

A History of the Book in Australian 1891-1945: A National Culture in a Colonised Market. Ed. Martin Lyons and John Arnold. St Lucia: U of Queensland P, 2001, 444 pp.

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Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia 1946-2005. Ed. Craig Munro and Robyn Sheahan-Bright. St Lucia: U of Queensland P, 2006, 433 pp.

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Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing. Ed. David Carter and Anne Galligan. St Lucia: U of Queensland P, 2007, 416 pp.

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These volumes of book and publishing history represent one of the most significant contributions to cultural history in Australia over the last decade. They are also part of a remarkable growth in book and publishing history over roughly the same period in a number of other national contexts. Other large book history projects include the Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, five out of a planned seven volumes published so far, about how 'our knowledge of the past derives from texts' and the five-volume History of the Book in Canada/*Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada* project going since the early 1990s (http://www.hbic.library.utoronto.ca/home_en.htm). These biblio-genome projects are all run by dispersed teams of historians, literary scholars, librarians, and information specialists and aim to define Britain's and Canada's places within an international network of book history studies. Such projects, like the History of the Book in Scotland, established at Edinburgh University in 1995, are often aligned with on-going bibliographical databases. The Cambridge book history covers 1,500 years while the Canadian project, like the Australian one, is divided into the stages of settlement: beginnings to 1840; 1840-1918; and 1918 to 1980.

Coeval with these national projects has been the development of the annual journal *Book History* (from 1998) and the thriving international scholarly forum, The Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing, created in 1991 to provide a global network for print historians, who up till then had often worked in isolation. SHARP now convenes an annual international conference and has more than 1,200 members in over 40 countries, including 'historians, literary scholars, librarians, sociologists, scholars and professionals working in publishing studies, classicists, bibliophiles, booksellers, art historians, reading instructors, and both university-based and independent scholars'. The SHARP website provides links to more than 80 'Book History Projects and Scholarly Societies' (<http://www.sharpweb.org/>). It's no coincidence that this moment should also have produced, in what is perhaps the nostalgic autumn of the Gutenberg era, a *Companion to the History of the Book* (eds Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, 2009), Alberto Manguel's loving celebration *The Library at Night* (2008) and histories of bibliocide like Fernando Baez's *A Universal History of the Destruction of Books: from Ancient Sumer to Modern Iraq* (2008), all universal in scope.

Apart from their obvious value as multi-disciplinary studies of the long-term and foundational centrality of print in Western cultures such collaborative and large-scale projects have had discernible effects within the academic ecosystem. They turn our attention back to considerations of exactly what book knowledge was, and in doing so have revived the circulation to some extremities of the scholarly humanities where the pulse was getting pretty low, like palaeography, textual editing, library history, bibliography and codicology. In Australia and New Zealand, for example, we have seen a new-look Bibliographical Society, with its refurbished journal *Script & Print*, conferences on important topics like the limits of the book in the digital age (July, 2009) and the cross-over popularity of exhibitions of incunabula and pre-modern books like ‘The Medieval Imagination: Illuminated manuscripts from Cambridge, Australia and New Zealand’ at the State Library of Victoria and ‘Script into Print’ at the University of Tasmania (both 2008). Talented postgraduates are being drawn to research projects, for example, in Australian library history and the inter-colonial book trade. In mid-2008 Melbourne was designated a UNESCO City of Literature and as Australia’s own bibliopolis is to build a Centre for Books, Writing and Ideas.

The Australian History of the Book project (HOBA) remains incomplete, at least in published form, with the first of its three volumes, ‘To 1890’, yet to appear, although eagerly anticipated. This volume will be interesting for how it represents the shift from colonial book paucity to ‘Australia’s role in the rise of the first, imperially networked mass reading public in the late Victorian period’. The two HOBA volumes published so far cover large historical spans: 1891 to 1945, and 1946 to the near present (2005)—from Nat Gould’s first bestseller, *The Double Event*, to the Second World War, and the post-war period into the twenty-first century. (Would 1888, the beginning of Angus & Robertson [A&R] as publisher have been a more logical point of division in the stages of Australian book history?) In each case, the format the editors have employed is a multi-authored collection of chapters and accompanying ‘Case-studies’ organised into larger sections, in volume 2 ‘Publishing and Printing’, ‘Bookshops and Libraries’, ‘Genres and their Place in the Market’, and ‘Reading’; and in *Paper Empires*, ‘The Rise of Publishing’, ‘Book Business’ and ‘Reading Readers’.

The tone for HOBA is set in Martyn Lyons’s introduction to the second volume where he begins with the story of Clive Bleeck, an employee of the New South Wales Railways who, over a lifetime of after-dinner typing, wrote 250 ‘novels or novelettes’: westerns, crime thrillers, romances and ‘space operas’ (xiii). Clive Bleeck, Lyons asserts, ‘is a healthy antidote to all those who confuse the history of literary production with famous novelists, literary prize-winners and a commemorative plaque at Sydney’s Circular Quay’ (xiii-xiv). Lyons is pretty firm about what HOBA isn’t, and it’s not a history of ‘big-ticket authors’ but the history of print culture. Such history might start out from figures like Bleeck and move towards the ‘ultimate destination of books—their readers’ (xvi), while literary history, subject to a nationalist agenda and the identification of the ‘uniquely Australian’, excludes him (xiv). The story this volume tells is rarely as black-and-white as this mission statement might suggest but it does set up an opposition between book and literary history, which is worth considering in terms of how the contemporary literary and cultural studies field is developing. Notwithstanding book history’s celebration of Bleeck’s productivity, his subjectivity as a writer, more’s the pity, is equally lost in print culture history as in traditional literary history. Nevertheless, the historical scenario this volume describes is clear: the predominance of the book imperium run from London—at the ‘end of the Second World War, little more than 15 percent of the books sold in Australia were of Australian origin’ (xviii)—and the various, resilient attempts to ‘shape a national literary culture’ (xix).

Richard Nile and David Walker's chapter, 'The "Paternoster Row Machine" and the Australian Book Trade, 1890-1945' (following Henry Lawson's characterisation of London's publishing headquarters) details the origins of the economic determiners of the book trade in this period—the Berne International Book Copyright Agreement of 1886 and the British booksellers' Net Book Agreement of 1900—that put in place the commercial and economic framework that would colonise Australian print culture for nearly a century. Other chapters tell the story of the huge book reading and buying market that Australia represented in this period and its importance to British publishers and Australian booksellers as a source of profit. There are plenty of facts and figures: John Arnold, for example, in his chapters about bookshops and retailing, printing technology and circulating libraries, is able to conjure relevant and revealing statistics out of the Sands & McDougall Post Office Directories, the Commonwealth Year Books, and other sources of bookselling history with practised ease. Deborah Adelaide's fascinating chapter about writers' incomes, from 1900, draws on published sources but also on considerable trawling through archival papers.

Nile and Walker's chapter is followed by Jennifer Alison's about Angus & Robertson, from its beginnings in the 1880s to 1945, drawing on the company's unpublished records and papers in the Mitchell Library. Thus, the contending elements of Australian book history are defined: economic imperialism by the British book trade (enhanced by local censorship control as Deana Heath demonstrates) and national cultural aspirations. The history of this icon of Australian publishing is followed by case studies of other ventures in native publishing: A. W. Jose and the *Australian Encyclopaedia*, David McKee Wright and the *Bulletin*, the *Bulletin* and the Communist Party as publishers, and so on. One of the most important historical shifts this volume documents is 'the gradual replacement of Australian wholesalers by local branches of British and (later) American publishers' (Arnold, 'Bookshops and Retailing' 127). This is causally related to the founding of the first Booksellers' Association in 1924, an important cultural and commercial organisation that will evolve throughout this period and into the next. The connections between both publishers and booksellers and the great collectors and bibliographers who will build the foundations of a national book culture are threaded throughout these studies: Sir John Ferguson was the son-in-law of A&R's founder George Robertson; David Scott Mitchell and William Dixson both had important personal connections to A&R's bookshop and to Tyrrell's.

Another important facet of book culture in this period is the growth of public libraries. Melbourne was the first colonial city to establish a public library, in 1853; presumably this fact was emphasised in that city's bid for a UNESCO City of Literature. It wasn't until 1869 that Sydney followed by opening what would become the State Library of New South Wales (Hobart 1870; South Australia 1884; Perth 1889; Queensland 1902). The importance of libraries to their communities is reflected, not just in the public pride of a state institution, but also in the flourishing—after the decades of establishment and before television—of other forms of lending libraries including the Mechanics' Institutes or Schools of Arts libraries, neighbourhood or local circulating libraries and workplace libraries, like those provided for employees by the Commonwealth Bank, the NSW Public Works Department, the NSW Railway Institute, retailers like Anthony Horderns and David Jones, as well as other companies and commercial organisations (Lyons, 'The Library in the Workplace' 176).

One of the revealing links between libraries and the reading practices of people is evident in the history of the bestseller in Australia. Mechanics' Institutes libraries, often funded municipally, were charged with the 'diffusion of useful and technical knowledge', but actually what their borrowers wanted was popular fiction—Nat Gould and Zane Grey, as the

perfectly accurate scene at the ‘Mullumbimby’ library in Lawrence’s *Kangaroo* illustrates (Bremer and Lyons, ‘Mechanics’ Institute Libraries’ 212). This would develop into a problem for the growth of a readership for serious works of Australian literature, at least in Nettie Palmer’s view. She noted in her diary in 1927 that despite the fact that Australians are big buyers of books and voracious readers ‘the truth is that our promiscuous reading public is not used to the deepest kind of reality in books about the background it knows’ (Nile and Walker, ‘The Mystery of the Missing Bestseller’ 241). The multi-authored format allows this volume to cover the range of indiscriminate popular reading by the Australian public that Palmer observed, with case studies of newspapers, journals, women’s magazines, non-fiction, text books, and children’s literature. In his essay at the beginning of the section on ‘Reading’, Patrick Buckridge makes the interesting point that it is the ‘permeability of Australia’s reading culture to overseas influences that makes it possible to plot’ the shifts in reading ‘norms’ (326). Buckridge observes a shift in the Australian reading public, over the 1930s and 40s, away from an idea of ‘serious reading’ with its origins in British book and reading culture towards an American model, whose pioneering advocate he sees as Walter Murdoch with his hundreds of ‘democratising’ newspaper columns about what to read and in his influence on the education system (330-31). Although they are mentioned briefly at various points, the school reader series and school newspapers in various states are underestimated, I think, in their influence on the formation of Australian readerships over the 50 years from 1890. Their important role on the operations of both literacy and the educational systems in various colonies and states, and even including their heritage format in the present, surely warranted a chapter or case study of its own.

Martin Lyons certainly recognises the important role played by children’s literature in the ‘Australianisation’ of the reading public (351). Lyons’s chapters about reading practices and about reading models and communities are outstanding examples of research and writing. They are underpinned by historical research into literary societies, reading circles, home reading unions, and the autobiographical writing of professional writers but they are also characterised by a perspicacious sense of the subjectivity of the reader in her historical circumstances. Hence the emphasis on the working class female reader, the interstitial female reader, the boringness of ‘self-improvement’ as opposed to the emancipatory value of autodidacticism (‘Reading Models and Reading Communities’ 382). There is also a notable subtlety about Lyons’s evocation of reading in this historical period and this is perhaps why he includes the various paintings of female readers by E. Phillips Fox and Grace Cossington-Smith’s 1919 painting ‘The Reader’, as emblems of the secret history of Australian reading and as a counter to the myth of a predominantly outdoors culture.

By the beginning of the third period of the HOBA, 1945, ‘print had lost its monopoly as both an information and an entertainment medium’ to radio and cinema (Lyons, ‘The Book Trade and the Australian Reader’ 407). Craig Munro and Robyn Sheahan-Bright’s volume tells the story of the growth of Australian publishing, the paperback revolution, the ‘advent of international publishing conglomerates’ and the invention of the internet (‘Introduction’ xi). Once again, trade and economic agreements are essential determiners of the history of the period: the ‘Statement of Terms’ between retailers and British book traders that fixed book prices in Australia changed as British publishers like ‘Longman, Collins and Harrap began setting up their own Australian stock-holding warehouses in Australia’ (Munro and Curtain, ‘After the War’ 5). Brigid Magner’s case study ‘Anglo-Australian Relations in the Book Trade’ details the story of Britain’s protection of what was its largest export market in Australia, since the late nineteenth century.

Just as the origins and rise of Angus & Robertson is the big story of Arnold and Lyons's volume, the saga of the A&R wars is an important thread in the *Paper Empires* volume. The takeover crises begin in the late 1950s, when A&R is the 'most powerful force in Australian bookselling and publishing', with the first incursion into the Old Firm's boardroom by Walter Vincent Burns quickly followed by the commercial gorilla, Sir Frank Packer. This fight, masterminded on the anti-Burns/Packer side by the academic scrapper, Colin Roderick, and supported by a group of A&R authors including Kenneth Slessor, Ruth Park, and Dame Mary Gilmore ends in temporary victory against the corporate predators (Munro and Curtain 13-17). Until Gordon Barton, that is, in the 1970s. Along the way there are case studies of Cheshires, Frank Eyre and Oxford University Press Australia, Lloyd O'Neil and Lansdowne Press, Rigby, Sun Books, and of the Ure Smith/*They're a Weird Mob* phenomenon. Frank Thompson sees the runaway success of John O'Grady's *They're a Weird Mob*—first published in 1957 with 300,000 copies sold in the first three years plus Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's 1966 film version—as marking 'the beginning of the modern era in Australian book publishing' ('Sixties Larrikins' 33). Thanks to David Carter's anatomy of the publishing success of O'Grady's novel, narrated by the fictional Italian migrant 'Nino Culotta', we can now recognise that this was more than just a local bestseller. It was obviously a comedy of assimilation that responded to the fact that within a few decades two-thirds of all Australians would be post-World War II immigrants and helped to shape the attitudes of Australians to post-war European migration, and it did this on the ground of vernacular Australian language and manners.

In the early 1970s, both the economic and cultural landscapes shift again. As the publishers' and booksellers' commitment to the 'Terms of Agreement' dissolves, many energetic, local publishing ventures arise (UQP, Outback, Currency, Fremantle Arts Centre), the Australian Independent Publishers Association is formed (1975) and A&R is asset-stripped and reshaped by Gordon Barton and Richard Walsh. This period, immediately preceding the globalisation of Australian publishing, has the glow of a golden age about it partly because this volume is narrated predominantly by players in the Australian publishing industry who are taking a backward glance at both a moment of cultural energy as well as their own youth: 'Outback Press was founded in Melbourne in 1973 with a gusto difficult to imagine today' (Morry Schwartz, 'Inner-urban and Outback' 63). Robert Sessions's 'Thirty Years On', Louise Poland's 'Allen & Unwin', Tony Wheeler's 'Lonely Planet', and Diana Gribble's 'McPhee Gribble' tell similar stories. The frequently anecdotal element in these accounts needs to be checked against Katherine Bode's quantitative analysis that indicates, at least in the case of fiction, that the period between 1960 and 1979 was a 'time of decline, rather than growth' in local publishing (see 'Beyond the Colonial Present: Quantitative Analysis, "Resourceful Reading" and Australian Literary Studies' *JASAL* Special Issue 2008, 187). Also, the legendary quality of this era in Australian book history should have acknowledged Michael Wilding's percipient understanding of the economics of Australian publishing by someone who, in the 1980s golden age, was a participant, as writer, critic and publisher (see for example his numerous articles about Australian publishing, including 'Small Presses and Little Magazines in 1970s', *Australian Literary Studies* 9.4 [October, 1980]). Whatever, the big story of this volume is about how the 'fledgling post-war publishing industry' [A&R, Ure Smith, Cheshire, etc.], that was once 'almost exclusively Australian owned and controlled' and that had its finest years in the outburst of independent and proudly Australian publishing in the 1970s and 80s, was assimilated by globalisation (Craig Munro, '2001 Publishing Report Card' 86).

This shift is complete by the time of the JIS, or *Book Production in Australia: A Joint Industry Study*, of 2001, the ‘most thorough analysis of the book publishing industry ever undertaken’ (Craig Munro, ‘2001 Publishing Report Card’ 85). And the most tangible sign of the new world publishing order is the advent of Nielsen BookScan, the computerised sales monitoring system, in 2002. From here on, the history of the book is imported into the economic, technological and cultural present of globalised media conglomerates. It sounds mind-numbing but Simone Murray’s description of the shift from the old paradigm of a market-differentiated book, as the predominant and discrete material object of publishing and reading, to a multinationally networked, screen-dominated ‘content streaming’ pinpoints the moment:

Capitalising on Western governments’ deregulatory economic policies during the period [the 1990s], a handful of globalised media players emerged with the structural capacity and managerial will to incubate and promote high-budget content franchises across all corporate subdivisions. (‘Content Streaming’ 127)

From here on, the fate of the book is inextricably bound to an increasingly digitised and mediatised mode of production dominated by the giant, northern-hemisphere-based conglomerates of Bertelsmann, News Corporation, von Holtzbrink, and Pearson. At the time of writing, there is considerable anxiety within the Australian publishing and writing community about the likely dismantling of local copyright—the last defence, it seems, of Australia’s independent and locally controlled book culture. The federal Productivity Commission has been asked to report by May 2009 on the current provisions of the Copyright Act 1968 (the ‘Copyright Act’) that restrict the parallel importation of books from the US, Europe and the UK. Authors, publishers and agents are united in their opposition to the abolition or minimization of local copyright but it is unclear whether this stance against the encroachment of globalization will be successful (see ‘Australians for Australian Books’ at <http://www.ausbooks.com.au/category.php?id=7>).

On the other hand, book-types may not need to feel as belated about Simone Murray’s scenario as they might. One of the noticeable lacuna in the HOBA project so far is a recognition of the way in which books in the past weren’t as culturally and economically discrete as we might assume. Philip Waller’s history of early twentieth-century networks of books, cinema, stage production, and the economics of copyright and authorship—like Arnold Bennett’s novel *Buried Alive* (1908), followed by the play *The Great Adventurer* (1913) and then film of the same title (1915) or Baroness Orczy’s novel, play and film *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (1905) or Hardy’s sale of the film rights for *Far From the Madding Crowd*, for example—is worth recalling before we get too outraged about the depredations of contemporary ‘content streaming’ (see *Writers, Readers, and Reputations: Literary Life in Britain 1870-1918*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006: 8-10). In that sense, Australian book history, in constituting itself in opposition to bad old literary history, might need to be wary of narrowing itself too much as a branch of cultural history. Chapters on, or case studies of, Dennis’s *Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* (poetry, cinema, stage and television versions), Clarke’s *His Natural Life* (serial, book, illustrated book, cinema, stage, and television versions) and the many adaptations, post-1945, of books to other media might be seen within the kind of precursive history Waller suggests (‘Back to the Future’ is his chapter title). Another curious blind-spot in the HOBA project so far is any account of historical bibliography; for example, there are brief mentions, but no sustained histories of ‘national’ bibliographers like Ferguson, Petherick or Morris Miller.

But there is much of interest in this volume: chapters and case studies on writers' organisations and centres, the growth of Indigenous publishing, literary festivals and prizes, the National Book Council, the history of state patronage of writers and government industry support in the post-war period (Stuart Glover, 'Literature and the State'), editing, design and book production including 'Commissioning' by Diane Brown, 'Editing Indigenous Writing' by Josie Douglas and Robyn Sheahan-Bright, and case studies of individual books like Drusilla Modjeska's *The Orchard* (Kath McLean) and Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang* (Paul Eggert). Given the experience and professional positions of the editors, it's no surprise that the chapters on the book trade are by significant and knowledgeable figures in the recent history of Australian bookselling like Michael Zifcak (Collins, National Book Council) and Terry Herbert (Bookworld). These participant accounts sit alongside more academic studies like Robyn Sheahan-Bright's 'For Children and Young Adults', Ingrid Day's sociological survey of adult reading practices, 'Romancing the Reader', and David Carter and Roger Osborne's detailed survey and analysis of periodicals in the post-war period. This chapter usefully reminds the reader about the brief moments of Flexmore Hudson's *Poetry* and Helen Palmer's *Outlook* if they want to go hunting for them in libraries, although they overlook *Hemisphere*. The comprehensiveness of the volume's overview of print culture is underscored by the chapter on the less glamorous topic of 'Education and Reference Publishing', with its string of case studies about curriculum materials, university presses, dictionaries and style guides, and government publishing.

As with the Lyons and Arnold volume, *Paper Empires* concludes with a section about readers and reading; once again, Patrick Buckridge offers the overview. Buckridge notices the way in which reading has reinvented itself and readers redefined themselves outside higher education in recent decades but still according to the ideology of 'good reading', practices of private identification, and communal forms of readerly connection like 'book clubs, reading groups and writers' festivals' ('Readers and Reading' 348). The connection between the Chicago-based Great Books Foundation, the Britannica Great Books of the Western World franchise and the *Women's Weekly* is a 1950s and '60s version of the blend of useful and improving knowledge institutionalised in the Arts and Mechanics' libraries of the '20s and '30s (see Buckridge, 'The *Women's Weekly* and "Good Reading"' 367). In this sense, the history of reading may be more cyclical, Buckridge argues, than book history with its linear progression through sequential economic and industry paradigms. Perhaps this model doesn't take account of what many would see as fundamental structural changes to reading practice and reading experience currently presented by screen culture, including digitised books, SMS messages, and Kindles. *Paper Empires* also has less emphasis overall on libraries and their role in book history than does the Lyons and Arnold volume, although it does conclude with two important case studies of public libraries by Alan Bundy and Catherine Harboe-Ree (on the National and State libraries systems). All the same, I suspect that scholars of library and information history would be surprised at the small amount of space given to libraries as institutions of the book in this volume. A random list of aspects of book history where it intersects with libraries that aren't covered in HOBA includes legal deposit, theory and practice of knowledge organisation, book conservation, digitisation, curatorship, social memory, the psychopathology of collecting.

Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing is not part of the HOBA project, but it shares a number of authors, overlapping coverage (feminist and Indigenous publishing, Text) and methodologies with that project, and has the same publisher, UQP. The emphasis in this volume, though, falls on the publishing *industry* since 1990, on the making of books rather than the book as cultural artefact, cognate with the cultural, entertainment and leisure

industries: ‘industry dynamics’, ‘the industry and new technologies’ (including ex-D. W. Thorpe MD, Michael Webster’s first-hand account of the development and introduction of BookScan UK/BookTrack/Nielsen BookScan), ‘industry sectors and genre publishing’ as its sections are titled. And like the HOBA volumes, *Making Books* has kindred relations to studies of publishing as commerce in other national contexts, like James Raven’s *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade, 1450-1850* (2007) that begins, as it happens, from the historical hub of Paternoster Row.

The editors position their collection as part of the growing interest in cultural history approaches to print and publishing studies (including HOBA) but that currently lag behind research and analysis of ‘non-print areas of the media and entertainment industries’ (1), and in relation to a sense of crisis in Australian publishing, ‘especially in the “culturally valuable” forms of publishing—poetry, literary fiction and serious non-fiction’ (3). For recent, local perspectives on the related, global crisis called the death of the book, see Emmy Hemmings, ‘Shares and Share Alike’, and Jenny Lee, ‘The Trouble with Books’ in *Overland* 190 (Autumn 2008) and David Carter’s review of Sherman Young’s *The Book is Dead (Long Live the Book)* (*Australian Humanities Review* 44, March 2008). The brief of Carter and Galligan’s contributors was to take more of a critical and evaluative overview of recent and contemporary publishing in Australia, the effects of new technology and ‘specific industry sectors and/or publishing genres’ (10) and, like the HOBA project, these contributors are a mixture of industry participants and experts (Michael Webster, Robin Derricourt, Nick Walker) and academic researchers and analysts. Anne Galligan usefully addresses the tensions in the fact of a *cultural industry* like publishing where complex sets of cultural values meet the economics of production and distribution, and where paradigms of the ‘knowledge industry’ and the ‘content market’ contend (‘The Culture of the Publishing House,’ 34, 44).

Curiously, the underestimation of the importance of libraries in relation to the publishing industry, broadly defined, persists. As Stuart Glover points out in a passing reference in his chapter, ‘Publishing and the State’, ‘[f]ederal and state government spending on libraries constitutes the third largest category of cultural spending (after broadcasting and national parks)’ (92) and that’s not including university library spending. It does raise the question of the relations between libraries as powerful institutions of the book and print, and publishing, two cultural sectors with at least one important common object, the book. While the focus of Carter and Galligan’s collection is on the ‘sustained research and scholarly analysis’ of the publishing industry in ‘contemporary’ Australia, exhibitions such as the State Library of Victoria’s *The Independent Type: Books and Writing in Victoria* (2009) suggest that libraries may also tell the story of publishing in ways that institutions of social memory do (1).

In her opening chapter, ‘Exploiting the Imprint’, Jenny Lee extends Simone Murray’s analysis from *Paper Empires* of the predominance, within the global conglomerate world, of ‘content’ and thus the ways in which books can be ‘parlayed into multi-format media phenomena’ and ‘strong coteries of fans can be recycled through a vast range of media’ (*Lord of the Rings*, Harry Potter, *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*) (21). The crisis Carter and Galligan refer to in their introduction is specified in Lee’s identification of the casualties of this unforgiving market restructure, ‘mid-list authors, particularly those of a literary bent, and scholarly writers and publishers’ (25). Here Lee makes an important point and one that resonates back over the history of Australian publishing since its beginnings in the 1880s:

Yet for the spasms of paranoia to which it is prone, the Australian publishing industry has risen to the challenge of this increasingly difficult environment. Paradoxically, the push towards globalisation has been accompanied by a steady increase in the popularity of locally published works. In 1970, local titles accounted for barely 10 per cent of Australian book sales; by 1989 their share had risen to 48.6 per cent, and in 2002-03 it was 64 per cent. [...] Book exports have also increased (27-28)

And this trend has been confirmed since Lee's data of the mid-2000s. This is a remarkable aspect of contemporary publishing in Australia: that the globalisation and conglomeratisation of the book industry, including crucially the 1991 amendments to the *Copyright Act*, have actually encouraged growth and provided opportunities for medium to small Australian publishers. In 2009 the 'market share of Australian-originated books has increased to the point where they now hold 60 per cent of the [book] market' (Mark Davis, 'Literature, Small Publishers and the Market in Culture' *Overland* 190 [Autumn 2008]: 6). David Carter's analysis of this overall picture of Australian publishing from the viewpoint of 'fiction'—a broader category than 'literary fiction'—reveals that, in terms of book sales, in '2003-04 fiction represented 18 per cent of non-educational titles and 10 per cent of all Australian printed books sold [...] a small but significant proportion of *total* books publishing and sales of Australian titles in Australia' (234). If one excludes educational publishing sales from these figures, then the percentage of fiction sold is much higher (36.7). Carter's chapter also includes data about sales of 'Literary novels as a proportion of total novels, 1990-2006', that doesn't conclusively support the sense of a crisis in literary publishing. Bronwyn Lea's data, though, points clearly to a halving, by 2006, of traditional poetry volume publishing by twelve medium-sized and independent publishers since the boom years 1993-1999 (250). But this is one genre where, as Lea recognises, the uptake of new media outlets for publication has been enthusiastic and innovative and it probably remains true that 'Australia enjoys a much larger readership [of poetry] in proportion to population than in most Western countries' (see 251).

Making Books positions itself as a cultural history of the present and recent past and as such it provides an impressive range of industry analysis, cultural diagnostics, and data presentation. There is even a glossary of publishing terms. It will be of interest and use to all readers and scholars in the field of cultural studies, and also to members of the writing programs and communications and publishing teaching-research communities. The collection is also of special interest to the literary studies community because of its address to the 'crisis' in Australian and culturally valuable publishing. This address includes the empirical analysis of literary publishing data, as in the Carter and Lea chapters, through to more wide-angle arguments like Mark Davis's about the 'decline of the literary paradigm' and Richard Flanagan's passionate defence of a sustainable national book industry against 'market Stalinism' (147). It is also a significant contribution to the disciplinary evolution of the humanities in Australia providing, as it does, a socio-economic and methodological context for knowledge about industry history, cultural policy, literary education and print technologies.

Part of the interest for anyone in the field of literary studies in Australia, and this goes for the HOBA volumes as well, is that this expert publishing and book history is no doubt changing the way we think about literary studies in the present, including literary history. Going back to Martyn Lyons's point about book as opposed to literary history: whatever the limitations of individual instances of literary history in Australia in recent decades, the significant degree of

theorising about literary history that has been going on within literary studies in its Anglo-American manifestation for decades now means that hardly anyone is likely to think about literary history in the way Lyons suggests they do. There are, for example, many important recent instances of literary history that are responses to innovative and even experimental thinking about what is possible within the genre (see *New Literary History* 39.3 [Summer 2008] about literary history and globalisation for example). But there's no doubt that these volumes alter the field irreversibly. An effect of book history on literary history is no doubt discernible in Robert Crawford's 2007 Penguin history of Scottish literature for example, which is titled *Scotland's Books*. It begins with a perspective on Burns and Scott that is unthinkable without recent book history. And a number of chapters in the HOBA and Carter-Galligan collections could easily have appeared in a contemporary literary history—Jennifer Alison's chapter on Angus & Robertson, Diane Brown and Susan Hawthorne's 'Feminist Publishing' and Sonia Mycak's 'Multicultural Literature' for example. As literary studies in Australia shifts to encompass and learn from these instances of biblio-cultural history our knowledge of the social and economic filiations of literature expands beyond the interpretative, the canonical and the private, but recursively, such that how we read literature and what we understand by it are also changed.

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