied and complex manifestations. As each sub-section in

the volume includes extracts from classic work in the area as well as introducing new and innovative approaches, it enables readers from different academic backgrounds access into the multi-disciplinary nature of this rapidly expanding field. *The Anthropology of Space and Place* will be of interest and value to scholars and students working in the fields of cultural anthropology, cultural studies, gender studies and geography. Emphasising the importance of opening up new 'avenues of research' which will facilitate 'further explorations' in the field (p.18), this volume likewise reflects a strong commitment to progressively bridging the gap between theory and praxis, a process crucial to any study of culture and human experience.

LORRAINE SIM
University of Western Australia

Heather Wearne and Adele Wessell (eds), *Caldera: Narrative Excursions*, Caldera Press, Byron Bay, 2003; pp.108; RRP \$15.00.

Caldera – Narrative Excursions, is an experiment in the possibilities of narrative and an exploration into the ways in which writings can intersect and extend upon one another. As such, this collection of critical and creative pieces offers a different kind of reading experience, one in which common themes or concerns can be viewed through a range of different theoretical and discursive lenses. Narrative excursions – which here occur between disciplines and across genres – are viewed as creative acts that open up new possibilities for language and meaning. As this collection is based upon the idea of 'narrative excursions', the various writings intersect on numerous thematic and conceptual levels that the reader is left to map out. For example, a common interest in practices of discursive concealment and disclosure are linked in several of the writings to themes of vulnerability, empowerment and questions about truth and the real. On one level, *Caldera* explores how states of exposure or vulnerability, whether physical, intellectual or emotional, can be created and resolved by narrative excursions in autobiography, biography, theory, fiction, myth, religious practice and the visual arts.

In 'Why I write', Australian author Peter Corris comments on the acts of reading and writing and reveals what these acts offer him. For Corris, fiction is a space of freedom within which worlds more

satisfying than the empirical one can be created. Writing functions as an 'escape valve' which enables him to stay 'balanced and whole' and achieve a sense of 'mastery' over what he is doing (pp.11-13). Whilst fiction-writing offers Corris, amongst many other things, the opportunity to 'offload' aspects of his own personality and escape the vulnerability he experienced working in other fields, Les Murray's poem 'A Study of the Nude' problematises the relationship between disclosure, intimacy, articulation and vulnerability in relation to the human body. Murray's poem suggests that a nude differs from 'Someone naked with you' and explores the radically different kinds of engagement these two forms of disclosure invite (p.41).

In 'Crime and art: don't personalise the body', Jan McKemmish reflects on the unstable boundaries between crime and art at three different sites, each of which explore the relationship between crime, fiction and the real or true. The Crime Scene Exhibition at the Police and Justice Museum in Sydney in 2000 displayed a series of photographs used as evidence in cases relating to crimes committed during the 1950s. McKemmish explores the disparity that occurs between the factual narratives offered by the original detective-photographers who were present at the exhibition, and the new narratives each photograph offers when located in a different place and time. McKemmish goes on to contrast this site with the NSW Art Gallery Biennale Exhibition, in which a series of photographs by Tracey Moffat seek to exploit the notion of the staged scene and speak of residual crimes. At a time when crime has become a very lucrative source of artistic material, as evidenced by the Mark Brandon 'Chopper' Reed phenomena, McKemmish introduces cultural texts that equally, if not always consciously, interrogate assumed distinctions between the factual world of crime, and art.

'Heartstones' by Maria Simms, is a short story that questions the possibility of an authoritative autobiographical voice that only possesses 'sections of a story' that 'drop away when you haven't had to make it coherent for years' (p.54). Exploring the relationship between past and present, 'Heartstones' traces how the journeys we choose affect the progress of our lives and the lives of those that love us. However, Simms' very engaging and subtle story also considers how the excursions made by loved ones can unconsciously influence the paths we choose. Whilst baking a cake, Julie the narrator recalls, in a manner reminiscent of Proust, a significant journey and encounter between her mother and a farmer,

Rohan, and proceeds to map out to her daughter, Callie, a series of parallel journeys and breakdowns between herself, her mother and her estranged husband, Tim. Situated amidst the complex fabric of mother-daughter relations, Simms' insightful meditation on journeys explores the nature of love and friendship and the illusions that can inhabit narratives of personal freedom and fulfilment.

Whilst my discussion has centred upon ideas of concealment and exposure in relation to a selection of the writings in *Caldera*, these creative and critical pieces cover a very diverse range of topics. For example, Kate Ravenswood and Heather Wearne in 'The art of critical practice: an exhibition of ideas – a leap out of faith', offer an alternative approach to teaching art students which encourages them to make a leap away from a traditional belief in the artist as a stable and authoritative subject towards a more dialogic understanding of the artist and their creative practice. Here, discovery and exploration in an 'infinite' realm of possibility is favoured as well as a critical approach through which 'the familiar known world is disrupted' (p.67). In 'Intoxicating Identity: Fiesta and the cultural politics of incorporation', Andrew Jones discusses the contradictions of a Catholic aesthetic as expressed in the annual Fiesta de Guadalupe in Tortugas, New Mexico.

Whilst some of the writings in *Caldera* are more successful in the narrative experiments they attempt than others, the great achievement of this collection is that it reveals how a group of creative and critical pieces can inform and extend upon each other when read together. Whilst inter-disciplinary work of all kinds continues to struggle with the task of mixing discourses or creating new ones in an attempt to accommodate and incorporate different areas of knowledge, *Caldera* shows the significant extent to which those conceptual interactions can be made possible merely by reading different kinds of writing side by side.

LORRAINE SIM
University of Western Australia

Anna Snaith, *Virginia Woolf: Public and Private Negotiations*, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire and New York, 2003; pp.194; RRP \$47.00 paperback.

Anna Snaith's *Virginia Woolf: Public and Private Negotiations* is the first book to privilege the ideas of public and private in a study of Virginia Woolf's life and writings. While critics have long attempted to dispel the popular image of Virginia Woolf as an apolitical, introspective, mentally unstable 'high-brow', Snaith's study really comes to terms with the numerous ways in which Woolf negotiated the private and public spheres, both personally and in her fiction and non-fiction. While the public/private dichotomy is a seemingly familiar one, Snaith offers highly original ways of exploring it, which in turn offer innovative readings of Woolf's views on class, war, history and genre, as well as her narrative strategies. Some of the ways that Snaith explores the public and private in relation to Virginia Woolf include: Woolf's approach to publishing; her relation to her reading public; her literal movement between her public life in London and comparatively private life in Sussex; and her use of private narrative forms, such as the letter, to talk about public issues, such as war, in *Three Guineas*. *Virginia Woolf: Public and Private Negotiations*, develops upon long-standing dialogues in Woolf scholarship, such as Woolf's slippery narrative forms in some of the major novels, as well as introducing exciting new material into the foreground, such as the letters that Woolf received from members of the public in response to *Three Guineas*.

The study begins by sketching an historical framework within which to think about the terms 'public' and 'private'. Snaith then maps Woolf's movement from her protected Victorian existence in Hyde Park Gate, to the comparatively liberal and social sphere of Bloomsbury, and considers how novels such as *Night and Day* and *The Years* offer a critique of the social formations and structures that served to exclude women from the public sphere in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Chapter three turns to a continuing interest in Woolf scholarship with her unique experiments in point of view. Arguing against earlier interpretations that claim Woolf relied on 'stream of consciousness' techniques in her novels, a technique associated with an interior and private perspective, Snaith discusses Woolf's use of free indirect discourse in her major novels. Free indirect discourse, Snaith argues, enabled Woolf to avoid one

privileged point of view, instead offering multiple viewpoints from both public and private narrative positions. Through close textual analyses, she unravels several complex narrative moments in Woolf's fiction and shows how free indirect discourse enabled Woolf to present multiple viewpoints thereby acknowledging the 'variety, fragmentation and situatedness of subjectivity' that 'cannot be totalized or contained' (p.82). In the final chapter of her study, Snaith explores how the Second World War intensified a self-conscious division in Woolf's thinking between the public and private from 1938 until her death in 1941. As the war constituted a constant invasion of public matters into Woolf's private life, Snaith discusses how these two realms are negotiated in Woolf's autobiographical writings and last novel, *Between the Acts*.

Virginia Woolf: Public and Private Negotiations explores the ways in which Woolf's writing accommodated her developing attitudes to politics, history, fact and fiction. Snaith rightly approaches Woolf as a complex and changeable thinker and writer, whose writing should not be over-simplified by restrictive or reductive critical frameworks or theories. Her project offers new critical approaches and contexts within which to discuss both well-known and less discussed Woolf texts. Claiming the need to 'allow space for the indisputable complexities, ambivalences and contradictions in Woolf's life and writing' (pp.5-6), Snaith's study creates new critical spaces from which to think about Woolf's writing and its engagement with a broad cross-section of historical, political and aesthetic concerns.

LORRAINE SIM

University of Western Australia

Paul Julian Smith, *Contemporary Spanish Culture: TV, Fashion, Art and Film*, Polity Press, London, 2003; pp.178; RRP \$61.55.

Mi amigo madrileño, who works in a bank by day and is an anarchist by conviction, is also an unapologetic devotee of Spanish *telenovelas*, or soap-operas. *El Secreto*, which has now completed its television run, is his favourite show to date, surpassing ¡*Uf, que calor!* a strip-show game-show of the early 1990s whose title is more conducive to discussions on the weather and difficult to translate – literally 'Oh, how hot it is!'

Among the many curiosities of *El Secreto* is the actor Mar Flores, a Warhol-Baudrillardian exemplar *par excellence*: she is pure image and famous for being famous. Yet what fascinates me about *El Secreto* is its stillness. Like all *telenovelas*, it has its fair share of sexual, political and fiscal intrigues that beautiful figures play out in hermetic environments, in this instance a hospital. Yet nearly all of the action, if it can be called that, takes place from the comfort of chairs. In a gesture that mimics, perhaps, the imagined sedentary position of the viewers themselves, the characters in *El Secreto* rarely move. Of course, this enforced immobilisation is in the interest of the close-up shot and it implicitly privileges the labour of the editor over that of the actor in the creation of dramatic tension. However, it also functions as intriguing counter-universe to the busy, bustling world outside the screen, and it is surely no coincidence that the post-Franco, Madrid-based and street-wise phenomenon now associated with the *auteur*, Pedro Almodóvar, was named *La Movida*, with its connotations of physical and cultural movement.

It is the tensions as well as the similarities between these heterogeneous spaces – the screen, the street and ‘culture’ more broadly conceived – that Smith’s book on contemporary Spanish culture addresses with alacrity at the same time that it initiates new fields of study that quite rightly broaden that all too familiar category of ‘visual culture.’ In place of the tourist’s Baedeker, with *El Prado* and *La Sagrada Familia* as its Spanish ‘must-sees,’ Smith chooses the works of Pierre Bourdieu as his guiding compass, a decision that holds the promise of other ways of seeing and knowing modern Spanish media. With reference to television and film, Smith’s book sets out to examine how ‘cultural capital merges with capitals of culture.’ Importantly, though, the discussion refuses to endorse the centrality of Spain’s self-claiming capitals of culture, namely Madrid and Barcelona, by directing attention to Galician-originated fashion, ‘queer’ Basque art and independent Catalan cinema, with their alternate investments in cultural value. In other words, Smith’s work is politically attuned both to the often contentious and extraordinarily diverse spaces of culture and cultural production within the nation state of Spain and the ways in which these circulate in frequently competing economies of taste and distinction as well as commerce.

Indeed, one of the strengths of *Contemporary Spanish Culture* is its efforts to understand Spanish cultural productions within their

international and domestic contexts of manufacturing, distribution and consumption. Furthermore, it seeks to avoid what Smith nominates the 'masochistic despair' that the Frankfurt School purportedly displays towards popular culture, celebrating instead its affective power.

That said, it is curious that the pleasure of consumption, which is privileged in this book, is given very little critical attention. This is symptomatic in part of the text's capricious character. Smith emphasises in his introduction the central use-value to his project of Bourdieu's notions of taste and distinction. This is done without any recognition of either the rigorous critiques levelled at Bourdieu's theories nor the limitations that these historically and culturally specific frameworks might entail for any study of contemporary Spanish cultures. Further, in each chapter that proceeds from this opening section, a sentence or two on Bourdieu's theories serves as a dislocated preamble to the discussion that follows. In short, the stated desire to interrogate the social function of 'quality' in relation to Spanish cultures is not sustained. Rather, it is subsumed beneath a more introductory, if certainly interesting, overview of various genres and the producers whom Smith associates with them. To be fair, there are moments in the text when Smith does signal an interest in linking more substantially 'quality' with 'genuine innovation' in the realm of television, for example. However, because Smith declines to expand on this notion of 'quality' (as well as 'genuine innovation' for that matter), his argument is unpersuasive and it is unclear how these relations might pertain, or not, to matters of social distinction that are championed elsewhere in the book.

For this reader at least, *Contemporary Spanish Culture* does much to induct an unfamiliar audience into Spanish cultural productions and their complexities. Yet a lost opportunity to examine in detail the specific contexts, functions and effects of the symbolically charged fields also marks the text. To take one instance: Smith represents, ethnographer-style, the process of purchasing a t-shirt from Adolfo Domínguez, an 'upmarket' Spanish fashion house (in front of whose shop-windows, I admit, I have loitered, longingly). He also provides the most comprehensive reading of a t-shirt's washing instructions that I have come across to date in a cultural studies book. Both accounts are proffered in an effort to substantiate an argument that questions the claims the brand, Adolfo Domínguez, might make to social distinction. Notwithstanding the fact that the position

presented leaves me nonplussed for reasons detailed earlier, I am struck by the concluding section of this chapter on men's fashion. It sees the author exiting the store into the streets of Madrid, relating how 'emboldened by my [Adolfo Domínguez] bag, [I] have no trouble hailing a taxi outside.' Nothing else is said on the matter, and this silence is surprising. This is where the chapter all but ends, but it is here that it may have started with the suggestive, interlocking co-ordinates of fetishism, consumption, identity, cultural power and mobility at which the passage hints.

These points notwithstanding, *Contemporary Spanish Culture* marks out new and important territory for Spanish studies, and more widely, cultural and visual studies. The book presents some compelling insights into the industries of Spanish cultures while retaining a commitment to representation and aesthetics. It offers a useful introduction to its subject and will serve as a catalyst for further research in this growing area of academic and popular interest.

TANYA DALZIELL

University of Western Australia

Philippa Kelly (ed.), *The Touch of the Real. Essays in Early Modern Culture in Honour of Stephen Greenblatt*, Crawley, UWA Press, 2002; pp. 246; RRP \$38.45 paperback.

The Touch of the Real is a collection of some dozen papers that were first presented at a symposium hosted by Canberra's Humanities Research Centre entitled *The Touch of the Real: Communing With the Living and the Dead*. The essays contained within this volume are an in-depth exploration of how and why the early modern period is still alive and relevant to people today. The symposium was presented as a celebration of Stephen Greenblatt's work, who in 1981 first coined the term 'new historicism' in its current sense, an influential approach to literary texts that has had a fair share of controversy in past years. All of the essays owe some debt to the methodologies that new historicism has fostered in the two decades that have followed its 'official' date of birth. Philippa Kelly has split the volume into three parts, 'Reinventing the Early Modern', 'Shaping Identity in Early Modern England' and 'Reorientation in a Changing World'. Each section explores an aspect of how the early modern period is

viewed and studied in the modern academic world making this a very well rounded and fulfilling investigation of the period.

In Stephen Greenblatt's opening essay, 'Racial Memory and Literary History', he questions the power structure upon which literary canons in any nation are constructed. In recent decades universities have been attempting to broaden their courses by adding new and diverse texts to their curriculum. Greenblatt argues that rather than displacing traditional canonical greats, such as Shakespeare, universities have really simply added more texts to inhabit the same value system. Greenblatt calls instead for a more radical rethinking of the way in which the canon is formed and instead of enlarging it to re-evaluate the very system of hierarchy that it depends upon. This essay is also a very perceptive study of the way in which nations use literature to validate the identities that they create for themselves.

Peter Holbrook's essay 'Shakespeare at the Birth of Historicism' is an investigation of the hegemonic position that Shakespeare still holds today in literary studies. He interestingly notes that the high academic status of Shakespeare actually relies on a paradoxical thesis where Shakespeare is both for all time, a 'universal' figure, and of a specific time, place and culture. The notion that Shakespeare's work is universal is further explored in the following paper 'Shakespeare, Cinema and History: Looking at *Richard III*' in which the author, Lee Scott Taylor, looks at how Ian McKellen's *Richard III* film deals with questions of history when setting Shakespeare in 1930s Britain. The inherently problematic nature of texts is explored further in Ronald Bedford's essay 'Historicizing Irony: The Case of Milton and the Restoration' which grapples with the question on how is one meant to read texts, written hundreds of years ago, which clearly require the reader not only to understand the words on the page but also what is only hinted at in tone.

Bob White's contribution is a fascinating study into how early modern writers and critics are actually far closer to 'post-modern' critics than most have realised. Entitled 'Humanisms, Old and New', White notes that many still look at the literary figures of the early modern period through the eyes of the Victorians, who projected their own ideals onto the early modern period. It's interesting to think that 'post-modern' scholars could actually find their genesis in the progressive thought of those living some four centuries ago.

But, as with any good collection of essays, this volume does

not unequivocally praise new historicism. Conal Condren's essay, 'Historicism and the Problem of Renaissance 'Self-Fashioning'' which opens part two of the volume, rebukes new historicism for its tendency to be anachronistic and failing to realise the limits of its approach. With regard to the renaissance notion of 'self' Condren finds great cause for concern because it seems all too easy for those using the new historicist approach to 'conflate early modern presuppositions of identity with the more modern conceptual nimbus of a 'self''(p.113). It seems that that the final problem is not that some new historicists are not 'historical' enough, there is always an abundance of historical evidence, but rather that they are unwilling to recognise that though it is true that the past can only be viewed through modern eyes it is not simply a malleable entity to be moulded to ones own ends. The essays following Condren's, Elizabeth Moran's 'Hatching Fashion: Consumption, Femininity and Family in Early Modern London' and Susan Penberthy's 'Falstaff's Reformation: Virtue in Idleness' explore further what identity meant in the early modern period.

Finally, coming to the end of the volume, in part three there are four essays dealing with the early modern in its own time and in ours. Anthony Miller explores how early modern writers often created literary triumphs to glorify the achievements of both rulers and rebels throughout this turbulent period. Christopher Wortham's essay 'Disorientation: The Case of *Othello*' brings together two differing texts, the maps of the medieval and the early modern period and the play *Othello*, to explore the mental 'disorientation' that many early modern people felt. Lloyd Davis' essay entitled 'Living in the World: Communication and Culture in Early Modern England' further looks at how the developing speed and reliability of the postal service led to a change in the way people negotiated their relationships with each other. Lastly Geoffrey Borny's 'Direct Address and the Fourth Wall' is a insightful exploration of the problems that an actor may face in attempting to play Shakespeare according to the realist conventions of today without reference to the unique theatrical structure of drama in Shakespeare's time. *The Touch of the Real* ends with John Bell's Epilogue in which he powerfully asserts that Shakespeare's plays must not be constrained into one style of acting, interpretation or performing.

The Touch of the Real is a commendable compilation of works, wide- ranging in its interests, giving one a sense of how new

historicism stands currently in early modern studies, and is thoroughly worth reading for anyone interested in the literature and history of the period.

KARINA WELNA
University of Western Australia

Pamela Statham-Drew, *James Stirling: Admiral and Founding Governor of Western Australia*, Crawley, UWA Press, 2003; pp.652; RRP \$59.95 hardcover.

No person is honoured with more landmarks in the Western Australian landscape than Sir James Stirling, Admiral and founding Governor of the Swan River colony. Yet for all the homage paid to this icon of a State's past, only now do we find a full biography being published; restoring the life story of so prominent an historical figure is the achievement of Pamela Statham-Drew, senior lecturer in Economics at UWA and long-time member of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society. Her reward for seven years spent in research and writing is a book standing foremost amongst recent contributions to Western Australian history.

For her work the author has drawn upon a large collection of previously unused Naval and Colonial Office archives and personal correspondence between members of the extended Stirling clan, resulting in an erudite and insightful reconstruction of the subject's life and times. Seamless prose allows the narrative to flow smoothly through a number of episodes falling on either side of the more familiar tale of Stirling's leading role in a bold experiment in free-enterprise colonisation: aristocratic upbringing and early naval training; active service in North and South America; marriage and children; and then further service in the Mediterranean and Far East, where Stirling, among much else, saved the Queen Mother from drowning and became the first British subject to negotiate a treaty with the Emperor of Japan. Thus is this new reminder of Westralia's pioneer beginnings personalised as but a stage in a fascinating individual journey through the profoundly life-shaping currents of a belligerent and ever-expanding British Empire.

Reviewers elsewhere have criticised as excessive the three chapters Statham uses to chronicle Stirling's dogged campaign

to have his land grants clarified and increased in the years after returning to naval service. But these land dealings have since attracted the censure of a number of historians, and so I would instead question why a similar effort could not have been made to resolve two other historiographical controversies involving Stirling. The first of these relates to his initial exploration of the Swan River in 1827. Statham relies on contemporary reports to reconstruct this visit, with only occasional embellishment with her own account gained through reference to subsequent analyses like that found in James Cameron's *Ambition's Fire* (1981). In my view, the excellent description this last work provides of the reasons why Stirling (and botanist Charles Fraser) produced so misleading an appraisal of the region's agricultural potential, together with the insights from writers like George Seddon on the failings inherent in early European perception of Australian environments, are under-appreciated by Statham. A more thorough incorporation of this scholarship would have granted readers a fuller understanding of Stirling's over-enthusiastic vision of his colony's future; this in turn would have facilitated a deeper appreciation of the dramas and setbacks experienced in the first decade of white settlement.

The second controversy stems from Stirling's role in the infamous 'Battle of Pinjarra'. Although Statham sets out to 'piece together a clearer view' of the incident (p.263), only a mere half-chapter is devoted to this most important issue, much less space than the same author takes to review the same so-called 'battle' in an article appearing recently in the journal *Studies in Western Australian History*. Her conclusions on certain disputed points are credible, but those apt to view such matters with an especially critical eye will spot two glaring deficiencies: firstly, that nowhere is the point clearly made that Stirling, as leader of the party that attacked the Murray River tribe, must bear final responsibility for the events of that day; and secondly, because scant justification is provided for the various inferences, some in preceding chapters, that Stirling's was a relatively benign and enlightened approach to indigenous relations. This bloody conflict will forever stand as a defining moment of his tenure as Governor, and an account open to accusations of being too brief and too partial will be seen as the book's greatest failing.

To the author I would also ask, 'Why Stirling's bouts of depression in the final years of his life?' A sudden dearth of family correspondence at this time prevents a discussion of the causes

of this illness, though I found some clues pointing to an answer. Throughout the text Stirling (a Scotsman, incidentally) comes across as a man convinced that a disciplined and honest commitment to the Imperial cause would be rewarded in full measure with personal fortune; but surprisingly limited wealth available for transfer to descendants seems, in these twilight years, to have triggered his malaise. At the very least, that such speculation is possible testifies to detail and depth of character. Statham succeeds in recreating, and this is doubly rewarding, lest several decades of revisionist historiography lead us to forget the constructive role that individual endeavour and self-interest within an accommodating Empire has played in the Western Australian past. Mention must also be made of this book's presentation, for UWA Press has produced here a magnificent volume, wonderfully illustrated with maps, portraits, watercolours and photographs. Perhaps nothing less from the state's leading academic publisher would have done justice to the outstanding contribution of a scholar with a life-long interest in Western Australian history.

JOSEPH CHRISTENSEN
University of Western Australia

Louis S. Warren (ed.), *American Environmental History*, Oxford and Melbourne, Blackwell Publishing, 2003; pp.359; RRP \$65.95 paperback.

'What is environmental history?' More than three decades on and the same question remains with us, being asked yet again in the opening lines to Louis Warren's edited collection *American Environmental History*. But the brief answer he provides, commencing with the by-now familiar line of 'explor[ing] the changing relations between people and nature' (pp.1-3), does nothing to suggest our colleagues in the United States share a common purpose or approach any less ambiguous than the operational definitions developed a full generation ago. And so on to the chapters, where once again we are confronted with the bewilderingly diverse: topics as varied and unrelated as the ecological consequences of a developing transatlantic livestock trade, to a shameless attempt by the Nixon administration to capitalise on rising environmental concern in the

lead-up to 'Earth Day' in April 1970.

Fourteen chapters make up this book, all but two of which contain full-length articles selected as examples of 'cutting edge' scholarship from various other publications. These articles are complemented by a short headnote from the editor and a number of supporting primary documents, a format that reflects the text's design as a supplement to undergraduate courses in American environmental history. Attention is turned first to the environment encountered by those following in the wake of Columbus. In an impressively cross-disciplinary study, William Denevan outlines patterns derived from indigenous disruption of localised ecologies across sections of the two American continents. His argument that the landscapes Europeans colonised from the mid-eighteenth century were more 'pristine', or less humanised, than those explored and settled directly after 1492 is both provocative and convincing, especially when considered alongside the fate of native populations presented in the next chapter, an excerpt from Alfred Crosby's acclaimed *Ecological Imperialism* (1986). Crosby's account of the havoc wreaked by 'Old World' pathogens, smallpox in particular, points to a mass American Indian depopulation in the immediate aftermath of first contact, and serves in addition as a stark introduction to the wholesale biological destruction stemming from the creation of 'neo-Europe's' in the Americas.

Having presented this opening sketch of its field, *American Environmental History* ventures squarely onto the seemingly boundless plains of human-nature interaction stretching forth from the formation of colonial society. Through chapters on early conservation movements, disappearing bison, and water management in antebellum south-eastern states, editorial direction seeks to blaze trails beyond the farthest points reached by pioneers in the genre. Here, the cutting-edge perspectives hailed as the volumes chief attribute involves a revision of established themes, so that the hunting drives of the 'Horse Indians' are added as a prefix to the well-known tale of plunder on the Great Prairies, and aspects of class and ethnicity are highlighted as under-appreciated dynamics in the beginnings of nature appreciation and preservation, environmental perception, and resource management.

The chapters I found reaching out to less visited horizons were those discussing subjects set within an urban context. Cholera outbreaks in 1830s New York fell firstly into this category, followed

later, and more notably, by Robert Gottlieb's effort to secure a 'broader, more inclusive' history of environmentalism cognisant of various campaigns undertaken for the benefit of urban working classes, and Ellen Stroud's analysis of the 'environmental racism' pervading residential planning for non-white minorities in the city of Portland. Together, these chapters expand disciplinary frontiers in directions that encompass some of the more common past experiences and interactions of American people with the surroundings they have lived in.

However, the opportunity available for a fitting conclusion to this good work proves to have been missed. The final two chapters, promisingly titled 'Backlash Against the Environmental Movement' and 'Legacies', turn out to contain only documents, and no articles at all. Could no writer be found to undertake an exploratory enquiry into the fortunes of an environmentalism faced with the emerging ascendancy of views, among both politicians and scientists, that directly refute the seminal predictions of a looming apocalypse so common in the sixties and seventies; was no-one prepared to review the 'changing relations with nature' detailed in the preceding twelve chapters, and from this to look at the lessons we learn from environmental history itself? To find only reproduced journalism and assorted statistics filling a section with potential for much more is a major disappointment.

I also regard the format of this book as disappointing. As a collection of tutorial readings for American undergraduates it is doubtlessly fine, but more advanced readers can easily (and less expensively) access individual articles from the source of original publication, and would not likely bother with a more than cursory glance at each document. Australian readers will also be frustrated by the narrow, nationalistic focus. Save for Denevan and the widely-read Crosby, who both provide comparisons that will assist understanding of the changes to our own continent following European invasion, only two other contributors offer more than a mere window into fresh currents within an American-centred historiography. The first is William Cronon, and his classic 1995 essay 'The Trouble with Wilderness'. Cronon's message that 'wilderness' is an inherently cultural construct in need of transcendence in the quest for a sustainable future cannot be repeated enough over here; imagine the progress that will be made when everyday Australians transfer their present concern for old growth forests or coral reefs to

the whole expanse of land and sea lying between these places and suburbia, because it is no less endangered! Next is Alan Taylor's 'Stories of American Settlement', where the unrestrained attack on nature that characterises the pioneering process is traced beyond the dictates of economic necessity, to the sufferings 'wild' landscapes impose on first settlers and the visions of success underpinning their endeavours. Reconsider the images of ring-barked forests or heaped marsupial skins familiar to us through the work of Jock Marshall and Geoffrey Bolton in light of the following passage: 'Settlers' treatment of the wild animals and plants derived from their anticipation of a future landscape deforested, depleted of wildlife, and dedicated to agriculture. Rather than seek an equilibrium with wild animal and plant populations, most settlers killed as much and as often as they could in order to claim the largest possible share in the bounty that they regarded as inevitably short-lived. Emigrating from districts already deforested and depleted of wildlife, the settlers considered the wilderness as a temporary place and condition where an unconquered nature imposed special hardships and compensated with unusual windfalls. By exploiting nature's bounty, settlers meant to transform the conditions that entailed their hardship' (p.115). A fine insight to be sure, but a rare one as well, and so Australian environmental historians keen for succinct and forward-looking overviews of recent scholarship, or a collection of studies with comparative value for their own studies—features that have made previous offerings from across the Pacific a 'must-read'—are best advised to pass on *American Environmental History* to colleagues specialising in American studies, as a text better suited as an adjunct to their own courses.

JOSEPH CHRISTENSEN
University of Western Australia

Werner Eck, *The Age of Augustus*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider, new material Sarolta A. Takács, Oxford and Melbourne, Blackwell, 2003; pp.166; RRP \$49.95.

Werner Eck's work on the administrative and social history of the Roman Empire, especially *Die staatliche Organisation Italiens in der hohen Kaiserzeit* (Munich, 1979), qualifies him, before all others, to

write a modern biography of Augustus Caesar, first Emperor of Rome, and undisputed master of her Empire from 30 B.C. to A.D. 14. Few rulers have shaped their dominions to their own liking more than Augustus, if only because few have enjoyed such a sustained domination. Attitudes, morals, and even religious observances were dictated from the centre, backed by legislation, and enforced by obsequious vicegerents. The constitutional provisions of supreme power became the last rites of the Roman Republic. Augustus' political settlement remained largely intact for 300 years.

Nevertheless, Eck begins by contextualising Augustus within the hierarchic nature of Roman society, and duly stresses his fortunate connexions. He is right to do so. Augustus' ascent to power began in 44 B.C. with the assassination of Julius Caesar, his great-uncle, who in his will made his eighteen-year-old nephew the recipient of an immense fortune. Even more importantly, the posthumous adoption gave Augustus the name Caesar, which enabled him to rally his uncle's veteran soldiers to his colours. Yet even at this youthful age Augustus was clearly capable of taking breathtaking initiative. His immediate need for cash was relieved by seizing the tribute of Asia, *en route* to Rome, and he was thus able to raise a private army. Of course, both acts were highly treasonable, but that, one would say, does not seem to have ever worried him. We can be sure of that because Augustus himself recorded many of the details of this affair, and many others, in his autobiography, the *Res Gestae divi Augusti* (The Achievements of the Divine Augustus), which, without telling a single falsehood, rationalizes the armed takeover of the state. Eck constantly returns to the *Res Gestae* and teases behind its imposing catalogue of deeds and honours to underline the illegality of much of the Augustan project. His conclusion that the substance of Augustus' power was established on far more than the retention of political office (which nonetheless remained vital) is not new: it was realized by Tacitus no less. Absence of novelty, however, does not make this belief any less correct.

Eck is not afraid to advance other established notions. Throughout the empire Augustus established an elaborate network of clients, whose continued influence at a local level relied on keeping their mighty patron happy. There is also the matter of political associates closer to home. When Eck writes that 'since almost all his political allies and opponents belonged to the Senate, any biography of Augustus must also be a history of the Senate and its members in

those same decades' (p.68), we are returned to Syme and his maxim that the enduring characteristic of Roman politics is oligarchy. It also brings us back to last century's preoccupation with prosopography. Yet once again this is fully justified. Augustus was a poor military commander, an ineffectual martinet rather than a soldier of any real ability, and he relied upon more capable men to deliver *auctoritas* sustaining victories. Eck gives due space to two of these men, Agrippa and Tiberius, and vividly demonstrates how Rome's frontiers expanded at a greater rate in Augustus' time than at any other. The oft-repeated account of the climb to absolute power – the battle of Mutina and the march on Rome; the sodden killing fields of Philippi; the horrors of the proscriptions and Perusia; the isolation of Lepidus; the demonization of Marcus Antonius and Cleopatra and their defeat at Actium – is also recapitulated, but at a fast pace. Themes and ideas remain central.

More recent interpretations also appear to have influenced Eck. Fergus Millar, in *The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic* (Ann Arbor, 1998), has asserted that the masses, contumacious or cowed, were of continued relevance to political life. Eck understands this, and points to the fact that Augustus still relied on the people in assembly to prorogue his power. The Emperor also had to deal with popular discontent; in 22 B.C. the *plebs* forced him to take on responsibility for the food supply in the midst of a grain shortage. Furthermore, Eck includes digressions on the Roman aqueduct system and fire-brigade, and includes chapters on the army and provinces. In doing so he moves away from strict biography, but it matters little: the direction of legions and appointment of provincial governors was firmly in the hands of Augustus, whose influence remained supreme until the end.

The Age of Augustus is a fine little book, but criticisms can be made. The language is eminently simple, but occasionally stilted, probably in translation. The compression of content causes some sporadic vagueness; for example, the claim that 'many people dismissed negative reports about him [Antonius] as propaganda' (p.33) raises the question, 'Which people?'. And there is an inconsistency in the use of 'Germany' (p.92) and 'Germania' (from p.99). One also feels that more attention could have been given to marital and sumptuary legislation, and Augustan age literature. The neglect of the latter is particularly puzzling given Eck's interest in propaganda, and in particular the *Res Gestae*, a translation of which is conveniently

included (though students should still be directed to the classic edition of Brunt and Moore). Most seriously, there is a paucity of notation, and few details of the primary sources. Finally, Eck lets Augustus off a little too lightly. The final fifteen years of Augustus' life were filled with financial crises, military disasters, and familial turmoil, and one cannot share the author's opinion that Augustus 'could look back on a complete and fulfilled life' (p.120). Bitterness and disappointment had intervened. Nevertheless, these qualms cannot stop one recommending this book, particularly for the undergraduate or advanced school student.

LUKE CAMBRIDGE
University of Western Australia

Patricia Crawford and Ian Crawford, *Contested Country: A History of the Northcliffe Area, Western Australia, Perth, UWA Press, 2003; pp.317; RRP \$29.95 paperback.*

Patricia Crawford and Ian Crawford have collaborated for the first time on *Contested Country*, a work sponsored by the Charles and Joy Staples South West Regions Publications Fund, and published by the UWA Press. Ostensibly, the book relates the history of the area surrounding Northcliffe, a small town situated south of Pemberton, deep within Western Australia's tall-timber forests. As the title indicates, however, this is not a simple history of the town, or of the people living there, although both feature prominently in the narrative. Rather, *Contested Country* is a history of the treatment of the South-West Western Australian landscape(s). It is also an intervention into the contemporary contestation over the ownership of Australian culture, territory and identity. The centralisation of the landscape in this book functions not only to produce a historical narrative inclusive of all of its past inhabitants, Aboriginal and European, but also to argue in favour of recognising relationships with the land based on direct contact, experience and knowledge. As such, *Contested Country* is a significant contribution to the dialogue that reverberates through popular and academic representations of the Australian past, and of its present.

The book opens with an account of the indigenous Murrumbidgee people and their interaction with the land. Ian Crawford's analysis

of the Murrum people is based on nineteenth-century European descriptions, archaeological evidence and some oral sources, resulting in a lucid account of the centrality of 'country' to Murrum spirituality, social organisation and subsistence. Crawford is careful to stress the fragmentary nature of the evidence available to him, and parts of the chapter are necessarily, if regrettably, speculative. He is on the surest ground when describing the Murrum people's millennia-old system of managing their country through a complex system of timed burnings. Ultimately, what emerges is a picture of a culture that had achieved 'a balance with nature' through its comprehensive knowledge of the land, its resources and its limitations.

Such an opening is all the more poignant when Patricia Crawford assumes principal authorship from Chapter 2 onwards, as she grapples with piecing together the catastrophic consequences of the European invasion of Australia's south-west. The European settlers who established a colony in King George's Sound in 1826 were at once dependent on, yet dismissive of, the local Aboriginal knowledge of the land. Their importation of English ownership and justice systems worked to destroy the traditional cultures, livelihood and robust health of the populations that had occupied the land. Crawford also documents the struggles the Europeans faced in establishing pasture land in unfamiliar and inhospitable terrain. In doing so, she argues for a direct relationship between these struggles, and the refusal by the invaders to recognise the harmony that tribes such as the Murrum had established with their country.

The decision to establish Northcliffe, a town that was premised on the post-war European dream of 'houses fit for heroes', is pictured throughout Chapter 3 as the result of such tragic misconceptions as to the nature of the land. Termed an example of 'How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed', Northcliffe was, from 1924, part of a group settlement scheme whereby war veterans from England were promised ownership of land to clear for farms and dwellings in return for their efforts. The handing over of traditional lands to European settlers proved the final stage in the dispossession of the Murrum people, with unhappy results for all concerned. For settlers expecting a pastoral paradise, a land characterised by vast tall-timber forests and dense scrub required huge amounts of labour and time investment. The hardship of this story is tangible through the pages of Chapter 3 as Crawford relates widespread poverty and family tragedy, brought on by

the ignorance and neglect of the settlers by the British, Australian and Western Australian governments. The mismanagement of the area by remote European officials, a recurring theme throughout the book, is vividly portrayed throughout this period of Western Australian history.

From here, the book moves momentarily to much less dramatic stories, as the families that survived the first decades of the Northcliffe settlement worked to consolidate their dairy farms throughout the 1940s and 1950s. The growth of the timber industry in Northcliffe is also documented as logging and milling increased, facilitated by the Western Australian Forests Department. For Patricia Crawford, the significance of these decades is their foreshadowing of the most recent contestation over land in the South-West – the public movement to conserve and protect the old-growth forests found there.

The impact of this environmental movement from the 1970s to the 1990s is narrated through Chapters 5 and 6. Protesters seeking to protect the forests' future converged on several areas around Northcliffe throughout the mid- to late-1990s. Castigated in the mainstream Western Australian press as 'ferals' and 'layabouts', these activists were a visible and not always welcome addition to the Northcliffe community. What is most remarkable about Crawford's treatment of these events and interactions is the sympathy she quite obviously holds for most of those contesting the Northcliffe country. Loggers, environmentalists, local residents and young activists are all viewed as having legitimate, if oppositional, interests in the land around Northcliffe. Such treatment is rooted in the Crawfords' overarching theme of the land-as-connection – that each individual's story is contextualised by their experience, and recognition, of the competing claims over the land. The responsibility for the continuation of conflict, however, lies for Patricia Crawford within the operations of government. Both the Forests Department and its successor, the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), are consistently criticised for its policies with regard to the timber industry. In continually placing governments in opposition to those 'on the ground', Crawford argues for control over the land to be held by those who have a personal interest in its future, and for 'ownership' by those bearing witness to the struggles that such interests produce.

Patricia Crawford and Ian Crawford have made a valuable contribution to the history of Western Australia, and indeed

Australia, with this well-written and beautifully compiled work. Its insistence on the importance of indigenous and European concepts of 'country' brings to the reader a valuable contribution to the public and bitter debates that have recently been played out in the media and in academic discussion regarding land claims, Aboriginal history and multiple Australian identities. For my part, it is the practice of history in these small, thoughtful ways that will constitute the most effective answer to those schools of thought that seek to deny the legitimacy of these crucial areas of Australian culture and politics.

JESKA REES
University of Western Australia

Christine Choo and Shawn Hollbach (eds), *History and Native Title (Studies in Western Australian History)*, Vol 23, 2003.

The latest volume of *Studies* explores one of Australia's most politically charged issues of recent years – that of Native Title. It opens with a statement by Choo and Hollbach on the current state of Native Title in Western Australia, describing briefly the process of investigating and resolving a native title claim, and how history and historians are involved in this process. This paper makes some insightful points on the difference between 'academic' history and 'applied' Native Title history, a style of history largely influenced by the evidentiary requirements of the parties on either side and of the courts.

Contributions by five indigenous men follow. Four of these are in senior positions in various Native Title Representative Bodies (NTRBs) and the other a former Member of the National Native Title Tribunal. These statements reflect their personal and professional views on the native title process and how it has affected Aboriginal people throughout the various regions they represent. Tony Lee's contribution is a particularly frank and powerful statement regarding the problems with the current native title process for indigenous people. His paper reminds us that native title is, in fact, a fairly narrowly defined area of rights in a particular context, an artefact of the Australian political and legal system, and not an indigenous statement of rights.

The volume then presents seven papers under the heading 'Historiography, Sources and Processes', ranging widely in their particular connection to native title and Native Title history. It is somewhat disappointing to note that none of the practitioners of Native Title history outside the NTRBs are represented, although their presence is acknowledged by Choo and Hollbach. It gives the volume the appearance of being somewhat one-sided.

Fiona Skyring's paper raises some cautionary points about history in native title, but her articulation of those points is subsumed in sharp criticism of the courts, legal representatives and historians working for the state government. Skyring argues that these historians promote a particular interpretation of history, and attempt to 'limit or distort' the focus of research into the history of an area. This contrasts with the paper by Choo and Hollbach, which notes how the applied histories of native title proceedings are constrained and defined by the baggage and construction of the courts. Clement's paper on Native Title history is singled out, a little unfairly, as Skyring appears to have misconstrued a number of points raised, especially in the use of the term 'black armband'.

The papers by Ketley and Ozich and by Shaw explore different aspects of the use of oral history in native title proceedings. Ketley and Ozich take a legal perspective on how oral testimony has been used to date in Australian cases, and discuss some of the obstacles that oral testimony-as-history can face under the rules of court procedure and from the potential biases of judges. Shaw's paper as a practitioner of oral history illustrates some of the uses of oral history in a practical sense in court. He looks at this from the perspective of oral histories collected prior to native title (presented by him in the Ward case in the Eastern Kimberley), and those collected from Nyungar people as an integral part of native title evidence.

Marsh and Kinnane's contribution discusses the destruction of files generated by the government departments responsible for Aboriginal people over the years. This paper contains the salutary reminder that the extant documentary record might only be part of the documentary record. It also serves to show the way in which the perceived value of information can change over time – many of these files were apparently destroyed as part of the disposal policy at the time, as they were not considered worth retaining. In the present era, drawing from the listings of files destroyed, it appears they would be of significant value in native title research. It should

be noted that the file destruction took place up until 1960, when a change of archival policy saw this large-scale destruction halted.

Choo and Owen write on the records of Kimberley police, and what the records conceal as well as reveal about Aboriginal–white relations in the nineteenth century Kimberley. This paper is a very interesting examination of these records, although it suffers somewhat from under-referencing. For example, it refers to the the Perth authorities being ‘constantly unhappy’ with the records but provides no examples, and cites only one example to show a ‘significant number of police constables were barely literate or wrote with a hand struggling with delerium tremens’. It would also have been of great value to be directed to references showing how the police procedures they described were seen in practice.

Peggy Brock’s paper on the comparison between indigenous dispossession in Western Australia and British Columbia is an interesting perspective on the land rights issue in an international setting unlike the more progressive systems of New Zealand or other parts of Canada. Pamela Statham writes of the Battle of Pinjarra, critically examining the records, and making a cogent and well-argued assertion that the battle itself was not premeditated. Her conclusions offer another perspective on the ongoing debate, permitting something of an honourable position for both sides. David Ritter’s paper on heritage legislation, which closes this section, is another worthy effort on his part, although only relatively loosely linked to native title.

Overall, although it would perhaps have been served better by a tighter focus on the practice of history in a native title milieu, this volume is a worthwhile addition to the ongoing study of the practice of history in native title.

CHRIS STRONACH

University of Western Australia

Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (eds), *Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation and Appropriation in Music*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2000, pp.316.

When Herbie Hancock’s *Headhunters* album appeared on the pop charts in 1973, it let musicians know that commercial audiences were

ready to hear the sounds of the Other. Since then, the floodgates have opened for the sampling of ethnic instruments, sound styles and rhythms. 'World music' must be the best known outcome of this trend, but classical composers and *avant guard* ones too have been on the same trend for longer, and usually with more interesting results. From its comprehensive introduction onward, this collection of essays contains a whole lot of very smart postcolonial thinking about cultural hybridity in music. From the high art of Arnold Schoenberg and John Cage to the pop records of Madonna and Transglobal Underground, *Western Music* reflects the fusions of its subject matter. In their accessible styles and with a fascinating selection of case studies, the essays bridge the gap between academic and enthusiast. Some of its stories tell of Western musicians in their search for authenticity, from Bela Bartok among the Hungarian peasants to John Cage's adoption of Eastern philosophies. Others tell of Others internal to the West, from Jewish communities to the low cultures of folk and peasant music. Tracing the fate of everything from African rhythms in world music to pygmy pop in funk, these essays reveal that musical borrowings are never innocent. Yet, it is also the case that 'Music can never 'belong' (to me). It is always already 'other,' always located elsewhere (than here) ...'. So begins Richard Middleton's first essay of the book. It is this central tension, between belonging and appropriation, ownership and art, that will multiply into the various political positions operating throughout *Western Music*.

Many of the analyses will conclude, after Edward Said, that corporate capitalism has continued the appropriative practices of colonialism. Others, such as those searching for the indigenous cultures sampled by ethnologists in the 1950s, will only find their songs have already been corrupted by the modern world. Samplers and style stealers will also defend themselves. Herbie Hancock uses the solidarity of race, saying that using pygmy hoots on *Headhunters* was 'a brother's kind of thing.' In an ethical attempt to redress their extensive use of samples, world music specialists *Nation Records* painfully search out the owners of original recordings in order to remunerate them. This company is run by and for musicians, and defend their use of samples by hoping that they will lead people to seek out the original recordings or, more importantly, the culture from which they are borrowed. The dilemmas encountered by *Nation* are illuminating. 'Where do you send the money to?' asks

one *Nation* worker. 'You can send money to Pakistan, but you know that fucking 75 percent of it is put into somebody's back pocket.' *Nation* are constantly confronted by the difficulty of doing the right thing in a global economy dominated by Western corporations.

These essays are something of a litmus test for the relevance of postcolonial theory as it confronts the hybridism of new cultural forms. World music and world beat are the most obviously exploitative of these forms. Its practitioners appear like the white explorers of the past, searching out undiscovered instruments and rhythms only to mutate them into a pop aesthetic that is palatable for Western ears. Yet the idea of an 'original' sound is questioned by both Richard Middleton, with the idea of music as other, and by Martin Stokes, who compares the politics of representation in music to infinite regress. Like two mirrors facing one another, the representation is either the simulated image of a culture or its dissimulated equivalent. Attempts to think through this politics in terms of ownership, copyright law and sampling will fall into the circularity of a simulation/dissimulation argument.

Some writers will break with the dilemmas of listening in a postcolonial world with innovative ways of thinking about the mutation of sounds. Steven Feld's 'schizophonic exchange' and 'schizophonic mimesis' recall Deleuzian strategies to think about the accelerated multiplicities of heterogeneous cultural practices. John Corbett's 'neo-Orientalism' describes innovations in Japanese music that have borrowed from the West. One would like to hear more from non-Eurocentric traditions after reading so much about Western appropriations. 'Reverse-Orientalism', as one example, describes the way in which the colonised take on the image of inferiority imposed on them by the West. In 1932, Egypt held a congress that asked Western music experts how they could improve Arabic music for the civilised ear. These glimpses behind and beneath the megalithic cultural operations of the West, from nation to transnational corporation, prove some of the most fascinating moments of the book. Steven Feld, in another instance, compares anthropological accounts of Mbuti attitudes to music with Jacques Attali's classic *Noise*. For the Mbuti, quiet and the sound of song please and awaken the forest, while noise displeases it. Yet it is inevitable, amongst the proliferation of recordings today, that these accounts of difference will be subsumed beneath the urgent politics of representation in sound. The voice of the Other itself remains to

be thought.

It is the sheer difficulty of thinking about the ethnology of music outside the paradigms of representation that remains for music theory. For one suspects that the very attraction of the other in music is not only to be found in the appeal of the Oriental. Implied in these accounts of the truly different is the proposition that music may also mirror the cognitive differences between cultures, and open that sensibility to different ways of thinking. Of course the fusions of world music are unlikely to achieve such utopian heights. There is hope, however, in the *auteur* groups and individuals whose sounds occasionally surface from the other side of the music industry. That *Western Music* pursues the many problematics of appropriation and representation so effectively, and with such a degree of readability, can only suggest that the way is cleared for all kinds of thinking about music that have not yet been thought. It is also testament to the relevance of postcolonial theory and the ideas of Said's *Orientalism* within this era of corporate capitalism.

DARREN JORGENSEN
University of Western Australia

Terrie Waddell (ed.), *Cultural Expressions of Evil and Wickedness: Wrath, Sex, Crime*, Amsterdam & New York, Rodopi, 2003; pp.226; RRP \$US56.00.

Cultural Expression of Evil and Wickedness: Wrath, Sex, Crime, edited by Terrie Waddell, is an interdisciplinary compilation of chapters written by international scholars. Each chapter evolved from papers presented at the '3rd Global Conference of Perspectives on Evil and Human Wickedness', held in Prague, 2002. Some chapters focus on political, social and legally sanctioned cruelty, while others explore the nature of 'evil' in contemporary art, media and literature.

Running through this book is the question of censorship. I shall discuss at length two chapters which deal directly with censorship: Loren Glass's 'Bad Sex: Second-Wave Feminism and Pornography's Golden Age', and Darren Oldridge's 'Video Abuse': Gender, Censorship and *I Spit on Your Grave*'.

Glass regards the history of Gerald Damiano's hard-core film, *Deep Throat*, as an emblem of the history of the pornography debate

in the US. Starting with the successful critical and box office release of *Deep Throat*, which first opened in June 1972, she states, 'The unexpected success of *Deep Throat* seemed to signal the apogee of America's sexual revolution, heralding a new age of frank and uninhibited public engagement with intimate issues previously suppressed by Puritanism and prudery' (p.97). Moreover, as a tale of 'one woman's quest for sexual satisfaction', the movie seemed to indicate that 'female pleasure was finally being acknowledged in the public sphere' (p.97). In other words, the release of the film appeared to indicate that the frank depiction of sexual pleasure, moreover, female sexual pleasure, had finally become publicly acceptable. Within six months, however, the brief 'Golden Age of Pornography' was over, as the war between the pro and anti-pornography advocates was reignited.

As Glass notes, this war produced some peculiar allegiances. In the effort to suppress porn, radical feminists, most notably Catherine McKinnon and Andrea Dworkin, partnered with right-wing fundamentalists. In contrast, academic feminists joined forces with the porn industry in the effort to protect it. *Deep Throat*, as one of the best-known hard-core films of its time, was central to this debate. Moreover, Glass traces the post-film history of *Deep Throat's* lead actress, Linda Lovelace, to propose 'an illuminating dialectical link between feminism and pornography in the 70s and 80s' (p.98). Thus, as Glass notes, Lovelace began as the voice of libertarianism at the extreme end of the anti-censorship camp, and ended up the image of the victim of the anti-pornography activists. Glass' concluding argument, however, relies not so much on her originality but on a synthesis of MacKinnon's critics, worthy though they may be.

Oldridge's chapter is both an exploration and re-reading of *I Spit on Your Grave*, a 1978 movie directed by Meir Zarchi. According to Oldridge, since the time of its release, the critical response to the movie 'has been crushingly negative' (p.113). He states that the censors 'have echoed these extreme reactions' (p.114). Oldridge sets about defending the movie on artistic and, most effectively, on feminist grounds. In the movie, the main character Jennifer Hills (Camille Keaton) is gang raped by four men, and subsequently goes about seeking revenge against them. Oldridge effectively puts to rest some of the distorted and grossly exaggerated misconceptions of the movie. For example, he attacks the claim made by some commentators that Jennifer appears to enjoy her rapes. He argues

that, contrary to films which conventionally employ a 'subjective camera' to present the viewpoint of the killer, 'one of the most striking qualities of Zachari's picture is its total identification with Jennifer during the rape sequences' (p.116). Thus, the effect of showing her viewpoint as she flees and is held down by her captors 'is extremely distressing, as the viewer is forced to identify with a victim of appalling violence' (p.116).

In another notable feminist argument, Oldridge convincingly argues that the non-stereotypical character of the heroine, as well as the revenge she inflicts on her male rapists, could have been a motivating factor behind the extreme critical reactions to the movie and, indeed, its censorship. Jennifer's vengeful actions take place outside the acceptable range of female behaviour. As Oldridge concludes, 'For female viewers this scenario is potentially liberating. For men, it is more likely to create feelings of alienation' (p.121). Indeed, Oldridge notes that the genital mutilation inflicted by Jennifer on one of the rapists appears to evoke 'particular horror in some reviewers'. Thus, two critics have described the castration in the bath as 'one of the most appalling moments in cinema history' (p.120).

Other notable chapters include Earl F. Martin's 'Masking the Evil of Capital Punishment', which explores the 'bureaucratization of executions', whereby the inclusion of lawyers, medical doctors and religion serves to sanction and mask the sinister nature of capital punishment in the US. He argues, 'The removal of executions from public view and the bureaucratization of the process that surrounds killings, both tend to obscure the evil that lurks beneath the sanction by lessening the moral impact of the final event' (p.165). Another important chapter is Diana Mendlicott's 'Interrogating the Penal Gaze: Is the Ethical Prison a Possibility?', which decries the dehumanising nature of panopticon prisons. A prisoner 'cannot choose not to be watched' (p.182) by anyone who is able to peer unwatched into his cell. When a prisoner is subjected to the gaze that he is unable to return, 'he has been constituted as the object of a gaze, a gaze he may not return because he has lost his right to reciprocate this most natural of human activities' (p.182). Like prisons, 'evil' is a word that dehumanises its subject.

Other chapters, although written with good intention, suffer from questionable methodology. For example, Michael F. Strmska's 'The Evils of Christianization: A Pagan Perspective of European History', while attempting to redress the argument that 'history is written by

the victors', falls prey to its own generalisations: note, for example, the first half of its title. Nevertheless, what is most welcome about this book is its relevance to the present world climate in which the construction of 'evil' is still and ever increasingly used for right-wing political ends.

DUC DAU
University of Western Australia

Suman Gupta, *Re-Reading Harry Potter*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003; pp. 185; RRP \$45.00 paperback.

While Harry Potter has been a large part of the recent public consciousness, Suman Gupta argues that there have not been enough 'thinking' explorations of Harry and his world. In *Re-Reading Harry Potter* Gupta sets out to account for 'the political and social implications of the Harry Potter books, or the political and social effects of the Harry Potter phenomenon' (p.7). Thus Gupta attempts to include the first four Harry Potter books by J.K. Rowling; *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999), *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), plus the films of the first two novels, and the assorted publicity, marketing and reactions that build on the Potter texts in his exploration of the Potter phenomenon. Dividing the book into two sections, Gupta first surveys already available readings of Harry Potter and their gaps, then offers his own re-reading of the texts through a thematic examination.

The first section, on the context of reading Harry Potter, opens by considering one context of reading often ignored by literary critics – the covers. In the case of Harry Potter, the different cover images marketed at separate child and adult audiences offer a way into thinking the implied construction of readers, and the extent to which images and marketing are as vital parts of the Potter phenomenon as the literary texts themselves. Gupta then sets out the validity of the Potter phenomenon as an object of critical study: beyond its economic success to its cross-cultural popularity as well as its impact as a social spectacle almost impossible to escape. The approach Gupta chooses for his critical study is what he labels a 'text-to-world' methodology, aiming 'to understand how specific

texts and their readings lead outwards to and devolve from the world they occur within' (p.22). The remainder of the first section surveys other ways in which the Potter phenomenon has been read. He starts with the role of the author, concluding that at least in this case, it is far more useful to see the author as part rather than cause of the phenomenon, as a constructed image of the author. Generic locations are the next contexts considered, with an examination of accounts that place the Potter texts as children's literature and fantasy. Gupta explores the gaps in these accounts, ultimately seeing generic location as irrelevant to his focus on social and political effects except in the ways in which generic location may be affected by those effects. Finally, he covers religious responses, mainly from the anti-Potter Christian right, which due to their inability to move beyond their own systems of belief are seen as unproductive for critical readers.

The second part engages with the Potter texts in more detail. It opens by looking at the relationship between 'our world' and the Magic and Muggle worlds depicted in the Potter texts. Gupta then quickly addresses structural considerations, considering how the books combine repetition and progression through elaboration, and use of allusions, how fairy tale and classical references are deployed in a way that fails to evoke a meaningful historical or intertextual framework, instead referring from the Magic world to our world. The thematic chapters follow, looking at 'Blood', 'Servants and Slaves', 'The Question of Class' and 'Desire' through a close reading of how these themes are played out in the books. Gupta also examines the representation of advertising, arguing that advertising and consumerism mediate the reader's entry into the Magic world, a world where the clichés of advertising are made manifest. One chapter is also given to the Potter films, where the difference between Muggle and Magic worlds are visually collapsed, while these worlds become virtually real through the conventions of cinema in our world.

Gupta's ultimate argument is that the Magic world constructed in the Potter texts is anti-rational, in that it discourages questioning or a need for an explanatory structure – things are just what they are in a world of chosen people who are marked by their innate qualities which they can unthinkingly manifest in order to win or support the established order of the Magic world. While parallels may seem to develop between the Magic and real worlds, the gap between

the anti-rational and (mainly) rational ways by which these worlds are understood means that these parallels become 'unsatisfactory, contradictory and, often, ominous' (p.161). But what Gupta finds most ominous is the uncritical 'unthinking' acceptance of the Magic world on its own terms by many Potter readers, both because it encourages the continuance of such unthinking reading practices, and because the popularity of the Potter phenomenon may emerge from a widespread desire in our world for such an unthinking state.

The obvious gap in Gupta's approach, mostly created through the text-to-world methodology he adopts which leads necessarily to a central focus on the texts, is that while setting up to examine the effects of the Potter phenomenon, he can only gesture in a suggestive way to what those effects might be, apart from his central argument of 'unthinking' reading. Secondly, the reductive definition of text he seems to employ, focusing primarily on the Potter books with a cursory look at the films, ignores the wealth of texts produced by the Potter phenomenon – computer games, merchandise and fan fiction being a few examples.

This book is strongest in its appraisal of other critical responses to Harry Potter, and in its detailed engagement with the texts in the thematic chapters. The clarity of the book is also worth noting, as Gupta clearly sets his intentions and provides convenient summaries at various stages of the book, while being reflexive about his own position and critical practices. At undergraduate level, this book may be useful in introducing students to adopting a critical position in relation to popular culture texts.

KAREN HALL

University of Western Australia

Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark, *The History Wars*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 2003; pp. 288; RRP \$29.95.

'One of the more insidious developments in Australian political life over the past decade or so has been the attempt to rewrite Australian history in the service of a partisan political cause.' (p.1) With a (suitably ironic) quotation from Prime Minister John Howard, Stuart Macintyre begins his attack on those he sees as marauders on the discipline of history. Over the following pages he narrates the

course of the discipline in the Australian context through the many characters that have coloured its scene and written the monographs which have occupied the shelves of any self-respecting Australian historian.

The controversy surrounding Keith Windschuttle's most recent offering, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, has brought the issue of how to write history, particularly in terms of our (dishonourable) past, to the forefront of public debate. Macintyre's book can be seen as a possible iron in the fire of the discussion over what Australia's past has been and how it should be remembered. While not directly commenting on Windschuttle until the last chapters, Macintyre examines the role of the historian over time, championing the role of the academic. Although Windschuttle is seen as something of an exception to the virtuous academic model, whose fault lies in the 'absence of any sense of this tragedy, the complete lack of compassion for its victims' (p.171), the real villains of the piece are the policy makers, the politicians and the right-wing commentators who attack the role of the historian and their quest for 'endless debate' and try to meld the stuff of history to fit their own version of a 'respectable' and 'comfortable' past.

As an introduction to the nature of Australian history, both its writing and 'what actually happened', Macintyre is both witty and insightful. He details with delight the maturation of both the discipline and the social environment of those operating from within the discipline. Macintyre's second chapter, resembling E.H. Carr's still unrivalled discourse on the nature of history *What is History?*, examines the role of historians, and the methods used by them in their work. This continues into the third chapter which explores variety in interpretation, the life-force of the historical discipline. As an introduction to what historians do for the general public, Macintyre's work is both interesting and amusing. As a critical exercise into the nature of history (not the probable aim of such a work) Macintyre falls somewhat short of the mark. While a monograph such as *The History Wars* is obviously constructed for a generalist audience, the lack of a deeper layered criticism can not but be missed. Additionally, the puzzling lack of footnotes and bizarre referencing by phrases at the end of the book raises some questions about the state of publishing in Australia as well as the ability (or lack thereof) of the general public to deal with the 'frightening' prospect of a footnote or two.

Macintyre follows on from his introductory remarks with several chapters which scrutinise the part played by the personalities of the Australian historical profession, including a chapter on Manning Clark and one on Geoffrey Blainey. Macintyre defends both Clark and Blainey for their desire to create debate and presents a more detailed version of the events, especially those leading to the uproar concerning Blainey's comments regarding Asian immigration. Macintyre is generous in his appraisal of the parts played by Blainey and his colleagues at Melbourne University and elsewhere. While he recognises the flaws in Blainey's character that encouraged the polemical debate over immigration, Macintyre sees the forum for the debate – the press release – and the intervention by political commentators, as being as much at fault for leading to the antagonism as the debaters' opinions themselves.

The remaining chapters deal with some other aspects of the Australian 'History Wars' in a broader social context: the furore over the centenary celebrations in 1988 and the 'black armband view of history'. Anna Clark also contributes an excellent, if brief, comparative chapter on the use of the history textbook in schools. She highlights the political power that the rhetoric over what 'our children' should know about 'our past' has in the battles of the History Wars. Macintyre concludes with a summation of the Australian history wars, 'conducted by ukase' (p.221) from the strongholds of conservative politics, be it in the press or parliament. He makes an appeal to readers to recognise the merits of debate, critical thought and difference, with a final (and rather worrying) appeal to 'Australians' who 'deserve more from their history than the History Wars' (p.222).

The History Wars is an attack on neoconservatism for what Macintyre sees as its intention to take the criticism and politics out of history and confine it to the role of comfortable 'white' conservative nation-building. While one (particularly as a young and not yet employed historian) must applaud Macintyre for defending the discipline, his defense often appears to paint his opponents as rather shadowy creatures whose agendas are wholly lacking in merit. Whereas all historians, Windschuttle remaining an exception, are noble with admirable intentions concerning that great maxim of history 'criticism, criticism, once more criticism, and criticism again', even if their intentions are not necessarily borne out through their actions. As a disciple of the discipline of history

the idealist in me can not help but applaud such sentiments. All historians should be wise and unbiased, aspiring to, if not achieving, that 'noble dream'. The historian within, however, even in the face of a defence of my discipline, cannot help but decry the lack of criticism and the unabashed bias in Macintyre's own narrative and interpretation.

MARIANNE HICKS
University of Western Australia

Robert Dixon, *Prosthetic Gods: Travel, Representation and Colonial Governance*, St Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 2001; pp.191; RRP \$29.95.

Prosthetic Gods: Travel, Representation and Colonial Governance is Robert Dixon's latest contribution to the analysis of colonial discourse in Australian literature, following the theme of his previous books *The Course of Empire: Neo-Classical Culture in New South Wales 1788-1860* (Oxford UP, 1986), and *Writing the Colonial Adventure: Race, Gender and Nation in Anglo-Australian Popular Fiction 1875-1914* (Cambridge UP, 1995). Dixon's substantial and theoretically-dense introduction, which draws on the works of theorists Foucault, Lacan and Bhabha, as well as a plethora of other authors including Mary Louise Pratt (*Imperial Eyes*, 1992) and anthropologist Nicholas Thomas, catalogues the varied strands of investigation present in *Prosthetic Gods*. Prominent amongst these are examinations of the relationship between modernity, the body and the construction of 'whiteness'; the mutually-constituting relationship of colony and metropole; the connection between colonialism and the development of suburbia; and the mediated interaction of colonial discourse, literature and the state as texts circulate in the commercial economy. Dixon aims to examine these elements by dissecting texts about Australia's relationship with Melanesia, produced by artists and government employees between the early 1900s and the 1960s. He argues that 'forms of representation like travel writing, radio broadcasting and cinema are contingent to colonial rule, but [their] affectivity has no necessary relation to colonial dominance' (p.8). In tandem with this he asserts that the human body was 'a key site of modernity ... [and thus] a site of the anxieties and contradictions of modernity ... [as

a] range of technologies was applied to the body for its regulation or improvement' (p.14). In the context of imperialism the colonial body's 'capacity to incorporate mechanical prostheses – notably the aeroplane, the gun and the camera ... sets it apart from the native body, which is required to be naked...' (p.19). Following from this Dixon attempts to develop the concept of 'colonial psychosis' which he defines as 'the anxiety that attends the threatened fragilisation of the colony body, the moment when the very technological prostheses which grant it the capacity of movement and cultural ascendancy bring the body into proximity with modernity's others' (p.17).

Chapter 1, 'Laboratories of Modernity: Modernity, Tropical Medicine and the Colonial Body', adopts the grand aim of Anne Laura Stoler, 'to re-route the history of modernity through the history of empire, to write a contrapuntal history of colonialism and modernity in Australia by focusing on the medicalised body in the literature of public health and tropical medicine' (p.24). It examines a number of government reports and emphasises the manner in which these act as 'instruments of the normalising, surveillant, centralist approach to public health that was characteristic of what Foucault calls 'bio-politics'...' (p.24), since the 'report' is the 'genre definitive of modernity' and 'participates most directly in the domain of colonial governance' (p.24).

Chapters 2 and 3, 'Frank Hurley and the Ross Smith Flight: Modernity, Aerial Vision and Empire', and 'Frank Hurley's *Pearls and Savages*: Travel, Popular Culture and Colonial Governance', deal with the work of Captain Frank Hurley, former official photographer with the Australian Imperial Forces and pioneer of aviation photography. Chapter 2 examines Hurley's coverage of the 1919 Ross Smith Flight from London to Sydney, while chapter 3 analyses his film *Pearls and Savages*, which presents a fictional adventure story about his experiences in Papua New Guinea. Dixon concludes that '[d]espite Hurley's involvement in debates about Colonial policy, his film and book made no reference to it' and that 'the film was primarily received as 'entertainment', and ... its affective power had no immediate or instrumental relation to colonial governance as such' (p.86).

Chapter 4, 'Captives and Inmates: Ion L. Idriess' Torres Strait Trilogy and the Aborigines Protection Acts', dissects the novels of Idriess, contrasting the reality of governance over Torres Strait Islanders with Idriess' inverted narratives of cannibalism and white

captivity. Dixon argues that 'Idriess' books constitute a systematic and sustained appropriation of legendary materials which white Australian readers reinvested with their own obsessions' (p.101).

Chapter 5, 'The Frank Clune Industry: Travel Writing, Corporate Sponsorship and Colonial Governance', examines two books written in the 1940s and 50s by popular travel writer Frank Clune, considering the influence of corporate sponsorship on his work. Chapter 6, 'James McAuley's New Guinea: Colonialism, Modernity, Suburbia', looks at the work of conservative academic James McAuley and his belief that the breakdown of traditional Melanesian society opened a gateway for the spread of Communism.

Prosthetic Gods covers a wide range of texts concerning the colonial project in Australia and Melanesia, elucidating interesting theories about the relationship of these texts with colonial discourse. Dixon's research also seems to have uncovered important new primary sources for this field of inquiry. I found his analysis of the interaction of medical reports with government policy and his theory about the role of colonies in constructing ideas of whiteness and modernity to be most interesting. *Prosthetic Gods* has made a substantial contribution to the study of Australian colonialism. However, Dixon tends to commit the mistake he criticises in his introduction that theories of 'postcolonial discourse have an insidious tendency to overdetermine the evidence ... literary criticism remains trapped inside the interpretative circle: it is all too often unable to make meaningful connections with other elements of society and cultural production...' (p.2). The brevity of each section within this book also compounds his over-interpretation of limited evidence. *Prosthetic Gods* is also plagued by language impenetrable to non-specialist readers, and suffers for the absence of a conclusion that could have united the divergent elements of this text.

DAVID ROBINSON
University of Western Australia

Douglas R.G. Sellick (ed.), *Antarctica: First Impressions 1773-1930*, Fremantle, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2001; pp.256; RRP: \$29.95.

More than two thousand kilometres to the south of Australia lays

a land virtually untouched by humanity; a pristine environment that, while over twice the size of the Australian mainland, rarely enters the consciousness of those living to its north. Antarctica is one of the world's harshest habitats, and even in the twenty-first century it remains off-limits to all but the most intrepid. With an average elevation of 2300 metres, winds of up to 320 km/h, a lowest recorded temperature of minus 89 degrees Celsius, and a winter night-time that lasts for months, this mysterious land has inspired some to speak of its indescribable beauty, and others to comment that, 'if there is a hell, this is the place'.

Antarctica: First Impressions 1773-1930 is an anthology, edited by freelance historian Douglas R.G. Sellick, which draws on a diverse collection of letters, journal entries and prose to present accounts of the explorers who journeyed to this continent before the advent of aviation helped unlock its secrets. Bringing together the writings of seventeen explorers from James Cook to Douglas Mawson, Sellick hopes his compilation will 'offer the reader a diverse collection of gripping autobiographical first impressions of travellers of all kinds to Antarctica... some of the most extraordinary tales of courage and daring ever published' (p.11). As its editor suggests, *Antarctica: First Impressions* is a book created more for entertainment than academic investigation, and as Sellick honestly informs readers in his introduction, it 'does not profess to be uniform or exhaustive' (p.12). Those with a specific research focus on Antarctica or exploration may be better served by examining the original sources of these texts, but the anthology is still a useful collection from which many gems of historical knowledge might be gleaned.

While *Antarctica: First Impressions* concentrates on Antarctic exploration, readers interested in areas such as the history of imperialism, environmental history, and the development of science, may also find this source useful. Situating Antarctica's position in Britain's global imperial project, explorer Robert Scott reveals some of the economic motivations for this exploration in his writings, noting that the mapping of the south and the study of icebergs were conducted for more than scientific purposes. Successful charting of the world's antipodean regions might reinforce Britain's trading dominance as '[i]n the southern trade routes, voyages would be shortened greatly by taking a higher latitude'(p.128). While American explorer James Eights embodies the spirit of nineteenth-century American imperialism with his calls for the United States

government to fund and support exploration of Antarctica so that they might, 'determine, with certainty, the situation, magnitude, and extent of these lands, and ... open a new source of revenue to the country, in the oil and fur of animals which must necessarily exist in these high southern regions' (p.54).

Some scientific aspects of Antarctic travels are discussed in accounts such as that of Royal Navy Engineer William Spry in 1879. In his memoirs he records that the Council of the Royal Society suggested that a ship be prepared for a three or four year journey and modified to allow continuous 'sounding, dredging, thermometric observation, and chemical examination of sea-water'. These activities aimed to measure and catalogue the 'physical and biological conditions of the great ocean basins' (p.80) and were a facet of the ideological superstructure of enlightenment values that accompanied the expansion of empire. Later Robert Scott also emphasised the scientific potential of exploration, writing of the 'strangely beautiful forms revealed by the microscope' (p.137). Descriptions of animals and climate also punctuate all these tales of Antarctic exploration, thus providing a snapshot for readers interested in the environmental history of the region. Belgian surgeon Fredrick Albert Cook's voyages in the seas around Antarctica reveal the variety of life that European explorers encountered, from Elephant seals, whales, dolphins and penguins, to 'big-mouthed fish, worms, spiders, anemones, sea-cucumbers, polyzoa, prawns... starfish and octopus... sponges, ascidians, isopods, and all kinds of sea lice' (p.177).

Douglas R.G. Sellick's anthology *Antarctica: First Impressions* is not a complete or holistic examination of pre-aviation Antarctic exploration. Its presentation of primary accounts is not accompanied by analysis, and is edited to emphasise elements of adventure and the personal daring of sailors and explorers of the region. Thus *Antarctica: First Impressions* will be of at least some interest and entertainment to most readers, if not theoretical insight. A chronology of exploration and maps provide a useful resource for studying Antarctica, while the stories of these intrepid explorers tell of how they avoided icebergs, killer whales, bottomless crevasses and icy death during their adventures in this vast, wild and magical land.

DAVID ROBINSON
University of Western Australia

Joy Damousi and Robert Reynolds (eds), *History on the Couch: Essays in History and Psychoanalysis*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 2003; pp. 233; RRP \$34.95 paperback.

The links between history and psychoanalysis ostensibly seem multifarious and transparent: both are concerned with the effect of the past, with memory and its fallibility and obfuscation, and with attempting to achieve an understanding of the past that holds truth and accuracy as fundamental goals. Yet as the recent Manne-Windschuttle debate has demonstrated, the discipline of history often struggles to embrace any theoretical approach that threatens to challenge the dominance of traditional empirical positivistic approaches – any attempt to extend its own epistemological horizons. The collection of essays *History on the Couch* attempts to simultaneously expose some of the latent desires that belie History's attempt to screen out psychoanalysis as a methodological approach, while demonstrating the efficacy of various intersections between psychoanalysis and history. Both tasks produce mixed results.

The introduction to the collection suggests that 'there is some historical work which has utilised Freudian concepts to a significant extent, but in large part historians remain ambivalent because the realm of the unconscious cannot be evidenced' (p.2). Disciplines such as English and Cultural Studies have found the leap into psychoanalytic approaches far easier to make. In English literature, the application of psychoanalysis is far more straightforward, whether dealing with the latent desire of the writer, in particular in relation to sexuality, or in the analysis of characterisation. In this model of investigation, psychoanalysis is one methodological approach to a single narrative, and it can function effectively within the hermeneutical practice of textual analysis. Indeed the studies in this collection seem most effective when they are looking at either novels, such as Rose Lucas' investigation of Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace*, or the various attempts to use psychoanalysis to interpret biographical information, such as Christopher E. Forth's examination of the Swiss Philosopher Henri-Frederic Amiele's journal. In all these cases psychoanalysis demonstrates its many applications when reading narratives and personal reflection. Such articles ably prove that 'history' and psychoanalysis can be used together, yet they fail to push the boundaries of already established discursive and interpretive structures.

Many of the chapters which move beyond traditional textual and biographical interpretation seem to be focussed on historical investigations of psychoanalysis in Australia. While the establishment of psychoanalytical practices remains an important element in its history and application, such approaches don't place history 'on the couch', don't attempt to explore history's resilience to psychoanalysis, and don't extend the place of psychoanalysis in wider historical investigations. One such attempt to broach these questions is Robert Reynolds' study 'The Inner and Outer World of Queer Life.' Reynolds suggests here that the academic field of Queer Studies, in particular its historical arm, has been resistant to psychoanalysis, and instead has embraced Foucauldian discourse theory. As Reynolds asserts: 'Foucault's discursive histories of sexuality rejected the distinction between inner and outer worlds, thus discarding the concept of internalisation which has so preoccupied psychoanalysis ... this shift to discourses and regimes of power was especially popular with historians and sociologists, for whom the idea of an inner world had always been troubling' (pp.55-6). Reynold's is then able to suggest how an investigation of the relationship between the social and inner worlds of gay perversion may indicate an area which discourse theory alone cannot adequately address, a potential flaw that psychoanalytic approaches can redress.

Along with Reynolds, Maggie Nolan's chapter 'Displacing Indigenous Australians: Freud's *Totem and Taboo*' highlights potentially innovative uses of psychoanalysis in historical investigations, suggesting that colonisation represents the manifestation of western civilisation's Oedipal complex. Freud's investigation of 'primitive societies,' such as Australian Aborigines is regarded as an attempt to investigate the savagery of Europe's former self. This approach allows Nolan to investigate colonisation as an attempt to incorporate indigenous others into a narrative of European identity formation that bears uncanny similarities to the way in which primal sons would incorporate the father into the self when superseding him. Nolan 'attempts to activate the disruptive potential of psychoanalysis to suggest that colonisation, rather than being the harbinger of civilisation, can be thought of as the enactment of violent fantasies of suppression and domination that are peculiar to the colonial psyche and its history' (70). Nolan's study represents a successful attempt to push the boundaries of history

through psychoanalysis, by extending the analysis of individual psyches to collective groups of people and historical events.

It is this movement however that history, and indeed *History on the Couch*, often fails to make. As John Cash suggests, in his concise and penetrating conclusion to the study, the relationship between individual psyches and the social institutions and imaginaries represent both the challenge to, and place of, the meeting of the two disciplines. Unfortunately, the work of such alternative psychoanalytic theorists such as Cornelius Castoriadis receives little attention in this volume, with too many of the contributions adhering to traditional Freudian models. Castoriadis' oeuvre represents an ambitious marriage of psychoanalysis, philosophical anthropology and social theory in order to explore the role of the imagination in both individual psychical processes, and the function of a radical social imaginary. Miriam Dixon's contribution 'Identity: history, the nation and the self' introduces the work of Castoriadis, in particular that focusing on the collective work on social imaginary significations, yet fails to engage his work as a means of investigating the relationship between the subjective imagination and social imaginary. A more nuanced understanding of Castoriadis' specifically psychoanalytic works, such as 'The State of the Subject Today' in conjunction with a detailed reading of *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, could have highlighted the potential of alternative models of understanding individual and collective psyches can be successfully utilised to investigate socio-historical situations.

The work of the Slovenian theorist Slavoj Žižek is also largely absent from the study. Žižek's work, attempting to introduce the psychoanalysis of Jacques Lacan to a study of popular culture, in particular Hollywood film, has been instrumental in popularising psychoanalytical approaches in the fields of Cinema Studies and Cultural Studies. While Žižek's work may not address specifically historical issues, his innovative use of psychoanalysis may provide an orientation for the application of psychoanalytical practices in the discourse of history. An investigation of historiography and its similarities to psychoanalytical practice is surprisingly absent from the collection of essays. An attempt to 'place history on the couch' should involve an examination of the theoretical models employed by history. It would seem that history's inability to widely investigate its own philosophical foundations represents an attempt to repress certain unconscious activities, that if properly

identified and explored may assist the discipline to adapt to a changing environment, to engage alternative approaches, such as psychoanalysis, to help it discover and understand its symptoms, that is, to get it *off* the couch.

ALEX MURRAY
University of Melbourne

Ieuan M. Williams (ed.), *Humphrey Llwyd's Chronica Walliae*, University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2001; pp. 272; RRP £29.00.

Ieuan M. Williams provides scholars and students with the long-awaited publication of Humphrey Llwyd's *Chronica Walliae* ('The Chronicle of Wales') which was composed in 1559. Until this current publication by the University of Wales Press, the text had remained in manuscript form and as a result this chronicle has not been given the attention it rightly deserves by modern historians. This publication is invaluable in making the *Chronica Walliae* available to historians of Wales and Tudor England throughout the world.

Modern historical writers have so far neglected to include Llwyd's *Chronica Walliae* in their surveys of late medieval and early modern historical literature. Historians of English Tudor historiography tend to overlook the contribution Humphrey Llwyd and his *Chronica Walliae* made to the study of antiquarianism. In Welsh historiography the trend is very different: Llwyd is mentioned frequently within general histories of Wales, but there has been no comprehensive examination of Llwyd's life, or the significance of his work. This is surprising given that, as Glanmor Williams points out, Humphrey Llwyd was one of the best Welsh antiquarians of the sixteenth-century (Glanmor Williams, *Recovery, Reorientation and Reformation: Wales c. 1415- 1642*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1987, p.245). Interest on Llwyd within Welsh historiography has been limited to examining Llwyd's influence on later antiquarians. It is well recognised that David Powel (c.1552-1598) drew very heavily on the work of Llwyd for his seminal work, the *History of Cambria*, which was published in 1584. As a result of this modern historiographical trend, Llwyd's work occupies the periphery of scholarly research. William's publication of the *Chronica Walliae* goes some way to giving Llwyd credit in his own right, making his history more than just a footnote.

The timeframe covered by the chronicle is considerable, spanning over six hundred years of Welsh history. The record starts with the reign of Cadwaladr, thought to have died in c. 664, and concludes with the death of the last Welsh Prince of Wales, Llywelyn ap Griffith in 1285. Williams points out in his introduction that there is debate among modern historians whether Llywelyn intended to continue his chronicle any further (p.9). As it stands the chronicle ends at the point of English intervention in Wales, which has significant implications. The death of Llywelyn ap Griffith opened the path for the conquest of Wales by the English Monarch Edward I (ruled 1272-1307). Modern historians of Welsh national identity often structure their texts in a similar fashion to Llywelyn, marking 1285 as watershed in the history of Wales. However, to analyse the significance of why Llywelyn chose to write the history of Wales from c. 664 to 1285, we must first look at the historical and literary environment in which Humphrey Llywelyn composed his *Chronica Walliae*.

Humphrey Llywelyn wrote his chronicle during a period of important literary developments in both England and in Wales. The changing notions of historiography in sixteenth-century Britain saw the development of such movements as Humanism, Antiquarianism and Tudor Historical Revisionism. Llywelyn's work was influenced to some degree by all of these three movements. His narrative progresses in a less than strict chronological fashion when compared to the structure of the sources which Llywelyn used, such as the Welsh *Brut y Tyysogyon* ('The Chronicle of Princes'). Llywelyn brought to the study of British Antiquarianism a uniquely Welsh perspective. For example, even though he wrote the *Chronica Walliae* in sixteenth-century English he often provides the Welsh spelling of place names and sites of historical importance, such as the Welsh 'Swydh Abertivi' for 'Cardiganshire' (p.77). This is significant given that Antiquarian studies of the sixteenth century centred on recording material evidence, such the location and history of specific burial grounds, churches, or townships. As a result of his interest in Welsh Antiquarianism, Llywelyn published a map in 1573 which documented the physical and natural landscape of Wales. This map holds an important place in the history of Welsh culture and identity, being the first printed map of Wales.

Williams' introduction to the *Chronica Walliae* can be divided into three main areas of discussion: the biographical details of Humphrey Llywelyn's life (1527-68), aspects of palaeography, and the historical

sources used by Llwyd. Williams covers each of these subjects comprehensively. Williams contextualises the *Chronica Walliae* within the life and patronage network of Llwyd, especially his English connections such as those to the Arundel Family. Llwyd's life was fairly obscure and, as Williams points out, there are some facts which are contentious. For example Williams challenges the assumption that Humphrey Llwyd studied Medicine at Oxford (p.2). From this discussion William then turns to the methodology which he employed in this publication. Williams takes care to describe in his introduction the process of collating several manuscripts and justifies the choices he has made. He describes the differences between the five surviving manuscripts of the *Chronica Walliae* in intricate detail, highlighting the problems associated with late medieval chronicle compilations. Lastly Williams examines the source material drawn on by Llwyd for his text. He provides a study of the relationship between the *Chronica Walliae* and two surviving versions of the *Brut y Tyysogyon* and the *Brenhiedd y Saesson*.

Having said how much I enjoyed the introduction, I must point out my disappointment with the scope of discussion. Williams has left many angles unexplored. Issues of Welsh national identity and the role of England in this equation played a far greater part in influencing Llwyd's subject choice and the structure of his narrative than is evident from a reading of William's 'Introduction'. Humphrey Llwyd composed the *Chronica Walliae* during a culturally dynamic time in Welsh history. The Act of Union between England and Wales was passed in 1536, and was revised in 1543. Although the title of Llwyd's chronicle is in Latin, the text itself is in sixteenth-century English, which is not uncommon for texts written in sixteenth-century Wales. Although the printing press was first utilized by the Welshman William Owen in 1521, with the publication of *Bregement de Toutes les Estats*, the first publication in the Welsh language was not to be until 1585, with John Pryce's *Yn Llyvyr Hwinn*. Such essential contextual background is not provided and as a result non-specialists in Welsh and Tudor history are not alerted to the significance of various references within the text. One example is Llwyd's attack on Polydore Vergil, a humanist historian of Italian origin at the English court, which occurs in the introductory paragraphs of the *Chronica Walliae* (p.65). Williams skims over the reasons behind Llwyd's personal attack on Polydore Vergil (p.15), which is surprising given the degree of influence Polydore Vergil

had on early modern historiography. In his *Historia Anglica* ('English History'), composed in c.1534, Polydore Vergil cast doubt on the historical authenticity and reliability of the *History of the Kings of Britain* by Geoffrey of Monmouth, who was born c.1120 of Welsh-Norman descent. The *Chronica Walliae* should be viewed as a rebuttal to Vergil's historical assertions concerning the origins of British (or English) history. Within this historical context, it is clear that this text was a product of the movement of historical revisionism. This is, disappointingly, not alluded to in the introduction.

As for the text of the chronicle itself, I am unable to comment on the quality of Williams' edition. I have not had access to the original manuscripts, nor am I an expert in this field. The text is, however, very accessible and clearly presented. It is a shame that a plate of Humphrey Llwyd's map of Wales was not included. The map is on the front cover, but only part of it is visible. Humphrey Llwyd was a well recognised cartographer. Perhaps as a result of this publication work will be done by modern historians on the connections between Llwyd's chronicle descriptions of the landscape and history of Wales and his cartographic framework.

This publication was, regrettably, published after Williams' death in January 2000. The task of completing Williams' manuscript was taken on by J. Beverly Smith. Given these circumstances one can only wonder what Williams intended to add. However as this publication stands, Ieuan Williams has provided us with a springboard from which to study various themes.

ALICIA MARCHANT
University of Western Australia

Rick Halpern and Enrico Dal Lago (eds), *Slavery and Emancipation*, Blackwell, Oxford and Melbourne, 2002; pp.416; RRP \$65.95.

The past thirty years have witnessed an explosion of academic literature addressing itself to aspects of American slavery long trivialised or overlooked in the historiography. During this period, scholars have examined the intricacies of this 'peculiar institution' from a range of different vantage points, proffering new answers to old questions, and fundamentally reshaping our perceptions of the slave system that had formed such an integral part of American life

until 1865. There appears to have been a genuine effort to examine the institution from 'below' – to focus research on the lives of the slaves themselves and to give them a voice long denied. Rick Halpern and Enrico Dal Lago's edited collection, *Slavery and Emancipation*, must be assessed within the context of these broader trends.

The book contains fourteen chapters dealing with the African American experience from the arrival of the first blacks in Virginia and the gradual codification of slave status to emancipation and the destruction of slavery in the Civil War. Each chapter consists of four documents and a single article by a historian. The documents include prominent slave-owner Thomas Jefferson's misgivings about owning slaves; William Lloyd Garrison's challenging anti-slavery message; John C. Calhoun's notorious insistence on the South's right to nullify legislation it regarded as objectionable and Abraham Lincoln's House Divided Speech (1858) and his Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. Although these and many other mainstream political documents are well known to those already familiar with the subject, they are important to the book's essential purpose as a teaching tool and they are complemented by other documents seeing the slave experience from within.

In the latter category, Olaudah Equiano's celebrated narrative is inevitably included as one of the few accounts of enslavement by an African, while the nineteenth century's most famous African American, Frederick Douglass, is represented in several chapters. If the documents as a whole are perhaps too representative of the famous – both black and white – with very few opportunities to see the institution from the 'bottom up', the accompanying articles amply reveal the richness of historiographical debate about slavery. While many of those are by well-established historians such as Ira Berlin, Peter Kolchin and Eugene Genovese, several convey the dynamic nature of history, especially with a focus on gender missing from the older views of slavery.

One might reasonably have expected that a book called *Slavery and Emancipation* would have documented more thoroughly the slaves' own reactions to freedom, for there are a number of studies, for instance by Kolchin and Leon Litwack, which have dealt in detail with the subject. Overall, however, the book would be invaluable for honours or more specialised undergraduate courses in African American history and it could serve as a signpost for research at the honours or postgraduate level using the many microfilm collections

of slave plantations and antislavery activism accumulated by major research libraries and often available on inter-library loan.

MICHAEL ONDAATJE
University of Western Australia

Suellen Murray, *More than Refuge: Changing Responses to Domestic Violence*, University of Western Australia Press, Crawley, 2002; pp. 222; RRP \$34.95 paperback.

Domestic violence is a dark secret that has only in recent decades been acknowledged publicly in our community. Extreme cases of abuse that ended up in tragedy kept people aware of the existence of the problem over the years, without recognition of its magnitude. In *More than Refuge: Changing Responses to Domestic Violence*, Suellen Murray traces both the history of Nardine Refuge in Perth, and the parallel process of changing responses to domestic violence within the community, and within government. She argues that it was largely through the efforts of feminists and social activists, such as the workers at Nardine Refuge, that the issue of domestic violence was brought into the spotlight of public awareness.

Early refuges in Western Australia offered women fleeing domestic violence only temporary refuge. The emphasis was on temporary protection of women and children rather than attempting to empower women to enable them to leave violent relationships. Looking back from the perspective of today, it is hard to recall that rape in marriage only became a crime in the 1980s and that before the Family Law Act (1975) introduced no fault divorce, women escaping domestic violence had few options.

Murray uses the case study of Nardine Women's refuge, established in 1974 as the first feminist refuge in Perth, as an opportunity for analyzing responses by the community and by governments, to domestic violence. Nardine was not the first service to provide shelter to women and children escaping domestic violence, but it was the first staffed by workers who were prepared to speak out against domestic violence and who sought to understand the causes of violence in the home and what could be done to prevent it. Members of the collective that managed Nardine did not just respond to the immediate needs of their clients but also engaged

in an analysis of society they viewed as patriarchal. Nardine's workers attributed the continued perpetration of violence against women to an imbalance in power between men and women. This stance was not unproblematic for Nardine's workers. The radical feminist analysis, that the problem resided with men, posed some contradictions for those Nardine workers who were married and led some to leave their marriages. Nardine's management structure, a collective, was another response to patriarchal society. Whilst some members recall that consensus decision-making as a collective was a 'chaotic' process, others recall a sense of empowerment in that individual voices were heard in the process (p.68). Nardine retained its commitment to the collective structure until the mid-1990s when the conservative Liberal Party Minister for Family and Children's Services, Roger Nicholls, gave Nardine an ultimatum that if it did not change its management structure, it would cease to be funded (p.69). The collective reluctantly appointed a coordinator in 1998.

The dominant role that men played in society was very evident when the Nardine workers met with government officials to discuss issues of funding support for the refuge. In the 1970s, men dominated the police force, the judiciary, the legislature and the government departments that implemented policy. Indeed, Murray cites Gisela Kaplan's argument that women did not exist as a group before 1968 (p.77) and that it was the efforts of social activists such as the Nardine workers that led to the establishment of services for women. There was little understanding amongst male bureaucrats of the lack of options women facing domestic violence had, especially if they had children. Without financial support, a safe house, legal protection reinforced by the police force, and community support, women had little chance of breaking free of an abusive relationship. Many chose to return, after time spent in the refuge, because the grim reality of life in an unfurnished State Housing Commission apartment, without prospect of employment or adequate child support was unbearable. The approaches that Nardine workers made to the Department of Community Welfare over the years helped to politicise the government employees with whom refuge workers dealt in their efforts to provide services for women and children affected by domestic violence.

A major breakthrough in raising public awareness about domestic violence came in 1985 with the appointment of a Western Australian Domestic Violence Task Force, appointed by the Premier, Brian

Burke. In gathering evidence, members of the Task Force traveled to regional areas and also conducted two public surveys. The response amazed and distressed Task Force members as they realised the extent of the problem. Some immediate outcomes of their report, *Break the Silence*, were the opening of refuges in the North West to assist Indigenous women, and changes to police training to ensure that police officers dealt with domestic violence sympathetically.

Now the problem has been named, but not yet eliminated. Murray acknowledges the progress made since the early 1970s, but adds that as the title of this volume states, there is still a need for 'more than refuge'. Tackling domestic violence requires an analysis that recognizes the complexity of causes underlying the problem and that a range of solutions are necessary to address them, so that the cycle of violence is broken.

JUDY SKENE

University of Western Australia

Laksiri Jayasuriya, David Walker and Jan Gothard (eds), *Legacies of White Australia: Race, Culture and Nation*, University of Western Australia Press, Crawley, 2003; pp.280; RRP \$38.95.

The high praise for *Legacies of White Australia* from eminent persons such as historian Stuart Macintyre and former senior Foreign Affairs bureaucrat Rawdon Dalrymple makes this reviewer read like a mere echo. *Legacies* provides an excellent overview of the issues and controversies surrounding 'White Australia'. It also contains a useful chronology of events relating to immigration and the White Australia policy (pp.199-215). According to the editors, an 'examination of the logic and history of White Australia is inevitably drawn to the question of whether Australia sees itself as part of the world or apart from the world.' Similarly, they argue, 'White Australia is inseparably linked to the question of who has the right to decide the nation's future'(p.3). The various contributors address these issues from diverse perspectives.

The chapters derive from papers presented at a National Symposium entitled 'Constituting a 'People': the Legacy of White Australia' in December 2001. The contributors include historians (Anne Curthoys and Andrew Markus); political scientists (Robert

Manne and Alastair Davidson), and Cultural Studies specialists (Ien Ang). The original Symposium was a Centenary of Federation event, and most chapters take the *Immigration Restriction Act* of 1901, the first piece of legislation passed by the new Federal Parliament, as the starting point for their examinations of the continuing impact of 'White Australia's' assumptions and structures on contemporary Australia.

Stand-out essays include Anne Curthoys' 'Liberalism and Exclusionism' (pp.8-32) which discusses the 'Janus-faced' nature of colonial liberalism. Australian liberals wanted 'freedom and liberty' for the 'entire community'. But they also believed the presence of those who were not equal, like the Chinese, would result in a population of inferiors that could 'form the basis of a system of semi-slavery most injurious to the country and the people' (p.19). Ien Ang's 'From White Australia to Fortress Australia' (pp.51-69) sees continuities between the ideological assumptions of 'White Australia', and contemporary cultural anxieties about threats to 'the Australian way of life' (p.52). Sean Brawley's 'The White Australia Policy and Foreign Relations' (pp.93-109) suggests that the policy 'is alive and well' despite the political changes that supposedly 'ended' it (p.103). Andrew Markus' 'Of Continuities and Discontinuities' (pp.175-189) highlights the impact of 'White Australia' on the Aboriginal population. Just as 'non-Europeans' were restricted from entering Australia, '[r]estrictions were also placed on the freedom of movement of Aboriginal people to areas of European population; for example, Aboriginal people were forbidden to enter Perth without a permit in the inter-war period' (p.176).

The date of the original Symposium places it in the immediate aftermath of the *Tampa* asylum-seekers affair and the 2001 Federal election. The *Tampa* haunts the pages of this collection, and many contributors link it to their interpretation of 'White Australia'. Robert Manne in 'The Road to *Tampa*' (pp.163-174) makes a direct connection between the 1901 *Immigration Restriction Act* and the 2001 *Border Protection Act* pushed by the Howard Coalition government (p.163). If the collection has a flaw, it would be that all the contributors appear to be singing from the same song-sheet on *Tampa*. Alastair Davidson's lament over the episode in 'The Politics of Exclusion in an Era of Globalisation' (pp.129-144) sums up the sentiments of most of the contributors: 'I hang my head . . . and think 'poor fella my country'.' They all believe that both the *Tampa* affair, and the whole issue of border protection, represent

manifestations of 'White Australia', and cynical politics on the part of the Coalition government. It is a position with which I agree, but most Australians would beg to differ. Anne Curthoys reports that 77% of the electorate supported the government's position on the *Tampa* in 2001 (p.8). Ien Ang also points out that many migrants from non-English backgrounds have also supported 'hardline policies against refugees and asylum-seekers.' The issue, she argues, is no longer the maintenance of a 'racially White Australia' but a 'culture of White Australia' (pp.64-5). Was there a possible contributor who could mount an intellectual defence of 'border protection' against the 'White Australia' label? Perhaps not, because as Robert Manne observes: 'In many poor suburbs or country towns it would be difficult to find an opponent of Howard's anti-asylum-seeker policy. In a humanities faculty of an Australian University it would be unusual for the policy to find a friend' (p.173).

Legacies succeeds in its aim to 'bring back into the arena of public debate and critical academic scrutiny the ideas and sentiments that lay behind the moves to Federation.' This useful volume deserves a wide readership, as the nation has not finished with 'White Australia'.

TIM DYMOND

University of Western Australia

Alexandra Hasluck, *Georgiana Molloy: Portrait with Background*, Fremantle Arts Press, Fremantle, 2002; pp.352; RRP \$29.95.

Alexandra Hasluck's *Georgiana Molloy: Portrait with Background* was first published in 1955, was re-issued in 1990, and has now been re-released. Georgiana and her husband John Molloy were among the settlers who founded Augusta on the south-western coast of Western Australia. She was also an avid and dedicated collector of botanical specimens, and it is in this role that she is primarily remembered. Hasluck's book a vivid and detailed account of her life.

Georgiana was born in Cumberland in 1805, into an English gentry family. She married 'handsome Jack' Molloy in 1829, when she was 24. Molloy was a dashing Captain with a meritorious Army career (he had fought at Waterloo), twenty-five years her senior. A few months after the marriage, when pregnant with the first of her seven children, she sailed with him to the newly-founded Swan

River Colony. Soon after their arrival in March 1830 they moved to Augusta in the far south-west. At first Georgiana disliked and feared the country to which she had come. Writing to her sister in England soon after her arrival, she said 'This is certainly a very beautiful place – but were it not for domestic charms the eye of the emigrant would soon weary of the unbounded limits of thickly clothed dark green forests where nothing can be described to feast the imagination and where you can only say there must be some tribes of Natives in those woods and they are the most degraded of humanity' (pp.108-9).

Hasluck describes Georgiana's life in England, Molloy's army career, the long sea journey to Perth and then their experiences as settlers in early Western Australia. The gently brought up Georgiana had to perform menial household chores and care for her rapidly increasing family. The book sets out a detailed and authentic picture of the life of the early settlers in Western Australia, and Georgiana emerges as a woman of intelligence and sensitivity, who came to love her new country but who suffered greatly also. In her thirteen years in Western Australia she gave birth to seven children. Her first-born died a few days after birth in 1830, and Georgiana's only son, John, drowned in a well in 1837 when he was 19 months old.

Georgiana's work as a collector of botanical specimens, while described in some detail, is not the main theme of the book. Yet it is for her work in this area that Georgiana is, quite rightly, acknowledged today although her contribution to botany was 'ungallantly overlooked' by leading botanists of the time (p.305). In 1836 Georgiana had been invited to collect seeds and plants by Captain James Mangles, R.N., who was an amateur botanist and horticulturalist with an interest in Western Australian plants. In collecting specimens for him, Georgiana found a fulfilling endeavour which allowed her freedom from domestic chores and the opportunity to explore the wilderness around her new home. While enduring the hardships of a settler's wife, over the next seven years until her untimely death, Georgiana systematically collected botanical specimens to send to him, which were used to establish many Australian plants in cultivation in England, and to make the diverse flora of Western Australia available to European botanists.

This groundbreaking work in the study and identification of much of the region's unique flora is an enduring testament to her skills and resilience. Moreover, in a time when the Aboriginal population

were feared and often loathed by the white settlers, Georgiana was not afraid to venture out alone with Aboriginal guides to collect specimens. In 1841, she wrote to Captain Mangles in relation to her attempt to procure seeds, 'Molloy would not accompany me so I placed myself under the guidance of three of the Natives. [sic] ... The natives [sic] are much greater auxiliaries than white people in Flower and seed Hunting. They ask no impertinent questions, do not give a sneer at what they do not comprehend, and above all, are implicitly obedient, and from their erratic habits, penetrating every recess, can obtain more novelties' (p.287). Georgiana obviously developed a love and respect for the land, which she could, to some extent, share with her Aboriginal guides.

Hasluck's book is a fascinating account of early Western Australia, but it gives little insight into main characters, or any real discussion of the impact of white settlement upon the Aborigines or the environment. Perhaps not surprisingly given when the book was written, issues such as the relationship between the settlers and the Aborigines are dealt with briefly and in a rather disingenuous manner. When referring to a massacre of Aborigines in retribution for the murder of the settler George Layman in 1841, Hasluck states only: 'The blacks were quick to launch their spears, guns were fired and in the confusion and half darkness, five natives were shot ...' (p.279). Hasluck accepts that contemporary views of the incident were 'without the background of anthropological and ethnological knowledge that we have today' (p.286), but then she remarks that 'the evidence seems to show that on the whole [the Aborigines] were kindly and considerately treated' (p.286).

Neither is there any exploration of the obvious gender inequalities between the settlers. Hasluck, writing from the perspective of a woman of the 1950s accepts without question Georgiana's description of Molloy as an 'excellent husband' (p.310). There is a tendency to whitewash the central characters, especially Molloy, whose military career is described in a breathless 'Boys' Own' style. Molloy may well have been an 'upright and honourable character' but his treatment of his wife as she struggled in a new and harsh environment should not so easily be overlooked. Georgiana was either pregnant or nursing an infant for the entire 13 years she spent in Western Australia, and her death in 1843 at the age of 37 was directly the result of the difficult births of her two youngest daughters.

As to be expected in a book written in the fifties, the style is rather

precious at times, and Hasluck is so anxious to provide sufficient 'background' to her portrait of Georgiana that she dwells overly much on the historical milieu of her characters, without spending much time on their possible motivations. Although the book begins with Georgiana's youth in the English border-country and ends with John Molloy's death in 1867, the main focus is upon the Western Australian colony from 1829 to 1843. Hasluck describes this in positive terms, and her description of the lives of early settlers such as the Molloyes, the Turners and the Bussells is detailed and fascinating. It is pleasing that Georgiana's story will now be available to a new audience.

DEBORAH WILLIAMS
University of Western Australia