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'The brave, brown women, who suffered as we have suffered:' The intercultural aim of Māori and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union to eliminate alcohol in the early nineteenth century.

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The common aim of Maori (indigenous people of New Zealand) and Pakeha (New Zealanders of European descent) to eradicate alcohol-fuelled domestic violence was commemorated in a photograph taken in the early twentieth century during the First Dominion Maori Convention at Hawke's Bay on 10 April 1911 (the Convention). It featured Australian temperance activist Bessie Harrison Lee (1860-1950) who had relocated to New Zealand, married, and furthered her work as a Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) member. The WCTU was an organization of women who were devoted to social reform. They perceived alcoholism as a cause and consequence of larger social problems and believed that temperance meant reducing or banning the drinking and trade of alcohol. This article specifically interrogates the intercultural exchanges of Pakeha and Maori through the lens of Lee, whose image among the Maori people represents the myriad of ways interactions between gender and race can be interpreted.

Introduction

A photograph taken in the early twentieth century during the First Dominion Māori Convention at Hawke's Bay on 10 April 1911 captured a common aim. Women in temperance movements from Māori (indigenous people of New Zealand) and Pakeha descent (New Zealanders with European background) had the unifying objective to eradicate alcohol fuelled domestic violence. The photograph featured Australian temperance activist Bessie Harrison Lee (1860-1950) who had relocated to New Zealand, married, and furthered her work as a Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) member. The WCTU was an organization of women who were devoted to social reform. They perceived alcoholism as a cause and consequence of larger social problems and believed that temperance meant reducing or banning the drinking and trade of alcohol. This article specifically interrogates the intercultural exchanges of Pakeha and Māori through the lens of Lee, whose image among the Māori people represents the myriad of ways interactions between gender and race can be interpreted. It utilises feminist historian Zora Simic's directive: to pay attention to intersectionality when studying intercultural dialogue, but to be mindful of reinscribing Lee as the dominant subject.¹

This research relied on the ability to source obscure digitised archives not previously obtainable for convenient access and retrieval. This, alongside the advent of the digital camera, has reshaped historical research practices and enabled the WCTU's material to be placed under conscious and critical reflection.² Digitised newspaper

¹ Zora Simic, 'What can Feminist Historians do with Intersectionality?,' *Lilith*, no. 24 (2018): 25.

² Ian Milligan, 'We Are All Digital Now: Digital Photography and the Reshaping of Historical

articles sourced via Trove and New Zealand's equivalent, Past Papers, have invited new kinds of scholarly questions, as 'hidden' archives have become more readily available and accessible to construct a narrative.³ When transcribing the factual content with visual images, Lee emerges as a figure who brought new ideas on temperance to the Convention through her public speaking and voluntary work in Britain, United States, and Sri Lanka. Despite her overseas experiences and association with many people from different walks of life and ethnicities, there was an evident disconnect between Lee's understanding of this key moment in early nineteenth century New Zealand intercultural history, and the lived reality of Māori women. Fortunately, many newspaper articles and WCTU newsletters used in this study have reports on Lee in both English and Māori.

Bessie Harrison Lee

Bessie Vickery was born in the Victorian mining town of Daylesford in 1860. Her early life was characterised by trauma where, after the death of her mother when she was eight, she and her six siblings were separated.⁴ Vickery was sent to live with relatives in Melbourne where she experienced firsthand the link between drunkenness and domestic violence: a point of reference for many of her adult public speeches and writings.⁵ At the age of 9, Vickery's father moved her to live with an aunt and uncle in the isolated Victorian mining town of Enochs Point. At the age of twenty, she married a railway worker named Harrison Lee, moved to Melbourne, and commenced voluntary work with women in prisons and refuges. Now Mrs. Lee, she became President of the WCTU in the inner Melbourne suburb of Footscray.⁶

Lee's first visit to New Zealand in 1899 was as an invited keynote speaker by the Auckland branch of the New Zealand WCTU, where she utilised her memories of drunken violence to highlight the perils of alcohol. She returned to New Zealand during general election campaigns in 1900, 1902, and 1905, to assist the WCTU with 'local option' campaigns which promoted the restriction of alcoholic beverage sales.⁷ Following the death of her husband in early 1908, Lee again toured New Zealand and renewed her acquaintance with Andrew Cowie, a Winton South Island farmer and widower. They were married at Winton on 17 November 1908 and settled in Invercargill. Lee (now Cowie) became a World Missionary of the WCTU in 1911, one of only a few women to achieve this position. Frances Willard, the American National President of the WCTU from 1879-1898, had given instructions to missionaries that they:

Should be migratory rather than stationary, in order that fresh enthusiasm may be constantly brought to work, and that the danger of yielding to prejudice and habit by long association may be avoided.⁸

Lee was expected to act out Willard's instructions, which sought to ensure that new ideas about race relations were being listened to. However, Australian historian Ian

Practice,' *Canadian Historical Review* 101, no. 4 (2020): 605.

³ Alexandra M. Chassanooff, 'Historians' Experiences Using Digitized Archival Photographs as Evidence,' *The American Archivist* 81, no. 1 (2018): 136.

⁴ Bessie Harrison Lee, *One of Australia's Daughters* (London: James, 1924), 5.

⁵ Bessie Harrison Lee, 'Temperance Meetings,' *Lyttelton Times*, September 1899.

⁶ Harrison Lee, *One of Australia's Daughters*, 6.

⁷ nn M. Mitchell, 'Lee, Betsy (Bessie) (1860–1950),' *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, accessed 11 September 2022, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lee-betsy-bessie-7144/text12331>.

⁸ WCTU, Second Conference, 1893, 114.

Tyrrell, notable for his work on transnational women's history, argued that:

The very world created by WCTU women's leadership, circumscribed their freedom of action amongst indigenous women, and limited their ability to comprehend the complexities of that other world, with its other cultures and other classes of women.⁹

Tyrrell's argument is demonstrated in Lee's interactions with Māori people, as depicted in WCTU photography and literature. These sometimes suggest her leadership to be understanding and friendly, and at other times, patronising and intolerant.

Scholarship on Lee

Studying Lee's leadership in the WCTU allows new pathways through which to interpret the first wave women's movement in their multiple forms of organising and—specifically for this paper—their intercultural encounters. Despite Lee's contributions to contemporary debates and leadership in social reform, scholars have yet to make Lee a central focus of study. This paper draws on current Australian, American, British, New Zealand, and Canadian debates over the WCTU and their intercultural encounters.¹⁰ It develops the dialogue that women's historian Patricia Grimshaw initiated in the 1980s, by showing that Lee presented serious challenges to contemporary laws with her support of reforms to education, alongside legal and political parity with men.¹¹ Grimshaw observed that Lee and her contemporaries 'extended prevailing ideologies' which stressed women's superior moral and spiritual role within the family in order to support the idea of women's role in the larger family: the state.¹² Grimshaw, along with Marilyn Lake, Ann McGrath, and Marian Quartly, identified Lee as one of four notable colonists who took public stances on issues of social justice in colonial society in their landmark study 'Creating a Nation, 1788-1900'.¹³ Lee was seen as significant because she distinguished structural disadvantages underlying an individuals' troubles, be it as workers or (in Lee's case) members of a particular sex.

Historian Clare Wright's 'You Daughters of Freedom' builds on these earlier works to tell the victory of suffrage for women in Australia and highlights the many public methods of protest that were utilised. In this work, Wright details a transnational political world to which Lee and other Australian women were active participants.

⁹ Ian Tyrrell, 'Woman, Missions and Empire, New Approaches to American Cultural Expansion,' in *Competing Kingdoms: Women Mission and Nation and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*, ed. B. R. Ellington, K. K. Skdar, C. A. Shemo (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 5.

¹⁰ Nancy A. Hewitt, *No Permanent Waves, Recasting Histories of US Feminism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010). | Nancy A. Hewitt, *A Companion to American Women's History* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2002) | Sue Morgan, 'Faith, sex and purity: the religio-feminist theory of Ellice Hopkins,' *Women's History Review* 9, no. 1 (2000): 13-34. | Riiko Bedford, 'Hereditas as ideology: Ideas of the Women's Christian Temperance Union of The United States and Ontario on Hereditas and Social Reform, 1880-1910,' *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 32, no. 1 (2017): 77-100. | Katie Pickles and Angela Wanhalla, 'Embodying the Colonial Encounter: Explaining New Zealand's "Grace Darling",' *Huria Matenga*, *Gender & History* 22, no. 2 (2010) 361-386. | Katie Pickles, *Female Imperialism and National Identity: The Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).

¹¹ Patricia Grimshaw, 'Bessie Harrison Lee and the Fight for Voluntary Motherhood,' in *Double Time: Women in Victoria, 150 years*, ed. M. Lake and F. Kelly (Ringwood: Penguin Books, 1985), 142.

¹² Grimshaw, 'Bessie Harrison Lee,' 143.

¹³ Patricia Grimshaw, *Creating a Nation, 1788-1900* (Ringwood: McPhee Gribble Publishers, 1994).

Concentrating on the WCTU specifically, Ian Tyrrell's comprehensive scholarly study was the first to analyse WCTU from an international perspective.¹⁴ Tyrrell identified the tensions generated by the WCTU's universalist agenda with its own version of an ideologically and religiously based form of cultural imperialism. New material was consolidated on the 'ebb and flow' of WCTU personnel, and Lee was discussed within this framework. The WCTU embraced an international and occasionally ecumenical vision that included a critique of Western materialism and imperialism. Nevertheless, Tyrrell argued that its mission inevitably promoted Anglo-American cultural practices and Protestant evangelical beliefs deemed morally superior by the WCTU. This paper furthers Tyrrell's claims in studying geographies of encounter with New Zealand Māori people and Lee. More recently, historian James Keating's 'Distant Sisters: Australasian Women and the International Struggle for the Vote, 1880-1914', identifies how suffragists in Australia and New Zealand connected with each other and their counterparts in the United States and Britain, and worked to position themselves within the internationalist struggle for women's enfranchisement.¹⁵ Keating contextualised the connections between women such as Lee and these wider networks. While the WCTU has received much historiographical attention for its role in the suffrage movement, less attention has been given to the day-to-day significance that the struggle for suffrage played in the lives of ordinary branch members.

Scholarship on Māori women in the WCTU and Temperance Activism

To remedy earlier male-dominated narratives on the role of WCTU women and intercultural exchanges with Māori, this paper will draw on the work of historians who are already readdressing this imbalance. For example, this paper also develops scholarship by the historian of sport and alcohol, Greg Ryan.¹⁶ He argues that from the first establishment of temperance societies in New Zealand, there was a focus on banning the sale of alcohol to Māori. However, beyond that, they had little to say about Māori people.¹⁷ Until the second half of the twentieth century, most Māori lived in isolated rural communities. Urbanisation in the main cities was less than 20%, and much of the European population had little regular engagement with Māori.¹⁸ Thus, according to historian Margaret Tennant, women's participation in missions to Māori people has received little examination.¹⁹ Missionary was a term used extensively by the WCTU and World's WCTU (WWCTU) to define representatives who went out into the community and supported women in becoming members of the organisation. Some of these missionaries were paid, while others carried out their work on a volunteer basis. This paper will refer to missionaries with this understanding: a wider definition that incorporates WCTU members, rather than only Catholic, Protestant, or Church of England religious missionaries. Patricia Grimshaw's scholarship on Māori women's political agency furthered this article's analysis of the dialogue between Lee and Māori people. In New Zealand, the WCTU spearheaded a campaign that—by 1893—

¹⁴ Ian Tyrrell, *Woman's World Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspectives, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

¹⁵ James Keating, *Distant Sisters: Australasian Women and the International Struggle for the Vote, 1880-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020).

¹⁶ Greg Ryan, 'The Tornado that circles round the liquor question: New Zealand anti-prohibition arguments and strategies c1890-c1930,' *Drugs, Education, Prevention and Policy* 22, no. 2 (2015): 96-102.

¹⁷ Ryan, 'The Tornado,' 98.

¹⁸ Marten Hutt, *Māori & Alcohol: A History: Te Iwi Māori me te Inu Waipiro: He Tuhituhinga Hitori* (Wellington: Health Services Research Centre, 1999), 15.

¹⁹ Margaret Tennant, 'Pakeha Deaconesses and the New Zealand Methodist Mission to Māori 1893-1940,' *The Journal of Religious History* 23, no. 3 (1999): 309-326.

had introduced universal adult suffrage for women as well as men, including Māori women.²⁰ New Zealand historian Anne Else noted that 'Māori women took an active role both in Māori politics and in the causes espoused by nineteenth century Pakeha women, such as women's suffrage, temperance and welfare.'²¹ Rich scholarship has emerged since Margaret Tennant's lamentation, with New Zealand historians Barbara Brookes and Caroline Ralston explaining the complexity of Māori women's political agency, tribal differences, and intercultural meetings.²² Vibrant scholarship continues to emerge by Māori historians such as Angela Wanhalla, who are uncovering extensive political activity by Māori women.

First WCTU Dominion Māori Convention

Historical circumstances surrounding Māori and Pakeha relations inform the significance of the Convention and its representation in WCTU media and photography. In 1911, the year in which the Convention took place, the Māori population were outnumbered approximately twenty to one by Pakeha. Māori and Pakeha lived largely apart, and Māori were no longer seen as a threat.²³ Prior to the Convention, the prohibitionists' lobby had comparatively little to say about Māori people.²⁴ A photo emblematic of the Convention included here (Figure 1), is therefore revealing in its attempt to give voice to a marginalised people. The event was held in Māori territory at Hawke's Bay, a place where previous political events of consequence for Māori people had occurred. For example, it had been home to the political movement, Te Kotahitanga, that established a Māori Parliament in 1892. Te Kotahitanga's inaugural meeting in June 1910 was held at Waipatu, Hawke's Bay.²⁵ Therefore, this geographical location for a meeting between Pakeha and Māori was powerfully different, going against the WCTU trend of separating themselves from surrounding countryside that was symbolic of the WCTU early endeavour to remain separate from indigenous (Māori) people.

Interpreting Lee's encounters and impressions of Māori people requires consideration of Angela Woollacott's argument that:

Rather than being locked into such binary analysis, we need to recognise the agency of Indigenous and colonised people within the structure of colonial societies, within their interstices, and in challenges to colonial hierarchies.²⁶

²⁰ Patricia Grimshaw, 'Settler Anxieties, Indigenous Peoples, and Women's Suffrage in the Colonies of Australia, New Zealand and Hawai'i, 1888 to 1902,' *Pacific Historical Review* 69, no. 4 (2000): 565 | Patricia Grimshaw, 'Interracial Marriages and Colonial Regimes in Victoria and Aotearoa/New Zealand,' *Frontiers* 23, no. 3 (2002): 12-28.

²¹ Anne Else, *Women Together, A History of Women's Organisations in New Zealand* (Wellington: New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs, 1993), 3.

²² Barbara Brookes, 'Gender, Work and Fears of a 'hybrid race' in 1920s New Zealand,' *Gender and History* 19, no. 3 (2007): 512 | "Caroline Ralston, 'Māori Women and the Politics of Tradition: What Roles and Power Did, Do and Should Māori women exercise?,' *The Contemporary Pacific* 5, no. 1 (1993): 23-44.

²³ Ian Pool and Tahu Kukutai, 'Taupori Maori- Maori population change- Decades of despair, 1840-1900,' *Te Ara*, accessed 19 December 2017, <http://TeAra.govt.nz/en/taupori-maori-population-change/p> | Margaret Tennant, 'Pakeha Deaconesses and the New Zealand Methodist Mission to Maori, 1893-1940,' *The Journal of Religious History* 23, no. 3 (1999): 312.

²⁴ Ryan, 'The Tornado,' 98.

²⁵ Basil Keane, 'Kotahitanga unity movements,' *Te Ara*, accessed 13 September 2017, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/kotahitanga-unity-movements>.

²⁶ Angela Woollacott, *Gender and Empire* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 3.

The commemorative photograph of the Convention would encourage viewers to believe that WCTU women were taking the lead. However, in the geographical area where the Convention took place, 'Māori women took an active role both in Māori politics and in the causes espoused by nineteenth century Pakeha women, such as women's suffrage, temperance and welfare'.²⁷ Māori women had already set up their own temperance groups before the establishment of the New Zealand WCTU as they were particularly concerned with the effect of alcohol on their communities. In 1893, Nga Komiti Wahine (Māori women's committees) were established, and in July 1894, the first Māori union of the WCTU was formed with English settler Ellen Hewett (1843-1926) as its first superintendent. Its inaugural meeting was held in Wellington in July 1894. One of the first Māori women to join was Hera Stirling (1876-1926) of Ngai Tahu. As a Māori organiser, she started branches in the South Island, Lower North Island Hawke's Bay, the place of the Convention. By 1898, new branches had been formed in Whanganui, Greytown, and Tauranga, with more than 600 pledges taken that year.²⁸

Rather than the replacement of Nga Komiti Wahine with the WCTU, there emerged a considerable overlap in membership between Nga Komiti Wahine and the WCTU. The Māori union department conducted temperance meetings and circulated temperance literature, pledge cards, bibles, testaments, and prayer and hymn books in the Māori language.²⁹ Their activity highlighted Māori women's critical attitude towards Pakeha's introduction of alcohol. Documentation of Lee's first journey to New Zealand in 1899 affirms that Māori women worked effectively, as they had always done in their own community. Examples include Lee's report that:

Mrs Te Ao Anaru, of the Taueru Māori Union, spoke a few words expressing the way in which the Pakeha had begun to work among the Māoris in connection with temperance: Mrs Mita Anaru, of Masterton Māori Union, said she was very grateful at having been asked to attend the meeting and talk about the great curse—the "waipiro", the Māori term for alcohol. Mrs Tai Te Tau interpreted the speeches of the Māori members, who spoke in their native language. Mrs Te Tau also gave a description of her work among the Māoris and stated that she was very pleased with the results of her efforts. The Māoris had much to thank Europeans for, but they did not feel inclined to thank them for bringing alcohol to the Dominion.³⁰

The agency of Māori leaders was also evident during the welcoming ceremony of the Convention, where sixty-five delegates representing seven unions were addressed: not only by Pakeha but by Chief Mohi and Mrs Mohi, Mesdames Tamehana, Wharekape, Manaro and Kopua and Mr Puhana. A record of the WCTU officers who responded were Mesdames Lee Cowie, Oldman, and A.R. Atkinson.³¹ The meeting of two cultures at Hawke's Bay highlight what critical geographers Barney Warf and Santa Arias argue, that 'geography matters, not for the simplistic and overly used reason that everything happens in space, but because where things happen is critical to how and why they happen'.³² The Pakeha's unprecedented meeting on Māori land demonstrated the

²⁷ Else, *Women Together*, 3.

²⁸ Else, *Women Together*, 3.

²⁹ Ian Dougherty, *Without Compromise: a Brief History of the New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union* (New Zealand: NZWCTU, 2013).

³⁰ 'Taumutu', *Ellesmere Guardian*, xx, 2073, 29 July, 1899.

³¹ *The White Ribbon Digest, Centennial Issue 100 years in print, July 1895-1995*, Informing New Zealand Women, New Zealand WCTU National Headquarters, 200 Nile Street Nelson, New Zealand.

³² Barney Warf and Santa Arias, *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Introduction* (London:

spirit of Willard's mantra, to be 'migratory.' The setting of Hawkes' Bay also offered what Ruby Ekkel referred to as an opportunity to expand what it meant to be in the private, domestic, or female sphere.³³

Lee and the Māori Community

The symbolism and rationale of the commemorative material as a result of the Convention includes the photograph of Lee and the Māori community (Figure 1). This photograph took up a whole page in Lee's children's series, 'Auntie Faith's Rhymes' (Figure 2).³⁴ It epitomised the pervasive tone of the Māori Convention towards the forging of harmonious and productive relations to achieve temperance. However, the photograph synonymously indicates racialised imagery and thinking. The photo captures the physical manifestation of the rhetoric Lee was famous for, and which earned her the labels the 'Queen of Temperance' or 'Australia's Francis Willard'. To contemporary eyes, the photograph concealed the fragility of the temperance movement when the 1911 national licencing poll was thwarted by the requirement for a three fifths majority.³⁵ As anthropologist and historian Ann Stoler argued, 'European interests and intentions were rarely unified', and this observation was played out in the 'most keenly debated issue in New Zealand politics by the early twentieth century': the argument of placing legal restrictions on the access of alcoholic drink.³⁶



Figure 1. Lee receiving pledges from a Māori male leader and child of the Māori community

Routledge, 2008), 1.

³³ Ruby Ekkel, 'Woman's Sphere Remodelled: A Spatial History of the Victorian Woman's Christian Temperance Union 1887-1914,' *Victorian Historical Journal* 91, no.1 (2020): 110.

³⁴ Bessie H. Lee, *Auntie Faith's Rhymes* (Melbourne: J.J. Howard, 1911), 5. (Image out of copyright)

³⁵ Ryan, 'The Tornado,' 97.

³⁶ Ann L. Stoler, 'Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundaries of Rule,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31, no. 1 (1990): 134.

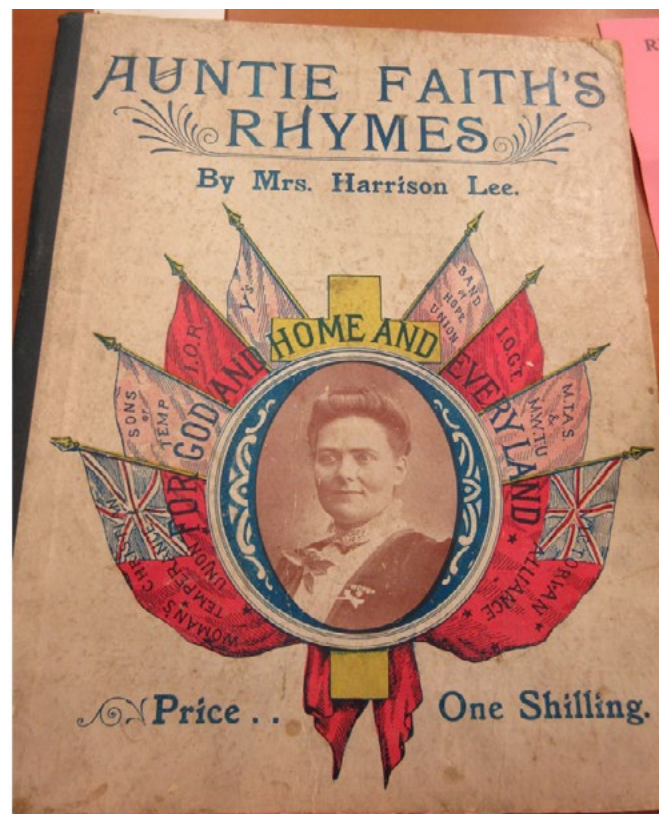


Figure 2. Cover of Bessie Harrison Lee's children's book 'Auntie Faith's Rhymes'

The photograph featured the subtitle, 'The Māoris of New Zealand, pleading for their Drink Curse to be removed from their land'. The photo depicts Lee, twelve Māori men, six Pakeha men, four Māori women, and six Māori children. They appear in both traditional and Western dress and signified a people proud of their culture. The photo was celebratory in style.³⁷ Lee is featured on the right side, not the centre of the photograph as she was normally framed. Consistent with her temperance narrative, it is the Māori girl who takes precedence over the adult male Māori leader in giving Lee the pledge to refrain from alcohol consumption. The audience of the photograph would notice that the child here is not in the periphery of political action but is taking agency below a large 'How to Vote' poster featured in the background. The centrality of the child indicates to readers of temperance literature that the child's voice will determine future prosperity and cement an enduring image in history.

The photo raises many questions for us to consider. In privileging the young Māori girl in the photo taken during the conference, who is then marginalised or made invisible within the power relations that exist in this colonial experience? In privileging the child, was Lee bypassing the current generation and interfering with kinship bonds integral to his or her whakapapa (genealogy)? In Lee's speeches and publications, she always prioritised the young child in her argument for temperance legislation by recalling her own experiences: 'my own childish sufferings have given me deep sympathy with other children in their longings for light and love'.³⁸ Since Lee's first visit to New Zealand in 1899, she always targeted children in her public

³⁷ Lee, *Auntie Faith's Rhymes*.

³⁸ Lee, *One of Australia's Daughters*, 20.

speeches, warning them against 'the wicked giant' of strong alcoholic drink.³⁹ Lee's recollection of events, the feelings of loneliness, confusion, isolation, abandonment, dislocation from family and community, qualified her to speak (she believed) with experience and insist that children deserved a voice.

The inclusion of Western and traditional clothing in the photograph highlights these people as existing simultaneously in two worlds. The women photographed are in traditional dress and appear as a wahine toa or warrior women. Their long flowing hair and beauty fall into the archetype of the 'Māori Belle' and Māori Maiden that dominated artistic depictions of Māori women in colonial New Zealand.⁴⁰ In contrast, Lee was dressed formally as the embodiment of white feminine virtue and stood in obvious contrast to the Māori featured. Symbolically, with Lee as a 'white saviour', the photograph shows binary opposites; it demarcates for Lee's western audience the perennial borders between white and black, civilised and uncivilised, clean and dirty.⁴¹ In viewing this photograph of Lee's missionary work and simultaneously drawing from the historian Malia Formes' warning against overemphasising European women at the expense of other actors in the colonial setting, more nuanced conclusions can be made. Formes observes that the authors of such works often portray their subjects as heroines, praising their fortitude amid difficult and alien circumstances, or searching for evidence of interracial sisterhood between Western and Indigenous women. Formes concludes that both the complexity of colonial social relations and the gendered nature of imperial rule remain insufficiently examined.⁴²

Formes further highlights that Indigenous people of both sexes, such as those featured in this photograph, recede into the background of such interpretations and 'may become static, monolithic supporting players in European women centred studies'.⁴³ Lee's description of Māori people in her report on the Convention supports Formes' interpretation where she used language like 'gracious', 'dignified' and 'hospitable', thus confirming contemporary religious leaders' opinions who understood Māori to be 'one of the highest types of primitive people a potential equal'.⁴⁴ Whilst Lee ignored notable church discussions where Māori were referred to as a 'virile race', the tone of the photograph endorsed the value Pakeha placed on clothing as part of the evangelising plan to civilise Māori people and convert them to Christianity.⁴⁵ The photograph therefore depicts Lee as a maternal figurehead that is giving aid to the Māori in their fight against alcohol abuse, but also the WCTU as a 'civilising' influence. In this way, WCTU members can be seen to endorse the representation of Māori women as victims in need of protection, despite the reality that leadership in traditional Māori society was not the exclusive domain of men. The significance of Māori women was grounded in their authoritative presence in cosmology, especially in the centrality of Papatuanuku: the Earth Mother and ancestress of all Māori who, for Māori society, is the source of social, cultural, spiritual, political, and economic well-being.⁴⁶ According to legal

³⁹ Mrs Harrison Lee, *South Canterbury Times*, Issue 2569, 21 August 1899.

⁴⁰ Leonard Bell, *Colonial Constructs: European Images of the Maori, 1840-1914* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1992), 8.

⁴¹ Francesca Bartlett, 'Clean, White Girls: Assimilation and Women's Work,' *Hecate* 25, no. 1 (1999): 10.

⁴² Malia B. Formes, 'Beyond Complicity Versus Resistance: Recent Work on Gender and European Imperialism,' *Journal of Social History* 28, no. 3 (1995): 630.

⁴³ Formes, 'Beyond Complicity,' 630.

⁴⁴ John M. Owens, 'Christianity and the Māori to 1840', *New Zealand Journal of History* 11, (1968): 18-40.

⁴⁵ Tennant, *Pakeha Deaconesses*, 313.

⁴⁶ Annie Mikaere, 'Maori Women: Caught in the Contradictions of a Colonial Reality,' *Waikato*

scholar Annie Mikaere, Māori women played an important role in the dissemination of culture as the composers, storytellers, guardians of the whakapapa (genealogy) and, most importantly, as bearer and nurturer of children.⁴⁷ The roles of women and men were complementary and non-hierarchical, as expressed in the gender neutral use of third person pronouns in the language, and in the overarching principle of balance in the social organisation. The photograph of the Māori Convention demonstrates the elision of Māori women's centrality, their ways of leading from the temperance movement, and the photographs and literature of the Western archive more widely.

Lee and the Māori community

Lee's attitudes towards Māori women's presentation and behaviour mirrors Kathryn Rountree's findings of early Christian missionaries in the 1820s and 1830s who focused on Māori women's bodies as a crucial site for their work of conversion.⁴⁸ Māori women's bodies, Rountree suggests, were at greater variance with British notions of feminine respectability than Māori men's bodies were with ideas of masculinity. Māori women were represented by the first British women settlers as free, unkempt, unclothed, violent, mobile, and disorderly. Convincing Māori women to groom, dress, and comport themselves in a more respectable manner became a yardstick by which British missionaries measured their own evangelical success. Lee expresses in 'The White Ribbon' (the WCTU newspaper) when referring to Māori women that: 'some are daintily dressed as many of the Europeans present. The utter regardlessness of the corset maker's art is seen in the fully developed figures'.⁴⁹

As the White Ribboners (the alternative title of WCTU members) added a social work role to evangelicalism and education, many were drawn into close association with the Māori communities by acting as advocates for Māori causes and challenging derogatory Pakeha constructs of Māori lifestyles.⁵⁰ Lee wrote admiringly that 'there is a naturalness about dress, behaviour, speech, and song, that charms the poor pakeha, who is bound and fettered and tied by law and custom'.⁵¹ Therefore, attitudes to Māori were not static, and indicates a more nuanced picture of the Pakeha and Māori relationship that was multifaceted and evolving. Whilst Māori dress was considered 'as varied and marvellous in combination and imagination' in WCTU literature, the WCTU did not seek to prescribe Māori women's presentation and behaviour through their participation, which was culturally destructive.⁵² For instance, the Māori pledge of the WCTU which Māori women signed in their hundreds, included a promise to cease from the practise of 'ta moko tattooing'.⁵³ The Māori practice of ta moko expressed a history of a person's achievements and represented status in their tribe. It also served as a reminder to people about their responsibility in life.⁵⁴ To Lee, 'the

Law Review 2, (1994): 125.

⁴⁷ Mikaere, 'Maori Women,' 125.

⁴⁸ Kathryn Rountree, 'Re-making the Maori Female Body: Marianne Williams Mission in the Bay of Islands,' *The Journal of Pacific History* 35, no. 1 (2000): 49-66.

⁴⁹ Bessie H. Lee, 'A description by a World's WCTU Missionary', *The White Ribbon*, Napier NZ May 17, 1911, volume 16, no. 191, 2.

⁵⁰ Tennant, Pakeha Deconesses, 309.

⁵¹ Bessie H. Lee, 'A Description by a World's WCTU Missionary,' 2

⁵² Bessie H. Lee, 'A Description by a World's WCTU Missionary,' 2

⁵³ Else, *Women Together*, 4.

⁵⁴ Australian Museum, 'The meaning of Ta Moko- Maori Tattooing,' last updated 30 September 2015, <https://australian.museum/about/history/exhibitions/body-art/the-meaning-of-ta-moko-maori-tattooing/#:~:text=It%20also%20served%20as%20a,lips%20and%20shoulders%20of%20women.>

tattooing of the women on lips and chin mars the beauty of young and old'.⁵⁵ Inclusion into the organisation was on Pakeha terms and Māori women's bodies became a site for assimilation.

In Lee's private collection, a photo of a Māori woman dressed in European dress taken in Invercargill—the place of Lee's first home with her second husband Andrew Cowie—epitomised these sentiments (Figure 3). In this image we see success was viewed as a Māori women's adoption of European ways, particularly in their dress and deportment. Visibility of this in WCTU literature, or in this particular photograph, did not necessarily mean 'voice' or empowerment.⁵⁶ Rather, the photo in this style 'created a specifically romantic image of melancholy that responded to current opinions about the "dying race"'.⁵⁷ This kind of portraiture in which the person stands or sits in white European dress and directs his or her gaze to the viewer lends each subject a despondent heroism which intends to convey individual dignity, but which also conveyed an essentially passive submission to the progress of 'evolution'.



Figure 3. Māori woman in European dress, taken at Amethyst Hall circa 1915.

Observations of humanitarian solidarity were emphasised by Lee's powerful description:

We clasped hands with the brave, brown women, who suffered as we suffered, in the demoralisation of husband, son, brother, and who longed to be free from the curse of nations.⁵⁸

Lee's commentary gives insight into the tensions between Lee's role as a leader and representative of Pakeha morality and her belief in the friendship or sisterhood, cemented by the shared hardships tolerated by women of diverse ethnicity. This was an area where both Pakeha and Māori women had common ground: the concern over

⁵⁵ Bessie H. Lee, 'A Description by a World's WCTU Missionary,' 2.

⁵⁶ Patricia Hayes, *Visual Genders, Visual Histories, A special issue of Gender and History* (Chicester: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 3.

⁵⁷ Margaret Maynard, 'Projections of Melancholy' in *Seeing the First Australians*, ed. Ian Donaldson and Tamsin Donaldson (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1985), 94.

⁵⁸ Lee, *One of Australia's Daughters*, 164.

the drinking culture of their men, and its impact on their children. Whilst this was an area of commonality, it was circumvented by the understanding that Pakeha had to protect their Māori sisters. What is interesting was the inclusion by Lee in the reports of the Convention that ‘the Pakehas desire that the Māoris shall stand on their own footing, but the Chief Mohi is afraid that if the Baby runs away without its Mother it may get into the fire, boiling water, or into the ditch’.⁵⁹ Contradictions were evident in that Lee publicly encouraged Māori women to speak out, but the WCTU media reported that Māori women were circumvented by Māori men and other Pakeha dignitaries. Following an address by Mrs Atkinson, President of the New Zealand WCTU, the conference considered whether temperance work among the natives should in future proceed upon independent lines. The conference concluded that the most desirable course was to continue under the auspices of the European organisation, but with a district convention of Māori workers to control the administrative details. Mrs Herbert (district Gisborne) would be organiser, and Mrs Rebecca Smith, the secretary.⁶⁰ The question of Māori addressing temperance issues independently – while discussed with ‘unanimity and great enthusiasm’ – was finally circumvented by the Pakeha leaders.

The commentary on Māori men, whilst often contradictory, highlighted the broadening of WCTU goals in defining and reshaping what it was to be a male in colonial society. Lee described Māori men in a positive light when she wrote:

Eleven strong, respected men came up to form the League. Some had babies in their arms, but these they disposed of by pulling the rugs off their own shoulders and making a bed on the floor for the small brown bundles of tired humanity.⁶¹

Framing Māori men in this way preserved, reinvented, and conjured up a construction of the power networks that worked to persuade the male Pakeha community to behave in a more exemplary fashion.

Lee and Pani Paku

Lee’s references to the Convention within her autobiography to a young Māori girl Pani Paku, and to other cultures from the South Pacific region, illustrate the complex attitudes between Indigenous people and those of European descent depicted in the WCTU written media and photography. Lee, in the following description of Pani Paku’s assimilation, was comforted. She wrote:

She [Pani Paku] was truly converted at a Bible Class camp with rare beauty. At nineteen years of age, she returned to her people, a messenger of God, pure, and true, and good.⁶²

Infantilising language, shown by Lee’s reference to Pani Paku, reinforced child and parent-like relationships between Māori and Pakeha. Her reference to Pani Paku at the Convention as ‘our girlie’ highlight Lee’s sense of ownership or parental responsibility. Lee referred to the young woman as ‘our Māori girlie, Pani Paku. How we all loved our black-eyed little princess’, illustrating her transference from ‘black’ as synonymous with evil, to a princess, epitomising innocence. She recounted the events as thus:

⁵⁹ Bessie H. Lee, ‘A Description by a World’s WCTU Missionary,’ 2.

⁶⁰ ‘Temperance Work Among Maoris’ Conference in Hawke’s Bay, *Northern Advocate*, 20 April 1911, 2.

⁶¹ ‘Temperance Work Among Maoris,’ 3.

⁶² ‘Temperance Work Among Maoris,’ 166.

A little girl ... was given to me as a gift from God here. A bit of raw material was Pani Paku. She could hardly speak of word of English, but how we loved our little brown maid and sought to train her as a missionary for her own people. Music, singing, first aid, nursing, etc. helped to equip my little princess for her future work.⁶³

By describing Pani Paku as 'raw material', Lee defined her as a 'blank canvas lacking in culture, and sophistication'. Through Lee's comments, gratification was achieved raising obedient, feminised people.

Lee's emphasis that 'she [Pani Paku] could hardly speak a word of English' emphasised the assumption that English was the superior language. Training Pani Paku and promoting domesticity demarcated boundaries between one community and another. Lee's attitudes towards language were often contradictory when she wrote, 'the poor whites who are not bilinguals are at a disadvantage, having to speak through interpreters'.⁶⁴ Lee appeared energised by the Convention where Māori women's suffering represented a point of crossroads and a meeting where both people were critical of colonialism. Lee reported that 'with the assistance of men, both Māori and Pakeha, the fellowship was unique especially when some could not converse without an interpreter'.⁶⁵ In 1912, after the Convention, 'The White Ribbon' was enlarged and three of its pages were filled with news of the Māori unions printed in the Māori language.⁶⁶ At international conferences, reports on Māori missions were also aired. For example, at the WWCTU Conference in Glasgow in 1910, Miss Anderson Hughes reported on behalf of New Zealand that 'much good work is being accomplished amongst the native people'.⁶⁷ Her report continued with a detailed mention of leaders:

There are 13 Māori Unions with a membership of 330. Much has been done by the organisers this year. Accompanied by Mrs Pani Te Tan, and Miss Hera Stirling (Māori Sisters) devoted to the interests of the women of their own race, Miss Powell visited many Māori pahs in Hawke's Bay, confirming existing Unions and organising new ones. They had perilous adventures by boat, coach and on horseback. Mrs Pani Te Tau's and Miss Stirling's later labours in and around Gisborne called forth the gratitude and admiration of their Pakeha sisters in that district. Miss Te Tau, at the call of the WCTU gave herself to this work with heart and soul, asking nothing in return but travelling expenses and hospitality.⁶⁸

The report by Miss Anderson Hughes that called for 'gratitude' from Pakeha on the work of Māori women leaders occurred during a backdrop of Pakeha men analysing Māori mythology as evidence of primordial behaviour.⁶⁹ Colonisers took the domination of men over women within a colonised people 'as an index of savagery'.⁷⁰ From Christian texts, less than complimentary articles on the ill treatment of women and infanticide

⁶³ 'Temperance Work Among Maoris,' 164.

⁶⁴ Bessie Harrison Lee Cowie, 'The First Maori Convention of the WCTU', *The White Ribbon*, Napier, May 17, 1911, 2.

⁶⁵ *The White Ribbon Digest, Centennial Issue 100 years in print, July 1895-1995*, Informing New Zealand Women, New Zealand WCTU National Headquarters, 200 Nile Street Nelson, New Zealand.

⁶⁶ 'Women's Christian Temperance Union', *Otago Daily Times*, Issue 15405, 18 March 1912, 8.

⁶⁷ World Women's Christian Temperance Union Conference, Glasgow 1910.

⁶⁸ WWCTU, Glasgow 1910.

⁶⁹ Caroline Ralston, 'Māori Women and the Politics of Tradition: What Roles and Power Did, Do, and Should Maori Women Exercise?,' *The Contemporary Pacific* 5, no. 1 (1993): 23-44.

⁷⁰ Deborah B. Rose, 'Land Rights and Deep Colonising, The Erasure of Women: Aboriginal Law,' *Bulletin* 3, no. 85 (1996): 6-13.

figure prominently as indications of the need of colonised people for the educating influence of 'good' white people.⁷¹ White society was depicted as a radical dichotomy between the good and the bad. The good were those who were religious, usually educated, and respectable, who wished to protect and civilise the Aboriginal population and give a degree of recognition to Indigenous ways of knowing and being.⁷² The bad were those who drank and had little regard for Christian morality. Rescuing Māori women from the 'oppression of Māori men' and educating them in Christianity was then deemed a success. The colonial protection narrative was illustrated by newspaper reports on the 1911 New Zealand WCTU conference and included discussion of young Māori women. During the discussion, strong exception to girls being employed in the shearing sheds, and a resolution condemning the practice, was adopted.⁷³ Māori women who had left the confines of family were described as particularly vulnerable to the sexual advances of shearers whom Lee further described as 'degraded Pakeha'. Whilst Māori women attended, emphasis was placed on the European delegation of which Lee was a part. Mission works, both WCTU and church, also contained implicit criticism of male Māori attitudes to Māori women and sanctioned the concept of their victim's status.

The common aim of a temperance lifestyle was linked to the Māori people adopting Christianity. Lee wrote positively about Māori people and what she believed were qualities the Pakeha could replicate, stating that 'the spirit of St. James reached the Māori long before his Epistle arrived by the hand of the white man'.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the NZWCTU and Lee saw themselves as rescuing Māori women who were considered victims of sexist, backward attitudes. Lee also claimed that the WCTU saved the Māori community through the adoption of the Pakeha religion. The Chieftainess Mohi (1840-1928) who was a prominent Māori leader in the Hawke's Bay regions, with a frank simplicity, told of drink abounding among both men and women until the WCTU was formed. She said, 'the religion increased, the people began to be good; anyone found drunk was reported to the Māori Council and the delinquent was fined; other branches were formed, and now the people are good'.⁷⁵ Lee also highlighted that the influence of the WCTU was widespread, as 'weddings, tangis and hui are now held without a drop of intoxicating liquor and the improvement in the homes, dress and conduct of the Natives is marked ...'.⁷⁶ The WCTU worked in many ways to intervene in the public sphere, creating and adapting a space for temperance.

Conclusion

Within the imperial power matrix, at this moment in the WCTU Convention, women were represented as united in their criticism of alcohol consumption and the devastating effect it had on the lives of New Zealand women. The colonial population was therefore not monolithic in its support of the status quo. Its power was a tenuous site of struggle, as indicated by the prolific debates surrounding the legal restriction on the licence sale of alcoholic drinks. The intercultural exchanges at this key moment between Māori and Pakeha, as seen through the eyes of Australian woman activist Bessie Harrison Lee, evidenced a common aim. The WCTU's framework aimed to rid their respective communities of alcohol, or 'the waipiro'. Māori women were framed

⁷¹ Jane Haggis, 'The Social Memory of a Colonial Frontier,' *Australian Feminist Studies* 16, no. 34 (2001): 95.

⁷² Haggis, 'The Social Memory,' 94.

⁷³ 'Temperance Work Among Maoris' Conference in Hawke's Bay, *Northern Advocate*, 20 April 1911, 2.

⁷⁴ Bessie Harrison Lee Cowie, 'The First Māori Convention of the WCTU,' 3.

⁷⁵ 'Māori Temperance Convention,' *Hastings Standard*, 15 April 1911, 5.

⁷⁶ *White Ribbon*, New Zealand, 1911.

through Lee's description as possessing powerful motivation to remove completely the consumption of alcoholic beverages from their community, a shared intercultural space. Lee's description however, undermined the reality that Māori women had always worked to bring about change, and was restricted in its understanding of the multiple ways in which Māori women knew about (and could exercise) leadership. Whilst Lee was energised by the fellowship she witnessed, it was circumvented by her rigid and perspective of New Zealand's first people.

Surviving the artillery of snow

Susan Laura Sullivan
Tokai University

pulling back, sweeping boughs releasing
the wind delivers its first blow
loosens wires, shrapnel stings
ice pounds the dome of an umbrella
hurriedly erected
skin inverted, innards spread
skeleton bent then snapped
in two.

shovels boots pathways patterns
passed from one year to the next,
nuances lost on you.
toes numb, turn blue yet
each year you fumble a little less
get better at fastening buttons
in accord
with the skies.

the spring after a summer fire,
gold with wattle.
green flower, red stalk, kangaroo
paws reveal such daring

only when undergrowth is at ankle
height.

the creek and the winter way you
have to take that step
then that step
then that
and *becarefullyoucouldlose*
a shoe in the mud. but even so,
the rain hardly chills the bone.

The sale is not complete/

Susan Laura Sullivan
Tokai University

how to leave america is in a motel
comfortable
yet do the locks really work?
a crack, a hair left in the basin
next door some *fastfoodfastfry* joint
across the way planes taxi in taxi out.
the menu is an add-on here and there and
if not added on then
the sale is not complete/

how to leave america is
your lover in pieces and hearts worn
and when asked to fight
or *get the fuck out*
flight is the answer.

II. just as easily as I came, I depart.

III. I guess we all got off lightly.

IV. downer than a can of worms, my head is pickled.

Three Poems

John C. Ryan

Poem 1

Canticle: A Sonnet

sentinel, I dwell in this quadrangle,
gone at dusk as they come, pied currawong
song cleaves the crisp mucous air, I belong
to decibels impelled at odd angle,
accessible to larks who embrangle
along my fuguebrisk updraughted headlong
brawn is borne of golden pollen threadsong,
falsetto at depth of dark tangle.
when by dusk courtyard flush with canticle
and woodswallows croon lunar euphony,
even I blush with moonlight in my cell
and all good hollows of me gush dolce—
again in every sleeping particle,
this harmony awakes and swallows me.

Poem 2

Plant Ekphrasis: In Response to Jacob Bigelow's *American Medical Botany*
(1817)

I.

Sanguinaria Canadensis

When taken in a large dose it irritates

the fauces, leaving an impression in

the throat for considerable time

after it is swallowed. -Jacob Bigelow, *American Medical Botany*, 1817

the rootstalk is a sluggish creature

inhumed supinely

one stubby appendage looks

fleshy as a ham hock

other organelles

awaken

drowsily in the tepid heft of vernal dirt

trichome hairs capillary

fine

secreting evermore compulsively

a fusty rhizospheric speech

in the spring after the earth

softens

after cold

residuum subsides

I notice

the lobes & sinuses

of leaf whorls like

parasols

through which the flower slides

fracturies of veins underside

a puccoon, a poughkone, a flush of sunken fire

a peculiar resin

a bitter principle

an acrid fact

sharpens appetite

stiffens linen

h a s t e n s

circulation

thimblest delicacy

transient vision tintured

in memory.

II.

Datura Stramonium

The iuyce of Thorne apples,

boiled with hog's grease

to the forme of an unguent or salve,

cureth all inflammations whatsoever. -Gerarde 1597

the stippled stems curve like

young elk

antlers

four-valved

capsule

gaping

pericarp electrified

trumpet blossoms gifting ambrosially

anther splay ramifying

shrouded in alabaster

voile

rank in growth

foliately ebullient

spectring fields and

roadsides

narcotic nebulizer of ancients

acrid to palate

vertigo-triggering

pupil-dilatating

delirium-

inducing

unguent to taste

whose inspissated juice

allays tic doloureux

cranial paroxysm

syphilitic ulceration

& whatsoever you wish

from *datūrus*, to give

Poem 3

duh: on remembering plant names

I.

EUPATORIUM PERFOLITATUM–*PERFOLIATUM* [for the leaf’s rough margin, its suctorian engulfing of stem] PADDLE-LEAF PLANT© [suggestion mine] ~~CONNATUS~~ [this denotes ‘double’] ~~CONNATUM~~ [connotes?] *SEROTINUM* [hybrid] [entomologically related to serotonin] ~~through~~ THOROUGH WORT [as in, thorough-going? yeah, but also aperient and emetic, mate, so *through* works] COMMON BONESET [making casts for breaks—someone I knew waaan...] *a tonic stimulant promoting digestion strengthening viscera restoring tone to system* (Bigelow, 1817, p. whatever) [~~dialysis~~ NO [duh] diaphoresis] FEVERWORT [sudorificsuperterrificsweatmakerbonereshifter :-)] (ACHTUNG—subjective assertions)] or SWEATING-PLANT [for improving ~~diaphoresis~~ NIET dialysis in elderly—UNSUBSTANTIATED] utterly bitter, little astringency, even less acrimony, in a carafe of isinglass [dafug is that?] AGUEWEED [OMG love this one folks, can we ~~resussitate~~ ~~resusitate~~ ~~resuscitate~~–resurrect it?] BRONZE-BUTTERFLY PLANT [for its etymological intimations, providoria] NECTARATOR OF WHITE M HAIRSTREAK enhancing larval fevers [also THOROUGH WAX & CROSS ~~WART~~ WORT [suffixed to food & medicine specie.] [it’s a collagen ~~attained~~ obtained from dried fish bladders] [duh] [~~who?~~] (first known use: 1943)

II.

PHYTOLACFUS [milked flora—boulderdash] PHYTOLACCCA [*lac*,
 secretion of lacks bugs, red dye, of ‘lacquer’ not ‘lactitude’] ipso facto DECANDRA
 [10 stamens & styles] DECANFRA [decanted-berry—duh²—THOUGH NOT EXACTLY
^{OFF}] _{now} *origin probably American* [hentsce] @PHYTOLACCCA AMERICANA
 {/} AMERICAN POKEWEED binomially {&} commonly, let me *reeschar*
you, UMERICAN if/but/then POKE SALLET SALAD [wut?] <insert blank
 space> *young shoots & leaves not roots* {S a A mid-15th c. L combat L helmet E with
 curve T over nape} [c. 1300, P Middle Low O German *poken*, K ‘to stick with knife’
E] bastardizarization of POCON und PUCCOON und POUGHKONE und autre
 ALGONQUIN appoliations [thusly] POKEROOT *frequently exceeding man’s leg in*
thickness [thusless] DRAGONBERRY [cf. note e.190.a.1.45674.r] ALGONQUIN
 BERRY [my numbination] *heat & smarting on first application* INKBERRY thisNESS
 [_{FUGACIOUS, YAKNOW, FUGUE-LIKE}] *to ~~improve red wine colour~~* DISPENSE FROM CLOSE-STOPPED
^{PHVIALS} #JALAP {_{@purgativeemeticathartic}} #GARGET {_{@inflamedeweudder}}
 #CKCKCOCKCKCKUM {_{@koekumIndianhealingtree}} PIGEON BERRIES *sweet*
& nauseous, acrimony-free [_{GOOD FOR PASSENGERPIGEONSINPIDGES}] #SUCCUS PROPRIUS©
 [its _{RETURNING} JUICE] darkpurplingduhness

III.

[~~thirteen~~ ^{9 ways of looking at a blackbird 'poison tree'}] (i) ToXiCo-DeNdRoN [literally 'TOXIC TENDRIL'] {thence} VeRnIx [not vernal {insert duh} but duhrived from birthing custard? ^[how dafug] *THAT'S AN IMAGINATIVE LEAP*] (ii) RhUs VeRnIx [pronounce *ru^{sss} sss^e* *roo^{sss} sss^s*] a distressing cutaneous malfiction even from the effluvium [a discharge, that which effluviates] (iii) PoIsOn SuMaC [from Arabic *summaq*, for red] a kuanity of thicke viscud flewid immediutely effludes ^{RUSE ROUGE ROGUE SURE} (iv) PoIsOn WoOd {for the} strong, penetrating, disagreeable effluviant [or biblically] (v) PoIsOn TrEe a strange sense of tumefaction [a swelling, a ^{tum} or a ^{dis} ^{ten} ^{tion} early 15c. from Medieval Latin *tumefaccionem* (nominative *tumefaccio*)]^{1etymology.org} (vi) PoIsOn AsH ^{THE BURNING SENSATION & ITCHING SO UNBEARABLE} I ^[though being not a true ash] could scarcely discern any object (vii) SwAmP-SuMaCh [a cateachresis, a mixing up of sword] (viii) DoGwOoD ^{the fallacy of depending on vulgar or provincial names} [duh] pithifull planet {thence} (ix) ThUnDeRwOoD [origin of psychogenic ^{iiiiitt} ^{chch} ^{chhh} ^{chch} ^{chch} ^{chch} ^{chch} ^{chch} ^{chch}] *thought of itch that becomes itch* [5 planets are aligning—MercuryVenusMarsJupiterSaturn+Earth-then-6] [6/9/2022] Wallace Stevens never wrote a [duh]² poem like: “Among twenty snowy mountains/The only moving thing/Was the eye of the blackbird/I was of 3 9 minds/Like a ~~PoIsOn~~ TrEe” ^[fullstop]

Seed

Clare Goodall Travis

The seed lay in a drawer, in a packet with five or six of its siblings.

It was tiny, no larger than a crumb. Yet, it held within it the instructions for growing into a plant, with stem and stamen and calyx and other mysterious functions besides.

The seed waited.

It waited some more.

Sometimes it sang songs to keep its spirits up. Eventually, its family could combine to deliver a note-perfect and rousing rendition of, 'Oh When the Seeds Go Marching In.'

When it wasn't singing, it was often thinking. It wondered about stuff, from the subtle smell of peppermints to the cracks of light that came into the packet at consistent yet not identical intervals, and the occasional bumps as other items were shuffled around nearby. It came to know intimately the days and seasons of the drawer.

When it wasn't singing or thinking, it was still humming. Humming with the secret vibrations of life and potential held within its unremarkable brown form.

And then finally, there came the day.

The drawer opened. A scrabbling hand found the packet and pulled it out triumphantly.

'Here they are!' a young voice called out. 'My seeds!'

Then, a series of jerky movements through space, with a thunderous BOOM-BOOM-BOOM that accompanied each jerk.

The seeds trembled.

Suddenly, a change in the light and air. A rushing, a sense of expanding space, a squawk of birdsong.

A pause.

Without warning, chubby fingers ripped open the top of the packet, then gently pinched, lifted and sprinkled the seeds into a waiting hole in the earth. More soil followed on top, and darkness returned.

But this wasn't the same as the darkness of the drawer. It had an altogether different quality – a warmth, a closeness, a feeling that all was as it should be.

And then came a sound. A squeak of metal against resisting metal, and a faint gurgling.

A moment later, the seed was drenched with the water that came flooding through the soil. It was shocking, and exhilarating.

The seed felt a tingling that spread through its entire being.

'Live,' urged the water silently.

The seed could feel itself expanding, soaking up the water, and stretching into new and previously unimaginable dimensions.

A profound relief came over it.

Now, all that remained was to grow.

Editorial Note

It has been brought to our attention that a review of Leigh Straw's book, *The Petticoat Parade*, published in *Limina* 27.2 contained a statement about the Whadjuk Noongar people which was inaccurate.

Our reviewer stated that the Whadjuk Noongar people were 'not mentioned by name and barely at all in general' within Straw's book. While it is true that the references to the Whadjuk Noongar people by name are both few and short – and indeed, are partially contained within the endnotes (167, 171) and Author's Note (156) – they are in fact explicitly mentioned both by name (18, 34-35, 48) and through general reference to the local Indigenous peoples of the Perth region (22, 34-35). Furthermore, Straw herself makes it clear in these short sections that there are two main reasons why *The Petticoat Parade* does not feature a reflection on the Indigenous voice. Firstly, Straw outlines that prostitution was not a familiar concept within Indigenous society prior to contact with European settlers. And secondly, the Whadjuk Noongar were themselves legally prohibited from entry into Perth between 1927 and 1954 without a pass, and '[w]hile Aboriginal women might have been given a pass to work in the city, they were not allowed to wander the streets, as streetwalkers certainly did' (35). These sections are short, and it is possible that some readers might skim past these few paragraphs and not accord them a greater significance than if they been highlighted within the introduction, and thus allowed the reader to better understand the Indigenous context and experience of prostitution and crime in early 20th century Perth.

At *Limina*, we take all feedback that we receive seriously, and while we believe that each work ought to be judged on its own merits – whether it is a book review, piece of creative writing, or an original article – in this instance, the *Limina* Collective, in consultation with the Editorial Board, is of the opinion that the error in question was misleading enough to warrant a published correction. It is important that we acknowledge the Indigenous people of Australia within our research, and seek to highlight their stories – but not so much so that we seek to find errors of omission where in fact there are none.

Erica Steiner

University of Sydney

Limina Book Reviews Editor

Fowler, Xavier, *Not Playing the Game: Sport and Australia's Great War*; Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 2021; paperback; pp. ix + 278, 11 b/w illustrations, 2 tables; RRP \$39.99; ISBN: 9780522877700.

In his first monograph, *Not Playing the Game*, Xavier Fowler analyses how during World War I (WWI), or the Great War of 1914-1918 as it was called in the British Empire, the combined efforts of the middle-class dominated media, federal and state governments, and sporting administrations promoted military enlistment through the prism of sport. However, 'sport in wartime Australia did not unify the nation' (7) as the middle-class loyalists of Empire tried to instigate. Instead, Fowler illustrates how the true history of sport within Australian society – an almost continuous acrimonious contestation between middle-class and working-class values, ethics, and morals – has been misrepresented ever since the war ended for Australians back in 1918. This is notable in the divergent evolution of amateurism and professionalism within various sports, and which at times further fostered this acrimony into physical violence.

In chapter one, Fowler provides a brief historical overview of how sport had, within the period after federation and leading into the Great War, 'both revealed and instigated various social tensions' (13) already polarised within (white settler) Australian society between Protestant and Catholic, middle-class and working-class. Fowler demonstrates Sir Frederic Eddleston's declaration, that class warfare in Australia 'is a figment of the imagination' (14), has always been a myth stemming from conservative dogmatic propaganda.

Chapter two deals with the outbreak of war in 1914 and how the disastrous Gallipoli campaign, followed by the war of attrition in France and Belgium, in 1915 quickly eroded support for the war. The 'targeting of sportsmen and their spectators [became] a key component of [government] efforts' (65) to maintain enlistment quotas through promoting sportsmen as best suited to being in the military, due to their prominence as role-models within Australian society as well their athleticism.

Chapter three examines how middle-class imperial loyalists pressured sporting administrations to establish recruitment committees, but also how the working-class professional sportsman was not 'entirely immune to the call to arms' (103). The general strikes and failed conscription campaigns between 1916 and 1917 impacted recruitment in rural regions more so than in the cities. It also produced overt resentment towards loyalist attitudes, illustrating the non-existent 'national masculine character' (96) was only ever middle-class media propaganda.

Next, chapter four analyses the funding which sporting administrations procured for the government's war chest. Although 'it ranked behind the disputes over conscription' (136), it was extremely controversial and exacerbated class warfare between middle-class and working-class, as simply playing sport became a catalyst for violent and acrimonious discontent.

In chapter five, Fowler illustrates how sport as a mechanism to 'mobilise the masses militarily' failed as the middle-class had largely labelled sport 'an unnecessary distraction' (147). The 'overwhelming resources required to facilitate a war' produced

polices to restrict sport in the hope of ‘focusing the public resources and attention back on the war’ (167), but instead this only further entrenched acrimonious discontent.

Chapter six first examines how, despite overwhelmingly being a loyal cadre of citizens and often pillars of their local communities, Australians of German heritage were subjected to systemic discrimination during WWI that included expulsion for those who were long-time members and players of various sporting clubs. Similarly, Irish Catholics faced overt social and political retaliation, after the Easter Uprising within Ireland, from Protestants in positions of power, a condition that continued in Australia until the 1970s.

Chapter seven explores women’s participation during the war. Donald McKinnon, the government’s chief enlistment strategist, was ‘convinced ... the women element [would] save the situation’ (201) regarding failing enlistment quotas. Women representatives from swimming, golf, rowing, croquet – all middle-class amateur pursuits – became key to McKinnon’s efforts. Fowler also reminds the reader that the first women’s Australian Rules match was played by predominantly working-class women in Perth in 1915 as a fund-raiser and was enthusiastically supported within society.

Lastly, chapter eight looks at how ‘[t]he public school community, acting as the microcosm of Australian middle-class ... embraced the decelerations of war against Germany with zeal’ (228), and how during the war it became an ultra-militant bastion of indoctrination for Empire loyalism.

Fowler’s conclusions reinforce his overall narrative, that the notion of Australian soldiers during WWI being legendary sportsman has become a propagandistic mantra within both media and sporting associations, and does not reflect historical truths. As Donald MacKinnon noted in a speech to the Victorian Cricket Association just three months after his son had been killed during the final weeks of the war, ‘when the history of the War [would come] to be written, the work of sport would be fully realised’ (252). McKinnon might have supported the modern narrative, but the sporting Anzac mythos as it currently stands, remains problematic due its inaccurate portrayal of both sportsmen and soldiers during WWI.

Yet despite Fowler’s well-constructed and convincing arguments on how (white) Australian society was shaped during the early twentieth century through tensions between professionalism and amateurism in sport, Fowler’s evidence is almost exclusively metropolitan, male, and more often than not centred upon Victorian institutions, organisations, or associations at the expense of other Australian locales. While Fowler acknowledges the limitations of his source materials regarding the participation of Indigenous Australians and women in sport, and the scope of his doctoral original research was dictated by archival access, space should have been provided to expand upon the original thesis within this book. Furthermore, a much more detailed exploration of how regional and rural locations responded to the war through sport would have resulted in an overall fairer assessment. Of course, given that *Not Playing the Game* is a development of the author’s doctoral dissertation completed at Melbourne University in 2018, it is not surprising there is a clear Melbournian bias to the source material. There is great potential for further research to develop from Fowler’s work, especially within Indigenous, women’s, and regional sporting histories.

Melbournian criticisms from a NSW sports fan of all four football codes firmly to one side, in *Not Playing the Game*, Fowler has produced an important socio-

political and socio-economic analysis of how the development of amateurism and professionalism within Australian sport during the early twentieth century heavily shaped Australian society, the self-mythologising responses to the Great War since it ended in 1918, and how middle-class ethics only dominated working-class values because they overwhelmingly dominated positions of power within media and politics. Overall, it is a well-researched and well-written work, and fills an important gap in Australian historical studies. This should be of serious interest to sporting, military, and socio-political historians alike. Regardless of the Victorian flavour, there is sufficient evidence presented within this work to ensure it will be of value to any Australian wishing to have a better understanding of sport's important role in shaping our history during the early years of federation, and not just regarding the modern sporting Anzac mythos.

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Sutherland, Andrew, *Paradise (point of transmission)*, Perth, Fremantle Press, 2022; paperback, pp. 96; RRP \$29.99; ISBN 9781760991319

Andrew Sutherland's debut poetry collection, *Paradise (point of transmission)* plays with memory and spectres in an intimate treasury of poems, focusing primarily on Sutherland's HIV-positive diagnosis while living in Singapore. The collection is split into three parts, (narrative), (metaphor) and (paradise), which each in their own way document Sutherland's forced return to Perth from Singapore upon diagnosis. While distinct, each section – each fragment of the poet's experiences – is haunted in the same way by spectres of the mythological, historical and pop-cultural, rendered in as tangible a way as the poet's own memories.

In this collection, the tangible experiences of Sutherland's diagnosis, his relationships both familial and romantic, and his forcible return to Australia are all melded by these aforementioned spectres. The imagery, metaphor and other modes of portrayal Sutherland engages in blur the lines of reality in these spectres' relationships to his own experiences.

This unfolding of hauntings and spectres can be observed even in the collection's first few pages such as in 'AIDS Play 1991' (12). This first poem summons subtle images of a suburban upbringing in cyclical hauntings that evoke fluid temporalities. The subtle hauntings and playful temporalities that this initial poem establishes continue and grow throughout the collection. While the hauntings of this book begin in relatively grounded images of suburbia across the first few poems, they delve into far more surreal territory as the collection continues. The histories, both personal and collective, become more abstracted and niche, the pop-culture becomes more overt, and the mythology becomes more visceral. Sutherland jerks us through their own memories with the help of Buffy the Vampire Slayer and X-Men, stories of the Buddhist divinity Guanyin and the jiangshi (revenants in Chinese mythology), and personal, romantic and familial histories alongside pre-Incan child sacrifice. The tangibility afforded to these hauntings amidst Sutherland's grounded, cataclysmic experiences in their HIV diagnosis help these poems illustrate the role that pop-culture, history and mythology have played in the poet's post-diagnosis understanding of self.

Upon reading, it is clear that as much as these poems are haunted by suburbia and by Singapore, they are haunted also by queer teenage-hood and a longing for Keanu Reeves' penis; by a person of the pandemic and a superhero with a streak in her hair; by the poet at various stages in their life and in their relationship to their own body and surroundings. All of which is explored in deft poetic practice.

The appearances of and references to X-Men, the Gorgon, the jiangshi, Buffy Summers, Guanyin and more allow Sutherland to illustrate his own personal hauntings in prismatic angles, taking the reader by the hand through his haunted, personal narrative of diagnosis, treatment, and life with HIV.

The specific way Sutherland has constructed this collection became clear to me when I came to the poem 'public health silence of god' (72-3). Here, Sutherland memorialises periods of his treatment in snippets of a script, as though this were a

found poem. Most immediately, this script could be seen as referencing the poet's work as a theatre-maker. However, in light of all that can be observed in terms of Sutherland's articulative relationship with pop-culture, memory and histories, perhaps the script presented in 'public health silence of god' is to be looked back on years from now as another site of articulation itself and another haunting of the poet's memory. In same way that Sutherland has come to articulate himself through mythology, history and pop-culture, and has used this to reframe his memories post-diagnosis, perhaps this false script in 'public health silence of god' is meant to serve a similar function – a new piece of pop-culture through which Sutherland can reframe his own memories and experiences.

Before concluding, I believe it is important to briefly outline how this collection performs a poetic practice that interstate Australian poetics cannot. While not immediately pertinent to the ways in which Paradise (point of transmission) deals in memory and spectres, for all Sutherland does to demarcate a complicated relationship with place in this collection, they have produced a work that is uniquely Western Australian.

Beginning with the cover of this collection, depicting mirrored ibises associated with aspects of both Perth and Singapore, this collection's relationship to the geography of the Indian Ocean is clear. The subject matter of the poetry only deepens this as it illustrates the poet's fraught relationship with both Singapore and Perth. It is in this way that Sutherland's debut collection joins the likes of Robert Wood, SoulReserve, and many more whose work contributes to understated poetic practices in Western Australia that seek to delineate our state's literary relationship with the Indian Ocean and countries that share its waters.

In this complicated relationship with place and a focus on memory and spectres, Paradise (point of transmission) uses its hauntings of mythology, pop-culture, and history to initiate and command an intimate relationship between the poet and the reader. As Sutherland returns to his experiences since diagnosis in 2014 and beyond, revisiting them through pop-culture, mythology, and history, the reader is invited to join him. Being jerked by Sutherland's deft poetry through fluid temporalities, each haunted by their own memory related to Sutherland's HIV status, the reader is encouraged to reflect on how mythology, pop-culture, and history may influence and appear as spectres in their own memories.

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Straw, Leigh, *The Ballroom Murder*, Fremantle, Fremantle Press, 2022; paperback, pp. 184, RRP: \$32.99, ISBN: 9781760990572.

In her latest book, *The Ballroom Murder*, her second with Fremantle Press, Leigh Straw recounts the story of *R v Audrey Campbell Jacob*: a sensational murder trial which shocked 1920's Perth. The situation appeared to be a clear-cut case of wilful murder. However, as the media release for the book notes, the defence mounted by lawyer Arthur Haynes, which included 'a publicity campaign in the media that ensured a sympathetic outcome for his client,' resulted in a verdict that demonstrates 'the power of the press and privilege'.

Having previously written a short article on the case myself ('Constructing gender in the press: The case of Audrey Jacob', *Law and History* 6 (1), 2019, 58-84), I was interested to read this account. I was not disappointed. Straw, an *Associate Professor of History* at Notre Dame University, has a reputation for compassionate and empathetic biographies of women and crime during the early twentieth century, and *The Ballroom Murder* is no exception. Straw tells the story of a sensational court case that has long fascinated Western Australians. The case has been examined in several shorter academic works and has been related in popular blog posts, short films and podcasts, however Straw's decision to deal with the case in the form of a monograph allows her to grapple with both the complexities of the case and the backgrounds of the characters, in a way that has not previously been attempted.

Using archival sources, including Haynes' case notes deposited in the little-known archives of the Old Court House Law Museum, and numerous newspaper accounts of the day, Straw begins with the background and early life of the defendant, twenty-year-old Audrey Jacob. She then traces the story of the shooting of Audrey's former fiancé, Cyril Gidley, by Audrey on the crowded floor of the Government House ballroom in Perth on the 27th of August, 1925. It was witnessed by hundreds of spectators and the prosecution was confident that the charge of murder against Audrey would stick, but, as Straw takes us carefully through the Inquest and trial, she outlines the meticulously crafted defence from Haynes that sees Audrey receive a full acquittal, against all odds. This defence included the sympathetic portrayal of Audrey adopted by the *Mirror* and made possible by Haynes' previous relationship with the newspaper. The story Straw reveals is full of scandal, melodrama and sensational headlines and makes for fascinating reading.

By detailing the evidence given at the Inquest and trial, Straw takes us through stories of broken engagements, accusations of cruelty, smuggling, and death threats made against the victim. She recounts the visit made by Audrey's parents to Laura Chipper, one of the early members of the Women Police, where the Jacobs confided their uneasiness with Audrey's behaviour of smoking, drinking, and visiting men. The Women Police was formed in 1917 and was concerned with monitoring and policing the women and girls of Perth and Fremantle. Their first two members, Laura Chipper and Helen Dugdale, were responsible for protecting young women from being 'lured' into sex-work, preventing truancy and keeping children off the streets. Straw also examines Audrey's movements in the months after the trial and follows this with a

short section on her later life.

Despite *The Ballroom Murder* being aimed squarely at the general, rather than academic, reader (as evidenced by the lack of an index and the citation style), it is nonetheless based on rigorous standards of academic research. Straw's quotations from these accounts help to bring the story to life, and she describes in detail many of the photographs printed in the extensive newspaper coverage of the case, although it is unfortunate that the images themselves were not included in this book. The photographs which appeared in the press reports at the time were integral to Haynes' defence and would have added to the impact of Straw's research. A section on fortune-telling, although more tenuously connected to the case (Audrey and Gidley visit fortune tellers during their engagement) is interesting in its own right, as it sheds light on the role of women – both those who were professional fortune tellers as well as their clients – at a time in the early twentieth century when this line of work was illegal. Fortune tellers could receive sentences of up to six months imprisonment for 'pretending to tell fortunes' (21).

Straw finishes the book with a thoughtful section in which she reflects on Audrey's motives and analyses aspects of Haynes' defence. She looks also at missed opportunities by the prosecution and ponders the many questions which still remain, and may always remain, unanswered by the historiography of this case. Did Audrey Jacob get away with murder? Or was she a victim of post-traumatic stress? Was Cyril Gidley a hapless victim? And the big question; why did Audrey Jacob shoot Cyril Gidley? Underlying this story is the fact that the sentence for the crime of wilful murder, at this time, was death. Could Audrey's gender have been a factor in the jury's decision? While not answering this question directly, Straw notes that Audrey was a 20-year-old art student of Anglo descent from a respectable family whose beauty and fashionable clothing were noted in newspaper reports. She suggests that if Audrey was not white, not 'respectable' and had the killing not taken place in a society setting, perhaps the jury's verdict may have been different. As Straw states, we shall never know the exact truth of what happened and the answers to some questions remain a mystery. When there are gaps in the historical record 'historians have to make their own deliberations and interpretations about evidence from the past' (134).

I expect that *The Ballroom Murder*, written in Straw's trademark eminently readable style, will prove to be a popular work. Not only does it deliver on its promise to examine in detail Haynes' defence strategy and the publicity campaign which helped see Jacob acquitted, but it also sheds light on attitudes to masculinity and femininity in the interwar years of Perth and the role of the Women Police in policing the morality of young women in Perth and Fremantle. It is a valuable addition to the history of women's crime in Australia.

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**Yen, Mavis Gock, *South Flows the Pearl: Chinese Australian Voices*,
Siaoman Yen & Richard Horsburgh (eds), Sydney, Sydney University Press, 2022;
paperback, pp xvi + 387, 8 maps; RRP \$ 40.00; ISBN 9781743327241.**

Even though Chinese people have played an integral part in the Australian narrative, their history has generally either been ignored or whitewashed by past historians who have privileged non-Chinese observations and misrepresented Chinese Australians. Yet despite these barriers, Mavis Gock Yen has managed to re-establish her people as active historical agents not passive victims. *South Flows the Pearl* 'stands as a record of her community on their own terms' (5). I was saddened to read that she never saw her work in print however, I believe her legacy will result in a more nuanced understanding of Chinese Australians in our historical narrative.

Because this work has been posthumously published, there is, in addition to a Preface written by Yen herself, a substantial and important amount of additional material preceding the main contents. In the Foreword, Kam Louie provides a succinct reflection on the content of the interviews, while Sophie Loy-Wilson's Introduction provides an important academic contextualisation and analysis of Yen's work. The editors of this work, Siaoman Yen and Richard Horburgh (Yen's daughter and son-in-law) also provide the reader with a biography of Yen, who was born Mavis Gock Ming in Perth, Western Australia in 1916, to a successful immigrant Chinese shopkeeper, William Gock Ming, and Bendigo-born Australian woman Mabel Jenkins. From 1925-35 the family returned to China, then Yen returned to Sydney for tertiary studies, before moving to Hong Kong in 1939, and escaping to China in 1941 following the Japanese occupation. She remained in China during the Cultural Revolution, and only returned to Australia in 1981 where she resumed her tertiary studies. Yen's turbulent lived experiences, shared with so many of her interviewees, arguably form an additional narrative thread within the interviews themselves.

The body of *South Flows the Pearl* is comprised of twenty-two chapters – each with an editorial introduction of its own – documenting twelve Chinese Australians whose recollections were given in Cantonese, Mandarin and other local dialects. Yen, acting as a pioneer in her own field, worked in desperation to record forty-five hours of cassette-taped interviews with elderly Chinese Australians over the clattering of yum cha plates or over a pot of tea in family homes. She had the foresight to know that these stories were essential to provide a more nuanced version of the history of Country towns, cities, the outback, and coast. These twenty-two chapters do not prioritise the 1850s Gold Rushes, but identify Chinese immigration in Western Australia, Northern Queensland and the transnational nature of many Chinese Australian lives. Yen's narrative balances the flow of Chinese culture to Australia and then sensitively unravels the complex feelings many Chinese Australians experienced on their journey to their ancestral family village. Meticulous record keeping would reflect Chinese Australian lives on their terms. Despite the lack of support from prospective publishers, Yen carried out this task that would probably have eluded academics from outside the Chinese community. Being a part of their linguistic community, she was able to draw out from her interviewee's subtexts communicated through the various Chinese languages and dialects. What she discovered were moments of humanity and empathy, subtleties

that could not be learned.

Although the interviewees claimed they were 'being ordinary' they were in fact living their lives in 'extraordinary circumstances' (xiv). Descendants of Chinese immigrants who were lured by the enticement of gold were interviewed. Thelma from Sydney, spoke about her ancestor Yin, past president of the Bendigo Chinese Association, Chinese Easter Pageant Committee and member of the Chinese Masonic Society (42). The Bendigo Easter Parade which commenced in 1871 is still an integral part of the Bendigo Victorian calendar. In contrast, Yen documented how Mabel Jenkins from Bendigo honeymooned with her Chinese husband in Heung Shan, China, and was waited on hand and foot in the village. On their return to Australia a deadlock in Hong Kong held the couple up when Australian shipping authorities would not accept their infant born in Hong Kong, Harry Gock Ming (107). It was in these places of transit that the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 took its toll. Whilst much of Chinese Australian history is dominated by the Gold Rushes, Yen included places of Chinese immigrant destination such as Moree, NSW, where Harry Gock Ming worked in a grocery shop along with Indigenous men. During the Depression of the early 1930s when Jack Lang closed the NSW Government Savings bank, Ming witnessed the generosity of his Chinese employer in offering a drover, his wife and six children food and lodgings (186).

Despite formal restrictions on Chinese people through immigration laws and informal prejudices and attitudes, Yen brings the archives to life, shining a light upon a community of people who were resilient, loved, prospered in business, travelled, educated themselves and their families, longed for home, flourished in community, or became reclusive or distrustful of Australia. Yen's work can be read in unison with texts such as Emeritus Professor John Fitzgerald's *Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia* (2007) who similarly was frustrated by the silence on the Chinese narrative in Australian history. *South Flows the Pearl* has the advantage of being written by someone who was part of their community. It is a celebratory collection of Chinese Australians' voices, meticulously curated by a Chinese Australian woman.

Decoding the interview transcripts and providing necessary critical oral history analysis is where this text invites a new generation of oral histories such as Robert Perks' and Alistair Thomson's *The Oral History Reader* (2015). Where memory is selective, distorted, confused or multi-layered, professional oral historians can supplement the transcripts with the critical lens of other factors that could lead to variations in interpretations. Yen wrote sadly about how a number of her interviewees spoke about how they would 'wilfully block out mainstream white society resulting in social and psychological isolation' (xiv). Current research and theories around trauma and memory could further deepen Yen's conclusions. Kate Bagnall (2011) and Sophie Couchman (2015) have championed new directions in scholarship over the past decade where historians are providing new methods for enlarging our knowledge about Australia's Chinese people. As a high school history teacher, I could envisage this book as a complementary text to an excursion to The Chinese Museum, Chinatown Melbourne or the Public Records Office to view the recent exhibition, *Chinese Petitions and Perspective*. It is in these spaces where Yen's work will be essential study.

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Gelder, Ken and Rachel Weaver, *The Colonial Kangaroo Hunt*, Melbourne, The Miegunyah Press, Melbourne University Publishing, 2020; paperback, pp 229; RRP \$39.99; ISBN: 9780522875850.

Ken Gelder and Rachel Weaver's book outlines the history of hunting kangaroos in colonial Australia and explores the cultures surrounding colonial kangaroo hunting practices. It makes accessible a history that is both central to, and illustrative of, colonial relationships with the Australian environment. Further, the history of the colonial kangaroo hunt continues to influence Australian attitudes towards native animals meaning that the book offers an opportunity for understanding and critiquing contemporary attitudes. That this history has not been written before is remarkable, or perhaps almost intentionally self-deceptive, as though Australian history has worked hard to ignore yet another war that has shaped the heart of this land.

Gelder and Weaver have located a diverse range of written and visual texts relating to colonial kangaroo hunting beginning with the first recorded shooting of a kangaroo in far north Queensland in 1770 during James Cook's first voyage on the *Endeavour*, through to the publication of Ethel Pedley's popular children's book, *Dot and the Kangaroo* in 1899. Through close analysis of these wide-ranging texts, they trace a brutal history which reveals the changing attitudes of these colonising people towards the animal life of the continent.

Early descriptions of colonial kangaroo hunting weave together a language of anatomical classification, artistic practice, and culinary details as kangaroos are observed, killed, described, and eaten. During the years of the establishment of the settlement at Port Jackson, the narratives turn to descriptions of hunting strategies, and detailed accounts of kangaroo hunts commence what will soon become 'a narrative genre' of such accounts (21). There follows a period where colonial kangaroo hunting is linked with visions of pastoral abundance and romanticised settler expansion. Chapters on the hunt as both sport and poem reflect upon a period of Australian history that mythologised the kangaroo hunt as a feature of the emerging Australian colonial character. Here the hunt played a feature role within a story of colonial strength, manliness, and frontier conquest.

Through the mid to latter decades of the nineteenth century, the textual analysis reveals the prevalence of an attitude that combined sad regret with a justification or resignation towards the inevitability of cruelty and even certain extinction. We get the impression, through the numerous extracts and examples presented, that many settlers felt powerless to decide, as though, for the most part, they could only consider their own actions as already predetermined by the necessities of colonial expansion. With time, the narratives of justification become increasingly harder to maintain, the connection to necessity or morality growing ever more tenuous. Where the earliest narratives justified the killing as necessary for survival or tied it to narratives of the scientific pursuit of knowledge, later accounts had to work much harder rhetorically to construct mythologies of colonial identity, wild adventure, or transition into manhood.

Although it is not an analysis developed overtly through *The Colonial Kangaroo Hunt*, a clear alignment is readable between the forms of these justificatory narratives

and the stages of the developing economic needs of the colony. From basic sustenance to food resource exploitation to symbolic currency for a rampantly exploitative squattocracy, the kangaroo hunt becomes what the colonial economy requires. Once occupancy and economic prosperity is secured, the narratives begin to become more self-critical, countenancing sympathy and generosity towards the kangaroo. The final narrative, the children's book, *Dot and the Kangaroo*, is critical and relational, not justificatory, giving the kangaroo character a voice, allowing her to speak of the savagery and trauma of the hunt from her own perspective at length and in detail. By opening a narrative space where the kangaroo can come into relationship with a child, the book marks a turn towards a future where settlers can begin to build relationships with Australian animals.

Gelder and Weaver show that this relational stance, while it marks an important turn in the narrative of the history of the relations between the colony and its environment, is also clearly part of a long narrative progression. The enormous popularity of *Dot and the Kangaroo* in Australia indicates a public ready to consider this change, from a position where the land has already been seized, cleared, fenced, emptied of native animals, and stocked with domesticated bodies. The turn towards a critical account of the kangaroo hunt occurs when it is no longer a threat to the colonial economy.

This book will appeal to readers with a wide range of interests. Kangaroos are widely recognised as distinctively Australian; indeed, this distinctiveness is so prevalent and strong that, on many occasions, both culturally and commercially, the kangaroo represents this continent. This history, therefore, speaks as a kind of representative history. How Australians have treated the kangaroo can plausibly be regarded as representative of how Australians have treated native animals and the natural environment more broadly. The *Colonial Kangaroo Hunt* ends in 1899, approaching the final years of Australia as a British colony, with the authors signalling a shift towards more compassionate and considerate attitudes. This provides a justifiable endpoint to the book as a work of colonial history, but leaves tantalisingly open the question of the history of the kangaroo hunt through the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Kangaroo hunting itself continued, and the debate continues to be ethically and politically fraught, culturally entangled, and under analysed. A second volume extending the history of the kangaroo hunt into the post-colonial sphere would be most welcome.

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Duffett, Mark, *Elvis: Roots, Image, Comeback, Phenomenon*; Bristol, Equinox Publishing, 2020; paperback, pp viii + 251; RRP £27.56; ISBN:9781845538309.

Much of the global media market has long been permeated by commercialism, and celebrity has accordingly been shaped into the superlative commodity. In contrast to the mainstream discourse, Mark Duffett utilises both macro- and micro-observations grounded in contextual analysis, providing his unique perspective to guide the reader in exploring the socio-cultural value of stardom as it pertains to Elvis Presley himself. Even though his story begins as someone who was subjected to the racism inherent in mid-century American society, through popular music he was ultimately able to influence social change across classes and cultures. The figure of Elvis is first sketched as a young adventurer within the entertainment industries, before unexpectedly rising to the position of 'King of Rock 'n' Roll', and eventually attaining legend status for his distinguished prestige in popular music. Ultimately, even the name Elvis has persisted as a sort of totemistic legend.

The contextual analysis used in this book is both dynamic and tri-dimensional. Thus, the author elaborates on various events along Elvis's temporal axis, and provides several important coordinates within his life, attempting to depict him from the side through multi-narrative strands based on both academic and popular literature. One of Duffett's narrative techniques is character profiling, through which he delicately restores situational dialogue to build up a renewed, real Elvis through the reactions of others around the protagonist. By using this sophisticated technique, readers are exposed to numerous close-ups which progressively build up the character of Elvis. The King of Rock 'n' Roll. The Hillbilly Cat. A peacetime war hero. Just as the cover of the book frames Elvis and Nixon with a handshake, readers are invited to associate the book's subtitle – 'Roots, Image, Comeback, Phenomenon' – to decode Elvis culturally, socially, and politically.

In 'Roots', the rise of Elvis is presented as 'a matter of total innocence' (19). Initially, the music industry saw Elvis as a marketable commodity with certain qualities (authenticity, originality, universality, and female-friendliness), while Elvis saw himself simply as himself. Duffett describes the coexistence of the commercial music industry's perception of Elvis as a commodity alongside Elvis's own self-image as a coincidence. This coincidence can be associated with the cultural moment in America – a need for crossover musical expression – with the serendipitous result that Elvis's music and style was able to fit into the commercial marketplace in such a way that it made Elvis seem like a natural musical genius.

Next, 'Image' discusses the striking depiction of Elvis at his peak. The author shifts the concept of a 'totemic Elvis' (65) to symbolize the 'melting pot' (71) of American culture, and advocates for analysing the image of Elvis through a critical cultural lens. During this time, Elvis expanded his musical influence to Hollywood and increased his marketability and diversity while becoming a metaphor for social change and progressive movements, including addressing race relations and sex liberation movements.

As described in 'Comeback', there seemed to be a chemical reaction between Elvis and rock 'n' roll that had transformed both Elvis himself and American society. By virtue of Elvis, rock 'n' roll emerged as a genre that allowed for a convergence of American social classes. In the earliest version of Elvis, he was a conservative white man singing non-mainstream Black music, his unique mode of performance characterised by his fast-paced delivery. By the period of the Comeback Special, Elvis genuinely held and publicly declared his conservative values, though these included compassion and humanitarianism towards women and marginalised people. His later conservative image could be described as contrary to the rebellious elements of his music. However, Duffett describes both Elvis himself and his music as an "assimilator" (30), whereby Elvis could attempt to heal long-standing racial divisions within society. The author emphasizes that the Comeback Special acted as de facto therapy for healing the superstar itself as well as America's collective trauma about racist history.

In 1968, prior to the Comeback Special, Elvis was arguably at a low point in his career, but Duffett is able to show how the then 33-year-old stepped onto both national and global stages with an explosive power. The author acknowledges '[t]he achievement of the Comeback Special was that it re-introduced the star to a broadcast audience specifically as a humorous tour guide to his own myth, while at the same time providing a taste of the musical excitement that made him popular in the first place' (114-5). However, Duffett holds that Elvis's variety of styles via mass media in this phase represents the zenith of his mature and positive self-image. Through the Comeback Special, Elvis regained his fame and represented a different masculinity. He was at that time still a rock 'n' roller, but one who conveyed a more tender voice.

It is commonly understood that Elvis had epochal significance, and the final chapter of the book, 'Phenomenon' examines his cultural immortality but also includes a discussion of American copyright laws and the establishment of celebrity image being protected as intellectual property assets. Here the author focuses on a post-Elvis legitimation and legacy, which mainly implies a symbolic power of hybridity in a socio-political context.

Duffett has been researching Elvis's career for over twenty years and has a number of other relevant publications, including *Counting Down Elvis* (2018), an examination of Elvis's 'finest' 100 songs (as chosen by Duffett). When assessing both these publications, it could be argued that Duffett is engaged in Elvis' music not just as a scholar but also as a fan. During the process of his investigating Elvis, Duffett looks very closely into the uniqueness of Elvis's voice and asserts it possesses complex emotional connections in its variability. His other works have examined the nature of fandom, especially Elvis fans. Giving a specific term to describe exclusive fans for Elvis, Duffett argues that the love and pursuit of 'Elfans' (154) may not only come from Elvis's charming demeanour but from his various crossovers and fusions, which aroused a longing for reconciliation within the hearts of contemporary people. Throughout, Duffett underscores how Elvis's stylistic variations directly reflect his public persona by means of the common threads and thematic concerns that are woven through each chapter. In particular, the book brings critical attention to mediums of adaptation that have been previously underexposed, such as Elvis's musical talents with his vocality, noting that:

Vocally, beyond the ways Elvis used his voice – beyond his technical learning, active performance style, plurality of registers, musically, beyond even his sheer vocal power – is what we might call a perceived body-in-the-voice. This heard ‘body’ is different, but related to, the embodied voice ... is both constructed and reinforced by the identification of listeners. (139-40)

The author’s expertise in ethnography, archaeology, and multi-layered storytelling is showcased in *Elvis*. Drawing on these sophisticated methods, the author is able to delve into Elvis’s iconic myth through extensive cultural research and intertextual analysis, demonstrated by a comprehensive list of notes and references throughout the book. Duffett’s conclusions encourage further reflection by the reader to ponder ‘why not’ to rethink the profound impact, both temporally and geographically, of the cult of celebrity upon both popular culture and American society. This also illuminates the empowerment of pop music and how it can mediate social reform. Ultimately, in Duffett’s fascinating work, it can be said that as much as the era cast Elvis Presley, so too did Elvis Presley shape the era. The multi-layered way in which the examination of Elvis’s life trajectory and his outstanding talent are portrayed in the book is undoubtedly refreshing. This is the real Elvis phenomenon – culturally and socially.

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Cross, Gary S., *Freak Show Legacies: How the Cute, Camp and Creepy Shaped Modern Popular Culture*; London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2021; paperback, pp. xiii + 232, 32 b/w illustrations; RPP: \$42.29; ISBN: 9781350145122.

'Monsters are everywhere' (viii). With this opening statement, Gary S. Cross establishes that the 'human fascination' (x) of the monstrous has permeated mainstream media. As a professor of modern history, with published works concerning the nuances of American consumerism, Cross brings a new perspective to the pre-existing domain of 'Freak Studies.' The aptly titled *Freak Show Legacies* explores how the ostracized 'monster' figure of the freak has been absorbed and ubiquitously circulated within American pop culture over the last century.

The first chapter, 'Freaking Out', pinpoints four historical media moments – the controversial 1932 horror film *Freaks*, the release of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* in 1939, the 1960s revival of *Freaks*, and the 1968 smash-hit success of George A. Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*. Cross highlights each example as an iconic moment of transformation: each one signifies the subtle osmosis of the freakish into film, television, and everyday life.

The next two chapters provide a lengthy discussion of the popularity of freak shows, with 'Carnival Culture and the Challenge of Gentility' establishing their contemporary appeal to specific audiences, notably through a blending of low and highbrow culture pioneered by the infamous P.T. Barnum. Chapter three, 'Marginalizing the Freak', covers the downfall of the freak show as a respectable form of entertainment. As public awareness of physical and mental disability increased within society, the freak shifted into a maligned sideshow grotesque, intended to scam country rubes and gullible immigrants, and not fit to be seen by the emerging middle-classes.

The second half of the book diverges to explore the cultural refraction of the freak, how its image and idea became widespread across American popular media. Cross' examination takes three forms, starting with 'the Cute' which addresses the infantilization of midget or dwarf performers, making the freak more whimsical in a world that had begun to idealize the aesthetic of childhood. Chapter five 'Countercultures of the Freakishly Camp' establishes how the freak became an appropriated icon in the 1960s, as alternative youth movements rebelled against the conformity of conservative, consumerist Americana. 'The Creepy' covers the manifestation of the freak in the newly uncensored horror releases of the 1960s to 1980s, with 'unnatural humans' reframed as zombies, masked slashers, mutants and inbred rednecks. Meanwhile the final chapter 'Taking Sideshow to the Big Top' is concerned with the ongoing spectacle of the freakish body, through American reality television and the modern circus.

Cross's intended focal point is 'teasing out the motives and culture of audiences rather than actors' (33). He includes a variety of audience perspectives towards the performing freak: religious, imperialist, racist, eugenical, and the differing reactions of social classes, the last of which is extensively discussed in chapter two. As the commercialized freak had to appeal to all corners of society (34), Cross addresses what made this figure specifically marketable, both a 'veneer of scientific and moral

respectability' to justify their existence before the upper-classes, (51), as well as their shocking 'carnival' otherness. Chapter two was my personal highlight within *Freak Show Legacies*, as it provides an effective set up for Cross's through-line of discussion: the paradoxical attitudes of middle-class culture. This chapter foreshadows the ongoing rejection as the Other became too exotic, but also the double standards of appropriation that made the freak enjoyable from a safe distance, whether in a horror release, a blockbuster musical or a Disney film.

Despite his engaging writing, in my opinion Cross overuses his three categories – the cute, the camp, and the creepy. Compared to the first half of the book, in the second half, each subtitled chapter felt like a separate entity, instead of a cohesive discussion of a specific part of history. His prologue foregrounded how these 'responses have combined and transformed in dynamic ways' (xii), but apart from a few examples of 'cuteified' horror in the final chapter (notably the Muppets) (214) and one line about camp zombies (217), there is a strong sense of compartmentalisation within the book. As if every example of a freak must slot into a pipeline of either cute, or camp, or creepy.

Considering a significant portion of his research revolves around the blurring of boundaries between 'normal' and 'Other', specifically blurring these 'genres' of freakishness seems like an obvious direction to take his analysis. Instead, most of the examples felt a little bracketed.

Furthermore, I felt that *Freak Show Legacies* occasionally struggled with repetition. Several of Cross's chapter segues were written with analogous phrases, notably, the concluding passages between chapter three, 'Marginalizing', and chapter four, 'The Cute', included very similar wording to the introduction and conclusion. Also, as so much pop culture was introduced at the start of the book, many of his subsequent points felt like additional information tacked on at the end of a much larger discussion. Therefore, I felt the book could have benefitted from some subtle restructuring. Maybe a shortened introduction, instead of a prologue and a whole chapter, would be an interesting method of teasing those significant media moments, setting up their impact instead of relaying them outright.

Apart from a few scattered misnomers, (in the horror sub-genre of slasher films, the surviving female lead is known as the 'final girl', not the 'last girl' (195)), *Freak Show Legacies* is an extensively researched contribution to the socio-cultural construction of the monstrous 'freak.' With its wide range of detailed examples and nuanced attention to media trends, this book is a useful tool for anyone researching the performing human oddity, but written according to the unique angle of the spectators. Judging by Cross's closing statements, the 'irrepressible' freak will always have an important role to play in our contemporary pop culture (218).

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Curthoys, Ann, Shino Konishi and Alexandra Ludewig, *The Lives and Legacies of a Carceral Island: A Biographical History of Wadjemup/Rottnest Island*, *Ocean and Island Studies 2*; London, Routledge, 2023; hardback, pp. 212, 16 b/w illustrations, 6 maps; RRP: \$252.00; ISBN: 9781032185033.

In the collaborative *The Lives and Legacies of a Carceral Island*, Ann Curthoys, Shino Konishi, and Alexandra Ludewig present a biographical history of Wadjemup, a small island off the coast of Western Australia also known as Rottnest Island. Although known to many people today as a place of quokkas, beaches and holidays, what emerges is the story of an island with a dark past. Approximately 3670 mainly Aboriginal prisoners were incarcerated in Rottnest Island Prison between 1838 and 1931 – with a ten percent mortality rate. Through the biographies of sixteen diverse individuals, over nine chapters, who either changed the Island’s history, or whose history was changed by the island, the authors explore Wadjemup’s maritime, penal, Indigenous, military, colonial and recreational history.

Chapter one opens with a biography of ‘explorer’ Willem de Vlamingh, the first European to be associated with the island, and who, despite spending only four days on Wadjemup in 1696-1697, left an idyllic description of the island as ‘a paradise on earth’ ‘pleasurable beyond all islands I have ever seen’ (27). De Vlamingh named the island after the small marsupial quokkas he found there and which he mistook for rats. In the next three chapters, the lives of Henry Vincent, gaoler of Rottnest Island Prison, his wife Louisa, and the prisoner Jane Green, are used to tell a much darker history. Vincent spent nearly thirty years as the prison superintendent, and his regime is remembered as authoritarian, cruel, and violent. The authors also examine Louisa’s time as Matron of the prison and their acrimonious divorce following Vincent’s eventual resignation. The story of Jane Green, a young domestic servant imprisoned following the killing of her newborn son, was pieced together from archival and secondary sources, but a lack of available records has meant that her experience of the island has had to be assumed. Although the authors write that Green was one of only two women sent to the island, recent research (Ingram, ‘There not being any place to keep her’, AHA conference, 2022) indicates a higher figure, serving as a reminder that Wadjemup may have still more stories to tell.

Chapter five provides another view of Wadjemup through the lens of the letters of Governor Broome’s wife, Mary Ann Barker, written to her son from the island in early 1884. Although the island was a place of recreation for Barker, the prison was situated just half a mile from her residence. Barker’s comments on the prison were often at odds with official reports of the time and her letters are analysed within this framework. In contrast, chapter six examines the lives of seven Aboriginal attestants who gave evidence at the 1883 Commission of Inquiry into the treatment of Rottnest Island prisoners. Although available information is fragmentary, the authors note that it has allowed them to ‘piece together some details about the lives of Aboriginal individuals from the Western Australian colonial frontiers, who have largely been marginalised from history’ (110). This is not the first time this evidence has been examined (Roscoe, ‘Too many kill ‘em’. too many make ‘em ill’, 2016), but the addition of biographical details allows a deeper understanding of the place of the criminal justice system in their lives and in those of their families.

Moving into the twentieth century with chapters seven and eight, the island served as an internment camp in WW1 and an outpost of the 10th Garrison Battalion in WW2. Of particular interest is the authors' use of the photographic collection of the WWI German internees Karl Lehmann and Martin Trojan which tells the story of a time of unusual freedom on the island when internees of different nationalities formed bonds with both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal prisoners.

Finally, chapter nine makes extensive use of the oral history of Fay Sullivan, a 'nurse, single mother, hostess, golfer, and environmentalist' who lived on the island between 1960 and 1984 and who witnessed the development of the island's life into a holiday destination (182). As the wife of the island's manager, she also helped to oversee re-forestation schemes and campaigns to remove introduced animals from the island.

A short epilogue details the fight of Indigenous peoples to have the island's dark history acknowledged; which is particularly apt given recent debates over the redevelopment of the Wadjemup burial site (ABC, Rottneest Island: White playground, 2022). This struggle is also a significant part of Wadjemup's history and provides a fitting end to the book.

The authors' strategy of using biographies to tell this history has resulted in an engaging work, written with an empathy and understanding for some of the marginalised lives within it. Through these lives we learn of the diverse uses of the island from the seventeenth to the twenty-first centuries. Each individual story sheds light on a new facet of the island's history, linked by the island itself and its use as a carceral space. The authors have used both secondary and archival sources to construct these biographies, and the inclusion of the photographic collection and oral history add an extra dimension to the stories.

Lives and Legacies of a Carceral Island is not without some minor shortcomings. In some sections the book has been poorly edited with a handful of errors making it to publication, and it unfortunately does not include a stand-alone bibliography, with references being limited to the endnotes for each chapter. Some of the illustrations in the printed version are lacking in contrast and the maps are too small to read easily, although these are not issues in the e-book version. Inaccuracies from secondary sources have been reproduced in places (40, 58, 65, 66), and although the authors use information from the Prosecution Project to calculate conviction and incarceration rates, it is not explained to the reader that these figures apply only to trials in the upper courts. Prisoners tried summarily for less serious offences were not included.

However, these are all minor issues and in no way do they detract from the fact that this is an excellent book, with an important history to tell. The chapters are succinct and written in an eminently readable style. By linking together these biographies this work tells a significant story about an island whose dark history remained hidden and untold for many years and of the fight to have this history known. This struggle remains unresolved. As the largest site of deaths in custody in Australia, the history of Wadjemup is significant for all Australians. This book would appeal to everyone interested in Australian and Western Australian history and particularly to academic readers interested in both carceral history and Indigenous history.

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