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INTRODUCTION

Mythologies of Nation-Building in Australia Today

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The national consciousness of settler colonial societies such as Australia often blends a complex mix of local and Indigenous identities. Historically infused with a sense of inferiority—and the imperative to stamp ownership on the continent—the stories that settlers tell, and the images and propaganda they project, seek to address this feeling. Robert Frost's poem argued that, for the United States, "the deed of gift was many deeds of war". For Australians, by contrast, the frontier wars neither gave nor served as a foundational narrative. In their place, mythologies emerged: of Anzac, of an impoverished Indigenous population, of an industrial "golden age", and of a free-spirited, urbane culture. We hope that you enjoy the eight articles in this issue of the *Journal of Australian Studies*, each of which grapples with a question of identity and clarifies and challenges these prevailing mythologies.

First, Steve Marti addresses the question of propaganda and myth. While historians have examined the power of C. E. W. Bean's *Official History* and other prose forms in propagating the Anzac legend, Marti explores the propagandising power of a material and visual device: the slouch hat. He shows how the slouch hat was used by artists and museum curators as a potent symbol to connect the masculinity of the Australian bushman with the martial masculinity of the Australian digger, thereby contributing to the power and ubiquity of the Anzac legend.

Matthew Bailey and Sean Brawley then consider different public understandings of two foundational events in Australian history: the frontier violence that accompanied European arrival and the Gallipoli campaign during the First World War. While the violence of dispossession remains inadequately acknowledged, the Anzac legend enjoys extraordinary potency. The authors collect written reflections from 320 tertiary students in support of their argument that, rather than seeking to nullify interest in Anzac, teachers can harness its themes of violence and military conflict in order to advance understanding of the frontier.

Also investigating questions of popular memory and neglected Indigenous histories, Elizabeth Watt interrogates how the personal and political shaped the telling of Aboriginal history in a close study of Noel Pearson, the historian. Reading Pearson's 1986 honours thesis alongside *Our Right to Responsibility* (2000), she argues that his later work relies upon a revisionist interpretation that minimises historic fractures within the Guugu Yimidhirr community to tell a simplified story of strength, unity, and "responsibility".

Sam Dalgarno's article likewise addresses questions of Indigenous voice and self-representation. While a robust body of scholarship has developed around both the systemic

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and cultural causes and effects of Aboriginal drinking, Dalgarno complicates these explanations through a reading of seven autobiographies by Aboriginal Australians. These life stories of alcoholism and recovery stress personal factors for drinking. While not without risks, this approach foregrounds Aboriginal perspectives in debates around drinking and points to the importance of individual approaches, alongside more structural solutions, to treating alcoholism. By focusing on these autobiographies, Dalgarno's article undermines stereotypical representations of a drunken Aboriginal culture while giving individual Aboriginal Australians a greater voice in describing their past and ongoing experiences.

The question of an Australian drinking culture is also central to the article by Julie McIntyre and John Germov in which they address the transformation that occurred from the 1960s in Australians' wine-drinking habits and reveal how these shifts were reflected in advertising. In particular, they show how the Ben Ean brand targeted a new and burgeoning group of women wine drinkers, and how the development of the brand's advertising campaign during the 1970s and 1980s reflected changing performances of class identity.

Thomas Buchanan and Thomas A. Mackay's study of the town of Whyalla, South Australia, in its "golden age" also considers the changing dynamics of class. In contrast to Roy Kreiger, whose 1980 study found that "years of experience with an inconsiderate and rapacious employer have gradually cemented feelings of collective distrust of the company", Buchanan and Mackay argue that this paternalistic "Industrial Eden"––a place no longer wholly dominated by Broken Hill Proprietary Company (BHP), but still thought of as a "company town"––was looked upon favourably by workers and residents. In the process, they document the role of Premier Thomas Playford in the development of the town, and of BHP's propagandising, which sold the company as a driver of national progress.

From class identity to cultural heritage, Andrea Baker's article examines Melbourne's "birth" as a music city. By tracing the "four thematic stages" of its development, Baker illuminates the rich legacies of the Indigenous songlines of the city, and later the early vaudevillian and operatic influences that created mass, rather than elitist, music venues. These early cultural developments intensified throughout the Gold Rush as the influx of money and migration to the city fostered a musical culture that would have a significant impact on the global stage, a stage on which the homegrown talents of both Melba and Grainger would shine. From these multiple perspectives, we see the local and transnational influences of music and the various elements that worked to reify Melbourne as the cultural capital of the nation.

Compared to other art forms, photography has often been sidelined as frivolous or shallow and, somehow, not properly art. Lucy Van and Anne Maxwell reveal how three Australian novelists—White, Malouf, and Jones—have portrayed the photographer-artist as perceiving and knowing the world in distinct ways. Photography in the Australian literature, they find, points to colonial ambitions to see and to claim spaces, as well as settler anxieties about a lack of belonging.

This issue offers a nuanced range of perspectives and is again at the forefront of contemporary scholarship on Australia. As always, we hope that you enjoy this issue.

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