Jupp’s latest book covers the changes in immigration policy and public response from 1972 to 2002. Since departmental records are unavailable for thirty years, Jupp relies on published sources and his own experiences. As he acknowledges, the subject is highly politicised and controversial. His views are clearly stated: that Australia needs a continuing, planned and multicultural immigration program, and that politicians should acknowledge that they are dealing with people and not simply follow majority opinion. The book, however, is about processes rather than experiences of immigration.

Thematic chapters address the evolution of immigration and multicultural policies since ‘white’ Australia ended; the records of successive governments; policy institutions; critics of multiculturalism; the impact of One Nation; economic rationalism, sustainability and population; and asylum seekers. Each chapter stands alone, leading to some repetition. Jupp argues that immigration and multiculturalism, despite their success, are more contentious than before and any consensus ended in 1988. Policy has shifted from numbers to ‘quality’, humanitarianism has been lost, and a division has emerged between liberals and the hard-nosed over anyone not ‘chosen’.
Jupp emphasises the degree of state control and social engineering in populating Australia and the move from assistance to exclusion, which impacts upon those most needing to come. He argues that policy shifts under Howard prioritise control and compliance rather than humanitarian and settlement needs. This, he maintains, generates a culture of suspicion.

He criticises the ending of the department’s research base; the decline in consultation, advocacy, and access and equity monitoring; Howard’s failure to censure Pauline Hanson in 1997-98; the denial of welfare benefits to new arrivals; and the merging of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs into one department, which he calls the ‘ministry of other people’. His critique reaches a peak in the penultimate chapter where he describes asylum-seeker policies as ‘positively draconian’, attributing them to a misguided attempt to win back seats lost to One Nation in 1998. He suggests various changes, warning that Australia cannot continue on its present course and remain xenophobic.

Some minor quibbles: the phrase ‘populate or perish’ was used earlier than Jupp suggests (1937) by Sir Joseph Cook while Prime Minister in 1913-14; terms and explanations are sometimes oversimplified; the minimal use of endnotes and limited reference to journal articles fail to reflect the huge body of scholarship in this area. While race and class are interwoven into the analysis, the gendered implications of policy-making are mostly absent.

Nonetheless, the book is another landmark. Its strengths are its readability, solid scholarly base, succinct synthesis of existing work, and, most importantly, Jupp’s overlay of informed and incisive critical comment. While its focus is the last 30 years, historical and international comparisons are constantly drawn. The analysis is penetrating, clarifying policy intricacies and outcomes. Much is new and from behind the scenes. Jupp is forthright and
uncompromising, often scathing in his criticism but giving credit when due. He highlights myths and anomalies, discretions and contradictions, and ongoing aspects of immigration policy such as ‘the consistent denial by officials of something which everyone knows to be true’.