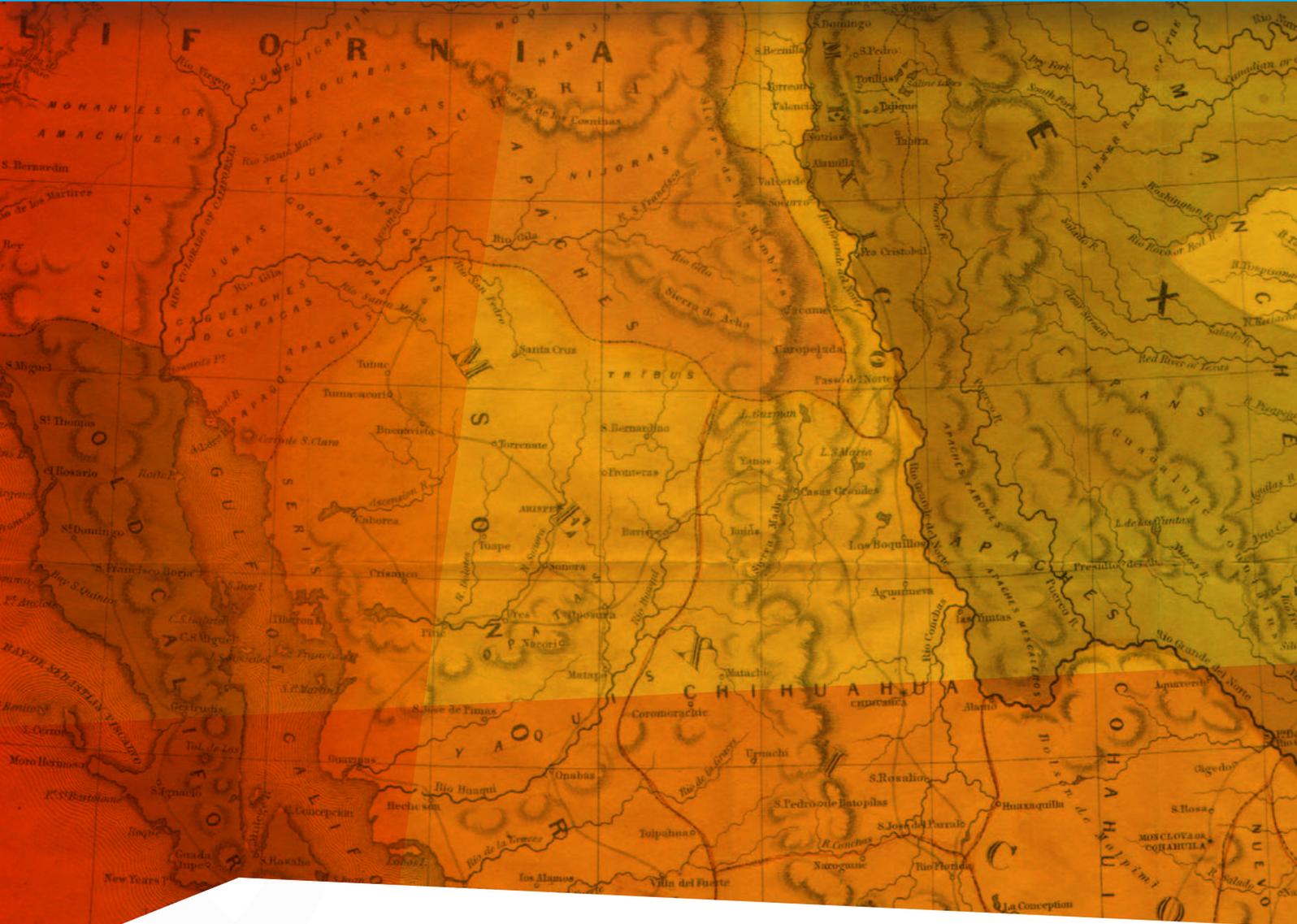


Humanities Australia

NUMBER 3 • 2012



HAN BALTUSSEN » KATE BURRIDGE » MOIRA GATENS » ROBYN HOLMES
THOMAS KENEALLY » JOSEPH LO BIANCO » SIMON MUSGRAVE » VIVIAN SMITH

THE JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF THE HUMANITIES

Welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to the third issue of *Humanities Australia*, the annual journal of the Australian Academy of the Humanities so ably edited by Emeritus Professor Elizabeth Webby AM FAHA.

For more than forty years, the Australian Academy of the Humanities has been dedicated to fulfilling its obligations as laid out in its Royal Charter; advancing scholarship and promoting understanding of the humanities both within academic institutions and in the national community at large. This publication is one of the ways in which we seek to support excellence in the humanities and to communicate the value of the humanities to a broad audience.

Our Academy comprises now close to five hundred and fifty Fellows: elected on the grounds of the excellence and impact of their scholarship. They have been recognised for outstanding work in the disciplines of archaeology, art, Asian and European studies, classical and modern literature, cultural and communication studies, languages and linguistics, philosophy, musicology, history and religion.

In providing advice to Government, we are pleased to be able to draw on the depth of expertise represented by our Fellows, as well as colleagues in the wider humanities community, to ensure that the challenges facing our nation are recognised as always involving social and cultural issues.

This third issue of *Humanities Australia* is but a small selection of essays, poems, narratives and reflections; yet together they demonstrate how essential the humanities are to the understanding of our national life and human culture across the ages. I hope you will find *Humanities Australia* a highly rewarding reading experience.

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LESLEY JOHNSON AM FAHA

President, Australian Academy of the Humanities, 2011-

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Editor's Introduction

» ELIZABETH WEBBY

As the journal of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, *Humanities Australia* aims to highlight original and creative contributions to this area by Australian researchers and writers. Our third issue has a focus on new directions in the humanities: in particular, the increasing interest in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary work and the impact of the digital revolution on humanities research.

Joseph Lo Bianco's Academy Address, delivered at the highly successful Annual Symposium he convened in Melbourne last year, provides a keynote for this issue in drawing attention to the increasingly borderless world in which we are now living, intellectually as well as materially. In 'Politics, Poetics and Policy: Borders, Bordering and Humanities', he concludes that 'Western scholars operating in institutions steeped in Western epistemological practices' will need to come to terms with 'new knowledge practices and discipline combinations that arise when the inexorable and immense multiculturalism our disciplines have kept at bay is no longer resistible'. His essay is a provocative and fascinating demonstration of mixing and matching, ranging widely across time, space, cultures and media. It takes us from current US border disputes with Mexico to mapping in Old Siam, from the

nineteenth-century German philosopher Nietzsche to golfer Tiger Woods appearing on the Oprah Winfrey Show, from Thomas Gainsborough's painting of the archetypal eighteenth-century English couple, *Mr and Mrs Andrews*, to Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa's experimental autobiography *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*.

Many humanities academics have of course already taken on the challenge of presenting their work through other than traditional print forms, as can be seen from Kate Burridge's account of her interactions with the public via Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) radio programmes and the recent television series 'Can We Help?'. As Burridge notes, many people are not at all happy about the increasingly borderless world of the English language, and can become very irate and even abusive when their pet prejudices are questioned. Nevertheless, our language is constantly changing and Burridge and her colleagues are now embarked on an ambitious plan to record this through the construction of an Australian National Corpus, a substantial collection of computerised language data. Simon Musgrave's essay gives an excellent introduction to what will be involved in establishing this 'massive online database of spoken and written language in Australia, in all its forms and diversity

ABOVE

Academy
Secretariat,
Canberra, Australia.

SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN
ACADEMY OF THE
HUMANITIES ARCHIVES.

(audio files, written texts, etc.). As someone who spent much of the last five or so years helping to build an online archive of Australian poetry, I certainly wish I had known as much about the dos and don'ts of building complex online databases as I did after reading his account! The Australian National Corpus will bring together a large number of existing databases and, while being constructed by linguists, will be relevant to many others researching Australian society and culture, including historians, sociologists and social psychologists.

The rapid growth in interest in digital humanities in Australia, as testified by projects such as the Australian National Corpus, is also apparent in the recent establishment, with support from the Academy of the Humanities, of the Australasian Association for Digital Humanities. The Association held a large and highly successful conference, 'Building, Mapping, Connecting', in Canberra in March 2012, with workshops and multiple panel sessions stretching across four days. Since 1993, the Academy has also supported regular meetings of the National Scholarly Communications Forum, focused on the impact of changing methods of scholarly communication. The most recent, 'Book to What Future: The Scholarly Monograph in the Digital Age', was held at the University of Melbourne in September 2011; further details can be found on the Academy's website <www.humanities.org.au>. Electronic publication is clearly the way of the future for more specialist works, one that offers many advantages, if also a steep learning curve for first time authors. We are delighted that Robyn Holmes, Senior Curator of Pictures and Manuscripts at the National Library of Australia, and an Honorary Fellow of the Academy, has found the time to write an account of her recent adventures in ebook publishing. Appropriately, since 2012 is the centenary of the birth of Patrick White, the only Australian to win the Nobel Prize for Literature, *Patrick White, Voss and the Cultural Landscape*, co-written with Vincent Plush from the National Film and Sound Archive, draws on the two institutions' extensive holdings of material related to White and his work. In this ebook, as Holmes notes, 'digitised source materials from these and other national collections – manuscripts of all kinds, images, musical scores, sound recordings, oral histories and films – appear as layers and voices in the story, to illuminate the narrative and create what aims to be a rich and living experience for those reading the text'.

We are also delighted to be able to feature in this issue new work by another Honorary Fellow, Thomas Keneally, who is of course also an Australian literary icon. He and his publishers have kindly allowed us to include the first chapter of his new historical novel. Its focus on the controversial topic of euthanasia links to another new multidisciplinary field, that of medical humanities, which draws on the therapeutic value of reading and writing, especially in coping with loss and grief. In his 2011 Trendall Lecture, classicist Professor Han Baltussen outlines recent research in the area, before going on to demonstrate how work by Greek and Roman authors like Antiphon, Cicero and Plutarch may be compared with that of modern writers like C. S. Lewis and Joan Didion. As Baltussen notes, undertaking his research has involved a 'venture into unknown territory'; he has had 'to cross disciplinary boundaries, read up on modern theories and observe contemporary events'. This is exactly the sort of exploration and border-crossing Lo Bianco advocates, and one that has resulted in an insightful and engrossing essay.

More crossing of disciplinary boundaries can be found in Moira Gatens' essay, which makes a close reading of a literary text, specifically George Eliot's novel *Silas Marner*, to offer a reappraisal of contemporary debates about the philosophy of Spinoza. She argues that Eliot's notion of 'deliberative fiction' can help bridge 'the lacuna in Spinoza's political thought between his negative assessment of the multitude and his account of the ethical potential of *all* human beings to become free'.

So, while the only works in this issue by a Fellow belonging to the English section of the Academy are Vivian Smith's two beautiful sonnets, its contents all deal, at least in part, with the English language or literature written in English. My thanks to Jorge Salavert of the Academy Secretariat for his help with this issue, especially in sourcing many of the illustrations. As in this issue we welcome a new designer in Anne Wakefield, I would also like to acknowledge the work of Nicole White in the design of the two previous issues of *Humanities Australia*.



ELIZABETH WEBBY AM FAHA,
Editor, Australian Academy
of the Humanities, 2009-

» VIVIAN SMITH



LEFT

Caligo eurilochus at the Schmetterlingshaus, 2006. Photograph by Manfred Werner.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.



VIVIAN SMITH FAHA was reader in English at the University of Sydney before retiring. His most recent book is *Here, There and Elsewhere: New Poems*, Giramondo, 2012.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
GABRIELLE SMITH.



IN THE BUTTERFLY HOUSE, VIENNA

I expected silk and colour, old brocade,
exotic palpitations, streaks of gold,
rosenkavaliers flirting in the shade,
but suddenly the day turned cold.

Was this the wrong time, or the wrong year,
a switch forgotten yesterday?
A few were starting to cause fear,
cloth that flutters as it rots away,

and several had an eyepatch on each wing,
drawing to repel admiration,
staring one way, flying off the other

wanting to be thought some other thing.
One tried an occasional gyration—
call it a final fling, brother.

VIVIAN SMITH





Politics, Poetics and Policy: Borders, Bordering and Humanities¹

» JOSEPH LO BIANCO



ABOVE

Detail of *A New Map of Texas, Oregon and California with the Regions Adjoining*, by S.A. Mitchell, 1846. Geographicus Rare Antique Maps.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

BUILD YOUR CITIES ON THE SLOPES OF VESUVIUS!

Send your ships into uncharted seas!

So urged Friedrich Nietzsche, calling ‘the greatest fruitfulness and greatest enjoyment in life’ the courage to ‘live dangerously’! In *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* his view of those who are ‘seekers of knowledge’ was that we/they should cast aside timidity and ‘[B]e robbers and conquerors as long as you cannot be rulers and possessors’.² I have always found Nietzsche a little scary, even once found myself reading him in full daylight in the garden, and yet, for this paper, I have taken his advice to heart, intending to range wide and wild. My aim is to relate stories about borders, aspects of border theory and effects of bordering, the borders of the concrete divisions of space as metaphors and predictors of mental borders and as reflections on the humanities.

HOLDING THE LINE

Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa was born and grew up in the 1940s on ranches in the borderlands of South Texas, where the United States thrusts deep south into arid land called the Free and Sovereign State of Tamaulipas,³ its adjectives more hopeful than accurate, indexing its long and troubled

connections with the thirty-one territories that not always fraternally constitute Mexico.

This part of South Texas was established by the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, in which most of Tamaulipas was ceded to the US and which designated the border along the middle of the Rio Grande, or, as the Mexicans call it, Río Grande del Norte, the great river of the north, specifically designating the deepest part of its channel. The Treaty declares the border, which bits of hill, water and desert plains it divides; a mostly liquid 3169 kilometre line. But liquid lines have a habit of moving, and the river moved south more than north, and hapless Mexico steadily lost land to the US, expanding by every means possible; after a century of land and water disputes due to the flowing boundary, Presidents John F. Kennedy and Adolfo López Mateos resolved matters in 1963 with the Chamizal Convention. Although officially an ‘open border’, large parts are fortified and patrolled, and in places surveyors, geographers and meteorologists have determined in which stretches unforgiving nature can be left to do the state’s patrolling work. One of Barack Obama’s presidential headaches has been the border fence being erected near Anzaldúa’s birthplace. On 10 May 2011 he visited (the ironically named) El Paso and the Chamizal National Memorial (Fig. 1).

Obama reassured the locals on border policing and reflected on how the US is ‘wrestling with the politics of who is and who isn’t allowed to enter this country’. His speech is remarkable for how

it references discourse about making the drawn lines count, what he calls the common refrain of 'borders first, borders first'. He wants to be seen as tough on borders, or at least not weak, so 'we have strengthened border security beyond what many believed was possible'. The rest is worth quoting from the White House press site, for it shows the verbal struggle to hold the drawn line:

THE PRESIDENT: They wanted more agents at the border. Well, we now have more boots on the ground on the southwest border than at any time in our history.

(Applause.)

The Border Patrol has 20,000 agents – more than twice as many as there were in 2004 ... I had a chance to meet some of these outstanding agents, and actually saw some of them on horseback who looked pretty tough.

(Laughter.)

So we put the agents here.

Then they wanted a fence. Well, the fence is –

AUDIENCE: Booo!

THE PRESIDENT: The fence is now basically complete.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Tear it down!

Obama delivers even more surveillance than his critics were seeking. 'We tripled the number of intelligence analysts working the border. I've deployed unmanned aerial vehicles to patrol the skies from Texas to California.' But '[T]hey'll say we need to triple the border patrol. Or quadruple the border patrol. They'll say we need a higher fence to support reform. Maybe they'll say we need a moat. Or alligators in the moat.'

The job of the 'agents' is to look 'pretty tough' and so determine which bodies are permitted to inhabit which side of the line.⁴ So, technically, El Paso means what is no longer possible, unlike in 1598 when Juan de Oñate claimed the area for Phillip II of Spain, naming it the place where it is possible to pass to the other side of the watery line. Despite these fences and border agents El Paso is tied, by commerce, culture and history, with its south-side sister city, Ciudad Juárez, the two joined as a metroplex of interdependency.

The governor of neighbouring south-side Coahuila called the fence a 'wall of hate', but it goes on being relentlessly constructed and many on the north side clamour for it to be made higher and more effective, doubled, moated and alarmed, stretching 1078 kilometres where Texan parts of the US and the former Texan parts of Mexico will always be joined. Three north-side named 'Operations' function in the fortified zones of this long and troubled line: Operation Gatekeeper in California, Operation Safeguard in Arizona, and, most suggestively, Operation Hold-The-Line in Texas.



LEFT

[Fig. 1] President Barack Obama waves to the crowd during his address at Chamizal National Memorial in El Paso, Texas, 10 May 2011.

Photograph by Lt. Col. Deanna Bague, Fort Bliss Public Affairs Office.

SOURCE: [HTTP://WWW.FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/DVIDS/5710634315/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/dvids/5710634315/)

INTERPRETING THE LINE

What is this line and what does it mean to 'hold it'?

In his 1903 structuralist reflections on the metropolis and its operations German philosopher Georg Simmel argued that borders impose requirements on both strangers and the community of insiders. A sense of community is forged on the basis of prior identification of the stranger as the excluded, so that forms of association between people within metropolises are differentiated other than in their collective



ABOVE

[Fig. 2] People walking past the Berlin Wall, 1989. Photograph by Raphaël Thiémarc.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

relation to the outsider. Simmel's conception of space is replete with ambiguity, all is interconnected but separated, there are walls but they have bridges and doors, and it is possible to telephone others beyond the walls, meaning that the exclusive hold of the metropolis on 'mental life' is dissipated, even as culture and space interact more intensively inside than out.

Thinking about the symbolic and practical function of borderlines, and how people are constructed sociologically in their relation to lines, Simmel invokes a dynamic view of relations, of the role of strangers in and for a community. In his conception, distance is

crucial to a stranger's relationship with a group: if they are too close they cease to be a stranger, too far and they are no longer in a relationship. This excluding character of the municipality relies on the line, the boundary, which 'is not a spatial fact with sociological consequences, but a sociological fact that forms itself spatially'.⁵

It is ironic that it was Berlin, the city of Simmel's birth, that played host to the world's most well known drama of rising and falling walls, making strangers of past neighbours, in brick and in mind (Fig. 2). But the demolition of Berlin's physical wall, seventy-one years after Simmel's death, suggests a modification to his

points of view and points from which to view, and our naming of borders and walls reflects our status as observers and participants.

Like academic disciplines, physical borders symbolise the positions they actually create. Borders may be visible lines and physical spaces, but they are also processes of mind and collective activities of groups, and their sides are unequal so that we inhabit unequally desirable sides of the boundaries they create. The term 'seeking asylum' implies exactly this, it involves escape from danger to protection afforded by borders, and most attempts at escape provoke sympathy and scorn, support and condemnation, apathy or engagement,

BORDERS MAY BE VISIBLE LINES AND PHYSICAL SPACES, BUT THEY ARE ALSO PROCESSES OF MIND AND COLLECTIVE ACTIVITIES OF GROUPS

dictum since that wall remained erect in the mind long after the sociological realities producing it were overcome politically. Walls may begin in the mind, before being bricked up, but mind walls are not dissolved when the masonry has been removed; instead they become hardened by the mortar of time and remain in place when the physical boundary is reduced to a memory.

In other words, we only know borders from standpoints, from north or south of the Texas line, east or west of the Berlin wall. These are vantage points with regard to lines,

assistance and treachery, largely on the basis of which side we inhabit. Walls and boundaries are usually built by only one of the affected sides.

It is these properties of borders, their motivated construction, that make authoritarian regimes and individuals suspicious and would-be escapers vulnerable. Borders and lines and walls do not deny vision of the other side, but access. We can see across borders, remember the time before they were built, or imagine the life lived there, well before we can cross over. This foreknowledge, in Simmel's terms, the 'mental life' associated with living with borders, is how they become compelling in cultural terms and problematical politically.

Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck powerfully evokes this precise idea in his 2006 award winning film, *The Lives of Others*.⁶ East German agents are engaged in every-moment-of-the-day wire-tapping of a writer and his lover on the more unfortunate side of the world's most famous wall. Through the tedium of endless surveillance they develop a perverse intimacy with the lives of those whose privacy they abuse, become an unseen presence within boundaries they violate, and ultimately feel a kind of shame and sympathy for the victims of their intrusive authority. They start to see what the writer sees. He wants what people on the other side of the border take for granted, inadequately conveyed by one of history's most struggled-over words: freedom.

The vantage points of the arts and philosophy, language and geography, offer us creative ways to think about the multiple dimensions of lines and borders, their physical existence and the processes

RIGHT
[Fig. 3] Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Ritratto di nonno con nipote* [c. 1490].

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.





LEFT
 [Fig. 4] United States border at Naco, Mexico. Photograph by Phillip Capper, 1990.
 SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

they give rise to, and attempts to remove them.

Within a metropolis we live lives governed by lines: political, social, emotional and conceptual lines. Imposition of the authority of those lines, and the bordered zones they produce, is a complex process of shifting and switching, according to notions of insiderness and outsidersness. For example, we permit the violation of boundaries to intimates and deny them to strangers. This critical role of intimacy is perfectly expressed by Domenico Ghirlandaio in his (c. 1490) depiction of a patrician grandfather and his grandson, who is allowed to cross the line of decorum which would be denied to a stranger (Fig. 3).

CONTESTING THE LINE

When physical walls are erected the material and mental lives of those living nearby are affected differentially. Proximity and involvement influence the depth and severity of effects and produce the unique life of border zones. In these marginal spaces special kinds of life emerge, subject to the patrol and interest of the powerful and the subversion and resistance of the subalterns. In this way the boundary zones, borderlines and Operations of South Texas and North Mexico are over-determined for the law but indeterminate spaces for popular culture. Everyone sees something there. Bruce Springsteen's heartland rock comes from well north of the border, in urban and post-industrial New Jersey, but with his E Street Band 'Americana' sentiments are fostered by the never-distant place of the southern

border in American popular culture. Whether it is 'Down to Mexico' or 'Born to Run', Springsteen invokes and ironises the privileges and problems of being 'Born in the USA', mistaken as a patriotic affirmation when it criticises the extended ideological boundary of the Vietnam War.

Other artists have more directly inscribed today's most famous border into popular culture, the badlands and lawless zone, in a wider fusing of natural boundaries and political borders, fences and rivers.⁷ Cultural production occurs in this tense space. Border zones and lawlessness induce political interests to raise and protect national flags, inviting transgressive artists to violate flags and their display, making the artist into a 'criminal'.⁸ During the 1980s and 1990s many artists came to this particular river as border, to perform at the border, so that when a twenty-kilometre section of fence was constructed along the border in 1991, artist activists assembled to challenge the militarisation of the space.⁹

Artists and musicians are 'shattering' the border, as Isabela Raygoza puts it:

[T]o most people, the conflict on the US-Mexico border is just a series of depressing newspaper clippings ... the war on drugs, human smuggling, and immigrants dying in the desert ... For decades, musicians in and out of Mexico have come together to demand social change – Fronterizos – people living by the border, people in sympathy with border life – are leading the charge ... bands who write about immigration, drugs, violence, desert crossing, working on maquiladoras ('sweatshops'), and

everything US-Mexico border related.¹⁰ (Fig. 4)

The politics and the arts of place in this zone are highly concentrated and intense, most dramatically when an infant takes its first breath, as the place of this first breath functions like a trip-wire, activating citizenship rights. Where you breathe first, which side of the line, invokes ancient laws of blood and ancestry, soil and borders, and can decide life's fortunes.

In these zones of cultural intensity, Anzaldúa, in politics and in poetry, changed how we think

In her replies, she demands respect for *mestizos*, the mixed people who lived in the place she came from before the borders arrived, when El Paso still meant what its name says. In asking for this specific kind of respect for individual *mestizos*, she made a wider claim for *mestizaje*, for in-betweenness in general, insisting that those who inhabit insecure categories and unapproved formations are not lacking culture, form or presence. The flag raising on either side of the border is the work of nation-making, fostering conformity to authorised cultural forms from places far

THE FLAG RAISING ON EITHER SIDE OF THE BORDER IS THE WORK OF NATION-MAKING, FOSTERING CONFORMITY TO AUTHORISED CULTURAL FORMS

about the meaning of borders and lines. The work that made her fame, from cultural studies to queer theory, was the experimental autobiography *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (Fig. 5).¹¹ This take-no-prisoners account, oscillating between poem and polemic, tells of growing up in marginalisation, at the edges of health and disability, America and Mexico, Spanish and Basque, Indigenous and Immigrant, male and female, gay and straight, grown up yet very short. For Anzaldúa border zones are always plural and troublesome. *La Frontera* discusses the identities

such borders forge, the problems they cause, and some cultural and linguistic possibilities they supply.

Peering through the cracks provided by her many marginalities Anzaldúa not only found anger and injustice, fragmentation, partiality and ill-formedness, she also saw potential, integrated spaces, completeness, and new lines. In these new formations she invented an audience, initially only among those secure in their cultural footings and inhabiting better named or less differentiated worlds, but over time among those well beyond border zones,

willing to imaginatively reside there too. Suffering an endocrine condition that arrested her physical growth at early adolescence, she matured into a short and sometimes angry woman who moved, physically and imaginatively, into cities, English literature, feminism, Chicano/Chicana studies and creative writing, continually to be asked: 'Where do you come from? Which borders define you? Within which domain do you belong?'

removed from the world of local mixing.

She was not of course the first to refuse to be discursively hemmed into identity binaries, but her multi-genre refusal, documented in short stories, children's books, poetry, narratives of autobiography and theoretical essays, helped constitute a new way to interpret people living physically and culturally at the border. In the decades since, many ethnographies, much politics, occasional policy making and extensive creative writing have concentrated minds on the border's processes. This has revealed the cultural and mental work involved in maintaining the physical presence of a border, on how making it higher, stronger, wider and more exclusionary is preceded by legitimating talk and followed by justificatory rhetoric, all of which requires the ongoing effort of naturalisation. A disfiguring wall that uglifies the surroundings and divides people needs a lot of words to remain in place. Borders that lack legitimation are vulnerable to collapse. But as defenders seek to naturalise a wall's presence they expose themselves to questioning about alternative possibilities.

By force of personality and talent, and a felicitous politics, Anzaldúa has come to represent the new *mestiza* consciousness she advocated; contributing words and concepts to a burgeoning new language about the unique role and function of border zones, with its now familiar lexicon of crossing and transgressing, but also playing with possibilities, rejecting all too easy characterisation of marginal spaces as inevitable badlands, and proposing them as places where it is possible to deny binary choices, and sometimes to make a binary choice.



ABOVE

[Fig. 5] Gloria Anzaldúa. Photograph by K. Kendall.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

WILD TONGUES AT LA FRONTERA

In chapter 5 of *La Frontera*, entitled 'How to Tame a Wild Tongue', Anzaldúa recalls 'being caught speaking Spanish at recess – that was good for three licks on the knuckles with a sharp ruler'. On the dentist's chair it was once demanded she control her wayward tongue, prompting a much quoted reflection about what tongues say: 'How do you tame a wild tongue, train it to be quiet, how do you bridle and saddle it? How do you make it lie down?'



and national identity, of 'equality' and 'liberty'. Expressing these sentiments perfectly at the National Assembly on 10 September 1791 nobleman and diplomat, Baron Talleyrand, made a decisive announcement that aimed to invent a new political entity conceived as radically unlike all preceding forms of state. Concerned that standard French was spreading abroad through colonial expansion but, in regional areas and among the urban poor, non-standard varieties persisted: 'Elementary education will put an end to this strange inequality' he fulminated. 'In school all will be taught in the language of the Constitution and the Law and this mass of corrupt dialects, these last vestiges of feudalism will be forced to disappear'.¹² In this pursuit of the revolutionary obligation to replace tradition with modernity, large parts of the overturning of the past were entrusted to the language politics of primary school teachers. In policing the borders of dialects and standards, they were in turn policed by a prescriptive curriculum, lest they should fail in their revolutionary duty.

All modern states have engaged in such 'linguistic consolidation', placing the state's teachers not *in loco parentis* but *in loco publico* to conduct this socialisation. The aim is to align the physical space the nation's borders enclose with prescribed modes of verbal expression, speech to realise community, symmetry between nation and tongue. Talleyrand would have approved of the three licks on the knuckles because policing talking in schools was designed to do no less than produce a new state of science and reason, and banish the bonds of sentiment and locality to the

LEFT

[Fig. 6] *Bilingual Aesthetics*, by Doris Sommer.

FOR CENTURIES, AND EVEN TODAY, CHILDREN IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD GET THE CUTS FOR WRONG TALK

For centuries, and even today, children in many parts of the world get the cuts for wrong talk, not because they speak too loudly or say impermissible things, but because we have determined that schools and their playgrounds are society's sand pits, the zone for lingual socialisation of the young.

Much of the modern manifestation of this was set in train in Revolutionary France, where national unity was to be fostered against the entrenched privileges of various social orders but also to be imposed in central and authorised culture. Since the fourteenth century, literate French had been promoted for publication and administration but it was now also the sole code of citizenship

private margins. He would have been horrified by the indeterminacy of South Texas/North Mexico.

Through her code-switching postcolonial poetry Anzaldúa demanded that all her languages expand to accommodate her presence in social spaces still struggling to be named, and which history determined can only be named multi-lingually. So *La Frontera* appears in six varieties of Spanish, including Spanglish, and not any old Spanglish, but local Spanglish, a language of a specific place, making meanings unique to its experiences. In *Bilingual Aesthetics* Harvard Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures Doris Sommer (Fig. 6)

has studied the unique perspective of play and nuance that bilingual discourse provides and has studied relations between Spanish and English in the Americas, what she once called the ‘univocal complacency’ of English, disrupted by Spanish, and how, elsewhere in the Americas, indigenous languages are effecting a similarly disruptive move onto the once total domination by Spanish of public domains.¹³ But even this only describes a battle between giants, the huge entities of nation-named forms of speech. English and Spanish, recalling faraway England and Spain, are sustained by industries of standardisation, dictionary writing, canonical literature, prescribed curriculum and schoolteachers. Anzaldúa’s *mestizaje* and Sommer’s bilingual aesthetics involve the crevices between and within the industries of English and Spanish, in small and local places at the borders. How else could multilingual communities communicate when all their languages inhabit the

border crossers, a vast population of people on the move across national, class, ethnic and linguistic lines. A mode of talk for border moving emerges as *Transfronterizo* talk, used by people who can move over the border line and sing ‘Jose, Can You See...’.

Those who live in politically ambiguous spaces can’t help make mischief with languages too, and we know that many Americans don’t take kindly to humour about flags and anthems if they consider it disrespectful. I have tracked, as far as you can from online blogs, deducing from what people say, the avatars they use and what they disclose about themselves, those who find it funny to play with national anthems and flags, and those who find it a provocation, and there is a link to their standpoint on the border. It is more complex than which side of the border they inhabit, but this line does predict many points people make and do not make. State-side bloggers often know the lyrics, capitalise the name, dispute that it can be sung in Spanish or

JOINING THEM IN THIS BORDER DEMOLITION WORK ARE OTHERS WITH ENTIRELY DIFFERENT AGENDAS: MANAGEMENT GURUS, AIMING NOT TO ADVANCE CULTURAL HYBRIDITY BUT TO CREATE A SEAMLESS SPACE FOR GLOBAL COMMERCE

same space and overlapping conceptual worlds?

Much of *La Frontera* is neither political nor polemical, nor does it transfer the politics and polemics to the personal, it is simply the sociolinguistic map made communicative. Its code switching is not particularly to make points, or not always, but mostly because hybrid multilingual communities hardly ever separate their languages; communicatively, they operate with merged and overlapping systems, of communication, of identity and of social practices. Multiple codes become available for play and creativity as much as for expression. Particularly good at this are New York’s Puerto Ricans, and among the best is Ana Celia Zentella, now at University of California San Diego, who brings the immigrant alien, like Simmel’s stranger, into relation with the community. In her vigorous defence of Spanglish, Zentella shows how children are ‘doing being bilingual’ in the Nuyorican way.¹⁴ She is intrigued by the southern border, and all the movement that is publicly disclaimed but privately supported, a line that does and does not exist. Focusing on talk, movement and inter-dependency at the Tijuana-San Diego line, claimed to be the largest border crossing in the world, she documents the communication of

interpret attempts to do so as badly intentioned or disrespectful. Some tell everyone that it is from a poem by Francis Scott Key commemorating the bombardment of Fort McHenry by ships of the British Royal Navy in Chesapeake Bay during the War of 1812, when Britain tried to unravel the revolution. South side, many laugh, or think it is clever, and a poke in the eye, too. In a post on a Cape Cod website on 6 December 2006 at 12:46 pm, Opinionator argued that ‘No one wants to sing “a la luz de la aurora” in place of “the dawn’s early light” at a ball game’; but in other places it is okay, audience and context matter.¹⁵

Transfronterizo talk, like all marginal identity, involves bilingual play more than mere play. *La Frontera* is breached all the time and everywhere, in talk and in walk, and, ironically, even as the line is breached its existence is confirmed. All this identity talk is not just academic prattle in small seminar rooms.

CABLINASIAN AND COMMERCE

In 1997 a twenty-one year old golfer caused a daytime TV sensation when he ‘outed’ himself on the Oprah Winfrey Show. What provoked Tiger



LEFT
 [Fig. 7] Golfer Tiger Woods, the Cablinesian.
 SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Woods was the limited identity menu required by schools, universities and the US Census Bureau. At school Tiger didn't 'check the African-American box'; he wanted to check a box reading 'Cablinasian', his unique fusion of 'Caucasian', 'Black', 'American Indian' and 'Asian', but there was no Cablinasian available for checking (Fig. 7).

In October of that year the White House Office of Management and Budget had issued Statistical Policy Directive Number 15, entitled

important to preserve comparability over the almost 230 years of its documenting the races and ethnicities of America and how they are all faring. If identities don't stay stable – controlled and fixed by unchanging names – how could we know if those belonging to each category were more schooled, better fed and housed than their parents?

Tiger told Oprah he didn't want to be labelled 'African American', because, in a Gloria Anzaldúa moment, his father was half African American, a quarter Chinese and a quarter Native American, and his mother was half Thai, a quarter Chinese and a quarter Dutch. By his estimation all these halves and quarters equalled a single Cablinasian, not a hyphenated administrative option. By repudiating the African American label, however, he irritated not only the Census geeks but also some community activists and social commentators. In the event, administration was unmoved, the Bureau reaffirmed the categories and the rolling process of official survey work proceeded as it had always done, though more recently respondents have been permitted to check more than one box.

So far in these stories of borders, talk and identities we have minority activists, cultural theorists and good golfers all contesting borders and imposed identities, or making science, bilingual play or poems about lines and bordering. But joining them in this border demolition work are others with entirely different agendas: management gurus, aiming not to advance cultural hybridity but to create a seamless space for global commerce.

The perfect and persistent representative of this corporate strategising is Kenichi Ohmae,

AT SCHOOL TIGER DIDN'T 'CHECK THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN BOX'; HE WANTED TO CHECK A BOX READING 'CABLINASIAN', HIS UNIQUE FUSION OF 'CAUCASIAN', 'BLACK', 'AMERICAN INDIAN' AND 'ASIAN'

Race and Ethnic Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting. The Directive stipulated the four racial (American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black and White) and two ethnicity (Hispanic origin and Not of Hispanic origin) categories permitted to US citizens; these races and ethnicities were the only 'Check the Box' options the Census made available and schools and universities used for administration purposes. The Directive explained that it was

1990s inventor of the 3-C Business Model, a triangular strategy for commercial success. The 3-C requires business managers to attend to the Corporation, the Customer and the Competition, though Ohmae later added three more C's: Capability, Consistency and Cultivation, and later still expanded alphabetically to include Environment, Community and Firm, the entire aim to focus planners on the Japanese injunction of *hito-kane-mono*, i.e. money, things and people.

In his stream of writings about making the world efficient for the corporation, Ohmae almost always manages to insert the term 'borderless world' in titles or subtitles or first lines: *The Next Global Stage: Challenges and Opportunities in Our Borderless World*; *The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economics*; *The Borderless World: Power and Strategy in the Interlinked Economy and Evolving Global Economy: Making Sense of the New World Order*.

These volumes, like Nietzsche, announce the death of national borders, or predict the imminent arrival of a new world efficiency-based commercial order, or advocate a fetter-free environment for the movement of goods and services.

In Ohmae's reasoning it is nations and national economies which disrupt the liberation of capital from the elemental error of protectionism. He is not lacking an orientation to community and ethics but this serves the ultimate goal of greater efficiency, competitiveness and niche positioning of companies in a cutthroat world

natural lines, fought over and revealing history's outcomes. By contrast, his favourite childhood map depicts north-eastern Belgium, a place which positively bristles with the demarcation lines of history. On this 'real world' map there are the contested boundaries of countries, regions, towns and languages, all plotted and known to exist precisely where they belong according to the map maker and the map maker's political standpoint.

The drama of history and the spatial distribution of its accommodations provide what he startlingly calls 'boundaries to insulate ... from the big bad world'.¹⁷ This strikes me as a depiction from well within the border, not at its edge. But, as if by poetic disclosure, smack in the middle of Jacobs' bordered woods, in north-eastern Belgium there lurks a counter place: a now defunct nation that was dedicated to dissolving nations and their borders, whose sad history confirms Jacobs' pessimism.

This place is now called Kelmis, or rather it is a part of the city of Kelmis, but it used to be

BOTH STALIN AND HITLER DESPISED ESPERANTO AND ESPERANTISTS, AS REPRESENTING ENTIRELY THE WRONG KIND OF INTERNATIONALISM

of unfettered trade. In this particular utopia, atomistic individuals constituted through their professional and occupational identities displace the identities of tradition, and are set free to accumulate wealth. Like Anzaldúa and Woods, Kenichi Ohmae wants to eliminate the nation line.

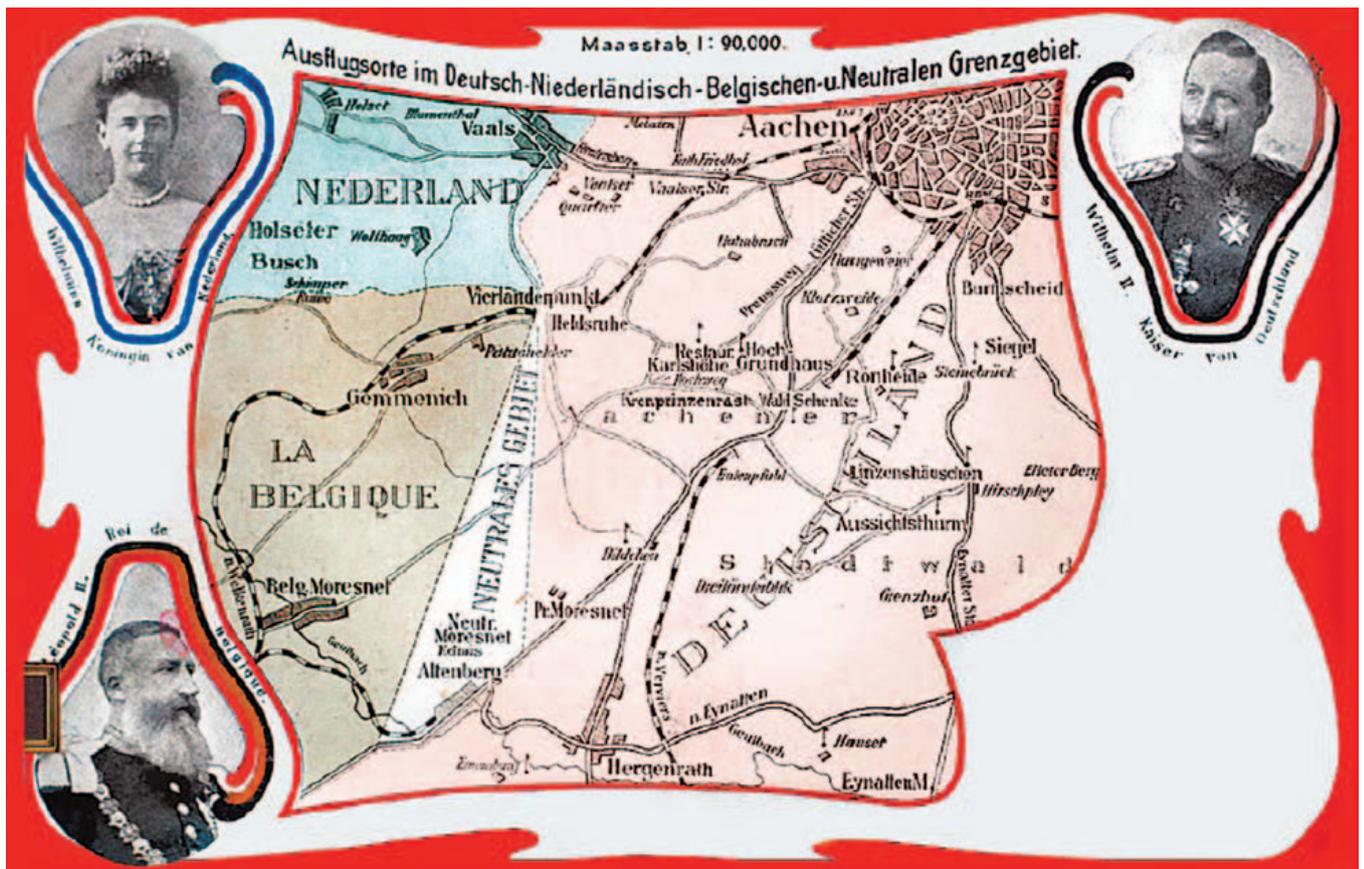
PRAISING THE LINE

But while these people come to bury borders, others come to praise them. In October 2011 the *New York Times* launched 'Borderlines': 'a series devoted to the history, appearance and significance of borders', with a first contribution by Frank Jacobs entitled 'In Praise of Borders'. The description of the 'Opinionator' states that 'Countries are defined by the lines that divide them. But how are those lines decided – and why are some of them so strange? Borderlines explores the stories behind the global map, one line at a time'.¹⁶

Jacobs notes that his favourite map, Tolkien's Middle-earth, while cartographically attractive, only shows mountains, lakes and rivers and so lacks the real-world drama of proper borders, human not

called Neutral Moresnet and then Esperantists went to live there and called it Amikejo, the place of friendship (Fig. 8). The ever idealistic Esperantists, inventing neutral languages, neutral religions, neutral flags and neutrality in general, in 1908, with appalling timing, installed within this tiny Belgian-Prussian condominium an officially Esperanto-speaking state, complete with unique flag and bounded space.¹⁸ This all happened in one of the several wrong decades of the wrong century, and in entirely the wrong place. Both Stalin and Hitler despised Esperanto and Esperantists, as representing entirely the wrong kind of internationalism. Amikejo's attempt to do away with national languages, flags and divisions, by substituting universal neutral alternatives, was obliterated by aggressive border-expanding nationalism, Hitler and Stalin's preferred kind of internationalism, and is now consigned to a small room in the municipal museum.

Jacobs cites another who praises borders; surprisingly, the French radical Régis Debray who might be expected to support hybridity



and multiple identities is scathing about *sans-frontièreisme*, a ‘stupid idea’ which has ‘the West’ in its thrall. Advocacy of borderlessness is for Debray mere ‘illusion, escapism, cowardice’; rather strangely, he decides that the border is a ‘vaccine against the epidemic of walls, a remedy to indifference, a rescue for the living’.¹⁹

Borders, in Jacobs’ view and, possibly, in the view of the *New York Times*, ‘reflect humanity’s need for obstacles, for a line in the sand between Them and Us’.²⁰

DRAWING THE LINE

The lines comprising borders are written mostly on maps, which are our theories of spatiality and spatial arrangements. Our particular geographical ideology relies on maps to display the arrangements of geo-politics and to prepare our conceptual systems for navigating the depicted physical space when we encounter it. Like most people’s, my geographic ideology began in primary school, facilitated by the twinned tools of timeline and map. I became used to maps not just as spatial depictions, but as temporal ones too; often a timeline was linked to a map, showing dynasties, periods of empire, expansion of religious affiliation,

exploration or commerce tied to physical space. These were explanations about the past and how the present came to be, the distribution effects of activity. My continuing affection for both map and timeline comes from this linking; the timeline is someone’s selection of the bits of the past that count formatively and the map is the end result of that formation in the present time. Historical maps are of course part of historical memory themselves, and therefore temporal snapshots. The end result of a timeline is the present map, explained. With a more critical adult eye we can see maps and timelines as efforts of socialisation, inducing us into a preferred story and interpretation of the world. Together they unify time and space, are the equivalent of what Talleyrand sought for the expressive identity of the French, i.e. the collective geographic and temporal imagination of citizens.

One of the most powerful stories of the conceptual formation and mental effects of mapping comes from Old Siam. Thai historian Thongchai Winichakul traces the nineteenth-century transition from Siam to Thailand, from a vaguely determined geographic space threatened by European colonial incursion, to a bounded and bordered nation. His compelling

ABOVE

[Fig. 8] Postcard of the Neutral Territory of Moresnet/Altenberg, c.1900. Author: Unknown.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

volume *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (1994) takes the timeline and map a step further, underscoring the nation-forming potency of drawn borders and their associated narratives, so that people and place form a legitimising geo-body (Fig.9).

In the broad geographic expanse of the Siam that predated Thailand, chiefdoms often served several overlords and local tributary kingdoms paid fluctuating deference to Siam's rulers as well as neighbouring states such as Laos or Burma. Siam's rulers derived their political system from the Buddhist 'Mandala model'; conceptual relation to space and to border demarcations were of minor importance to the ruling elites and their political orientations. As a result, acceptance of shifting boundaries, overlapping

classes of Siam operated with a border theory like Anzaldúa's preference for fluidity and lack of demarcation. But from these conceptions of space, simultaneously cosmographic, religious, political and mundane, they were jolted into taking seriously the politics of geography and mapmaking to protect themselves from the designs of French and British imperialism.

As they made maps Siam/Thailand's leaders shifted towards explicit delimitation of space, giving borders a more conceptual presence. Mapping, which Thongchai calls geography's 'prime technology of knowing',²¹ therefore forged both the physical and the conceptual reality, and helped construct national sentiment and ultimately the Thai Kingdom's nation-state. As we can see in the image, *Wake Up Thai People*,

RIGHT
[Fig. 9] *Siam Mapped*, by Thongchai Winichakul.

FAR RIGHT
[Fig. 10] *Wake Up Thai People!*

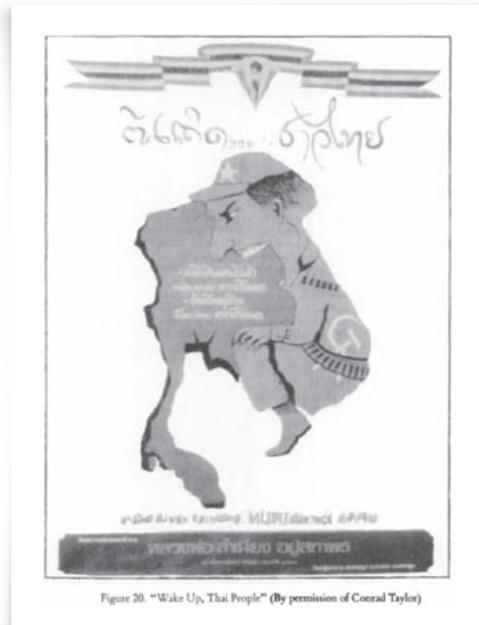
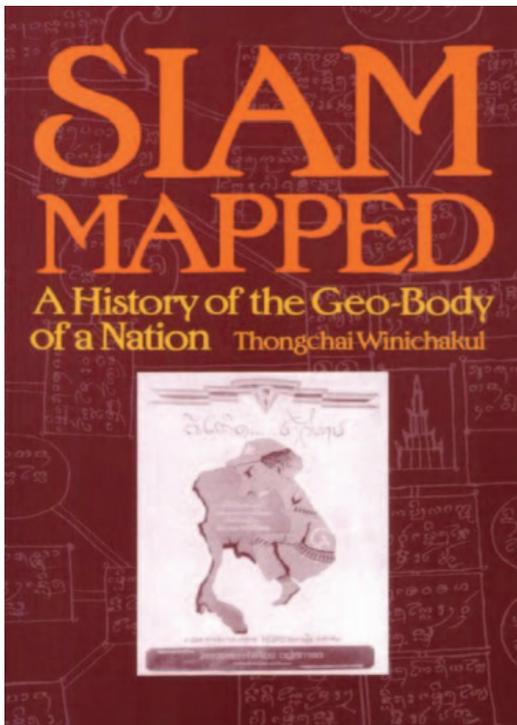


Figure 20. "Wake Up, Thai People" (By permission of Central Taylor)

zones and double sovereignty suited and fostered the indigenous tradition of spatial orientation and political influence, with its orientation to exercising influence. When political push came to imperial shove, however, Siam's rulers had great difficulty coping with even basic aspects of political geography because these were derived conceptually from alien ideas of governance through exclusive political jurisdiction over autonomous and bounded spaces, so different from exercising influence in a crowded space.

Without the guidance of secure boundaries and lacking conviction in their utility, the ruling

maps began to speak (Fig. 10). This map, giving a political warning about the threat of communism, is an excellent example of the geo-body that not only represents 'what is there' but also naturalises its ownership and warns of infiltration 'inside' the very body of geography. The threatening communist is not only occupying Thai political space but converting himself into the map, a kind of geographic insinuation. The evolving Thai geographic ideologies discovered the techniques and political power of explicit charting, fostering the mind map that is at the centre of the geo-body, which over time came to organise a sense of imagined community, the Thai-political self.



LEFT

[Fig. 11] Thomas Gainsborough, *Mr and Mrs Andrews*, 1750.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

How different is this explicit charting, this classical mapmaking, from more radical and more ancient conceptions of space which are not about ‘them’ and ‘us’, but permitting of overlapping identities and multiform interpretations of space? An artistic return to older notions of space as dynamic, ironically using the explicit techniques of mapmaking, can be found in the

BEHIND THE LINE

Far away from borderlands, well behind the lines, these collusions we see in Old Siam, between space and mind, and in South Texas, between talk and place, become established.

I want to discuss this by reference to a picture and a book about English and about England, and then English and the World, English within its

WIERZBICKA TELLS US THAT LANDS AND PEOPLE, THROUGH LANGUAGE, CONTINUE TO BELONG TOGETHER

work of the conceptual artist originally called Alighiero Boetti, who separated himself into two and gave each of his halves one of his original names, joined by an ‘and’ (‘e’ in Italian). Alighiero e Boetti conducted a radical experiment in public participatory mapmaking over twenty years in Kabul, Afghanistan, and Peshawar, over the border in Pakistan, commissioning refugees and artisans to produce maps of flag-formed national boundaries. Over the twenty years, changing flags and changing borders have come to show the ‘real world’ dissolution of the Soviet Union, unification of Germany, reconfiguration of territory in the Middle East and re-shaping of Central Asia.²² Alighiero e Boetti neither praise nor declaim lines, but set in motion a long-term public art project of border and map observation documenting both resilience and transience.

old borders, and English in the borderless space it now inhabits, reproducing a small section of a longer discussion about global English.²³ The front cover of Anna Wierzbicka’s *English: Meaning and Culture* (2006) reproduces Thomas Gainsborough’s *Mr and Mrs Andrews*, often ironically called a conversation piece since there is clearly nothing being said (Fig. 11). The genteel Suffolk couple are pictured incongruously dressed up against a scene of rustic fecundity, the solid oak invoking the comfort of continuous presence and regeneration in this place. All the borders are far away here, not visible and unimaginable.

This is a display of association, ownership and prosperity, a rural idyll of cultural continuity between lands and the Andrews, eighteenth-century English people and English place. Just like Gainsborough, Wierzbicka tells us that lands and people, through language, continue to belong

together. Her work is about how the Anglo in English persists, despite it being spoken now more often by people called Peng and Rajiv to people called Takahashi, ibn Wahid and Santi-Biondi. Wierzbicka's grammatical study uncovers cultural scripts, so that the English, those people, and the England, that place, continue centuries later in English, the language. In Wierzbicka's analysis the mental and cultural worlds of Mr and Mrs Andrews are revealed in their English and how they use it.

She detects the influences of Puritanism, enlightenment thinking about reason and individualism, and notes that these percolate

language, if it still carries its origins inside its grammar, for people who have never and likely will never visit that Sussex farm? This is one of the most important questions in education today. How do we reconcile the global and local in English? What are its features and functions, when its borders are overlapped, code-switched and played with, and when the majority of the world's apparently English conversations involve no native speakers? The old native speaker varieties of English: ours, the British, the American, nourish identity and attachment, but new varieties also increasingly do, in India and Nigeria, even as the

WHAT IS THE FATE OF A LANGUAGE WHICH RETAINS THE CULTURAL RESIDUES OF ITS ORIGINATING ANGLO CONTEXT WHEN IT LODGES IN THE LIVES OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN FARAWAY PLACES?

into everyday discourse from their origins in philosophy, religion and social conditions. According to this approach the particularly English way to use words like *fair*, *right* and *wrong* suggests a 'procedural morality',²⁴ and widespread use of epistemic phrases like *I think*, *I consider*, *I suspect*, *I imagine*, *I suppose*, and epistemic adverbs like *evidently*, *arguably*, *presumably*, *advisedly*, *probably*, distil into ordinary conversation the social ideologies of dominant philosophical schools of English liberalism. Unlike the code-switching borderlands in South Texas, where six Spanishes and two Englishes make sense, on the farm in Sussex there is an uncontested one, a standard literate and authentic code.

But English today is actually *Englishes today*, the world's language is a series of overlapping codes, which Indians and Maltese have localised. It is used all along the border Mr Obama is fortifying and both north and south it is mixed with *Transfronterizo* talk; it is now compulsory in the schools of China and Thailand, found in the mouths of people not at all like the Andrews.

Today English is a key medium of higher education in Stockholm and Kuala Lumpur. There are more Chinese learning English than there are Americans. It is the language that Kenichi Ohmae uses to write his borderless world books, that lubricates global capital and its movement as well as processes of globalisation and their spread.

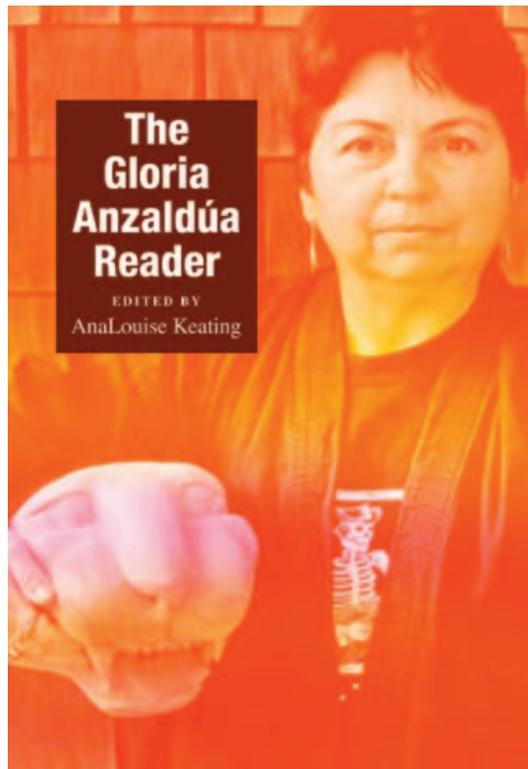
What is the fate of a language which retains the cultural residues of its originating Anglo context when it lodges in the lives of millions of people in faraway places? And what is the place of that

particular cultures are so radically different.

To reconcile these divergences we must distinguish the resources available *in* language, what we inherit from past users and past usages, from what speakers *do* with these resources, essentially distinguish between linguistic signifiers and the signs that users make from the code they are working with. *Language comes to us, but we make discourse*. Languages are bounded and bordered. Authorities and nations have created themselves through such bordering in maps of terrain. Similarly, languages and cultures have created themselves through dictionaries and grammars, maps of language. But discourse is far less bounded and bordered.

Those who praise lines describe themselves as realists, recognising that boundaries are protective; physical technologies and mental representations have been engineered to foster community premised on keeping the stranger at bay. Behind the line the work of mental and cultural production of community is fostered and discourse is its key tool. But all lines have far away and close up zones, and these borderlands and their unique practices are infecting how we talk and think today. In cultural terms border zones operate like unplanned versions of a Special Economic Zone, Industrial Park or Estate, Free Trade Zone or Free Port. These are geographic areas removed from the normal operation of laws in a given country to experimentally introduce new practices in a controlled environment or to attract but control foreign direct investment. Usually they are for free market-oriented production in a socialist centrally planned economy. China created

Special Economic Zones under Deng Xiaoping during the 1980s. Border zones allow the presence of the other, the outsider, behind the line, and their hybridity makes them appear like culturally experimental zones, paving the way for the rapid and deep trans-nationalism that is irresistibly upon us. The cultural code-switching required of us is already challenging, but it will deepen and expand. Code-switching marks the trans-nationalism of the world today, and increasingly *mestizo* lives are the likely destiny of most of those at school, making redundant Talleyrand's prescription that equal citizenship depends on cultural sameness. Ironically, as Gloria Anzaldúa perceived, *La Frontera* has spread everywhere, our ways of talking are increasingly marked by the local in its proliferating multilingualism even as we are linked inexorably to the global. Border zones have had this incubating effect, pioneering forms of social pluralism that then ooze into the hinterland spaces well behind boundary lines, where there is anxiety and patrolling, for fear of their contamination (Fig. 12).



LEFT

[Fig. 12] *The Gloria Anzaldúa Reader.*

BORDER ZONES ALLOW THE PRESENCE OF THE OTHER, THE OUTSIDER, BEHIND THE LINE, AND THEIR HYBRIDITY MAKES THEM APPEAR LIKE CULTURALLY EXPERIMENTAL ZONES

THE HUMANITIES LINE

The Australian Academy of the Humanities has been called upon in recent years to defend its turf, to defend the humanities line. A dispassionate look at the past twenty years shows the Academy was open to the 'new humanities' in the late 1980s, to the 'studies' and 'schools' approach of the 1990s that seemed to so seriously challenge its disciplinary basis, to inter-disciplinarity, trans-disciplinarity and multi-disciplinarity in the past decade, and all along to critique, both fair and foul.

Our next challenge comes from the border merging of globalisation, the trans-nationalism galloping across all the spaces once thought to be securely bound and structured by borders. Gloria Anzaldúa offers one way to re-conceive border zones, reinterpreting their lawlessness as the genesis of new formulations, some of which prosper and others die.

Like the rulers of Old Siam, we need to prepare maps to depict and help navigate the new conceptual and activity spaces that are upon us. For Western scholars operating in institutions

steeped in Western epistemological practices this will involve new knowledge practices and discipline combinations that arise when the inexorable and immense multiculturalism our disciplines have kept at bay is no longer resistible. We will not then require mere technical skills of cartography and design, since the merged world that is emerging will impose a bigger adjustment than any we have prepared for.

My stories about South Texas, about Thailand, about Tiger Woods or Gloria Anzaldúa, about *Transfronterizo* and Mr and Mrs Andrews, can be replicated everywhere, and applied to our disciplines, their boundaries and relations. I haven't even mentioned the fundamental dislocation to our literate bound lives as the voice retrieval of information will begin to transform for the first time in a millennium in the West the taken-for-granted hierarchy between literacy and speech, and with it every assumption on which universities flow and float. But these are the new borderlines for the humanities. What the humanities offers as a way to understand them, cannot be replicated by any other method of study.



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- 6 Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, *Das Leben der Anderen* (2006), 137 mins.
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- 18 Existed from 1816 to 1920.
- 19 R. Debray, quoted in Jacobs, 'In Praise of Borders'.
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- 21 Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), p. x.
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HAM



JAM



RAM



‘Matter out of place’: Public Perceptions
of and Reactions to Language Use¹

» KATE BURRIDGE

A panel on ‘Accessing Culture Through New and Emerging Media’, at the Academy’s 2010 Symposium, provided me with the opportunity to tell something of my experience of communicating about language to the broader community via television and radio. As a historical linguist at home with such things as word order change, Latin rhoticism and the Great English Vowel Shift, early in my career I hadn’t had much involvement with the cultural institution that is our standard language. Certainly, I had no idea of the concern people had for the well-being of this institution and was little prepared for the passionate public discourse on language and value that accompanied this concern. Like others in my discipline, my training had always been to view language as a natural (even if social) phenomenon, something that evolves and adapts, and can be studied objectively. But this is not how most in the wider community view their language. For them, it is more like an art form, something to be cherished, revered – and preserved. Rather like the ‘proper garden’ of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, language ‘should be well fenced from the outside world. It should by no means imitate either the wilfulness or the wildness of Nature’ (William Morris’ description of the ideal garden).² As human constructions, gardens and standard languages share two fundamental characteristics.

They are restricted by boundaries and cultivated – but they are not finished pieces of work.

Let me briefly outline the nature of this community engagement. Together with many years of giving public lectures (for schools, festivals, charities and a range of different groups and societies), I’ve had around 18 years involvement with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), preparing and presenting weekly programmes on language for radio and, more recently, for television. During this time, I have been lucky enough to be involved in a number of talkback radio programs (where callers put directly on air their observations on language and queries about usage). I’ve also been given the opportunity to write regular pieces for ABC radio’s *Soundbank* and since 2007 to present a weekly language spot on the ABC TV show ‘Can We Help’,³ where I attempt to answer viewers’ questions about language. Many have to do with etymology, but like those of the talkback callers, they are also often complaints about the language of others, i.e. observations on what is viewed as bad grammar, sloppy pronunciations, new-fangled words, vulgar colloquialisms, unwanted jargon and, of course, foreign items. As is so often the case when aspects of human behaviour are proscribed, it is what other people do that ends up on the blacklist – ‘knowledge about language’ might have



ABOVE

Detail of page 484 of *The Book of Knowledge: The Children’s Encyclopedia*, Vol II, edited by Arthur Mee and Holland Thompson, The Grolier Society of New York, 1912.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

dropped from the school curriculum, but we are all born with a keen nose for the ill-chosen word and the grammatical error of our fellow speakers!

Typically, these complaints target words and word usage that are believed to threaten the identity of the culture – what eighteenth-century grammarians referred to as the ‘genius’ of the language.⁴ Authenticity has two faces here: one is the struggle to arrest linguistic change and to retain the language in its perceived traditional form; the other is to rid the language of unwanted elements and to protect it from foreign influences. However, as linguist Deborah Cameron has argued,

of others and looking things up in dictionaries and usage guides. These activities are born of a fascination with language, but also the urge to improve it and clean it up. And like other tabooing practices, they also help to define the gang.

Community engagement in this area has many challenges. One is the complication of having to talk about something such as the Latin rhoticism and the Great English Vowel Shift (as examples of topics I’ve had to cover recently) to those who probably know more about the ins and outs of climate change and stem cell research than they do about nouns and verbs – and who probably aren’t at

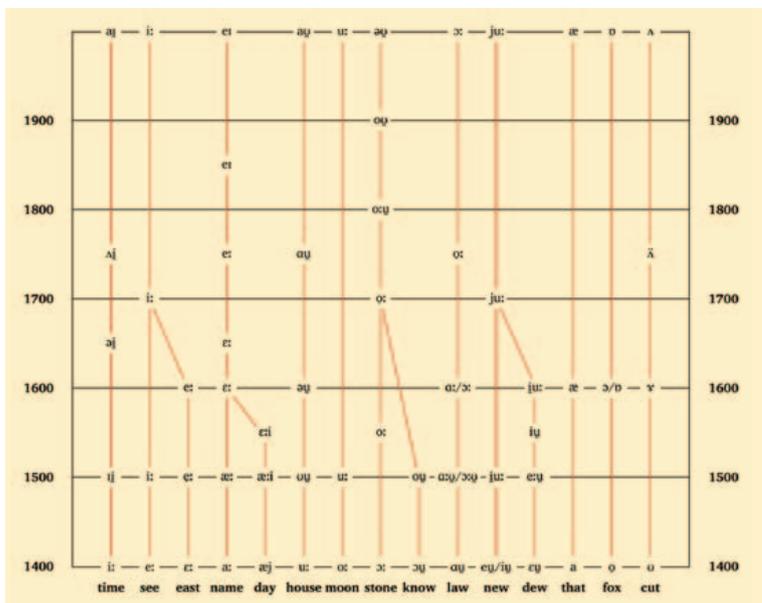
VERBAL HYGIENISTS ALSO ENJOY THINKING AND ARGUING ABOUT WORDS, CORRECTING THE WRITING OF OTHERS AND LOOKING THINGS UP IN DICTIONARIES AND USAGE GUIDES

the prescriptive endeavours of people are more complex and diverse than this.⁵ She prefers the expression ‘verbal hygiene’ over ‘prescription’ or ‘purism’ for exactly this reason. Verbal hygienists are the people found in those language associations formed to promote causes as diverse as Plain English, spelling reform, Esperanto, effective communication, and even things as esoteric as the preservation of Old English strong verbs, the abolition of the aberrant apostrophe and the advancement of Klingon. There are in fact hundreds of people out there inventing languages – *conlangers* they’re called, or ‘constructed language creators’. Verbal hygienists also enjoy thinking and arguing about words, correcting the writing

all interested in sounds except to complain about the consonants and vowels of others. Then there’s the challenge of providing a potted account of the Latin rhoticism and the Great English Vowel Shift, often in less than a minute (no room for long-windedness) and the additional difficulty of having to convince broadcasters and producers that language is more than words and their meanings – and that, yes, even the subjunctive can make for riveting radio and television!

Three incidents in particular convinced me that this kind of engagement is important and needs to be done. Two that occurred very early in my academic career especially stick in my mind. The first involved one of Robyn Williams’ excellent programmes on ABC Radio National – the show caught my attention on this occasion because it featured an academic from Monash University who was presenting a piece on infixes in English. This was remarkable in itself, since infixes belong to a rare group of affixes that stuff inside a word rather than attach to the beginning or the end like the more familiar prefixes and suffixes. Moreover, they don’t exist in English, except in colloquial curiosities like *absobloodylutely* (featuring the so-called ‘bloody-insertion rule’). Needless to say, there wasn’t a single example of an actual infix in the entire programme (with the exception of one provided by Robyn Williams when he concluded the show with ‘Fanbloodytastic!’). The second irritation was that the academic presenting the piece on English infixes was a physicist whose hobby was language. Presumably even a serious love of quantum mechanics or thermodynamics

BELOW
A graph showing the Great English Vowel Shift. Attribution: Olaf Simons. SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.





LEFT
 Graffiti found on the back of a business in Austin, Texas. Author: Senorelrobo.
 SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

would never be enough to secure a gig on the Science Show. So the message was clear. If professional linguists don't do this sort of work, others will – and they may well get it wrong.

The second incident occurred not long after when the Melbourne *Age* republished an article that vividly conveyed negative views, shared by many it seemed, towards my discipline. In this piece, Laurence Urdang, editor of *Verbatim*, described linguists as 'categorically the dullest

never factors into any university KPIs (or Key Performance Indicators). But it is rewarding work, and I've benefitted hugely from it – the flow of ideas between university and the community is indeed a two-way one. People's concerns regularly alert me to something interesting happening in the language – a new discourse particle, a meaning shift, a grammatical change perhaps. As I've said on other occasions, the clues to where a language like English is heading often lurk in

THE CLUES TO WHERE A LANGUAGE LIKE ENGLISH IS HEADING OFTEN LURK IN THE LINGUISTIC CONSTRUCTIONS THAT MANY REGARD AS WRONG, BAD OR SLOPPY

people on the face of the earth; ... rather than trying to present and explain information, they seem to be going in the opposite direction. They try to shield people from knowing anything useful about the language'.⁶ Clearly, linguistics had something of an image problem. And so I became determined to show that 'the pointy-headed abstruse strudel of academic linguistics', to quote Urdang, does indeed have something to offer.

Despite current buzzwords such as 'community engagement', 'community service', 'knowledge transfer' (or the initialism 'KT'), this mission

the linguistic constructions that many regard as wrong, bad or sloppy. Linguistic bugbears provide me with a constant source of ideas for exploring linguistic change. Think of *between you and I*, *mischievous*, *gotten*, *youse*, *yeah-no*, *to verse*, *funnest*, and *penultimate* (which some younger speakers now use to refer to something that is 'out-of-this-world greatest'). I've learned much and have derived a huge amount of pleasure following up people's queries and complaints (though this does not include the hours spent trying to find rhymes for *orange* or words ending in *-gry!*).

But it's more than just a matter of feeding my research interests. Public discourse on language and value is certainly ferociously passionate and confident, but it's also lacking in the norms we expect of debate on other topics. Ever since schools moved away from the explicit teaching of linguistic awareness, many people haven't had much of a clue about how their language works. Nonetheless, they still have views, and strong ones. People are self-styled experts in English simply because they

distinction between what is 'right' and what is 'wrong' in language and no amount of well-argued rational linguistic evidence seems able to sway them from what they see as self-evident.⁸ In 2002 Margaret Florey and I published some research on the discourse particle *yeah-no* in Australian English.⁹ In a follow-up opinion piece in Melbourne's *Age*, writer and former English teacher David Campbell outlined the various functions that we had identified for this new discourse particle; he then went on to dismiss these on the grounds that *yeah-no* is 'yet another example of speech-junk – unnecessary words that clutter up our language'. Let me emphasise with fan-fare and with trumpet blast – discourse particles might get up your nose or under your skin, but they are never 'speech-junk'. Expressions such as *yeah-no*, *I mean*, *I think*, *well*, *you know* and *like* have mindbogglingly complicated semantics and play crucial roles in conversational interaction and politeness, facts that David Campbell acknowledged but rejected outright simply because deep down he 'knew' *yeah-no* was a piece of junk.¹⁰

Frank of Floreat Park was an ABC talkback caller who regularly used to hang up the phone in disgust (if he wasn't first disconnected). In Frank's eyes, linguists are a laid-back bunch of people who flatly refuse to address people's concerns about language. We are part of a permissive ethos encouraging the alleged decline and continued abuse of Standard English – anything goes! Of course, the linguistic position is anything but 'anything goes'. What linguists try to promote is a responsive attitude to language. Expressions like *yeah-no* don't belong in written or even in formal spoken language, but where they do belong is in our informal chat – they are among the



ABOVE
Meadow Lane
Errant Apostrophes.
Attribution: John
Sutton, 2011.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA
COMMONS.

speak it, and every native English speaker feels free to voice an authoritative opinion. Linguistic intolerance is rampant – as Deborah Cameron notes: 'Linguistic bigotry is among the last publicly expressible prejudices left'.⁷ People frequently make extremely negative value judgements about others who use vocabulary, grammar and accent that they view as *bad English*, often castigating such people as 'uneducated', even 'stupid'. It is very much out of whack in an era otherwise so obsessed

CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SPEAKERS OF NON-STANDARD DIALECTS AND LOW-STATUS ACCENTS REMAINS RIFE AND GOES UNCHALLENGED

with equality for all and the desire not to offend. The basic human right of respect is understood to mean that people can no longer speak of or to others in terms that are considered insulting and demeaning; yet, this behaviour does not extend to the way people talk about the language skills of others. Conscious and unconscious discrimination against speakers of non-standard dialects and low-status accents remains rife and goes unchallenged.

People generally see a clear common sense

important verbal cuddling strategies of English.

Fiery exchanges are commonplace when it comes to issues of language use. Indeed, because of the extreme views expressed by someone who emailed me, (most notably his suggestion that I might be better off dead), I was advised to contact the local police. When I explained to the police officer the concern that triggered these emails (in this instance, the etymology of the phrase *Gordon Bennett*), he exclaimed: 'What would it

be like if you spoke about something that really mattered!" But of course language does matter, and it clearly matters a lot to many people.

These days it's punctuation that prompts particularly fiery public outbursts. The 2003 'Runaway number British Bestseller', *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, is certainly evidence of this. This amusing punctuation guide has received prayers of thanks from verbal hygienists the world over – who could imagine that a book on

spleen about a piece of punctuation. Clearly, it is not simply the listeners and viewers of Australia's national public broadcaster who feel strongly about their language, and the correspondence and general feedback I receive bears this out.

The complaint tradition is alive and well, but there is a striking difference. During the eighteenth century, the golden era of prescription, matters of punctuation fell under the purist radar – a couple of hundred years ago, no one batted an eyelid over a misplaced hyphen or an aberrant

LET ME EMPHASISE WITH FAN-FARE AND WITH TRUMPET BLAST –
DISCOURSE PARTICLES MIGHT GET UP YOUR NOSE OR UNDER YOUR SKIN,
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BELOW

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SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

apostrophes, commas, colons and exclamation marks could sell over three million hardcopies even before its debut in paperback? I also recall the time I recommended that English might be better off if it abandoned the hyphen in certain contexts and retained it only for other more useful functions. This sparked fierce attack (as did my suggestion that English could well survive without the services of the possessive apostrophe). The following is but one of the many emails received.

Email (concerning the hyphen) from 'The Weatherman', 22 June 2005

Subject: Grammar

Just read an article regarding your strange ideas that you have just published in the weed book or something.

I'm 25, tattooed ex con, so not in the habit of sending emails like this (or ever actually).

Although there is one thing that REALLY annoys me. People that want to take away from the English language.

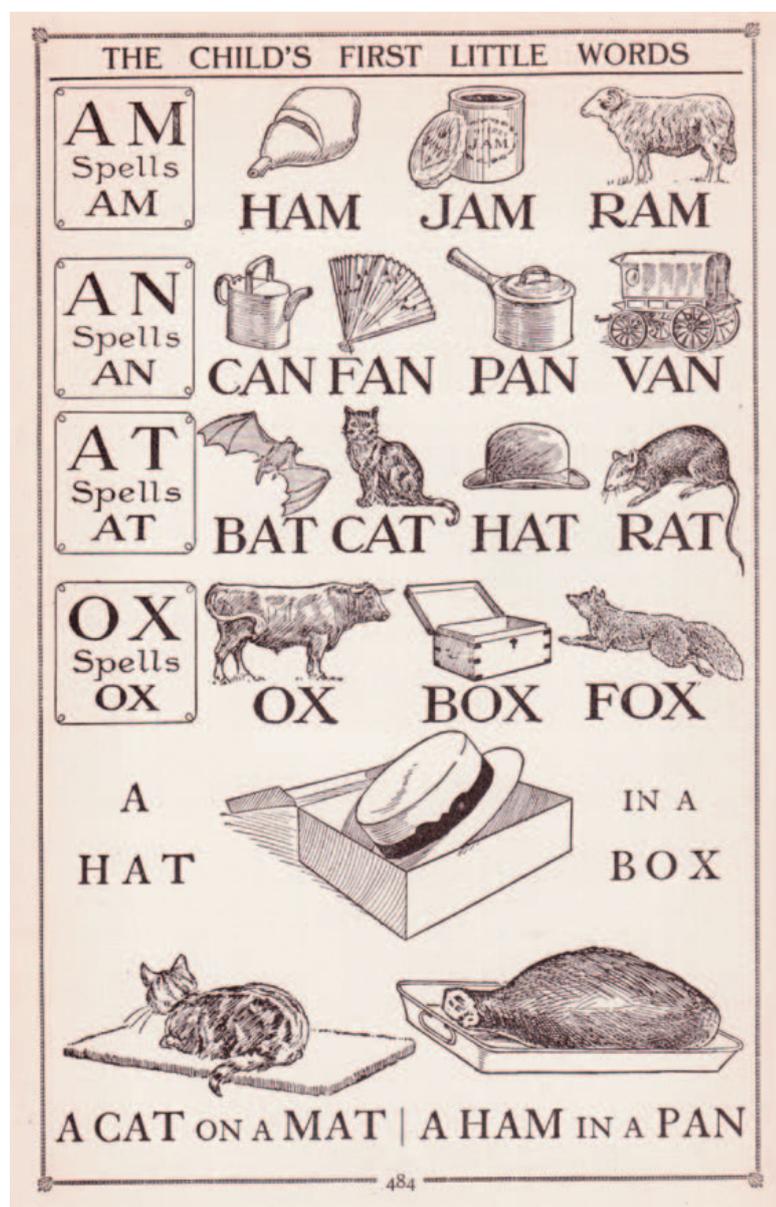
If you want to become more American in your use (or non-use) as the case maybe [sic], then so be it. *Did you note the hyphen ;-)*

But language makes us what we are, i's [sic] our common ground.

Already there are far too many illiterate people in the world.

You seem to want to make a dumb world even dumber. Good one.

It is interesting that someone who describes himself as a 25 year-old tattooed ex-con should vent



apostrophe. English historical linguist Joan Beal has tried to explain the extent of current public interest in punctuation, most notably what has been dubbed 'the greengrocer's apostrophe'.¹¹ When a Melbourne store prominently displays a sign advertising the sale of *Canva's Hat's*, it is tempting to think that the apostrophe has entered a new decorative phase (much like details of timber beams on ancient Greek buildings that are later repeated in stone buildings, though they no longer serve a utilitarian function; compare buttons

I realise now, it was never about linguistic facts, but how people perceive their language to be.

There is clearly a sense in which standard languages pass into supernatural realms. They become an ideal that speakers have for their language and everyday usage never quite rises to the occasion – not even the performances of 'good' speakers and writers. Editors, dictionary makers and handbook writers, who help to establish and maintain this object of worship, become the ones with the specialised knowledge. They possess

WHO COULD IMAGINE THAT A BOOK ON APOSTROPHES, COMMAS, COLONS AND EXCLAMATION MARKS COULD SELL OVER THREE MILLION HARDCOPIES EVEN BEFORE ITS DEBUT IN PAPERBACK?

on the cuffs of jackets, running boards on early cars, pendulums on modern longcase clocks). Apostrophation is a matter of proof-reading and not a matter of life and death; yet, as Beal notes, 'it is clear that many intelligent people do see the "greengrocer's apostrophe" as just that'. She concludes: 'Perhaps the apostrophe and its alleged misuse have come to stand for a whole set of values which the "grumpy" generation fear losing'. It might also be because people know something about the rules of the apostrophe, whereas rules to do with the subjunctive or infinitive clause formation no longer loom large in their lives.

But let me now move to the third incident that has shaped my thinking as regards linguists and the wider community. In 2001 the new *Herald Style Guide* for Australian journalists appeared on the scene. In a discussion on radio with the

the shamanic powers to control the events, to diagnose and to cure. Some even create certain rituals of prohibition and avoidance themselves. It is after all the activities of these language professionals that advertise violations of codes and draw people's attention to ill-chosen words, grammatical errors and infelicities of style. Once condemned by those in authority, these features find themselves no longer a part of what is good and what is proper – as Dwight Bolinger once put it, 'a bit after the fashion of a fireman who makes himself necessary by setting a fire'¹²

However, there are signs of change. Growing egalitarianism and social democracy are now seeing the solidarity function of accents gaining over the status function. The relationship between standard and nonstandard

COLLOQUIALISATION, LIBERALISATION AND THE EFFECTS OF E-COMMUNICATION ARE GIVING THE VERNACULAR A NEW CACHET AND RESPECTABILITY WITHIN SOCIETY

writer Kim Lockwood, I suggested that the rules he outlined weren't cut-and-dried and that he should have guided his readers through the range of available options. Other rules, I argued, were no longer valid and should be dispensed with. One talkback caller phoned up, totally frustrated, and said: 'She just doesn't get it, does she?'. There is a sense in which this caller was absolutely correct – I don't think I really did get it.

usage is clearly transforming with changes in educational practices heralding the end of years of institutionalised prescription. Colloquialisation, liberalisation and the effects of e-communication are giving the vernacular a new cachet and respectability within society.¹³ So will this spell the end of linguistic purism?

Dictionaries and handbooks give acts of linguistic purification a more public arena.

However, there's ample evidence of linguistic purism throughout the history of English, even before people started to lay down the laws on standards. A good example is the hostile response provoked by the influx of 'inkhorn terms' during the Renaissance. Purists went as far as attempting to revive obsolete native words such as *raintilt* to replace *umbrella* (some even created new ones like *mateword* for *synonym*). These activities occurred well before the creation of any English language dictionaries as we know them.¹⁴ Field linguists also report that speakers of non-standardised, non-written languages also express prescriptive sentiments, and when these languages are endangered, purism can be the kiss of death.¹⁵

But what about younger English speakers today – those who have grown up with variation and change as facts of linguistic life? A recent survey of our first year linguistics students revealed that these young speakers overwhelmingly showed intolerance towards language change, especially when it came to American English influence (a hot talkback topic). Of the seventy-one students surveyed, 81% expressed the view that the incorporation of American elements into Australian English was detrimental to the language.¹⁶ These students have gone through the 'language in use' approach at school. They have also had one year of linguistics and been immersed in the accepted wisdom of the



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ABOVE

Dr Samuel Johnson reading *The Vicar of Wakefield*, from *The Illustrated Magazine of Art*, Vol 1, No. 1, c. 1853.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

discipline. Yet I see no evidence of any new open-mindedness in their linguistic thinking. David Crystal has predicted a new egalitarian linguistic era where 'eternal tolerance' will replace the old 'eternal vigilance' of institutionalised prescription.¹⁷ Perhaps it is simply, as he says, that new attitudes and practices take time.

However, I do not believe that purism is simply the by-product of codification and generations of prescriptive thinking. As long as we signal our identity via linguistic means, we will continue to judge others by how they speak. I imagine that for as long as human language has existed, people have complained about the language of their fellow speakers. An integral part of the linguistic behaviour of every human group is the desire to constrain and manage language and to purge it

of unwanted elements. Next to the shamans are the self-appointed arbiters of linguistic goodness, ordinary language users who follow the ritual and taboo those words and constructions they see as 'unorderly' and outside the boundaries of the standard language. Feelings about what is 'clean' and what is 'dirty' in language are universal and humankind would have to change beyond all recognition before these urges to control and clean up the language disappeared. The definition of 'dirt' might change over the years, but the desire to clean up remains the same.

Mary Douglas' theory of pollution and taboo offers interesting insights here. As she sees it, the distinction between cleanliness and filth stems from the basic human need for categorisation – our need to structure the chaotic environment

around us and render it understandable. That which is dirty is that which does not fit in with our 'cherished classifications'; dirt is 'matter out of place'. The standardisation process forces languages into tidy classificatory systems. The neat lists and elegant paradigms inside the dictionary and handbook provide the perfect counterpart to the 'boundless chaos of a living speech' (my favourite quotation from Samuel Johnson) that lies outside. There are no grey areas any more, but clear boundaries as to what is and what is not acceptable. The language is defined by condemnation and proscription of those words and constructions deemed impure or not belonging. The infiltration of linguistic innovations, lexical exotics, and non-standard features is a transgression of the defining boundaries and poses a threat to the language – as well as to the society of which the language is a manifestation and a symbol. So they are tabooed and brushed aside. And, as Mary Douglas concludes her ideas on pollution: 'The moral of all this is that the facts of existence are a chaotic jumble'.¹⁸ Then so, too, is the language we use to describe these facts. Like gardens, standard languages are never finished products. To create such a work of art is to enter into a partnership with natural processes; prescription would soon render the work sterile and useless.



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communities in North America, the notion of linguistic taboo and the structure and history of English. Recent books include *Introducing English Grammar* (with Kersti Börjars, 2010) and *Gift of the Gob: Morsels of English language history* (2010).

- 1 A variant version of this paper has appeared as 'Linguistic Cleanliness is Next to Godliness: Taboo and Purism' in *English Today: The International Review of the English Language*, 26, 2 (2010), 3-13.
- 2 William Morris, 'Making the best of it', in *The Hopes and Fears for Art* (A paper read before the Trades' Guild of Learning and the Birmingham Society of Artists), 1882.
- 3 See <<http://www.abc.net.au/tv/canwehelp/>>
- 4 The first edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1775) identifies the genius of a language as 'the particular set of ideas which the words ... either

from their formation or multiplicity, are apt to excite in the mind of anyone who hears it properly uttered'. Quoted in Sterling A. Leonard, *The Doctrine of Correctness in English Usage 1700-1800* (New York: Russell and Russell, [1929] 1962), p. 29.

- 5 Deborah Cameron, *Verbal Hygiene* (London: Routledge, 1995).
- 6 The piece originally appeared in *The Washington Post*, 13 January 1992, p. D5 and was then reprinted in *The Age*.
- 7 Cameron, *Verbal Hygiene*, p. 13.
- 8 Just as I was finishing this essay, a letter appeared in the *Green Guide* of Melbourne's *Age* newspaper (26 January 2012, p. 4) in which Arthur Comer railed against the 'careless approach' of 'those, including the *Oxford English Dictionary*, who would legitimise any common mispronunciation of kilometre'. And the result of this 'careless approach' – 'unscientific chaos'.
- 9 Kate Burridge and Margaret Florey. "Yeah-no he's a good kid": A Discourse Analysis of yeah-no in Australian English', *The Australian Journal of Linguistics*, 22 (2002), 149-72.
- 10 David Campbell, 'Too much speech-junk? Yeah-no!', *Age*, 19 June 2004, p. 8.
- 11 Joan Beal, 'The Grocer's Apostrophe: Popular Prescriptivism in the 21st Century', *English Today: The International Review of the English Language*, 26, 2 (2010), p. 63. See also Tiekken-Boon van Ostade, 'The Usage Guide: Its Birth and Popularity', *English Today: The International Review of the English Language*, 26, 2 (2010), 14-24.
- 12 Dwight Bolinger, *Language: The Loaded Weapon* (London: Longman, 1980), p. 7.
- 13 Cf. David Crystal, 'Into the Twenty-first century', in *The Oxford History of English*, ed. by Lynda Mugglestone (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 394-413.
- 14 Ingrid Tiekken-Boon van Ostade, pers. com.
- 15 Cf. Nancy Dorian, 'Purism vs. Compromise in Language Revitalization and Language Revival', *Language in Society*, 23 (1994), 479-94.
- 16 Here are some of the explanations offered: 'Because Australian English would then slowly perish and it won't be unique anymore'; 'Loss of Australian identity'; 'Often US English seems to use "wrong" words, I don't like the use of "z" instead of "s" and cannot stand "for free"'; 'Why would we want to speak American English? I think "they" are lazy with language'; 'American accents are so nasal and it sounds yuck. American rap terms ≠ cool'; 'Even though it's not sociolinguistically correct to say this, but I think that American English is "bad" English and we should try and stay away from it as much as possible'; cf. Naomi Ferguson, *The Americanisation of Australian English: Attitudes, Perception and Usage*, (Monash University Honours Thesis, 2008).
- 17 Crystal, 'Into the Twenty-first Century', pp. 410-11.
- 18 Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 193.

An Introduction to the Australian National Corpus Project¹

» SIMON MUSGRAVE

In the last few years, a consensus has emerged from researchers in various disciplines that a vital piece of research infrastructure is lacking in Australia, namely, a substantial collection of computerised language data. A result of this consensus is an initiative aimed at the establishment of an Australian National Corpus. Australia's language data resources at present remain scattered and relatively inaccessible, and the Australian National Corpus Initiative constitutes a sustained effort on the part of linguists, applied linguists and language technologists to overcome this data inaccessibility by establishing a massive online database of spoken and written language in Australia, in all its forms and diversity (audio files, written texts, etc.). It represents a major expansion of Australia's e-research infrastructure in the humanities and social sciences. The Australian National Corpus is being developed (currently with support from the Australian National Data Service) as a linked set of multimodal and multilingual language resources that represents the Australian linguistic landscape, unified through common technical standards.²

The Australian National Corpus (AusNC) is therefore an ongoing project to collate and provide access to a wide range of samples of Australian language for use in academic research. Building on earlier work collecting corpora in different disciplines, AusNC will bring existing

and newly collected samples together in one place and provide tools to help researchers annotate, analyse and work collaboratively on this data.

The corpus will contain collections of:

- published texts from many genres
- transcribed speech, often with aligned audio files
- visual records of interaction (video)
- electronic texts including email, blogs and social media.

AusNC aims to illustrate Australian English in all its variety: situational, social, generational, and ethnic; and to document languages other than English used in Australia, including Auslan, and the community languages of immigrants.

The corpus will be built from existing collections contributed by researchers from many disciplines; these will be adapted as needed to allow them to be properly integrated into AusNC. The project welcomes suggestions and offers of already digitised collections of English and other languages used in Australia, to complement the main collection. All these different types of language data will then support a very wide range of researchers and their needs, including those of:

- linguistic researchers
- English language teachers, for school and adult education
- lexicographers and terminologists



ABOVE

Professor Kate Burridge at the launch of the AusNC.

COURTESY OF STEFANIE JACOBS, GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY.

- translators and interpreters
- speech and language pathologists
- natural language processing and language engineering
- other language-oriented research in the humanities and social sciences.

The last category mentioned above could include work in history, sociology, social psychology, cultural studies; indeed, any area which relates to Australian society and culture.

utilised for comparison with sub-corpora of the British National Corpus (BNC)³ or the American National Corpus.⁴ Nevertheless, questions remain about the extent to which it is sensible to make comparability a high priority. In particular, the BNC was assembled around 1990, and therefore computer-based text types are scarcely represented in it. Any attempt to represent the use of the English language in Australia in the first decades of the twenty-first century obviously cannot afford to neglect such genres, and the AusNC initiative can be expected to include substantial amounts of such data. But should this be seen as an aspect of the corpus additional to those sections which provide comparability with earlier collections, or should some elements of comparability be sacrificed in order to make coverage of the newer genres more complete? Inevitably, such decisions will in the end depend also on resource allocation, but the decisions will have to be made relative to the expressed needs of various research communities.

The development of computer-mediated communication and the recognition of computer-based textual genres is one important change since the BNC was assembled. Another is the huge improvement in the possibilities for creating and

AUSTRALIA WAS A SITE OF GREAT LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY BEFORE EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

Initial discussions concerning a possible AusNC have emphasised the diversity of research agendas which it might support and the corresponding diversity of content which might be desirable. These have particularly concentrated on three areas. Firstly, there is a consensus that an AusNC must have a carefully planned core component which is comparable to other large corpora, but questions remain about whether (or how much) technological change should influence this design. Secondly, there is also consensus that an AusNC should represent language use in Australia beyond Australian English, which would make it significantly different from existing national corpora. Thirdly, if an AusNC is to accomplish the various goals mentioned here, it is clear that the design of the technical infrastructure will be of great importance.

The design of the AusNC has not yet been finalised, but there is little doubt that it will include a very substantial body of text data which can be

disseminating high-quality recordings, both audio and video, of language in use.⁵ Concurrent with these developments, and interdependent with them, has been an increasing focus on multimodal data as the basis for comprehensive language research. This change is in turn interdependent with the emergence of language documentation as a sub-field of linguistics.⁶ A major corpus being designed now must take these developments into account, which means that the AusNC will include a substantial component of recordings of actual language use of various types. For such material, the actual multimodal recordings will be the basic data. This contrasts with the approach of the BNC, which includes approximately 10% of data from spoken language, but only transcripts are immediately accessible for analysis; the original sound recordings are part of the Sound Archive of the British Library, but are not treated as a part of the corpus itself. The proposed inclusion of audio(visual) recordings and computer-mediated

communication in AusNC inevitably means that at least part of the language data held in the corpus will not be directly comparable with other major corpora, but does, on the other hand, raise extremely interesting new research possibilities.

AusNC has as one of its aims to represent language in Australia in total, that is, to go beyond only representing the use of (more or less) standard English in Australia. This aim is

to represent Auslan in AusNC.¹⁰ Ideally, all of this diversity will be represented in the AusNC.

A crucial step in designing the AusNC is the creation and promulgation of a set of technical standards. These standards will have to specify the required formats of material which can be accepted into the corpus, the associated metadata which will be necessary to access it, the discovery

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL CORPUS IS INTENDED TO MEET A CRUCIAL NEED BY PROVIDING ACCESS TO LARGE AMOUNTS OF DATA ON LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE USE IN AUSTRALIA

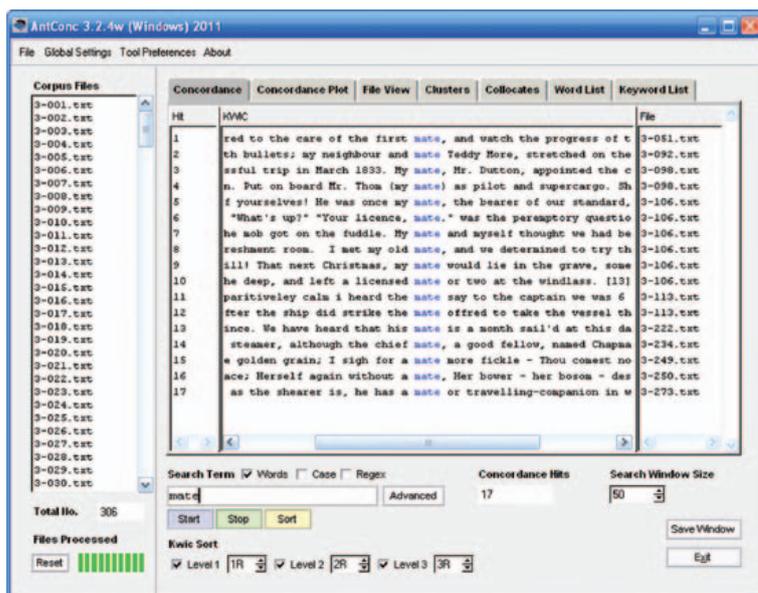
of considerable importance to many members of the research communities involved in the initiative, and can be considered a core objective. Australia was a site of great linguistic diversity before European settlement.⁷ A small part of that diversity remains and the indigenous peoples of Australia also speak distinctive varieties of English (scarcely represented in written texts) and various contact varieties.⁸ In addition, there has been a huge change to the language picture of Australia as a result of migration in the last half century.⁹ Further, Australia is one of the few places in the world where a sign language has been documented in detail with extensive video collections available

and access systems to be used, and a storage architecture.¹¹ A further important aspect of the standards associated with the corpus is a framework for handling legal and ethical issues that come with managing large bodies of data. These questions have been addressed, initially in a workshop funded by the Australian Academy of the Humanities, and then with the help of legal counsel, with the result that AusNC has a legal framework that includes a contributor's licence, end-user agreement, and other legal protections.¹²

The AusNC project is based on a Statement of Common Purpose adopted by the Australian



LEFT
AUSNC webpage
screengrab.



ABOVE

A KeyWordInContext search using COOEE data. From research by S. Musgrave and K. Burrige on Irish features in early Australian English.

Linguistic Society and the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia in 2008. One part of the statement reads: ‘We further propose that such a corpus should be freely accessible and useful to the maximum number of interested parties’, and this commitment leads naturally to a conception of the AusNC as a distributed group of resources meeting common standards which allow them to be linked by a set of network services. In most cases, users will interact with the corpus via a network connection (cf. the Corpus of Contemporary American English which is only available online).¹³

Two things crucial to ensuring that such an architecture is possible will be well-understood metadata standards and a coherent approach to annotation. Metadata for linguistics resources has received a good deal of attention over the last decade.¹⁴ There are currently two well-developed standards which can be used at least as a basis for new projects: the Open Language Archives Community metadata scheme, and the IMDI metadata scheme.¹⁵ The corpus is organised conceptually as consisting of *collections*, that is, groups of data created by a person or group as a coherent resource. Collections consist of individual *items* of data which may or may not be accompanied by *annotations*, that is, linguistic and social information attached to the data. The current stage of the project has developed a metadata scheme which accurately describes the corpus at the collection level and at least partially at the item level.¹⁶

In order to ensure that data from a diverse range of sources can be stored in a way that makes that data maximally useable for as many people as possible, the use of standoff annotation

is a crucial design principle for the AusNC.¹⁷ Treating annotation as distinct from primary data will ensure that data is multi-purpose and maximally accessible for diverse types of research. This approach will also have the advantage of making multimodal data tractable. The data to which standoff annotation relates need not be text data; what is essential is that the annotation is precisely linked to some section of primary data. The primary data itself might be text or might be a section of an audio recording specified by time codes, and the annotation can be a transcript of the specified section of a recording, just as tagging for parts of speech might be the annotation for a specified segment of text. The use of standoff annotation makes the two possibilities conceptually equivalent.

An audit of existing data (which has begun) will seek to identify holdings of any type of language data (English or other languages, text or multimodal) in a condition suitable for inclusion, as well as data that can be brought to the technical standards of AusNC with a relatively small investment. In the future, researchers across all aspects of language in Australia will be encouraged to create data and metadata which meet the standards of AusNC so that such data can be added to the collection relatively easily.

In the initial stages of the project, ten existing collections of data will be made available via a common web portal. The collections are listed and briefly described below; they should be available via AusNC early in 2012.

Australian Corpus of English (ACE)

The ACE corpus was compiled to match Australian data from 1986 with the standard American and British corpora (Brown and LOB) from the 1960s. It includes one million words of published text in 500 samples from 15 categories of nonfiction and fiction.

Australian Radio Talkback (ART)

ART is a set of samples of Australian talkback radio (2004-2006), totalling just over 200 000 words, from national, regional and commercial radio. It was collected in connection with an ARC-funded project: Australian English Grammar.

AustLit

AustLit provides full-text access to hundreds of examples of out of copyright poetry, fiction and criticism ranging from 1795 to the 1930s. The collection includes literature intended for popular audiences as well as literature intended for audiences concerned with literary quality or the establishment of a national canon. The

bibliographical information associated with these records enables researchers to investigate the relationships between texts and particular publishers or to track the first publication of each text in newspapers, magazines or journals. This provides indirect evidence of the original audience for each text and the evolution of reception over time if the texts were subsequently republished in other contexts.

Braided Channels

The Braided Channels research collection includes materials collected on Australia women, land and history in the Channel Country. The collection is constructed from some seventy hours of oral history interviews with women from Australia's Channel Country, together with archival film, transcripts, photos and music. It includes examples of Aboriginal English.

Mitchell & Delbridge

The Mitchell and Delbridge database contains recordings of Australian English as spoken by 7736 students at 330 schools across Australia, mostly collected in 1960. The tapes were digitised and reissued as an online database by the University of Sydney in 1997-98.

Monash Corpus of Spoken English (MCE)

MCE consists of a collection of recordings and transcriptions of interviews made in Melbourne c. 1997. The subjects of the interviews were adolescents from a variety of schools. The data were collected and transcribed by staff of the Linguistics Programme at Monash University.

These collections provide a sample which illustrates the aims of the project almost completely. There is a substantial amount of

THE CORPUS OF OZ EARLY ENGLISH (COOEE) OFFERS FASCINATING POSSIBILITIES FOR RESEARCH ON THE LANGUAGE OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE

Corpus of Oz Early English (COOEE)

This material, collected by Clemens Fritz, had to meet a regional and a temporal criterion. Texts had to be produced between 1788 and 1900 and written in Australia, New Zealand or Norfolk Island. But in a few cases, other localities were allowed.

Email Australia

10,000 emails submitted for a project sponsored by nineMSN and the Powerhouse Museum called Email Australia in which people submitted their favourite emails to be included in Australia's first email archive.

Griffith Corpus of Spoken Australian English (GCSAusE)

GCSAusE comprises a collection of transcribed and annotated recordings of spoken interaction amongst Australian speakers of English, as well as users of English in Australia more generally, collected by staff and students at Griffith University.

International Corpus of English (Australia's contribution is ICE-AUS)

The ICE-AUS is a one million-word corpus of transcribed spoken and written Australian English from 1992 to 1995. Its internal structure with five hundred samples (60% speech, 40% writing) matches that of other ICE corpora (associated with the International Corpus of English).

text-based material, but some of that represents a computer-based text type. There are also collections of multimodal material; the only area which AusNC aims to cover, not present in the initial collections, is data on non-English languages used in Australia. All of the collections will be accessible and searchable from the AusNC website.

The Australian National Corpus is intended to meet a crucial need by providing access to large amounts of data on language and language use in Australia. It aims to become an essential component of the infrastructure available for e-research in Australia (and more widely). Although the initial impetus for the project has come from linguists and applied linguists, the project is designed to provide a resource of use to researchers across many disciplines in the humanities. For example, the Corpus of Oz Early English (COOEE) offers fascinating possibilities for research on the language of nineteenth-century Australian literature. COOEE includes some literary sources, but also contains data from many other types of writing which can provide valuable comparisons to the language being used in published literature at the time.

The Management Committee of the Australian National Corpus Incorporated welcomes input from individual researchers or research communities with suggestions as to the types

of data which should be included and the ways in which data can be made maximally useful for their purposes. We also welcome information about existing bodies of data which should be recognised in our ongoing audit and which might be candidates for inclusion in the AusNC, but this should not be taken as an indication that the primary orientation of the project is archival. AusNC intends to take a role in encouraging the collection of new language data in Australia by making it easy for researchers to identify gaps in existing coverage and by providing a service for making data easily accessible. One area given high priority in initial discussions about AusNC is that of spoken discourse. The initial collections include two historical sources of such data (Mitchell and Delbridge from the 1960s and ICE-AUS from the 1990s), but the value of these resources would be increased by the addition of current data. Such data is being collected by the AusTalk project,¹⁸ and it is to be hoped that this data will be made available via AusNC in the future. The comparison of spoken Australian English across time which would then be possible would stimulate new research possibilities, and this is the role AusNC will have in the long-term: not only gathering in data created by previous research but also fostering new kinds of research.



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endangerment, African languages in Australia, communication in medical interactions, and the use of technology in linguistic research.

- 1 I am grateful to Kate Burridge, Michael Haugh, Pam Peters and Robyn Rebollo, all of whom read a draft of this article and made suggestions which improved it.
- 2 The project website is at <http://www.ausnc.org.au>; *Selected Proceedings of the 2008 HCSNet Workshop on Designing the Australian National Corpus: Mustering Languages*, ed. by Michael Haugh, Kate Burridge, Jean Mulder and Pam Peters (Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project, 2009). <<http://www.lingref.com/cpp/ausnc/2008/index.html>>
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- 4 Nancy Ide and Catherine Macleod, 'The American National Corpus: A Standardized Resource of American English', in *Proceedings of Corpus Linguistics 2001* (Lancaster, 2001).
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- 6 Michael Haugh, 'Designing a Multi-modal Spoken Component of the Australian National Corpus', in *Selected Proceedings of the 2008 HCSNet Workshop*, ed. by Haugh et al., pp. 74-86; Simon Musgrave and Sarah Cutfield, 'Language Documentation and an Australian National Corpus', in *Selected Proceedings of the 2008 HCSNet Workshop*, ed. by Haugh et al., pp. 10-18.
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- 8 Patrick McConvell and Felicity Meakins, 'Gurindji Kriol: A Mixed Language Emerges from Code-Switching', in *Australian Journal of Linguistics*, 25 (2005), 9-30; see also John R. Sandefur, 'Kriol of North Australia: A Language Coming of Age', *Work Papers of SIL-AAB: Series A*, 10 (1986); Anna Shnukal, 'Torres Strait Creole', in *Macquarie Aboriginal Words*, ed. by Nick Thieberger and William McGregor (Sydney: The Macquarie Library Pty Ltd, 1994), pp. 374-398.
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- 12 See <http://www.ausnc.org.au/about-1/AusNCFramework_NovConf2.docx/view>
- 13 Mark Davies, 'The 385+ Million Word Corpus of Contemporary American English (1990-2008+): Design, Architecture, and Linguistic Insights', *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 14 (2009), 159-90.
- 14 See for example Steven Bird and Gary Simons, 'Seven Dimensions of Portability for Language Documentation and Description', *Language*, 79 (2003), 557-582.
- 15 Open Language Archives Community: <<http://www.language-archives.org/>>; IMDI: <<http://www.mpi.nl/IMDI/>>
- 16 See <<http://www.ausnc.org.au/about-1/ausnc-data-model>>
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- 18 See <<http://austalk.edu.au/>>

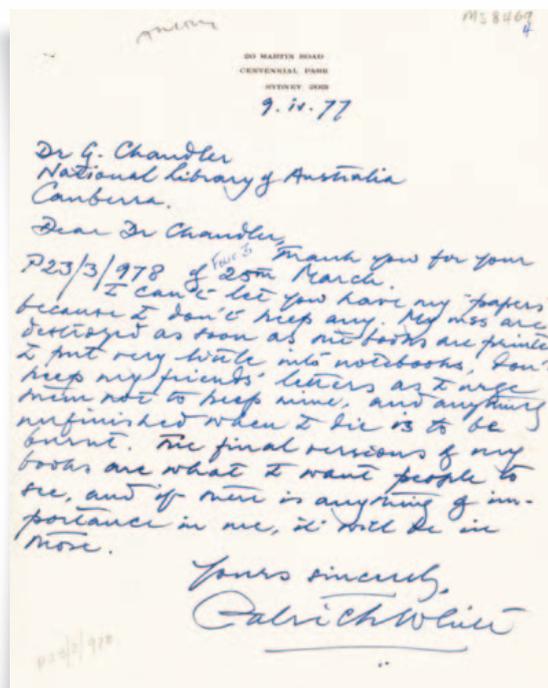


Enhancing the Ebook: Patrick White and the Australian Cultural Landscape¹

» ROBYN HOLMES

When Patrick White claimed in 1977 ‘My MSS are destroyed...’, he was declaring truthfully that he had burnt priceless drafts of his major novels and plays.² However, when the National Library of Australia (NLA) acquired the ‘lost’ Patrick White papers from his literary executor Barbara Mobbs in 2006, a frisson of excitement and shock rebounded through the scholarly, literary and wider arts communities.³ More than anyone, his biographer David Marr was astonished to discover this cache of thirty-two boxes of unknown material. ‘Happy to let me dig about in the entrails of his life’ for almost a decade, it now seemed to Marr that White had deliberately kept him from ‘trawling through this intimate evidence of his work’.⁴ In 2012, the celebration of the centenary of White’s birth is the catalyst for scholars and the custodians of cultural collections to revisit the significance of White’s entire body of work, published and unpublished, and his influence and place in Australia’s artistic life.

White’s papers, while far from comprehensive, reveal more about his complex human qualities, his creative processes, his social interactions as well as some unfulfilled aspirations in aborted scripts, plays, stories and libretti. Many items are on public display during 2012 in an exhibition at the NLA in Canberra, *The Life of Patrick White*,⁵ opening in April, and later moving to Sydney to the State Library of NSW. The exhibition



ABOVE

Patrick White at work in his study. PAPERS OF PATRICK WHITE, MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.

LEFT

Letter from Patrick White to Dr G. Chandler, Director-General National Library of Australia, 1977.

PAPERS OF PATRICK WHITE, MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.

documents White’s contributions to literature, but also explores his forceful presence in the cultural life of a nation, across the stage, visual arts, film, music and opera. It reveals his social concerns, his passions, his loyal and generous, if prickly, nature, his friendships, the homes he created and intimate moments in his life as a writer.

Other scholarly and publishing projects abound in this centenary year. Two scholarly publications

emanate from the Australian Research Council (ARC) funded digital project *Patrick White in the Twenty-first Century*, led by Margaret Harris and Elizabeth Webby at the University of Sydney: both emphasise the importance of the survival of the White archive. The first is Random House's publication of his 1981 previously unknown work of fiction, *The Hanging Garden* – of which only the first part is complete. Secondly, the researchers are creating a scholarly digital edition of the surviving ten notebooks, connecting transcriptions, annotations and commentaries to the manuscripts digitised by the NLA.

However, White's collection represents just one of a myriad of equally rich personal collections preserved in the nation's cultural institutions: those of composers, writers, designers, directors, filmmakers, public thinkers and friends, whose stories intertwine and intersect with White's presence in a wider artistic landscape.

Among the most notable related collections of original materials held at the NLA are the personal archives of composers Peter Sculthorpe and Richard Meale, director Jim Sharman, designer Desmond Digby, critics

Curt and Maria Prerauer, writer Geoffrey Dutton, historian Manning Clark, entrepreneur Harry M. Miller, actor Kate Fitzpatrick, operatic director Moffatt Oxenbould and White's biographer David Marr, as well as designs by Sidney Nolan and

photographs by William Yang. The National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA) holds other records, like those of prominent film producer Anthony Buckley, as well as related audiovisual collections. The focus of each personal archive is the individual: their collections document their own careers, relationships and creative contexts.

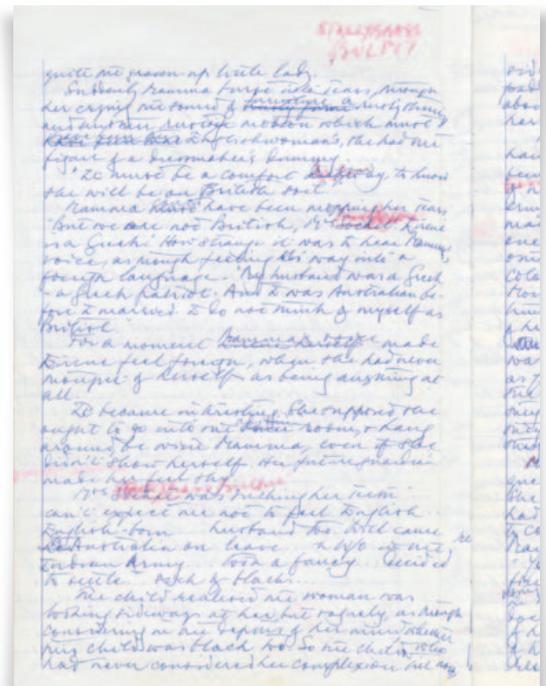
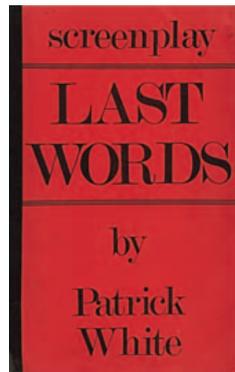
Yet White's presence forms a common thread across hundreds of boxes that contain correspondence, diaries and notebooks, musical sketches and scores, stage ephemera, photographs and visual diaries, business files and memos, and even aides-memoires of personal phone calls. White appears here as a character on a much larger cultural stage, in which the threads weave, interconnect and resound across multiple collections. Across these inner and professional worlds of other personas, Patrick White recurs as a kind of refrain, a recurring motto, an icon, weaving connections and networks, some intimate, some inspirational, others inflammatory.

These collections, considered together with White's own, reveal White from a different viewpoint: as a writer under the influence

RIGHT

Last Words screenplay, unpublished.

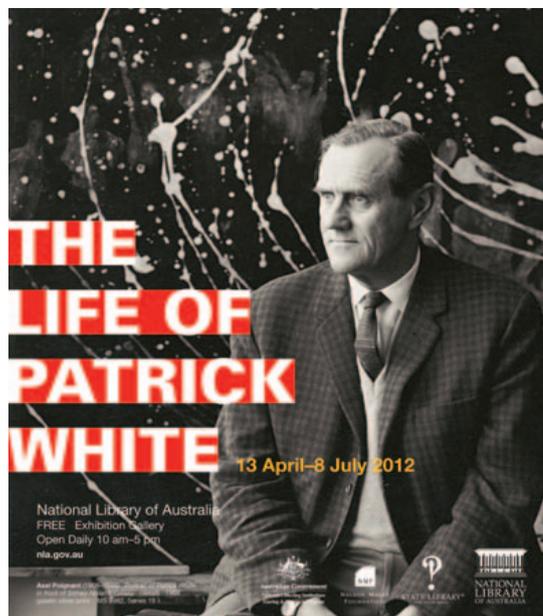
PAPERS OF PATRICK WHITE, MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.



FAR RIGHT

Part of the first draft of *The Hanging Garden*, unpublished, 1980s.

PAPERS OF PATRICK WHITE, MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.



BOTTOM RIGHT

Promotional flyer of the exhibition *The Life of Patrick White*.

COURTESY OF NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.

of – even trying his hand in – other art forms, ever imagining, or rejecting, or participating in the transformation of his ideas and writing into other forms of artistic expression. White was not only self-declared 'painter manqué', but also musician manqué, opera lover and (almost) librettist manqué, screenwriter (mostly manqué) and director manqué, who loved but could never quite work out how to fully play in

the world of the theatre, the opera stage, the film set and the artist's studio. Writing was to be his fate, his curse, as he sometimes saw it.

This broader narrative, derived from these multiple collections, forms the basis for another innovative and experimental White centenary project *Patrick White, Voss and the Australian Cultural Landscape*. The result is an enhanced

arts funding, piece together like a gigantic cultural jigsaw. White plays the role of a central protagonist or behind-the-scenes puppeteer in this cultural narrative. Such is the dominating presence of a Nobel Prize winning artist.

This joint project grew out of two quite separate aims. The first was to bring to a wider public the results of a series of events in 2009 called *The*

PATRICK WHITE RECURS AS A KIND OF REFRAIN, A RECURRING MOTTO, AN ICON, WEAVING CONNECTIONS AND NETWORKS SOMETIMES INTIMATE, SOME INSPIRATIONAL, OTHERS INFLAMMATORY

ebook published by the National Library in partnership with the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, and written by Robyn Holmes (NLA) and Vincent Plush (NLSA). In this ebook, digitised source materials from these and other national collections – manuscripts of all kinds, images, musical scores, sound recordings, oral histories and films – appear as layers and voices in the story, to illuminate the narrative and create what aims to be a rich and living experience for those reading the text.

Using the novel *Voss* as a central thread, the authors explore White's relationship to a medley of high profile Australian artists, thinkers and entrepreneurs, most seeking opportunities to establish their voices in both Australian and international contexts. This is a generation, like White, committed to creating art professionally in Australia, and working to embed their art-forms, confidently and maturely, in the nation's psyche. White appears here, as protagonist, provocateur, chief critic, guardian angel and sceptic in politically

Voss Journey. This four-day event led by the NLSA with the NLA, in partnership with fourteen other agencies including the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and Opera Australia, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the Australian National University (ANU), set out to chart the cultural resonances of the novel *Voss* over a fifty-year period. White's physical and spiritual quest for an Australian 'mythical history' in his novel *Voss* plays itself out in a myriad of *Voss*-related offspring in literature, painting, music, theatre, film, photography and ethnography, some projects realised, others barely begun. *Voss*, in essence, is a story about the future of Australia as much as it is about its history and its present (as perceived in 1957). Perhaps this is why the novel was so resonant for other artists struggling with the quest for an Australian artistic identity on the international stage in a period of burgeoning cultural activity.

The Voss Journey, peopled by a teeming cast of creative and public figures, explored the webs of

WRITING WAS TO BE HIS FATE, HIS CURSE, AS HE SOMETIMES SAW IT

engaged stories of the growth of Australia's cultural agencies from the 1950s to the 1990s. The heady days of experiment and achievement in Australian literature and publishing, the Australian film industry, the rise of professional permanent Australian performing arts companies, multi-arts festivals like the Adelaide Festival of Arts and multi art-form venues like the Sydney Opera House, as well as the growth of government

relationships, ideas and collaborations sustained and sometimes sundered around *Voss*, and exposed the ways in which collections held across multiple institutions could 'speak to each other'. Scholars explored the novel and its sources in Leichhardt and colonial society; Indigenous artists inverted the story through dance; and performing artists reflected on the multiple attempts to film *Voss* and its transformation onto the opera stage

RIGHT

Patrick White at work in his study.

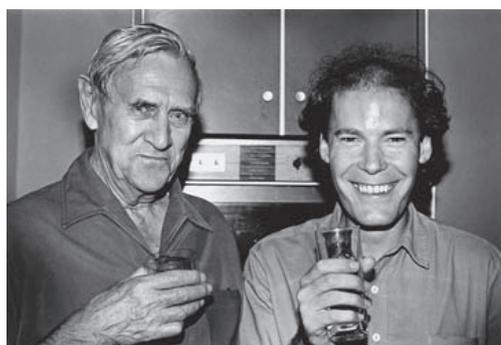
PAPERS OF PATRICK WHITE, MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.



RIGHT

Patrick White and Jim Sharman.

PAPERS OF PATRICK WHITE, MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.



RIGHT

Patrick White, Manoly Lascaris and his theatrical friends.

PAPERS OF PATRICK WHITE, MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA.



and language to convey the interior journeys of the characters; and how a cast of actor-singers brought *Voss* to the stage under Jim Sharman's masterly direction. Other clips, digitised manuscripts, pictures and ephemera invoke recollections of the Adelaide Festival of Arts, the opening of the Sydney Opera House and other historical moments, from colonial sources that animated White's historical imagination through to paintings and contemporary performances.

This experimental ebook project was driven also by the need for the national cultural institutions to explore a completely different aspect of their business. The rapidly changing technologies, shifts in scholarly publishing and new e-publishing business models provide serious challenges to those institutions with statutory responsibilities for preserving the creative and scholarly output of the nation. The NLA, in particular, is confronting its role in the cycle of production, management and archiving of ebooks: publications increasingly enhanced with rich media, presented in various manifestations with multi-formats, and distributed in new ways, in which hardware, software and distribution platforms are interdependent. How will the Library respond to this alternative future? How will it provide access to such books permanently into the future? No better way to understand the processes than to encounter them first-hand!

Thus the two institutions, NLA and NFSA, embarked on this ebook as a collaborative 'learning' project. The NLA's publications staff had already converted their out-of-stock back issues into ebooks (in PDF), freely available from the website, and were testing new business models with boutique, high-end publications produced for sale in both print and ebook formats. This project aimed, instead, to test the issues for extended and enhanced scholarly e-publications, free to users, in order to explore production, distribution and user behaviour, as well as the complexities of archiving and interactivity. The project had some in-built advantages: the authors were on staff and had already unravelled and generated cultural content related across institutions that could complement the Patrick White centenary projects. Rich media and direct links to permanently identified materials could test new ways of providing interpreted access to collections. In addition, staff responsible for web publishing and preserving digital objects, together with authors and editors, could meaningfully investigate, from multiple viewpoints, the complexities and challenges of the technology and emerging industry standards.

by The Australian Opera at the 1986 Adelaide Festival of Arts. In sharing their memories, the illustrious cast of characters revisited and reflected on the significance of key cultural moments in this fifty-year history, as well as recounted some apocryphal Patrick White anecdotes.

The four days of *The Voss Journey* created living history and the NFSA fully documented the events in film and sound, creating a rich audiovisual source for the – as then unimagined – ebook. Excerpts from the opera production of *Voss*, courtesy of Opera Australia (formerly The Australian Opera) and the ABC, but now commercially unavailable, also enliven the ebook narrative. Film and sound clips, digitised scores and images, illuminate the ways in which David Malouf transformed this complex novel into a libretto and Richard Meale crafted a musical style

BELOW

Voss costume design by Luciana Arrighi, Patrick White's niece.

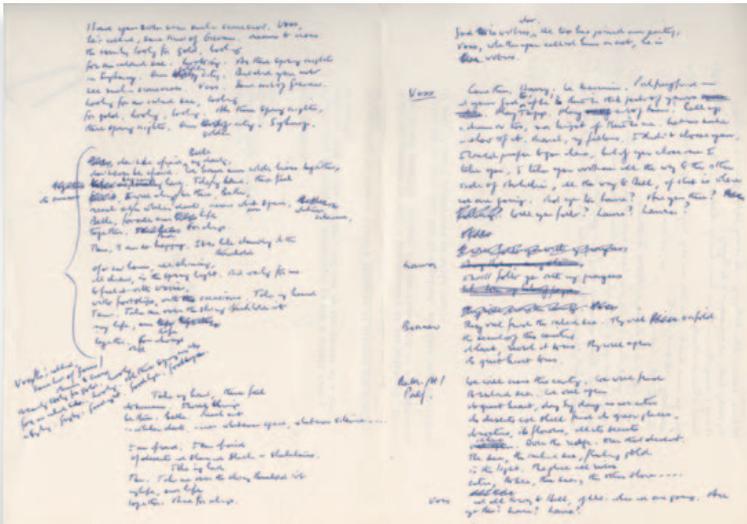
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media: others will not. It also has to be accessible to people with disabilities. The principle is to use a 'single source publishing' model in which the same content is used to generate multiple outputs. Given the vast array in the marketplace, this range of formats and interoperability cannot be comprehensive. Without common industry standards and consistent behaviours across

formats and devices, the project is targeting the most accessible, the most used and the most marketed in Australia.

The team also decided to make the book available in HTML and PDF on a website, a cross-institutional micro-site, co-branded with its own nomenclature, but hosted by the NLA in its Drupal web content management architecture. The rationale for a web version was to enhance both accessibility and interactivity. Given the limitations of some ebooks to support annotation, tags,



ABOVE

David Malouf's draft of the Voss libretto.

COURTESY OF FRYER LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND. BY PERMISSION OF DAVID MALOUF AND BARBARA MOBBS.

commentary and review, these desirable ebook functions have been transferred to the website, creating an 'engagement space' in which to seek feedback, update related information about other projects and harness new knowledge, without prejudicing the integrity of the ebook in its first iteration. An early test provided a useful proof of concept. When the filmmaker Ken Russell died in late 2011, the NFSA published on its website a portion of the chapter that discusses Russell as the first-engaged director in Patrick White's and Harry M. Miller's attempts to transform Voss into a film. Within twenty-four hours, blogs

from around the world, including from Ken Russell's biographer who was unaware of Russell's excursions into Voss, elicited the sharing of new information and important commentary. As it is an experimental project, there is no ongoing commitment to revising the ebook, just as a publisher cannot commit to future editions on first release. Yet the possibilities for interactivity in ebooks remain rich and the project has left open a door of opportunity to capture feedback, new collections and new knowledge into the future.

To maintain the principle of an 'agnostic' book, the narrative also needs layering. It needs to stand with integrity as text alone, with or without the sources: a 'good read' that does not leave the reader missing its meaning by not being able to access the clips, oral testimony, images and accompaniments. Thus, at the micro level, authors cannot include statements like 'as you can hear/see in the following example'; they must express an idea using both text and rich sources but without repetition; and include elegant messages and citations where audiovisual materials are available but may not render.

The layout needs to be agnostic as well, with text and digital objects free-flowing to fill the varied sizes and style definitions of eReaders, in an environment where the user takes control of the options for font size and type. One consequence is that page numbers become obsolete for scholarly citation and for cross-referencing across chapters, replaced by search functionality. Footnotes automatically convert to endnotes, images cluster, and tables appear as images. The ebook production does not have the same precision as a print version. An editor more used to publishing electronically than in print can define in advance some electronic styles to minimise difficulties of converting the text to multiple publication formats and reduce manual manipulation, but automated conversion does not always guarantee accuracy and consistency in this ever-frustrating process of ebook formatting.

Even the question of where to place a digitised resource in the text can be problematic, whereas the fixed relationship between text and illustration in print publication can anticipate a reader's long-standing habits of relating text and image. When an ebook expands to include audiovisual materials, then these 'reading' habits are likely to be informed by the user's experience of sound, film, multimedia and gaming, as well as web usage. There is little systematic research yet as to how readers translate their experience, habits and expectations from other media into a book environment. In other words, user expectations are not well understood,

though technology companies are driving screen-readability and usability changes informed by technical research. Content creators can at best synthesise an understanding of users' behaviour in a web environment with known habits of reading long sustained text, but in electronic form. In this context, book editors and designers are gravitating more towards the role of creative producer as technologies and user experiences converge.

The NLA's early adoption of permanent identifiers for its catalogue records and digital/digitised objects has proved an important bonus for a book designed to enhance the narrative with collection sources and to support full scholarly apparatus to reveal the evidence. The project

generation authoring tools, but most notably the omission of full support for scholarly apparatus and referencing. In all output formats, the project team has inserted footnotes (endnotes) that contain live URLs to the sources, using the Library's permanent object or catalogue identifier. Though internet navigation remains clunky, we wished to ensure that the scholarly reader could directly locate these sources, and use and correctly cite them with confidence, into the future.

A further question arose from the decision to embed the sources: would a book of 250,000 words, rich with video, sound and image, cause problems for the user in downloading, storing and using the ebook? The project decision has

THERE IS LITTLE SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH YET AS TO HOW READERS TRANSLATE THEIR EXPERIENCE, HABITS AND EXPECTATIONS FROM OTHER MEDIA INTO A BOOK ENVIRONMENT

team's original vision was that a reader should be able to move directly and freely in and out from the narrative to the digital object and/or to full bibliographic details of sources in the catalogue record. Not all people, of course, will want to read and experience the book in this way, but the guiding principle is to support rich scholarship for those that do. In other words, just as the text is 'agnostic', the book aims to reach a dual audience of scholars and the general public.

However, eReaders and ebook formats do not readily allow readers to navigate from the self-contained space of the ebook into the internet, and back again. This limitation has inhibited implementation of the project's preferred model. Instead of delivering source materials in the text dynamically, as desired, we have had to embed the digital resources in the narrative; that is, confine them within the container of the ebook rather than enabling the reader to navigate to external repositories and back into the text. On our testing to date, the new iBooks Author tool is better able to present embedded resources because it can preserve the functionality inherent in the original. For example, in this format we have been able to import digitised Patrick White notebooks into the text as a whole, not just selected static pages, and allow readers to control the page turning. The display is also friendlier, with more flexible viewing options and easier navigation across chapters. This format, however, still has limitations, not only those of its first-

been to include audiovisual clips where desired, using audio over video for preference, but not to limit these inclusions because of size restrictions. The team considered breaking the book into four related books: covering the relationship of Patrick White and *Voss* to history and literature, to visual arts, to film and stage, to music and opera. However, the final decision has been to keep the narrative as one book, and to monitor usage and download issues as they arise. One of



LEFT

David Malouf FAHA and Richard Meale FAHA, collaborating on *Voss*.

PAPERS OF RICHARD MEALE, MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA..

the goals was to test all ends of the spectrum in the experience of ebooks; size may yet prove one of the key challenges for both creators and users.

The book is a collaborative project managed across two institutions, with two authors, an editor, a web developer and other contributors. A key goal has been to explore a collaborative IT environment, in which authors could continually update a shared text, and others could document or insert into it selected collection resources. To achieve this goal, the Library established a password controlled public wiki site, enabling internal and external access by project contributors. The wiki space has acted as a repository for working

distributors. However, commercial distributors, such as Amazon, have implemented business models that do not necessarily mesh with the goals of scholarly book distribution: these models may yet militate against distributing the ebook free to as wide a global audience as possible.

This use of the wiki to support collaboration has proved relatively successful but only where contributors have had full access to the technology. Old browsers and operating systems do not support all functionality and, in the case of one participant, have caused technical frustrations when working outside of the institution using a laptop. However, in the process, the team has learned much about

SCHOLARLY NORMS AND VALUES, HOWEVER, REMAIN AS STRONG AS EVER: THE BOOK HAS TO APPEAL TO THE READER AND THE NARRATIVE MUST FLOW

documents and supported distributed authorship and editing, version control and a channel for communication. The aim was to maintain one continually growing and changing master version of the book, authored in Microsoft Office, while enabling access to previous versions, each dated and controlled automatically in the wiki for ease of checking and cross-reference by multiple users. The editor applied consistent styling conventions, such as heading styles, block quote and character styles, prior to conversion. This helped ensure a relatively smooth transition from a master book, authored in Word, to a structured format.

This structured format – DocBook XML – serves as the ‘single source’ or master format, which is then transformed into the various target output formats: ePub, html, pdf, rtf etc. The transformation process is managed by tools and templates and requires no human intervention. The obvious benefits of this approach are in maintaining one authoritative source as well as ensuring that future distribution formats can be catered for via new transformation templates. As the ebook enters the dissemination phase, we intend to monitor and evaluate usage of the book, its accessibility and outreach, relative to the range of distribution options and targeted output formats we have employed. We have yet to encounter the potential pitfalls that are inherent in the emerging ebook marketplace. For example, our intention is to distribute the ebook, free of charge, through multiple international

naming conventions, consistency, version control and the management of resources in a shared space. In hindsight, establishing protocols, guidelines, style manuals and good training from the outset, based on what we now know, would have alleviated many of the issues and made for a more efficient collaborative environment.

The project team established a parallel process for managing the multi-format media resources in the ebook, using the NLA’s in-house Exhibitions Filemaker database. A running number identifier was allocated to each resource to enable its import into the text. Each media element was included in the master source via reference to its associated Filemaker identifier, with the Filemaker record also generating the caption and credit text. For the NLA resources – though not for the NFSAs – the Filemaker records also linked directly to the institutional digital repository via their permanent identifiers, enabling easy retrieval. The use of the Exhibition database also enabled cross-fertilisation of resources with those selected by the curators of the NLA’s *The Life of Patrick White* exhibition, including sharing the permissions processes for use of the materials. This was important since the Library was running concurrent projects with some cross-over in engagement with contributors, collection donors and copyright holders.

Another experimental component in the project has been to test the quality and approach to digitisation of collection items. When the NLA expanded its original digitisation program

in 2001, it implemented a policy of ‘digitise once, for many uses’. This resulted in high quality digital masters that could support preservation and publication requests, with lower quality surrogates delivered to the web for general public research and access. Such a policy is resource intensive and expensive, as many institutions across the world have found out. The Research Libraries Group in the United States undertook a major study that led to a 2011 report: *Scan and Deliver: Managing User-initiated Digitization in Special Collections and Archives*.⁹ This report proposed alternative pathways to digitisation, using different processes, at varying resolution,

the reader and the narrative must flow; authors still need to communicate meaningful research in clear and vibrant language, and peer review remains essential even if the processes change. Time-honoured issues of trust, authenticity, integrity, consistency, accuracy and sound evidence remain – indeed, with search functionality, ebooks are even more exposed to anyone checking and comparing sources. Ebooks are not lesser books – in some ways they have highlighted the need for excellence. However, new modes of production are opening up a different reading experience, one that is becoming a reality as the tools to create and disseminate richer, enhanced ebooks become

EBOOKS ARE NOT LESSER BOOKS – IN SOME WAYS THEY HAVE HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED FOR EXCELLENCE

for different purposes. The NLA has trialled this approach with items specifically digitised for this project, because the technical standards required for online publication are lower than for print publications. Staff will evaluate the success of this strategy to streamline processes and lower administrative costs, and consider implications for policy. In the new publishing environment, the NLA is experiencing an ever-increasing public demand for digital copies of collection items, perhaps because etexts so readily facilitate illustration. However, the trend is for publishers to push these costs onto authors, increasing pressure on scholars, particularly independent ones.

This raises the question of costs and workload associated with publishing. Despite the ease of non-physical distribution of books to audiences the world over, and the potentially greater audience and global market for an ebook, the production costs of epublications are not necessarily any lower. A large portion has simply shifted from the printing and distribution end of the production cycle to the preparatory and middle stages, and demanded other skill-sets and participants in the process. Authors and editors themselves need new skills and on-the-job training though, increasingly, ‘digitally native’ scholars are equipped with the aptitude to publish their own work independently, especially with the rise of simpler ‘GarageBand’ tools.

Scholarly norms and values, however, remain as strong as ever: the book still has to appeal to

simpler. For now, the learning curve to produce a complex ebook can remain quite intimidating for the author or copy editor without institutional or publisher backing, even though distributors are supporting self-publishing as a new norm.

One ever-taxing issue for any author and publisher, however, has become even more complicated: that of access, copyright and permissions. Our ebook draws largely on original materials, in which creators retain perpetual copyright. The project team has mostly found creators extraordinarily generous, even enthusiastic, in supporting access, copying and use of correspondence, other writing and creative works. Publishers, agents and organisations have also allowed use of many in-copyright materials. However, publishing pushes traditional concepts of ‘publication’ and access into new territory, where the distinctions between ‘broadcasting’, ‘publishing’ and ‘communicating’ can become blurred. This is particularly challenging when using audiovisual materials – that often contain multiple layers of ‘communication’, moral and underlying rights – and with visual art and other outputs. For example, in newspapers and the music industry, companies or agencies have established licensing models to enable re-use and to monetise their ‘long tail’ products. Where an author once might have paid a fixed fee to use this kind of illustrative material, this same material may now be subject to a licence fee on a renewable basis. This is not feasible or

practical for institutions, nor necessarily for publishers, entering unknown waters and without a budget into the future for ongoing licensing.

So, just like Patrick White's novel *Voss*, and *The Voss Journey* that seeded it, this ebook has galvanised an exploration into uncharted territory. It has been challenging, complex, collaborative and deeply insightful as a 'learning' project for both the authors and the national institutions. No doubt, the spectre of Patrick White will loom over this project as it comes to fruition, alongside the many other celebrations of the centenary of White's birth. It brings together multiple old paper-based and analogue audiovisual archives that have survived alongside Patrick White's – regardless of his determination to burn his papers – with the new technology that can make such collections more accessible for new audiences. Above all, the enhanced ebook provides the opportunity to enrich these Australian stories with the full range of artistic media that so inspired Patrick White and ensured his place as a dominating presence in Australia's cultural landscape.



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- 1 I am grateful to the National Library of Australia's Director of Web Publishing, Carmel McLerny, and the project's web developer, Brendon McKinley, for their assistance with this article.
- 2 Patrick White, reply to Dr. George Chandler, NLA Director-General, 9 April 1977, National Library of Australia Manuscripts Collection, MS 8469 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn1179909>>
- 3 Marie-Louise Ayres, "My Mss are Destroyed..." The Patrick White Collection', *National Library of Australia News*, XVII, n° 6, March 2007. Also available as <www.nla.gov.au/pub/nlanews/2007/mar07/story.1.pdf>
- 4 David Marr, 'Patrick White: The Final chapter', *The Monthly*, April 2008, p. 35. <<http://www.themonthly.com.au/monthly-essays-david-marr-patrick-white-final-chapter-873>>
- 5 The exhibition runs at the National Library of Australia in Canberra from 13 April to 8 July 2012, and transfers to the State Library of NSW in Sydney from 20 August to 28 October 2012. It is supported by a grant from the *National Collecting Institutions Touring and Outreach Program*, an Australian Government programme aiming to improve access to the national collections for all Australians. <<http://www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/the-life-of-patrick-white>>
- 6 T.S. Eliot, *The Wasteland* (Faber and Faber and Touch Press, 2011). <<http://thewastelandforipad.com/>>
- 7 Warren Fahey, *Australian Folk Songs and Bush Ballads Enhanced E-book* (Harper Collins, Australia, 2011). <<http://www.harpercollins.com.au/books/Australian-Folk-Songs-Bush-Ballads-Enhanced-E-Book>>
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- 9 Jennifer Schaffner, Francine Snyder and Shannon Supple, *Scan and Deliver: Managing User-initiated Digitization in Special Collections and Archives* (Dublin, OH: OCLC Research, 2011). <<http://www.oclc.org/research/publications/library/2011/2011-05.pdf>>



How to Console Yourself and Others: Ancient and Modern Perspectives on Managing Grief¹

» HAN BALTUSSEN

PREFACE: REFLECTING ON DEATH, GRIEF AND CONSOLATION

When Emily Dickinson in one of her letters wrote ‘That *Bareheaded* life – under the grass – worries one like a wasp’, she expressed the general human worry about what happens to us after death. Such is our plight: we are aware of our mortality and anticipate it.

The need for grief expression in words is apparent across history and different cultures. In the past fifty years or so, the modern study of grief in the twentieth century, and more recently in the ancient world, has intensified considerably. Different views have been put forward to explain this: the rise of the social sciences, secularisation and the need for guidance in ritual, the Second World War and its subsequent ‘age of anxiety’ accompanied by the rise of Prozac. All these factors may have played a role, but my project has taken its cue primarily from more recent changes in public grief expression, and – in the context of resolving mental disorders – the increasing critique of medicinal approaches, leading to a use of the Arts in resolving grief.

Perhaps, like retirement, death is a topic most of us prefer to deal with later – and with increased longevity this is perhaps a luxury we can afford. But unlike retirement, death has a way of imposing

itself more frequently, disrupting our daily routines when family or friends are taken. As the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) broadcaster and linguist Ruth Wajnryb commented a few years ago:

we live with disturbing uncertainty, from one moment to the next everything can turn around: you change lanes at a bad moment and there goes your spine, you have a biopsy and await the results and then you have to rethink your life expectancy. The stock market dissolves your super. A cyclone sweeps away your home, family, community. Life, as you know it, is tenuous at best.²

Yet, unless disproportionately unfortunate, we lack enough familiarity with the subject to get used to it or be prepared for a new mishap. In modern testimonies one may quote the well-known example from C.S. Lewis’ *A Grief Observed* which opens: ‘No one ever told me that grief felt so much like fear’, or Joan Didion’s memoir *The Year of Magical Thinking*: ‘Grief, when it comes, is nothing we expect it to be.’³ Such comments can easily be paralleled with ancient ones that express dismay at how hard it is to find words when dealing with grief.⁴

These brief sound bites stand for a range of remarkable documents that chart a constant concern for coping with sorrow by way of a literary response. They encapsulate a humanistic



ABOVE

Antonio del Pollaiuolo, *Apollo and Daphne*, late fifteenth century.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.



ABOVE

Joan Didion at the Brooklyn Book Festival. Photograph by David Shankbone, 2008.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

value that continues to evoke a strong reaction of recognition and sympathy long after they were produced. Consolation and grief management is a fascinating topic at the core of what the humanities deal with: human experience, how it is expressed in the miracle of language and what we might learn from it. In other words, my focus is not on loss per se, but on what we can do to cope with it. The term

provoke. How did they manage grief and sorrow? Has this changed over time? Can we learn anything from the documents that offer consoling thoughts and strategies, given that they are dealing with a universal and defining marker of humanity? To answer these and other questions I had to venture into unknown territory: to cross disciplinary boundaries, read

THE STRUGGLE TO CONTAIN EMOTIONS BY RATIONAL MEANS IS AS OLD AS HUMAN DOCUMENTS ALLOW US TO TRACE

‘grief management’ is a modern one, but it does essentially apply in many cases to ancient material.

The ancients knew about loss in as many forms as we do: loss of child, parents, pets, property, dignity, and country. It is said that Alexander the Great was inconsolable over the death of his horse, that Cicero bemoaned his exile, as did the poet Ovid, and the famous physician Galen needed all his composure to cope with the loss of his carefully collected store of medication, recipes as well as quite a few of his writings, after a fire in Rome (92 CE). *The struggle to contain emotions by rational means is as old as human documents allow us to trace.* Thanks to a range of surviving written sources we know that humans have long found a need to *express* their grief, or as Shakespeare put it, ‘to give sorrow words’. But in addition they have pursued ways to use language as the cure. This centrality of *language* is at the core of my project: how reading and writing can assist in coping with grief.

This topic, then, is about human experience and takes a deliberate interest in the subjective. Since the Enlightenment Western culture has attempted to create an objective science of the subjective, but even Isaac Newton (1642-1727) understood that science only covers certain aspects of reality, writing, ‘I can calculate the motions of heavenly bodies, but not the madness of crowds’. In the nineteenth century Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) proclaimed: ‘Science does not tell us how to live’. Here I will simply assume that the subjective plays an important role in our lives and that rational analysis of literary sources, ancient and modern, can provide insight into the trends, importance and value of emotional responses to difficult circumstances.

The similarities between ancient and modern responses to grief can be exploited, I believe, by trying to answer questions these similarities

up on modern theories and observe contemporary events. One finding is that *something seems to have been lost in modern times which was still with us up until the early modern period.* In the early seventeenth century authors were still familiar with Plutarch’s ideas on the therapeutic use of reading; for instance, Philemon Holland translated the *Moralia* and commented on how ‘young men “may take profit by reading poemes”’:

he must enter into his owne heart and examine himselfe when he is alone, how he was mooved and affected ... whether he find any turbulent passions of his minde thereby dulced and appeased whether any grieffe or heaviness that trouble him be mitigated and asswaged.⁵

So in what follows I will highlight one particular thread of my wider project on grief, in two sections and a conclusion: in Part 1, I discuss the benefits of a comparative approach by applying modern tools to ancient sources; in Part 2, I clarify the nature of the ancient consolation genre, in particular its universal features, in the hope that this increases our appreciation of the wisdom of those who lived before us. Cicero famously said that those who do not know their history will remain children. In other words, he is suggesting that historical awareness is about maturity, and that one should build on the past to understand the present and contribute to the future. In the case of grief, we have an opportunity to tap into a reservoir of human experience that fills the historical gap and helps to counter (in C.S. Lewis’ phrase) ‘chronological snobbery’ regarding historical material and its presumed *inherent* inferiority.⁶ Our primary aim is to consider how we gain a proper understanding of these expressions of grief and loss.

PART 1. STUDYING ANCIENT EMOTIONS: THE BENEFITS OF A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

Modern grief studies show how the subjective element in emotional responses affects self-assessment and how emotions are 'moving targets'. As we will see in the two case studies in Part 2, this applies to the understanding of bereavement. Modern grief studies based on *empirical* research are only sixty years old and recent debate over the best methods has made for something of a 'hot' topic. The first *empirical* research into acute grief in the famous Lindemann study (as recent as 1944) showed the great variety of symptoms and responses to grief, thereby breaking with the attitude of the stiff upper-lip or the advice to 'just get on with it'.⁷ Further work in the 1970s by Bowlby on the mother-child attachment showed its impact on later experiences of attachment, separation and loss.

The benefits of a comparative approach for a study of grief are considerable. New methodological perspectives and hindsight are always a useful part of historical analysis, if used correctly, but modern methods and concepts assist in gaining greater clarity on meaning, context and development of the topic. They help us recast certain interpretations that further illuminate texts in ways that are not just literary. Here I am not merely following the influence of the social sciences upon historical studies since the 1960s, but also specifically the growing debate outside academe on the nature of emotions. In the public sphere I am thinking, for instance, of the appearance of a range of so-called self-disclosure documents, memoirs that reflect on the loss of an intimate, such as C.S. Lewis,

Bermann's book *Companionship in Grief*.⁸

But we should not overlook the public responses to Princess Diana's death, the war in Iraq and the September 11 attack on the World Trade Centre. In the US, President Bush was accused of not knowing why mourning is appropriate.⁹ These factors have triggered a broader public awareness of the importance of dealing with grief. Earl Spencer's speech at Diana's funeral was not only a well-planned emotional eulogy, but also a quite subtle and subversive critique of the press and the royal family:

Diana was the very essence of compassion, of duty, of style, of beauty. ... she was a symbol of selfless humanity, a standard-bearer for the rights of the truly downtrodden, a very British girl who transcended nationality. Someone with a natural nobility who was classless¹⁰

BELOW

Princess Diana during a visit to Bristol, 1987.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.



In his emotive praise of the 'people's princess' (as Tony Blair called her) Spencer combines his eulogy for Princess Diana with implicit criticism of the royal family's background (German), lack of compassion and inherited nobility. There is good

MODERN GRIEF STUDIES BASED ON EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ARE ONLY SIXTY YEARS OLD AND RECENT DEBATE OVER THE BEST METHODS HAS MADE FOR SOMETHING OF A 'HOT' TOPIC

A Grief Observed (1961); Joan Didion, *The Year of Magical Thinking* (2005); Abigail Carter, *The Alchemy of Loss* (2008); Megan O'Rourke, *The Long Goodbye* (2011). What we have here are not diaries with sentimental outpourings of emotions, but well-crafted accounts of grief. That there was a real increase of these in the past decades is not just my perception, as is clear from Jeffrey

reason to believe that the death of Princess Diana prepared the way for public emotional outpouring. With her death something unprecedented occurred and things had changed permanently.

Ancient parallels exist for cases like these: Julius Caesar's funeral in 44 BCE generated a lot of public interest as well as anger at his assassins as a result of Marc Antony's funeral speech; in 19

CE the very popular grandson of Augustus and designated heir of Tiberius, Germanicus, died unexpectedly under suspicious circumstances; his death caused a huge public display of mourning in Rome and the empire. The account in Tacitus shows how important eulogy was in honouring his memory, especially by implying that the exact opposite was true of Tiberius (*italics mine*):

His funeral, ... was *honoured by panegyrics and a commemoration of his virtues*. Some, thinking of his beauty, his age, ... likened his end to that of Alexander the Great. Both had a graceful person and were of noble birth, and died in a foreign place, ... [But] Germanicus was gracious to his friends, temperate in his pleasures, the husband of one wife, with only legitimate children.¹¹

Let me give one more contemporary example to drive home this point on the way in which public tributes play out in different cultures. As soon as the death of Apple's CEO Steve Jobs became public, Apple was flooded with tributes and condolences. It seems curious that a businessman's death generated such a worldwide response of grief and sorrow. The most striking and typically twenty-first century aspect of this, I think, was the role of the so-called social media in generating attention and tributes. This was even more important for the truly iconic tribute by a Hong Kong graphic designer, which went 'viral' on the Internet.¹² An ingenious way of creating a tribute via both the Apple logo and Jobs' silhouette, it also signified

Jobs' *permanent absence* by incorporating this in the 'bite' of the apple.

What we have here, in modern terms, is *the attempt at memorialisation of the deceased* – an age-old convention already found in ancient Greece and Rome.

Of course, the case of Steve Jobs is also *atypical*, because of the emotional investment users make in Apple *products*, a feeling

which they seem to have redirected back to him at his death. One American commentator wryly noted (and Harry Potter fans may find this amusing) that Apple products can be viewed as Steve Jobs' Horcruxes which contain a little part of his spirit or soul. One hopes of course that the parallel with Voldemort ends there.

Among current theories of grief management we find emphasis on the great variety of ways in which people may mourn (less so in antiquity), the idea that grief may escalate into a morbid

state of depression or worse (complicated grief; again not recognised in antiquity, although certainly described in medical sources), the ways in which grief lingers or is suppressed by social pressure.¹³ When death is unexpected, the experience of grief is usually worse, but anticipated grief (a concept already known in antiquity) is only marginally different.

One new interesting result from modern research (with no exact parallel in the ancient world) is the way in which grief has been looked at from an evolutionary point of view as being normal for *all* animals, including non-human animals, both as grief *in* animals and as grief *for* animals (pets).¹⁴ Even here we find parallels in antiquity: Achilles' horses are said to mourn for their driver, Patroclus (*Iliad* 23.280-84), while we have several

poems in which masters pine for their pets.

The irony is that these recent trends have begun to attack the clinical and medicalised approaches that had been on the rise throughout the twentieth century.



Horwitz and Wakefield, in *The Loss of Sadness* (2007), argue that the psychological profession has gone too far in the medicalisation of depression (and grief is considered a special case of depression). Their specific aim is to criticise the use of standard diagnostic criteria (in the handbook for psychological disorders, DSM-V) which they believe has led to an overgenerous definition of depression and hence caused normal sadness to be declared depression. *This is where it gets interesting* for my purposes: at the same time that these professional studies in psychiatry are advocating non-medical approaches to depression and grief, new possible alternatives are being trialled which include various activities originating in the Arts. A pioneering collection edited by S. L. Bertman has led the way in looking at how drama, film, writing *and* reading prose or poetry, can play a role in grief work.¹⁵ So let me illustrate what kind of texts I have looked at before making the case for aligning this with the 'Bertman approach'.

For a long time the ancients had little to assist them in times of distress apart from rituals, music and lament. (I omit for the moment a curious incident of a medicinal cure, *Helen's potion* in Homer's *Odyssey* 4.224-28, where Helen presents her husband Menelaus and her guest Telemachus, who are struck by a bout of grief, with a special concoction which is *nepenthes*, "grief-assuaging".)

RIGHT

Tribute to Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple.

COURTESY OF JONATHAN MAK.



ABOVE

Achilles tending Patroclus wounded by an arrow. Tondo of an Attic red-figure kylix, c.500 BCE. Altes Museum, Berlin.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.



FAR LEFT

Statue of Gilgamesh on the University of Sydney Camperdown Campus.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

LEFT

Bust of Cicero, Musei Capitolini, Rome.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

When did this change? The earliest example of the expression of grief can be found in the Gilgamesh epic (some 4000 years ago), when the arrogant king Gilgamesh loses his dear friend and alter ego Enkidu: ‘Hear me, o elders of Uruk, I mourn for Enkidu, my friend. I shriek in anguish like a mourner ... after you died, I let a filthy mat of hair grow over my body, and donned a skin of a lion and roamed the wilderness.’¹⁶ The symptoms of despair, self-neglect and restlessness expressed here look all too familiar. But note that there is no internalised self-analysis or self-directed consolation. Grief is played out through lament and action, and only fades after the king has gone through some of the grief stages now associated with the famous model of Kübler-Ross.¹⁷

A thousand years later we find Achilles in a similar emotional state when his friend Patroclus dies. This time the situation is slightly more complicated: Achilles has been boycotting the war effort, Patroclus proposes to go to battle in his place, and Achilles lets him. This engenders a sense of guilt that complicates his grief:

A black cloud of grief came
shrouding over Achilles.

Both hands clawing the ground
for soot and filth,

He poured it over his head, fouled
his handsome face

And black ashes settled into his
fresh clean war-shirt.

Overpowered in all his power,
sprawled in the dust,

Achilles lay there, fallen

Tearing his hair, defiling it with his own hands.¹⁸

Achilles’ behaviour is that of women mourners, but more extreme, so much so that it frightens his companion who interprets it as potentially suicidal. In this case we can see how he is brought down by the powerful mix of several emotions: pride, guilt and grief. The classical commentary on the *Iliad* by Walter Leaf, admittedly written when textual criticism dominated scholarship, focuses mostly on conventional literary and linguistic analysis (grammar and morphology), saying things like ‘the word “clean” translates the peculiar *nektareôî* = probably *euôdes* nice-smelling, since herbs were used to preserve garments ... the cloak may be a present from Thetis’.¹⁹ Leaf is of course not primarily interested in ancient fabric softeners, but in determining the correct text and explaining word meaning, occurrence and origin. I believe a psychologising reading leads to a richer and more rewarding insight into the emotive effect of such a passage, provided it is viewed within the wider development of attitudes and responses to grief.

This can be further illustrated if we move to fifth-century BCE Athens to find examples of grief strategies that exploit rhetorical techniques. Their

major difference from the *Gilgamesh Epic* and the *Iliad* is that these are rational approaches to grief, aiming for a deliberate effect of consolation with the help of persuasion. No longer just about moaning and self-pity, they search for the right word or turn of phrase to change the outlook or at least mood of the addressee. The earliest evidence of this ‘therapeutic turn’ comes from the mid-fifth century: the sophist Antiphon, a teacher of rhetoric, is said to have offered sessions in which, according to two sources, he composed tragedies both by himself and with the tyrant Dionysius. While he was still involved in poetry he designed a method for the cure of grief (*peri alupias*), on the analogy of the treatment of the sick by doctors and, getting himself a dwelling in Corinth near the market-place, he advertised that he was able to cure those suffering from grief through [the power of] words (*dia logôn*); and discovering the causes of their sickness by inquiry he gave consolation to sufferers.²⁰

It is striking how Antiphon’s interest in poetry is brought into connection with rhetorical skills and knowledge of causes. The second passage points also to his power to drive out grief with the use of language: ‘Antiphon developed great powers of persuasion ... and he announced a course on “grief-assuaging” lectures [*nêpentheis akroaseis*], asserting that no one could tell him of a grief so terrible that he could not root it out of the mind.’²¹ The crucial term is *nêpentheis*, linking it to the unique occurrence in the Homer passage I mentioned earlier (Helen’s potion, *Od.* 4.222). So hereafter it is not just ritual, but reason, that deals with the emotions, especially when it comes to consolatory writings. Philosophical views would begin to dominate ways of thinking, but while their influence has been studied in great detail, their efficacy has not. In Part 2 I look at two cases, with philosophical influence clear in one, and absent in the other.

WHEN DEATH IS UNEXPECTED, THE EXPERIENCE OF GRIEF IS USUALLY WORSE, BUT ANTICIPATED GRIEF IS ONLY marginally DIFFERENT

RIGHT

Antonio del Pollaiuolo, *Apollo and Daphne*, late fifteenth century.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



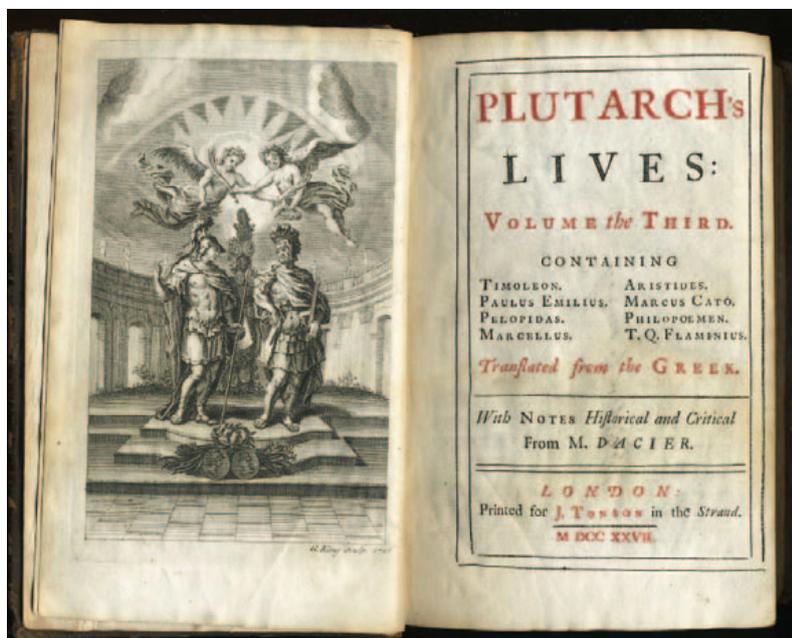
PART 2. THE POWER OF THE WORD: GRIEF WRITINGS (AND READINGS)

Grief writing was and still is an accepted way to help deal with times of trouble. It is an ancient Greek tradition to see the treatment of psychological problems as analogous to physical problems. Plato also alluded to the possible use of the word in influencing the mind (*Gorgias* 456b, *psychagogia*).²² This is of course an attempt to make more concrete what is invisible and difficult to control. Another problem for Greeks and Romans was how to guard oneself against such contingencies as the loss of life, of health, of material possessions. This was as pressing in antiquity as it is today, although our lives are more secure than those of Greeks and Romans. Offering consolation is an act of empathy and is always embedded within a belief system, philosophical or religious, necessary to cope with the prospect of a short life, and the experience of losing someone close. The ubiquity of death and disease made loss a permanent factor in their lives.

My first case study, Cicero, was ill-prepared for what Fate had in store for him. A politician and orator, he lived in the tumultuous last days of the Republic. We know about his grief responses from three types of documents, but only one has been studied seriously. I propose that we can improve

a period of grief that lasted several months, as is clear from his letters to Atticus. He had lost his public status due to political turmoil, his wife to divorce, and now his beloved only child. In other words, he had lost his pride in his work as a politician and the safe haven of his family home.

The loss of his daughter tipped him over the edge and landed him in a depression: an earlier study and my own findings confirm that his symptoms fit the type of grief nowadays called pathological or abnormal. In one letter he writes: 'For after trying everything, I have nothing, in which I can find peace. For while I dealt with that, about which I have written to you before, I – as it were – fostered my pain. Now I reject everything and find nothing to be more bearable than



LEFT
Plutarch's Lives,
 Vol. 3.
 SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA
 COMMONS.

our understanding and appreciation of Cicero's predicament by including *all three* types of his writings as part of his grief work, provided we take note of the modern convention of viewing grief as a *process*; this allows us to identify grief stages and take self-consolation more seriously in the process of healing. The first stage, acute grief, can be lined up with Cicero's *Letters* to his friend Atticus; the second stage, in which he moves from lament and lethargy to grief work, is reflected in his *Consolation to himself* which unfortunately survives in fragments only; finally, there is the reflective third stage, in which he tries to describe

solitude.²³ These letters give us invaluable insight into Cicero's darkest moments of despair, revealed to a much-trusted friend. In breach of the social code of his time and class, Cicero admits that he is inconsolable, and even that he is fostering his grief. He has withdrawn from Rome's political scene to stay in the country. Cicero's special situation and resulting isolation explain his responses to the agony of grief: he has to figure a way out himself, and does so first by reading, and next, by writing. But these are not random scribbles: after a telling silence of some weeks, Cicero gets going, does research and involves Atticus in finding

IT IS AN ANCIENT GREEK TRADITION TO SEE THE TREATMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AS ANALOGOUS TO PHYSICAL PROBLEMS

in philosophical terms how grief can be placed within a wider framework of emotions. These *Tusculan Discussions* are fictional conversations in deliberate emulation of Plato, named after the villa in Tusculanum where they supposedly took place.

Cicero lost his daughter just after she had given birth in February 45 BCE. He was plunged into

materials.²⁴ Then he reveals his purpose: *he has written a self-consolation* – which he claims is an unprecedented thing. Remarkably, the orator has somehow addressed himself and made an effort to cope with his loss. The use of persuasion or encouragement, based on a strong belief in the therapeutic value of the word, is to be expected:

the addressee is asked to *re-conceptualise* his situation, that is, to re-evaluate his views on the circumstances or events which led to the emotional state under consideration. In essence, this is not far removed from recent modern approaches to anxiety, distress and bereavement called Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). In this method patients are also encouraged to reconsider their interpretation of circumstances or events and to change their perspective by imagining different outcomes, in particular the preferred outcome. In modern terms, Cicero is 're-learning the world'.²⁵

no public or private context to communicate his grief along conventional lines. He did receive letters from other senators, but these contain the standard exhortations, basically saying 'count your blessings in these difficult times and get on with it'. What he did instead is read everything on the subject in Atticus' library, and when he considered this unhelpful or ineffective, write his own consolation, to *himself*. But this was not all. Cicero underestimated the effect his reading and writing had: 'You exhort me and say others want me to hide the depth of my grief. Can I do

THUS CICERO, AUTHOR BY NATURE AND THERAPIST BY NECESSITY,
WAS ABLE TO 'BOOTSTRAP' HIMSELF OUT OF HIS GRIEF

This tripartite model of explanation allows us to try to unearth Cicero's emotional state of mind in pragmatic terms, not in terms of theoretical ideals. How he has moved on from his terrible personal tragedy can hardly be retrieved from his stylised philosophical account written long after his acute grief. Our renewed attention to the value of the emotions not only in our own psychic lives, but also in ancient belief systems, encourages such an approach. The remarkable neglect of Cicero's letters may be caused by the fact that most readers found his laments and cries of woe rather painful and embarrassing and in stark contrast to his noble image as orator and politician. The tradition may even have started in 1354, when Petrarch rediscovered the letters to Atticus and was appalled at the Cicero he found there; in the 1960s we still find similar comments. Such judgments of Cicero's grief are based on anachronistic notions of the appropriateness of grief expression.²⁶ The crucial point here is that Cicero ignores philosophical advice and goes his own way in creating a document intended for both himself and *other* Romans as a source of consolation.

I once likened Cicero to C. S. Lewis since both sought solace in their reading and writing. The same holds for many other writers I have mentioned, such as Joan Didion, who used their professional skill as a comfort zone, and managed to 'write the wrongs' in a way that suited them.²⁷ As examples of self-consolation such activities would in modern terms be accepted as valid therapeutic tools. But Lewis had great difficulty in getting his brutally honest self-disclosure published, while Cicero had very little choice when he had

so better than by spending all days in writing? Though I do it, not to hide, but rather to soften and to heal my feelings, still, if I do myself little good, I certainly keep up appearances'.²⁸ Perhaps he was not allowed to admit it – yet there is at least the admission that writing distracted him somewhat. And, after his consolation, Cicero launched into a phase of furious writing, concentrating on philosophy. To this phase belongs his *Tusculan Discussions* and I would argue that this also included a further act of (skill-based) therapy, namely *translating* Greek philosophy – a demanding and technical task which had a lasting influence on the philosophical tradition in Latin.²⁹ Thus Cicero, author by nature and therapist by necessity, was able to 'bootstrap' himself out of his grief, and regain social and intellectual respectability through his reading and writing.

My second brief case study concerns the philosopher, writer and priest Plutarch who, around 90 CE, was forced to write a letter of consolation to his wife when he heard about the death of their two-year-old daughter. He happened to be travelling, hence the letter, and we therefore get an interesting look at a piece of writing addressed to someone else, using philosophical ideas, and written in a manner which also betrays something of the author's own emotional state.

The letter is elegant and well-structured, but I will concentrate on one passage, which sums up much of Plutarch's strategy in offering solace to his wife.³⁰ He leads into his advice by using some standard elements known from rhetoric: they offer exhortation and praise to

cheer up the addressee. But a more important component of the strategy is to make elaborate use of good memories. This may seem a sentimental passage, but it is more than that:

she was the daughter you wanted after four sons and she gave me the opportunity to give her your name. There is special savour in our affection for children at that age; it lies in the purity of the pleasure they give, the freedom of any crossness or complaint. She herself too had great natural goodness and gentleness of temper: her response to affection and her generosity both gave pleasure and enabled us to perceive the human kindness in her nature. She would ask her nurse to feed not only other babies but the objects and toys that she liked playing with, and would generously invite them, as it were to her table, offering the good things she had and sharing her greatest pleasures with those who delighted her.³¹

Despite his use of some standard elements Plutarch clearly succeeds in adding a personal touch, appealing to a shared experience of special significance for both parents as well as *shared grief*. The lively portrayal of the child is both moving and generous as a tribute to the child *and* the mother. Rather than assume this shared experience would be readily available for recall, he gives a striking characterisation of the child, ‘picturing’ her in words as a last tribute and as a lasting image for the mother to treasure. This

as we have it is a revised version of the original note sent to his wife. But we would be projecting modern notions of appropriate mourning onto Plutarch to require a desperate scream of agony.

CONCLUSION

I have looked at a number of similarities between antiquity and today to illustrate how grief stands out as specially fit for a comparative approach across historical periods. The cases of Cicero and Plutarch allow us to explore details of ancient strategies of consolation, which prove strongly influenced by rhetorical and philosophical ideas not dissimilar to a number of modern bereavement counselling approaches. As two male aristocrats who try to cope with the loss of their daughters, they are just a small slice of the existing literature. Their strategy appeals to the universality of loss and becomes fruitfully fused with a kind of narrative psychotherapy – again an approach which has found new advocates in recent sociological studies of grief.³² Consoling himself, Cicero seems to ignore or deny philosophical advice and the role of writing per se, but we can see this as a cultural difference which misreads the effect of this activity. Plutarch uses writing to console his wife *and himself*. Both cases confirm the therapeutic role of language.³³

Are there lessons to be learned? Broadly speaking, grief management has come a long way, but there still is no one method to apply

WE WOULD BE PROJECTING MODERN NOTIONS OF APPROPRIATE MOURNING ONTO PLUTARCH TO REQUIRE A DESPERATE SCREAM OF AGONY

striking passage contributes to the value of the letter as a *memento* of the child, to be read and re-read long after her death. Such a vivid evocation with (potential) emotional impact is typical of a literary technique called *ekphrasis*.

There are other subtle techniques used in this letter, but I put those aside to make one small point about such refined writing in relation to deeply upsetting news. Some modern commentators have accused Plutarch of insincerity because of the literary nature of the letter’s composition: instead of raw emotion we get a finely constructed piece of writing. Does this make his emotion less genuine? I have argued elsewhere that this is not a fruitful way to approach the work. It is possible that the letter

to every individual case. This strikes at the heart of the paradox of grief and the notion of empathy: we all consider our grief unique, while sensing that we know what the other is going through. What does emerge is that grief is a process that requires an activity of some sort, and the choice has to be a personal one.

So there is good reason to investigate the issue of grief from an interdisciplinary angle. Recent shifts in classical studies focusing on emotions and modern attitudes towards death may well mean that the taboo is gradually lifting. The evidence that reading and writing clearly play a significant role in grief resolution seems to be confirmed from both ends: for

the purpose of grief work, we are what we read, and we can indeed 'write the wrongs'.

Secondly, the use of modern tools has clearly improved traditional analysis of consolation writings. As a bonus, we have also found that the benefit of insight can sometimes go the other way. The consistency in grief statements and viewpoints in consolation writings suggests that humans respond in very similar ways, yet benefit from being offered words.

Thirdly, as to emotion and history, I have tried to emphasise the element of universality in grief documents. But this is *not* an essentialist reading of the emotions – or a claim for only one core notion of grief across time. Rather, I wish to point to the *relationship* between the occurrence of death and the response to it: what matters is the dynamic at the core of a culturally embedded process. Unlike technological progression, emotions are not linear and are therefore more open to comparative analysis, provided we defuse some of the risks of such an approach. In matters of the heart, the chronological gap may collapse to a certain extent. The modern vantage point does not justify a position which is assuming intrinsic inferiority of previous generations. Grief is a special case, because it deals with the finality of life and confronts us with our own mortality.

Finally, the similarities between grief management across time create an opportunity to explore its 'literary capital' for the benefit of the bereaved within the context of the healing Arts. Further work is certainly required here.

I end with a quotation from Nabokov who offers a curiously ambivalent thought (after Epicurus?), both critical and consoling: 'Common sense tells us that our existence is but a brief crack of light between two eternities of darkness. Although the two are identical twins, man, as a rule, views the prenatal abyss with more calm than the one he is heading for.'³⁴

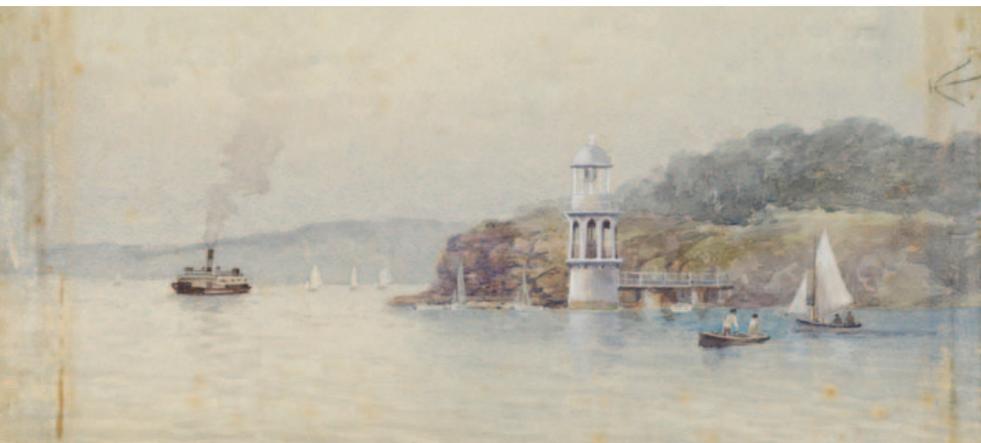


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- 1 This is a revised version of the A. D. Trendall Lecture presented in Adelaide on 19 October 2011. I am grateful to the Australian Academy of the Humanities for the opportunity to present my work and to the Australian Research Council for funding this project 2007-2010 (DP 0770690).
- 2 Quotation taken from her broadcast 'Words as tranquillisers' <<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/linguafranca/words-as-tranquillisers/3187468>> (transcript at ABC, Lingua Franca). [accessed 17 April 2012]
- 3 C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), p. 5; J. Didion, *The Year of Magical Thinking* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), p. 26.
- 4 E.g. Cicero, *Fam.* 12.30: 'I am writing to you, but I have nothing to say'; Seneca, *Agamemnon*: 'There is no limit to weeping, Cassandra, because | what we are suffering has vanquished limit itself'; Jerome, *Consoling Heliodorus* 1: 'the greater a subject is, the more completely a person is overwhelmed and cannot find words to unfold its grandeur'.
- 5 Quoted in Katherine A. Craik, *Reading Sensations in Early Modern England* (London: Palgrave, 2007), p. 1.
- 6 C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of my Early Life* (London: G. Bles, 1955), pp. 207-8.
- 7 E. Lindemann, 'Symptomatology and Management of Acute Grief', *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 101 (1944), 141-48. The past few decades have seen renewed and lively debate about grief and how to deal with it, many building on John Bowlby's studies (J. Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss*: vol. 1. *Attachment*; vol. 2. *Separation: Anxiety and Anger*; vol. 3. *Loss: Sadness and Depression* (London: Hogarth Press; Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1969-1980), but also offering new theoretical approaches, especially regarding cultural differences and types of grief. In other words, we have become more sensitive to the usefulness of mourning (A.V. Horwitz and J. C. Wakefield, *The Loss of Sadness: How Psychiatry Transformed Normal Sorrow into Depressive Disorder* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007)), to the psychological mechanisms underlying grief responses, to the different causes of loss, and to the culturally distinctive factors involved in processing and resolving difficult emotions (see especially C. M. Parkes, P. Laungani, and B. Young, (eds.), *Death and Bereavement Across Cultures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997)).

- 8 Jeffrey Bermann, *Companionship in Grief: Love and Loss in the Memoirs of C. S. Lewis, John Bayley, Donald Hall, Joan Didion and Calvin Trillin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- 9 E. L. Doctorow, 'The Unfeeling President', *East Hampton Star*, 9 September 2004.
- 10 Quotation taken from <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2007/may/04/greatspeeches>>. [accessed 18 April 2012].
- 11 Tacitus, *Annals* 2.73.
- 12 Image by J. Mak at <<http://news.discovery.com/tech/apple-logo-steve-jobs-111007.html>> [accessed 17 October 2011].
- 13 Such effects can have a serious impact on people's lives. For example, we now know that grief which is not tolerated (dubbed 'disenfranchised grief' by K.J. Doka (ed.), *Disenfranchised Grief: New Directions, Challenges, and Strategies for Practice* (Champaign, Ill.: Research Press, 2002)) may lead to mental and physical damage.
- 14 J. Archer, *The Nature of Grief: The Evolution and Psychology of Reactions to Loss* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).
- 15 *Grief and the Healing Arts: Creativity as Therapy*, ed. by S. L. Bertman (New York: Baywood Publishing, 1999).
- 16 Quoted in Horwitz and Wakefield, *The Loss of Sadness*, p. 30.
- 17 Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying* (New York: Macmillan, 1969): denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance.
- 18 *Iliad* 18.22-27. Both quotations are taken from Horwitz and Wakefield, *The Loss of Sadness*, p. 30.
- 19 *Homèrou Ilias (The Iliad of Homer)*, edited with general and grammatical introductions, notes, and appendices by Walter Leaf and M.A. Bayfield. 2 vols., (London: Macmillan, 1895-98). 2, p. 271.
- 20 Ps. Plut. *Lives of Ten Orators* 883-4 (= T6(a) Pendrick; transl. Dillon 2003, modified. Philostratus, 244-9 CE) 1.15 [498 Olearius] = T6(d) Pendrick). The doubts about these testimonies as unreliable retrojections (Pendrick ad loc.) are not conclusive (see H. Baltussen, 'Personal Grief and Public Mourning in Plutarch's *Consolation to his Wife*', *American Journal of Philology*, 130,1 (2009) 67-98).
- 21 Philostratus, 1.15.
- 22 See C. P. Segal, 'Gorgias and the Psychology of the Logos', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 66 (1962), 99-155 for a seminal analysis of the psychagogic powers of Gorgias. Anthony Kenny in 'Mental Health in Plato's *Republic*', in *The Anatomy of the Soul. Historical Essays in the Philosophy of Mind* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973), p. 1, declares Plato 'the inventor of mental health'.
- 23 *Letters to Atticus*, 12.8.
- 24 Compare Joan Didion: 'I was taught from childhood to go to the literature in time of trouble, [so I] read everything I could get my hands on about grief: memoirs, novels, how-to books, inspirational tomes, *The Merck Manual*. Nothing I read about grief seemed to exactly express the craziness of it' (online interview, 2 October 2005, at <<http://nymag.com/nymetro/arts/books/14633/>>). [accessed 18 April 2012]
- 25 I borrow the phrase from Thomas Attig's *How We Grieve: Relearning the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) which, according to the blurb, 'rejects the grief stages and phases offered by Kübler-Ross, Engels, Lindemann, Bowlby, and the medical profession as static and too automatic. Instead he considers grief to be an individualized process'.
- 26 Although Erskine has recently offered a fair account of Cicero's grief experience, his analysis does not go far enough. See A. Erskine, 'Cicero and the Expression of Grief', in *The Passions in Roman Thought and Literature*, ed. by S. Braund and M. Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 36-47.
- 27 A phrase used in a recent newspaper article, 'Writing the Wrongs', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8-9 October 2011, Spectrum p. 21. I owe this reference to my colleague Dr Jacqueline Clarke.
- 28 *Letters to Atticus*, 12.10.
- 29 I defend this interpretation more fully in H. Baltussen, 'Cicero's Translation of Greek Philosophy: Personal Mission or Public Service?', in *Complicating the History of Western Translation: The Ancient Mediterranean in Perspective*, ed. by S. McElduff and E. Sciarrino (London: St Jerome Press, 2011), pp. 37-47.
- 30 I am concentrating on the emotive part of the strategy; for the rational component, see Baltussen, 'Personal Grief and Public Mourning'.
- 31 Translation by D. A. Russell, in *Advice to the Bride and Groom and Plutarch's Consolation to his Wife*, ed. by S. B. Pomeroy (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 59.
- 32 Or 'narrative psychotherapy', see for example Tony Walter, 'A New Model of Grief: Bereavement and Biography', *Mortality*, 1, 1 (1996), 7-25.
- 33 An argument of this kind was made in a traditional manner by the Spanish scholar Pedro Laín Entralgo in 1958. I am keen to update and expand it by making use of modern views on grief.
- 34 Vladimir Nabokov, *Speak, Memory. An Autobiography Revisited* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1966 [1947]), p. 17.

» VIVIAN SMITH



LEFT

Frederick Elliott, Sydney Harbour
early lighthouse for guide to
shipping at Bradley's Head.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

In 1924, at a time of personal crisis when some of his Surrealist friends had decided to give up writing, Paul Éluard disappeared from Paris on a round the world voyage which gave him a port of call in Sydney.

ÉLUARD IN SYDNEY

Disparaître c'est réussir

They are such witty bastards, all those guys.
I left them to their tight artistic scene,
flummoxed by the questions they can't answer.
Success means disappearing from their screen.

Tristesse drives me through the slack tropiques,
a friendship shattered and a lover lost.
A first class journey to review my life
and only I know how to count the cost.

Some good will come of this or I'll jump ship
and do a Rimbaud, follow sea and sky.
Sumatra, source of camphor, passes by;
plumbago is completely ceylonese.

They're either red or blue these southern trees.

Poems start to catch me by surprise.



Murdering Mrs Durance¹

» THOMAS KENEALLY



ABOVE

North Head Cliffs,
Sydney.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA
COMMONS.

It was said around the valley that both the Durance girls went off but just the one bothered to come back. People could not have said which one since the girls were both aloof and looked similar, dark and rather tall. There was confusion even in the local paper. And they weren't the sort of girls whose names got called across streets, girlfriend hallooing girlfriend in the excitement of Kempsey's big shopping days. Before the war it was the younger one – wasn't it? – who stayed at home with the parents. So the younger, wasn't it? The just a bit shorter one anyhow. That one had taken her mother Mrs Durance to visit the surgeon in Sydney. But what could those Macquarie Street doctors do?

* * *

After a choppy night's passage down the coast aboard the *Currawong*, Mrs Durance had only fallen asleep off Broken Bay and then needed to be woken by a steward bearing tea – Sally being on deck at the time, for the experience of the approach to Port Jackson – as the steamer entered the Sydney Heads. Mother and daughter had time for a cup of tea at the Sydney wharf in Darling Harbour before Sally took her still exhausted to the specialist's rooms in Macquarie Street. After an examination by this eminent man she was sent from his office across Macquarie Street to Sydney Hospital for

X-rays. Waiting for these to be developed and read, she and Sally met up with Naomi, the other daughter, the one who was considered a bit flash – Macleay District Hospital not good enough for her – who'd been in Sydney a few years.

They went that afternoon together to a bang-up tea at Cahill's, when she and they did not know what the expert men who read the body's inner secrets from photographs were at that hour discovering. They knew she had understated her pain to them. They knew she was secretive about the scale of her bleeding and the urine coming out of the wrong opening.

That night, Naomi put them up in her little flat – Mama sharing Naomi's bed, Sally on the lounge. They could have all stayed at Mrs Durance's younger sister Willy's place at Randwick for Mrs Durance didn't want to share news of her problems with her sister as yet. Both Sally and Naomi would wake to hear their mother's choked-down groans. But unblunted ambition seemed to declare itself in the briskness Naomi put on her uniform and her scarlet cape the next morning to go to her duty at Royal Prince Alfred.

There had always been something larger than her beginnings written in Naomi Durance's gestures and her long bones. Her parents even knew it. She had left them for the city, but in so far as they were boastful, they boasted of her. Sally

worked a mere three miles from home, across the river, at Macleay District. Merit in that, no one denied, and loyalty. But it was news of Naomi that made eyes shine on the Durance farm.

So it was cervical cancer, the surgeon told Mrs Durance the next morning. There was no option of an operation, for it would be very long, painful and dangerous and could not hope to get all of the proliferating cancer. Surgical procedures were to be recommended chiefly in early stages. Whereas metastasis had already occurred as the X-rays showed. If she rested well and ate lots of fruit, he said, she could expect to live at least a year. She was a dairy-farmer's wife? Well, no more butter-churning, he said, and no early morning milking. He gave her a script for pain medicine, he told her. He would be writing to her doctor in the Macleay so that he could keep her comfortable.

You are fortunate to have two daughters who are registered nurses, he told her.

I am, she said, glowing with the pride but hollowed by pain.

She and Sally caught the regular outward journey of the *Currawong* home the next night. Naomi saw them off at Darling Harbour, in the shadow of those shameful slums of the Rocks from which bubonic plague had come boiling forth in their girlhoods and travelled north on *Currawong* by a rat nestled in a furniture case, bringing a small outbreak to Kempsey which killed a youth, a farmer's wife and a nursing sister in the Macleay District's plague ward. Naomi waited in their small cabin until the last call to go ashore and then stayed on the wharf to wave a futile handkerchief. She could have stood for one of those heartbreaking paintings of emigrant farewell.

She is so beautiful, isn't she Sal? asked Mrs Durance, leaning on the railing from pain rather than as a gesture of languid seafaring. She has a lot of grace, doesn't she?

As they reached on a black tide for Dawes Point, the handkerchief still waved, more luminous than Naomi's face. Bush people did that handkerchief-waving stuff and it gave them away as hayseeds, but worldly Naomi risked that tonight. She had promised she'd come up as often as she could and help Sally out. But that she would remain a city woman was not questioned.

It was a brisk night, and Mrs Durance developed a cold on top of all else and again fell asleep late. Again Sally came on deck at dawn and looked out on the blue surge of the tide breaking on the

yellow sand of Trial Bay and making enough water at the river bar to allow the *Currawong* to enter.

For six months Mrs Durance ate her fruit and sat in sumps of sunlight on the veranda. But the cancer owned her by night. Sally still worked the day shift at Macleay District but now slept on call in the same room as her mother, her father having moved to a lean-to at the back of the homestead. Sally was to administer an eighth of a grain of morphine hypodermically when brave and reticent Mrs Durance confessed, one way or another, to agony. Naomi took her holidays and came home on a visit and gave her sister a break from the regimen. In between, Mr Durance paid Mrs Sorley's girl to sit with Mrs Durance by day and was attentive himself. But since Mr Sorley had been killed by a native cedar – which when cut slipped sideways rather than forward – the Sorley kids were ever ready for employment.

Sally noticed more clearly now that though her father and mother were souls of decency, Eric Durance moved about the bed as if he and his wife were acquaintances only. He seemed to fear he might be seen as an intruder. There had always been that distant courtesy between the parents. Sally knew they'd infected Naomi and her



BELOW

Prince Alfred Hospital.

SOURCE: MITCHELL LIBRARY, STATE LIBRARY OF NSW, CALL NO. GPO1-29070.



LEFT

Trial Bay, NSW.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

with it too. It might be one of the reasons Naomi had cleared out, in the hope that on a different stage she might have a different, franker soul.

Mrs Durance suffered so much night pain that she frequently told Sally she was praying to God for death. These were remarkable and dramatic things for Mrs Durance to say and – since she had always had contempt for overstatement – could be forced out of her only by the fiercest anguish. In the seventh month of it, Naomi

came back from Sydney yet again to sit with her mother by day and share the night watch.

The second night Naomi was home, Sally slept in her own room while Naomi took up post in the camp cot in Mrs Durance's room, a surface of canvas no blanket could soften. Naomi was meant to wake Sally at four so that she could take over, but did not come rapping on Sally's door till near-dawn. She was in a dress and boots, and her eyes looked smeared after gales of tears.

dead yielded differently. They were beyond pain but past affection too. She kissed the hand. It smelled of the scented soap Naomi washed her corpse with. This too was proof of death. The living mother smelled of workaday Sunlight soap, of sand soap. She found herself on her knees, still caressing the hand, Naomi standing behind and above her. Naomi who always presumed to do things first. As it always had been, Sally did not know whether to hate her, to attack her eyes, or

NAOMI WAITED IN THEIR SMALL CABIN UNTIL THE LAST CALL TO GO ASHORE AND THEN STAYED ON THE WHARF TO WAVE A FUTILE HANDKERCHIEF

Mama's gone, she said. I'm sorry, Mama's gone. I ran over to the Sorley's and asked their boy to ride into town to get Dr Maddox.

Sally stammered with a confused and bitter grief and went to go off at once down the hallway. Naomi took her shoulders and gazed at her, straight into her face. Naomi's eyes were full of that conspiracy which up to now had been hers alone. She had the eyes of a co-murderer. At that instant their shared mercy and their crime drew them together so utterly that they were no longer city and country nurses but twins once more of the same womb under one roof.

You didn't wake me for my shift, said Sally.

It wasn't necessary, Naomi asserted, frankly, with her gaze on her. She went before it was time to wake you.

Let me see her.

I washed her and laid her out.

Without me?

I wanted you to sleep. I burned her nightdresses and the rags she used and took all the tonics and pounded the bottles to dust. Especially that rhubarb concoction Mrs Sorley swore by.

There was indeed still a taint of smoke in the air.

She led her sister by the hand and they walked down the hallway to the plain room they had both been conceived in. Blackbutt made for dim corridors they loved and hated, that pulled them closer to home but which Naomi had proved to be also escape avenues.

There was her mother, grey-faced, prepared, serene, the girl she had been at some time visible again in these features delivered of pain.

Sally heard herself howl and went to her mother's body, kissing the face. The skin of the

fall flat in gratitude and wonder. Standing with a purpose in mind, she noticed the hypodermic needle, the morphine solution they had made up of pills actually prescribed by Dr Maddox, and the unused bottled tablets in case the old doctor wanted to inspect them or return them to stock.

She went to the dresser, was poleaxed with loss by the mother of pearl hairbrush with strands of her mother's hair in it. She knew the little drawer where her mother had her subdued pink lipstick and her beige face powder.

Yes, said Naomi, you should put some colour on her poor face.

It was a prayer – not an order – and Sally set to.

The stolen reserve of morphine she herself had put together to finish her mother had been in the towel and linen cupboard in the hallway. How had Naomi found it? You could bet the solution Naomi had made up and injected for mercy's sake had been poured out, and the spare illicit tablets Sally had filched from Macleay District consigned to fire with the rhubarb tonic. To Sally – putting rouge and colour into her mother's cheeks – it seemed knowledge grew between Naomi and herself without them looking at each other.

Yesterday they had been near strangers. Now they were altered. A different kind of reserve was imposed on them, and the different intimacy.

Is Papa up? Sally asked. Does he know?

Not yet. I was frightened. Will we tell him in a moment? Perhaps let the poor fellow rest a few more minutes.

For he would need to do the milking even on the morning of his wife's death.

But she finds it hard to face him, Sally perceived. Naomi – who had tried to avoid the weight of

home and its taint of illness – had really taken the weight now. She'd taken up station on the far side of the bed, across from where Sally on her knees put reasonable Methodist colouration on the poor, released features. Naomi said, I didn't have any idea till I came home that it was as bad as that. Her pain was the whole world to her. She could see nothing but it. Well, not any longer.

Sally was engrossed with her mother.

It was easy, Mama, to steal what you needed. I cut out two pages from the drugs record book – former nurses who had managed the drugs register had done similar excisions because they did not approve of some missed or untidily written entry. Then for your dear sake I copied the dosages on fresh pages adding an extra dose of eighth of a grain morphine in this case and that, until I'd created a phantom two grains of morphine which I then fetched from the drugs cabinet and brought home to you. It's unlikely a doctor or matron will remember a specific morphine dose as months go by. But I don't care if they do.

She had kept the tablets hidden at the back of the bed linen in the hallway dresser. These two grains when mixed in solution and injected would bear away disease and the fuss of enduring all useless treatment. They would reach deep into the body and halt the mechanism of agony. And had now.

She kissed her mother's brow before gracing it with the powder. Eric Durance would be astonished by his wife's beauty in death.

Naomi declared, I gave her half a grain and we kissed and held hands though I had to be careful, a touch would break her bones. Then she went.

You were standing over her? said Sally.

They both knew how rare it was that a patient expired while the nurse was standing there to observe and hold a hand. The dead went almost secretively.

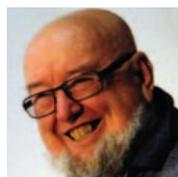
By good fortune, said Naomi without flinching but without bothering to look at her. By good fortune I was there.

Again, Sally's astonishment that Naomi had done the right, fierce, loving and hard thing Sally had meant to do! Even in this she was not to be outshone, the half-mad Sally thought. But Naomi was there because she found the secret cache and took the burden of soothing her mother's breath down to nothing. A solemn loss and rejoicing were the day's order – Mama's freedom now from a world she had never since their babyhoods seemed accustomed to. As for her children, they must now get accustomed to something new. To new love and new hate and mutual shame.

The roads being firm just then, Dr Maddox

arrived by motor at mid-morning. The town – ignorant of medicine – loved him for his kindness and punctuality and a lack of airs in a place where a doctor could easily play the grand wizard. But the hospital staff knew he was one of those tosspots who could carry it off well, that some unforgettable and disabling past event drove him to it. Though he performed surgery only when the other town doctors were not available, he was still a better surgeon than most country doctors when sober. It was peripheral things he was negligent at – paperwork, including death certificates. His method with the town at large was to hide it all behind an air of universal brotherhood and to breathe an impeccably mentholated breath over the sick beds of the shire. That Saturday morning Dr Maddox came to lower his face over Mrs Durance's dead one and to ask Naomi about the last injection and how many grains, and to accept what she said and then breathe, Good woman, good poor woman. Then to prepare a medical certificate – which he showed Naomi and Sally and which said Mrs Durance had died of cancer, nephritis and exinanium. There were in the valley many people Dr Maddox certified as dying of nephritis and exinanium. Nephritis and exinanium was the cited verdict all along both banks of the river and inland to the blue, wooded hills where the timber workers camped and always died of nephritis and exinanium unless a tree fell on them. Farmers who had taken poison to escape the bank had their death certificates compassionately marked by Maddox with that saving formula.

That morning of the death, over tea Sally made while keeping her eyes from straying to Naomi, Dr Maddox sat at the kitchen table and spoke for a while to her father – these were very much men's mutterings, half-embarrassed and platitudinous. Her listening father wore large mute features, the same he brought to his labours. His face had not yet crumbled in grief but somehow promised soon to do so.



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1 'Murdering Mrs Durance's is the first chapter from Tom Keneally's new novel, *The Daughters of Mars* (Vintage, 2012). Reprinted by permission of Random House Australia.



Imagination and Freedom: Spinoza's 'Hard Path' and George Eliot's Artful Bridge¹

» MOIRA GATENS

ABOVE

Detail from Gustave Doré's illustration of Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

RIGHT

Portrait of Spinoza, c.1665, artist unknown.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Contemporary appraisals of Spinoza's philosophy are divided about the role he assigns to passion and imagination: do they contribute to, or prevent, the development of understanding and freedom? The source of these contrary views might be traced to the dissonance between Spinoza's description of the passionate multitude in the *Theological-Political Treatise* and the figure of the rational 'free man' he offers in the *Ethics*.² Given his low opinion of 'the masses', what chance does an ordinary person have to pursue what Spinoza called 'the hard path to freedom'? Does his philosophy offer two disturbingly distinct pictures of political and ethical life: the unruly mob that must be constrained versus the elite man of reason? I argue that George Eliot's development of Spinoza's account of affect, imagination and fiction can take us beyond this unsatisfactory dichotomy.

Eliot wrote what I will call 'deliberative fictions', which – precisely because of their avowed fictitious status – are able to convey truths about the human condition. What I mean by a deliberative fiction is a fiction that, while *affirming* its fictitiousness, nevertheless works to demystify the confusions inherent to affective and imaginative ways of life. Eliot's fictions aim to engage the imagination and affects of her readers in a way that cultivates the reflective and critical capabilities of thought, thereby facilitating the expansion of their understanding. In this way



deliberative fictions can enhance the capacity of human beings to become free. My thesis is that the notion of a deliberative fiction goes some way towards bridging the lacuna in Spinoza's political thought between his negative assessment of the multitude and his account of the ethical potential of *all* human beings to become free.

I propose to explore this thesis with reference to Eliot's novella *Silas Marner*. It is set in the early

nineteenth century and Marner, a simple weaver, is a member of a small community of Calvinist dissenters that believes in the literal truth of the Bible. When Marner is falsely accused of the theft of church funds, the congregation relies on the authority of the Old Testament to bring him to account through the drawing of lots. He is found guilty and exiled from his community. Rather than find fault with the method of casting lots, or with the beliefs and practices of his community, Marner blames God. In a passionate outburst he cries: ‘There is no just God that governs the earth righteously, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent.’³ This is a perplexing reaction. If one felt sceptical about the procedure followed for determining the guilt of an accused, then that scepticism turns into incredulity when responsibility for the outcome of this bizarre method is projected onto a demonic and deceitful God.

How might one come to understand the peculiar beliefs and practices of Marner and his community? If a literary presentation of a given way of life were to be successful, the incredulous



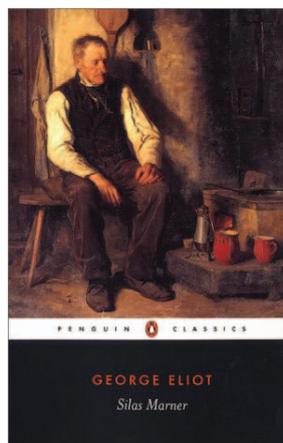
reader would gradually come to understand Marner’s confused and angry response. Certainly, this is part of Eliot’s aim when she explains to her readers that although we may be able to distinguish between ‘religious feeling’, on the one hand, and the variety of forms through which that feeling might find expression, on the other, the simple-minded Silas Marner cannot. For him, she writes, ‘the form and the feeling have never been severed

by an act of reflection’. The ability to separate his faith from a particular religious practice, says Eliot, ‘would have been an effort of independent thought such as [Marner] had never known’ (*SM*, 14).

This story provides an illustration of Spinoza’s critique of literalist interpretations of the Bible. But the connection between Eliot and Spinoza is more profound than this. Eliot started a translation of Spinoza’s *TTP* in 1843 and completed a translation of the *Ethics* in 1856. Although Spinoza was only one influence on the development of her thought, he was a very significant one. In addition to Spinoza’s *TTP* and the *Ethics*, she also translated David Strauss’ *Life of Jesus* in 1846 and Ludwig Feuerbach’s *The Essence of Christianity* in 1854. What is significant about all three philosophers is that each treated religion as the natural expression of a veiled truth that can be uncovered given the appropriate methodological approach. Their critiques of religion sought to reveal the latent meaning of scripture and religion through a study of the projected desires, wishes, and fears that religion masks in metaphor and allegory. Religion, Feuerbach insisted, should be approached as an

anthropological account of human history, that is, a distorted but ultimately edifying picture of common fears, hopes and desires.

Silas Marner succeeds as a work of fiction because it progressively draws the reader into an imaginary world in which



Marner’s beliefs begin to make sense, a world in which his actions, his suffering and his joy form part of a meaningful social whole. In this way, a belief that initially seemed ridiculous becomes meaningful when understood as a component that integrates with a broader milieu of shared beliefs and practices. Literature attempts to engage the reader’s imagination in order that she invests in the cognitive and affective lives of the characters in a work. Fiction, then, can provide a horizon within which unfamiliar beliefs and forms of understanding can become legible to an appropriately engaged reader. Literary works can enhance the understanding of readers through immersion in a constructed world in which imaginings and beliefs are embodied in

FAR LEFT

Samuel Laurence, portrait of George Eliot, c.1860.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

LEFT

Silas Marner.

specific characters that are, in turn, embedded in particular socio-historical contexts. Part of the peculiar power of literature concerns this ability to show how particular ways of *knowing the world* and particular ways of *being in the world* are mutually co-implicated.

Philosophy also aims to understand how what can be known affects, and is affected by, specific ways of life. Typically, however, philosophers pursue this aim by abstracting from particular forms of embodiment and by generalising across the various historical and cultural ways of life in which knowledge is embedded. Philosophy aims to extract the kernel of truth at the heart of diversity. Spinoza aimed to understand not only how particular ways of being in the world affect what can be known about the world, but also to ascertain what are the *general* principles that determine *every* correlation between ways of being and ways of knowing. The work for which Spinoza is best known is the *Ethics*. This challenging account of 'the right way of living' yields surprisingly few moral prohibitions or imperatives. Rather, it presents a five-part account of what we are, what we can know, what are our limitations, what are our powers, and how we might realise the maximum degree of freedom and virtue of which we are capable. Spinoza dramatically departed from the views of his contemporaries by insisting on a holistic view of nature, which fully includes human nature. Every individual in nature is connected to every other and the privileged status of human beings within nature is rejected along with certain Judeo-Christian assumptions that sustain that

understanding of necessity. The distinct freedom of human beings amounts to our ability to understand nature: 'I call him free who is led by reason alone' (EIVP68Dem). Freedom, then, does not involve the ability to will in accordance with my desire but rather the exercise of the capacity to understand the causes of my desire. The more we understand nature, the more active we become, and the more active we become, the more we express our power, virtue, or freedom. This is why the second half of the *Ethics* offers a detailed analysis of a range of affects, or emotions, that are generated from the fundamental triad of desire, joy and sadness. Becoming free always means becoming more joyful. But if joyful feelings can serve to guide us on the path to perfection and freedom, why, on Spinoza's own admission, should this path be 'hard' and 'difficult', and the achievement of freedom so 'rare' (EVP42S)? One can find a succinct response to this question in the Preface to the *TTP*: 'men generally know not their own selves'.

The *TTP* argues that most people live in the imagination and fictions rule their lives. Most experiences, Spinoza says, 'are like conclusions without premises' (EIIIP28Dem). We experience joy or sadness (that is, the 'conclusion' of an encounter), but we are often ignorant or confused about the cause of the joyful or sad experience (that is, the 'premises' of an encounter). It is this phenomenological peculiarity of human experience that allows superstition and religion to acquire such a firm hold over the imagination. Our inborn egotism, along with our natural attachment to a teleological worldview, encourages the

PHILOSOPHY AIMS TO EXTRACT THE KERNEL OF TRUTH AT THE HEART OF DIVERSITY

privilege. In Spinoza's view, if we are to have a true understanding of what we are then we must repudiate two key ideas of traditional religion: first, the anthropomorphic conception of God as the transcendent creator of the world; and second, the notion that things are arranged in accordance with a *telos* or goal. At the close of Part I of the *Ethics* Spinoza refers to these ideas as 'the sanctuary of ignorance'. By sheltering from criticism our egotistical projections, the idea of a transcendent God who wills the world into existence prevents us from acquiring adequate knowledge of nature.

In Spinoza's view, freedom is grounded in an

psychological predisposition to grasp experience in the form of narrative. This, in turn, renders uneducated people especially vulnerable to manipulation by religion and political ideologies because these offer ready-made narratives that provide structure and meaning for everyday experience. The essential ethical question – how to live rightly – inevitably leads Spinoza to the study of religion and politics. An individual can do only so much remedial work on his or her imagination and emotions. There are also collective social, political and theological imaginaries whose resistance to critique can be formidable.

Eliot endorsed Spinoza's critique of religion, along with his account of the crucial part religion plays in founding sociability, but whereas he plots the path to freedom through an understanding of the *general principles* by which we are held in bondage to our passions, she saw his abstract philosophical approach and his ideal model of the free man to be inscrutable to all but an elite few. His explication of 'the nature and powers of the affects, and the power of the mind over them' through the deployment of the geometric method that 'considers human actions and appetites just as if it were a question of lines, planes, and bodies' (EIII Pref) is unlikely to engage the understanding of a non-philosopher.

In a passage that could be interpreted as a response to Spinoza's geometric method,

and the implied audience of Spinoza's texts. A vital distinction between them is reflected in their respective attitudes toward their readers. Whereas Spinoza expressed his strong preference that the common people (*vulgus*) refrain from reading the *TTP*, Eliot directly compared the vocation of the author to 'the office of teacher or influencer of the public mind'.⁵ As many theorists have noted, this particular conception of 'the public mind' reflects a shift in nineteenth-century conceptions of the relations between the 'elite' and the 'multitude', and is connected to the increased rates of literacy and the rise of the novel as a primary means through which national and local identities were being formed and imagined. The novel allowed an increasingly educable public to imaginatively connect the experiences of the high-born and

IN SPINOZA'S VIEW, FREEDOM IS GROUNDED IN AN UNDERSTANDING OF NECESSITY

transposed to a modern idiom, Eliot insists that 'molecular physics is not the direct ground of human love and moral action any more than it is the direct means of composing a noble picture or of enjoying great music'. It is true, she admits, 'that every study has its bearing on every other' but still 'pain and relief, love and sorrow, have their peculiar history, which make an experience and knowledge over and above the swing of atoms'.⁴ She could easily have said that affective experience cannot be reduced to lines, planes and bodies. Her novels may be read as studies that chart the specificity of the interconnected histories of the pain and relief, love and sorrow, of her deftly drawn characters. These studies, however, are presented in such a way that the Spinozistic general principles that determine human action and suffering are always embodied in particulars. And the *specificity* of each case of love, or pain, or sorrow, has ethical import. Although they suffer from similar affects and endure similar legal and social disadvantages, in Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871-72) the love and sorrow experienced by Rosamond Vincy is not ethically equivalent to the experiences of love and sorrow of Dorothea Brooke. The quality of their joys and sorrows are – like their characters – incomparable.

Like Spinoza, Eliot was cautious about the capacity of the multitude to be, or to become, self-governing. However, there is a vast difference between the constitution of her reading public

low-born, of town-folk and country-folk, and of men and women, in a manner that opened new channels for sympathetic fellow-feeling and for the formation of classed, sexed, and national identities.

Eliot's contribution to the edification of 'the public mind' is best understood against the backdrop of the influence of the philosophers of Biblical critique, especially Spinoza. Like them, she saw the critique of religion as essential to the



LEFT

Statue of Ariosto by Riccardo Secchi, Reggio Emilia.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

maturity of humanity. However, her approach was not to offer more overt critique but rather to construct enabling fictions that challenge the religious imaginary from within. Her novels, that is, self-consciously re-trace the imaginative pathways of religion – its parables, prophetic visions, and methods of capturing passion – in a way that erodes the old forms in order to create new, more enabling narratives. Her re-staging of Bible stories, infused with unorthodox narrative interventions, provides an opportunity for her readers to deliberate on conventional meanings and morals and to un-make and re-make their habitual

reflective capacity to separate religious feeling from the various forms that such feeling might take. The story of his exile, despair and redemption tracks his partial acquisition of this reflective ability. By opening the story with the distinction between form and feeling, Eliot situates her reader in a deliberative space where she is led to the exercise of the very capacity that Marner lacks, namely, to reflect on religious feeling as distinct from the variety of ways in which that feeling might find expression. Eliot shows *how*, rather than states *that*, Marner’s community context determines his inability to adequately reflect on his situation

THE ESSENTIAL ETHICAL QUESTION – HOW TO LIVE RIGHTLY – INEVITABLY LEADS SPINOZA TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND POLITICS

chains of thought. But this critique of religion is internal to her literary practice. Eliot’s novels enact an immanent re-interpretation of the meaning and significance of a range of religious tropes: sin, forgiveness and redemption. In some ways, this notion of immanent critique – achieved through artful reinterpretation – pulls against certain aspects of Spinoza’s philosophy. Most especially, Eliot’s faith in art as a powerful force for the improvement of understanding, and the expansion of sympathy, highlights the lack of any definite outline of a theory of art in Spinoza’s philosophy. This is a question to which I shall return.

As noted above, Eliot opens *Silas Marner* with a description of Marner as someone who lacks the

and how this mystification, in turn, depletes his capacity to understand himself and so renders him unfree. Marner’s superstitious community may consider drawing lots as an adequate method of revealing God’s judgment on an accused but neither Eliot’s contemporaries nor the modern day reader are likely to concur. Already, then, in the first few pages of the novella, she has caused a fracture to appear in the credibility of Biblical authority. If the Books of *Joshua* and *Jonah* contain erroneous beliefs, what is to prevent other parts of the Bible containing falsehoods?

Marner’s story can be read as a reprise of the *Book of Job*. Like Job, Marner’s life is stripped of everything that had made it intelligible (God’s love and protection), of all that made it worthwhile (family, friends, community), and of what made it a distinctly human life (the ability to link the past with the present and to enjoy the capacity to imagine a future). The interlacing of knowledge, feeling and imagination that made up the fabric of his life has been torn, and the first half of *Silas Marner* shows how his way of being progressively unravels and his powers of action dramatically diminish. Deprived of the ready-made context of his community, he is unable to find any stable form through which his complex thoughts and emotions can be expressed, and so he sinks into a mere animal existence. With the loss of the form of his belief Marner has lost the capacity to sustain a meaningful human life. Equipped with the skill to produce a valuable commodity – linen – he is not driven away from his new location but nor is Marner accepted as a member of the

RIGHT
Cristofano dell’Altissimo, *Ludovico Ariosto*, before 1568.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.



community. He sets up his loom in a cottage on the edge of the village and he lives, works and eats in solitude. This is the ‘insect-like existence into which his nature had shrunk’ (SM, 18). Cut off from his past, and lacking the trust to risk opening himself up to his new context, Marner lives in the meaningless present in the manner of an animal. Deprived of his habitual way of being he ceases to think, to feel, or to desire and works from instinct, ‘impulse’ and ‘without reflection’, just like ‘a spinning insect’ (SM, 16-17).

He is redeemed from his inhuman existence by two things: the sympathy extended to him by one of the villagers and his love for an apparently orphaned child. After Marner has been robbed of his life savings – a hidden hoard of gold coins that he has come to see as his only companions – sympathy from the villagers offers some consolation. It is through friendship that Marner eventually discloses his life story and so opens his closed life to the possibility of new connections provided by sympathetic fellow feeling. But it is the mysterious arrival of a small child at his cottage, one snowy evening, which fully awakens his sympathetic feeling. Searching for a clue as to how the infant came to be so far from the village, he finds her mother lying dead in the snow. Marner’s impulse to keep and protect this golden-haired child is simply expressed: ‘it’s a lone thing – and I’m a lone thing. My money’s gone, I don’t know where – and this is come from I don’t know where’ (SM, 118). The legendary quality of *Silas Marner* is apparent: ‘the gold had turned into the child’ (SM, 122). Marner’s feelings for the child restore his human consciousness by re-connecting him with his emotional and moral capacities. Her possibilities become his rediscovered possibilities and her wonder and joy at the discovery of new things reawakens his capacity for joy. Like Job, all that was taken from Marner is eventually returned. But unlike the story of Job, in Eliot’s re-telling they are returned through the exercise of the thoroughly immanent human powers of sympathy and love.

But can the frame of Spinoza’s philosophy accommodate the edifying role of fiction, as proposed by Eliot? Isn’t it the case that Spinoza’s philosophy criticises the fictional productions of the imagination and emotion? How can Eliot’s fictional works be understood in terms of an appropriation and amplification of key elements in Spinoza’s philosophy? I will begin to defend the viability of reading Eliot’s novels as forging a genealogical line with Spinoza’s critique of religion and his immanent account of ethical life by considering his views on the common falsehoods

and shared fictions that prevent the development of human understanding. Some commentators argue that because Spinoza views the imagination as the sole source of error then the imagination always will be a hindrance to the development of reason and freedom. My view is that Spinoza’s account of the imagination is more heterogeneous than these kinds of interpretation allow, and that his estimation of the powers of the imagination changes over the time he developed his philosophy.

It would be helpful to offer an account of the kinds of imaginative fiction Spinoza criticises as well as to consider some of those that he himself employed. In broad outline, I suggest we can discern at least five very general types of fiction relevant to our concerns. These are: mythology, storytelling, religion, theologico-political ideologies and hypothetical philosophical posits. Each type of fiction arises from distinct human needs and desires and, generally speaking, has different aims. For example, Biblical narratives answer the need of relatively uneducated people to have a clear and simple code of conduct that is easy to follow; the fiction of divine rule meets the desire of the powerful to ensure the security and longevity of their rule; and the drive of philosophers to attain an adequate understanding of nature generates hypotheses that aim to help explain the way things are. I will say something briefly about each type of fiction.

Spinoza frequently refers to the works of Terence and Ovid and to the mythologies that informed their worldviews. For example, he uses Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* to illustrate his thesis on feigning and fictions. The fifteen books of the *Metamorphoses* offer a mythological account of the origin of the world, the extraordinary powers of the gods, and end with the deification of Julius Caesar. It is clearly this text that Spinoza has in mind when he writes: ‘the less men know Nature, the more easily they can feign many things, such as, that trees speak, that men are changed



ABOVE

Gustave Doré’s illustration of Ludovico Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

in a moment into stones and into springs, that nothing becomes something, that even gods are changed into beasts and into men'.⁶ Mythological fictions offer some protection from the utter indifference of nature to human concerns and interests. They can function to reduce fear by humanising nature through the projection of human need and emotion. However, while mythological explanations of the world might help to assuage fear, they also mystify the order of the natural world and so prevent the development of adequate knowledge about that order.

Although mythology obviously involves narrative Spinoza appears to distinguish it from those stories that primarily aim to amuse. In this context he mentions Ludovico Ariosto's sixteenth-century poem *Orlando Furioso* that tells of winged dragons, battles with giants, and other 'fantastic happenings' that, he says, 'are quite incomprehensible in respect to our intellect' (*TTP*, 97). Such stories directly appeal to the imagination with the ambition of entertaining the reader who must suspend his critical powers in order to enjoy them. Fictions such as these do not intend to persuade the reader that the improbable events they portray are real, nor do they pretend to educate or edify the reader with respect to facts about the world.

The overt fictitiousness of the narrative

imaginaries. Although Spinoza judges religion to be useful, at certain times and for certain people, when theologians attempt to enlist philosophy in order to demonstrate the *literal truth* of religious narratives the result will be intellectual confusion, oppression and persecution. Spinoza was not an enemy of religion or derogatory about religious faith that is sincerely held. Rather, the target of his criticism is theology, and especially those theologians who seek to control what people think and believe through the exercise of state power.

In a passionate passage in the *TTP* Spinoza rails against tyranny, saying that its supreme mystery 'is to keep men in a state of deception, and with the specious title of religion to cloak the fear by which they must be held in check, so that they will fight for their servitude as if for salvation, and count it no shame, but the highest honour, to spend their blood and their lives for the glorification of one man' (*TTP*, 3). The lust for power of theologians transforms sincerely held faith into dangerous dogma, or ideology. Once a people have fallen under the sway of theologico-political fictions they become dangerous and divisive, each faction wishing that only their 'truth' be recognised.

Finally, Spinoza writes about a special kind of fiction, namely, a philosophical hypothesis that can serve as a device for pedagogic or illustrative purposes, or as a guide to conduct.

SPINOZA WAS NOT AN ENEMY OF RELIGION OR DEROGATORY ABOUT RELIGIOUS FAITH THAT IS SINCERELY HELD

constructions of storytellers is one way in which story telling can be distinguished from Scripture. The Bible contains many narrative episodes – the garden of Eden, Susanna and the Elders, Noah's ark, the good Samaritan – but they are presented as historical accounts of actual persons and real events, that is, as *literally true*. Spinoza's view of such narratives is that they seek to encourage ordinary people of little learning to obey a moral code. The stories are simple, the moral lesson of each story is evident, and the lesson is easy to remember and to re-tell across generations: disobedience will be punished, lust and deception lead to disruption of community, the pious will be saved, love thy neighbour as thyself, and so on. Taken together they add up to a complete moral code. The conditions of life of many people would be untenable without the guidance afforded by such comprehensive moral

Here, I am using 'hypothesis' in a broad sense to include: a theoretical posit, a supposition in an argument, a thought experiment, or a provisional conjecture. Contemporary philosophers make use of hypotheses when they devise 'thought experiments'. For example, John Rawls uses the fictions of the 'original position' and the 'veil of ignorance' to explore common intuitions about justice.⁷ As well as having a pedagogical function these philosophical fictions can also lead to the refinement of important concepts, or of the relations between concepts. Spinoza sometimes employed imaginary stories in order to illustrate a philosophical point. Well-known examples include a self-deceived stone and a worm with elementary powers of deduction.⁸ In each case, these fictions perform an illustrative or pedagogic function.

But there is another more troubling use of the imagination and fiction in Spinoza's

philosophy that is of a different order to those just mentioned. In the *Ethics* he offers a model of human nature – a philosophical *exemplar* of the free man – as an ideal that we should strive to emulate even though it is impossible that a completely free man could ever exist. Moreover, this model does not play a simple explanatory function but rather has a vital normative role in Spinoza’s ethical and political theory. Spinoza writes, ‘I shall understand by good what we know certainly is a means by which we may approach nearer and nearer to the model of human nature that we set before ourselves. By evil, what we certainly know prevents us from becoming like that model’ (EIVPref). The *exemplar* of human nature is meant to perform a profoundly evaluative role in ethical life.

Does Spinoza’s *philosophical* deployment of an *exemplar* alter the fact that it is nevertheless an imaginative ideal, in short, a fiction? And if what Spinoza offers as a guide to ethical conduct is a fiction, are we not entitled to ask why we should prefer his model to the models of conduct supplied by religion, for example, the imitation of Christ? The powers of the imagination and imitation may be equally active in each case but the crucial difference between a philosophical fiction and a Biblical fiction concerns the role played by deliberation in the former. In the case of a philosophical fiction one is aware that the ideal is a fictional device – a mode of thought – that serves as a guide for the human drive to understand nature. It may be *literally false* but nevertheless *truth-seeking*. In the case of the religious exemplar, a fiction of the perfect man is posited as *literally true*: an actual individual, Christ, the son of God, exists. For the philosopher, the imagination is used as an aid to gaining knowledge whereas in the case of religion it is used as a substitute for knowledge. Spinoza’s use of an imaginative model to guide human conduct highlights an important feature of his moral philosophy, namely, that the use of the imagination and fiction are inescapable for any form of life that gives itself a code of conduct. No less than the multitude, the philosopher cannot do without imagination and fiction in the pursuit of the right way to live. This is because nature does not, and cannot, provide us with such a code. Nature is morally neutral and entirely indifferent to our desire to survive and flourish. Moral codes may be understood as revisable hypothetical posits that are responsive to experience and to new knowledge about human nature. So long as philosophical fictions remain aware of their fictitiousness then they



LEFT
 ‘Silas finds Eppie’,
 illustration from
Silas Marner by
 George Eliot, 1910.
 SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA
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are of a different order than theological fictions.

These five types of imaginative fiction call for a more detailed analysis than can be offered here. Nevertheless, even this rudimentary taxonomy confirms that in Spinoza’s view *some* fictions are especially adept at engaging the imagination and in capturing affect in a way that prevents the development of human knowledge and freedom (e.g. theologico-political ideologies). The bare thesis that imaginative fictions may lead to error and unfreedom is not in doubt. The more interesting question is: can the imagination and fiction also play a role in the *development* of knowledge and in the *realisation* of human freedom? The analysis of the fifth type of fiction suggests that some Spinoza scholars have been too swift in drawing a line of equivalence from imagination to fiction to falsehood. The imagination is essentially bivalent. A fictional posit also may serve as a model that can function as a guide for the realisation of human potential. Fictional posits can facilitate as well as impede human understanding and freedom.

If we follow Spinoza’s typology of fictions, to which category would George Eliot’s novels correspond? Given that Eliot’s fictions strive to teach the proper causal order of things then they are at odds with the form of writing that Spinoza describes as Scripture. And, insofar as she deliberately appeals to, and strives to engage, her readers’ emotional and imaginative powers, her fictions are also at odds with Spinoza’s formal

RIGHT

Giovanni Batista Tiepolo, *Susanna and the Elders*, c.1722.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.



account of philosophy. However, Eliot's novels are a form of writing that also is at odds with Spinoza's conception of the modest aims of storytellers to entertain their readers. Eliot selects some elements from each of these genres: she has what Spinoza referred to as the robust imagination and the sincerity of heart of the genuine prophet, the patient and diligent observational skills of the philosopher, and the talent of the storyteller for capturing the imagination and stirring the emotions of her audience. Eliot's conception of the edifying potential of art pushes at the border of what Spinoza's philosophy can accommodate. She conceived of her novels as a vehicle for instruction,

imagination' of the artist and mere 'fictions of fancy'. It is the special talent of the artist who possesses the superior 'powerful' imagination both to uncover latent meaning in the everyday and to construct new combinations from past experience, emotion, and individual and cultural memory. To be worthy of the name, an artwork should have the force to compel us to attend to the familiar with deliberative attention. An artistic representation, for Eliot, is always a matter of re-visioning: attending to what is thought to be ordinary, uneventful, or mundane, in order to promote deliberation on the extraordinary that lies within the mundane. Her fictions dissect and lay bare the complexity of human feelings and relationships, and the power of historical, social, and political contexts to shape those feelings and relationships. Eliot's re-tracing of the causal links between the present and the past works to reconstruct the webs of belief in which we all dwell. Her account of imagination, emotion and fiction, and their potential to contribute constructively to knowledge, both builds on and goes beyond Spinoza's philosophy.

In her view, although philosophy and art have distinct methodologies, knowledge in each case is gained through careful observation of, and critical reflection on, experience and nature. It is this account of artistic knowledge that underpins Eliot's distinctive ethical realism in art and her championing of the hypothetical method. In one of her letters she referred to her novels as 'simply a set of experiments in life'. Philosophical abstractions can obscure the ethical dimension of the deeply textured nature of human life, and this

NATURE IS MORALLY NEUTRAL AND ENTIRELY INDIFFERENT TO OUR DESIRE TO SURVIVE AND FLOURISH

that is, as a potential causal agent in the *revision* of belief, in the *reformation* of her reader's moral sensibilities, and in the promotion of more adequate understandings of the world. In all these tasks the role of the imagination is paramount.

Even though Eliot's ameliorative conception of art pushes at the borders of Spinoza's thought, she shares common ground with him in relation to her view of the imagination. She too was critical of the capricious imagination. She makes an important distinction between the 'powerful

is why her letter continues with the observation that 'I become more and more timid – with less daring to adopt any formula which does not get itself clothed for me in some human figure and individual experience, and perhaps that is a sign that if I help others to see at all it must be through the medium of art' (*Letters*, VI, 216-17). By describing her fiction as a set of experiments in life Eliot presents an understanding of her novels as experimental forms in which the playing out of various hypotheses provoke the reader's

deliberative faculties. Eliot aimed to write truthful, or truth-seeking, fictions. Her fictional accounts of people and places, actions and passions, conscientiously track everyday human experience, real historical events, common moral dilemmas, and extant individual and cultural narratives. They are not fictions of fancy that tell of monsters and flying dragons, nor do they claim for themselves the status of divine revelation. Eliot's fictions are the product of what she called 'the veracious imagination'.⁹ They are constructions much closer to the genre of Spinoza's philosophical fictions.

Spinoza's complex attitude towards passion, imagination and fiction, and the roles they might play in gaining knowledge of self, others and nature, has given rise to widely divergent interpretations and appropriations of his philosophy. Eliot's literary works offer an alternative appropriation and extension of Spinoza's philosophy. Her assumption of Spinoza's legacy is significant for the way in which it develops an integrated view of the potential of passion, imagination and fiction for the pursuit of freedom. The nature of her art practice however cannot be understood in purely aesthetic terms. Art, for her, is essentially ethical.¹⁰ Through her 'experiments in life' she shows that the pursuit of freedom requires a calibrated reform of the passions of the self along with the broader contexts within which selves are formed. Eliot's contribution to this recalibration is to expose the complexities of the relationships between individuals within particular political, religious and social contexts, and to invite sober deliberation about the possibilities for individual and collective change given relevant personal, historical and political constraints.

Deliberative fictions show that passion and imagination do not necessarily act to block understanding of the self, others and nature. Certain kinds of fiction can increase our understanding of the vicissitudes of the affects and the powerful shaping force of social institutions. I am not suggesting that Eliot aimed to translate Spinoza's philosophy into novelistic form. Rather, I propose that she assiduously developed an important strand of his account of the power of passion, imagination and fiction to shape human lives. The notion of a fiction that invites critical deliberation on the links between our ways of knowing and our ways of being holds out the promise of bridging the lacuna in Spinoza's philosophy between the ethical ideal of the free man and the real conditions of life of the multitude. It is the construction

of this artful bridge that opens another, more inclusive, path to freedom. This path signals the advent of a new genre of writing that would have puzzled Spinoza: the philosophical novel.

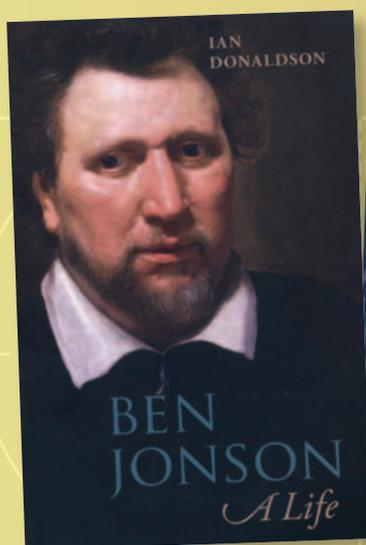


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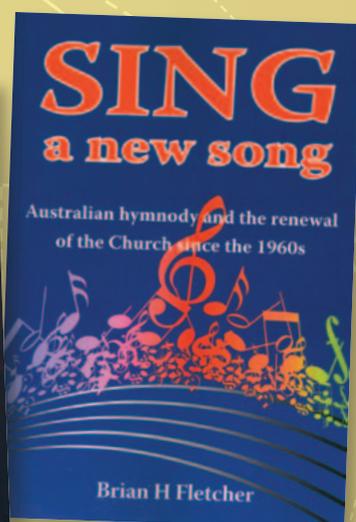
- 1 This essay is an edited version of my Presidential Address to the Annual Conference of the Australasian Association of Philosophy, Otago, New Zealand, July 2011.
- 2 References to the *Theological-Political Treatise (TTP)* are to *Spinoza Theological-Political Treatise*, trans. by Samuel Shirley 2nd edition (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2001). References to the *Ethics* are to *The Collected Works of Spinoza*, ed. and trans. by Edwin Curley (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, Volume I, 1985). I use the standard method of referencing where E stands for the Ethics, I – V for its five parts, P for Proposition, S for Scholium, Pref for Preface, and Dem for Demonstration.
- 3 George Eliot, *Silas Marner* [1861] (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1996), p. 14. Hereafter, *SM* followed by page numbers.
- 4 *The George Eliot Letters*, ed. by Gordon S. Haight, 9 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954-78), Vol. 6, pp. 98-99. Hereafter, *Letters* followed by volume and page numbers.
- 5 See Eliot's essay 'Authorship' in 'Leaves from a Notebook', in *Essays and Leaves from a Notebook*, ed. by Charles Lewes (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1884), p. 358.
- 6 *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* in *Collected Works of Spinoza*, p. 27.
- 7 John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971) is a very influential text in political philosophy. The idea of 'the original position' is that if free and equal citizens imagine themselves behind a 'veil of ignorance' where they lack knowledge of their sex, race, class and abilities, then their intuitions concerning what would constitute fair and just social, political and economic arrangements would be impartial.
- 8 Spinoza wrote about the hubristic stone and the clever worm in Letters XXXII and LVIII, respectively. See *The Correspondence of Spinoza*, trans. and ed. by A. Wolf (London: Frank Cass, 1966), pp. 209-214 and pp. 294-298.
- 9 'Leaves from a Notebook', in *Essays and Leaves from a Notebook*, p. 371-72.
- 10 Her guiding principle is captured in her statement that 'If art does not enlarge men's sympathies, it does nothing morally' (*Letters*, II, 86).

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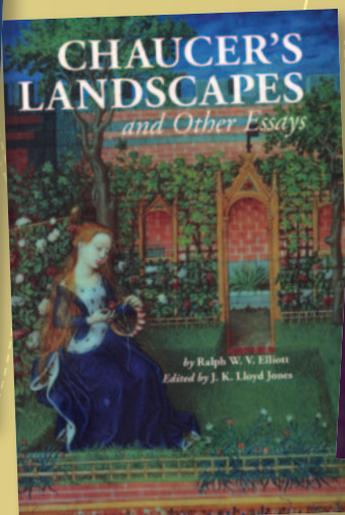
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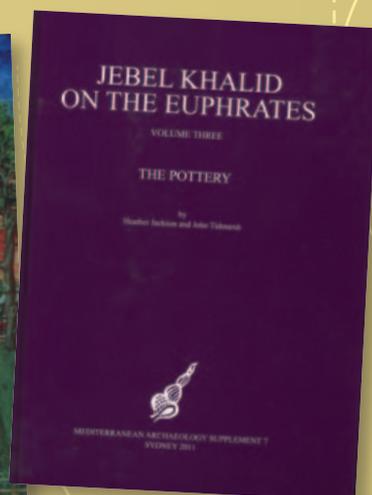
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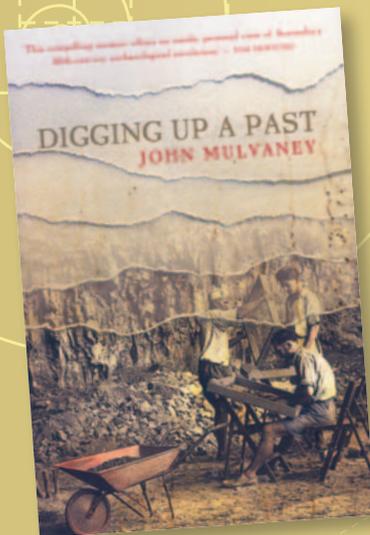


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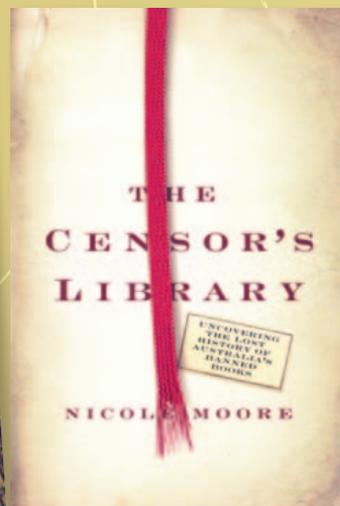


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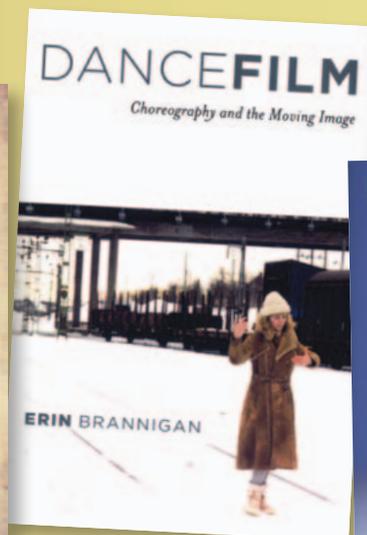
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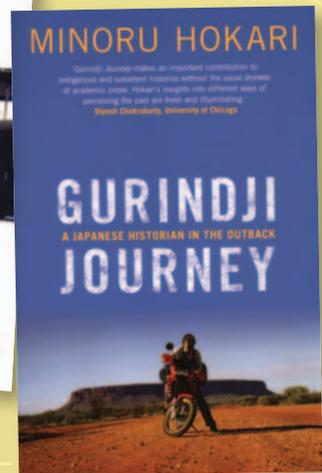
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