

The Australian ‘Settler’ Colonial-Collective Problem

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Abstract

This studio-based project identifies and interrogates the Australian denial of violent national foundation as a ‘settler’ problem, which is framed by the contemporary clinical and social concept of a ‘vicious cycle of anxiety’. The body of work I have produced aims to disrupt the denial of invasion and the erasure of Aboriginal culture through accepted narratives of European settlement of Australia. By aligning collective denial with anxiety, it presents a pathway for remediation through situational exposure; in this case, through works of art. The critical perspective on the invasion and colonisation of Australia is presented in the discursive and non-discursive modes of communication of the coloniser not to arbitrate or appease but to amplify the content. The structure of the exegesis also draws from Aboriginal narrative methodology and integrates with, and is informed by, the studio production in printmaking using demanding traditional European graphic techniques such as etching and aquatint.

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Introduction

Captain Cook gives,
And Captain Cook receives,
Captain Cook leaves his mark upon our trees,
All along our coasts, thieving turtles, shooting guns,
Raising flags in the sun.
And so...
By decree and degrees,
Captain Cook steals everything he sees.¹

Two hundred and forty-seven years ago, Captain James Cook declared, in something very much like the language I now write in, that King George III's baleful imperial eye had fixed upon that 'great southern land', the antipodes, *terra incognita*, *terra Australis*, today called Australia. Upon what is now known as Possession Island, Cook performed the period- and culturally specific symbolic rites of land seizure: a speech was made, rum was swilled, and guns were fired. Due to a philosophy based on Emmerich de Vattel's writings, particularly *The Law of Nations*,² my ancestors' land tenure was denied via specious, selectively inaccurate interpretations of our culture, land use, and land transference. Paradoxically, Cook theoretically subjugated my ancestors to a foreign monarch and emperor while simultaneously ostensibly denying their very existence. 'New South Wales' was metaphorically emptied; my ancestors—considered only animals after all—were not regarded as being civilised enough to own the land that had been their home for 40 thousand-odd years. Patrick Wolfe writes of the economic importance of land, of its ownership in relation to colonial 'settler' national constructs and their access to wealth, profit, and prosperity.³ Land was wealth at the centre and on the periphery of empire.

¹ David Jones, unpublished poetry, 2014.

² Emmerich de Vattel, *The Law of Nations or the Principles of Natural Law* (1758), ed. Joseph Chitty (Philadelphia: T. & J. W. Johnson, 1844), accessed 12 May 2017, www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/Lieber_Collection/.../DeVattel_LawOfNations.pdf

³ Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 (2006): 4.

My father, John Lee Dalungdalee Jones, had a long history of legal engagement with governments from the days of Patrick Killoran, Departmental Head of Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, under Sir Johannes ‘Joh’ Bjelke-Petersen, KCMG’s premiership, up until the days of Wayne Goss, and beyond. My father ended his days attempting to claim our lands through common law as opposed to Native Title, which he had issues with. Around twenty years of legal argument ended with him. My family is now included in the Butchulla Land and Seas Native Title Claim (QUD289/2009 Butchulla People #2 and QUD288/2009 Butchulla People Land & Sea Claim #2) (figure 1).

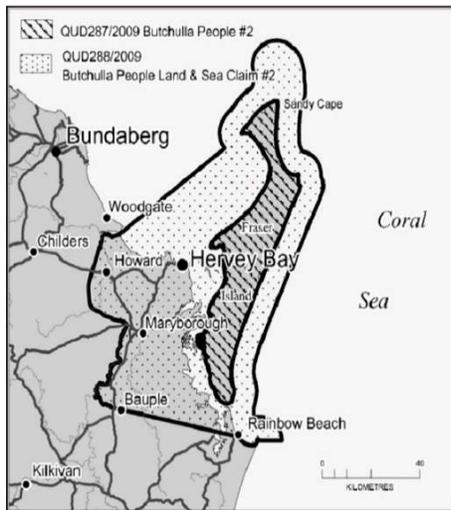


Figure 1 Butchulla Land and Seas Native Title Claim



Figure 2 Wanggoolba Creek, Fraser Island, Mary Anne Dalungdalee’s birthplace

Therefore, my Indigenous heritage is my Dalungbarra heritage, identity, that traces through my father, my grandmother, and her mother. My great-great-grandmother was known as Mary Anne Dalungdalee, who was born near Wanggoolba Creek on K’gari (Fraser Island), probably close to the time that our lands were being consumed by the advancing colonial frontier, around the early 1800s. As Maryborough was coming into being, Mary Anne was tribally married to John Rooney, one of two brothers who built the Sandy Cape lighthouse.

Unable to follow my father's path into law, I have used my art practice as a vehicle through which to critique institutionalised and everyday racism in Australia. My Butchulla, Dalungbarra, and more particularly Dalungdalee heritage informs the process and work in this DVA project as it is the resolve that drives all my visual practice.

In this doctoral project, I engage with the particular problem that Kevin Gilbert wrote of in *Because a White Man'll Never Do It*: the 'sickness' of 'settler' Australian society. Gilbert states, "Remember that the Aborigine's sickness has been forced upon him. Yours you not only tolerate, but [is] structured into the very fibres of your society."⁴

All the work exhibited during this project interrogates, to different degrees, the key symptom of the societal sickness mentioned above: the denial or refusal of Australia's violent foundation. Having identified the contemporary clinical and social concept of "The Vicious Cycle of Anxiety",⁵ I have chosen to apply it as a framework through which to research the national denial cycle in Australia. The 'problem', as I will present it, is that societal denial of the very violent nature of Australian national foundation, the normalisation of a denial cycle using revisionary practices, has resulted in a limited or compromised idea of self or, in this case, national identity. This denial inhibits any social change or progress to a farce, where Australian national identity and society moves with each cycle of denial and revision into a state more and more dissociated from reality.

⁴ Kevin Gilbert, *Because a White Man'll Never Do It* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1994), 11.

⁵ Centre for Clinical Interventions, "The Vicious Cycle of Anxiety," accessed 9 May 2017, <http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/resources/docs/Info-Vicious%20Cycle%20of%20Anxiety.pdf>.

In the title of this project, the word *Settler* is used within scare quotes to stress the ambiguity this term has for me (and I have used them throughout). *Settlement* is a passive, calm word used to hide the very violent nature of colonising. The phrase *Colonial-Collective* is borrowed from Lorenzo Veracini's 2008 journal article, "Settler Collective, Founding Violence and Disavowal: The Settler Colonial Situation".⁶ The *Problem* in the title refers to the 'settler' Australians' denial of founding and ongoing physical and mental violence perpetrated in order to maintain their nation state. The title could also imply there is a 'collective problem', a shared denial or disavowal across time, society, and culture. It thus succinctly reverses an oft-used term, 'the Aboriginal problem', allowing a reversal of the gaze, if you will, where attention is turned to the 'settler' politic, its problem with accepting Indigenous peoples' rights and privileges, history and memory, identity and law, and, most importantly, prior ownership of land. This leads me to the research question:

Can visual art scholarship disrupt an Australian 'settler' colonial-collective denial of violent national foundation?

In this question, *visual art scholarship* refers to the method of approach to, and eventual delivery of, the inquiry for public interpretation. This studio-based research project has involved academic research informing art production, and vice versa. Appropriation, translation, or substitution and subversion of text and image comprise the main methods of art production. Though relying on black humour and aesthetic seduction to begin with, the work's gravity of the experience should intensify upon the apprehension of its whole. My theoretical response to the topic was by way of

⁶ Lorenzo Veracini, "Settler Collective, Founding Violence and Disavowal: The Settler Colonial Situation," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 29, no. 4 (2008): 363–79.

a qualitative methodological approach, situated in the domain of critical social science, written from a personal political perspective. To relate my visual ideas in a verbal context, and to support the theatrical nature of elements in the exhibition, a certain amount of expositional and descriptive writing leaked in. The developing parallel narrative also fed into my studio work. My intention was to tell a story, to present a “personal perspective of history that may play to the objectives of the project”.⁷

Early textual inspiration was derived from Veracini’s aforementioned essay; Eric Willmot’s book *Pemulwuy: The Rainbow Warrior*⁸ and Franz Kafka’s essay “In the Penal Colony”⁹ also proved invaluable for both writing and art; while Irene Watson’s article “In the Northern Territory Intervention: What Is Saved or Rescued and at What Cost?” introduced me to ‘re-affirmations’ among a range of theoretical concerns.¹⁰

Many of my practicing visual art exemplars can be found in the Queensland collective of artists, proppaNOW—Vernon Ah Kee, Tony Albert, Richard Bell, Jennifer Herd, Gordon Hookey, Laurie Nilsen, Megan Cope and Bianca Beetson—who contribute to, and support in practice, living and progressive Australian Indigenous cultures. My visual canon continues with Judy Watson, Ryan Presley, Dani Mellor, Michael Cook, and, further afield, Kara Walker, Nick Cave, and Betye Sarr.

⁷ Judy Watson, discussion with the author in her capacity as Associate Supervisor, Brisbane, June 2015. Christine Black also talks of how narrative methodology may be effectively utilised; see her “Maturing Australia through Australian Aboriginal Narrative Law,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 110, no. 2 (2011): 347–362.

⁸ Eric Willmot, *Pemulwuy: The Rainbow Warrior* (Sydney: Bantam, 1988).

⁹ Franz Kafka, “In the Penal Colony,” *The Transformation ('Metamorphosis') and Other Stories*, trans. Malcolm Pasley (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 127–53.

¹⁰ Irene Watson, “In the Northern Territory Intervention: What Is Saved or Rescued and at What Cost?,” *Cultural Studies Review* 15, no. 2 (2009): 45–60.

Having introduced my theoretical and visual influences, I will now briefly outline the structure of the exegesis. Chapter 1: Trauma Induced Colony uses a “version of history from a personal and cultural perspective” to compile a case background of the Australian ‘settler’ colonial-collective.¹¹ Chapter 2: Anxiety Breeds Contempt concentrates on the proposed vicious cycle of ‘denial’, the maintenance of which dooms Australian ‘settler’ culture to a meaningless state,¹² unable to effectively reflect on its actions. Chapter 3: Takeaway Therapy outlines the strategies suggested by psychological theory designed for reversing the vicious cycle of anxiety, and contextualises these in relation to the visual scholarship.

As I relate to both the coloniser and the colonised, I feel this project can contribute towards a dialogue about institutionalised and political racism in contemporary Australian society, and pose questions as to the legitimacy of its continuance. The following exegesis essentially contains the theoretical workings and textual research related to the visual scholarship, a record of the research that motivated my art production and reflections on that material, the schema or framework by which I’ve approached the project. Importantly, the writing does not specifically ‘explain’ the various works of art reproduced as they each in turn do not directly illustrate the text but form part of presenting a total experience of witnessing the colonial enterprise, to deepen the understanding of an alternative and less anxious reading.

¹¹ Watson, discussion with the author, June 2015.

¹² Discussed in John Healy, *Literature and the Aborigine in Australia, 1770-1975* (St. Lucia, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1979).

Prelude

Some of my forebears lived in that place Captain Cook wrote of in his log.¹³ My people were some of those who followed his progress past Gillarae¹⁴ and K'gari.¹⁵ As he watched them, they watched him, and wondered about the HMS *Endeavour* too. The event of Cook's passing was discussed, and a yauar warrai, or 'corroboree', was made by the yauar nuva (song maker). My great-great-grandmother could easily have been in the audience when the yauar was performed at the place of crows, or Wa Wa.¹⁶ And upon that now distant starry night, coalesced of woven word, the story of that strange event would have been related:

Gavrin woondulla yarneen areeram?
Anyon gane wein kum ya yeelong?
Oonda woonyamba dahla thoorringba gaveer barine?
Mumo gumbling bunder vuree oor thaane munya,
Yooiin mumo gumber bilung unda,
Tickera thunda kungmungaleen moonya.

[Where are these strangers going?
Where are they trying to steer?
They go to that place Thoovovr, can you believe that?
See the smoke (foam) of the waves as they crash,
They bury themselves like crabs in the sand,
They disappear over the horizon like clouds.]¹⁷

In his journal, Cook mentions the "Indians", the "natives", and accordingly "names" this place of encounter "Indian Head".¹⁸ As the yauar states, Cook proceeds beyond Thoorvoor, disappearing into the place of rainbow water.¹⁹ Eight years passed, and then Pemulwuy²⁰ watched as the birth

¹³ A. W. Reed, ed. *Captain Cook in Australia: The Journals of Captain James Cook* (Sydney: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1969).

¹⁴ Headland near Teewah, now known as Rainbow Beach, Queensland, Australia.

¹⁵ Now known as Fraser Island, although the national park on the island has recently been renamed Kgari, which means paradise in Butchulla language.

¹⁶ Wa Wa was a gathering place and known as a place of crows by my Dalungbarra ancestors.

¹⁷ This was a yauar or corroboree my father was ever keen to perform. Found in Robin A. Wells, *In the Tracks of a Rainbow: Indigenous Culture and Legends of the Sunshine Coast* (Queensland: Gullirae Books, 2003), 1.

¹⁸ Reed, *Captain Cook in Australia*, 59.

¹⁹ A dangerous sand shoal off the K'gari (Fraser Island) coast.

²⁰ The spelling of this Indigenous hero's name is taken from Willmot, *Pemulwuy: The Rainbow Warrior*.

of Port Jackson took place, how it grew. And as he saw the glint of Leviathan's²¹ cold and rheumy colonial eye, he struck swiftly, and, so nearly did the followers of the crow come to vanquishing that terrible monster (figure 3). Yet it grew across their plains, cast its shadow into their worlds, and the Killing Time began. Replication followed, a division, and then there were three: Port Jackson, Port Arthur, and the Moreton Bay penal settlements. The question of *where those strangers were going* was answered by the early 1800s, as stories of invasion, war and massacre sped along the song-lines.



Figure 3 David Jones *Flight of the One-Eyed Crow* (2016)

And then they came. How disturbing for the Dalungdalee²² it must have been to watch methari (spirits) return to the world, white wraiths such as Durrumboi or James Davis, flitting along the

²¹ Leviathan as described by Thomas Hobbes in his book of the same name: “For by Art is created that great LEVIATHAN called a COMMON-WEALTH, or STATE, (in latine CIVITAS) which is but an Artificiall Man; though of greater stature and strength than the Naturall,” sourced from “Leviathan, by Thomas Hobbs,” Project Gutenberg, last modified 29 January 2013, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3207/3207-h/3207-h.htm#link2H_4_0001.

²² Author's family group belonging to the Dalungbarra people.

shoreline along Teerwah.²³ Though it was quickly evident that these newcomers were no ghostly spirits, on their mortal backs they carried all manner of daemon, to grow and thrive in the dawning light of nation: greed and avarice, violence and hate, bigotry and hypocrisy, to name only a few of those malevolent homunculi. Defiance shown by my forebears was ever derided by laughing, leering, crouched gargoyles, national white stone warders built of racial theory, perched in the eaves of that grand national construct: Australia. The sibling arch-daemons, repression and revision, malingering in the shadows of the national façade, haunt the half-light halls of state, and writhe betwixt the words of law and its purpose. These violent guardians of the Australian nation have pedigree, and are born of the violent actions of those first free and freed ‘settlers’, which are reborn of each inaction today.

²³ Now known as Rainbow Beach, Queensland, Australia.

Chapter 1: Trauma-Induced Colony

Pauper prisoner, soldier sailor!
Pioneer invader, settler gaoler!
*This is Australia!*²⁴

Characteristics and behavioural patterns for ‘settler’ Australian society were established well before the birth of New South Wales. Those who arrived on these shores, though cast to the extremities of their civilisation, were nevertheless products or by-products of their Georgian nurture. A case study of the ‘subject’ is in order. The subject in this case is a colonial-collective, the Australian ‘settler’ society, a collective of national patriots who sustain an imagined national persona and claim to *djaa*.²⁵ As such, a very brief histrionic prelude to the Australian state and national identity follows.

For Indigenous peoples, the catastrophic cascade of events that led to eleven British vessels appearing off the coast of Eora lands²⁶ during January 1788 foredoomed the methodology underpinning the genocide applied to Indigenous peoples. If not for American independence, “a rage of pseudo-scientific curiosity”,²⁷ industrialisation, social reconstruction and cleansing, empire building, individual aggrandisement and many more Western political, economic imperatives, the bewigged elders of Britain may never have considered placing a penal colony at the other end of ‘their’ world. However, so it was, and Australia is ‘here’ today. I will begin with a convict litany of sorts with which to draw out precedents for ‘pioneer-convict’ colonial behaviour towards Indigenous peoples—behavioural benchmarks to which the invader ‘settler’

²⁴ David Jones, unpublished poetry, 2015.

²⁵ The Butchulla word for ‘here’.

²⁶ ‘Eora’ simply means ‘here’, see <http://www.sydneybarani.com.au/sites/aboriginal-people-and-place/>.

²⁷ See Richard Neville, *A Rage of Curiosity: Visualising Australia 1788-1830* (Sydney: State Library of New South Wales Press, 2000).

measured their strategy.

Dispossession, dislocation and concentration...

All across Georgian England and Great Britain, stone walls and hedges were thrown up. The *Enclosure Acts* (1604–1801)²⁸ forced dispossession and dislocation upon customary tenant farmers, un-landed villagers, and those ‘afflicted’ with poverty.²⁹ Millions of souls flooded the hedgerows and highways that wended their way between the patchwork of lands now forbidden them. They flowed toward the cities that grew large on their socio-cultural horizon, pouring into those crowded and polluted cauldrons of humanity. Each city was a turbulent and violent confluence of the disparate and the avaricious, the powerful and poor.

Transgression and punishment...

Great and noxious cities grew in the new age smog, a miasma of mechanical breath and fume. Urban populations swelled despite the appalling death rates of factory workers and paupers alike. In this ferment, this social geographic compression of the very poor with the very rich, ‘The Bloody Code’ took hold.³⁰ Upper-class Georgian fears of the ‘afflicted’ poor, and for their property, condensed into over 180 new hangable offences between 1723 and 1820.³¹ The greater majority of these new statutes were property offences.³² A self-imposed class cleansing had begun: the British judiciary was seconded to proceed with the punishment and severance of those

²⁸ British Government, “Inclosure Act 1773,” The National Archives, last modified August 27, 2015, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/apgb/Geo3/13/81/contents>. The original spelling of *enclosure* was *inclosure*.

²⁹ Simon Fairlie, “A Short History of Enclosure in Britain,” *The Land*, iss. 7 (Summer 2009), accessed 9 May 2017, <http://www.thelandmagazine.org.uk/articles/short-history-enclosure-britain>.

³⁰ Harriet Evans, “The Bloody Code,” *The Manchester Review of Law, Crime and Ethics* 2, December (2013), accessed 9 May 2017, [http://hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/schools/law/main/research/MSLR_Vol2_3\(Evans\).pdf](http://hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/schools/law/main/research/MSLR_Vol2_3(Evans).pdf).

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

afflicted with the sins of poverty and landless birth. Sentences were oft commuted to transportation, first to the American colonies and then Australia.

Transportation...

Out on the Thames, evidence of society's ague grew daily and worse. Great hulks of once fine vessels disintegrated into the open sewer of London, loaded with their chained and condemned cargo.³³ For, suddenly enough, America had achieved the inconceivable—independence—and thus began refusing Briton's convicted problems.³⁴ Enter the 'father' of the Australian colonies, Sir Joseph Banks,³⁵ who made his recommendations to his British peers. With Captain Cook, Banks and James Matra had been 'there'—to the end of the world that is—and were thus assured of its existence. Therefore, thousands of those evicted from 'civil' society could now be punted off the docks at Portsmouth, away to the end of 'their' world.³⁶

Detention, sometimes execution...

For those being transported, mostly a one-way journey of privation into a vast unknown lay ahead of them. They had been cast out, and would be dragged in chains around the Cape of Good Hope, only to watch it diminish forever. Those transgressors were swept away by the Roaring Forties as far away from their beginnings as could be. Governor, sailors, convicts, and marines, minus little more than a score of individuals, landed safely if sore upon the edge of 'their' world,

³³ A. Roger Ekirch, "Great Britain's Secret Convict Trade to America, 1783-1784," *The American Historical Review* 89, no. 5 (1984): 1285–291. doi:10.2307/1867044.

³⁴ Andrew Tink, "The Role of Parliamentary Committee Witnesses in the Foundation of Australia" (After dinner address to annual meeting of the ASPG, Parliament House, NSW, October 2005), accessed 4 May 2017, <http://www.aspg.org.au/conferences/sydney2005/ASPG%202005%2013%20Tink.pdf>.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Cathy Dunn, "The Founders of a Nation: Australia's First Fleet 1788," accessed 9 May 2017, <http://www.australianhistoryresearch.info/the-first-fleet/>.

'our' world. Their terminus was detention in a foreign land; 'press-ganged' into nominal service of empire, they would build their own prisons in lands far away.



Figure 4 David Jones *Gumnut Invasion* (2016)

Emancipation...

Free and later 'freed' 'settlers' and their retired military jailers rode forth from the penal beachhead and saw the potential, saw 'opportunity', and in effect replicated the original penal social model on a larger and larger scale as invasion and genocide were carried out. Past military men and jailers, for the main, became major land holders and magistrates. The lower class freed convict and poor free settlers constituted the virtual tenant farmers to this growing Bunyip aristocracy. Far from the prying gaze of British government, and with the aid of cheap convict

labour, those first invader/pioneers began fencing and naming, physically and symbolically enclosing and emptying the land.

I could rewrite the convict litany from above as an Indigenous dirge; forced and mostly fatal dispossession, and ‘dispersion’ or massacre is followed by dislocation/transportation and concentration, often in foreign lands. Indigenous peoples are marked as transgressors, detained indefinitely, violently oppressed, then offered limited emancipation through assimilation and servitude or death in custody. ‘Settlers’ seem to have projected the very Georgian sins they were exiled for and wished to repress memory of—poverty and depravity—upon Indigenous peoples, so as to justify their actions as the ‘peaceful settlement’ and ‘taming’ of a ‘wild’ Australia for its own good. The strategies employed by their social and economic superiors to control land and eject or eradicate the poor were learnt and transcribed onto a fresh set of circumstances by the first invaders—the first proto-Australians.

Though it is easy enough for most Australian ‘settlers’ to romantically embrace the hardship borne by their erstwhile convict ancestors as recipients of possibly unfair and harsh treatment, they cannot accept that the same strategies of unfair and harsh treatment were applied to Indigenous peoples, and that ‘we’ may not be able to embrace these imposed hardships with the same tint of sentimental nostalgia. The same actions that would normally constitute genocide are recast as necessary humanitarian strategies and actions by the Australian society and culture that is intent on repressing memory or history of any wrongdoing.³⁷

³⁷ When writing on the denial of the Holocaust, Dirk Moses uses Freud’s notion of ‘repression’ to describe the “psychic defence mechanism with which denialists protect themselves from the traumatic consequences of having to incorporate uncomfortable facts into a closed and rigid ideological framework.” A. Dirk Moses, “Revisionism and Denial,” in *Whitewash: On Keith Windschuttle’s Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, ed. Robert Manne (Melbourne:

Australia's national self-image is different from how most Indigenous people see it, and from how the international community sees it too. The following quote taken from a contributor to *Quadrant* magazine paints the Australian 'ideal' national identity adequately, describing a hardworking, open, experimental, game, ambitious, and wise 'type':

Australian success over this early phase of our history did not lie solely in the existence of opportunities, but rather in having the wherewithal to exploit them. And critical in this respect were three attributes, qualities that are timeless and important for the members of any society who wish to innovate. These were: first, a spirit of openness and a willingness to experiment with novel ideas; second, the ambitious nature of the settlers who came to Australia; and third, a belief in the value of knowledge.³⁸

Omission of any foundational violent conflict sets as default an empty land of opportunity: history has been replaced with nationalistic and nihilistic hyperbole. The Australian national identity is lost in self-compliment and praise, wrapped up in romantic notions of itself as a peaceful nation of humanitarian patriots. Denial has long been dominant in the national narrative regarding national foundational violence though. The prominent Australian historian W. E. H. Stanner first mentioned the 'Great Australian Silence' in the Boyer Lecture of 1968.³⁹ This silence still envelopes much of the 'settled' hills and vales, like some chilled, still mist.⁴⁰ The reasons for Indigenous peoples' condition of health and mental distress—invasion, genocide—are forever denied by 'settler' Australia. Indigenous peoples' cultural and social 'degradation' has been rewritten as sign of 'racial' inferiority and remains so to a great degree. Song-lines were compromised, silenced, with the paths of living knowledge disrupted—in some

Black Inc. Agenda, 2003), 340.

³⁸ Thomas Barlow, "The Role of National Character in Australia's Prosperity," *Quadrant*, April (2013), accessed 9 May 2017, <https://quadrant.org.au/magazine/2013/04/the-role-of-national-character-in-australia-s-prosperity/>.

³⁹ Andrew Gunstone, "Reconciliation, Nationalism and the History Wars" (paper presented at the Australasian Political Studies Association Conference, University of Adelaide, 29 September–1 October 2004), accessed 9 May 2017, https://www.adelaide.edu.au/apsa/docs_papers/Aust%20Pol/Gunstone.pdf.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

cases, irrevocably. The ‘settlers’ re-composed the violent silence of massacre as a primordial, Arcadian absence of human clamour. Their invasion was revised as ‘settlement’ of a vacant and mutable wilderness.

The descendants of those first free and convict/pioneer invaders were now jailers to a multitude of refugees, resultant of a denied genocide, refusing to quietly die out as predicted or hoped for. The Australian ‘settler’ colonial-collective cannot, or prefers not to, understand the intergenerational trauma inflicted by ‘their’ very presence on the land. Indigenous peoples are governed by, live under the laws imposed by descendants of those who quite literally ‘carved’ their nation out of Indigenous bodies politic.

This ‘settled’ Australia was imposed by a polity whose only language was one of physical violence punctuated with gunshot and whip crack. Attendant to this violent collective nature was fear—of ‘hordes of savages’, of ‘the bush’, of isolation, of starving, of privation, and so on. Mistakes happened; apparently, grass trees, or spear trees, once known as ‘black boys’ to most ‘settlers’, were sometimes mistaken for ‘savages’, and set upon (figure 5, page 24).⁴¹

⁴¹ I transcribed one such example of grass tree–associated abuse into a multiple print composition entitled *Black Boyz, Black Boyz, What Ya Gunna Do When They Come for You* (2014, figure 4 in this exegesis). The incident is relayed as follows: “Walking from Perth to Freemantle once, on descending an elevation into an open valley near the sea-beach, I beheld two lawyers apparently wrestling with a grass tree. My surprise was excited. As I approached, I perceived that they were trying to uproot and throw it down. This not being an action of *trover* but one of assault, and seeing the harmless tree exposed to the vengeance of the law, I was induced to inquire what offence it had committed? They informed me that, mistaking it for a native, it had more than once frightened them, and that they were determined it should never do so again. These redoubted champions of the oppressed and oppressor, so bold amid courts and clients, were terrified at the very idea of meeting an Aborigine.” From “Anon” [Robert Lyon], “Australia: Appeal to the World on Behalf of the Younger Branch of the Family of Shem,” cited in Healy, *Literature and the Aborigine in Australia*, 21–22.



Figure 5 David Jones *Black Boyz, Black Boyz, What Ya Gunna Do When They Come for You?* (2014)

The general state of Australian ‘settler’ intergroup anxiety, even paranoia, precedes and proceeds from massacre. In a sense, those early ‘settlers’ relied on fearmongering in order to carry out what they regarded as necessary. The intensity of ‘retaliative’ massacre and bodily violation reflects the degree to which ‘settlers’ felt “isolated, frightened and in the nature of things, on the make”, or guilty.⁴² Once ‘reprisal’ for an ‘outrage’, imaginary or otherwise, was completed, the frontier type effectively marched on, ground was taken and occupied, new ‘offences’ ‘retaliated’ against, and more Indigenous people ‘violently denied’ their lives, occupied ground, and so on.

⁴² Martin Krygier and Robert van Krieken, “The Character of the Nation,” in *Whitewash: On Keith Windschuttle’s Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, 101.

Constructing the Australian nation is also an ‘imaginary’, creative process that involves contextual visualisation and then repetitious realisation. As Benedict Anderson suggests, ‘imagined communities’ rely on similar individual perspectives living out and ‘celebrating’ these communicable views or ideologies.⁴³ Although various patriotic communities vie for ideological pre-eminence as ‘true Aussies’, the story of a peaceful national birth is broadly accepted. However, many people indigenous to the land Australians lay claim to cannot accept this assertion of benevolent nation without denying their antecedents’ stories of resistance to that ‘peaceful settlement’, and their own resilience in the face of the continuing effects of this ‘settlement’.

These colonies were not peaceful settlements: they were brutally induced investments on foreign shores by a British empire. Indeed, Australia was born of traumatically induced colonies that blossomed and bloomed, expanding over land made rich with my forebears’ blood and bone. This may seem melodramatic but it is true. Massacre sites dot the Australian landscape, with the resulting bodies burnt or buried after mutilation caused by souveniring certain body parts in demand by the scientific community.⁴⁴ Mostly, the evidence was left for the crows or to dissolve back into the soil.

Born of violent, traumatic exile and class cleansing, the proto-Australian society developing in the austral sun applied its lessons of cruelty to Indigenous peoples with enthusiasm. The

⁴³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (New York: Verso, 2006).

⁴⁴ See Paul Turnbull, “‘Ramsay’s Regime’: The Australian Museum and the Procurement of Aboriginal Bodies c. 1874-1900,” *Aboriginal History* 15, no. 2 (1991): 108–21, <http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p72251/pdf/article089.pdf>.

strategies used to evict ‘them’ from their world were learnt and applied to ‘us’ in ‘our’ world. There seems an intergenerational perpetuation of the learned abuse that, by turn, becomes potentially more and more traumatic to admit and stop. As Stephen Page, director of Bangarra Dance Theatre, once said: “There’s a hidden guilt that is passed on through generations—the white generations—and it is slightly, innocently ignorant.”⁴⁵

For ‘settler’ Australians, the nationalised character is hardworking, open, experimental ambitious, wise, egalitarian, carefree, larrikin-like, peaceful and caring, English-speaking, and often Christian. In fact, during April 2017, the Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull called for tougher, or more exclusionary, methods for ‘testing’ foreigners who wish to become Australian citizens.⁴⁶ Potential citizens must “prize ‘Australian values’ and prove their commitment to the nation”.⁴⁷ More emphasis will be placed on assessing the potential blooming of ‘Australian values’ in the fertile mind of the applicant. When questioned by Leigh Sales on the Australian Broadcasting Commission’s *7.30 Report*, Turnbull indicated that “concern for his own political future was not behind an overhaul of Australia’s citizenship laws”.⁴⁸ It must be noted, however, that these changes seem in line with ideologies espoused by the One Nation Party and by Tony Abbott, former ousted Prime Minister and representative of the far right of the Australian Liberal–National coalition that Turnbull requires support from.⁴⁹ There is even

⁴⁵ Jens Korff, “Admired Overseas, Shunned at Home,” *Creative Spirits*, accessed 11 May 2017,

<https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/people/admired-overseas-shunned-at-home#ixzz4bzpuaxMZ>.

⁴⁶ Stephen Dzedzic and Henry Belot, “Australian Citizenship Law Changes Mean Migrants Will Face Tougher Tests,” *ABC News* (Australian Broadcasting Corporation), 20 April 2017, accessed 11 May 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-20/migrants-to-face-tougher-tests-for-australian-citizenship/8456392>.

⁴⁷ Stephanie Anderson, “Malcolm Turnbull Grilled by Leigh Sales over ‘Australian Values’, Citizenship Test Overhaul,” *ABC News* (Australian Broadcasting Corporation), 21 April 2017, accessed 11 May 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-20/turnbull-grilled-by-leigh-sales-over-australian-citizenship-test/8459326>.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

conditional support from Australia's political opposition in Bill Shorten and the Labor Party, although Labor Minister Penny Wong also questioned the motives behind the changes proposed.⁵⁰ Pertinent to this paper though is Turnbull's understanding of his electorate, his Australian 'settlers' who hold a lingering notion of a white Australia. Turnbull understood that this sort of announcement would receive bipartisan support in the greater Australian society.

For Indigenous peoples though, there are more facets to the Australian identity than the average citizen patriot would admit to. 'Settlers' are, for a start, invaders, grand larcenists of Indigenous land, resources and lives, and descendants of our forebears' killers. Australia displays introverted and paranoid tendencies, a closed society fearful of refugees, 'boat people', foreigners and new immigrants, not to mention Indigenous peoples. Australians are conservative, happy rather to remain in their privileged routine than undermine it with reflection, prefer denial of the circumstances that have them where they are now than the trauma of reconciling with their own past and present inhumane actions.

⁵⁰ Dziedzic and Belot, "Australian Citizenship Law Changes."

Chapter 2: Anxiety Breeds Contempt

Gun and sword flag and drum!
That's how a settlin's done!
Bury the bodies and cover the graves,
That's how Australia's made!

So on and on and around they go,
Acts held high and mind down low,
Will they stop?
Nobody knows,
Caught in their colonial dream...⁵¹

Motivation for a vicious cycle of anxiety derives from unresolved traumatic experience.

According to current psychological theory, a vicious cycle of anxiety has at least four ongoing phases: surveillance, responsive action, short-term relief, and reinforcement of safety behaviours.⁵² Surveillance grows in its compass by each revolution through the cycle. Primarily, anxiety underpins a constant state of surveillance for threat. Any threat encountered is answered with avoidance or escape, flight from the troubling event or perceived threat. All responses lead to short-term relief, and then an increased reliance on safety behaviours is developed by which an increased scanning for threat is justified. Safety behaviours broaden in their scope and become more frequently relied on. Worry spirals out of control and can end up encompassing an entire private world. The subject's attention can become increasingly self-centred, and their ability to access possibly pre-existing emotions such as empathy and guilt decrease, while sociopathic or even psychopathic indicators can increase.

I propose that a national entity such as Australia might be viewed by this method, substituting denial for anxiety. For this model, the driving force for a national vicious cycle of denial could

⁵¹ David Jones, unpublished poetry, 2015.

⁵² Centre for Clinical Interventions, "The Vicious Cycle of Anxiety."

well be the violent invasion and genocide perpetrated on Indigenous bodies politic by ‘settlers’, past and present. The trauma involved in admitting foundational violence is avoided at all costs by the subject, by the Australian ‘settler’ colonial-collective. When an anxious moment of denial is unavoidable, or the subject is caught unawares, any one or combination of up to three reactions may be used by the subject. Unlike the anxiety model, fright, flight, and fight are all potential responses.⁵³

Short-term relief ‘rewards’ the subject for their reaction and the maintenance of safety behaviours. Active scanning for anti-denialist or ‘heretical’ threat to ‘normality’ is justified, and the subject’s state of anxious ‘denial of founding violence’ is heightened, cycle by cycle.⁵⁴

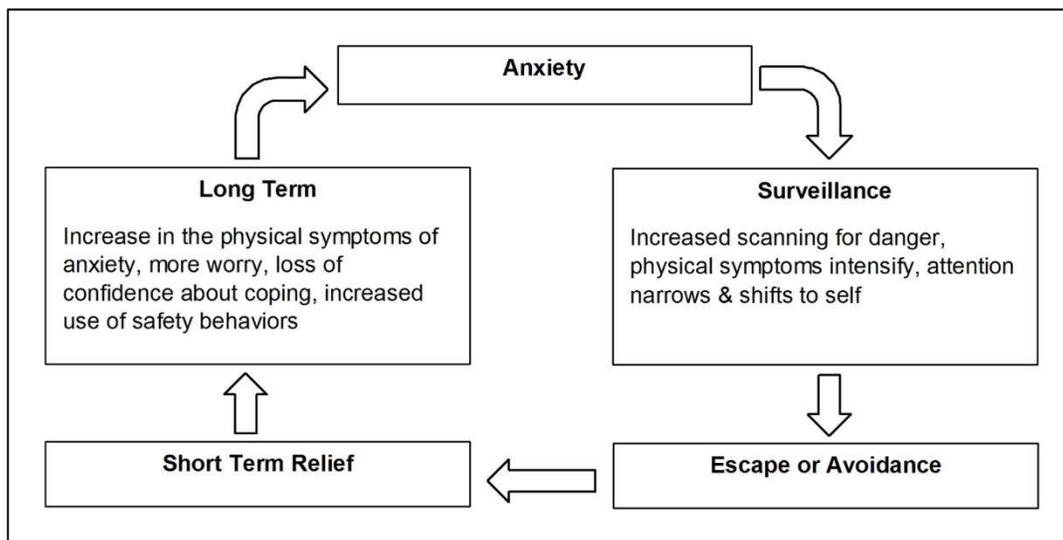


Figure 6 Vicious Cycle of Anxiety

In the case of the vicious cycle of anxiety, the subject’s fears grow to encompass their world, which increasingly alienates them from reality, and concentrates their attention inwards to their

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

everyday individual first world.⁵⁵ With an anxious cycle of denial, this increasing self-centredness might be read as inversely proportionate to the diminishment of empathy in the Australian subject.

Each of the elements in the vicious cycle of anxiety is transposable into the proposed cycle of denial—more precisely, an Australian ‘settler’ colonial-collective’s cycle of anxious denial of the genocide perpetrated in the founding of their nation. The natural state of the denialist must be one of constant scanning or surveillance. Australian ‘settler’ surveillance of Indigenous societies and itself operates at a personal and an institutional level at least. At a personal level, surveillance is mostly covert, while institutional scanning is overt. Personal scanning is an early warning system so that avoidance or escape from contact with Indigenous people can be achieved. Social and institutional surveillance, on the other hand, are covert and overt. Ostensibly, municipalities and governmental institutions use surveillance to ‘better understand’ and document the ‘other’, to ‘know’ Indigenous people and culture.⁵⁶ Family services and medical services document, while the police monitor and apprehend. Institutional surveillance is also employed to head off or deal with ‘unrest’.

Sustained, intergenerational ‘settler’ vigilance is maintained by government, communities, and individuals in various ways and through various organisations. The Australian federal and state police forces are the most obvious governmental tools for monitoring ‘rebellion’ or protest, Indigenous peoples’ day-to-day life, communities, and individuals. Although constabularies across Australia have and continue to be the prime social tool for the physical control of

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ See Irene Watson, “Aboriginality and the Violence of Colonialism,” *Borderlands* 8, no. 1 (2009): 4–5.

Indigenous communities and individuals, their stations and officers are forward observation posts too, for a socio-culturally distant ‘settled’ Australia.



Figure 7 David Jones *Evolution of Australian Wire* (2014)

The Departments of Families and Housing and Welfare and the Native Title Tribunal are some of the latest transformations of institutionalised, and departmental, government-directed monitoring of Indigenous bodies politic. These are direct descendants of the federal ministries for ‘native affairs’, state departments of Aboriginal and Islander affairs, Colonial Protectors, their concentration camps, and missions. Indigenous communities and individuals are still “watched” and monitored for “unrest”, and at slightest sign of “smoke”, police and family services personnel or the Australian army can be sent in to “restore calm”, or “move them on”.⁵⁷

Vigilance and action still make up the vernacular of the ‘frontiersman’ or ‘frontline services’.

Events of ‘rebellion’ and ‘ungrateful protest’ are ‘dealt’ with, ‘dispersed’; the ‘unrest’ thus

⁵⁷ Christine Jennett, “Policing and Indigenous Peoples in Australia” (paper presented at the History of Crime, Policing and Punishment Conference convened by the Australian Institute of Criminology in conjunction with Charles Sturt University, Canberra, 9–10 December 1999).

quelled justifies continued and intensified scrutiny of the increasingly ‘other-ed other’. Rather than vigilance and then pre-emptive or disciplinary action, possibly attention, facilitation and communication could be better responses to a tradition of Indigenous resistance necessitated by ‘settler’ Australian collective behaviour historically and now.

Surveillance employed by mainstream Australian media mostly focuses on either controversial or feel-good storylines. The more turmoil in Indigenous communities the better, since being written as ungrateful, drug-reliant ‘deviants’ or sad cases of self-neglect and harm justifies the continued and increased scrutiny and incarceration of right-leaning ‘settler’ Australians. By contrast, feel-good stories reinforce the notion of a humanitarian society dealing as best it can with a ‘difficult situation’, which caters to all the lefties out there. Surveillance stems from the state of ‘intergroup anxiety’ active in ‘settler’ Australian society, reliant on entrenched intergroup biases, borne out by surveys and studies over the last decade, at least, which support the notion of an ongoing cycle of denial of genocide.⁵⁸

Situations that induce the fright, flight, or fight reactions can be authored by both radicals within ‘settler’ society or from without. Heretical attacks from within the social group originate mostly from lefty academics in their ‘ivory towers’ as Keith Windschuttle would have it, such as Raymond Evans, Rosalind Kidd, and Henry Reynolds. Also, more recently, those of us ‘white aboriginals’, mostly academics and artists, whom Andrew Bolt has delineated as opportunistic

⁵⁸ For example, see the T. Phillips et al., *The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, 2007* (Canberra: Australian Data Archive, The Australian National University, 2008); the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision (SCRGSP), *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2014* (Canberra: Productivity Commission, 2014); and TNS Social Research, *Discrimination against Indigenous Australians: A Snapshot of the Views of Non-Indigenous People Aged 25–44* (Hawthorn Victoria: beyondblue, 2014), accessed 13 May 2017, <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/.../bl1337-report---tns-discrimination-against-indigenous-australians.pdf>.

stowaways on an Indigenous gravy train, are also to blame.⁵⁹ Not surprisingly, Bolt points to our white skin, denying us our Indigenous identity.⁶⁰ “Attacks”, critical comment, and protest can also be instigated from without ‘settler’ society; unrest is always growing in the “camps” of ungrateful and recalcitrant “true blacks” getting all their “free money”.⁶¹

Fright is the first reaction to be covered here. On the surface, this is a transient response usually followed up by flight or a fight. Two of the fears underlying the initial fright might well have been embodied in my father. Firstly, Australian ‘settlers’ feared who he was, who his mother was, and who her mother and her mother was, while I am feared for what I am now, and what my children will be: intergenerational witnesses to the genocide of the Dalungbarra. This is an inherited role that must be passed on now, it seems, forever. Secondly, they fear what he wanted; the return of the Dalungbarra lands and seas, or compensation for it at least.

The first fear my father embodied reflects the intergenerational guilt of genocide that most Australian ‘settlers’ feign ignorance of. Ignorance is used to avoid total blame. Guilt can simply be related to fear. A fear of the trauma involved in ‘admission’. This ‘feeling’ of guilty fear is probably what underpins the default rationale of surveillance and denial for the ‘settler’. There are more irrational fears that haunt the ‘settler’ that fall outside this exegesis’s focus: Indigenous cannibalism, infanticide,⁶² and sexual mutilation.⁶³ These myths are all surprisingly alive and

⁵⁹ Andrew Bolt, “The New Tribe of White Blacks,” *Herald Sun* (Andrew Bolt blog posts), 21 August 2009, accessed 11 May 2017, <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/blogs/andrew-bolt/column--the-new-tribe-of-white-blacks/news-story/2084e333d698f20fafd8b0a3f88c77b4>.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Some publications quote Daisy Bates’ questionable testimony to support claims of Indigenous infanticide and cannibalism. For example, Pauline Hanson, *The Truth: On Asian Immigration, the Aboriginal Question, the Gun Debate and the Future of Australia* (Parkholm: St. George Publications, 1997), which.

⁶³ In 2003, Dr Helen Pringle of the University of New South Wales criticised the Office of the High Commissioner

well, still invoked “to deflect the ‘guilt’ of invasion or genocide”.⁶⁴ Although the ‘pseudo-scientific’ findings of anthropologists and ethnologists such as Dr W. E. Roth, and opportunistic amateurs such as Daisy Bates and Archibald Meston, have been discredited, their racially entrenched testimonies and theories are still often cited by ‘settler’ Australians in support of their actions or inaction today.

Flight involves completely avoiding the issue, disengaging if caught, transferring responsibility when questioned, ensuring minimum contact, and swiftly taking leave. As mentioned above, ignorance can be invoked to avoid the full force of blame or guilt, and even to twist that guilt. Ignorance can be used in a passively aggressive manner, a segue to the fight response; for example, ‘*no one told me*’. Australians are afraid of physical proximity to Indigenous people too; the ‘settler’ will cross the street, look elsewhere, hurry on, with quick, sympathetic, blank and banal platitudes flung willy-nilly over their retreating shoulders to impede any pursuit. Indigenous people will be quite openly avoided and watched when in the ‘settled’ areas. The advertising campaign *Invisible Discriminator* by beyondblue may have generated immediate and affronted response in the Australian Twitter-verse, yet it highlighted the need to expose the very real and physical nature of casual racism in Australian society.⁶⁵

for Human Rights’ reliance on early nineteenth-century ‘scientific’ papers, written originally by a protector of Aborigines, Dr Walter E. Roth. By quoting this dated and rather unreliable source of ‘Indigenous knowledge’, the report represented Indigenous peoples in Australia today as an example of a culture continuing to practice the sexual mutilation of women. Found in the paper by Helen Pringle, “The Fabrication of Female Genital Mutilation: The UN, Walter Roth and Ethno-Pornography” (refereed paper presented to the Australasian Political Studies Association Conference, University of Adelaide, 29 September–1 October 2004).

⁶⁴ Katherine Biber, “Cannibals and Colonialism,” *Sydney Law Review* 27 (2005): 626.

⁶⁵ *beyondblue, Invisible Discriminator Television Campaign*, 2016, accessed 11 May 2017, <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/who-does-it-affect/the-invisible-discriminator>.

Everyday life is often used to block out historical context for the ‘settler’ Australians’ state of privilege. Australians can avoid reflection on genocide by concentrating on their work and leisure, although probably not in that order. Australians do not feel they have time for ‘things’ that happened in the past. They paint their privileged day-to-day experience as one of a constant battle to survive, something Indigenous people, who are recipients of ‘free’ money, could never understand.⁶⁶ An ignorance of the reasons that Indigenous people find themselves in cycles of welfare benefit dependence is maintained by the ‘settler’ from one generation to the next. This nurtured ignorance keeps guilt in abeyance.

The fight response seems either employed through reaction or is a planned or pre-emptive response. Either the violence is improvised for a perceived or real threat or else it is premeditated, and usually over-reactionary in either case. This fight response can be verbal or physical in nature. The litany of physical violence perpetrated on individual Indigenous people over the last 200-odd years cannot be included here in its entirety. Nevertheless, there will be many examples of brutality included in the pages to come. Verbal abuse and violent language against Indigenous peoples are also legion. Adam Goodes’ experience at the hands of a nation is a reasonable example of this verbal violence.

Goodes’ now famous “spear throwing dance”, seen through the eyes of those party to denial of foundational violence in Australia, was an affront to the nation and by extension themselves.⁶⁷

Football-goers kept up a sustained booing campaign that made the world cringe a little. Unable

⁶⁶ This is borne out in results from questions used in Phillips et al., *The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, 2007*.

⁶⁷ Michael Bradley, “Goodes’ War Dance Reveals Our Moral Confusion,” *ABC News* (Australian Broadcasting Corporation), 30 July 2015, accessed 12 May 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-30/bradley-goodes'-war-dance-reveals-our-moral-confusion/6657960?pfmredir=sm>.

to understand Goodes' action as one of cultural and personal significance, mainstream conservative media outlets interpreted the action as "undeservedly" confrontational and racist.⁶⁸ Goodes' action affronted 'their' national narrative of peaceful, benevolent and lawful settlement with a re-affirmation of Indigenous resistance to invasion.⁶⁹

There is a perverse reversal of victimhood instigated by commentators such as Andrew Bolt and Alan Jones in their labelling of Goodes as racist.⁷⁰ Goodes is positioned as an antagonist, unable to come to grips with being on the losing side of an "ethnic conflict"; unable to accept the reality of 'history' and 'get over it', he is simply a "perpetual mourner", who aims his undue ire at the 'inevitably benevolent' and dominant Australian 'settler'.⁷¹ Trying to instigate feelings of guilt and remorse in the dominant society is then seen as victimisation of that society, by a recalcitrant minority, and the victimiser becomes the victim. Thus, in response to reprimanding a thirteen-year-old girl for a personal racialised slur, Goodes is then booed relentlessly by Australian patriots expressing their ire at his 'victimisation' of a young notional national. Spectators, the girl, Bolt, and Jones all displayed a lack of empathy and, moreover, a propensity for aggression—two indicators of psychopathic national tendencies and racialised stereotyping.

Validating victimisation is sought by 'settler' Australians in strange places. While a plenitude of war memorials dot the landscape to remind 'them' of their sacrifice, and days of remembrance

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Megan Levy, "Swans Star Adam Goodes Always Plays the Victim: Alan Jones," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 Jul 2015, accessed 12 May 2017, <http://www.smh.com.au/afl/sydney-swans/swans-star-adam-goodes-always-plays-the-victim-alan-jones-20150728-gimnm3>.

⁷¹ Hank Theriault, "Universal Social Theory and the Denial of Genocide: Norman Itzkowitz Revisited," in *Defining the Horrific: Readings on Genocide and Holocaust in the Twentieth Century*, ed. William L. Hewitt (New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004), 386.

are observed, this would not seem enough. In an essay revolving around the Port Arthur massacre of 1996, Banerjee and Osuri ask why this event was billed as the “worst massacre in Australian history” by Australian news media.⁷² Although this event is clearly tragic, Australia has a rich history of massacres and the pair asks why this massacre is given precedence. Or does loss of ‘settler’ life simply trump in sorrow that of Indigenous loss?

A more straightforward indication of ‘anxious behaviour’, the fight response is found in the clandestine, overzealous, violent symbolic denial that coalesces in vandalism to Indigenous Australian monuments.⁷³ A monument erected in 1865 near Perth mourns the death of three early explorers at the hands of “treacherous natives”,⁷⁴ and lauds the actions of Maitland Brown in leading a “search and punitive party”.⁷⁵ As Peter Read relates, another plaque relating to the Indigenous peoples’ side of the story was later added to the memorial in 1994, which received repeated brutal attention with crowbars and sledgehammers.⁷⁶

In 1994, a monument was erected in memory of the battle in 1884 between ‘settlers’, native police, and the Kalkadoon people caught in a last-ditch attempt to defend their country.⁷⁷ Its

⁷² S. B. Banerjee and G. Osuri, “Silences of the Media: Whiting Out Aboriginality in Making News and Making History,” *Media, Culture & Society* 22, no. 3 (2000): 264.

⁷³ Peter Read, “‘The Truth That Will Set Us All Free’: An Uncertain History of Memorials to Indigenous Australians,” *Public History Review* 15 (2008): 30, accessed 12 May 2017, <https://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/journals/index.php/phrj/article/download/810/831>.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ The epigraph reads: “This plaque was erected by people who found this monument before you offensive. The monument describes the events at La Grange from one perspective only; the viewpoint of the white ‘settlers’. No mention is made of the right of Aboriginal people to defend their land or of the history of provocation which led to the explorers’ deaths. The ‘punitive party’ mentioned here ended in the deaths of somewhere around twenty Aboriginal people. The whites were all well-armed and equipped and none of their party was killed or wounded. This plaque is in memory of the Aboriginal people killed at La Grange. It also commemorates all other Aboriginal people who died during the invasion of their country. Lest we forget.” In Read, “‘The Truth That Will Set Us All Free,’” 31.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

epigraph, “The spirit of the Kalkatungu tribe never died at battle; but remains intact and alive today within the Kalkadoon tribal council”,⁷⁸ was enough to drive patriotic ‘settlers’ between 2000 and 2008 to repeatedly attempt its destruction with dynamite.⁷⁹

In the case of either a flight or fight response, a short-term relief ensues—a “short term dissociative relief”—as does an increased reliance on safety behaviours, such as ‘revision’, the use of ‘nationalised screen-memories’ and ‘re-affirmative’ events.⁸⁰ The use of these compounds and maybe increases denial, and justifies the need for increased vigilance in surveillance for ‘threat’. Denial could grow to inhuman proportions, infecting an entire national identity, perpetuating an unawareness of discrimination and abuse, and increasing socio-cultural distance between Australian ‘settlers’ and Indigenous people.

After short-term relief, the subject must return to work; there is no rest for the denialist. Surveillance must be resumed with increased vigour, and safety behaviours honed and maintained. Safety behaviours are usually rigorously employed by the subject so as not to have to deal with, and indeed avoid completely if possible, any event that triggers an anxious response in them. The first safety behaviour to be discussed below is the production and maintenance of screen memories.

In his paper “Settler Collective, Founding Violence and Disavowal: The Settler Colonial Situation” Lorenzo Veracini made use of the concept of ‘screen memories’, which he borrows

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Veracini, “Settler Collective, Founding Violence and Disavowal,” 369.

from Sigmund Freud.⁸¹ In essence, the ‘settler’ collective screens off foundational violence that accompanies the forceful dispossession of land with an imagined bloodless and benign declaration made by Captain Cook. To borrow from Benedict Anderson’s social concept of ‘imagined communities’, while an Australian nation relies on the continuum of a spectacle of nation, socio-culturally generated national spectacles play their role as screen memories too, cultural blinds, cultural screens.⁸² While the nationalised celebratory events to be discussed are indeed tools of national cohesion for the patriotic community, Australian ‘settlers’ in denial are also want to use them, albeit unconsciously for some, to screen off uncomfortable past and present inhumane actions and atrocity carried out on the Indigenous bodies politic. Historical scenes such as Captain Cook’s ‘discovery’ of Australia, the ‘peaceful settlement’ of Australia, and notions of bringing civilisation to the ‘bush’, progress and prosperity for all, egalitarianism, and freedom are utilised to ignore or repress unwanted and traumatic aspects of an unrecognised national history. The imagined community of ‘settler’ Australians and their nation are sustained by spectacles that obscure Indigenous death and privation, imprisonment and demonisation.

Australia Day is a well-known and oft-used facade, cultural foil, or mis-directional spectacle that is embedded in the national memory. This day of celebration neatly screens off the violent national foundation of this country, re-affirming each year the erroneous notion of *terra nullius*. While effectively dancing on Indigenous graves, Australians celebrate their ‘appropriated’

⁸¹ David Smith provides a succinct introductory explanation of screen memory: “Freud used the term ‘screen memory’ to denote any memory which functions to hide (and to derivatively express) another, typically unconscious, mental content. Freud distinguished between three types of screen memory: those in which a recollection from childhood ‘screens’ or conceals some event contemporary with it, those in which a later recollection stands for a memory of a childhood event, and those in which a childhood recollection represents a later concern (Freud, 1901b; Freud, 1899a).” See David L. Smith, “The Mirror Image of the Present: Freud’s Theory of Retrogressive Screen Memories,” *Psychoanalytische Perspectieven* 39 (2000): 7, accessed 12 May 2017, www.psychoanalytischeperspectieven.be/wp-content/uploads/.../screen-memories.pdf.

⁸² Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

economic prosperity, their assumed territory with ‘sausage sizzles’, flag raising, waving and wearing, the dispensation of multitudinous official awards to individuals and organisations, and a lot of speech-making besides.

Captain Cook and Captain Arthur Phillip are used relentlessly to embody longstanding traditional myths of ‘discovery’ and ‘settlement’, ‘rational and benevolent’ historical figures that blot out Indigenous campfires burning bright all along these shores, and long before *terra incognita* was ever imagined in Britain. On what is now known as Possession Island, on 22 August 1770, Captain Cook

...once More hoisted English Colours, and in the Name of His Majesty King George the Third took possession of the whole Eastern coast from the above Lat. [38° South], down to this place by the Name of New South Wales... after which we fired 3 Volleys of small Arms, which were answer’d by the like number from the Ship.⁸³

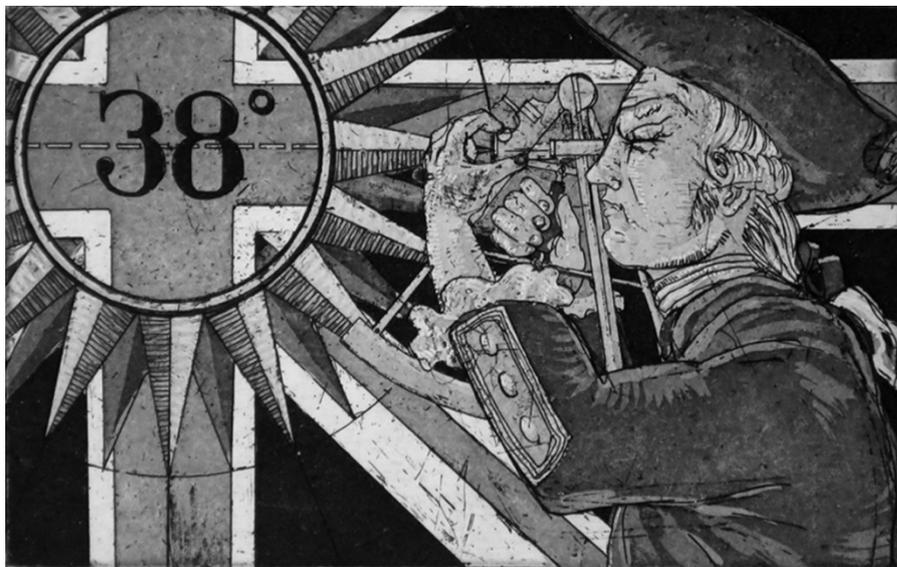


Figure 8 David Jones *And so... By decree and degrees Captain Cook steals everything he sees* (2013)

⁸³ Reed, *Captain Cook in Australia: The Journals of Captain James Cook*, 39–42.

And so that was that—Cook’s symbolic act and rudimentary surveying, his assessment of the land according to doctrines espoused by de Vattel in his 1758 treatise, *The Law of Nations or the Principles of Natural Law*,⁸⁴ supposedly trumped all existing Indigenous symbols and traditions of land ownership and transference sprawled across the continent that he floated at the edge of. Cook is generally credited with claiming New South Wales according to the doctrine of *terra nullius*, which has been cited by many historians as patently erroneous, given the term only came into Australian legal usage quite recently.⁸⁵ However, it fits with how ‘settler’ Australians want to imagine their beginnings: a wide untamed and empty land to which their forebears brought civilisation. Indigenous people were here though, even if Cook looked straight through them and at the land. Indigenous peoples in Australia are no fabulous beings invisible and visible by turns, but, like a musketeer closing their eyes as the flash pan ignites, the ‘settlers’ close their eyes to the trauma they cause, only opening them again to wonder at the carnage wreaked.

Australia Day also continues the myth of peaceful national birth. Australians are still want to claim singularity in the cosmos of world nations, a blazing example of peaceful and democratic national birth, international beacon of freedom and egalitarianism in state. However, Australia did not suddenly appear in 1901 in some blaze of democratic glory. Federation plays a role of misdirection as much as it celebrates nationhood.

For ‘settler’ Australians, this ‘peaceful national birth’ is theoretically true; dissent between the colonial Anglo-European patriarchs, fathers of nation was sorted out through congress and

⁸⁴ De Vattel, *The Law of Nations*.

⁸⁵ Geoffrey Partington, “Thoughts on *Terra Nullius*” (paper presented at the Nineteenth Conference of the Samuel Griffith Society, Melbourne, 17–19 August 2007), accessed 12 May 2017, <http://www.samuelgriffith.org.au/papers/html/volume19/v19chap11.html>.

debate, which sounds remarkably reasonable. But to arrive at that happy moment for ‘settler’ Australians, Indigenous presence and sovereignty must be omitted. Indigenous peoples are intergenerational witnesses to the traumatic inducement of the Australian nation, at odds with the gentle birth proclaimed each Australia Day by the ‘settler’ colonial-collective.



Figure 9 David Jones *Phillip's Hope* (2017)

And so the story goes: Sir Henry Parkes, ‘father of Federation’, led the peaceful plebiscite of all proto-Australians upon the heels of healthy, democratic, political debate, and lobbying the British Commonwealth, to Peter Dodds McCormick’s land of the “young and free”.⁸⁶ Upon

⁸⁶ Australian Government, “The Australian National Anthem,” last modified 4 May 2017, <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-national-anthem>.

Dorothea Mackeller's "wide brown land", that uninhabited and 'untamed land' of romantic and epic proportions, the cheer went up, and all Australians rejoiced:

We have no records of a bygone shame.
No red-writ histories of woe to weep...

we have no songs of strife,
Of bloodshed reddening the land...

Free-born of Nations, Virgin white,
Not won by blood nor ringed with steel.
Thy throne is on a loftier height,
Deep-rooted in the Commonweal!⁸⁷

By 1902, almost all Indigenous people whose lands were in the path of nation had been removed from 'settler' view— 'mustered', as Archibald Meston called the process.⁸⁸ As with nuclear waste, no 'settler' communities wanted the 'camps' in their own backyard though. When Meston moved his inmates from Bogimbah to Whitecliffs, from the outskirts of Maryborough to Fraser Island, there was uproar in the Maryborough community. This was a favourite holiday spot for the district's 'settlers' and eventually the Indigenous prisoners were "moved on".⁸⁹ To Yarrabah, to Palm Island, to Cherbourg, Indigenous peoples were pushed together at the periphery of 'settler' habitation; they were meant to disappear and they were 'disappeared'. However, they were brought out for display on special occasions, such as when His Royal Highness the Duke of Cornwall and York visited Brisbane for the celebration of Federation. Meston's "excited living arch" was praised as "'the most unique and striking feature' of all the city's decorations" by the visiting royals.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Raymond Evans, "The Country Has Another Past: Queensland and the History Wars," in *Passionate Histories: Myth, Memory and Indigenous Australia*, ed. Frances Peters-Little et al. (Acton, ACT: ANU E Press, 2010), 25–26, accessed 12 May 2017, press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p70821/pdf/ch0149.pdf.

⁸⁸ Raymond Evans and University of Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Studies Unit, *A Permanent Precedent: Dispossession, Social Control and the Fraser Island Reserve and Mission, 1897-1904* (St. Lucia, Brisbane: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Studies Unit, University of Queensland, 1991).

⁸⁹ Evans et al., *A Permanent Precedent*.

⁹⁰ Judith McKay and Paul Memmott, "Staged Savagery: Archibald Meston and his Indigenous Exhibits," *Aboriginal*

This was a highlight to Meston's theatrical career,

The arch was manned by no less than sixty aboriginals... [t]hey were all profusely decorated with emu feathers, and their bodies lined out with red and white ochres, whilst they carried weapons from all parts of Australia.⁹¹

The Australian national narrative as understood by 'ordinary' Australians is a lurch and leap from one screen memory or misdirection to another. Each national spectacle on the historical calendar tends to obscure its own contingent elements of genocide; these spectacles are made to bolster up a compromised perceptual framework or schema for Australians, within which a 'blameless' existence can be maintained.

Most nations include some martial thread in their grand narrative weave, and Australia is no exception. Every year, Anzac Day is celebrated, with the spectacle and enthusiasm growing proportionately with each year further from the original event. Australian tourist-pilgrims now purchase their tickets through ballot there is so much demand for a part in the nationalistic nostalgia-driven spectacle—dawn on Anzac Day upon that faraway cove in Gallipoli.

Australians could also look to colonial contributions to the Boxer Rebellion and the Boer War if they cared to, but written as the national trial by fire, this military catastrophe outshines all. So worn has this national myth become, so used smooth, that much of the detail is lost to first glance. Historical exactitudes need not be applied in any event, the patriot is happy with the diffusive light of nation that glancing and glinting along its monolithic proportions.⁹² In the case

History 40 (2016): 197.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² As Raymond Evans describes in his essay discussing the Australian History Wars of the early twenty-first century: "The 'insistently political' tone of the debate—indeed, its plain nastiness—appears crucially connected to its examination of foundational moments, to the moral calculus of settler colonialism on which the nation's origins are based. Much therefore appears to be at stake. In a sense, the embarrassments, silences and obfuscations that once attended the awkward matter of convict origins across several generations have now been exclusively focused on that twin shame of origination—the story of dispossession and sequestration that converted Aboriginal lands into

of Anzac, substitution is an effective safety behaviour by which a cycle of anxious denial may be sustained. Denial, revision, and substitution become society-wide tools for dissociation from a culturally penal heritage and a dissonant contested reality.



Figure 10 David Jones *Tool of the Australian Amateur Scientist* (2017)

The Anzac legend of sacrifice and martial fortitude by far outstrips the ‘pioneer invader’ legend it draws attention away from, an example of which was published during 1883 in the *Queenslander*, in the form of a journal of explorer and prospector Christie Palmerston’s adventures in the “far north”.⁹³ I quote just after Palmerston and his “sooty friend” have “made terrible havoc” and as the “enemy gave way” (the Mamu people, that is).⁹⁴ Having noticed “a little boy running away”,⁹⁵ Palmserton

...soon overtook him, and, laying the barrel of my rifle gently against his neck, shoved him over. He seemed struck with terror and amazement, biting me, spitting and [shouting]. In my present garb I should have been

British ones as settlement progressed. Australia’s substitute founding myth, the Anzac legend sees public service, to a marked degree, in diverting attention from this country’s ‘darkling plains’ to the grim cliffs and beach-heads of Gallipoli.” Evans, “The Country Has Another Past,” 25.

⁹³ Evans, “The Country Has Another Past,” 14.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

an object of terror to a child of my own race—only a shirt and cartridge belt on, my legs bespattered with blood.⁹⁶

A blood-spattered, gun-toting, knife-wielding maniac, wild-eyed and wearing no trousers, and towering over a defiant child is not really the national icon material for any nation. Anzacs are remembered for their charge into certain death. This national monument to sacrifice, the story of the Anzac, screens off the Killing Times and repositions the ‘trial by fire and iron’ of the Australian ‘settlers’, overshadowing and outshining ‘pioneer’ invader violence. This myth is built consciously or not to hide or foil scrutiny of the Australian character.

The next type of safety behaviour to discuss is ‘re-affirmations’, as defined in Professor Irene Watson’s 2009 article, “In the Northern Territory Intervention: What Is Saved or Rescued and at What Cost?”⁹⁷ Each Australia Day, another invasion takes place; although a re-enacted and symbolic invasion, it nevertheless provokes grief and yearning in the hearts of Indigenous peoples. Re-affirmations of cultural and social, if not national, integrity may be supported by, or carried out through, re-enactments designed to occlude foundational violence at the very least, or simply deny it. Australia Day reaffirms the peaceful settlement of Australia to a settler collective while re-enacting foundational violence on Indigenous peoples, invading again, and again, each year. All along the coasts, in most cities and towns of Australia, each year, men dress up as Captain Cook or Captain Phillip to once again storm the shore, symbolically re-affirm their claim to this land. Flags are raised and enthusiastic re-creationists let off cannons and musket salutes, the sausages sizzle in the backyard of nation, stacks of white bread dry in the sun while speeches crammed with stories of ‘pioneering spirit’ float upon the patriotic haze of national sweat. Both

⁹⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁹⁷ Irene Watson, “In the Northern Territory Intervention,” 2.

captains are remembered in the same stance, heroically holding one claiming palm out over the land, and backed by British colours. Cook and Phillip are interchangeable; their main difference is that one ‘finds’ and one ‘founds’, but each are fatherly, firm but fair symbolic figures for Australian history to rely on.

John Howard’s Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER), instigated during 2007, was early on labelled the ‘NT Intervention’ by Indigenous communities.⁹⁸ Stemming from the *Ampe Akelyernemane Meke Mekarle: “Little Children Are Sacred” Report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse 2007*, the NT Intervention was ostensibly, as Howard would argue, to save children from sexual abuse.⁹⁹ Strangely enough, “the word ‘child’ or ‘children’ does not appear once in the hundreds of pages of the NT Emergency Response Act”.¹⁰⁰ In fact, when the legislative changes derived of this act are reviewed, another older agenda would seem to be outlined—which is one of ‘mainstreaming’ Indigenous people, as Howard himself described the Act’s ultimate goal.¹⁰¹ The legislation passed by both major parties (Labor and Liberal) caused the following:

- removed the permit system for access to Aboriginal land;
- abolished government-funded Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP);
- subjected Aboriginal children to teaching in a language they don’t speak for the first four hours at school;
- quarantined 50% of welfare payments;

⁹⁸Jens Korff, “Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER) – ‘The Intervention’,” *Creative Spirits*, last modified 2 April 2017, <https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/politics/northern-territory-emergency-response-intervention#ixzz4gpvOqjrm>.

⁹⁹Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse, *Ampe Akelyernemane Meke Mekarle: “Little Children Are Sacred”: Report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse* (Australia: Northern Territory Government, 2007), accessed 12 May 2017, http://www.inquirysaac.nt.gov.au/pdf/bipacsa_final_report.pdf.

¹⁰⁰ Jeff McMullen, “The Search for Common Ground” (presented as part of *Building Bridges by R4WS, Parramatta Town Hall, New South Wales, 8 September 2010*).

¹⁰¹ Rebecca Stringer, “A Nightmare of the Neocolonial Kind: Politics of Suffering in Howard’s Northern Territory Intervention,” *Borderlands* 6, no. 2 (2007): 30, accessed 12 May 2017, http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol6no2_2007/stringer_intervention.htm.

- suspended the Racial Discrimination Act (RDA);
- expected Aboriginal people to lease property to the government in return for basic services;
- compulsorily acquired Aboriginal land; and
- subjected Aboriginal children to mandatory health checks without consulting their parents, and against the sacred oath of doctors.¹⁰²

The NT Intervention re-affirms assimilative policy, and returns to actions and government process that led to the Stolen Generations in the first place. The Australian army was moved in to implement the Act, and Watson notes that this invasion of Indigenous homelands re-enacts the ‘originary’ violence of foundation.¹⁰³ It reaffirms settler colonial-collective’s use and denial of violence, exhibiting elements of the ‘crusader’ complex that Gayatri Spivak writes of that Watson cites in her article.¹⁰⁴

Australian mainstream and fringe literature and media give a public voice to all the fears of ‘settlers’ based around what Indigenous peoples want and represent to ‘them’. Most fears are posed as “negative predictions”.¹⁰⁵ These tend to “overestimate” the likelihood of a loss of national and private profit, “exaggerate” the potential for Indigenous autonomy to harm the nation and “themselves”, “underestimate” the irrevocable and permanent nature of the Australian national construct, and “dismiss” Indigenous peoples’ assertions that reconciliation could be beneficial to the Australian identity in the long run.¹⁰⁶ Most coverage is devoted to negative images, and quite deep-rooted and well-worn storylines of Indigenous inability to deal with civilisation, harking back to the ‘dying race’ or ‘naturally ignorant and ungrateful savage’ concepts so popular in the colonial era.

¹⁰² Korff, “NTER – ‘The Intervention’,” *Creative Spirits*.

¹⁰³ Watson, “In the Northern Territory Intervention,” 46.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁰⁵ “The Vicious Cycle of Anxiety,” Centre for Clinical Interventions.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

Revision is a historical strategy anyone can use, and denialists have added it to their repertoire alongside omission and the discrediting of unorthodox or contrary evidence and witnesses. These patterns become safety behaviours for a society. The sublimation of intergenerational trauma and abuse through dissociation with a contested reality could result in symptoms compatible with a national histrionic anxiety based on denial. Ideals of egalitarianism and freedom written over-large by generations of Australian ‘settlers’ have screened society from contradictions such as genocide, theft, oppression, and inequality that are resident in the eternal witness of Indigenous people. These same ideals are used across the Western world to mitigate the mental effects of wage-slavery. Denial and historical revision have been habitualised in Australian ‘settler’ society, leading to an unawareness or social reliance on dissociation from their intergenerational actions and inactions relating to Indigenous peoples.

Australian society has grown through its shyness of penal beginnings, and outgrown, for the main, its cultural cringe. Even the Great Australian Silence, as Stanner predicted, has become unstable or at least questioned. Nevertheless, ‘settler’ Australians seem unable to accept that their nation was founded on violence and theft. Each generation persists actively or passively in supporting a continuum of national spectacle designed to screen off the deaths of so very many, for their present state of self-entitled bliss. This uneasy bliss is pulled taught across a national identity in conflict, as Maggie Walter discusses in *Keeping Our Distance: Non-Indigenous/Aboriginal Relations in Australian Society*: “public conversation, supportive and reconciliatory attitudes and substantial levels of anti-Aboriginal sentiment appear to

incongruously coexist as an Australian norm”.¹⁰⁷ Walter’s analysis relies on data retrieved from *The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, 2007*,¹⁰⁸ which bears out a “cognitive dissonance between egalitarian belief systems and willingness to endorse social actions to address inequality” in Australian society.¹⁰⁹

Responses to the first five questions that are posed in *The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, 2007* indicate a reconciliatory and sympathetic national identity. Those surveyed agreed that Indigenous people are not treated equally in Australian society, that injustices towards Indigenous people still exist, that assimilation is wrong, and an Indigenous person need not follow a stereotypical traditional lifestyle to be defined as a ‘true’ Aboriginal.¹¹⁰ However, the sixth statement, “Granting land rights to Aboriginal people is unfair to other Australians”,¹¹¹ is strongly agreed with. Land always has formed the basis for ‘settler’ colonial-collective economic viability.¹¹²

Land and resources are simply the basis for any nation or people from which livelihood and excess are extracted to provide social stability and mercantile profit. Australian national identity was nurtured by agriculture and manufacture, all of which patently relies on natural wealth and resources, i.e., access to land. The less one pays for access to land, by extension, increases profit.

¹⁰⁷ Maggie Walter, “Keeping Our Distance: Non-Indigenous/Aboriginal Relations in Australian Society,” in *Australia: Identity, Fear and Governance in the 21st Century*, ed. Juliet Pietsch et al. (Canberra: ANU Press, 2012), 29, accessed 12 May 2017, <http://press.anu.edu.au?p=210621>.

¹⁰⁸ Phillips, et al., *The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, 2007*.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹¹⁰ Walter, “Keeping Our Distance,” 20.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 388.

Patrick Wolfe extensively analyses the logic of elimination in his article on settler colonialism:

Whatever settlers may say—and they generally have a lot to say—the primary motive for elimination is not race (or religion, ethnicity, grade of civilization, etc.) but access to territory. Territoriality is settler colonialism’s specific, irreducible element.¹¹³

As Wolfe goes on to explain, ‘settler’ “colonialism destroys to replace”,¹¹⁴ yet the socio-cultural rubble they create through their efforts of clear-felling Indigenous peoples’ civilisation never goes to waste.

In Australia... (as in many other settler societies), the erasure of indigeneity conflicts with the assertion of settler nationalism. On the one hand, settler society required the practical elimination of the natives in order to establish itself on their territory. On the symbolic level, however, settler society subsequently sought to recuperate indigeneity in order to express its difference—and, accordingly its independence—from the mother country.¹¹⁵

Australia can rub shoulders with Turkey, Japan, Guatemala, the USA, and Rwanda, to name only a few nation states that maintain a denial of their atrocious actions either in the past or present.¹¹⁶

Neo-conservative-backed, revisionary denial is actually growing. As Hank Theriault writes in his essay, “Universal Social Theory and the Denial of Genocide: Norman Itzkowitz Revisited”,

Turkish denial of the Armenian genocide and the Japanese denial of various genocidal atrocities in Asia during the 1931-1945 period—is steadily, even exponentially, increasing—as are the institutional support and financial resources backing them.¹¹⁷

Denial continues the atrocity of genocide and is described as the eighth stage of genocide.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 389.

¹¹⁶ “Genocides, Politicides, and Other Mass Murder since 1945, with Stages in 2008,” *The Genocide Prevention Advisory Network*, accessed 12 May 2017, <http://www.gpanet.org/content/genocides-politicides-and-other-mass-murder-1945-stages-2008>.

¹¹⁷ Hank Theriault, “Universal Social Theory and the Denial of Genocide: Norman Itzkowitz Revisited,” in *Defining the Horrific: Readings on Genocide and Holocaust in the Twentieth Century*, ed. William L. Hewitt (New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004), 382.

¹¹⁸ “What Is Genocide?” *Genocide Watch: The International Alliance to End Genocide*, accessed 12 May 2017, <http://www.genocidewatch.org/genocide/whatisit.html>.

Through denial, Australian's present society is complicit in the Killing Time, aiding and abetting genocide by inaction and historical revision. The Australian national story includes all aspects of the United Nations' definition of genocide outlined in the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide" of 1951.¹¹⁹ Punishable acts applicable to present-day Australians include the "attempt to commit genocide" and "complicity in genocide" at the least.¹²⁰ The removal of children from Indigenous parents and family continues to be supported by Liberal and Labor governments, even after the *Bringing Them Home Report* of 1997 called for its end.¹²¹ This report called for an end to 'child protection', for compensation for those affected, and "[t]hat the Commonwealth legislate to implement the *Genocide Convention* with full domestic effect".¹²² The continued government-controlled separation of Indigenous families 'for their own sake' makes Kevin Rudd's 2008 'Sorry' speech to the Stolen Generations decidedly hollow. Well may have the Prime Minister of Australia felt private remorse, and in his speech outlined "[a] future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again".¹²³ Yet, as the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision's *2014 report Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators* reveals, the Australian

¹¹⁹ "Article II: In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," approved and proposed for signature and ratification or accession on 9 December 1948, entered into force on 12 January 1951, accessed 12 May 2017, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CrimeOfGenocide.aspx>.

¹²⁰ "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide."

¹²¹ *Bringing Them Home: National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families* (Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1997), accessed 12 May 2017, <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/bringing-them-home-report-1997>.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ "Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples," accessed 12 May 2017, <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/our-country/our-people/apology-to-australias-indigenous-peoples>.

government remains committed to ‘child protection’, which keeps the “injustices of the past” alive and active:¹²⁴

The report finds substantiated child protection notifications for Aboriginal children aged 0-17 years had increased from 29.5 per 1000 children in 2009-10 to 37.9 per 1000 children between 2012-2013. That’s despite the substantiation rate of non-Indigenous children remaining at 5 per 1000 children over that same period.... Nationally, the number of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children who were placed with non-Indigenous carers had increased, fluctuating between 23.3 per cent and 31.2 per cent from 2004 to 2013. It found the number of Aboriginal children placed with other Aboriginal families had decreased from 27.5 per cent to 16.3 per cent.¹²⁵

As Indigenous rates of imprisonment steadily rise, so do suicide rates among Indigenous people, and “hospitalisation for self-harm has increased over the past 9 years by nearly 50 per cent”.¹²⁶

Indigenous communities continue to suffer at the pleasure of the Australian federal, state and territory governments, which, by extension, only service and enact the wishes of the ‘settler’ colonial-collective. Child removal is termed ‘child protection’, with the main cause of “substantiated child protection notifications”¹²⁷ being issued for neglect, whereas the majority of non-Indigenous notifications are for reasons of emotional abuse.¹²⁸

From an Indigenous perspective, generations of Indigenous children continue to be imprisoned and stolen. ‘Settler’ Australians continue to rationalise the genocidal practices in current use with now well-worn and over-used arguments, underlined in the main by archaic racial ideology.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ SCRGSP, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2014*.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ ‘Settler’ concepts of Indigenous people are still framed by various discredited and outdated lingering eighteenth and nineteenth century ‘theories of race’, as lineage, as type and as subspecies, each theory in some ways evolving one from the other, and co-existing. See Michael Haralambos and Martin Holborn, *Sociology: Themes and perspectives*, 6th ed. (London: Collins, 2004).

All ‘racist’ theories were designed to justify genocide and theft of territory as morally and ethically defensible, a natural or holy progress of ‘civilisation’, genocide rewritten as an inevitable consequence of ‘race’ inferiority.

Through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, three categories of racial classification were shown evolving from and alongside each other, formulated by ‘racists’ such as Dr Samuel Moreton, J. C. Nott and G. R. Gliddon, Arthur de Gobineau, and Herbert Spencer.¹³⁰ ‘Race’ has subsequently been proven as a politically divisive pseudo-scientific construct, and “has no scientific basis”.¹³¹ As the geneticist Steve Jones was able to prove in 1991:

The overall genetic differences between ‘races’—Africans and Europeans say—are no greater than that between countries in Europe or within Africa. Individuals—not nations and not races—are the main repository of human variation¹³²

For geneticists and sociologists in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the term ‘race’ is obsolete, merely describing a Western-generated fiction. Nevertheless, as John Richardson and John Lambert point out, belief in ‘race’ lingers on in many societies and nations, the consequences of which are very real.¹³³

The social, cultural distance between ‘settler’ Australians and Indigenous peoples is borne out in the ninety percent of non-Indigenous people who took part in the *Survey*, who reported as having had little to no regular contact with Indigenous people. Socio-cultural proximity and awareness decreases with each new generation, each new cycle of denial. A contempt for, or inability to

¹³⁰ Ibid., 155–56.

¹³¹ Ibid., 157.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

empathise with, Indigenous trauma is still active in the Australian identity. A 2014 survey instigated by beyondblue, *Discrimination against Indigenous Australians: A Snapshot of the Views of Non-Indigenous People Aged 25–44*, outlines a quite unsympathetic and unaware Australian character with relation to racial discrimination.¹³⁴

The Australian ‘settler’ colonial-collective accepts a refracted history that jolts from one narrative of misdirection to another, jumping the puddles, avoiding them, leaping in to violently disperse them, but never seeing their own reflection in them, nor do they understand how these pools of tears form on their national path. The perpetuation of genocide has been normalised in the ‘settler’s’ way of understanding the world about them. Their schema, their perceptual framework, exists upon the exclusion of compromising data. Australia is a land of compromise. The Australian ‘settler’ colonial-collective’s existence is one of humanitarian compromise, of historical compromise, of perceptual compromise generated by the intergenerational socio-cultural turbine, a vicious cycle of denial that holds at bay any guilt that could traumatise them.

¹³⁴ “Awareness of the impact that discrimination has on Indigenous Australians needs to be improved. One in four (25 per cent) non-Indigenous Australians do not agree that experiencing discrimination has a negative personal impact for Indigenous Australians, and almost one in five (19 per cent) do not recognise that discrimination affects Indigenous Australians’ mental health. In addition, more than one in four (28 per cent) do not think that reducing discrimination against Indigenous Australians is a priority. Motivation to modify behaviour needs to be improved with regard to treating Indigenous Australians as equals. Racist attitudes and stereotypical beliefs such as the perception that Indigenous Australians receive unfair advantages from government also needs to be addressed to improve attitudes towards Indigenous Australians and ultimately reduce discrimination.” In TNS Social Research, *Discrimination against Indigenous Australians*.

Chapter 3: Takeaway Therapy

So many Aussies,
Jumping on our dead,
One fell down
And woke in dread.

Went an' called the doctor,
The doctor said,
"No more Aussies,
Jumping on our dead."¹³⁵

Few of us live without difficulties, and denial, by its function, can augment the management of anxiety around certain inevitabilities of life, such as financial stress and death. We help ourselves and those around us by not dwelling on mortality, for instance. The denial in focus here is of the dysfunctional sort. A denial cycle is worth disrupting in Australian society, and yet denial of that denial must be dealt with first. A patient who is in denial of their condition will quite often prove very responsive to therapy, comfortable in the knowledge that there is no problem at all, and the necessary and offending mantra of 'politically correct' piffle can be palmed and binned on the way out the door.

Two options seem to exist for those in denial: crisis or engagement. Crisis relies on a personal or closely related near miss or tragedy to jolt the subject out of denial and into acceptance. So, if a close friend dies explicitly of smoking, one may consider quitting smoking so as to avoid a similar demise. The subject may also be motivated by personal circumstance as with a grim medical prognosis. Engagement would most likely begin with an intervention, whereby family and friends voice their concerns and stakes in an issue, or a colleague or friend may simply air a problem they have with the subject's behaviour. Sensitive humour can be an 'icebreaker' in these

¹³⁵ David Jones, unpublished poetry 2017.

situations, a method possibly used to reveal the denial immediately or as a means of either gentle or abrupt rebuke. Only after the subject acknowledges a problem, demonstrated through tragedy or action of their disaffected peers, can therapy be entered into. Ultimately, the subject must choose to reflect on their problem for best possible long-term outcomes. According to Jorg Friedrichs, only when the denialist can “accept an alternative framing whereby denial is counterproductive” is there any chance for change, and that “rational persuasion” should be used.¹³⁶ Friedrichs nominates four points for successful outcomes:

1. Deniers should be persuaded that their orientations ought to be long-term rather than short-term.
2. Deniers should be persuaded that their problem is getting worse.
3. Deniers should be persuaded that their problem, painful as it may be, can be solved.
4. To counteract the risk of procrastination, deniers should be persuaded that, unless they act quickly, it will be too late because the solution will not be available anymore.¹³⁷

Australian ‘settlers’ need to suppress adversarial tendencies or strategies of rebuttal, which is based in an historical insecurity. ‘Settlers’ seem unable to empathise with the crisis we Indigenous people live with, and mostly resent any attempts at intervention from external ‘peer’ organisations such as the United Nations and International Court. Most Australians’ general growing lack of empathy¹³⁸ for Indigenous and ‘non-Australian’ people would seem to preclude any chance for this denial of genocide denial to be recognised any time soon. At an individual level, some ‘settler’ Australians may have managed to confront their society’s and culture’s denial of genocide, yet a nation of patriots is blissfully living the Australian dream in contrast to the Indigenous nightmare. Cultural events, and for my part exhibitions of artworks, offer a

¹³⁶ Jörg Friedrichs, “Useful Lies: The Twisted Rationality of Denial,” *Philosophical Psychology* 27, no. 2 (2014): 226, accessed 12 May 2017, DOI: 10.1080/09515089.2012.724354.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ TNS Social Research, *Discrimination against Indigenous Australians*.

medium through which an intervention could operate, with Indigenous concepts and perspectives on national history presented to ‘settler’ Australians in a Western culturally acceptable format. Exhibitions could also be the first step in graded and increasingly meaningful engagement with Indigenous concerns, history, and reality.¹³⁹ Through the fostering of socio-cultural and intergroup empathy, and recognising similarities in concerns and aspirations that each group hold, the reduction of cultural distance could be aspired to and the cycle of denial relinquished.

The process of reflection and growth that could follow denial is seen active in the Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Because the Jewish Holocaust has been publicly and privately acknowledged by the majority of people, past crimes can begin to be mitigated by the reflective and empathic attributes that are attributed to the progressive national identity and international cultural stereotype representing Germany. The Jewish Museum of Berlin’s Libeskind Building and Holocaust Tower are examples of how including difficult facts in a national narrative can be achieved in a public place for public education.¹⁴⁰ Why should Australian ‘settlers’ rely on World War II Germany for an example of genocide when one exists in practice in their own backyard? It has all the historical trappings of elaborate torture, trading in body parts and massacre, concentration camps and missions from the past, and ongoing child removal and imprisonment, ridicule and derision, discrediting and a racially inspired susurrations of justifications by the learned and not-so-learned in the present. The genocide denied in Australia makes hypocritical the humanitarian stance often assumed by the Australian government towards international humanitarian issues. Australia’s recent application for a seat on the United Nations Humanitarian

¹³⁹ “The Vicious Cycle of Anxiety,” Centre for Clinical Interventions.

¹⁴⁰ “The Libeskind Building,” Jewish Museum Berlin, accessed 14 May 2017, <https://www.jmberlin.de/en/libeskind-building>.

Council is a painful application of salt to now old wounds that the Indigenous bodies politic must bear.¹⁴¹

If the Australian ‘settler’ could understand and dismantle their constructed anosognosia,¹⁴² then perhaps the deeper cycle of denial could be unbalanced. As mentioned throughout this exegesis, the denial of genocide can be overlaid on one of anxiety. Anxiety is treatable with graduated situational exposure therapy. In essence, through graduated situational exposure, much like inuring oneself to a particular poison through small and then larger doses, the subject exposes themselves to situations that cause an anxious response. In a controlled manner and with trained supervision, confidence can be achieved after greater and greater autonomy and immersion in the problematic situation or exposure to ‘trigger’ events.

Through graduated situational exposure, subjects build up their confidence to the point of being equal to their initial fear, learn to relinquish and recognise safety behaviours, and relax the tense state of surveillance for perceived threat that can eclipse their lives. Therapy is meant to be supervised, methodically adhered to by the recipient, and exposure to causes of anxiety should be of long enough duration.¹⁴³ In the case of intergroup anxiety, this therapy could still apply. Simply enough, the group individuals involved begin with supervised short contact or hosted interludes—an exhibition of art perhaps—with the long-term aim of lengthy unsupervised and

¹⁴¹ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “Australia’s Candidacy for the United Nations Human Rights Council 2018–2020,” accessed 14 May 2017, <http://dfat.gov.au/international-relations/international-organisations/pages/australias-candidacy-for-the-unhrc-2018-2020.aspx>.

¹⁴² *Anosognosia* is described as “a lack of awareness or a denial of a neurological defect or illness in general, especially paralysis, on one side of the body. It may be attributable to a lesion in the right parietal lobe.” From *Mosby’s Medical Dictionary, 8th ed.*, s.v. “Anosognosia,” accessed 15 May 2017, <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/anosognosia>.

¹⁴³ “The Vicious Cycle of Anxiety,” Centre for Clinical Interventions.

even enjoyable group experiences with the ‘other’ group in question.

Yet, a number of impediments preclude a simple, let’s-go-visit-the-neighbours-and-have-tea response. The first problem that the standard Australian ‘settler’ may have with this intimate or individual end of the graded ‘other’ group exposure therapeutic process is a separation in physical space, with many ‘settlers’ never having even met an Indigenous person.¹⁴⁴

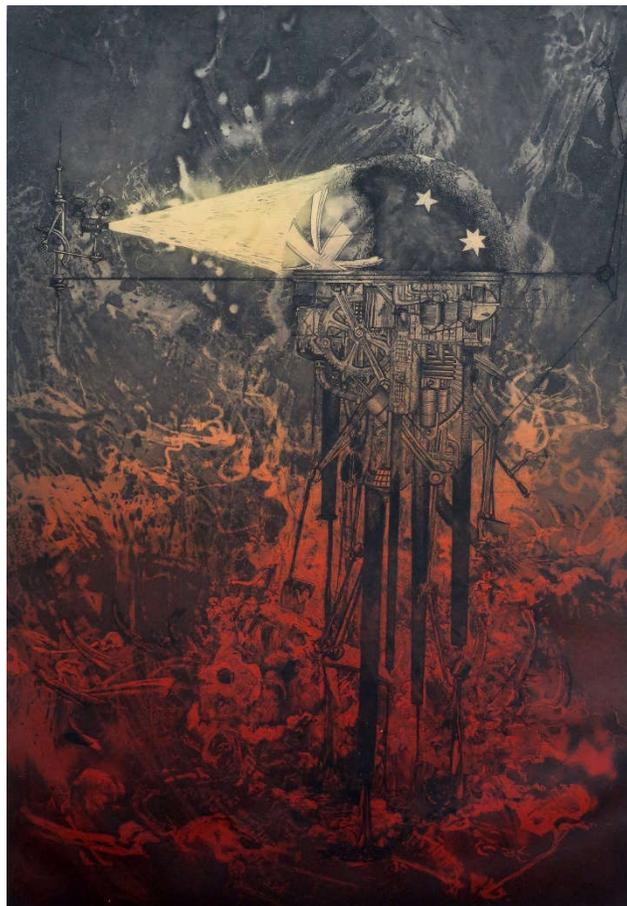


Figure 11 David Jones *National Bubble* (2015)

Geographically, Australian coastal and urban population densities contribute to a ‘screening off’ or occluding effect regarding Indigenous presence. When present in these heavily ‘settled’

¹⁴⁴ SCRGSP, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2014*.

areas, Indigenous people have historically been concentrated into an urban blind spot, or cast to the fringes of the Australian ‘settler’s’ perception. Thus, running into Indigenous people as a matter of course and on regular basis is unlikely given the nature of Australian suburbia, its remoteness from Indigenous Australian economic prospects and cultural desires. Indigenous people do not pine for the ordered streets and cut lawns, beneath which Indigenous bones lie and trampled ‘spirits of place’ languish, yet remain.

Adding to the separation of ‘groups’, the Australian ‘settler’ also seems to exist in a separated understood reality of land. Ploughed fields and cattle grates, long bitumen roads and the bright lights of the cities, cane fields and mines, beaches and backyards, and the lawn make up this ‘settler’ dream. And this ‘is’ Australia, as imagined by Australians, a land ‘found’ by ‘them’, ‘made’ by ‘them’. The ‘settler’s’ understanding of the lands rests along rail and road, station, city, field and mine. This understanding is set in manipulative and exploitative concepts. There is a very different concept, an economic concept of the physicality of the land ‘they’ stand on, as Wolfe points out with his logic of elimination argument.¹⁴⁵ Australians want to live in ‘Australia’ and ‘we’ want to live ‘here’, or djaa.

There is cultural distance too; many Indigenous peoples still hold fast to their languages and knowledge, law and history, where at all possible. All too often, Indigenous culture is still represented or framed as quaint at best, while nightmare fears of the cannibal ‘race’ still mangle under the fraught cultural serenity of the invading Australian. Cultural distance was shown to be

¹⁴⁵ Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” 388.

increasing in Maggie Walter's study,¹⁴⁶ and empathy to be languishing in beyondblue's study.¹⁴⁷

Leaping into the mass sentiment of a protest march provides fleeting relief, while protestors for the main though return to their 'normality' once the demonstration and any repercussions from that protest are over. Inevitably, all those 'settlers' who would see change in the Australian socio-historical perception of 'itself' regarding the Indigenous genocide must return to their privileged economic situations to survive. Protest is nevertheless a healthy and necessary outlet for aggrieved or rebellious or critical parties in any democratic system. Lost in the hurly burley of the protest, in the shadow of larger-than-life archetypes and stereotypes, in the throes of the cause, individual contact is rendered transient.

Maybe 'settler' and 'new' Australians could simply begin by reflecting on the individual space they take up economically, culturally, and historically. Maybe each Australian must understand from an individual point of view what underpins their individual wellbeing and prosperity, where their opportunities spring from. 'They' issue forth from the well of our demise, from the mimbri¹⁴⁸ of Indigenous intergenerational pain of loss that is genocide.

It is human to dislike being told we are wrong, even if we know we are wrong and prefer to live in denial. We do not like to be told to eat the last piece of cake even if we like the cake and eat it. In the case of denial of violent national foundation then, the subject in denial must first recognise 'it'. Self-initiated recognition would then possibly be most conducive to taking the next step of

¹⁴⁶ Walter, "Keeping Our Distance."

¹⁴⁷ TNS Social Research, *Discrimination against Indigenous Australians*.

¹⁴⁸ Dalungbarra word use for a place or thing of 'issuing forth' and to a degree, 'increase' when specifically related to geography. I believe this term is Jinabarra too.

seeking or initiating self-therapy. Self-directed therapy could involve a graded interaction with an Indigenous history of Australia or could begin with supporting several organisations devoted to reconciliatory efforts. Just researching the land on which one lives could begin the process. Since denial impedes or obstructs any therapy, recognising denial is a high priority for overcoming symptoms and causes of the root malaise.

Self-initiated recognition must begin the deconstruction of denial. An art gallery¹⁴⁹—or a work of art itself—is a site where, according to recent Western tradition, social or cultural reinforcement or radical, challenging comment is almost expected by the viewer. An exhibition experience allows physical movement or leaving if one is inclined to, social interaction, or talking on occasion, as well as quiet contemplation as chance permits. Depending on how overt the visual message is, a relatively large degree of interpretational space could be imagined, wherein the decision to reflect on denial's existence may be easier to own as self-initiated, rather than directed.

An art exhibition can have the same effect as a life-changing book or movie, speech, play, or concert. Unlike these mediums, however, with art, the viewer is not physically and mentally immersed in the narrative of the artist through constraints of viewing. The increased interpretive space of the exhibition experience possibly allows suggestion without overt direction.

¹⁴⁹ These white-walled rooms are the aesthetic wing of the mansion of the national mind. Each room has corridors leading off to other departments, the national narrative typing pool is at the end of one. There are secret passages too that wend their way between room and hall down to grottos of racial thought and plotting. The gallery has a history of connection with many departments, its denizens are frequently found constructing new connections, renovating old ones.

The visual scholarship this exegesis supports is meant to incite speculation in the ‘settler’ viewer. Black humour is couched in rhymes that attend images of historical distortion or fantasy in *The Australian Cook Book: Six Easy to Follow Steps for Inventing a Nation* (2016), which is an introduction to the visual submission. The book is physically light-hearted though the message shouldn’t be. ‘It’ is an artistic intervention of sorts for an aspect of the Australia Day re-affirmations of invasion each year, embodied in the enthusiastic ‘settler’ Australian re-enactments of Captain James Cook’s ‘discovery’ and ‘claiming’ of an ‘empty’ land. The book may be fanciful, yet so was the declaration of British sovereignty—at least, from an Indigenous point of view.

In most cases, the images are produced via an etching print, quite a lush and sumptuous medium for the eye, meant to accommodate an aesthetic seduction of sorts. Visual content varies from fanciful to literal, black humour to grotesque. Text of historical accounts are paired with the more literal works, excerpts from the exegesis are hung with the more fantastic. Through research, texts utilised were a small number of those retrieved from historical publication, more often though from databases such as Trove and its records of the *Maryborough Chronicle* publications during the late 1800s and early 1900s.¹⁵⁰ Excerpts from the exegesis are included, inspired by or inspiration for the works concerned. Text and image are placed together in an optional situation where text can evoke strong visuals and visuals can intimate textual narrative, a story.

Re-imagining May Gibbs’ gumnut babies as ‘settler’ Australians is metaphoric of both the fanciful dissociated reality that Australian ‘settlers’ maintain through denial and the writing of

¹⁵⁰ “Trove,” National Library of Australia, accessed 14 May 2017, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/>.

bush folklore over a landscape violently emptied of Indigenous peoples' law. A process of 'owning' and 'knowing' a land through literature and visual arts followed the frontier's passing. Indigenous prior presence is mostly written over and out of the picture, Australian 'settlers' went to great lengths to hide the memory of conflict with Indigenous first people from generations to come after them.



Figure 12 David Jones *Specimen 16: Gumnut infantem feroces australis* (2015)

Stories of 'pioneer' versus environment come hard on the heels of convict tribulations; the Killing Time is neatly omitted mostly. Artists such as Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson and Steel Rudd, May Gibbs, Dorothy Wall, Arthur Streeton, and Margaret Preston tried to reinscribe the 'land', romanticising the 'bush' for a developing 'Australian type'.

In my artwork entitled *Specimen 16: Gumnut infantem feroces australis* (2014), some of the gumnuts on display are dormant, though not all (figure 12). Australian 'settler' society yet has an eerie wistfulness for the 'good ol' days' when there were no land rights marches and everyone knew their place, which echoes the postcolonial melancholia Peter Gilroy writes of as

manifesting in British society in the early 2000s.¹⁵¹

Presently, there may be more ‘ordinary’ Australians than previously who wish to settle this 200-odd-year-old dispute, yet that proportion of society is still not large, and support remains qualified. *The Native Title Act 1993* is held up as a great achievement towards the reconciliation process by the Australian government, and, by extension, the ‘settler’ population. It was a legal mechanism by which assumption of authority over who has ‘connection’ to land and culture was rendered into the hands of the Australian state, represented in the Native Title Tribunal and Registrar.¹⁵² The United Nations has also criticised Native Title as prioritising ‘settler’ Anglo-European interests above those of first nation peoples, constituting an institutionalised racism.¹⁵³ Native Title is also subject to extinguishment, somehow very ironic.

Waving history and statistics at the denialist transcribes into an ‘unwarranted’ guilt trip for most ‘ordinary’ Australians, which in turn leads to the “why can’t ‘they’ get over it” response, and the ‘settler’ perpetrator then feels ‘victimised’. Most of the Australian ‘settler’ population will never consent to, or are likely able to participate in therapy designed to ‘unpack’ their denial of the reliance they have on genocide, for their present state of socio-economic wellbeing. The Australian national identity is unlikely to take on serious reflective qualities anytime soon. As borne out by multiple sequential studies from recognised public bodies and authorities, the cultural and social distance between ‘settlers’ and Indigenous peoples is a growing thing.

¹⁵¹ Peter Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

¹⁵² Australian Government, “Native Title Registrar and Deputy Registrar,” accessed 14 May 2017, <http://www.nntt.gov.au/aboutus/OrganisationalStructure/Pages/Registrar-and-Deputy-Registrars-.aspx>.

¹⁵³ Emma Alberici, “UN Says Discrimination Embedded in Australia,” *ABC News* (Australian Broadcasting Corporation), 28 August 2010, accessed 15 May 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2010-08-28/un-says-discrimination-embedded-in-australia/961306>.

Conclusion

How can this later stage of genocide ever be dismantled if it is invisible to the perpetrator through a state of Australian anosognosia, if you will, where there is an inability in the subject to perceive its own paralysis of ethics and morals when answering to questions of land ownership, its acquisition, and the sharing of it? How can there ever be an easing of the automatic paroxysm of ill will in the ‘settler’ regarding Indigenous land rights in Australia? How can the ‘settler’ ever be comfortable with who my father was and what he wanted?

The Australian ‘settler’ society’s cognitive dissonance involves accepting Indigenous ‘connection’ to land romantically but not accepting Indigenous ownership of land realistically. Historically, letters published and posted, and notes written in diaries carefully kept, attest to an element of discord in ‘settler’ Australian society. Letters published in the *Moreton Bay Courier* in 1861 testify to the existence of some outraged souls, but the cheering crowd that lined the Maryborough wharf to watch Lieutenant O’Connor-Bligh shoot a young Indigenous man in the back at point blank range outnumbers the voice of admonishment.¹⁵⁴

Australians are struck with disbelief that dressing up as Indigenous North Americans to welcome in the Comanche while hooting as they were taught to when playing cowboys and Indians could

¹⁵⁴ This act and others of similar brutality were rewarded; the officer received a dress sword for his actions inscribed by the people of Maryborough as follows: “Presented to Lieutenant John O’Connor-Bligh 1861 as a mark of esteem for his services in suppressing the outrages of the blacks.” From, A Believer in Gasson’s Statement, “Lieutenant Bligh’s Sword,” *The Moreton Bay Courier*, 25 April 1861, accessed 9 April 2016, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3722918>.

be a disrespectful act in the least.¹⁵⁵ The international and Indigenous community didn't get the humour of 'settler' Australian sportspeople blackening their faces with boot polish either.¹⁵⁶ 'Whistle-blowers' were even vilified for "spoiling the fun", for being too "politically correct".¹⁵⁷

Education and awareness could head off some embarrassing misunderstandings though. An example of this lack of education is the repeated theft of a Torres Strait flag flown at the Malahang Reserve, Heidelberg West, in Melbourne's north-west.¹⁵⁸ Through a phone call to Councillor Langdon, the thefts were explained, with the person calling stating that they "don't like the Arabic flag".¹⁵⁹ The repeated theft speaks of an uneducated, irrational, and a little paranoid character, possibly inherited social characteristics of an Australian 'settler' society that feels at home with a maintained historical dissonance.

While Indigenous imprisonment rates grow steadily, the Australian 'settler' government makes more prisons in other nations too, for asylum seekers and refugees, who are all sent to Nauru and Manus Island, Cambodia, and now the USA. 'Settlers' seem concerned they will be 'swamped' by undeserving 'foreigners' who will culturally make them strangers in 'their' own land. In this regard, I believe that Pauline Hanson's rhetoric of fear represents this groundswell the best. The problem may be that Australians are comfortable in their delusion and do not have much interest

¹⁵⁵ Aneeta Bhole, "Kristy Hinze-Clark Sang Racist Chants after Sydney to Hobart Win," *Daily Mail Online*, 29 December 2015, accessed 15 May 2017, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3376884/Supporters-Kristy-Hinze-Clark-s-winning-Sydney-Hobart-yacht-Comanche-slammed-wearing-racist-native-American-headaddresses-shouting-war-cries.html>.

¹⁵⁶ Elise Elliot, "Here's an Idea for a Costume: Anything but Blackface," *Herald Sun*, 16 May 2016, accessed 15 May 2017, <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/rendezview/heres-an-idea-for-a-costume-anything-but-blackface/news-story/d5becd844aa675481200aa55eadd7a70>.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Nakari Thorpe, "Torres Strait Islander Flag Repeatedly Stolen after Being Mistaken for 'Arabic' Flag," *NITV News*, 24 February 2016, accessed 15 May 2017, <http://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2016/02/24/torres-strait-islander-flag-repeatedly-stolen-after-being-mistaken-arabic-flag>.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

in socio-cultural change, even though accepting their historical situation probably wouldn't bring about the end of the nation anyway.

The tradition of Indigenous resistance and social critique through the visual arts contributes to the possibility of social change in Australia. As part of the broader effort for social change around Indigenous issues in the Australian 'settler' community, arts have always been a visible and valuable medium for dialogue and education. While contributing towards economic empowerment and the consolidation and continuance of Indigenous identity, art can also call into question the self-view of the 'ordinary' Australian 'settler'. This is where my project sits. Within the category of social critique, this project should, if successful, cause a moment of reflection in the 'settler' Australian viewer. If a moment of doubt regarding Australia's maintained story of peaceful and benevolent settlement can be suggested or induced in the intended audience, then maybe that audience can take with them, back into their normal life, a potential for personal change at least. If government and nation are magnified, they are made of each and every patriot, every individual's support and imagining. So, individual change must eventually lead to broader social change as long as there is a strong tradition of continued Indigenous resistance, one aspect of which is the visual art scholarship. Though there may only be minute and grindingly slow change regarding 'settler' Australian denial—and even, it seems, regression in some cases—continued Indigenous social critique of Australian society must be a maintained tradition for the time being. Recently, part of the land that I am related to, Fraser Island, has been renamed; its national park renamed K'gari, meaning paradise.¹⁶⁰ Though this is mostly only a symbolic

¹⁶⁰ Jess Lodge, "Fraser Island's National Park Renamed K'gari, Meaning Paradise," *ABC News* (Australian Broadcasting Corporation), 24 April 2017, accessed 15 May 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-24/fraser-islands-national-park-renamed-kgari-paradise-aboriginal/8460808>.

change, the return of Indigenous place names as currently being discussed and implemented by the Australian federal government could shift the understanding of where ‘settler’ Australians are and on whose land they stand. Any movement howsoever tentative towards a re-understanding of Australian history in the minds of ‘ordinary’ Australians is to be lauded.

Symbolic forms of recognition for Indigenous relationship to the land that Australia is built on may only be the thinnest possible end of a taper towards a reconciliatory national future though. Practical social change of attitudes in Australian ‘settler’ society and actual reparation for Indigenous peoples is still far away. And so, what more can this project do than contribute toward an already, and necessarily rich tradition of Indigenous resistance and survival through visual scholarship?

Epilogue

Far to the right, the light of Capitol Hill's pyre of nation burns brightest as the devotees stoke their fervent blaze for Australia Day. Smaller flares in red, blue, and white dot that dreary landscape, patriotic communities all march on and on through their archaic dreams of benign cultural superiority. Would that those with their shoulders to the task cease their toil for a moment, spell that old horse Glory for a time, and reflect on their actions. That old creaking corpus of empire remains upon its curved course though, driven on by the fervent and indifferent alike. Upon a re-inscribed land, the Australian 'settler' treads with infinite care, lest their footfall tear the thin veneer of a carefully crafted nation state. Their march of Australian progress and pride leaves an intergenerational wake of imposed physical and mental trauma that ripples through the already rent cosmos of Indigenous peoples' interconnection and reciprocation.

Out here, flitting along the pressure seams of "Malinowski shapes",¹⁶¹ where my identity often finds itself, my attitude is checked by tendrils/vanes of memory that orient my perspective. From here, between the Indigenous socio-cultural bio-cosmos and 'settler' landscaped Australian society and culture, 'settler' colonial-collective denial looks much like a churning vicious cycle of anxiety. The flow of the 'settler' colonial-collective on its seeming curved course kicks up a socio-culturally corrosive, looming storm-front of individually minute, culturally abrasive actions and inactions. The great monoliths that 'settler' Australians struggle with, ever and on, in their endless march of action without reflection, leave an audible wake. Generated by the hollows and holes in those national constructs, the monotonous whine is tolerated or ignored by a

¹⁶¹ Healy, *Literature and the Aborigine in Australia, 1770-1975*.

minority in the ‘settler’ Australian society. Many more chant in sanctimonious harmony as they toil for nation or sing along in strident and over-exuberant glee. Either way, dancing or marching, they ignore the odd clatter and crunch of bone underfoot. Most has been swept away, before the majority advance, or hidden in the national cabinet of historical denial, and the individual family cupboards of personalised misremembering.



Figure 13 David Jones *Old Horse Glory* (2015)

The ever-expanding socio-cultural storm-front is lit up by the perpetually polarising racial frisson along its outward frontier. Those ‘settlers’ who form the intergenerational vanguard of ‘progress’ work where lightning strikes of ‘pure white policy’ earth, in the light of the crackle and flicker of simplistic, racial ideologies they toil. The pure/sterile white light illuminates their immediate course, blinding them from future ramifications attached to present actions, and the effects of past actions on their present course. Australian politicians and polity alike remain trapped in their

bright 'false now', a "false concept of reality",¹⁶² dissociated from reality through the pursuit of material wealth, power, and prestige. Would that their cold hearts warm with empathy, that the splinter of racial looking glass in their eyes melt; then they could see their own footprints ahead of them in the land, churned up by their cyclic procession, and step aside from that eddy of denial and onto a path of real progress.¹⁶³

¹⁶² Gilbert, *Because a White Man 'll Never Do It*, xvii.

¹⁶³ Such as Hans Christian Andersen's Kay in *The Snow Queen* story found at the website, H.C. Andersen Centret, "Hans Christian Andersen: The Snow Queen," accessed 15 May 2017, http://www.andersen.sdu.dk/vaerk/hersholt/TheSnowQueen_e.html#top.

Appendix: Printmaking Practice

To this point, printmaking has been central to my career in the arts. After graduating from Queensland College of Art (QCA), Griffith University, with first-class Honours in 2004, I established Under the House of Art (UHA) in partnership with Jacek Rybinski. This fine art printing business operated until 2011, during which time we printed editions for artists such as Dennis Nona, Alick Tipoti, David Bosun, Brian Robinson, Billy Missi, and Michael Zavros, to name a few. Many of these prints were large, innovative and technically challenging. By 2009, we had a second press delivered. Probably the largest press of its kind in the world, with a bed size of 4.5 x 2m, it was engineered and manufactured by Artequip Pty Ltd, Braeside, Victoria. Utilising and exploring the potential of this machine was an important basis for this project. The photos below give some perspective of its size.



Figure 14 Large-format roller-style etching press



Figure 15 Large-format roller-style etching press, detail of 2m wide bed

Since leaving UHA, I have established my own printing studio that offers specialist printing services. I have printed for a number of established artists, such as Alick Tipoti, Michel Tuffery, Ross Woodrow, and Ryan Presley, as well as a number of emerging artists from the Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art programme (CAIA) and the Bachelor of Arts programme at QCA.

In 2014, I was fortunate to be invited to participate in *Body Politic*, which was held in early January 2015 at the ICEBOX Project Space, Crane Arts, Philadelphia, and to meet the exhibition curator Richard Hricko. This gave me opportunity to experiment with a 7 x 1.27m print, just fitting in the huge gallery space. The explanatory text from the *Turtleboy and Puppet's Cabinet of Curiosity* exhibition was included in the accompanying publication. The print was a multiple

woodblock relief print on approximately 300 gsm Somerset rag paper. An image of it installed is provided in Figure 16 and to the right is an excerpt from the published text.



Figure 16 David Jones *Turtleboy* (A small souvenir of the Great Western Paradigm's Delusions of Superiority) comes to the rescue, Puppet is in danger of coming unstrung... Will it be able to save Puppet in time? (2014)

Turtle boy and Puppet are small souvenirs from a racially prejudiced past. They are repositioned in fine art today in order to draw attention to the fact that racism may be officially abhorrent, yet in a public and private sense continues being taught and maintained within mainstream Australian society.

The project for consideration relies on a sort of melancholic humour to prompt uncomfortable questions, in order to elicit a reflective or critical response in the viewer. This is primarily for the benefit of a Western viewer. These are not the voice of Indigenous Australia, they will no longer stand for the 'other' but become metaphors for what remains in the Western gaze, a sentimental and nostalgic attachment to the simplification and degradation of 'others'.

The deconstructive visual journey of Turtleboy and Puppet is intended to highlight the need to delineate political racism active in the present, the need to identify and realize the problem in order to deal with it.¹⁶⁴

In 2016, I was contacted by the Director of KickArts Contemporary Arts Ltd in Cairns, Justin Bishop. Badu Island Art Centre required twelve 2m and a number of smaller linoleum blocks printed for an upcoming show, *Sageraw Thonar: Stories from the Southeasterly Season: Contemporary Expressions of Cultural Knowledge from Badu Art Centre*, at KickArts.¹⁶⁵ A

¹⁶⁴ Amze Emmons and Richard Hricko, eds., *Body Politic* (Philadelphia: Crane Arts, 2015), last modified 1 August 2016, <https://www.griffith.edu.au/visual-creative-arts/queensland-college-art/qca-publications/body-politic>.

¹⁶⁵ Alick Tipoti and Louise Martin-Chew, eds., *Sageraw Thonar: Stories from the Southeasterly Season: Contemporary Expressions of Cultural Knowledge from Badu Art Centre* (Cairns: KickArts Contemporary Arts, 2016).

workshop ensued at my studio where I was fortunate to meet three of the artists—Cr Laurie Nona, Matilda Malujewel Nona, and Aoina Tala Gaidan, the latter of whom is also master printmaker for the Badu Arts Centre. I was also able to meet Dian Darmansjah of Firebox Studio in Cooran, Queensland, a master printmaker who graduated from the Tamarind Institute of New Mexico, USA. Over the four-day workshop, my conversations with Dian ranged from printmaking studio benchmark practices, professional practices, business models and printmaking market and pricing to the more practical concerns of various printmaking techniques and process. Dian was open with his wealth of experience and knowledge, forcing me to revise my costing at the least. During the workshop, Laurie, Matty, Tala, Dian, my partner Anastasia and I printed twelve 2 x 1.2m and four 1.2m² linoleum blocks on Hahnemühle 300gsm rag paper. Fortunately, Anastasia and I were later able to attend the opening in Cairns, which was held to coincide with the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair.



Figure 17 Author with Tala Gaidan's work at *Sageraw Thonar*, printed at Corvine Art Studio (2016)

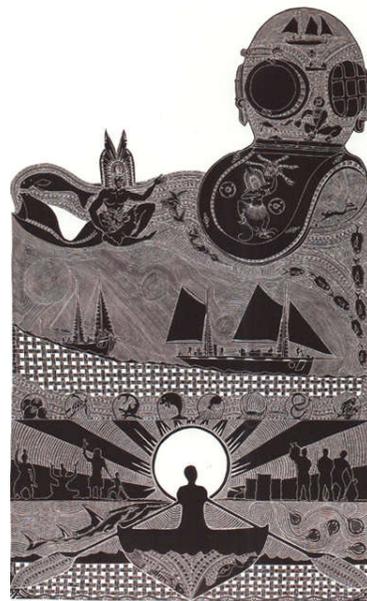


Figure 18 *Badhu Habaka*, by Laurie Nona, printed at Corvine Art Studio for *Sageraw Thonar* (2016)

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