'Deep Hanging Out':
Native Species Images and Affective Labour

Michael Farrell
University of Melbourne

Living alongside native animal species is an aspect to living in Australia beyond that of keeping pets or raising livestock. There is a history of representing this human-nonhuman relation in poems by settler poets; the natural or problematic representation of the feelings described or evoked relate to the naturalising, or problematising, of representations of settlement. This history suggests, in settler terms, a 'poetics of outside', although (perhaps inevitably) aspects of the domestic(ating) also appear.

This article revisits ideas around affective labour and the kangaroo image that have been the basis for an article published as 'Affective and Transnational: the Bounding Kangaroo', in *JASAL* in 2013. I refer to some of the same poems: Barron Field's 'Kangaroo,' Charles Harpur's 'The Kangaroo Hunt,' and D.H. Lawrence's 'The Kangaroo.' In extending this discussion into the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, I also consider poems by Eve Langley, Robert Gray, David Campbell and Gig Ryan. To use Mikhail Bakhtin's term, the poems, and the consideration of affect, undergo 're-accentuation' with regard to the image and to labour. Bakhtin writes that, '[t]he historical life of classic works is in fact the uninterrupted process of their social and ideological re-accentuation' (421) (extendable to, I would argue, all works worth (re)writing about). In what follows, I am interested in theorising the image work of native species: what is this national literary work; how do—or might—these particularly Australian images work on (or for) Australian readers? These questions are implicated in the problems of settlement, representation, and human-animal relations, as well that of cultural capital. If we are reading for affects, which, as Elizabeth Wissinger notes, travel 'faster than they can be subjectively recognized' (260), are these, then, potentially, unsettleable, or is the writing and reading process necessarily a settling (domesticating) one?

I also briefly consider Judith Wright's *Birds* for comparison, in terms of potentially iconic representations of native species: in Wright's case, the black cockatoo, the black swan and the lyrebird. Birds are a significant aspect of Australia's cultural capital, if we think of them as providing images for literature as well as vernacular discourse (think of 'cocky' or 'galah'), but also for product and event advertising, tourism and so on. A selection of Wright's birds and the kangaroo can offer representative case studies for thinking about affect, labour and image in Australian poetry, in relation to native species. In thinking about cultural capital, I am informed by John Guillory and Frank Kermode, if not directly citing their arguments.

What types of work, then, are poeticised Australian species made to do? We could consider representations of the basic activities that every animal does to survive. This kind of work is described in Wright's 'The Blue Wrens and the Butcher-bird' (161-2). The wrens are described as 'nest-building.' Their efforts are in vain, however, as the presence of a butcher-bird forces them to abandon the nest; the poem ends with the blue wren 'twitter[ing] to his anxious hen' that he '"know[s] another blackthorn-tree".' The two are permanently unsettled. The poem was originally published in *Birds*, a book that features a range of modes of representations of birds: some, like the one just quoted, feature bird speech (in English). The blue wren's speech adds to the wrens' pathetic aspect. The wren's speech, then, is affective labour. It is also gendered.

Wright presents the male bird as both protective and knowledgeable, but also, possibly, as foolish and wrong.

'The Blue Wrens and the Butcher-bird' is contextualised within a variety of poems depicting bird species, and some of those depicted are relatively more iconic, such as black swans, black cockatoos and lyrebirds. These species are representative of, and are promoted as having a synecdochal relation to, Australia as nation. The black swan is the official state bird of Western Australia; the black swan image is also, complicatedly, implicated in the history of Australian poetry, through the much-quoted line by hoax poet Ern Malley: 'I am the black swan of trespass on alien waters'—the final line of *The Darkening Ecliptic's* initial poem, 'Durer: Innsbruck 1492' (Heyward 89). As the titles of the poem and the collection from which it derives indicate, the poem is implicated in European trespass, experimentalism and anti-modernism, colonialism, race and deception. The black swan is an emblem of improbability, even in the twenty-first century (see Taleb). Wright's 'Black Swans' exploits the bird's visual aspect: 'Black swans shadowed the blaze of moon/ as they came curving down the sky' (174); a following mention of 'red stars' conjures the swans' beaks. The poem ends on a troping, world-ending note: 'On rushing wings the black swans turned/ sounding aloud their desolate cry.' There is nothing to indicate that such desolation is related to the human world, yet Wright's mention of a 'bitter year' of drought connects the birds to the narrative of the struggling settler.

The black cockatoo does not have the same degree of resonance, but represented Australia as a mascot at the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games (Karak). In 'Black Cockatoos' the birds are not mentioned until the penultimate line: 'the wild black cockatoos, tossed on the crest/ of their high trees, crying the world's unrest' (173); the poem's ending corresponds to that of 'Black Swans.' Wright succinctly, yet ambiguously, indicates that being wild they have no human relation (the trees are 'their[s]'), which both localises and allows them ownership of a place, before they finally express 'the world's unrest.' This latter could, of course, be planetary unrest, but can also be read as saying something about the human world. What the poem does not suggest is anything to do with nation: Wright deploys—or employs—the black cockatoos on behalf of the planet (no species being so wild we cannot name them and make images of them).

The lyrebird is a highly iconicised bird species, representing the Australian Film Commission and the New South Wales Parks and Wildlife Service, as well as featuring on the 10 cent coin and the 100 dollar note: literally working (hard) for the money. Wright, however, shies away from linking the lyrebird to the nation. Her representation in the poem titled 'Lyrebirds' is purely negative: she describes what she 'should see' if she went to lyrebird country' and what she 'should hear.' But, she writes, 'No, I have never gone./ Some things ought to be left secret, alone' (176). While some birds carry the burden of crying for the world, others it seems should just be let be. Wright's birds, then, are not for capture or emblem: her landed swans are 'rocked' by the lake; they are not 'still', like Malley's 'swan of trespass.'

Even as Wright writes these bird poems, there is a tension in the poems themselves that resists the notion of the birds as cultural capital; that yet belongs to a poet who can observe such a variety of bird life. Paul Kane frames Wright's (and others poets') approach in terms of negativity; he quotes Wright as saying that the:

> writer must be at peace with his landscape before he can turn confidently to its human figures. But in Australian writing the landscape has, it almost seems, its own life, hostile to its human inhabitants; it forces its way into the foreground, it

takes up an immense amount of room, or sometimes it is so firmly pushed away that its obvious absence haunts us as much as its presence could do. (31)

While Wright seems quite anthropocentric here, hers is a sophisticated and empathetic perspective that itself speaks of cultural capital. Vivian Smith phrases it this way: 'She … had the advantage, in writing about Australia, its landscape … of being able to write at one and the same time about her own pioneering family which had such a close relationship with and a sense of responsibility for the land' (cited in Kane 31).

I am not insisting on Wright's privilege (or guilt) as coming from the 'squattocracy', but rather her education—to a greater or lesser extent, a self-education—relating to knowledge of, and familiarity with, the land, and to birds as ecologically and grammatically situated in relation to land. In terms of poetics, this education supports her image-making ability. This is the cultural capital of any poet who has the ability and desire, even poets of relatively urban spaces. Yet in the context of colonisation and empire, it also brings questions of obligation and ethics, an ethics—or 'poethics' (a term Stuart Cooke borrows from Joan Retallack, in his discussion of Wright's lyrebird poem, 195)—that Wright pioneers.

In the case of the kangaroo, labour is decidedly a kind of national effort—of making an icon, of representing Australia—and work related to cultural capital. Poets make capital out of images. This, in turn, becomes the capital of their readers. If such poems, like those of Wright and Gray's kangaroo-featuring poem 'The Dusk,' become part of a high school syllabus, their work becomes part of the training of Australian citizens. A kangaroo in a poem is a representative image, a figure, an icon; it is on a continuum towards character; a model kangaroo. It works, but unlike Wright's birds, it is not often represented as active (the fleeing kangaroo of Harpur's 'The Kangaroo Hunt' being an exception). When not on the run, kangaroos, I suggest, hang out together.

Reading Elizabeth Wissinger's article 'Modelling a Way of Life: Immaterial and Affective Labour in the Fashion Modelling Industry,' I particularly noticed her use of the term, taken from anthropologist Clifford Geertz, of 'deep hanging out' to describe her experience of fieldwork with fashion models (250). Geertz, who himself borrows the term from James Clifford, ascribes it to 'localized, long term, close-in, vernacular field research' (110). The term seems to me also highly kangaroo-like. Using a quotation from Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire*, Wissinger defines affective labour as labour that is 'performed either through actual or virtual human contact or interaction, which produce "intangible feelings of ease, excitement, or passion"' (253). Wissinger adapts their formula for modelling, specifically, and the effects (affects) that are the work that models produce. The models are, in a sense, working for readers, of photographic advertisements, for example. We can think of reading as virtual human contact and, in a literary context, of the images in poems as a textual interaction working similarly (or at least, analogically) to models, both networked to reading and producing feeling.

In 'The Dusk' Gray writes that 'It [the lone kangaroo] turns its head like a mannequin' (96). The poem is constructed from a narrator-observer's perceptions or research. Unlike Lawrence's history of the kangaroo and Australia, which his narrator imagines seeing in the animal's eyes, Gray concentrates on similes (like a 'plant,' 'mushroom,' 'package'). Yet his kangaroo is no less representative, de-individualised (Gray's similes do not suggest uniqueness as an animal but as a species); its tail is like a lizard (Lawrence suggests python); it is an 'it,' neutered, rather than explicitly gendered. (Kangaroos are gendered in Harpur, Lawrence, Campbell and Langley.) Clearly, Gray sees the kangaroo 'mannequin,' with its 'fine, unlined face' to be a

kind of model. How closely does the poem relate to Geertz's definition? It is presumably 'localized;' it is 'close-in,' if we think of this as meaning scrutiny, rather than body in relation to another body; and while it speaks of the moment, rather than the long-term, it is produced out of long-term observation or practice. Is it vernacular? This is a tricky term, but in the sense of being at home, Gray is as much on home ground as the other settler poets could be said to be—unlike the visitor, Field, for whom the kangaroo is a novelty read through the mythological; nor the expressly touristic Lawrence, whose poem represents a kangaroo in a zoo. Nevertheless, these latter two do not have the monopoly on whimsical representation: familiarity does not necessarily breed realism. Whatever problematics the term has in its original anthropological context, these change in a colonial, poetic one. Do poets, through granting the at-homeness of native species, grant the same status for themselves, or do they project an unsettled quality onto the animal? In 'The Dusk,' it is not so much affects that travel fast, but simile: resemblance—figuration—is never settled.

Perhaps we might more readily see the affectiveness of images if we consider the use of emoji, 'xo,' winks, hearts and 'like' buttons, in social media and email, as affective labour. This labour is not—necessarily—attached to occupation, and is, though depersonalised, instantly recognisable as affective, if minimal, effort. The use of animal images in writing and the affective devices of social media—the eliciting of a reader's affect, of liking—are, I argue, comparable, producing 'intangible feelings of ease, excitement, or passion.' These feelings, when associated with animal images as presented in language, are related to knowledge of what different animals do: sing or bound, look cute or beautiful. Kangaroos fit Sianne Ngai's description: 'cute objects have no edge to speak of, usually being soft, round, and deeply associated with the infantile and the feminine' (814). (A koala would be even more apt, but they are not favoured by poets to the same extent.) Ngai also cites Kanako Shiokawa's definition of cuteness: 'The "complete absence of anything threatening".' Ngai goes on, however, to discuss the aggressive desire that the cute object 'appears to elicit' (820), arguing that 'violence [is] always implicit in our relation to the cute object' (823). The cut, in other words, is implicit in cute. Kangaroos are known for their boxing ability and occasionally attack humans (see 'Melbourne' and 'Kangaroo' articles).

Another aspect of Hardt and Negri's definition of affective labour is labour that 'always directly constructs a relationship' (Wissinger 254). In her article on modelling, Wissinger notes the amount of labour that goes into building relationships on and off the job: labour that is apart from modelling as such, often unpaid. Gray's narrator seems to avoid creating a relationship with the kangaroo, using simile to provide it with other relations. A poem's work is constructing relations and, as long as it is still read, this work is never over. Yet while abstract nouns may become vague, a table (as image) shift dimensions or material, a kangaroo remains a kangaroo. There is of course species variation. When I imagine a kangaroo, I think of the eastern grey and read the poems pertinent to this article (all either set in eastern Australia or written by poets of eastern Australia) as referring to the eastern grey kangaroo. Readers familiar with other species might read them differently. The ability to read the kangaroo at all relates to cultural capital (as does, of course, the ability to read a poem). The reading is a product of our relation to Australia and being Australian. The paradox of cultural capital is that we need to have already read like things in order to recognise them. Having seen a native species is not enough to see one in a poem. To adapt a paraphrase of Maurice Blanchot: there is no beginning to reading, only beginning again (Nelson xii). The same is true of listening and talking. We hear the word, or sound image, 'kangaroo,' and we see it. We are, therefore, part of an interpretive community, to allude to another framework.

Christopher Collins's work on the image is useful here: he refers to the use of the more universal species term of 'dog' as 'weak coding' (17). It is weak because of the range of images that the word can evoke, if we know nothing about the textual dog's attributes: the reader-listener's psychology, age, their experience of dogs as companion animals, their knowledge of possible breeds, whether actual or mediated through film, or television, all these factors come into play. (Riggs traces this line of thought back to Edmund Burke, 8.) We might think of native species—kangaroo, koala, lyrebird, platypus and so on—as having relatively strong coding, then, as there is less variation of kind in native species and less variety of relation with humans. This brings in another weakness that is more to do with the reader-decoder than the code, which we might call the weakness of the agent: the familiarity with the species or image of the species. 'Kangaroo' as a word appears as stronger coding than many other native species, being more familiar, if only to people of my generation who had access to commercial television, through the popular children's drama *Skippy* (1968-69). The show's credits contextualise the kangaroo as one of a number of native animals, including the koala and the (white) cockatoo. For local and export consumption, the show naturalises the lives of white settlers in the bush. Skippy performs an authorising presence and, while she (Skippy is female) can make tea and play drums, she is also shown hanging out in the bush, as a kind of conscience. While Wright's wrens talk of making a home, the (because) silent kangaroo is a convenient Indigenous presence that seems to acquiesce in both settlement and its own displacement. In *Skippy*, however, the character of Skippy does in a sense, talk. Not in English, but in a kind of code her listeners must interpret. (The actual sound was produced through chewing.)

It is from this television character that the term 'skip' as applied to white or 'dinkum' Australians is derived: the term connotes condescending affection towards a TV animal, deference to a captain, and, via rubbish skips, white trash. 'Skip' does not appear in the *Macquarie Australian Dictionary,* but is defined in the web-based *Urban Dictionary*. And a victim of a rare kangaroo attack acquired the nickname of Skippy afterwards via association (see 'Kangaroo'). Whiteness, especially that of people associated with kangaroos, as well as the potential violence of this association, is therefore rendered cute. This relates to the self-image of Australians as harmless and of course to colonialism, while this marginal manifestation of cultural capital ironically circulates outside the mainstream; is quaint. It is a subtly feminising term, the name Skippy not being precisely gendered and presumably derived from the kangaroo's movement. (It was first suggested that the starring kangaroo be called 'Hoppy.') According to *Australian Screen*, Skippy is popularly believed to be male (Burnstock). The troping of this term is a kind of queering, re-accentuating or reorienting. Yet such terms (and others relating to gender) seem inadequate when we are talking about relations among different species.

Geography is also a factor in the cultural capital of kangaroo familiarity: people who live in Canberra are as likely to see kangaroos as people who live in the bush. But there are many opportunities for becoming familiar with an image of a kangaroo, however reductive, without actually seeing one: on the tail of a Qantas jet, for example. Or, on the box of the colonial pick-me-up, Twinings' 'Australian Afternoon' tea, which brings kangaroo and ibis silhouette images together. The tea, its packaging claims, is 'full-bodied, brisk, and lively', presumably affects lent by the kangaroo. The blend was concocted for a competition by Member of Parliament Kevin Rudd in 2012, between his terms as Prime Minister; ten cents from each pack went to Rudd's chosen charity, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). An article in the *Daily Telegraph* states that the tea was tested on Rudd's staff and pets, 'as guinea pigs,' and quotes Rudd saying 'The win is a win for Australian animals' (Ly).

Collins asks this question of the image: is it message or messenger? In both Field's 'Kangaroo' and Lawrence's 'The Kangaroo,' the kangaroo itself is presented as code; that is, to be interpreted by the narrator-reader. There is a different level of coding of names for animals in Harpur's poem, preserving an early colonial diction that includes variations of Indigenous terms. In his poem 'The Kangaroo Hunt,' the terms 'forester' and the more apparently generic 'flyer' occur more often than kangaroo. (The term 'forester' survives as the name for the species of kangaroo found in Tasmania.) Even at the time of writing, Harpur did not, apparently, feel able to rely on the names having communicative capital, but supplied substantial explanatory notes regarding species names to his long poem, which was serialised in the Sydney newspaper *The Australian Home Companion and Band of Hope Journal* in 1860.

This cultural capital, then, was produced by poets such as Field and Harpur, and is relied on by later poets trying to 'construct a relationship' with readers through animal images ('The Man from Snowy River; 'Waltzing Matilda'). Paterson's poems have become a further settled way of saying 'Australia' or of building a relationship with the reader on the basis of Australianness: we are Australian, you are Australian, because you recognise the Australianness of this poem or you recognise my Australianness because of what I am saying. Paterson's images of settlement and capital, though not without 'ideological fissures' (for example, the class conflict of 'Waltzing Matilda'), displace images of native species through his predominant use of introduced species, such as horses and sheep, rebranded, we could say, as typically Australian. Yet, in 'The Man from Snowy River', the ground of the poem features wombat holes as ambiguous markers of both the absence and presence of repressed or conquered native species. The new Australian empire, then, as Harpur stresses earlier, is a human one (ironically confirmed also, by *Skippy*).

As evocative as such a phrase might be, 'deep hanging out' is just what kangaroos do not do in these poems on the kangaroo, at least with each other. They are singled out, held captive, separated from their mobs. In Field, the apostrophised generic animal is verbally dissected by the narrator; in Harpur, a kangaroo is chased by men on horses and by dogs, and in the end quartered; in Lawrence, a doe is fed peppermints while the narrator improvises terra nullius nonsense ('empty dawns,' 'silent lost land … / Where nothing bites') while looking into her eyes. Gray's kangaroo is 'like a plant/ with a single bud', sharing space, momentarily, with an old man and a moth, before it 'flits … [alone] into the dusk.' This separation is also true of Langley and Ryan's poems: in the former, the kangaroo is dead; in the latter the kangaroo is abstracted into a symbolic, cross-species pair, with an emu. It is not so much that the poets have not done their research, but that they are primarily focused on human thinking and feeling in a human-animal encounter, and on the singular kangaroo's signifying ability, in order to present a complex of thought and feeling (that is, a poem) about Australia.

Whether 'a' or 'the' kangaroo, when the word represents an undifferentiated example it is a model of the 'expendable' (Wisssinger 256). Drawing on Hardt and Negri, Wissinger writes that:

> Models work to stimulate interest in and attention to images by playing on forces that can consciously be perceived as desire, envy, or a need to belong (through being fashionable or 'in the know'); in so doing, they produce networks for affective flow that create community. They also, however, produce affective images, by tuning into a felt sense of vitality, aliveness, or engagement that takes no particular form, but taps into affective energy that is then conveyed via the virtual human contact of the image. (258)

Poems as popular as Paterson's are easily comparable in their ability to 'produc[e] affective flow that create[s] community.' Yet these less well-known poems have affective potential through using kangaroo imagery: they become affective repositories of energy.

Lawrence's 'The Kangaroo' comes closest, I think, to Wissinger's formulation, with qualification. Any notion of community based on attending a zoo is necessarily restricted. Lawrence's narrator describes affective relations between himself and the kangaroo through introducing a modelling comparison: he tells us how the 'mother Kangaroo' 'lift[s] her beautiful tender face' and how she 'loves' peppermint drops. She is a model kangaroo, a promoted, advertised kangaroo: this makes sense of her captivity. The poem continues:

> Her sensitive, long, pure-bred face.
> Her full antipodal eyes, so dark,
> So big and quiet and remote, having watched so many
> empty dawns in silent Australia

She has both been bred for this moment and hung out deeply in the past. Lawrence's generalising oblivion participates in the ongoing production of *terra nullius*. This is not just a visitor's ignorant vision. Compare P. R. Stephenson from his notorious 1935 essay 'The Foundations of Culture in Australia: An Essay towards National Self-respect':

> in a human emptiness of three million square miles, our six million white people,
> of immigrant stock, mainly from Europe, are becoming acclimatized in this
> environment new to them but geologically so old that Time seems to have stood
> still here for a million years. (204)

The modelling comparison expands our sense of Lawrence's narration, which might be heard as voiceover:

> Her little loose hands, and drooping Victorian shoulders.
> And then her great weight below the waist, her vast pale belly,
> With a thin young yellow little paw hanging out, and
> straggle of a long thin ear, like ribbon,
> Like a funny trimming to the middle of her belly, thin
> little dangle of an immature paw, and one thin ear.
>
> Her belly, her big haunches
> And, in addition, the great muscular python-stretch of her tail.

We are invited to inspect and admire. The kangaroo is an exhibit; she is what you have paid for.

Affect is related to flow, the 'mood … in the room,' or the job of the model to respond and modulate expressions at a speed 'faster than they can be subjectively recognized as emotions' (Wissinger 260). Might we compare this situation to what a poet asks of images? We do not, when not close reading, dwell on one image and its affective impact, but rather experience the whole poem as an 'image complex' (Forrest-Thomson). A kangaroo cannot exist in a poem as pure image but is, rather, networked with other images; is subject to mode of address, syntax, the poem's conceptual framework and so on.

Eve Langley's poem 'Native Born' also presents a kangaroo as an iconised image. It presents a kind of limit point to the kinds of feeling that I have been discussing. The narrator of the poem finds a kangaroo. The words 'Tall, dewy' defer the information given in the same line that the kangaroo is dead. She is 'lovely' but the sense of lovely is that she is lovely to eat for the meat ants. That she is female creates a humanising identification with the kangaroo: Langley refers to her at first as 'like a woman,' but by the end of the poem, she is 'woman.' Anita Segerberg calls the poem a 'sad and haunting portrait of the writer herself' (67). The lines:

> Her ivory hands, black-nailed, crossed on her breast,
> Her skin of sun and moon hues, fallen cold.
> Her brown eyes lay like rivers come to rest
> And death had made her black mouth harsh and old (74)

describe a figure comparable to a statue, of a Madonna perhaps, yet the harshness is an affective quality, produced in death. That the body lies by ashes suggests a crematoria and the narrator does the literal mourning work of burning the kangaroo body, so that it may not be eaten by ants, eagles or maggots. Her actions remove the kangaroo from the bush's cycle of death and rebirth, conflating 'woman [the kangaroo], logs and dreams,' which are 'scorched away,' and (via smoke presumably) become one with the 'night, that land from whence they came.' As the title of the poem, 'Native Born', indicates, the poem is troubled by what this native belonging means and much could be said about the way black and white are figured in the poem. It is a strange mix of the kitschy (in its use of gold and purple, attributed to the eagles and flies respectively) and the (Australian) pastoral, where Australian is defined against the Italian stockman swearing nearby. The narrator has a paradoxically idyllic moment lying in a gully with a dead kangaroo, while meat ants 'linked us as we lay.' This is Hardt and Negri's 'intangible feelings of ease,' as produced 'through actual or virtual human contact or interaction.' It is Geertz's 'localized, long term, close-in, vernacular field research,' or deep hanging out. The narrator stands in for the reader, could even be said to block affect in the reader through taking on the kangaroo's qualities, as she gives womanly qualities to the kangaroo. The burning, then, of the kangaroo-woman is a complex action. In a discussion of Langley's gender difficulties, Segerberg quotes Eve (who sometimes masquerades as Steve), Langley's narrator from her 'largely autobiographical' novel *The Pea-Pickers*:

> I knew that I was a woman, but I thought I should have been a man.
> I knew that I was comical but I thought I was serious and beautiful, as well. It was tragic to be only a comical woman when I longed above all things to be a serious and handsome man.
> The third point of my consciousness was a desire for freedom, that is, never to work.
> The fourth was a desire, amounting to obsession, to be loved. (59)

'Native Born' is an example of queer phenomenology, if we adapt Sara Ahmed's claims about how bodies are oriented towards other bodies, and if we are not—and clearly Langley was not—too outraged by the possibility of that other being both dead and nonhuman (70).

There is not the room here to discuss Langley as a historical transgender figure, but there seems to be a symbolic aspect to the burning of womanhood, while also recognising that this is a dream; that she has to work (in the novel's terms as Eve or Steve). In the poem the male figure is also shown as working, while the narrator lies down and shares death and a kind of love. The

kangaroo does affective labour for Langley's human protagonist, despite being dead (although apparently still 'listening,' the sharing via ants corresponds to John Donne's 'The Flea'). This is not a large point, ultimately, as there is not a great difference between the representation of the living and the dead in these poems. While Langley's poem, like *Skippy*, naturalises colonial settlement and the human animal relation, unlike *Skippy* it also suggests that this is a failed project, a dream tending to death and immolation.

The poems previously noted by Field, Harpur, Lawrence and Gray seek to represent the representative, the symbolic kangaroo: few poems seem to be interested in kangaroos in plural, together, without humans. One poem that does represent kangaroos in mob form, perhaps suggesting a deep hanging out relation between humans and kangaroos, is David Campbell's two-stanza poem 'Sanctuary', part five of a six-part sonnet sequence called 'South Country' (184). It begins:

> The kangaroos stand about her lawn like grey
> Greatcoated ghosts with folded paws …

The 'her' refers to a Russian aristocrat who has escaped revolution. In the second stanza,

> She stands with her kangaroos in the dusk to look
> For hunters in her sanctuary …

The first stanza's use of 'Greatcoated' implicates the kangaroos in war, while in the second the woman is looking out for hunters. Whereas in 'Native Born' the kangaroo and narrator are gendered as silent women together, here the kangaroos are silent and masculinised—yet their ghostliness aligns with Langley's dead kangaroo. We might read the kangaroos as oblivious to threatening possibility, but it is not a relaxed scene. The poem creates a complex matrix of war and displacement. The act of a woman looking links the poem to the first poem of Campbell's sequence 'Black Gins' Lookout' (182-83). This poem begins in present tense but the 'rock-lilies [that] wait' in line two rhyme with the 'women [who] sat' of line four. Line nine begins with 'Riding,' but it is not till the final line, when the narrator says, 'I amble to Picnic Point on a white-eyed mare,' that the present tense is confirmed, coincidentally with the first use of first person. The place, horse, even the colour of the horse's eyes, affirm white hegemony. (Langley's kangaroo has 'ivory hands'—but a black mouth—and lies in a 'white gully.') Campbell logically, subtly and brutally uses the sonnet volte to make the scene shift into one of settlement. The use of the sonnet underscores British colonial success. Yet the Russian woman character suggests a more tentative belonging than the working Italian man in Langley. There is an exceptional worldliness to Campbell's poetry, which he owes to his family's capital: being early, and wealthy, landowners. In Campbell, as in Wright, we see an ethical questioning. If Campbell is no longer, as Nicholas Birns has recently claimed, 'central … in the national literary conversation' (x), this is the conversation's loss. (That Birns himself does not take more interest in Campbell is striking, given what a key term 'sanctuary' appears to be for him.) In a 2007 book chapter, Kate Rigby identifies Campbell as one of the key writers in a discussion of what she terms the 'Ecopoetics of the Limestone Plains' (162-67).

Returning to 'Sanctuary', then, we see a later version of settlement and taking possession. In the first stanza, the pronoun refers to her lawn: 'The kangaroos stand about her lawn.' Campbell plays with the ambiguity of 'She has come a long way,' as if she has just arrived, so that the second stanza, which begins 'Now in age,' appears to be a shift in time but there is no textual evidence to prove that she is not 'in age' (a pun on image?) in the previous stanza. It is, possibly,

one continuous scene, not two scenes. The more substantive difference is the use of the pronoun. In the first stanza it is *her* lawn but there are also *her* officers and *her* feet. (In Langley's poem 'a white gully' later becomes 'my country'.) The stanza concludes with a reference to murdered officers: either 'her officers' are the survivors of a conflict (presumably the Russian Civil War) or they are the ghosts of the murdered ones. Yet we have already had the image of the great-coated kangaroos: they seem to have replaced the officers. In the second stanza the kangaroos are referred to as 'her[s];' the other uses of 'her' are 'her sanctuary' and, lastly, 'her mind.' The pronouns suggest that it is the character's fantasy, rather than the narrator's imagination, which has created this sanctuary, where new animals can do the work of officers, assisting her in looking out for hunters: the image work of standing and being grey and ghostly, of providing a 'virtual human contact or interaction'.

I conclude with Gig Ryan's 'Kangaroo and Emu,' which features neither of its titular animals as explicit images but does include a lizard, a 'rumpled horn' (a pun on the crumpled horn in 'The House that Jack Built'), jockeys, a paddock, and a 'punter of woe riding out of luck' (179-80). An assemblage of animal affects and effects, then, which appears to reject in its last line ('punter of woe riding out of luck'), Howard-era nationalism. Howard is identified by his infamous anti-refugee declaration—'We decide who comes into this country and the circumstances in which they come'—a decision mocked by Ryan: 'by algorithm or parachute'. The title, working as the conceptual framing of the poem, would be nonsensical if we did not have the ability, the cultural capital, to read it as a coat of arms, a shield from the non-national. As a traditional if unlikely pairing, the words kangaroo and emu have strong metonymic power. Yet in image terms, their coding is relatively weak, in the sense that as a paired image, this does not evoke living animals but rather a sculpted, possibly flattened, if not two-dimensional icon, which perhaps parodies the British lion and unicorn.

To think in terms of parody opens a fissure in the notion of the settled, Australian reading. As a colonial emblem, the pairing of kangaroo and emu perhaps once was seen as ludicrous as well as novel (though not as ludicrous—and less pretentious—than a lion and a unicorn as metonyms of England: a coat of arms still featured on Twinings tea). Ryan revivifies (or perhaps scarifies) the emblem in this scornful portrait of early twenty-first-century politics. The poem suggests new possibilities for Australian poetry: a way out of the fear of Australiana, or kitschphobia, as Ryan recharges these animal images with political relevance. The poem could be seen as anti-kangaroo and emu, in that it is undoubtedly anti-nationalist—at least in the terms of nationalism allowed under Howard—but such a reading would allow the flattening and silvering of the animal as poetic coin. If we think of the title as the first line, we can read it as compromised, or opposed to the next, with Australians colonised by the voting machine: 'He surveys the tilled electorate.' Yet kangaroo and emu may, from their position above the entrance, survey the surveyors, dissenting with their eyes, even as they build relations to monuments and money. Deep hanging out need not be as passive, nor, I dare hope, as ghostly or mournful as it often seems to be.

Works Cited

Ahmed, Sara. *Queer Phenomenologies: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

Bakhtin, M. M. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, edited by Michael Holquist, translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014.

Birns, Nicholas. *Contemporary Australian Literature: A World Not Yet Dead*. Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2015.

Burnstock, Tammy. 'Skippy 1966-69'. *Australian Screen*. https://aso.gov.au/titles/series/skippy/. 8 November 2017.

Campbell, David. *Collected Poems*, edited by Leonie Kramer. North Ryde: Angus & Robertson, 1989.

Collins, Christopher. *Reading The Written Image: Verbal Play, Interpretation, and the Roots of Iconophobia*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991.

Cooke, Stuart. 'Unsettling Sight: Judith Wright's Journey into History and Ecology on Mt Tamborine'. *Queensland Review* 22 (2015): 191-201

Farrell, Michael. 'Affective and Transnational: The Bounding Kangaroo'. *JASAL* 13.3 (2013).

Field, Barron. 'Kangaroo'. In John Kinsella, *The Penguin Anthology of Australian Poetry*. Camberwell: Penguin, 2009.

Forrest-Thomson, Veronica. *Poetic Artifice: A Theory of Twentieth-Century Poetry*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978.

Geertz, Clifford. *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Gray, Robert. *New Selected Poems*. Sydney: Duffy & Snellgrove, 1998.

Guillory, John. *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Harpur, Charles. *The Poetical Works of Charles Harpur*, edited by Elizabeth Perkins. Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1994.

Heyward, Michael. *The Ern Malley Affair*. St Lucia: U of Queensland P, 1993.

Kane, Paul. *Australian Poetry: Romanticism and Negativity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

'Kangaroo knocks out jogger David Striegl on Mt Ainslie in Canberra'. No author. *News.com.au*. 19 March 2010. http://www.news.com.au/national/roo-knocks-out-david-striegl-in-canberra/news-story/c0e22c386b1eeb2393ec703037b42ecc.

'Karak the cocky to be mascot for Melbourne Games'. No author. *ABC News*. 2 April 2004. http://www.abc.net.au/news/2004-04-02/karak-the-cocky-to-be-mascot-for-melbourne-games/162924.

Kermode, Frank. *An Appetite for Poetry*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Langley, Eve. 'Native Born'. In *Modern Australian Verse*, edited by Douglas Stewart. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965. 74-75.

Lawrence, D.H. *The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence*. New York: Viking, 1971.

Little, Katherine C. *Transforming Work: Early Modern Pastoral and Late Medieval Poetry*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013.

Ly, Philip. 'Kevin Rudd's Twinings Australian Afternoon Tea Gets its Big Test on Australia Day'. *Daily Telegraph*. 18 January 2012. http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/kevin-rudds-twinings-australian-afternoon-tea-gets-its-big-test-on-australia-day/news-story/6a1f7b1f47851d67a0b5c4ca396a3bfb?sv=572ab6a8e805b22d5924e5244ddbadb0.

'Melbourne Woman Feared for Life in Kangaroo Attack at Templestowe'. No author. *ABC News*. 17 January 2017. http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-01-17/kangaroo-attacks-woman-in-melbourne/8188408.

Nelson, Lycette. 'Introduction'. Maurice Blanchot. *The Step Not Beyond*. Translated by Lycette Nelson. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.

Ngai, Sianne. 'The Cuteness of the Avant-garde'. *Critical Inquiry* 31 (2005): 811-47.

Paterson, A.B. *Selected Poems*. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1996.

Rigby, Kate. 'Ecopoetics of the Limestone Plains' in *The Littoral Zone: Australian Contexts and their Writers*, edited by C. A. Cranston and Robert Zeller. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007. 153-72.

Riggs, Sarah. *Word Sightings: Poetry and Visual Media in Stevens, Bishop, and O'Hara*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Ryan, Gig. *New and Selected Poems*. Artarmon: Giramondo, 2011.

Segerberg, Anita. '"Strangled by a Bad Tradition"?: The Work of Eve Langley'. *JNZL: Journal of New Zealand Literature* 10 (1992): 55-73.

'Skippy and the Easter Bunny'. The Adventures of Skippy the Bush Kangaroo. Online video clip. *YouTube*. 16 September 2013. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UaWiZ9HykRQ.

'Skippy the Bush Kangaroo'. matturtle. Online video clip. *YouTube*. 4 August 2006. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r3HkUKoGoc4.

Stephenson, P.R. 'The Foundations of Culture in Australia: An Essay towards National Self-Respect'. In *The Writer in Australia: A Collection of Literary Documents 1856-1964*, edited by John Barnes. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1969. 203-44.

Taleb, Nassim Nicholas. *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*. New York: Random House, 2007.

Wissinger, Elizabeth. 'Modelling a Way of Life: Immaterial and Affective Labour in the Fashion Modelling Industry'. *ephemera: theory and politics in organization* 7.1 (2007): 250-69.

Wright, Judith. *Collected Poems 1942-1985*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1994.