write narratives of settler apologetics and to create new foundation myths for the present' (15, emphasis in original). This process of creating foundation myths is evident in white writers' accounts of the massacre of Wardandi Nyungars. Where Len Collard recorded an oral history of a Nyungar that stated 'the white men's guns were too many so some of the Aboriginals got away but they were rounded up and shot north of Capel River (Mallokup)' (61), John Molloy wrote that five Wardandi Nyungars were killed by thirteen armed men 'in spite of every effort to the contrary' (27 February 1841). John Molloy's denial of the magnitude and intent of the massacre reappears in Hasluck's biography. Her appendix shored up the myth of John Molloy as a man beyond reproach.

Historians Attwood and Foster (2003), among others, have charted the manifold ways in which settler history has perpetuated the 'great Australian silence' – (exhibited spectacularly through Keith Windschuttle's contention in 2000 that Henry Reynold's calculation of the numbers of Indigenous Australians killed in massacres was 'unsubstantiated guesswork') and of the ways that many other historians are working to redress the bias against oral histories. Yet literary critics also have an investigative role to play. We can demonstrate how language is used to obscure the facts of historical events, papering them over with versions that privilege the 'European aesthetic' to which Collard referred. We can see how these renditions shape their subjects in positive or negative ways, and how this in turn shapes the subjectivities of readers. We can read silence in the way we read words and become receptive to its sound, even in the air in which one sits on a smooth grassy lawn in the sunshine. In doing so, we can promote more inclusive narratives that listen to and respect Indigenous voices. [1]