ACADEMY OF THE SOCIAL
SCIENCES IN AUSTRALIA

Newsletter

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About the Academy

The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia was established in 1971. Previously, some of the functions were carried out through the Social Science Research Council of Australia, established in 1942. Elected to the Academy for distinguished contributions to the social sciences, the 303 Fellows of the Academy offer expertise in the fields of *accounting, anthropology, demography, economics, economic history, education, geography, history, law, linguistics, philosophy, political science, psychology, social medicine, sociology and statistics.*

The Academy's objectives are:

- to promote excellence in and encourage the advancement of the social sciences in Australia;
- to act as a coordinating group for the promotion of research and teaching in the social sciences;
- to foster excellence in research and to subsidise the publication of studies in the social sciences;
- to encourage and assist in the formation of other national associations or institutions for the promotion of the social sciences or any branch of them;
- to promote international scholarly cooperation and to act as an Australian national member of international organisations concerned with the social sciences;
- to act as consultant and adviser in regard to the social sciences; and,
- to comment where appropriate on national needs and priorities in the area of the social sciences.

These objectives are fulfilled through a program of activities, research projects, independent advice to government and the community, publication and cooperation with fellow institutions both within Australia and internationally.

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President’s column

Fay Gale

This Newsletter discusses a most important issue facing all Australians, namely the rights of our indigenous people. Contributions from different perspectives, from non-indigenous researchers and high-achieving indigenous people, offer a range of ideas, opinions and information at a crucial time in Australia’s history, when the past treatment of indigenous people is being brought very much into the political limelight, bringing with it considerable reaction.

The Symposium associated with the Annual General Meeting this year is entitled ‘Reconciliation and the Academy: Inventing the Future’. It hope to focus on the responsibility of academies in relation to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to pursue our obligations in research and teaching. At that time, we will be focusing especially on native title.

No Australian can be unaware of the controversial nature of the moral and intellectual dilemma now facing us. This Academy has never been afraid to speak out in its areas of expertise on difficult social and economic issues. Nor has it refrained from seeking advice or information from those working at the cutting edge of debate through its workshops and the pages of this *Newsletter*. I hope this edition, devoted almost entirely to indigenous issues, will stimulate Fellows to take a greater intellectual lead in this debate.

Naturally, the Academy is also busy with many other issues. This is the Academy of Fellows able to advise the Minister of Education on a whole range of matters related to higher education. Recently we have, as a member of the National Academies Forum, responded to the final report of the West Committee.

In our response we have identified a number of concerns. We have said that ‘The scholarly function of the universities as living repositories of knowledge and wisdom, as critics and irritants to accepted norms and as places where the human spirit can soar, must be sustained’.

Our major concerns lie in the weakness of the West Report in relation to research, research policy and research training. There is a real danger that increasing reliance on student fees and the possibility of student entitlements or vouchers will place in jeopardy longterm research projects, especially those whose primary objective is the advancement of knowledge without any immediate or evident commercial gain.

Research is essential to scholarship and teaching excellence, yet the Commonwealth Government has already foreshadowed that funding for research infrastructure through the Block Grant and Equipment and Facilities Support will decline from $126.3 million in 1998 to $61.7 million in 2000.

The significance of the ARC to social science research is immeasurable. We are concerned that its budget will be reduced after 1998-99.

The interim report of the Penington Review of the ARC is timely. It raises issues that need to be addressed, particularly in relation to research policy, the management of research programs and the support of excellence in postgraduate training. The crucial issue of funding is to be further considered by the ARC and the Review.

We live in a time of continual reviews but because so many have a substantial bearing upon the teaching and research in the social sciences, our vigilance in participating in these reviews must continue.

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Vice President’s note

Ian Castles

In their essay on urban studies in Australia in the strategic review *Challenges for the Social Sciences and Australia,* Graeme Davison and Ruth Fincher identified the young Stanley Jevons as ‘probably the first person in Australia to call himself a social scientist’. And they reflected that the early social scientists such as Jevons

> were usually also moral reformers, inspired by a desire to comprehend human society in all its complexity. That grand vision may now have been tempered by political realism and academic specialisation, but the city remains in the minds of many social scientists a symbol of the inter-connectedness of social life . . .

In a 1996 paper, Professor Davison has explained how Australia played a ‘brief, but illuminating, part in the history of urban sociology when Jevons, later to become one of the founding fathers of modern economics, carried out a pioneering social survey of Sydney’.

Although William Stanley Jevons was to maintain an active interest in many of the natural and technological sciences throughout his career, his increasing fascination with the social sciences had become apparent by the beginning of his last year in Australia. In 1858, at the age of 22, he wrote from Sydney to his sister in England:

> . . . to extend and perfect the . . . knowledge of man and society is perhaps the most useful and necessary work in which any one can now engage. There are plenty of people engaged with physical science . . . but thoroughly to understand the principles of society appears to me now the most cogent business.

John Maynard Keynes, then aged 22, attested to the degree of success which Jevons achieved in this ‘business’ in a letter to Lytton Strachey in 1905:

> I am convinced that [Jevons] was one of **the** minds of the [nineteenth] century. He has the curiously exciting style of writing that one gets if one is good enough.

More than thirty years later, Keynes refined and confirmed his youthful assessment of Jevons’ genius in a celebrated paper read to the Royal Statistical Society. It was in this essay that Keynes held that an 1862 paper by Jevons marked ‘the beginning of a new stage in economic science’; that in an 1863 paper he had achieved as much progress in solving the problem of price index-numbers as all succeeding authors put together; and that his *Theory of Political Economy*, first published in 1871, was 'the first modern book on economics'.

More famous than these judgements on individual works was Keynes' verdict that Jevons was 'the first theoretical economist to survey his material with the prying eyes and fertile, controlled imagination of the natural scientist' – an assessment which was made before the range and brilliance of Jevons' work in many of the natural sciences had been revealed.

Keynes' essay was also notable for its comparison of two photographs of Jevons. At that time the 'familiar' likeness, taken in later life, revealed the 'powerful, but not . . . brilliant face' of one who 'would pass for a banker of high standing'. But Keynes thought that the photograph of Jevons in Australia, which was taken just three weeks before he wrote the letter quoted above, was 'much more interesting': it was 'of a genius then and not at all a banker'. This is the photograph which appears on the cover of *Challenges for the Social Sciences and Australia.*

Jevons had not always believed that research in the social sciences was 'the most useful and necessary work in which any one can now engage'. In 1862, recalling the time of his acceptance of the post in Sydney, Jevons wrote in his journal:

> During this part of my life [early 1854] . . . I used to think that physical science was the true field of knowledge & enlightenment. Classical, historical, poetical studies . . . I regarded as at the most elegant, & interesting. Possessing no certainty & being unprogressive they could not compare in usefulness with anything sure and progressive.

The re-ordering of Jevons' personal research priorities cannot be attributed to any lack of interest in, or aptitude for, the natural and technological sciences. On the contrary, the record of his activities in his Australian years which is summarised in the following pages testifies to his exceptional facility in many of these disciplines, no less than in the social sciences. Thanks mainly to the work of Michael White, economist at Monash University, these activities can now be linked to reveal Jevons as one of the most remarkable polymaths of the modern era.

Metallurgy

At the age of 18, Jevons bought all of the equipment required for the assay office he was to establish in Sydney, and arranged for its shipment. After his arrival in Australia, he rented a rat-infested cottage in Church Hill and, with his assistant, built melting and cupel furnaces and installed laboratory equipment. Within four months he wrote that ‘All the apparatus is complete & works well. . . . I have had a few assays to do for the public as well as 57 assays for the Mint.’ Following a change of plans which led to the assaying work being undertaken at the Mint and the two original assayers becoming highly-paid employees of the Mint, Jevons and his colleague produced coin of superior fineness to that produced at the parent Mint in London. Jevons outlined the improvements he had made in the assay process in his essay on ‘Gold assay’ for Watt’s *Dictionary of Chemistry* (1864).

Chemistry

In his office at the Mint in Macquarie street, Jevons built an apparatus for simulating clouds in miniature. He reported some early results in papers published in the *Philosophical Magazine* (London) in 1857 and 1858 and, in greater detail, in a 15,000-word paper which was presented to the Philosophical Society of New South Wales in December 1857.

In the 1990s, Jevons’ work in this area has been reviewed by Raymond Schmitt, senior scientist at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts. Readers of the *Scientific American* (May 1995) learned from an article by Dr Schmitt that Jevons had created and observed the phenomenon now known as ‘salt fingers’, a century before their discovery at Woods Hole in the late 1950s. The *Scientific American* reproduced the 1858 photograph of Jevons in Sydney, together with two of the illustrations accompanying Jevons’ original paper, published in the *Sydney Magazine of Science and Art* in 1858.

Dr Schmitt also found, from inspection of the archives of the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge, that in 1880 the English physicist Lord Rayleigh, later a Nobel prize winner and President of the Royal Society, had ‘repeated several times the experiment of WS Jevons [see *Philosophical Magazine* for July 1857] on the formation of cirrous clouds. . . . The effects obtained resembled those described by him.’ Expressing some surprise that Rayleigh had not mentioned these experiments in an 1883 paper, Schmitt observed that:

> Rayleigh . . . was an astute theoretician and talented experimentalist. Yet despite having read Jevons’s hint and duplicated his experiments, Rayleigh failed to recognise the role of heat conduction in the formation of salt fingers.

It appears that the quality of the work of the lone 20-year old assayer in remote Sydney in 1856, using apparatus which he had constructed himself, compared favourably with that of the renowned 38-year old physicist in 1880, with the facilities and research support of one of the world’s leading laboratories.

Photography

In 1952, Jevons was described as ‘Australia’s first pictorialist’. Taking up the new art of wet-plate photography with enthusiasm, his portraits, interiors and landscape scenes ‘are considered to be among the most interesting of the period, both for their technical and pictorial quality’. Among photographs taken by Jevons at the Mint were panoramic views (taken from the roof of the building); illustrations of the refining and assaying processes; and shots taken during the cloud simulation experiments in his office laboratory (two of the eight illustrations accompanying his ‘clouds’ paper at the Philosophical Society meeting were drawn from photographs of the experiments).

Meteorology

From January 1855 until June 1858, Jevons made twice-daily meteorological observations on apparatus which he had acquired or constructed himself. For a year during this period he was the only meteorologist in Sydney, and his records for this period have been incorporated in the official meteorological record.

For an individual working without support, the task of managing the accumulating database of statistics of Sydney’s air pressure, temperature, moisture, rainfall and cloud and wind conditions must have been massive. After 20 months, he recorded that his work was then ‘of some forty or fifty thousand figures, independent of continual calculations, drawing of means, and other work’. His weekly ‘Meteorological Report’ was published in the *Empire*, owned by Henry Parkes, from September 1856 to June 1858.

In ‘William Stanley Jevons and the climate of Australia’, a paper shortly to be published (with the now-famous 1858 photograph) in the *Australian Meteorological Magazine*, Neville Nicholls of the Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre reviews Jevons’ study of the climate of Australia and New Zealand. This work, published in *Waugh’s Australian Almanac for the year 1859*, is described by Dr Nicholls as ‘the first thorough and scientific study of the climate of Australia’. Nicholls notes that Jevons was the first person to have documented Australia’s highly variable interannual rainfall (a feature now known to be attributable to the El Niæo – Southern Oscillation), and that ‘many of the observations regarding Australia's climate made by Jevons, based on very limited data, have proven to be correct'.

Earth Sciences

In a bibliography of Jevons' Australian writings published in 1949, Professor JA La Nauze listed four papers relating to the geology of Australia. One of the papers, published in the *Sydney Magazine of Science and Art* in 1858, was a list of recorded earthquakes in New South Wales. In this paper Jevons ridiculed a statement in a catalogue compiled for the British Association, and published in its *Transactions* for 1854, that 'terrible explosions were heard' and two centres were 'filled with corpses' in an earthquake in Australia on 22 September, 1837. Arguing that it was 'difficult to understand how such an exaggeration of the facts became current', Jevons claimed that the report must have been a garbled account of 'a considerable earthquake' centred on Newcastle some six weeks earlier, which had been reported in the *Sydney Herald* without reference to any loss of life.

Astronomy

Jevons reported his observations of a total and of a partial eclipse of the sun in the *Empire* in March and September 1857, acknowledging the benefit of calculations by 'Mr Tebbutt, of Windsor', who was then only 23. More than 20 years later, when Tebbutt had become a world-famous astronomer, he acquired Jevons' *Principles of Science* for his library.

Environmental Science

In letters to the *Empire* entitled 'Lead poison in the Sydney water' and 'Action of Sydney water upon lead and lead upon Sydney water' in October and November 1857, Jevons questioned the quality of Sydney's water supply. He strongly criticised statements by the health authorities and cited evidence in support of views which had been presented to the Philosophical Society by Dr John Smith, foundation professor of chemistry and experimental physics at the University of Sydney. Jevons stated that he had been using a sand filter for more than a year 'with uniform and complete success', and that he had become fully accustomed to the taste of filtered water. He could clearly detect the taste of lead in unfiltered water, 'which I would now be rather excused from drinking'.

In another letter to the *Empire* entitled 'Gunpowder and Lightning', Jevons quoted the research findings of Arago and other scientists in support of his contention that the gunpowder magazine on Goat Island in Sydney Harbour was insufficiently protected against the risk of a lightning strike. In the event that his concerns were 'referred, like many another greater matter, to the Circumlocutions Officer', Jevons was ready to 'leave it to the numerous and influential inhabitants of the closely-adjoining suburb of Balmain, 'who must . . . feel a most immediate and personal interest in the matter'.

Music, Logic and Computer Science

In the letter to his sister in which Jevons identified 'the principles of society' as 'the most cogent business', he described music as 'a condition of my existence . . .' In Sydney, he equipped himself with an harmonium, a metronome, many musical scores and 'a superb and most convenient music-holder of my own design and manufacture'. And he wrote a book about music (sending the manuscript 'chapter by chapter' to Henrietta), and invented a new system of musical notation.

Although not all of these writings have survived, Dr Jamie Kassler, FAHA, has recently drawn attention to Jevons' letters from Sydney as 'a previously untapped source of information for the history of music in Australia'. More importantly, she has offered 'evidence to support the thesis that, whilst in Australia, Jevons' study of music laid an important foundation for his pioneering work in logic', including his famous 'logical piano'. This remarkable device is identified in the recent computer guide *Bebop BYTES back* (1996) as 'the first machine that could solve a logical problem faster than that problem could be solved without using the machine!' At one stage Jevons contemplated building a machine which could cover problems involving as many as ten terms (the logical piano could only manage four), but found that he would have to sacrifice the entire space of one side of his library.

The Social Sciences

In 1857 Stanley Jevons, aged 21, wrote to his brother about a 'very grand cricket match between Sydney and Melbourne'. After reporting upon 'the immense number of orderly people' at the match and noting that 'the business of the town [of Sydney] was quite interrupted' because nearly one-quarter of the population was watching the game, the future author of 'the first modern book on economics' concluded:

> I take this to be a sign, not of laziness, but that the people are so well today as to be able to spare more holydays and really to enjoy themselves more than the people of other countries.

The notion that the people of a prosperous community might be right to choose to sacrifice income in the pursuit of happiness was not obvious in 1857. It is apparently still not obvious to many, because governments regularly set targets for 'economic growth' but not for 'more holydays'.

Jevons tried to explain the point in *The Theory of Political Economy*, when he observed that ‘we may, if we like, include . . . a game of cricket [as] labour’:

> (B)ut if it be undertaken solely for the sake of the enjoyment attaching to it, the question arises whether we need take it under our notice . . . We are not prevented in any way from including such cases in our Theory of Economics . . . But we need not occupy our attention by cases which demand no calculus. When we exert ourselves for the sole amusement of the moment, there is but one rule needed, namely, to stop when we feel inclined . . . Labour . . . is **any painful exertion of mind or body undergone partly or wholly with a view to future good.** It is true that labour may be both agreeable at the time and conducive to future good . . . (T)here are three quantities involved in the theory of labour – the amount of painful exertion, the amount of produce, and the amount of utility gained.

These are valuable insights, which our late twentieth-century compilers of numerical indices of ‘human development’ and ‘genuine progress’ have yet to grasp.

Jevons was also in advance of his time in recognising the case for public support of basic research. In an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1858, he reflected that

> Lovers of nature and knowledge . . . are . . . like true statesmen, only singler in purpose and purer in soul. And the genuine love of science is yet what chiefly promotes it. But evidently it is the common interest that every suitable means should be used to promote science, which we have shown to be a common benefit. A member of society so invaluable as the patient student of nature should be compensated in some way from the public fund, because he can seldom lay a claim and serve a bill upon any one person. And even where no pecuniary reward is bestowed, a fair name, and a place of respect and honour, may be allowed him.

Sadly, Jevons has had no ‘place of respect and honour’ in Australia. In the early 1990s, the Mint building in Macquarie street in which he had worked between 1854 and 1859 was a part of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (the Powerhouse). The caption on a exhibit in the ‘Gold Room’ of this museum stated that ‘This room focuses on . . . the experiences of two gentlemen who worked at the Mint, William Jevons and Robert Hunt’. There was nothing to indicate that one of the ‘gentlemen’ was among the greatest scholars of modern times.

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Fellows please note that Wendy Pascoe, so long the warmly welcoming voice when you called the Secretariat, has moved to Lake Macquarie to support her husband’s career. Her replacement is **Mrs Pam Shepherd**, formerly of Airservices Australia.

‘The importance of absolute accuracy’. Anthropology and Native Title

Mary Edmunds

In 1897 and 1898, FJ Gillen wrote to Baldwin Spencer[1]:

> Now about the Luritja, my going out there at present is entirely out of the question, we are just about to establish the duplex system on the line and for the next three months I shall not be able to move off the Station – Martin will probably be in for Christmas and if he comes he will bring a Nigger from whom I hope to get definite information. I don’t expect to find anything akin to the Arunta system, what I do expect to find is that certain definite localities belong to certain families and that these families intermarry with the people of any locality outside their own boundaries (22nd Oct 1897).
>
> Apropos of Warramunga, Scott has been making some enquiries for me and while out some distance from Tennants Creek the blacks showed him a rockhole supposed to be permanent, in which young men are dipped either before or after they pass through the initiatory rites, this looks like the beginning of our baptismal rite by immersion and, feeling that it may lead to something important, I have given him a flood of questions to work out – I am inclined to think Kempes reply re Urrapunna is correct, it fits in with what my Urrapunna friend told me and I have so impressed Kempe with the importance of absolute accuracy that I don’t think he would have replied without being sure (Dec 3rd 1897).
>
> You’ll be disgusted to hear that one of my boys has been allowed to take a lubra without being subincised. This is the beginning of the decay of this rite, five years later our work could not have been done effectively for once they begin to drop the old Customs degeneration – true degeneration *from our, which is the proper point of view,* – rapidly follows (3rd April 1898).
>
> Why oh Why do you not send me some copies of the initiatory paper? Is it not procurable? I am very proud of that paper, it simply gallops over Roth of Qld whos detail is of the meagrest (April 17th 1898).

These four brief quotes from one of the most productive early partnerships in Australian anthropology encapsulate, perhaps, some of the key issues that have been and remain central to the practice of the discipline:

- the gathering of detailed ethnographic data;
- the reliance on closely observed and recorded detail and consistency as the basic test of accuracy;
- the critical but uneasy relationship between anthropologist and subject, demanding both closeness and distance;
- the constitution of an analysis that casts the beliefs and practices of indigenous peoples into the categories of a different intellectual tradition, while at the same time subjecting that very tradition to modifications that emerge from its engagement with the Other; and
- the proleptic view that sees change as 'degeneration' and loss of cultural integrity.

Contemporary anthropology has lost the academic certainty that informed the work of Spencer and Gillen. What it has retained is the intellectual and practical engagement with the beliefs and practices of indigenous Australian cultures, now very much in a dynamic tension with the ways in which those beliefs and practices are constructed and interpreted by the subjects – indigenous peoples – themselves. What it has regained, after a dalliance with various schools of abstract theorising, is a fresh realisation of the absolute centrality to the discipline, in both its practical and theoretical dimensions, of fine-grained ethnographic material.

The need for anthropological evidence in land claims under the Commonwealth *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* provided the first challenge and incentive. The common law recognition of native title in the High Court's 1992 *Mabo* decision and its enactment into legislation in the *Native Title Act 1993 (NTA)* have continued and reinforced this realisation and its consequent practice.

Neither the *Mabo* decision nor the *NTA* attempts to define native title as anything other than 'the communal, group or individual rights and interests of Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders in relation to land or waters', where the rights and interests are possessed 'under the traditional laws acknowledged, and the traditional customs observed, by the Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders' (*NTA* s223(1)). Native title itself, that is, is not a common law title, but a title recognised and protected by the common law. The definition of native title itself was, in the first instance, to be left to traditional law and custom.

Since the passing of the *NTA*, however, the implementation of these two propositions has brought them into increasing tension with each other. With these developments has come an increasing hegemony of legal discourse, with its associated inclusion of the discourse of rights and a passion to itemise, specify, categorise. When the *Native Title Bill* was in the process of being drafted in 1993, Federal Cabinet considered a proposal that a determination of native title should be broken down into a list of particular attributes[2]. This tick-list, developed by a lawyer with much experience of working for mining companies in Western Australia, reduced native title from a full possessory title to a series of rights each separable from the others: the right to hunt and fish, to forage, to hold ceremonies and so on.

In response, a major group of anthropologists wrote to the then Special Minister of State to express their concerns about the use of this model and to suggest an alternative (letter to the Hon Frank Walker, 26 August 1993). The incidents model disappeared from the *NTA*. It re-emerged in the gazetted Regulations.

In that letter, anthropologists touched on a number of issues that have subsequently become central to discussions about native title by both claimants and others:

- the diversity and dynamism of indigenous societies and therefore the need for claimants to demonstrate the continuing existence, not the content, of native title;
- that native title is about ownership and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander notions of ownership of the land are not fragmented into isolated attributes but incorporate a range of interrelated associations with the land which may or may not require physical presence;
- that boundaries between groups vary from reasonably specific in some areas to almost wholly permeable in others, with the right of owners to exclude others being not a clear-cut issue but an exercise based on social and ritual links that must be negotiated amongst the groups concerned; and
- that different groups own and exercise differential and often competing rights and responsibilities over land, with disputes arising routinely when such competing rights come into conflict.

In the processes put into place by the *NTA*, some of which will be significantly modified by the *Native Title Amendment Bill 1997 [No 2]*, a determination of native title that is mediated by the National Native

Title Tribunal is not by judicial decision but by agreement of all the parties. Unlike claims under the Northern Territory *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* 1976, it does not in principle demand supporting anthropological evidence. In practice, such evidence is increasingly required, often at the behest of State or Territory governments, to satisfy them that the claimants are the right people for the country claimed. This is particularly so where there are overlapping claims and the overlap is disputed, often on the basis, identified in the 1993 anthropologists' letter and subsequently[3], of differential and competing rights and responsibilities.

Disputes are also fostered, however, by a contradiction inherent in the *NTA* itself, in which individual rights are implicitly separated from, and therefore opposed to, the collective rights that define native title. Despite its fundamentally communal character, s61(1) of the Act allows an application by individuals claiming to hold native title. The result has been a fragmentation and proliferation of claims in which claimants themselves have often given priority to individual and family rights rather than to their membership in a broader land-based cultural group[4].

Native title, like land claims in the Northern Territory, has confronted claimants with their own interpretations of their 'traditional laws acknowledged', and their 'traditional customs'. It has confronted anthropologists, as the key to both theory and practice, with the re-emergence of accurate and detailed ethnographic research that is derived from active contemporary engagement with the claimant groups themselves and has to address the multiplicity of indigenous meanings. Interpretations will differ, particularly in relation to the meaning of change (as demonstrated most publicly in the Hindmarsh Island case). But such interpretations will remain subject to and tested by the quality and 'absolute accuracy' of the ethnography itself, a situation that continues to reflect, as with Spencer and Gillen, the dynamic relationships and tensions between the subjects, the researchers, and the academy.

Notes:

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Dr Mary Edmunds is a Member of the National Native Title Tribunal

The Agreement on Native Title compared with the Ten Point Plan

On 5 July 1998 the National Indigenous Working Group on Native title released the following statement. It may assist readers to find their way through the complexities of this issue.

'The Prime Minister's agreement with Senator Harradine on native title has been wrongly portrayed as a workable solution which is fair to indigenous peoples. That is not the case – in reality, this is still the unfair Ten Point Plan with some minor changes.

1 Ten Point Plan: Validation of illegal grants from 1.1.94-23.12.96

Did it go through? Yes – in full

What this means for indigenous people

- State Governments have been rewarded for illegally granting new interests in land without following the procedures of the Native Title Act.
- Where they have done this, native title will have been impaired or extinguished and native title holders will have to wait years for compensation.

How it should have been resolved?

- Agreements process for validation of major projects
- 'fast track' compensation for minor development
- application of non-extinguishment principles to validated acts

2 Ten Point Plan: Extinguishment of Native Title on so-called 'exclusive tenures'

Did it go through? Yes – except for 'crown to crown' grants, national parks and land held in trust for Aboriginal people, and the Government has agreed to disregard earlier grants of title to non-indigenous interests on vacant Crown land or reserves currently occupied by Aboriginal people.

What this means for indigenous people

- means native title has been wiped over large areas of the country in countless situations where a government has granted certain titles, even if the land has never been used for that purpose or the use stopped long ago.

- If native title is found by the courts to have survived on these tenures, the Government will be liable for compensation, but indigenous people will have lost their land.

How it should have been resolved?

- Government has listened to Aboriginal people in taking out Crown land, national parks and land now held by Aboriginal people from the schedule *but*
- Courts should determine where native title still survives (if Government had done this in 1993 with pastoral leases we would never have had the Wik decision – but that would have meant a huge compensation bill and in reality it amounts to legalised theft of people's land).

3 Ten Point Plan: Winding back native title for provision of Government Services

Did it go through? Yes.

What this means for indigenous people

- Governments can go ahead with any project they classify as providing a Government service
- Right to negotiate no longer applies and legal protection of native title is reduced.

How it should have been resolved?

- An effective right to negotiate should apply

4 Ten Point Plan: Upgrading pastoral leases

Did it go through? Yes – full primary production upgrades allowed, *but* instead of permanent extinguishment of inconsistent native title rights, the courts will decide if native title has been extinguished or can be revived.

What this means for indigenous people

- Allows sheep or cattle stations to be used for all kinds of new intensive agricultural activities that could impair or suppress native title – eg farming, horticulture, acquaculture – but with no right to negotiate for native title holders to protect their interests.
- Native title rights don't have to be considered
- The new arrangement applies whether or not a pastoralist previously had actually held rights to do the expanded range of activities

How it should have been resolved?

- Should have kept the Right to Negotiate so Aboriginal people can be involved in economic, cultural and social planning on what will happen on their traditional land.

5 Ten Point Plan: Limited Statutory Access Rights

Did it go through? Yes – *but* access will only be available to people who had access to their land at 23.12.96

What this means for indigenous people

- Arguably is of no net benefit, and will ratify unlawful acts wherever native title holders have wrongly been excluded from country covered by a pastoral lease.

How it should have been resolved?

- Senate amendments to ensure that people who have been locked out of their land would benefit from this provision should have been retained.

6 Ten Point Plan: Winding back native title rights in relation to future mining activity.

Did it go through?

- Yes - *but* although Government has removed right to negotiate in many cases there will be some consultation rights
- Higher registration test
- No right to negotiate on mineral exploration
- No right to negotiate if there is an ‘approved’ State or Territory scheme.

What this means for indigenous people

- Leaves protection of native title to the mercy of States and Territories
- States and Territories can set up their own regimes and eliminate the right to negotiate on pastoral leases, public purpose reserves and national parks – native title holders will only have a right to be consulted and less capacity to protect their land or culture from damaging aspects of development
- Right to negotiate only applies on vacant Crown Land which has never had any form of title issued – means right to negotiate eliminated over vast areas of Australia – leaving only a right to be ‘consulted’
- New registration test will make it more difficult for indigenous people to access ‘right to negotiate’ and consultation procedure.

How it should have been resolved?

- Indigenous people support a fair registration test but the one that has been adopted is far too harsh.
- The right to negotiate as it is presently in the Native Title Act should be retained.

7 Ten Point Plan: Compulsory acquisition of native title for Government and Commercial Development

Did it go through? Yes – same as above.

What this means for indigenous people

- Much the same as point 6 above.
- Is effectively compulsory acquisition of native title, but the right to negotiate will only apply on vacant Crown land.

How it should have been resolved?

- Same as above.

8 Ten Point Plan: Winding back native title re management of water resources and air space.

Did it go through? Yes

What this means for indigenous people

- There will be no Right to Negotiate
- There will be limited right to be consulted but gives people much less say over what is done

How it should have been resolved?

- The right to negotiate should apply equally over areas where native title survives, including waters.

9 Ten Point Plan: Harsher registration test and Sunset Clause re 'Management' of Claims

Did it go through? Yes

- Government's registration test has gone through except for a provision that native title holders may apply for orders to the court if their parents enjoyed access to the land.
- Sunset clause dropped.

What this means for indigenous people

- People who have been cut off from their traditional land will have to go to contested court proceedings with governments and miners to be registered as a native title claimant and will effectively have to prove their native title claim to be registered.

- This places many hurdles in front of indigenous people seeking to establish they are native title holders, and seeking protection of their native title
- Likely to cause development delays and reduce workability while people establish their right to be claimants
- Minister has greater powers to intervene and all Native Title Representative bodies will have to reapply for recognition, regardless of their performance or effectiveness – an administrative nightmare.

How it should have been resolved?

- Indigenous people support fair registration test. The test agreed by the Government and Senator Harradine is not a fair one.
- Native Title Representative Bodies should be supported and given appropriate statutory functions to manage claims – the Government has made some changes along these lines but these do not give the Representative bodies the tools to do the job properly.

10 Ten Point Plan: Land Use Agreements

Did it go through? Yes

What this means for indigenous people

- Indigenous people wanted inclusion of workable process for agreements and supported this being included.

How it should have been resolved?

There is general agreement about the process for agreements – this area is not controversial.'

The National Indigenous Working Group on Native Title can be contacted at PO Box 201, Deakin West, ACT 2600; Tel: 61 (2) 6234 3330 Fax 61 (2) 6282 4109.

Those who wish to pursue the implications of these decisions, particularly the legal aspects, could access the Law Report (ABC Radio National) of 14 July, a transcript of which may be found at www.abc.net.au/rn.

Ethical Australian Archaeology

Graeme K Ward

More than fifteen years ago, a meeting of Australian archaeologists in Hobart heard indigenous Tasmanians berate them for making ‘our heritage – your playground’. Ros Langford’s comments[1] revitalised debate within the discipline[2], for while they might have painted some unfairly, others might have felt themselves rightly targeted. A decade later, following sibling associations[3], the Australian Archaeological Association adopted a ‘Code of Ethics’[4]; members now acknowledge ‘the importance of indigenous cultural heritage . . . to the survival of indigenous cultures’ (Principle 1) and, *inter alia*, ‘. . . that the indigenous cultural heritage rightfully belongs to the indigenous descendants of that heritage . . .’ (Principle 5); rules of behaviour bind members: they ‘. . . shall negotiate with and obtain the informed consent of representatives authorised by the indigenous people whose cultural heritage is the subject of investigation’ (Rule 2).

Ethical research in indigenous studies reflects indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights. Internationally, the United Nations’ *Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (Article 12)[5] affirms the right of indigenous people to their cultural traditions, and to have any misappropriated cultural property returned to them. Article 29:

- Indigenous people are entitled to the recognition of full ownership, control and protection of their cultural and intellectual property.
- They have the right to special measures to control, develop and protect their sciences, technologies and cultural manifestations, including human and other generic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literature, designs and visual and performing arts.

Basic to ethical research in indigenous studies are informed and negotiated consent[6]. Such negotiation must consider the disadvantaged position of indigenous people, and how their participation might benefit them as well as the proponents of a research project. Informed consent of the people as a group, as well as that of individuals within that group, is crucial, because most indigenous knowledge is collectively owned[7]. Furthermore[8],

- Heritage can never be alienated, surrendered or sold, except for conditional use. Sharing therefore creates a relationship between the givers and receivers of knowledge. The givers retain the

> authority to ensure that knowledge is used properly and the receivers continue to recognise and repay the gift.

Funding for archaeological projects in Australia derives from three main sources: universities, the Australian Research Council (ARC), and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). Universities are implementing social science research ethics committees to assess proposals, requiring demonstration of informed consent, and of negotiation of appropriate arrangements regarding, for example, lodgement of artefacts and publication of results[9]. The ARC is considering a report[10] dealing with questions of protocols and codes of ethics, whose acceptance would influence the allocation of grants for research into and likely to affect indigenous Australia.

AIATSIS is a Commonwealth statutory authority whose primary function is '. . . to undertake and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies . . .'[11] It provides guidance toward 'ethical research' for researchers applying for support, requiring[12]:

- informed consent to the research by the individuals/community with whom or where research is to be carried out or by their representatives;
- benefit to the local community as well as to the broader community of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- acknowledgment of ongoing indigenous ownership of the cultural and intellectual property rights in the material on which the research is based;
- appropriate use of research results and/or publication of material as agreed with the community or community representatives.
- AIATSIS will not approve of research activities of researchers that might provide offence to indigenous people of the area, and further recognises that[13]:
- neither it as a corporate body nor any worker that it supports has any undeniable right to be given access to information about Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander life or culture;
- it is only with the co-operation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that it is able to fulfil its aim of pursuing research into Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultures and ensuring its documentation for future generations;

- it is the obligation of the intending researcher to convey to the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people concerned the purpose of the work and to obtain their agreement to it; and
- failure to respect Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander custom can disrupt the life of the communities within which the Institute is sponsoring research or curtail the researcher's work and hinder possible future research.

The Institute requires evidence of support and consent before any project is started, and that these matters are addressed: return of research results to communities; personal privacy of individuals involved in proposed research; involvement of and benefits to the community; payment of adequate compensation to indigenous co-workers, assistants and subjects of the research working away from normal personal and community activities; the dangers of creating circumstances where exploitation of an economic, cultural or sexual nature can occur. Cultural and intellectual property rights are addressed in detail, acknowledging ownership by indigenous people of rights in the material on which the research is based: these rights remain with the indigenous owners, and the researcher is the owner of the copyright in the research data where these are used for research purposes and not for profit; AIATSIS holds a non-exclusive royalty-free, perpetual licence to use the research material for purposes detailed in the Grant Agreement.

It is Institute policy that, when research has been completed, the relevant community and individuals should be informed, clearly and intelligibly, of the results, and that copies of reports should be returned to the community, as well as research materials being deposited with the Institute’s collections, protected from improper access and use.

Younger researchers and archaeologists who have learnt the benefits of working with indigenous Australians appear to have no difficulties in accepting these requirements. Applications for support of archaeological research projects continue to be received by the Institute in significant numbers[14]; all but a small minority meet ethical and scholarship requirements.

While major funding agencies are enforcing ethical practice in indigenous research, indigenous community organisations are formalising permissions and research protocols by developing contracts for the approval and supervision of research projects conducted by outsiders. An example is that contract used by the Pitjantjatjara Women’s Council with researchers wishing to work with its members on the Pitjantjatjara Lands[15]; in exchange for Anangu Pitjantjatjara

(AP) permitting a project being undertaken, the Researcher agrees to comply ‘with any reasonable direction that may from time to time be given by the Executive of the Women’s Council’ (Condition 2a), and to promote ‘. . . the interests of AP and the Women's Council in completing the research project’. A further ten sections deal systematically with restrictions (both during and after the project) on divulging of information collected during the research that might adversely affect the AP; ownership by AP of research records; sharing by the researcher and AP of copyright in a thesis resulting from the research project, and requirements for reporting. The researcher is required (3d) to submit a draft of research to the Executive of the Women’s Council prior to its finalisation, not submit a thesis without prior written consent, and to have consulted with the Aboriginal informants ‘. . . to identify any sensitive and/or restricted material and to determine the conditions of access to or any restrictions on the use of the material . . .’, and to ensure that the university is able to deal with any restricted materials in a report. The remaining sections cover misconduct by the researcher, and the Women’s Council’s right to terminate the agreement; the necessity of the researcher to comply with various statutes, and regulations in force on the Pitjantjatjara lands; with matters of jurisdiction; and with arbitration of any dispute[16].

Some academic researchers have found it desirable to formalise their co-operation with an indigenous community in contractual form. In an agreement made between a land council and University of New England researchers in respect of intellectual property and confidentiality for an ARC-supported archaeological project in northern New South Wales, the contract specified ‘. . . exchange of Information between the parties and the creation of Information and Intellectual Property of commercial value’[17]. It was agreed that ownership and use of intellectual property would be determined in accordance terms and conditions, defining ‘Information’ and ‘Intellectual Property’ (‘. . . means and includes all copyright including future copyright . . . and all other intellectual property as defined in Article 2 of the convention of 1967 establishing the World Intellectual Property Organisation’). It dealt with disclosure of information exchanged; defined confidential information; agreed that each party is entitled to publish results of the project with prior written consent of the other party (‘not to be unreasonably withheld’); further agreement by others engaged in the project about these matters; procedures for the resolution of any disputes; binding mediation and/or arbitration (by the Australian Commercial Disputes Centre, Sydney); and termination and variation of the agreement.

The project was more of a collaborative one than the formal agreement would suggest, with productive goodwill on both sides. That such collaboration is becoming the norm in Australian archaeological research was revealed in a series of research seminars, entitled ‘Meanings of Archaeology’, held at AIATSIS in the second half of 1997. Two examples will suffice to illustrate their nature:

The first, ‘Ownership and protection of traditional Ngarinyin places in the western Kimberley’ was given to a discussion of co-operative research between members of the Kamali Land Council, Derby, and a doctoral candidate at the University of Sydney. The late David Mowaljarlai[18], along with other traditional owners, sought to protect traditional Ngarinyin places in the western Kimberley; Anthony Redmond worked with the Council for an extended period, collecting material for his dissertation and assisting in development of various protection initiatives, including AIATSIS-funded applied survey research in the Prince Regent region, and an exhibition of traditional knowledge of sites and a film[19] in Paris that they hope will promote international initiatives to recognise Ngarinyin heritage.

The second, ‘The Quandamooka heritage and cultural resource management project: an archaeologist’s and a Koenpul’s view’ was jointly presented by Dr Annie Ross of the University of Queensland and Mr Shane Coghill, representative of the Quandamooka Aboriginal Land Council of Stradbroke Island. The Land Council requested assistance from archaeologists in mapping its country; the work resulted in considerable collaboration between Dr Ross and the Quandamooka community with great benefit to both parties, community members participating not only in the fieldwork component but also spending many hours in the archaeological laboratories at the University of Queensland dealing with the minutiae of sorting and classifying excavated materials; Mr Coghill formally enrolled in classes to pursue his archaeological interests.

It is not so long since one heard despairing remarks from academic archaeologists (and fieldworkers in other disciplines) about restrictions of their ‘right’ to conduct research there or anywhere, and who were going to transfer their interests to historic archaeology or beyond Australia. Consulting archaeologists, especially those liaising between indigenous and commercial interests knew that this was not true. Those students and staff who have shared their plans with indigenous communities in those areas where they want to conduct fieldwork, or who have responded positively to initiatives from communities themselves, and who have honestly negotiated informed consent to their projects, have also found otherwise[20]. Their work has benefited from the consultation and co-operative endeavour inherent in the discarding of colonialist models and acceptance of ethical paradigms of the research process. The Institute is actively encouraging such research[21], and its library is filling with reports of collaborative projects. Well-trained indigenous researchers are making their marks (and seem better able than many of their colleagues to facilitate indigenous conceptualisations, rather than imposing alien constructions, of the past). Indigenous community organisations are overseeing ethical practice through imposition of contracts, and granting agencies are failing to fund projects without evidence of ethically-obtained community support.

Notes:

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[1] Langford, Rosalind F (1983), ‘Our heritage - your playground’. *Australian Archaeology* 16: 1-10.

[2] Exemplified by papers edited by McBryde, Isabel (1985), *Who Owns the Past?* Oxford University Press: Melbourne. For discussions from the present decade and from various perspectives, see, for example, Lahn, Julie (1996), ‘Dressing up the dead: archaeology, the Kow Swamp remains and some related problems with heritage management’, in Smith, Laurajane & Clarke, Anne (eds), *Issues in Management Archaeology*. Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Queensland, Brisbane (Tempus 6): 25-31; Murray, Tim (1996), ‘Aborigines, archaeology and Australian heritage’, *Meanjin* 55: 725-735.

[3] McBryde, I (1992), ‘The past as a symbol of identity’, *Antiquity* 66: 261-266.

[4] Anon (1994) Code of Ethics of the Australian Archaeological Association (Members’ obligations to Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people). *Australian Archaeology* 39: 129. Also: Anon (1991), First code of ethics on members’ obligations to indigenous peoples [and] The Vermillion Accord [on] human remains. *World Archaeological Bulletin* 5: 21-23. In some jurisdictions, these concepts are reflected in heritage statutes and management protocols; eg Boyd, William E & and Ward, Graeme K, ‘Aboriginal heritage and visitor management’ in *Heritage Management in New Zealand and Australia*. Oxford University Press: Auckland: 103-118; also initiative of Department of Communication and the Arts, the Australian Heritage Commission and AIATSIS: [Draft] *Guidelines for the Management of Indigenous Heritage Places*. Indigenous Cultural Heritage Program, Department of Communication and the Arts, Canberra.

[5] Anon (199?4), *Ethical Guidelines for International Comparative Social Science Research in the Framework of Most* [on line]. MOST Secretariat, UNESCO, Paris. [http://www.unesco.org/most/ethical.htm]

[6] Consent is informed when it is given by a person who understands the purpose and nature of the study, what participation in the study requires a person to do

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and to risk, and what benefits are intended to result from the study (definition of The Council of International Organizations for Medical Sciences).

[7] Indigenous Australian leaders are well aware of these initiatives; eg Michael Dodson's address to 'Conference on Human Genetics: Diversity and Disease', Fremantle, July 1997: *Indigenous social and ethical issues: control of research and sharing of benefits*. Also Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991), *Final report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (eleven volumes). Australian Government Publishing Service: Canberra.

[8] Daes, Erica-Irene (1993), *Discrimination Against Indigenous Peoples, Study on the protection of the cultural and intellectual property of indigenous peoples*. Paper presented to 45th session of the Commission on Human Rights, Economic and Social Council, United Nations, 1993: (9).

[9] As examples of tertiary institution Codes of Ethics relating to indigenous research, see:

Aboriginal Research Centre, Faculty of Aboriginal and Islander Studies, University of South Australia (1993), *Ethics in Aboriginal Research*, Adelaide.

Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation, Research and Development. (1995), (Draft) *Consultation Paper. Guidelines on Research Ethics Regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural, Social, Intellectual and Spiritual Property*. James Cook University of North Queensland, Townsville.

Centre for Indigenous Natural and Cultural Resource Management (1997). Guiding principles for ethics policies and research protocols, in *A Handbook*. CINCRM, Northern Territory University, Casuarina: 10-21

Jumbunna Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies, Education and Research (1995), *Principles of Community Action Research and Indigenous Research Ethics*. University of Technology, Sydney.

North Australia Research Unit (1993), *Advice on Field Work in Northern Australia and on Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*. The Australian National University, Darwin.

The Koori Centre (1993), *Principles and Procedures for the Conduct of Research*. Aboriginal Education, University of Sydney, Sydney.

[10] AIATSIS (1998), *Research of Interest to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: Stage 2. Final Report to Australian Research Council.*

[11] *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989* (Part 3 Section 5); also *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies 1998-2000 Corporate Plan*. AIATSIS, Canberra (1998). URL: http://www.aiatsis.gov.au.

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[12] 'Information for applicants' in *Research Grants Program 1998*, AIATSIS, Canberra: 27-36.

[13] *ibid*.

[14] In the last grant round, archaeological projects (including site recording, protection of rock markings, cultural material studies, etc) comprised about a quarter of all applications.

[15] [extract from] *Agreement between Anangu Pitjantjatjara and [a researcher].*

[16] Also: Anon (1988), *Research policy as adopted by Tangentyere Council's Executive on 15 March 1988*. Tangentyere Council Inc, Alice Springs; Anon (1992), 'Control of Cultural Material' in *Central Land Council Annual Report 1991-92*. Central Land Council, Alice Springs: 34-35; Anon (1994), *Guidelines for Researchers Wishing to Work with the Kalkadoon Tribal Council*. The Kalkadoon Tribal Council, Mt Isa; Anon (1995), Indigenous Research Ethics Conference. *Torres News* 6 (12 October): 1, 3, 9.

[17] Balme, J and Beck, W, *ARC Collaborative Project. Intellectual Property and Confidentiality Agreement.*

[18] D Mowaljarlai OAM 1925-1997. *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 1997/2: 78-84.

[19] Doring, Jeff / Pathway Project (1997), *Le chemin secret des Ngarinyin du nord-ouest australien*. Pathway Project and Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris.

[20] Examples of such projects are among papers edited by Davidson, Iain, Lovell-Jones, Christine and Bancroft, Robyne (1995), *Archaeologists and Aborigines Working Together.* University of New England Press: Armidale.

[21] In the most recent grant rounds, to select two examples, AIATSIS has funded a scientific dating investigation of rock markings in central Queensland at the request of the traditional custodians, and a preliminary fieldtrip to the Gulf country by a post-doctoral scholar to consult with traditional owners before commencing substantive fieldwork.

Dr Graeme K Ward is Research Fellow in the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

The National Museum of Australia

Bill Jonas

The first calls in Australia for the equivalent of a national museum were made in the 1820s. Several states then built what they called national museums in both the previous and the present centuries, but it was not until 1980 that Federal legislation was passed to establish the National Museum of Australia. An Interim Council was appointed shortly afterwards to prepare plans for the development of the National Museum in Canberra and that Council reported in 1982 with a proposal for an 88 hectare site on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin at Yarramundi. Gazettal of the Yarramundi site followed, permanent storage space for the Museum's collections was established at Mitchell, a temporary administrative headquarters and visitor centre was built at Yarramundi, and objects were purchased and acquired in other ways for the collections. However, different governments, economic vagaries and fluctuations in good will towards the National Museum concept and proposal resulted in the continual deferral of construction of any national showcase to house the Museum and its Canberra activities. The National Museum established and maintained a profile, at least in the museum community, by constructing and touring acclaimed exhibitions and by developing the award-winning Australian Museums On Line Internet program.

In December 1996 the recently elected Prime Minister John Howard committed his Government to building the National Museum on Acton Peninsula (rather than at Yarramundi) and to co-locate with it a new home for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). Funds for the project were identified as part of the Federation Fund announced in the May 1997 Budget Speech. Since then the government of the Australian Capital Territory has joined the project with promise of construction of a cultural centre for the ACT's indigenous communities.

An international competition held in 1997 resulted in the Melbourne firm of Ashton Raggett McDougall being selected as the winning architectural designers and they have teamed up with Canberra architects Robert Peck von Hartel Trethowan to be the architects for the project. The Public Works Committee of Parliament has now given approval for the project to go ahead and construction is expected to commence in October 1998.

In the past many national museums existed to bring the world to their nations. Vast collections of the exotic 'other' were amassed and a prime function of this type of museum was to display these collections, usually in some taxonomic framework. Modern museums tend to reverse this order and instead take their nation to the world. Collections are used to tell the histories which the museums present and modern technology plays a large part in enhancing the story telling.

The National Museum of Australia fits into this latter category and will be telling the stories of Australia, and presenting Australian experiences and issues, utilising its own and borrowed collections and integrating into the process all of the resources which film, video, the Internet, broadcast facilities and live performances can bring to bear. Three over-arching mega-themes of social history, indigenous cultures and peoples' relationships with the land are being combined into more integrative themes of land, people and nation, and within these themes story lines and integrated experiences are being explored. The Museum is committed to the best quality research with ideas papers commissioned, and ideas summits already held, involving leading academics, museologists, writers and others who are contributing to the development of appropriate, relevant and accurate exhibitions.

Eleven years as a Commissioner (co-opted and appointed) with the Australian Heritage Commission and, more recently, several years chairing the ACT Heritage Council have instilled in me the value of preserving those places and those aspects of material culture which are important to present and future generations. Now, as Director of the National Museum, I regard being able to present a history of Australia through the objects which have survived from the past a great challenge and a great privilege.

My Aboriginal heritage is also very dear to me and the National Museum will present a wonderful opportunity to present indigenous histories and cultures in ways which allow indigenous voices to be heard.

My background as a geographer is also being put to good use in this project. For many of the years during which I studied and taught geography a loose definition of it as a discipline was the study of relationships between people and the environment, and this is our third mega-theme.

Of course, Australia does not have a white history isolated from a separate black past and a third and separate story of people and the land. I believe that some of the best stories which the Museum has to tell will be based on an integration of these themes. That is the reality of our past and it is one of the main reasons we have chosen to explore people, land and nation. But even so, the search for true integration is a difficult one and here, as elsewhere, the crossing, blurring and even removal of disciplinary boundaries is for many a hard task. I believe that appropriate and sensitive use of new technologies will assist us in this aspect of our work.

The National Museum is being co-located with the world famous AIATSIS and will be close neighbours with the equally prestigious Australian National University and CSIRO. The National Film and Sound Archive is just up the road and the Academies of Humanities, Science and Social Sciences are all nearby. I am delighted to say that the National Museum has already established formal and informal links with these institutions. These links will intensify as the project comes to fruition and we build a National Museum which, in the words of that remarkable museologist Elaine Gurian, is truly a safe place for dangerous ideas.

Dr William Jonas is Director of The National Museum of Australia.

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Deadline for the next issue is 1 October 1998

The Development of Aboriginal Radio and Television in Central Australia.

Freda Glynn and Philip Batty

In January 1980, a meeting of the Aboriginal community of Alice Springs was called to discuss the forthcoming launch of the national Australian communications satellite, AUSSAT. The meeting organisers, John Macumba, Philip Batty and Freda Glynn, were concerned about the possible cultural impact that this new telecommunications technology might have on local Aboriginal societies.

Our concerns seemed, at the time, to be reasonably justified. The forthcoming satellite service was due to deliver an avalanche of national and international television programming not only into Alice Springs (then with a population of 11,000), but into every remote region in the country, including hundreds of isolated Aboriginal communities, many of which did not possess even a regular telephone service.

Apart from these broader concerns, the realities of life in central Australia at that time made the need for some form of Aboriginal participation in the media, and therefore a degree of leverage over their own media representations, a necessity. In 1980, slightly more than fifty per cent of the region's population was Aboriginal and the majority of these people spoke an Aboriginal language as a mother tongue[1]. The Aboriginal influence on the local political, social and economic climate had become considerable since the mid 1970s. Aboriginal land holdings, granted under the 1976 *Northern Territory Lands Right Act*, had put much of central Australia under a measure Aboriginal control and twenty to thirty percent of the centre's economy was infused with government funding for the administration and management of Aboriginal Affairs[2]. Again, the broad presence of Aboriginal people in the local socio-economic fabric made their complete lack of involvement in the local media glaringly apparent, particularly given that stories about Aboriginal substance abuse, crime, alcoholism, 'land grabs' and corruption formed the staple diet of the local press, which frequently paid little respect to journalistic ethics.

Further, one of the main rationales for the launch of the satellite was that it would make the 'full range of communications facilities available to all Australians'[3]. But as we pointed out, the government's own statistics indicated that the most 'communications poor' people in the nation were traditional Aboriginals.

At our initial meeting, we called for the direct and continuing involvement of the Aboriginal population in the planned deployment of AUSSAT, particularly in the remote regions of Australia.

In brief terms, the arguments we put forward at the time centred around the following proposals; (i) that whenever new communications media had been introduced into other traditional societies, there had always been an influence on the social political and cultural fabric of that society, (ii) that while one could argue about the extent, nature, and effect of this influence, the fact that there *was* an influence, could not be denied, (iii) that in the situation where the control of communications technology was in the hands of a people of an entirely different cultural milieu from that of the local consumers of that technology, then the influence on the local community was even greater, if not devastating, (iv) that in regard to the situation in central Australia, where there was a large Aboriginal population, the development of an *awareness* of the influence of media technologies could only have meaning if accompanied by positive *actions* that grew out of this awareness, and (v) that for such actions to succeed at all they must take the form of a ‘combative engagement’ with the actual technology of communications media itself.

In all our public debates, we argued above all that an ‘independent’ organisation, ‘controlled’ by local Aboriginal people, be established, and that such an organisation should work towards establishing Aboriginal television and broadcasting services in Alice Springs and eventually, in all the remote regions of Australia.

There were however, a few impediments to this ambitious plan. Firstly, there were no precedents to guide us. In 1980, there were no Aboriginal media organisations in existence, anywhere in Australia. There were no government or private funding programs to assist Aboriginals in establishing their own broadcasting facilities. There were certainly no radio or TV stations controlled by Aboriginal groups. Not even the government-funded Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) had any kind of formal involvement with the Aboriginal community.

Nevertheless, by 1989, just nine years after the initial meeting in Alice Springs, we had succeeded (with the help of many others along the way) in creating the envisaged Aboriginal organisation which operated (and still does) a 24-hour satellite service carrying Aboriginal television and radio programs across an area the size of western Europe. The service continues to cover four states and reaches almost all the isolated Aboriginal communities in Australia. This organisation was called and still remains, the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, or

CAAMA, based in Alice Springs. CAAMA's Board of Management is composed entirely of Aboriginal people (as is required by its constitution) who are directly elected from the all-Aboriginal membership, which is drawn from the local Aboriginal community.

In the months following the creation of CAAMA, an intensive lobbying campaign was mounted by supporters and members of the organisation, funded largely through donations. Ministers were lobbied in Canberra and tentative promises of support received, the ABC's Director of Corporate Affairs and Controller of Radio Resources visited Alice Springs and offered CAAMA the use of the ABC's local production and office facilities, and a little later, a contract to supply the ABC with radio programming (to be broadcast through the local ABC station in Alice Springs, 8AL). Most significantly, a body known as the National ABC Management Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Broadcasting was established to produce the first ABC policy on Aboriginal issues.

By the end of 1981 we had created a further precedent. For the first time, radio programs presented in Aboriginal languages went to air on a daily basis. The programs were presented in the three main Aboriginal language groups of central Australia – Arandic, Western Desert and Warlpiri – as well as English. All programs were produced in the ABC studios of Alice Springs with the assistance of local Aboriginal language speakers. A popular request program known as the Greenbush Show developed into a public news and message service for prisoners and their families.

The first moves made towards securing an independent licence for CAAMA, as well as a serious involvement in the forthcoming satellite service, came in 1981 and negotiations with the ABC produced a commitment to provide substantial time to CAAMA on the ABC's new shortwave transmission service. These arrangements were to form the basis for the future use, by a number of other Aboriginal broadcasters in other parts of the country, of the ABC's shortwave system. In 1983 CAAMA (which by this stage was becoming relatively well known on a national basis), passed four more significant milestones: a three volume radio broadcasting licence application was presented to the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (to establish an Aboriginal radio broadcasting network composed of four transmission sites, fed terrestrially from Alice Springs); we organised a joint meeting of all relevant state and federal funding bodies in Alice Springs to discuss the establishment of the first Aboriginal television and video production centre; and a wide ranging, two year oral history project was initiated.

At the end of this year, CAAMA engaged a group of educational consultants to produce a feasibility study on the possible ways in which AUSSAT could be used to provide distance education for Aboriginal people. The study was completed some eighteen months later and was used as a basis for various experiments in the area of Aboriginal distance education.

The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (now the Australian Broadcasting Authority), finally awarded CAAMA a full radio broadcasting licence in September, 1984 and in April 1985, the CAAMA radio network went to air. 8KIN Network, as it became known, was made up of four inter-linked radio broadcasting transmitters, encompassing an area of many thousands of square kilometres. In its initial stages, the network broadcast over 60 per cent of its spoken word material in local Aboriginal languages. We also instituted a network rule that regulated the musical content of the service. According to this rule, at least 50 per cent of all the musical content had to be Aboriginal. At the time, there was very little pre-recorded Aboriginal music available, so in order to fulfil the 50 per cent rule, great effort was put into recording and broadcasting local Aboriginal musicians. Perhaps one of the most successful radio projects initiated at this time was the educational pilot program called ‘Bushfire Radio’. It was developed in conjunction with the Northern Territory Education Department and was directed at Aboriginal primary school children living in remote Aboriginal communities throughout central Australia. It was presented by a variety of fictional characters who were all multi-lingual with the main educational emphasis on oral English and ‘life skills’.

By late 1984, the new federal Labor Minister for Communications, had decided that the satellite transponders set aside for non-government television broadcasting, should be licensed to commercial television companies only.

This, in our opinion, was perhaps the worst single decision the Federal Australian Government made in a long history of bad decision-making in relation to the development of the national satellite. It could have easily configured the satellite service, both in a technical and regulatory sense, so as to accommodate both the commercial and public users. Certainly, this decision had a dramatic effect on the future direction of CAAMA.

We now found ourselves in an extremely difficult position; CAAMA did not want to operate a commercial television service; this ran counter to the organisation’s general purpose and aims. However, there seemed little choice; access to AUSSAT depended on going commercial.

We created a commercial company, (on paper) known as Imparja Television Pty Ltd as the vehicle for the application. We planned to devote substantial resources to the production of locally made programming for the Aboriginal population, which represented 38 per cent of the total potential audience. There was to be a daily news segment, broadcast in English and the three major languages of central Australia, similar to the news program on the 8KIN network. At a later date, this news program would be presented in the other Aboriginal languages spoken in the Northern Territory. Special programs for particular Aboriginal communities were to be produced on a regular basis. A carefully devised educational program would be developed in association with the education department, providing a comprehensive ‘school of the air’ for Aboriginal people of an ages. Aboriginal musical segments, documentaries, live debates, and other specialist material was also proposed.

Given the unavoidable reality that locally made television is generally expensive to make, and conversely, commercial network fare is cheap to buy, we were proposing to broadcast only three hours per week of locally produced Aboriginal programs, with the rest of the line-up being primarily made up of commercial material ‘stripped’ off the satellite, mixed with ‘quality’ documentary programs bought directly from independent suppliers. The other problem – as it turned out – was that while the commercial material would attract advertisers, the Aboriginal programs could not attract any advertisers, despite our best efforts.

Fortunately for CAAMA, the federal government had just created the Australian Bi-Centennial Authority. The ABA was given a substantial budget to fund the celebrations, and there was quite a lot of money set aside for Aboriginal groups.

CAAMA mounted an intensive campaign of lobbying and fundraising and after a protracted hearing (on and off, lasting 12 months), the Tribunal concluded that CAAMA should be awarded the licence, due to its superior programming proposals, particularly in relation to the Aboriginal audience.

This represented a great achievement for CAAMA and the Aboriginal people of Australia in general. They had won the right to deliver both radio and television programming to every remote Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory and South Australia, as well as the relatively large outback towns of Alice Springs, Catherine, Tennant

Creek, and Coober Pedy. Indeed, CAAMA's new broadcast service area was home to the majority of Aboriginal groups still living a semi-traditional lifestyle. It also contained most of the remaining Aboriginal languages still spoken in Australia. All this offered an enormous opportunity to develop the kinds of programs we had been advocating since the inception of CAAMA in 1980.

Less than eighteen months later, the CAAMA-owned satellite service, Imparja Television, went to air, the first and still the only Aboriginal owned television network in Australia.

From 1988 through to the present, CAAMA went on to expand and grow at a rapid pace; a three year training program involving over forty Aboriginal media cadets was completed; the first Aboriginal-owned recording company and record label featuring Aboriginal music was created, (CAAMA Music); a retail business to sell Aboriginal arts and crafts was established (CAAMA Shops), and the first Aboriginal television production company (CAAMA Productions), came into existence.

Today the CAAMA Group, as it is now known, employs over 120 staff and has an annual turnover of approximately $7.0 million of both commercial and government income, and is responsible for the transmission of well over 130 hours of radio and television programs per week, reaching many hundreds of small and large communities scattered throughout the Australian outback.

However, there can be little doubt that much of what we set out to accomplish, indeed, some of the most fundamental aims of our original project, have not eventuated in the way we originally envisaged, although much else besides has. The emphasis on the provision of radio and television programs in Aboriginal languages has now been, more or less, reduced to the symbolic. While CAAMA's radio network, 8KIN, did manage to sustain a high level of radio programming in local languages – up to 60 per cent – in its early stages of development, this has faded to less than 10 per cent, and mostly in the form of brief announcements between musical items. As a result, more than ninety percent of programming is now in English, despite the reality that in central Australia, the majority of local Aboriginal people continue to speak an Aboriginal language as a mother tongue. Imparja Television has a similar record. Although its television programs do indeed reach a majority of remote Aboriginal communities in Australia, where local Aboriginal languages still predominate, it produces a minuscule amount of programming in such languages (less than 1 per cent of its entire broadcasting output), and in almost ten years of operations it has not increased its original budget for this production. In fact, any kind of programming produced specifically for the Aboriginal audience is now almost non-existent. In its current program schedule, Imparja essentially delivers a staple diet of commercial television, much of it American, into these same communities, and – it must be said – such programming has proved to be popular with the Aboriginal viewing audience, as it has elsewhere in the world. In the field of educational radio and television – perhaps our most important original objective – very little of value has developed, despite the feasibility studies and pilot programs produced in an earlier era. This is not because of any improvement in the educational standards of Aboriginal people in central Australia; indeed, recent analysis tends to indicate that the level of education for children in remote Australia is still extremely poor. Another central aim, the production of a regular English news service (both for television and radio) that would both represent the views of Aboriginal people and be of general interest to the Aboriginal community, has been less than successful. While, again, this kind of news segment has operated in fits and starts on CAAMA’s radio service, Imparja has for a long time simply taken its news from existing commercial television networks and inserted a limited amount of locally made news which is directed not specifically at the Aboriginal community, but at the broader audience. Further, many of the key managerial and production staff positions continue to be occupied by non-Aboriginal people.

Essentially, it is a problem to do with economics; it is unavoidable that local programming is far more expensive to make than imported, or ‘off the shelf material – no matter who controls a local television service.

Having catalogued the disappointments, we can also point to the successes of CAAMA. The sheer fact of owning and operating a radio and television service, regardless of what it actually does, has allowed many Aboriginal people to gain experience, training, and employment in the Australian film and television industry – something that was completely unavailable before 1980. Aboriginal producers, announcers, administrators, camera operators, technicians, editors and directors continue to emerge from CAAMA. In a similar vein, CAAMA had the effect of forcing the Australian media industry to include the Aboriginal population in its corporate thinking. The ABC, for example, were forced to institute wide-ranging policies that created extensive employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal people. The ABC also launched a national Aboriginal current affairs TV program available in every household in Australia. The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal introduced measures that would ensure that new commercial satellite TV operators would provide a level of Aboriginal programming. There can also be no doubt that it was the pioneering work of CAAMA that helped precipitate the establishment of Aboriginal-owned radio stations in many regional centres and the installation of more than 100 low powered radio/stations in remote communities under the Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme[4]. One other area in which CAAMA has played a leading role is in the recording, production and distribution of contemporary Aboriginal music. Today CAAMA regularly records and distributes a plethora of contemporary Aboriginal music, some of which has gained national prominence.

Any attempt to ‘explain’ the complex development of CAAMA can only occur through a detailed examination of the multiplicity of historically contingent and specific factors that influenced its growth and outcomes. Among these were: the nature of communications technology itself and the way its material configuration determines its usage and reception; the way in which such technologies are deployed according to intersecting economic, political and cultural requirements, all of which operate through a far from neutral set of power/knowledge relations; the haphazard and unstable nature of governmental policy and the way in which it will effect, and be effected by arbitrary events as they unfold; the almost innate economic and historically determined constraints that govern the way in which a television or radio station will operate, particularly in relation to the costs of programming production and transmission which apply to both ‘commercial’ and ‘publicly funded’ services across the world; the interaction and influence of particular agents or personalities and the way in which they both act upon and are acted upon, by a complex field of social relations; the effects of theoretical and political orthodoxies; and the intersecting complexities of local demography and geography.

From the early 1970s, a sea-change in the administration of Aboriginal affairs began to occur. There was a partial and sometimes, wholesale, transfer of services such as Aboriginal health, housing, community administration, and education out of state and federal departments and into Aboriginal ‘controlled’ organisations. But these organisations were generally only given their new responsibilities if they were prepared to become incorporated under the federal *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act* (passed in 1976), or similar state legislation, including specific government statutes. Such legislation was generally hailed as an ‘enlightened’ means by which Aboriginal people could ‘. . . manage their own affairs . . . set their own goals . . . and choose [their own] lifestyle . . .’[5]. But, like any legislation dealing with incorporation, these acts strictly determined the rules by which the new 'independent' Aboriginal organisations would operate, including 'Rights of Members . . . Rules of Incorporation . . . Eligibility of Membership . . . Audit of Records . . . Investigation by Registrar . . . Offences . . . Entry on Premises . . .' and so on[6]. If any of these rules were broken or disregarded the legislation also allowed for direct ministerial intervention. Direct government funding of most of these organisations also gave the state a large degree of leverage. The contradiction here is obvious; if Aboriginal people are considered to be Australian citizens, and therefore able to pursue and determine their own lives like all other Australians, why did they need a special set of legislative rules to both encourage and govern this new move to 'self-determination'. By the late 1980s there were over two thousand organisations incorporated in this way, forming a comparatively large administrative network, which in effect became a 'second tier' of government which continues to administer and service the Aboriginal population.

Far from the emergence of a 'self-determining' indigenous community, there has in fact been an enormous intensification of government administration and regulation of this population during the past twenty years. It is within this context, a discursive explosion in the administration of the 'indigenous subject', that CAAMA found its emergence, not in any real form of 'resistance against cultural and media imperialism'. We would suggest that the more CAAMA represented itself as an agent of 'resistance', as a shining example of 'Aboriginal self-determination', the more it conformed to, and legitimated, government policy and as a result, the more government funding and regulatory support it received. The dilemma is not one that is easily resolved, in theory or in practice.

Notes:

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[1] See the Institute of Aboriginal Development (1988), *Aboriginal Languages of Central Australia*, Institute of Aboriginal Development: Alice Springs.

[2] See Crough, G (1986), *Aboriginal Economic Development in Central Australia*, Tangantyre Council: Alice Springs.

[3] Department of Post and Telecommunications (1980), Press Release, May.

[4] The Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme, or BRACS, was initiated by the federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs in the late 1980s and essentially entailed the installation into Aboriginal communities, of small transportable units consisting of two low-powered transmitters, one for radio and the other for television, and domestic equipment for the production of local television and radio programs. There

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is also a small satellite receiving dish that allows for the re-broadcast of commercial and public radio and TV programming available off the satellite.

[5] Department of Aboriginal Affairs (Australia) (1976), Department of Aboriginal Affairs *Annual Report* 1975-76, AGPS: Canberra: 1.

[6] Australian Parliament (1976), *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976*, AGPS: Canberra: i-ii.

Freda Glynn and Philip Batty were two of the three organisers who set up CAAMA in 1980 and worked for that organisation until 1992. Because space did not allow full reproduction, this article is a heavily edited version of a paper presented on behalf of the Academy at the XIIth General Conference of the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils in Beijing in late 1997. Focus in this edited version is on the actual development of the CAAMA Group. The theoretical arguments used by the authors will be taken up in the next issue of the Newsletter on 'Globalisation', in which Dr Jeremy Beckett will consider the question of the 'indigenous subject'.

Academy News

Three Fellows were admitted to the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours list last month. They are:

■ *Professor Don Aitkin*, Vice-Chancellor at the University of Canberra, who has been made an Officer in the General Division (AO) for service to higher education and to the community as a scholar, writer, teacher, mentor and leader in the Australian universities sector.

■ *Professor Allan Martin*, who has been made a Member in the General Division (AM) for service in the field of Australian historiography as a teacher, scholar and biographer and as Foundation Professor of the History Department at La Trobe University.

■ *Emeritus Professor Robert Smith*, who has been made a Member in the General Division (AM) for service to the advancement of tertiary education, particularly through the Australian Education Office in North America, the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, the University of New England and the University of Western Australia, and to geography.

■ *Emeritus Professor Jerzy Zubrzycki* was awarded the degree Doctor of the University *honoris causa* by the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan on 4 May. The Adam Mickiewicz University, named for Poland's great Romantic poet, is the second oldest in Poland. Its origin was the Poznan Academy of the Humanities established in the early seventeeth century.

■ The National Academies Forum and the National Library of Australia are jointly sponsoring a conference **Malthus and His Legacy: 200 years of the Population Debate** on 17-18 September, to be held at the National Library in Canberra (see details at the end of this section).

Monash University Faculty of Arts **Visiting Scholar Scheme** 1998-1999. Applications are invited from outstanding researchers in the field of arts to work collaboratively with Monash University academics. Funding is available for travel and rental support for up to three months. Further information and application forms: Chris Wood, Administrative Officer (Research). Tel 03 9905 9211 or the Graduate Studies Office Tel 03 9905 2116.

Professor Geoffrey Serle AO, former General Editor, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* died in Melbourne in April.

His obituary will appear in the *Annual Report*.

Academy Projects

Creating Unequal Futures?

On Friday 12 June the first of two workshops was conducted by Ruth Fincher and Peter Whiteford, as part of the ARC/Academy project on Australian poverty and its potential to create unequal futures for a significant segment of the population.

Contributors attending the workshop provided short papers covering the following areas of specialisation: ‘Discourses of Poverty –Representing Poverty and Need in the Media’ (Professor Peter Putnis); ‘Poverty and the Labour Market’ (John Buchanan and Ian Watson); ‘New Geographies of Disadvantage and Poverty’ (Professor Ruth Fincher and Dr Maryann Wulff); ‘Poverty from the Perspective of Children’ (Dr Peter Travers); ‘Situating Australia Internationally’ (Dr Peter Whiteford); and ‘Tackling Poverty Among Indigenous Australians’ (Professor Jon Altman and Boyd Hunter).

The workshop provided an excellent opportunity for the convenors and contributors to assess individual chapters and overall thematic direction for the project. Initial discussions are taking place with appropriate publishers regarding a possible publication of the project.

Much of the discussion revolved around how a book resulting from the project would consider the active ‘creation’ of inequality in Australia, in terms of the processes in government and outside it giving rise to the patterns of inequality we see, and also how the book would take up the challenge and comment on the ‘futures’ we seem to be so creating.

A second workshop will be held on Thursday 10 December at which final papers will be assessed before the editing process begins.

International News

■ **Australia-China Exchange Scheme** *Dr Robyn Iredale*, from the School of Geosciences at the University of Wollongong visited China for a month in March and April. She had been invited to present a paper on ‘Problems of female labour migration in Asia’ at the *Labour Mobility and Migration in China and Asia Conference*, jointly organised by the Asia-Pacific Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the International Institute of Asia Studies, Leiden, The Netherlands. She also presented a paper on ‘Migration research: theory and methodology’ at the *China Migration Research Network*

Workshop. These papers have led to further invitations to international conferences. Dr Iredale also took the opportunity to continue collaborative research with colleagues in China.

Rachel Murphy, Chinese Studies, Department of Social and Political Sciences, University of Cambridge, has submitted a lengthy report on her 6 week visit to China. The purpose was to conduct a preliminary study of one or possibly two locations where migration has contributed significantly to business creation in the natal community. She is researching the kinds of rural-urban linkages that are established through migration, the various resource flows which are channelled via these linkages, the impact of these flows on the sending communities, and the interactions between power, status and the redistribution of resources both within communities and within households. She is also interested in the response of local governments in utilising the linkages and flows for the economic benefit of the rural area, and in addressing problems which result from the reorganisation and redeployment of village resources such as land and labour. Ms Murphy met problems during her visit, since her research was in rural areas where few foreigners have attempted interview-based investigation. In her report she emphasised, however, that she received considerable help and kindness from her hosts in the Jiangxi Academy and her nearly five years of experience in China allowed her to make the most of the opportunities she was given.

■ **Australia-Netherlands Exchange Scheme** *Dr Shurlee Swain*, History, Australian Catholic University, visited The Netherlands in February and March. She has reported to the Academies on her visit. The primary purpose was to attend the European Social Science History Conference at which she presented a paper entitled ‘Religion, Philanthropy and Social Reform: meanings, motivations and interactions in the lives of nineteenth century Australian women’. This paper arose out of research on the ways in which Australian women in the past became involved in philanthropy and the access which this activity gave them to power within their society. This research has been brought into an international perspective through participation in a comparative project on women and philanthropy organised by Professor Kathleen McCarthy, Centre for the Study of Philanthropy, City University of New York.

A considerable period was spent in discussions with Dr Francisca de Haan, the major scholar in The Netherlands working in the area of women, religion and philanthropy. Through her Dr Swain was introduced to the IIAV, the Amsterdam based archive of the women’s movement, the holdings of which are of interest because of their specifically international focus.

In discussions with Dr de Haan, a joint interest in the area of nineteenth century women philanthropists was confirmed, particularly on the international influence of Elizabeth Fry whose work in The Netherlands Dr de Haan plans to make the subject of her next book.

At the conference itself her paper was presented in a session shared with women scholars from France and Finland working in the area of women and welfare states, focusing on the experiences in Scandinavia. Given the emphasis on the Scandinavian welfare state in comparative Australian studies it provided an interesting and substantially new point of comparison to look at the philanthropic efforts which both preceded and accompanied state intervention. The parallels between her work and that of Dr Pirjo Markkola of Finland were striking and laid a clear basis for further comparative work in the future. Dr Markkola is also beginning an investigation of women's religious orders as providers of welfare.

Attendance at the conference also widened contact with European scholars working in some other areas of research interest, most particularly the history of women and children. Comparative historical work in these areas in Australia tends to look largely to Britain and the United States for its historical context yet the most vital work at the conference was clearly coming from Scandinavia and France. Discussions with those working in this area, particularly around the arguments advanced in Dr Swain's last book, *Single Mothers and Their Children: Disposal, Punishment and Survival in Australia,* may lead to further collaborations.

Time was also spent making a contribution to ongoing debates in the women's studies area, meeting with Dr Tijske Akkerman of the Belle van Zuylen Instituut, University of Amsterdam who is eager to establish stronger international links in both her work and that of the Instituut. As a member of the committee organising the forthcoming conference for the International Network for Research in Women's History to be held in Melbourne in July 1998, Dr Swain was able to publicise the conference amongst European scholars in the women's history area.

While there are no plans for immediate publication, papers in this area will be presented at three further international conferences during 1998. When the project is completed, articles will be submitted for publication in *Woman-Church* and the *Journal of Religious History.*

■ *Professor Roy MacLeod*, Department of History, the University of Sydney, has submitted a report on his visits to The Netherlands in February and May. His primary purpose was to explore recent innovations in Dutch museums and meet with museologists and historians of science. He also gave lectures in Amsterdam and Utrecht.

Professor MacLeod reports that he found the Rijksmuseum and the Van Gogh museum proverbially strong in their curatorial dedication, if perhaps less engaged with current museological fashions. In the world of science centres, there are many signs of new thinking. To call Amsterdam's controversial newMetropolis merely a 'science centre', however, underestimates its wider significance. Created with funds from both private and public sectors, from industry and education departments, it is exciting both in what it attempts – not always, in the view of its curators, with complete success – and it what it fails to achieve, in areas in which no one in the world has yet much success to report. It is internationally impressive, not least in its innovative attempts to link the study of creativity and the diffusion of technical skills with a range of topical issues associated with energy, the environment, transportation, communication, and forensic investigation. Along more classical lines, the newly (1991) re-opened 'Boerhaave Museum' in Leiden, with its spectacular instrument collection, is particularly remarkable. Its future may include opportunities for closer interaction with the university community; and for understanding how better to convey specialist interests to a wider public. Teylers Museum in Haarlem, with its unrivalled collections of optical and electrical apparatus, remains a favourite, now even more popular thanks to its contiguous, newly-opened art gallery. The Amsterdam Jewish Museum, in the middle of what was before the war the Jewish quarter of the city, conveys a carefully reconstructed view of peoples and places within buildings and spaces that themselves form part of the museum's story. In presentation, the use of information and public access, this must rank among the best of its genre, and offers an important model for its counterparts in Australia.

The splendid and exciting new (1994) Groningen Museum could make a claim to be the 'Bilbao of the North', in its imaginative use of Italian architecture and Dutch location (forming a museum-island in a canal, at the entrance to the city). The museum's stimulating interior decoration, and its bold representations of contemporary art, are inevitably controversial, and welcome a range of new museum activities. Its historical and archaeological collections are also impressive (if not as widely advertised), and its decorative arts section is a beautiful celebration of the senses. It was interesting that such shortcomings as may have come about as by-products of the museum's appeal to post-modernity (notably, a lack of information about many of its objects) are now being assessed by its directors.

In Amsterdam, discussions with Dr Peter van Mensch surveyed new directions in Dutch and European museological research, and have now led to proposals for an exchange of staff and students between Sydney and the Reinwardt Academy. Professor MacLeod made a number of suggestions regarding the Exchange Program which will be taken up by the International Relations Committee.

Reports on Workshops

Workshops planned for the remainder of the year include:

■ *Re-thinking Social Work and the Human Services in Australia* convened by Professor Ian O'Connor to be held in Brisbane on 10-11 August. Papers will examine the past, present and the future of social work and human services in Australia, as well as the implications for education and employment of professionals in these areas.

■ *Gender, Sexualities and Historical Change* will be convened by Professor Patricia Crawford in Perth on 30 July-1 August. The theme of this workshop is the history of sexual cultures and subjectivities over a long period of time, focusing chiefly on medieval and early modern periods. Among the many questions to be addressed, it will consider if sexual categories and values change over time, then what are the factors influencing those changes?

■ A workshop on the *1998-99 Federal Election* convened by Dr Marian Simms will be held in Canberra after the next Federal Election. The workshop will bring together government and other political specialists to study the major issues as well as the strategies used by the significant parties during the campaign, both nationally, and in regional and local areas.

Those who are interested in proposing a workshop to the Committee are urged to seek a copy of the *Guidelines* from Sue Rider at the Secretariat and allow at least six months' lead time for organisation.

■

The National Academies Forum
and the
National Library of Australia
present

MALTHUS AND HIS LEGACY:
200 Years of the Population Debate

17-18 September 1998
at the National Library of Australia, Canberra

The Conference commemorates the 200th anniversary of the publication of '*An Essay on the Principle of Population'* by the Rev TR Malthus.

> ***'The voice of objective reason had been raised against a deep instinct which the evolutionary struggle had been implanting from the commencement of life; and man's mind, in the conscious pursuit of happiness, was daring to demand the reins of government from out of the hands of the unconscious urge for mere predominant survival.'***
>
> John Maynard Keynes on Malthus' First *Essay* (1798) in *Essays in Biography (1933)*

Speakers at the forefront of scholarship ranging across demography, history, economics and medical science include Barry Jones, John Pullen, Sir Tony Wrigley, Clara Tuite, Suzanne Rickard, John Poynter, Michael Roberts, Roger Short, Janet McCalman, John Caldwell, Sue Serjeantson, Ian Castles, Iain McCalman, Michael Roe, Christabel Young, Geoffrey McNicoll and Jonathan Stone.

Enquiries: National Academies Forum
Sue Rider, Tel 02 6247 8087; Fax 02 6248 6287
Email naf@anu.edu.au

Books

A Books section will now form an integral part of the *Newsletter*. Publishers and individuals are invited to contact the Editor with suggestions for books which might be considered for review in these pages.

■ Henry Reynolds, *This Whispering in Our Hearts.* Allen & Unwin: Sydney 1998.

There can be no historian whose contribution to Australian history in recent years has been more significant than that of Henry Reynolds, whose numerous monographs examining the fraught occupation of Australia and many facets of its outcomes have been critical not just for the discipline but also for public debates on Indigenous peoples' rights. Reynolds has now added to this impressive body of knowledge with a further study, this time focused on yet another previously neglected area of colonialism. *This Whispering in Our Hearts* recovers the voices and actions of humanitarians who over a 150 year period from 1788 to the 1930s emerged as protagonists for human rights, civil rights and land rights for Aborigines.

In histories of British imperialism and Britain's colonies humanitarians, frequently Christians influenced by the nineteenth-century evangelical revival, have figured prominently as protagonists for the interests of indigenous peoples as opposed to land-hungry settlers, (though rarely as critics of colonisation itself). Such humanitarians have scarcely rated mention in Australia outside of the undiscriminating pages of missionary hagiographies. In part the neglect of humanitarians' activism stems from the savage character of white occupation that above all else rivets the attention of historical inquirers. This absence arises, also, from the widespread collusion of missionaries – elsewhere prominent actors in humanitarian campaigns – in state policies that first marginalised Aborigines and then directed Aboriginal lives with draconian policies of surveillance and control.

Reynolds demonstrates in this book that right from the time of the first military reprisal against Aborigines in 1790 humanitarian voices of dissent rose to challenge the brutality, illegality and inequity of colonisers' actions, laws and regimes. He concentrates on three periods, the 1830s and 1840s, the 1880s and the 1930s, and on particular individuals who spearheaded dissent in those decades, incurring as a result very considerable settler hostility. For the nineteenth century Reynolds foregrounds the actions of such men as the protectors /missionaries George Augustus Robinson, Lancelot Threlkeld and John

Gribble. In the 1930s he features John Gribble's son Ernest, and the remarkable Western Australian mission teacher and human rights advocate Mary Bennett. These biographical vignettes give particularity and substance to Reynolds' narrative. The study constitutes an important recovery of agents of colonisation who nevertheless sustained a moral position that did not concede all considerations of human rights to the exigencies of white territorial gain.

Henry Reynolds does not argue that humanitarians were numerous, heroic or free from patronising racial attitudes. What he establishes with force and clarity is the fact that the terrible conditions inflicted on Aborigines did not go unchallenged at any time. Historians, he indicates, cannot plausibly suggest that the paths chosen by white settlers were excusable because these settlers were just `people of their times', when 'everyone was racist'. Those settlers who perpetrated crimes and injustices, or tolerated them, or benefited from them, acted in a context where such behaviour was always contested by their peers. That such views were submerged by a dominant racist discourse does not negate the humanitarians' significance nor our debt to Henry Reynolds for writing of them.

Patricia Grimshaw

■ Roberta Sykes, *Snake Cradle* (Vol 1 of *Snake Dreaming, Autobiography of a Black Woman*. Allen & Unwin: Sydney, 1998.

The performance of the One Nation Party in the recent Queensland election is not surprising, if you have read *Snake Cradle*. It seems little has changed. Snake Cradle is a powerfully stark, honest and at times very funny autobiography covering the first 18 years of Sykes' life as a black woman in Townsville, from about 1940 to 1960.

In the first part of her trilogy *Snake Dreaming,* Sykes details her eventful but often sad life facing overt and covert racism in North Queensland. She uses the same gentle but confronting style used to such advantage by other black activists like the Dodson brothers or Noel Pearson. Despite serious childhood illnesses, including life-threatening meningitis, her intelligence was reflected in high academic performance at school. From an early age, her ambition was to become a surgeon, although that was never realised. Her subsequent doctorate from Harvard demonstrated her intellectual capacity, and the extent to which she was able to overcome the racism she encountered in the Catholic, Anglican and State education systems in Queensland.

Her mother was white, but Sykes knew little of her father. Although the relationship between the two women was loving and supportive, her mother never told her any details of the immediate or extended family. Because of the colour of her skin, she came into conflict with the Queensland police force. In an incident strongly reminiscent of African apartheid laws, she was confronted by police and asked for her pass and if she lived on a reserve. She was only able to elude Australia's 'pass laws' because her mother was white.

She faced the Queensland justice system after she had been pack raped and become pregnant as a 17 year old. Only the determination of one sympathetic police detective, who believed her story and persisted with the case, resulted in some of her assailants finally being brought to justice.

I recall Sykes as an activist in the 1960s, wearing her trademark headband, but it was only after I began to read *Snake Cradle* that I realised she was but a few years younger than I. I too grew up in Townsville, had swum in the Tobruk Memorial Pool, attended the Townsville High School just down the cutting from her home; the same school that had refused Sykes admission following her expulsion from St Patrick's College for Girls. Sykes' 'crime' had been to accept a lift as a pillion passenger on a white friend's motorcycle to the College's front door. Although a high achiever and the College's only black student, Sykes was expelled. Sister Joan later explained to Sykes' mother that she had been a bad influence on other girls and, unfoundedly, that she had tattoos on her back. The Townsville General Hospital where I had worked refused to accept Sykes as a trainee nurse 'because dark girls couldn't train as nurses'.

The significance of this book for me was a brutal realisation that in those early years of my life I had been oblivious to the racism surrounding me. My confrontation with reality came later when I worked for brief times on Palm Island and began to recognise what indigenous people faced when they lived under the custody of the Queensland Protector of Aborigines.

Snake Cradle is a compelling read.

John Marlton

■ Stuart Macintyre, *The Reds. The Communist Party of Australia from Origins to Illegality.* Allen & Unwin: Sydney, 1998.

This is a masterful book. Stuart Macintyre achieves his declared aim of making it a history of communism and communists as well as of the party. His summaries of changes in the international communist 'line' and its swing from 'Leninist revolutionary internationalism' to 'a Stalinist instrument of Soviet state power and strategic policy' are models of clarity. He demonstrates a rare ability to combine analytic insights derived from impressive scholarship with gripping accounts both of the fluctuating fortunes of the CPA itself and of the outlook, strengths and individual frailties of the human parade who passed into and – usually nearly as often – out of its ranks between 1920 and 1941.

A number of popular myths are laid to rest. Access to archives in Australia and Russia reveals that the legendary ‘Moscow gold’ amounted to but a few thousand pounds of subventions over these two decades. Macintyre also indicates that exaggerated estimates of CPA power by security police echoed the charged imagery of the communists themselves who were remarkably prone to self-delusion about their own effectiveness. Police infiltrated the party from the outset. Thus in 1938 it emerged that the Central Committee member long entrusted with keeping the national membership records was a police spy. Similarly, the official surreptitiously sent from Moscow in 1930 to reform and purge the CPA was most probably a USA government agent.

While recording the increasing grip which Soviet policy exerted on the CPA, Macintyre is at pains to stress the Australianness of many communists. The wall graffiti ‘See You This Arvo at the Demo: Up the Revo!’ vividly contrasts with the increasingly sterile official ‘communese’, whose ugly neologisms and literal translations of Soviet jargon rang quite absurdly in the Australian context. It also reflects a dichotomy between leaders and led. As the 1930s progressed, the CPA executive became increasingly dictatorial.

Judging by some chilling suggestions in these pages it was just as well that real political power never came within the grasp of the Australian leadership. The rank and file were different. Telling anecdotes bring out their personal warmth, gallantry and extraordinary dedication to achieving a better society for the underprivileged. Yet in many ways the communist foot soldiers represent the greatest puzzle of all. How did these egalitarian Australians accept the virtual thought control imposed on party members? Democratic centralism produced antipodean replicas of the despotic cult of the personality and hypocritical public self-criticism. This book provides unequalled insights into how radical psyches rationalised these and other quite inequitable alien concepts.

Tom Sheridan

■ Peter Coaldrake and Lawrence Stedman, *On the Brink: Australian Universities Confronting Their Future.* University of Queensland Press: St Lucia, 1998.

The main claims and conclusions of this book are as follows. Our universities, despite the vast changes in their size and role, are attempting the virtually impossible task of maintaining traditional ideals while meeting new demands. There has been a basic shift from concern with knowledge for its own sake to the production and transmission of knowledge that serves Australia’s social and economic future. Other public and private institutions are also engaged, in various ways, in these activities; as students meet more of the cost, they expect better facilities and a wider range of vocationally relevant courses; there are no longer standard levels of salary, and academic areas no longer enjoy equal financial status; as government regulation and funding are being reduced, universities must take a more entrepreneurial role; the level of funding by governments is likely to be directly related to performance; there is a general trend towards a globalised economy; and advanced information technology is having an important influence on the processes by which knowledge is produced and transmitted. In the face of such changes, universities can play a significant role in our evolving society only if they make fundamental changes to their teaching and research, to the ways they promote themselves, and adopt a professional, business-style approach to management.

This analysis of the changing scene in Australian higher education is almost entirely descriptive. There is no reference to the kinds of diversity that might be desirable among our institutions of higher education. The vital question of whether they all should be universities or whether there should be a variety of such institutions serving different purposes (as in, say, Germany) is not addressed. What is lacking throughout is any assessment of the extent to which these movements for change are desirable. It seems to be assumed that, if the changes as described are occurring, universities should simply conform to them.

The authors regard universities mainly as sites for the production of the knowledge on which a modern economy depends, and the training of personnel to meet its rapidly changing needs. There is only one page on liberal (or general) studies appropriate for a university, and how they contribute to the quality of personal life and the exercise of responsibility as a citizen. But, surely, if universities are fulfilling their proper role, some form of liberal education, which provides at least a challenge to the dominance of instrumental values, has a central place in their work of teaching, and there should be elements of liberal education in all undergraduate programs.

The book is deficient not only on liberal studies, but in its discussion of university teaching. While advances in information technology can facilitate teaching and learning, they do not dispense with the need for a sound conceptual context to guide the work of interpreting, evaluating, and applying information. In fact, the rising flood of information available through advanced technology makes the need for carefully structured knowledge greater. (The distinction between knowledge and information, referred to earlier in the book, might at least have been recalled.) The authors make no comment on how courses should be designed to focus students' attention on basic concepts, theories, methods of inquiry etc; on gaining an understanding of disciplines and fields of knowledge as complex human institutions; and on the issues at stake in the different ways they are interpreted. There is an indispensable philosophical dimension to every area that makes a claim to systematic knowledge.

Although the authors stress the need for integration and teamwork in university teaching, they seem quite nonchalant about the decline of anything like a community of scholars. As in other contemporary business enterprises, university staff (both academic and general) will be treated as 'input' that can be acquired and dispensed with very flexibly. In this environment, outsourcing of work and the use of labour-hiring firms become common practice. The authors may be predicting what is, in fact, the trend. But there are basic reasons for retaining some version of the ideal of a community of scholars in a university. Instead, the authors make the extraordinary claim (pp 69, 99) that this ideal fosters fragmentation and even individualism in the work of academics.

They claim (p109) that university teaching is increasingly being separated from an academic's research, and need not even suppose engagement in any research. The authors seem to find this acceptable. On the contrary, all university teachers should engage in some research (and scholarship) directly related to their area of teaching, and present it in various forms to the critical evaluation of their peers. There can be variations in the mix of teaching and research among both individual academics and universities. However, engagement in teaching and research (and the interaction of the two) should be one of the distinguishing features of institutions we call 'universities'.

Although university administration can always be improved, the authors exaggerate the deficiencies of traditional university management, while reflecting unquestioned confidence in the merits of professional management. (They make no reference to the not infrequent failure of senior managers and of whole businesses.) Also, academics have not regarded as anathema any attempt to assess the quality of their work and to assign preferential treatment, as the long-standing annual procedures for promotion show. What academics object to in the management model is top-down decision making that has no place for genuine collegial deliberation.

Where do the authors stand on the question of what, if any, distinctive characteristics and objectives institutions called universities should have? The answer is crucial for any normative argument on the direction that our universities should take. The question is addressed in Chapter Three, ‘The Purpose of a University’. Unfortunately, the treatment is very thin (as is the authors’ list of references on this crucial topic). A discussion of the distinctive objectives of a university is not simply a matter of describing what, in fact, the objectives of places that bear that name happen to be, but what they should be. For the most part, this book assumes that the purposes to be served by universities are determined by the changing social and economic conditions. Its main focus is on the means that universities should adopt in order most effectively to achieve these changing purposes.

The changes to which attention is drawn certainly do have a significant bearing on the role of universities and how their work is conducted. But what their distinctive role should be in these changing conditions and what kinds of adaptation are appropriate are vital questions that, unfortunately, this book scarcely addresses. Indeed, the logical outcome of many of the changes listed by the authors would be an increasing range of alternative institutions of higher education and research (either in combination or separately). Because of its heavy emphasis on the economic utility of universities, the book blurs the issue of institutional diversity at this level. In so doing, it promotes a serious diluting of the distinctive contribution to education and research that institutions traditionally known as universities can make to the quality of our society and its culture. (I have discussed topics relating to this review in *Minding Their Business: The Proper Role of Universities and Some Suggested Reforms,* Canberra: ASSA, 1997.)

Brian Crittenden

■ Details of a book mentioned in the last issue of the *Newsletter* are as follows: John Uhr, *Deliberative Democracy in Australia. The Changing Face of Parliament*. Cambridge University Press: Sydney, 1998.

PUBLICATIONS

Occasional Paper Series

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‘Communication Futures in Australia’ ***Prometheus*** 14, 1, June 1996

No Place for Borders. The HIV/AIDS epidemic and development in Asia and the Pacific
Edited by GJR Linge & DJ Porter (Allen & Unwin), 1997

The Politics of Retribution
Edited by C Bean, S Bennett, M Simms & J Warhurst (Allen & Unwin) 1997

China’s New Spatial Economy. Heading Towards 2000
Edited by GJR Linge (Oxford University Press) 1997.

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B *Accounting, economics, economic history, statistics.*
Chair: Associate Professor Sue Richardson
C *History, law, philosophy, political science.*
Chair: Professor Jill Roe
D *Education, psychology, social medicine.*
Chair: Professor Graeme Halford

1998 Calendar

22	July	Launch of *Challenges for the Social Sciences and Australia* Report.
22	July	Meeting of Workshop Committee
22	July	Meeting of Executive Committee
23	July	Meeting of Membership Committee
30	July	Closing date for Australia-China Exchange Program applications
15	August	Closing date for Australia-Netherlands Exchange Program applications
17-18	September	*Malthus and His Legacy. 200 Years of the Population Debate*. Conference jointly sponsored by the National Academies Forum and the National Library of Australia
1	October	Closing date for Australia-Vietnam Program applications
1	October	Deadline ASSA *Newsletter* 4/1998
8-10	November	Annual General Meeting
8	November	Meeting of Executive Committee
9	November	Annual Symposium: *Reconciliation and the Academy: Inventing the Future*. Cunningham Lecture, Fellows' Dinner
10	November	Annual General Meeting

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