Cultural value and books in public debate in Australia 2003-2008

Jan Zwar, BA, MIR

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Economics

Faculty of Business and Economics

Macquarie University

5 December 2011

Abstract

Cultural value and books in public debate in Australia 2003-2008

The years 2003-2008 were a time of heightened public debate in Australia. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, books which offered critiques of the Bush and Howard governments, and which questioned developments in international and domestic politics, found interested readerships. One publisher has recalled this as a distinct period of unusual Australian appetite for books about serious issues. Such books were amongst a range of narrative non-fiction works (e.g., essay, biography, memoir, extended journalism) through which their authors sought to participate in civic debate. Surely, if books made a contribution to contemporary public debate, this timeframe would provide a compelling case study.

This research analyses the Nielsen BookScan top 5000 non-fiction book sales from 2003-2008 in Australia, focusing on critiques and other popular narrative non-fiction "reading patterns" identified in the data. The project examines reading patterns in relation to two major debates, namely the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan, and Australia's policies towards asylum seekers; the extent and popularity of overseas-authored and Australian books; and whether Australian independent publishers have made distinctive contributions to public debate through the types of books they published during this period.

The findings are considered in the context of the developing conceptual body of work about cultural value in economics, and theoretical work on readerships in book history.

Thanks and acknowledgements

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction

> *"…a major development in Australian literature is the rise of non-fiction as the pre-eminently literary category."*
>
> > *David McCooey, 2006, Australian Book Review, p 26*

> *"Dr. King once said that the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends towards justice. It bends towards justice, but here is the thing: it does not bend on its own. It bends because each of us in our own ways put our hand on that arc and we bend it in the direction of justice..."*
>
> > *Barack Obama, 2008, on the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King.*

> *"PEN believes in civil society."*
>
> > *Eric Lax, International Treasurer, PEN, speaking at the Sydney Writers Festival on 20 May 2010.*

1.1 Background

"During the four centuries when printed paper was the only means by which complex texts could be carried in quantity across time and distance, almost everyone believed that reading had vital consequences" (St. Clair, 2004 p 9). William St Clair's examination of the political economies of books and reading in England from the 1600s through to World War 1, and their relation to societal mentalities, conveys confidence about the influence of printed texts because during that time books were the dominant form of recorded communication. In the conclusion to *The Reading Age in the Romantic Period* he notes the difficulty of undertaking such studies in a contemporary timeframe because so many other media options are available, and therefore an examination of the role of printed texts is much more complicated (ibid p 451). St Clair offers a challenge that has been accepted in the course of this research, which focuses on some of the most divisive years of public debate in Australia's recent history, from 2003-2008; the last six years of John Howard's conservative government in Australia.

There are a number of reasons for selecting this timeframe:

- These were years of heightened public debate and controversy in Australia. Examples of issues which generated heated discussion included Australia's participation in wars in

Afghanistan and Iraq, draft Work Choices (industrial relations) legislation, Australia's treatment of asylum seekers, global warming, the "history wars", and the government's treatment of Indigenous Australians. Surely, if books were to make a contemporary contribution to public debate, this timeframe provides a compelling case study.

- This period is close to contemporary market conditions for the Australian publishing industry, giving some scope to relate the findings to the present situation.[1]
- It poses an appealing challenge. Knowing that even then there was a preponderance of other forms of media to which Australians turned for news and current affairs, would it be possible to identify ways in which books played a role in public debates?

1.2   Anxieties about the contemporary publishing industry

This research also addresses anxieties about the contemporary publishing market. Unease about the operation of publishing markets and the buying preferences of readers dates back at least to the time dealt with in St Clair's study[2] but it has acquired an additional urgency recently overseas and in Australia. Michael Korda, a former editor in chief of Simon & Schuster, who edited and oversaw many US bestsellers, as well as being a bestselling author himself, drew attention to:

> …the sordid question of what is selling as opposed to the question of what is worth reading. From the very beginning, serious reviewers were dismayed with the bestseller list, and the marked tendency it demonstrated of Americans failing to heed the advice and warnings of book reviewers (then as now). Even today, a reader of the *New York Times* Book Review can hardly fail to note the obvious difference between the books that are prominently and/or seriously reviewed, and those that appear on the list (Korda, 2001 p xxi).

This anxiety has been expressed in Australia and has intensified in recent years. Susan Lever (2008) echoed Korda when she wrote: "At the literary end of the scale, there is an obvious disparity between the literary readership that awards prizes such as the Miles Franklin and Premier's prizes, and the readers who buy books" (p 64). Peter Craven took anxieties about the Australian publishing marketplace to another level: "What alarms many people in the literary world at the moment is that we may be in the midst of a market that is so free it's at the point of being entropic – that is, it has so few quality controls that it ceases to be trustworthy in any sense" (Craven, 2008 p 67).

---

[1] Note, however, that Michael Webster, former CEO of Nielsen BookScan, estimates that during the period of the research, book sales via the Internet rose from 1% to 5% of all sales (Webster 2009). Sales have subsequently increased further and it would be methodologically difficult to conduct a study now or in the future without accounting for online sales.

[2] For example, "The gentlemen who founded the Lewes Literary Society in 1786, were 'disgusted at the usual trash of the circulating libraries'" (St. Clair, 2004 p 249). "Even though many authors expressed disgust at the vulgar sensationalism of others, none could afford to abandon the hope of creating a sensation himself" (Eisenstein, 2005 p 117), writing about the early 1800s.

In the 2000s some US surveys revealed an overall decline in book reading (National Endowment for the Arts, 2004, 2007) and "the death of the book" was debated by journalists and academics (Crain, 2007, Young, 2007). A *New York Times* article was illustrated by a staged photograph of a family reading: the father with a newspaper, the mother with a novel, and two children reading on screen.

Figure 1 The photo accompanying a *New York Times* article titled "The Future of Reading: Literacy Debate: Online, R U Really Reading?" July 27, 2008.

Industry and academic analysts varied in the degree to which they were pessimistic about the future of the book but they were at pains to distinguish between shifts in the popularity of the codex (printed books) to ebooks for some forms of reading, and key ways in which books, including ebooks, would remain part of a recognisable publishing industry (Young, 2007, Gomez, 2008, Kovač, 2008). At the end of the decade, in a major study of the US and UK trade publishing sectors, John B. Thompson reviewed these predictions and concluded that "few industries have had their death foretold more frequently than the book publishing industry, and yet somehow, miraculously, it seems to have survived them all – at least till now" (Thompson, 2010 p 1). However, as Thompson notes, the rapid consumer uptake of ebook readers has since commenced and changes in the ways people purchase and read some types of books are inevitable. These changes commenced on a broad scale after the conclusion of the period of the current study, and therefore, this study provides an opportunity to examine the contemporary dynamics of books, publishers and readers immediately before the wide-scale impact of e-readers. That is, this research is set in a unique window: starting in 2003, the first year of methodologically comparable Australian national book sales data, and ending before e-reading became popular.

The reading (and book buying) habits of consumers are strongly correlated with demographics. To generalise, women are more likely to buy books, as are those who have higher educational qualifications such as a university degree (Productivity Commission, 2009 p 2.7). People under 45 are less likely to buy books, although sales to adults who buy books for children are strong. "Book purchasing is skewed towards higher-income households, but disadvantaged sections of

the population, especially the unemployed, are overrepresented among library users" (Lee, 2010)[3].

In Australia, research such as *Young Australians Reading: from keen to reluctant readers* (Australia Council for the Arts, 2001) and *Keeping Young Australians Reading* (State Library of Victoria, 2009) have found that the "enjoyment of reading for pleasure drops dramatically in teenagers, with 45 percent of primary students saying they really like reading for pleasure, down to 24 percent amongst secondary school students" (Australia Council for the Arts, 2001 p 19). The reports reflect a number of concerns: that Australians in general are not buying and reading as much "quality literature" (let alone Australian quality literature) as literary educators would like (perhaps not surprisingly, the authors noted a difference between the types of books teenagers said they would like to read for pleasure and the books prescribed on Year 12 English curricula (ibid p 9)); Australians are not reading *books* as often as book enthusiasts would like; that younger Australians, in particular, devote a considerable proportion of their time to reading from computer screens; and also that demographic changes in book reading practices among young Australians would have significant educational, social and intellectual consequences for them in later life.

These are nuanced studies, but it is instructive to think about these issues in another context. Book historians have demonstrated that throughout history, the vast majority of printed texts read by people were not "literature". They were almanacs, home manuals, or the contemporary equivalent of "penny dreadfuls". There is the risk of false nostalgia for ages of widespread literary taste and sophistication across broad social groups – which never existed. However, despite this background about Australian readers, the main interest of this study is in Australian *publishers*, and it is stressed throughout that we await further research to uncover more about the reading practices of individual contemporary Australians.

Australian publishers were drawn into public debate about their operations when an inquiry was announced in November 2008 by the federal government into the removal of parallel importation restrictions on books. The Productivity Commission's inquiry generated over 500 submissions from people including authors, publishers, booksellers, and representatives of writers' organisations. It promoted discussion about the strengths and vulnerabilities of the Australian industry. Richard Flanagan reflected the views of many in the industry when he claimed that "Australian publishing over the last 30 years is a cultural success story, perhaps our greatest, that for some peculiar reason we choose not only to ignore but to denigrate" (Flanagan, 2007 p 134).

There are many ways in which the industry can be characterised as a success. Although Australians have read books since European settlement (and were also enthusiastic non-professional writers as colonial-era diarists and letter-writers (Whitlock, 2000 p 233)), for over a

---

[3] This research does not cover borrowing from public libraries. Enquiries were made to a number of libraries, but aggregate digital borrowing records were not available for reasons that include privacy concerns, and also libraries do not store this data long term.

century the Australian market was essentially captive to British publishers. In 1945 the federal government was advised by the Commonwealth Librarian that Australia didn't possess a publishing industry, and in 1964 Gough Whitlam characterised its readers as "a captive market, a subject people" (Flanagan, ibid). This depiction is now unrecognisable. Australia has a vibrant and enthusiastic population of readers, and a profitable and diverse publishing industry. Writers' festivals have attracted increasingly larger audiences over the last decade, book sales have increased and writers' organisations such as the Australian Society of Authors and more recently PEN, have been active in public life.

However, it is possible to characterise the Australian publishing industry as one which is both confident about its achievements, while also subject to intense anxieties about structural market changes, which include the growing sales of ebooks, the take-up of online ordering and the dominance of discount department stores in the book retail sector. When the editors of *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing* "posed the question to Laurie Muller, then of University of Queensland Press (UQP), of whether the Australian industry was in crisis or was flourishing, his answer was: 'Yes…both'" (Carter and Galligan, 2007c p 3).

In 2009, after intense lobbying from supporters of both sides of the debate, the federal government announced that it would not remove the parallel importation restrictions. Despite this, further reviews of the sector seem inevitable. The Productivity Commission's final report (Productivity Commission, 2009) pays tribute to many of the positive attributes of the industry, including its Australian literary output, but one aspect remains unexplored, which is the subject of this research. Many studies of publishing and readerships note the social dimension of readers and their books, but focus on readers and reading as individual acts of economic consumption and personal pursuit. This research locates the Australian publishing industry in social, economic and cultural contexts. It examines sales data to identify popular "reading patterns", the cultural diversity of the books and the contributions of different types of publishers, all within the framework of cultural value; a new theoretical field in cultural economics.

1.3   Australian narrative non-fiction books and Australian cultural life

Assumptions about the type of literature that is significant in Australia's national cultural life have changed substantially. It was once assumed that fiction and poetry would be the most prominent artistic genres in a developing body of Australian literature. However, a marked market swing towards non-fiction books occurred in the 1990s, which generated considerable industry and academic attention. Over the last two decades narrative non-fiction has risen in significance in Australia in a number of ways. At its most popular, it sells in large numbers: tens of thousands of copies for bestsellers, to over a hundred thousand copies in a handful of cases each year. It is perceived by many writers, publishers and readers as offering opportunities for innovative, stimulating literary work, and is no longer perceived as a staid handmaid to fiction (Whitlock, 2000). In universities, the study and teaching of creative non-fiction genres has

achieved increased respectability. University research centres and funding institutions such as the Australian Research Council (ARC) sponsor research into non-fiction forms such as biography, autobiography, memoir and the essay. The publication of narrative non-fiction is also acknowledged as a way of contributing to public debates on important matters ranging from the Stolen Generations to other moral, political, economic and historical debates.

Understanding why narrative non-fiction forms of writing are generating such attention involves examining developments in the Australian publishing industry, amongst markets and readerships, and in academia. In brief, these developments include:

- A marked increase in Australian sales figures for non-fiction titles as a proportion of total sales, to the point where non-fiction titles outsell fiction titles overall (Mordue, 2003).
- The identification of what David Carter calls the "middlebrow audience": middle-class book buyers who are interesting in accomplished literary works that deal seriously with moral and ethical issues. Such works could be fiction or non-fiction, but include many non-fiction genres (Carter, 2004c).
- A perception by critics that some of the most interesting Australian writing being published is non-fiction, rather than fiction (Cunningham, 2003).
- Increased enrolments in creative writing, journalism, media studies, and cultural studies courses, creating new avenues for researchers and students to study narrative non-fiction (Dawson, 2005).
- The formation of new professional associations based around non-fiction writing. The US Creative Nonfiction Foundation was incorporated in 1994 by Lee Gutkind, a professor of English; the Australian Association for Writing Programs was formed in 1996; and the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies was formed in 2006. Members of these organisations include academics who publish research about writing and literature – but not necessarily from a traditional literary studies approach.

The forms which narrative non-fiction take vary enormously, from the popular categories of true-crime (a big seller) and sports biographies to essays, memoirs, and works dealing with public policy issues. When examining the various categories, it is helpful to move beyond considerations of whether or not particular categories are deemed "literary". Many issues-based and public affairs non-fiction works are written by journalists (e.g., David Marr and Marian Wilkinson's *Dark Victory,* Chris Masters' *Jonestown*, Gideon Haigh's *Asbestos House*) and some contain very fine writing. There has also been increased academic interest in Australian genre writing, for example Gelder and Salzman's (Gelder and Salzman, 2009) study of Australian fiction 1980-2007, which devotes a chapter to genre fiction including crime, fantasy and science fiction, romance and blockbuster novels. In 2010 the Miles Franklin Literary Award was given to Peter Temple's *Truth*, a crime novel. Although literary writing remains the predominant research interest of Australian academics, room has opened up for examination of non-literary books and genres. Gelder and Salzman (Gelder and Salzman, 2009 p 178) argue that

the location of a work within a particular genre does not preclude its capacity to be of a high literary standard, as Temple's award subsequently underlined. Such a stance is adopted in this research project, which inevitably includes a wide range of books that could not be considered literary, as well as noting finely written works which may come to be regarded as masterpieces.

1.4   Experiencing the debates personally

This project arose partly out of my personal experiences in Australia in the early- to mid-2000s. Millions of Australians marched against our involvement in the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan in 2002, including me, but the arguments were complex. I was friendly with an educated Arab-Australian Muslim woman who opposed the invasion but whose husband, an Anglo-Australian aid worker, supported it, pointing out that his wife had never visited Iraq whereas he had spent months working there with the people who were suffering under Saddam Hussein's regime. Although I disagreed with the war, I helped a Kurdish-Australian friend write a letter to *The Age* newspaper explaining why he supported it, as did many Kurds around the world.

During this period I responded to the debates in two main ways. Firstly, I completed a Master of International Relations degree at Macquarie University. During my study I was struck by attempts to maintain civilised academic discourse in journals such as *Foreign Affairs*, the journal of the US-based Council of Foreign Relations, and the often contrasting tone of strident claims and counter-claims about the wars reported in the daily media. Books as well as journal articles were widely used in the study of international relations and my personal bookshelves gradually filled. To some extent I found a sense of sanctuary in an environment in which vigorous debate was encouraged within the bounds of reasoned argument, and with reference to foreign affairs specialists in the US, Britain, Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

Secondly, I formed a lasting friendship with Mrs Aziza Abdel-Halim, OA, President of the Muslim Women's National Network (MWNNA). My contribution to the MWNNA often consisted of writing funding submissions for community events such as lunchtime presentations at the Stanton Library in North Sydney to speak about the role of women in Islam, a tour of the Auburn Gallipoli mosque in Sydney (which over 100 women, mostly non-Muslim attended), and a forum for members of the local Arab community to meet with journalists from the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper. These local events were in sharp contrast to the broad-scale theories of international power relations I was studying. Sometimes I felt sceptical about the worth of such small-scale initiatives, but was in every case proved wrong as I experienced their impact, reinforcing for me an understanding that notions such as democracy only have value when citizens actively participate; whether at local, national or international levels.

However, arguably the most contentious debate in this period relates to the Australian Government's hard-line treatment of asylum-seekers. Detention centres were set up and contracted to private operators most experienced in managing prisons. Asylum-seekers were

dealt with administratively as numbers rather than by their names, and civil rights groups raised concerns about a range of human rights abuses. These measures were electorally popular but also led to the development of a range of grassroots organisations, with many members who had never been politically active before, working to improve conditions for refugees (Coombes, 2004). The Australian chapters of PEN, the international writers' organisation, were actively involved in campaigning for more humane treatment of asylum-seekers, and many publishers became involved by publishing books or by making their premises available for PEN meetings. Writers' festivals in Australia became another site at which the policies were debated, where guest authors such as David Marr and Marian Wilkinson attracted sold out sessions when they discussed books relating to the debate. Although I was not involved in the activism, I visited the Villawood Immigration Detention Centre once to meet and talk to detainees, and I was one of the many people who sat on the wharf at the Sydney Writers' Festival listening to an outside broadcast of Marr and Wilkinson's packed-out session.

1.5 Books, writers and the civic sphere

Several years later, in late 2008, when I was developing a thesis topic, I wondered whether books had played any significant role in the debates that played out in Australia. As it turned out, this interest connected with an area of contemporary academic discussion about the role of writers in the civic sphere. Many writers who disagreed with the Howard government's conservative policies responded by writing novels, essays, plays, TV dramas and works using narrative non-fiction genres. Susan Lever referred to this humorously when she wrote in *Overland*:

> Things seemed so grim that many writers felt a duty to take up political causes – even I felt compelled to write an unperformable play about the aftermath of September 11. All the idealists in the community felt an urgency about getting a message out to anyone who'd listen – usually, people with the same opinions as the writer (Lever, 2008 p 66).

This wry observation inspired a serious research intent. One of the interests of this research is in investigating whether the ideas in books were able to reach readers who disagreed with them, and if so, how.

Other recently published reflections on the role of particular writers in public debate include Brigid Rooney's *Literary Activists: Writer-intellectuals and Australian public life* (2009), and *Just Words: Australian Authors Writing for Justice*, edited by Bernadette Brennan (2008). Rooney combines literary biography with literary criticism to examine the interplay between the political commitments of writers such as Judith Wright, Patrick White, Tim Winton, Helen Garner (among others) and their literary work. In contrast, the current project starts from a broader systemic approach, examining the industry structure of the Australian publishing marketplace and sales data about the books bought by Australians.

1.6   Research questions

The research questions can be summarised as follows:

- Is it possible to map narrative non-fiction reading patterns in relation to public debates as a first step to formulating contemporary Australian "reading mentalities", and if so, what were those reading patterns in the period under study?
- Did Australian independent publishers make a distinctive contribution to public debate in comparison with multinational publishers and other overseas-based independent publishers during this period, particularly with regard to the diversity of books published?
- Did the Australian publishing industry make a contribution in terms of the role of books in public debate, which can be mapped out empirically and conceptualised in terms of cultural value as it has developed in cultural economics?

At the outset of this project there was no assumption that books did actually play a definable role in any of the debates examined in this research. Indeed, despite the plethora of books published in relation to the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan, both wars went ahead despite strong Australian (and international) public opposition. Likewise, a decade since the Tampa incident discussed in Chapter 7, Australian public opinion firmly favours the asylum-seeker policies of the Howard years despite attempts by authors, publishers and politicians to persuade the majority of the electorate otherwise.

Many independent publishers conceive of their work as playing an important role in contributing to debate about serious public affairs (King, 2007a, b). Morry Schwartz was inspired by *The New Yorker* and *The Atlantic* to shift the focus of publishing house, Black Inc. towards Australian-authored contributions to public life (Wyndham, 2004). Over the last decade a body of research has built up that examines the changing marketplace faced by independent presses, including those in trade and academic publishing (Arms, 2004, Freeth, 2007, Davis, 2008). The authors of such research are part of a broader community of publishing professionals and academics who believe that the book provides a unique form of contribution to public life, because the commercial publication of books involves a process of filters and the organisation of thought, which is not replicated by online activities such as blogging. The following quote, although long, is reproduced because it captures this ethos:

> [printed books and ebooks] embody knowledge, and their authority derives from a great deal more than the technology that went into them. They owe some of their authority to authors, although they commanded respect long before the cult of the author took shape in the eighteenth century … authors write texts, but books are made by book professionals, and the professionals exercise functions that extend far beyond manufacturing and diffusing a product. Publishers are gatekeepers, who control the flow of knowledge. From the boundless variety of matter susceptible to being made public,

they select what they think will sell or should be sold, according to their professional expertise and their personal convictions. Publishers' judgments, informed by long experience in the marketplace of ideas, determines what reaches readers, and readers need to rely on it more than ever in an age of information overload. By selecting texts, editing them, designing them to be readable, and bringing them to the attention of readers, book professionals provide services that will outlast all changes in technology (Darnton, 2009 p xvi).

1.7   Thesis structure

Chapter 2 sets up the framework for this cross-disciplinary research by acknowledging the gulf between traditional methodological approaches in economics and the humanities, and by identifying points of connection. Key terms are defined and situated in the disciplinary research, including "cultural value", the various categorisations of publishers, and "narrative non-fiction".

Chapter 3 considers theoretical scholarship on books in public debate. It examines ways in which readers and readerships have been researched and conceptualised, from Robert Darnton's and William St Clair's major historical works, to studies of contemporary readers. Models of "the communications circuit" of books are considered and assumptions regarding Enlightenment ideals about the attainment of social progress through public debate are reviewed. Recent scholarship about Australian public intellectuals contextualises this research project. Finally, ways of conceptualising and theorising contemporary Australian readers are put forward.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the contemporary Australian publishing industry. It outlines both popular and academic assumptions about the different characteristics of multinational and independent publishers.

Chapter 5 draws on the Nielsen BookScan top 5000 non-fiction sales data to demonstrate the characteristics of the Australian market for non-fiction books in general, and for narrative non-fiction books in particular.

Chapter 6 identifies book reading patterns in relation to the first of two case studies discussed in this thesis, namely the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan. It investigates whether multinational and independent publishers make different types of contributions to public debate through the publication of books, and the cultural diversity of the books published. It concludes by proposing ways of characterising the contributions of multinational and independent publishers.

Chapter 7 examines book sales in relation to debates on the Australian Government's policies towards asylum seekers; the second case study considered. The same methodologies are applied to sales data as in the previous case study, in addition, the research draws together empirical information about the role of books in the media, in academic citations, and in Parliament. It finds evidence of both the presence of books and their limitations in contemporary public debate.

Chapter 8 contrasts the economic activity represented by publishers and narrative nonfiction book sales with the non-economic forms of value mapped out empirically in this research that can be related theoretically to aspects of cultural value in cultural economics.

Chapter 9 concludes by discussing government policy implications for the publishing industry. Potential areas for future research are also outlined.

Chapter 2. Background/definitions of key terms

2.1 Introduction

This research is situated in the cross-disciplinary field of book history, which encompasses a range of disciplines including cultural history, publishing studies, and more recently, economics. Book history, also known as "the history of the book" developed originally from traditional bibliographical studies but it has been transformed over the last decades to encompass the life cycle of books from authorship to production and marketing, and the study of readers. Over the past years scholars in the field have undertaken analyses of contemporary book markets, and although economic methodologies have not played a prominent role to date, scope for their contribution is increasing.

The first part of this chapter provides an overview of relevant scholarship in cultural economics, including the economics of book publishing, and a developing field concerned with theories of cultural value and cultural diversity. These lead to a discussion of cultural policy studies, which has an "applied" focus on policy-making and policy evaluation in the cultural sector.

The next part considers scholarship in book history and Australian literary studies. First, it draws attention to a gulf which has existed between quantitative methodologies and Australian literary studies scholarship until recently. Moves to bridge this gap have been made by a new generation of Australian literary studies researchers with backgrounds in, or personal connections to individuals with, expertise in information technology and mathematics. Their research is characterised by openness towards the use of economic frameworks and quantitative methodologies. Also, more broadly, a shift in emphasis has occurred in Australian literary studies from a nationalist framework to transnational frameworks, and the ways in which these developments are connected to this research are considered. Then, theoretical and methodological inter-disciplinary points of connection are drawn together which enable the research frameworks for this project.

In the last part of this chapter, key terms are defined and context is provided for the different types of publishers of interest to this research (multinationals, the major Australian independent publisher, other Australian independent publishers, overseas-based independent publishers), and finally, recent interest in narrative non-fiction writing is discussed.

2.2 Economic value and books

2.2.1 Books as private goods

The reading pleasures of individuals take the form of private consumption (regardless of whether the books are bought, borrowed or received as gifts). If the value that an individual derives from

books exceeds the price paid, this can be considered consumer surplus. If collectively Australians gain more individual value from books than the price paid, this represents the consumer surplus of the market.

Books are "experience goods" whose "yield remains uncertain until they are actually bought and experienced" (Caves, 2000 p 189). Further, Caves argues that the market offers an "infinite variety" of close-substitute products. This leads on the one hand to strategies by publishers and consumers to make use of information about the books through the branding of authors and genres, for example, to minimise the consumer's risk. Another important principle is that of "great uncertainty about demand for the individual creative product" which Caves calls the "nobody knows" principle (Caves, 2000 p 146). Lastly, the "time flies" principle refers to the heavy upfront investment by a publisher in developing a book and the incentive to recoup that expense and make a profit quickly, giving incentives to "employ price discrimination: higher prices to consumers eager for the latest thing; lower for those who will wait" (Caves, 2000 p 146).

David Throsby, a cultural economist, notes that cultural goods have special private consumption characteristics: "cultural consumption can be interpreted as a process contributing both to present satisfaction and to the accumulation of knowledge and experience leading to future consumption" (Throsby, 2001 p 23). That is, as individuals gain more experience with books and knowledge about them, their consumption patterns change and demand for books overall is affected. The desire for more cultural goods as a result of education and experience has been described as an example of "rational addiction" (Caves, 2000 p 175).

2.2.2 Books as public goods and mixed goods

Books are mixed goods, that is, they have private- and public-good characteristics. The characteristics of public goods are that they are nonexcludable or able to be jointly consumed (it is difficult or costly to prevent someone from benefitting from them) and nonrival (one person's use does not decrease the amount available for others) (Heilbrun and Gray, 1993 p 209). The ways in which books contribute to public debate demonstrate both nonexcludable and nonrival characteristics. The conduct of informed, democratic debate benefits all Australians through contributions to improved or more accountable policy-making and more transparent government (the nonexcludable property). If a book's contents are discussed on radio, TV, in newspapers or online, their use by an additional audience member does not diminish their utility for others (the nonrival property).

Some publishers in Australia have been expressly established using public money on the basis that some form of public good would be derived from their activities. For example, the *Griffith Review* was established on the basis of two motivations: the recognition of a gap in extended journalism; and, a sense that "universities were actually not present in any meaningful way in terms of ideas formulation development and new policy, thought leadership and so on. They

really had vacated the field". The founding editor, Julianne Schultz explains "the opinion pieces were becoming much more about trying to generate an immediate same day reaction rather than informing long-term discussion". Therefore, the *Griffith Review* was founded in 2003 within Griffith University. "A comparatively small amount of money ... comes from the university and then the rest is supplemented by subscription sales, licensing and syndication, [and public] events that we make money [from]"[4]

2.2.3 Direct use value, indirect use value and non-use value of books and publishing
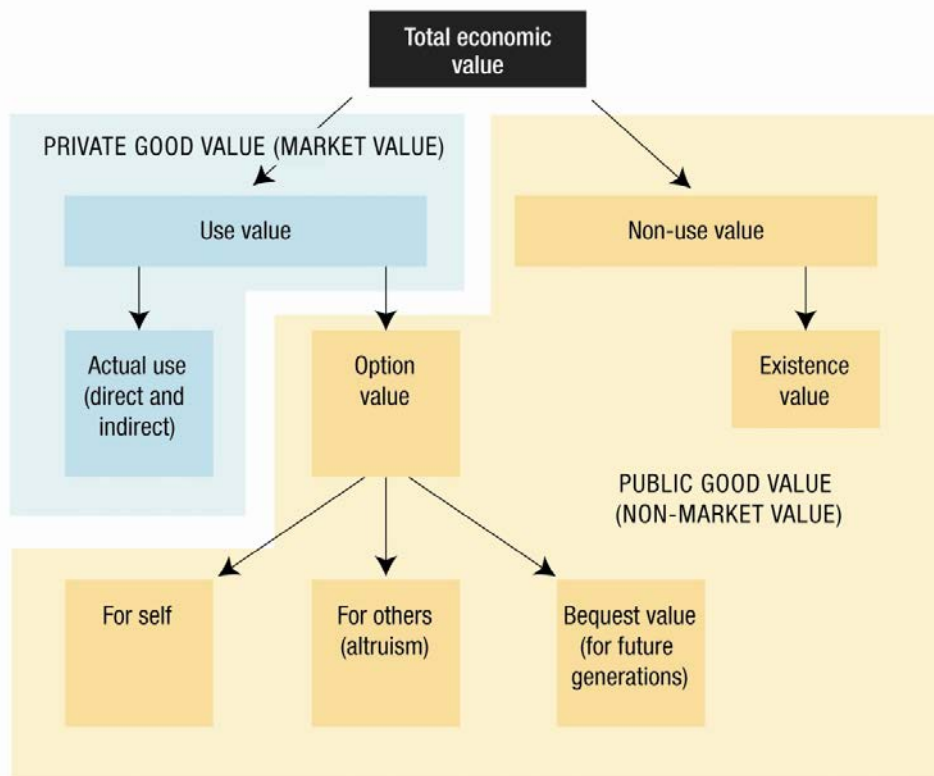
Figure 2 Total economic value (Pearce et al inO'Brien, 2010p 23)

Another way of distinguishing between the forms of economic value derives from the concept of use value, which is the direct utilitarian value which can be obtained from the use of a product, and non-use value. Use value, in the case of this study, applies to books which are read, discussed in newspapers (and by extension, other media), referred to in Parliament and other governmental forums, debated at writers festivals and other public events, and used as symbols of civil society (e.g., by PEN). Indirect use value refers to the broader social benefits beyond their direct use. These generalised benefits take the form of a public good. Non-use values are those forms of value generated without an asset being used:

---

[4] J. Schultz, personal communication, Sydney, 2011.

- *option value* (people may benefit from knowing that books about public issues are available to be read, even if many people don't read them);
- *existence value* (people feel benefits from the existence of these books and would feel a sense of loss at the prospect of them no longer being available); and
- *bequest value* (the desire to make them available to future generations).

2.3 Cultural economics and cultural value

Despite the fact that "the first university-level courses in English literature were taught by ... Adam Smith" (Rose, 2004 p 490), traditionally a gulf has been perceived between the quantitative, empirical methodologies of economics and the concerns of literary studies. Michael Hutter and David Throsby recognise that, in regard to economic and cultural value, "[T]here are indeed two distinct kinds of valuation at work, each with its own logic of operation"(Hutter and Throsby, 2008b p 9), with the primary focus of studies of economic value being on systems of transactions, and on exchange values; the standard measure of exchange value being monetary. However, Hutter and Throsby (2008b) argue that:

> Far from being isolated from each other, economic value shapes cultural valuation and cultural valuation influences price. Their mutual interdependence leads to tensions in social practice, and these tensions are documented in the history of ritual, of art, and of its markets ... despite interdependencies and tensions, there has been little cross-disciplinary dialogue connecting those scholars working on the various aspects of cultural value, especially with those specializing in economics (Hutter and Throsby, 2008b p 9).

The potential contradictions inherent in economic studies of the cultural sector have been widely acknowledged (Throsby, 2001, Frey, 2005, Doyle, 2010) due to the tensions between the quantitative methodologies which are central to economics, and the intangible nature of many dimensions of cultural goods and cultural consumption. Yet, as Doyle observes, "the field of cultural economics is thriving ... Oddly, culture seems to both attract and resist economic analysis" (Doyle, 2010 p 245).

Economists acknowledge that other systems of value operate in society, but a conservative, mainstream view within the discipline is that analyses of other forms of value lie outside the discipline of economics. Steven Connor, an eminent literary scholar, argues that:

> [T]he evil of economic exchange-value is not that it melts away the fixity of use-value but precisely that it subordinates all forms of exchange to the force of one form alone – the economic. The general corruption of an era of exchange-value lies in the fact that it makes everything exchangeable according to this one standard or register (Connor, 1992 p 4).

From the perspective of a pragmatic policy orientation, one could comment that until the problem of scarcity is solved, economic discourses will remain dominant. However there is merit in developing alternative discourses which make visible that which standard economic analysis alone does not. Governments make funding decisions and policies, especially in relation to the arts and humanities, based on assumptions about cultural value, for example, in relation to heritage policies, arts funding, free-to-air TV content regulation, and recently in debates about changes to provisions for the parallel importation of books.

"Cultural value … is multi-dimensional, unstable, contested, lacks a common unit of account, and may contain elements that cannot be easily expressed according to any quantitative or qualitative scale" (Throsby, 2003 pp 279-280). Despite the challenges of the enterprise Throsby, has undertaken to theorise the processes by which cultural value is acquired in societies. The next section provides an introduction to this relatively new field, with a more detailed discussion in view of the research findings provided in Chapter 8. (Books as private goods in economics are examined in Chapter 4.)

Throsby (2001) refers to dual definitions of "culture" throughout his work. The first is a broad framework "to describe a set of attitudes, beliefs, mores, customs, values and practices which are common to or shared by any group. The group may be defined in terms of politics, geography, religion, ethnicity or some other characteristic…" (p 4). His second definition is more functional "denoting certain activities that are undertaken by people, and the products of those activities, which have to do with the intellectual, moral and artistic aspects of human life" (Throsby, 2001 p 4).[5] Throsby suggests that the following characteristics of such activities are:

- that the activities concerned involve some form of creativity in their production;
- that they are concerned with the generation and communication of symbolic meaning; and,
- that their output embodies, at least potentially, some form of intellectual property.

Throsby does not propose a quantitative index of cultural value, but rather refers to the "problems of evaluation" (Throsby, 2001 p 29). Cultural economists and cultural policy analysts agree that measuring cultural value poses large, perhaps insurmountable challenges in some cases. Throsby has confirmed that "some of the phenomena under consideration may be incommensurable according to any familiar quantitative or qualitative standard" (Throsby, 2001 p 28). Klamer describes it as a "vexing issue" and observes that although he stresses "the need to account for non-tangibles, I cannot be more precise as to how to do so" (Klamer, 2003 p 471).

---

[5] There is an important distinction to be made between Throsby's definition of "cultural value" within economics, and another concept which is widely cited in book history and literary studies, Bourdieu's "cultural capital". Bourdieu's disciplinary approach is sociological and Throsby relates Bourdieu's definition most closely to the idea of human capital in economics (Throsby, 2001 p 48-49).

In a recent report for the UK Department for Culture, Media and Sport, O'Brien provides an overview of relevant methods that are compatible with the cost-benefit analysis (CBA) approach in government decision-making:

Methods	Used to value	Key question answered
Contingent valuation	Economic values including option and non-use values e.g. the economic value of having a museum in a town or city	How can we capture users' and non-users' valuations of culture for use in cost-benefit analysis?
Choice modelling	Economic values including option and non-use values e.g. the value of one policy option, such as longer opening hours, against another, such as a new building	How can we capture users' and non-users' valuations of culture for use in cost-benefit analysis?
Hedonic pricing	Economic values, excluding option and non-use values e.g. The value of living near to, so being able to use, a theatre	What is the relationship between a good or service and market prices?
Travel cost	Economic values excluding option and non-use values e.g. the value of visiting a free gallery	What do people value based on the amount of time they are willing to spend travelling to consume a good or service?
Subjective wellbeing	Impact of any activity, e.g. taking part in a dance class or visiting a heritage site, understood through the relationship between wellbeing and income	How can we value changes in wellbeing generated by culture?
Quality Adjusted Life Years	Value of quality and length of a year of human life e.g. the impact of participation in a community arts group on health	How do we make decisions about resource allocation in healthcare?
Non-economic forms of valuation	The impact of cultural activity on individuals and society	How can we value culture without using monetary criteria?
Multi-criteria analysis	Used to make different forms of data commensurable	How can we make judgements using incommensurable forms of data?

Figure 3 Overview of methods used to value cultural good and services which are compatible with cost-benefit analysis (O'Brien, 2010 p 6)

As shown in Figure 3 above, techniques for measuring the instrumental benefits of cultural initiatives and activities include economic impact studies, contingent valuation (such as surveys to gauge people's willingness to pay for cultural goods and services through their taxes), choice experiments and choice modelling (rather than asking people to estimate a price, which can be unreliable, respondents are asked to choose between various scenarios that draw out the underlying aggregate values of people surveyed). However, O'Brien emphasises that "valuation must also embrace a cultural discourse if it is to gain the support of the cultural sector" (O'Brien, 2010 p 9).

Techniques for measuring intrinsic value are less developed and O'Brien recognises the existence of "debate over the extent to which economic valuation techniques are able to capture all dimensions of cultural value". Throsby (2001) disaggregates forms of cultural value into key constituents: (a) aesthetic value; (b) spiritual value, which includes benefits of "understanding, enlightenment and insight in a secular sense" (p 29); (c) social value; (d) historical value; (e) symbolic value; and (f) authenticity value (Throsby, 2001 p 28). He proposes a variety of evaluative tools including mapping, thick description, attitudinal analysis, content analysis and expert appraisal (Throsby, 2001 p 29-30), which in some cases could offer means of measurement but "because of the non-singular phenomena", not in all cases (Throsby, 2001 p 30).

The current research examines ways in which books and the Australian publishing industry contribute cultural value, but it does not attempt to measure that value. It would be possible to survey Australians to find out whether they believe books make a valuable contribution to public debate even if they don't read books in general or read books about public issues, and to ask how much they would be willing to pay in tax to support this activity. Such research would build on contingent valuation studies in other cultural sectors.[6] However, the possible outcomes are unclear for several reasons. First, popular talk of "the death of the book" and the availability of new media, such as online forums and digital channels, may influence perceptions that books are no longer relevant. Also, various views about the value of the arts and literature have been put forward by proponents over centuries and many respondents are likely to have opinions influenced by these traditions of thought (e.g., they could tailor their answers to accord with ideas of high culture, although a good survey design should minimise this). Books have primarily been valued publicly for their literary merit and for the pleasure reading brings, but the contribution of books to public debate has received less attention as a general theme and there may be less awareness of this (an information deficit). Therefore, this investigation seeks to expand our understanding of the categories of cultural value proposed by Throsby through the

---

[6] O'Brien (2010) discusses the philosophical, practical and technical critiques of this method (pp 26-27) but concludes it will continue to be used despite its weaknesses until a more effective method is developed (O'Brien, 2010 p 33).

application of economics and literary studies scholarship, without attempting the feat of measurement or valuation.[7]

2.3.1   Cultural policy studies

Developments in cultural policy studies over recent decades include theorisation about the cultural industries, with a focus on the arts and heritage sectors, with the theoretical focus recently shifting more broadly to the creative industries (Throsby, 2008, Banks and O'Connor, 2009). These discussions revolve around attempts to highlight the economic importance of the cultural sector, and to apply economic frameworks to its analysis. The motivations for such research arguably include an enthusiasm for these studies on the part of commissioning bodies (cultural organisations), which have been increasingly required by governments to rationalise their budgets in economic frameworks and to demonstrate that key parts of the sector *generate* economic growth rather than being an overall cost to a nation's economy, albeit worthy and worthwhile. The emphasis on economic measures is continuing, although criticism of this approach is discussed in Chapter 8 (O'Brien, 2010). However, some of the assumptions on which these developments are based have been increasingly questioned. For example, researchers have questioned whether the rhetoric about cultural industries has ultimately been productive as an analytic tool for researchers, despite the enthusiasm of commissioning cultural organisations (Banks and O'Connor, 2009, O'Connor, 2009, Oakley, 2009). Similarly, specialists in the field of cultural policy have questioned whether the phrase "cultural policy" has proven useful for analysis, apart from designating a field with particular interests in common.

> Many may have been struck by a peculiar oscillation in the status attributed to cultural policy as a sector of public policy action. It can figure successively as a peripheral and as a central component of government strategy, as superficial and as fundamental, as decorative or as substantial. Certainly, one can use this disparity as a source of legitimate irony (Ahearne, 2009 p 141).

A recent significant development is the recognition that the ways in which particular cultural goods were assumed to have value as public goods has not been consistent over time. Belfiore and Bennett's *The Social Impact of the Arts: An Intellectual History* was undertaken with funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Arts Council England. The researchers proposed a project that went back to first principles about the assumptions which have shaped cultural policy. It mapped out the ways in which positive claims about the benefits of various cultural forms were often first made defensively in response to public criticism, extending back to Plato's criticism of poetry as potentially corrupting to impressionable young minds (Belfiore and Bennett, 2008 p 40). The changing aesthetic assumptions underlying the

---

[7] The philosopher Lamert Zuidervaart comments that "Whether mainstream economists are open to the possibility raised by Throsby remains to be seen" (Zuidervaart, 2011 p 34). Zuidervaart proposes a different theoretical approach to cultural value as a sociocultural public good which is outside the framework of economics, however, this thesis adheres to economic frameworks of economic and cultural value.

value of the arts were also examined by economists (Hutter and Schusterman, 2006) and changing ideas about art and culture in the history of economic thought (Goodwin, 2006). Works such as these permit points of connection between cultural economics and the humanities methodologies. They acknowledge not only that the value accorded to a particular cultural pursuit or an artist's work may vary from negative to positive over time but that basic assumptions about the foundations of the value of the arts have themselves been transformed over time. (This is discussed further in Chapter 8.)

2.3.2   Studies of the book publishing industry

Broad-level economic analyses have been applied to book publishing industries in a large number of individual country studies authored by long-standing publishing professionals. These studies provide an overview of the size and structure of the industry, general information about consumer preferences, current trends and industry issues. Examples include studies in Spain (Martos, 2008), France (Benhamou and Peltier, 2007), China (Xiaoyan, 2006), Taiwan (How, 2010), South Korea (Yang, 2004), Canada (Boggs, 2010), the United States (Szenberg and Lee, 1994) and Australia (Wilkins, 2008). Other studies address regions such as Latin America (Uribe, 2006) and the Middle East (Kennedy, 2010). A considerable number of these reports are published in *Publishing Research Quarterly* and combine industry data with insider analysis.

Thematic studies in this vein address issues such as the take-up of digital publishing, for example in France, Germany, Italy and Spain (Mussinelli, 2010); business models in digital publishing (Tian and Martin, 2009); the impact of shifting sales and distribution channels (Shatzkin, 2009); trade in foreign-language rights, for example in German literature (Janhsen, 2007) and Spanish-language literature (Coll, 2006); and more broadly, the impact of mergers and outlooks for the industry.

The number of studies by economists is less extensive, but includes the analysis of bestseller lists for product variety (Sorensen, 2007); the diversity of the book trade between countries (Benhamou and Peltier, 2007); an overview of the pan-European publishing economy, particularly the impact of fixed book price agreements (Canoy et al., 2006); consumer demand in Norway (Ringstad and Løyland, 2006); a model of book translations between countries (Hjorth-Andersen, 2001); and an investigation into the impact of industry mergers on the diversity of publishers (Szenberg and Lee, 1994). Creative industries scholars such as Vogel and Caves examine the book publishing industry in the context of music, film and other entertainment industries (Caves, 2000, Vogel, 2007). Also of note are the books by Albert N. Greco, a US Professor of Marketing, who has written data-rich studies of the US publishing industry and changing consumer preferences (Greco, 1997, Greco, 2005, Greco et al., 2007), and works by Andre Schiffrin, the founder of Pantheon books, who combines personal and publishing history, industry analysis and elegant polemic about the impact of conglomerates on independent publishing (Schiffrin, 2001, 2010).

There is a considerable body of work examining the operations of the British and US publishing industries because these are the largest and most influential English-language centres of publishing. Most of these were not written by economists, instead by academics with backgrounds in sociology (Thompson, 2010), publishing studies (Squires, 2007) or other disciplines that contribute to the field of book history. These works are relevant because the operations of the Australian industry are still affected by its colonial publishing legacy with England and because of the scale of the US trade with Australia. Analysts look to both US and British markets for trends in industry practices and sales that may be taken up in Australia. Further, as will be discussed, rights in the majority of non-English language books, which are translated for English-speaking readerships, are traded through these centres. European industry studies are located in a slightly different context. The number of different languages complicates trade in rights and sales of titles, meaning that intra-European trade flows have been a point of study by cultural economists. (Economic analysis of Australia's industry is discussed further in Chapter 4.)

Finally, an interest in the cultural diversity of book publishing in Europe has resulted in recent pan-European studies funded by European cultural organisations and foundations (Wischenbart, 2008, Kovač and Wischenbart, 2009a, Kovač and Wischenbart, 2010). These studies examine the diversity of the nationality of authors in book trade flows and the prospects for popular or significant authors in one country to find readerships in other countries through translations and rights deals. Academic and policy interest in cultural diversity is discussed in the next section.

2.4   Cultural diversity and books

An interest in the diversity of books available is part of a broader interest in cultural diversity on the part of economists and policy makers. UNESCO has recognised the value created by cultural diversity in its Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO, 2005). Article 2 of the Convention gives states the rights to "protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions within their territory".

Benhamou and Peltier (2007) define cultural diversity as:

> [T]he quantitative and qualitative diversity of the production and consumption of cultural goods and services. It represents the possibilities open to consumers for gaining access to a large supply of a cultural product (in terms of quantity), including segments (in terms of genres and original languages) of relatively well-balanced sizes and as diversified as possible. It also represents the effective consumption of these numerous and diversified cultural product[s] (Benhamou and Peltier, 2007 p 90).

Cultural diversity in the creative industries has been examined from different perspectives in cultural economics, cultural policy, the humanities, and in the industry itself. However, despite their differences, researchers have reached broadly compatible conclusions: "[T]he growing

predation of market share by a small number of titles is hardly favourable to the visibility of the works published or to the sovereign exercise of choice by consumers" (Benhamou and Peltier, 2007 p 103).

Theories about the value of cultural diversity in economics have been inspired by approaches to valuing biodiversity (diversity in the natural world). David Throsby (2010) has identified four ways in which cultural diversity contributes to cultural value: (1) *for its own sake*, that is, "people gain benefit from the knowledge that both biodiversity and cultural diversity in all their richness are simply there"; (2) *in the interconnectedness of cultures*, which prevent cultural forms from stagnating and dying; (3) as part of an "ecosystem" which is necessary to support *economic activity*; and (4) *future potential* in which "certain cultural manifestations may have both economic value and cultural value that is not yet evident" (Throsby, 2010 p 173).

2.4.1 Studies of cultural diversity and book publishing

Although there have been extensive debates about ways to measure diversity in the media (newspapers, magazines, radio, free-to-air television, pay TV and the Internet), there have been fewer economic studies examining diversity in book publishing. What studies there are have mostly addressed European markets (Wischenbart, 2008, Kovač and Wischenbart, 2009a), and although they provide important contextual and comparative information, they are not directly applicable to the Australian market.

When considering the diversity of books in a country, John B. Thompson distinguishes between *diversity of output* and *diversity in the marketplace*.[8] Thompson's study of the UK and US publishing markets found that the dynamics of the industry has changed to a "winner takes more" position on the part of multinational publishers, which invested in marketing and promotion for a smaller proportion of favoured books ("hoped-for bestsellers"). Another important dynamic was the increase in the number of books published each year, although many books may have had small print runs (Thompson, 2010 p 388). The result was that, in the UK and the US, "the field may be characterised by an extremely diverse output, but if only a very limited number and range of titles are picked out and noticed – that is, made visible in a crowded marketplace – then we have a different kind of problem about diversity" (Thompson, 2010 p 389).

Reaching conclusions about the diversity of cultural products in a given market is fraught, and there is no established methodology within cultural economics, particularly in application to the

---

[8] Thompson's approach could be compared to media diversity scholarship. Two common criteria are "reflective diversity": the extent to which people have equal access to express their preferences or to contribute; "equal access for people" and "open diversity" which refers to the equality of representation of different points of view and ideas; "equal access to ideas" (Cuilenburg, 2005 p 301). Although connections could be made to diversity of output and diversity in the book marketplace, measures of media diversity require equality in absolute terms (although this has been contested by scholars) and, importantly, the industry cost structures, product forms and product expectations are too different for the frameworks to be directly transferable.

publishing industry. Different approaches to the publishing industry in cultural economics include: the number of titles on the market; the combination of popular and "more difficult books"; and the availability of variations from the standard book genres (Benhamou and Peltier, 2007 p 87). Benhamou and Peltier distinguish between "supplied and consumed diversity" (Benhamou and Peltier, 2007 p 86), which has parallels with Thompson's diversity of output and diversity in the marketplace.

Although Australian exports of books are not examined as part of this research, it is worth noting that Australia is fortunate in that, although it is on the margins of literary and publishing cultures internationally, it is predominantly an English-language industry and it has access to international English-language publishing centres as part of the British Commonwealth. Kovač and Wischenbart (2009a) examine the international flow of ideas through (literary fiction) books that were translated in Europe.

> Only a few countries and their book markets seem to work as launching pads for the kind of top literary best sellers we want to analyse here...
>
> With the odd exception... all those writers started their journey... with a handful of truly global literary agents in London and New York, from one of the members of "old Europe".
>
> [S]tarting a similar career from Hungary, Serbia or from outside the triangle of Western Europe, the USA, and the former British Commonwealth obviously is hardly conceivable (Kovač and Wischenbart, 2009a p 26).

Although it is difficult for Australian authors to attract international attention for their work, it is not insurmountable compared to the difficulties faced by writers from the former Eastern bloc, Asia and Africa. Kovač and Wischenbart (2009a) found that "medium-sized publishers seem to play at least as important a role as the powerful marketing machines of transnational conglomerates" (Kovač and Wischenbart, 2009a p 24) in initiating translation deals, especially by building domestic readerships for books first, and through individuals employed by these publishers being inspired by the works and acting as advocates for them.

This research does consider the diversity of books available in Australia from other countries. An oft-cited finding is that "fifty percent of all the books translated in the world are translated *from* English, but only 3 percent *into* English" (Levisalles, 2004 p 55) or from Wischenbart (2008) who states that the proportion of all book translations *into* English is assumed to be 2-3 percent of all book translations (Wischenbart, 2008 p 38). In the US, "risk reduction means, for example, waiting for a book written in Czech or in Greek to be first translated in another country, preferably by a well known and respected French or German publisher" before it will be considered for translation into English (Levisalles, 2004 p 57). Therefore, when considering the contribution of publishers in Australia to the diversity of books available as discussed in later chapters, it is important to acknowledge the overall structure of the international industry, which

encompasses highly favourable and unfavourable cultural flows. (Chapters 6 and 7 examine the diversity of books published by Australian independent and multinational publishers in relation to two public debates.)

2.5 Book history/Australian literary studies

2.5.1 Dating and the "forced marriage" between the social sciences and the humanities

The humanities have also undergone debate about the direction of disciplines, including the potential for cross-disciplinary research. In a recent article about the impact of digital technologies on the humanities, Katherine Bode and Robert Dixon (2009) cite Paul Longley Arthur's metaphor to indicate the extent of the gap between the humanities and the sciences: "As one might expect in any forced marriage, it was not love at first sight" (Bode and Dixon, 2009 p 1). Arthur's choice of metaphor was unwittingly close to that of Throsby who, from the other side of the divide, recounted one of his earlier lectures:

> Being an economist myself, I was licensed to poke some gentle fun at my own profession, so I suggested that the economy as a real person would certainly be male, somewhat overweight, prone to hypochondria, garrulous and inclined to neglect his personal freshness... art would just as certainly be female, smart, unpredictable and somewhat intriguing... I proceeded in the lecture to ponder the following question: suppose these two individuals ran into each other at a party, would they have the slightest interest in each other and, if they did, would they perhaps get together? If so, what sort of relationship might develop between them? (Throsby, 2001 p xi)

Throsby's light-hearted introduction belies the intensity of debate about the use of cross-disciplinary methodologies which has occurred across the humanities and social sciences. At times, the debate has been conducted in vitriolic terms (Martingdale, 2001 pp. 395-405)[9], and has been related to debate about the future of literary studies as a whole (McDonald, 2006b, Gottschall, 2008, Singerland, 2008). Resistance to empirical methodologies has been acknowledged:

> [T]here is still a tendency for scholars in literary studies to regard empirical methods with "suspicion"... I argue that quantitative studies, and eResearch generally, are not only possible within Australian literary studies; they are the logical progression from (and the only feasible way fully to realise) the insights that have shaped the discipline over the past three decades. While employing such methods challenges methodological, critical and disciplinary orthodoxies, such a move has the potential to propel Australian literary

---

[9] Colin Martingdale is a psychologist and quantitative analyst who positioned himself as a provocateur according to his memorial website: http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/beautiful-minds/200811/remembering-colin-martindale-0 . An example of his style can be found in (Martingdale, 2001 pp 395-405).

studies beyond its current crisis of confidence by reinvigorating the discipline and offering renewed institutional, political, social and critical relevance (Bode, 2008).

A number of Australian scholarly initiatives in literary studies that experiment with quantitative methodologies fall within the ambit of book history, to which we shall now turn our attention.

2.5.2 Book history

The *Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory & Criticism* provides an overview of book history:

> Bibliography, literary criticism and editorial theory, cultural history, sociology, information studies, economics and more – each deals with aspects of book culture, but usually from a specific perspective. The book historian draws on all of these in order to examine the whole life cycle of the book ... it takes as a founding principle that the status and interpretation of a work depend upon material considerations, that the meaning is always produced in a historical setting, and that the meaning of a text depends upon the differing readings assigned to it by historical, rather than ideal, readers (Bishop, 2005).

Importantly for this thesis, "increasingly, scholars are exploring the literary marketplace" (Bishop, 2005).

Within UK and US literary studies, Mark Osteen and Martha Woodmansee (1999) identify five reasons for an increase in what they call the "new economic criticism".[10] First, the return to historicist approaches in the 1990s involved acquiring new methodologies from other disciplines, including economics. Second, changes in the economics of academic publishing "forced literary critics to seek untrammelled pathways" (Woodmansee and Osteen, 1999 p 4). Third, cultural studies found rich "cross-fertilisation" in economics. Fourth, the boom economy of the 1980s made economics publicly visible. Lastly, it happened to prove itself as a rich field. New economic criticism is no longer a term which is widely used in literary studies, but some of the scholarship arising from this movement has informed this thesis (particularly that of Paul Delany and Regenier Gagnier).

In the introduction to *Literature, Money, and the Market*, Paul Delany (2002) discusses theoretical approaches in the humanities to literary markets and authorship. Delany argues that the approaches of Adam Smith and Richard Cobden were originally based on the market as a form of radical resistance to "the absolutist pretensions of a state controlled by the landowning classes" (Delany, 2002 p 2). He acknowledges a prevailing hostility in humanities faculties to capitalism (p 3) and observed that "most of the economic literary criticism in today's academy

---

[10] Osteen and Woodmansee (1999) outline four areas of interest: production: "the social, cultural, and economic contexts in which individual or related works have been produced"; internal circulation: "an understanding of texts as systems of exchange involving dynamic patterns of interlocking metaphoric transfer"; external circulation and consumption: "the market forces at work in canonization ... the changing dynamics of aesthetic value; the condition of authors or artists as commodities and celebrities..."; metatheoretical: "analyzing the practices, presumptions and protocols of economic criticism itself" (Woodmansee and Osteen, 1999 p 35-39).

takes its stand, paradoxically, in opposition to economism, whether of the right (neo-liberalism) or the left (determinist Marxism)" (Delany, 2002 p 4).

Although Delany notes the brilliance of individual works and scholars, he criticised as inadequate two prominent theoretical movements in literary studies which sought to examine "the circulation of power through culture" (p 5): cultural materialism (also known as new historicism) and Foucauldian-inspired discursive analysis of markets and culture. Both, he argues, do not take into account historical specificity (for example, he argues that the Foucauldian model could not apply to cultural institutions and cultural traditions in both France and England because they were so fundamentally different (p 6)). In other scholarship, the totalising approach of cultural materialism is found wanting. "It's not *all* about domination" (Federico, 2004). Mature capitalism has not led to homogenous mass culture but rather to diverse specialisations in publishing. In Delany's examination of the different types of market conditions under which British literature was produced, he debunked accounts of a "pre-market innocence" which supposedly equated with artistic purity, and he found that self-avowed anti-market movements such as modernism still relied on patronage funded by market profits. Delany returns throughout his study to the inevitability of market influences on decisions made to write and publish (p 191). However, he was also critical of:

> [C]urrent economic criticism [which] suffers from its lack of dialogue with the new historicism prevailing in literary studies. This criticism approaches culture from a base within the academic discipline of economics; much of it has been associated with the *Journal of Cultural Economics*. Typically adopting a neo-liberal stance, it addresses such topics as the costs and benefits of cultural activities, the effectiveness of state intervention in the arts, and the workings of the cultural marketplace (Delany, 2002 p 6).

Delany professes a "cultural economist's respect for neo-classical economic principals" (ibid p 7) but argues, with particular attention to Britain, that he did not find cause for cultural optimism in the contemporary British market economy. It is important to note that while he is correct in observing that cultural economists do not work with new historicist methodologies, he is not accurate in implying that they, as a group, view culture through the lens of neo-liberalism. Indeed, the move to develop a theoretical field of cultural value is an attempt to move beyond neo-liberal frameworks.

Although there is not a definable "school" or self-inscribed scholarly movement to embrace economic approaches within book history, there are a number of scholars whose works have influenced the field in developing a "new and more benign treatment of literary capitalism" (Rose, 2004 p 493). Delany's work is one contribution. Robert Darnton's multi-volume landmark research on the economics of book production and circulation in the French Revolution is perhaps the best known example. (Darnton, 1979, 1982, 1984, 1995, 2003). Another important perspective for this research is provided by St Clair's (St. Clair, 2004) innovations in utilising economic analyses of publisher activity and circulation figures to draw conclusions about

reading mentalities. Aspects of the contemporary publishing industry were analysed in Claire Squires' (2007) research into the marketing of literary bestsellers in the UK, and in Laura J. Miller's (2006) examination of the commercial culture of book retailing in the US. In addition to these key works, there have been a number of detailed, commercially informed histories of individual publishing companies or historically informed examinations of publishing markets and literary production, with the Victorian period in Britain proving a popular and fruitful area of research.

In Australia, David Carter has referred to a "world of books and print and ordinary readers" and has commented that "book history has already altered the course of the mainstream, not just in the various national histories of the book, which might never stray far from the reference shelves, but in general publications such as *The Oxford English Literary History*" (Carter, 2008). Key Australian texts include *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing* (Carter and Galligan, 2007), *The Making of the Australian Literary Imagination* (Nile, 2002), and a three-volume *History of the Book in Australia* project of which two volumes have been published (Arnold and Lyons, 2001, Munro and Sheahan, 2006).

Carter (2009a), in a survey of these developments and their implications for literary studies, acknowledges being

> …very conscious of sliding back and forth between literary history and book history, and then again between each of these and cultural history ... I don't think this is just a reflection of my own ambivalent relation to literary studies, for it manifests a more positive, constitutive ambivalence or multiplicity produced by the intersection of literary studies, critical theory and more empirically inflected kinds of books or print culture studies. Indeed, it is exactly a practice of sliding or shifting frames I want to argue for (Carter, 2009a p 35).

Another important aspect of book history is in its detailed accounts of popular reader tastes at particular historical times, that is, in delineating communities of taste (e.g., (Rubin, 1992). These works of cultural history examine why particular types of books (for example, middlebrow books in the case of Rubin's study) became popular, and the underlying cultural and social influences which gave them status, while also demonstrating that such status has been questioned or discounted at other times.

It's important to note that delineating communities of taste requires different research questions than just mounting arguments about which books have significant cultural value and why. One such question may be concerned with histories of books and readerships. Close examination often reveals that the tastes of these readerships reflect a range of choices from "high" to "low" culture. This type of research often contests the relationship between high culture and class, that is, readers of popular genres are not necessarily separate from readers of books marketed as literary works. The other type of investigation into the merits of works and their place in a canon

is concerned with traditional debates in literary studies and the arts more broadly. Both are relevant to this research; the former in delineating reading patterns, and the second in articulating arguments about cultural value.

Book history overlaps with another sub-discipline, publishing studies, which grew out of publishing courses in universities, initially as vocationally-oriented courses, but which also provide the basis for scholarly studies of books and publishing. In Australia, a substantial body of research has been developed that analyses aspects of publishing such as: the commissioning practices of independent publishers (Poland, 1997); the production of regional literatures; Indigenous publishing (Heiss, 2003); feminist publishing (Murray, 2004); and the role of writers festivals (Stewart, 2009). Leading research in publishing studies is moving from empirical approaches to the development of critical theoretical frameworks. Simone Murray, in a recent survey of the field of publishing studies, observes that "the field is currently experiencing a sense of urgency arising from both scholars and their institutions to reconfigure itself as a critical – rather than merely a descriptive or vocational – field" (Murray, 2006 p 3-25). Therefore, the cross-disciplinary approach of this research clearly fits within a recent Australian tradition of book history and publishing studies research, which is itself a small but distinct subset within Australian literary studies, to which we shall now turn our attention.

2.5.3 Australian literary studies

Over the last decade, academics in Australian literary studies have debated the future of the discipline. This has been a vast and varied undertaking and it is not necessary to delineate its dimensions in detail here.[11] Prominent issues being debated, which of course overlap, include the following, with some examples cited to give a sense of the tenor of the contributions: the value and necessity of promoting an Australian canon of literature (Dixon, 2003); the relevance of national and transnational paradigms (Huggan, 2008); the relative priority which should be accorded to popular literature and literary writing (Galligan, 2006, Gelder and Salzman, 2009); the place for professional judgements of a work's aesthetic value (Gelder, 2006, Craven, 2008, Gelder, 2008); the future readers of Australian literature and Australian literary scholarship (Lever, 2008); the positioning of creative writing in Australian universities (Dawson, 2005); and the opportunities for the discipline arising from a renewed emphasis on empirical techniques (Bode and Dixon, 2009).

Robert Dixon characterises the fifty-year history of Australian literary studies as three necessary phases of complex "cultural nationalism, projecting Australia abroad, and internationalising Australian literature" (Dixon, 2007 p 18). He proposes strengthening the development of transnational practices of Australian literary criticism. Such transnational approaches would encompass: career biography; social and intellectual formations; economic and industry

---

[11] Important contributions include but are not limited to: (Carter, 1999, Dale, 1999, Whitlock, 1999, Davis, 2007, Dixon, 2007, Craven, 2008, Lever, 2008, Mead, 2011).

histories; translation and other-language reception; a shift from Australian literature to literature in Australia; and genre-based studies (Dixon, 2007 pp 23-24). Dixon emphasises:

> I'm not arguing that in adopting a more cosmopolitan perspective we must cease being nationalists; or that to develop productive links with other fields of English we must stop being Australian literature specialists. I'm actually asking for something much more difficult—and that is that we should try to be all of these things at once (Dixon, 2007 p 24).

Internationally, Franco Moretti's work on distant reading and on graphical representations of reading histories challenges researchers to consider: "Shapes, relation, structures. Forms. Models" (Moretti, 2005 p 1). Dixon (2008) refers specifically to the work of Moretti and St Clair as possible methodological models, and has convened a number of symposia at the University of Sydney, which aspired to be agenda-setting for the discipline.[12] Another champion of transnational approaches, David Carter, appraised the situation as follows:

> [T]here have been clear signs now for almost a decade of a new set of interests and a feeling that the textual politics of literary studies had reached a point where it could only repeat its familiar gestures of critique. If the shift in the 1980s was from literary criticism to textual politics, the current trend is from textual politics towards various forms of cultural history and print culture studies...
>
> It's important to insist that these developments are not anti-theory but post-theory... If formal literary criticism performed the work on texts necessary to move them into the academy, the new work reverses the process, pursuing the life of books into the marketplace and the public domain (Carter, 2007b p 118-119).

A recent development is scholarly interest in using bodies of digital information for new forms of inquiry about books. One term for this is "data mining" although there is no consistent terminology across the field. This research project could be considered an example of data mining. Other current examples include investigating historical library records that have been placed online (Dolin, 2004, Lamond and Reid, 2009), examining publication statistics in literary studies database, Austlit, in an effort to overturn conventional accounts of Australia's literary development (Bode, 2009); and to give a more accurate account of Australia's publishing history (Ensor, 2009). These studies constitute a set of experimental methodologies in the early stages of development internationally as there is no standard practice. As such, this research project fits within a small but distinct movement in Australian literary studies towards an increased emphasis upon transnational theoretical approaches, new empirical methodologies, everyday readers and print cultures.

---

[12] For example, "Resourceful Reading: The New Empiricism, eResearch and Australian Literary Culture" in 2009; "Reading Across the Pacific: Australia-United States Intellectual Histories" in 2010; and "Republic of Letters: Literary Communities in Australia" in 2011.

2.5.4 Points of connection in this cross-disciplinary research

Despite the differences between economics and the humanities observed in the earlier parts of this chapter, important points of connection were identified between cultural economics and book history:

- both fields acknowledge that culture is shifting, unstable, contested, and difficult to measure;
- both fields acknowledge that ways of evaluating and valuing cultural artefacts are socially constructed;
- both fields permit models of readers with diverse tastes across high culture and popular culture, rather than the contested class-based model of high/low culture;
- both fields acknowledge that exchange-value is the dominant form of value formation, and within cultural economics a complementary theoretical sub-field of cultural value is in development;
- both fields acknowledge long-standing tensions between perceptions of cultural or literary worth and commercial success, although these tensions are interpreted and examined in different ways;
- both fields are open to the potential of utilising an institutional approach, an interest in systems (both Carter and Throsby independently point to "thick description" as a useful tool (Throsby, 2001 p 29, Carter, 2009a p 47));
- both fields are open to the potential for empirical methodologies to make a contribution to debates about cultural value, including quantitative methodologies, but these must be critically informed and placed in a theoretical context; and
- both fields acknowledge that government decisions influence the cultural options available to us as citizens.

Nevertheless, the disciplines have more to differentiate them than they have in common. Key differences include an emphasis on industrial and mathematical models in economics and an emphasis on history as the primary methodological tool in book history. These can both be contrasted with the traditionally core methodologies of close reading and capital T Theory in literary studies over the last few decades. However, returning to the metaphor of a personal relationship, rather than an unhappy "forced marriage", book historians and literary studies academics may find that if individual researchers are able to get past the initial "dating" period, the relationship with the social sciences may offer a more richly rewarding experience than was anticipated. Therefore, this research seeks to demonstrate that the methodologies used in economics to undertake institutional analysis, and on a more prosaic level, to interrogate large bodies of data, can be applied fruitfully to book history scholarship and other English scholarship interested in the world of "ordinary readers" (Carter, 2009a p 36); and conversely, that theories from the disciplines of literary studies, publishing studies and book history have the potential to inform the development of theory within cultural economics (in particular, theory of cultural value).

The current research could be characterised within cultural economics as a cross-disciplinary industry study or as a contemporary study in book history, which is itself interdisciplinary. The methodologies used to analyse the Nielsen BookScan (NB) data in the empirical aspects of the research are explained at the beginning of the relevant chapters (Chapters 5-7).

Importantly, Ivor Indyk has rightly stressed how quickly empirical formulations designed to predict publishing success can become ridiculous (Indyk, 2009). Publishers such as Indyk and Henry Rosenbloom (Koval, 2005a, Kaplan, 2007) take pride in operating independent publishing companies outside the framework of NB sales data. Therefore, the case studies which draw heavily on NB data do not claim to offer a comprehensive portrait of all Australian publishing companies and reader buying practices. The changes to industry practices wrought by the introduction of this powerful empirical tool are discussed in Chapter 4.

The remaining part of this chapter defines key terms in this research, including various categories of publisher and then narrative non-fiction publications.

2.6   Definitions of book publishers

Greco (Greco, 2005 p 8) defines the core functions carried out by publishers as follows:

- content acquisition
- content development (i.e., via the editing process)
- book design
- management of the production cycle
- prepress, printing, and binding
- marketing
- sales
- fulfilment (of orders)
- customer service
- other revenue streams (e.g., sales of rights)

There is a distinction between an organisation which purchases an ISBN and publishes a book as part of its broader practices, and those organisations which specialise in publishing. This research adopts the ABS definition of a publisher as "businesses which had either book publishing as their main activity (book publishers) or generated $2m or more in income from book publishing, although this was not their main activity" (ABS, 2005).

Although there have been a number of reports about the Australian publishing industry recently, a standard categorisation of publishers has not been used. The table in Figure 4 sets out the categories used in the industry and in recent industry reports.

Organisation	Categorisation
Publishing industry	Trade/Educational
Productivity Commission	Large arms of MNs/Australian
Australia Council	Larger publishers
	Independent publishers
	Very small publishers
Bowker Thorpe Bloom Report	Large (30+ staff)
	Medium (11-30 staff)
	Small (1-10 staff)

Figure 4 The categorisation of Australian publishers by the publishing industry, Australian policy bodies, and Australian academics

Two characteristics of publishers were important for the purposes of this research. The first was whether a publisher was a multinational or an independent publisher, and the second was whether an independent publisher was Australian or overseas-based. Therefore, categorisations were developed as follows:

Categorisation for this research	Multinationals
	Major Aust independent
	Aust independent (small, medium & micro)
	Overseas-based independent and scholarly publishers

Multinational publishers

Dunning and Lundan (2008) argue that the threshold definition of a multinational publisher is "an enterprise that engages in foreign direct investment (FDI) and owns, or in some, controls value-added activities in more than one country" (Dunning and Lundan, 2008 p 3). However, as authorites in this area, add that "the choice of the point at which an enterprise is deemed to become a multinational – not to mention a regional and/or global corporation – is bound to be arbitrary" and as such depends on the research interest (Dunning and Lundan, 2008 p 4).

The current research specifies that multinational publishers operate from several countries and uses the definition of a multinational enterprise (MNE) from *The Penguin Dictionary of Economics*:

> A company, or more correctly an enterprise, operating in a number of countries and having production or service facilities outside the country of its origin. A commonly accepted definition of an MNE is an enterprise producing at least 25 per cent of its world output outside its country of origin (Bannock et al., 2003).

One benefit of this approach is that publishers that define themselves as independent but have limited operations in another country (such as Canongate) remain categorised separately as

independents. University presses are also categorised as independent publishers, and although a small number could also qualify as multinationals, for the purposes of this research they are grouped together as independents (in practice, given the small numbers involved, the results would not differ substantially either way).

The Australian book marketplace is dominated by multinationals, with the six largest being Pearson Australia, which includes the Penguin Group Australia; Random House Australia; HarperCollins Publishers Australia; Hachette Livre Australia; Scholastic Australia; and Pan MacMillan. The ten largest publishing companies (including Allen & Unwin, which is not a multinational) account for over 70 percent of sales (Wilkins, 2008 p 149).

Australian independent publishers

Louise Poland (1997) defines independent Australian publishers as companies with 50 percent or more Australian ownership, and expressly includes organisations subsidised or funded by Australian institutions such as universities (Poland, 1997 p 8).[13] The category of Australian independent publisher also encompasses micro-publishers, which produce one to five books per annum. Micro-publishers may be individuals who are connected with a university, and examples include Melbourne-based Ian Syson's Vulgar Press and Lythrum Press in Adelaide. The quality of the output can be high, the print runs are small, and publishing does not constitute the main source of income for the proprietors, who usually hold another job.

The categorisation of the publishers listed in the Nielsen BookScan top 5000 non-fiction sales reveals that there are a number of Australian independent publishers that have established themselves by specialising in how-to subject matter; including bushwalking, wildlife photography, arts and crafts, maps and guides, sports, fitness and diet. Because they don't specialise in literary works they have had low visibility amongst publishing researchers. Although they are not publishers of narrative non-fiction, and hence are not included in the scope of the current research, it is worth noting their existence here. Examples of such presses include

---

[13] Poland's definition is adopted in this research; however it is worth noting some anomalies. In 2004 the Managing Director of Text Publishing, Michael Heyward, announced that Text (an independent publisher which was then for a brief period owned by Fairfax) had entered a joint venture with Scottish independent publisher Canongate. Canongate had acquired a 50% interest in Text on the basis that Text would operate independently under Heyward's direction. Canongate's Managing Director, David Graham, described it as "two independent publishers ... forming a very interesting strategic alliance across the world. It's the only way independents can remain independent and compete with the multinationals" (Steger, 2004). Therefore, assessed against Poland's definition, Text is categorised here as an independent publisher. On the other hand, in 2007 Tony and Maureen Wheeler sold a 75% share of the well-known Australian publisher The Lonely Planet to BBC Worldwide, meaning that this publisher is no longer counted as an Australian independent publisher. On 4 October 2011 Text announced that Tony and Maureen Wheeler had acquired Canongate's holding, although Text would continue to work closely with Canongate (Text Publishing, 2011).

Explore Australia Pty Ltd Group (caravanning etc), Images Publishing Group Pty Ltd (architecture, interior design), Coroneos Publications (maths, educational books), Sally Milner Pub Group (craft and health), Steve Parish Publishing Group (wildlife photography), and Universal Publishers Group (UBD maps). From their websites it appears that the publishers take great pride in the quality of their books, and their passion for their subject matter. They have enthusiastic readerships, if the number of titles printed and reprinted over years is a guide. A number of them appear to be exporting successfully.[14] Other Australian independent publishers, which are better-known in publishing academia, specialise in poetry, fiction and theatre scripts. Therefore, when this research considers the policy implications of its findings for Australian independent publishers specialising in narrative non-fiction, it is important to remember that this is a sub-section of the Australian independent publishing sector.

Increased scholarly interest in the activity of small, independent Australian publishers, includes the contribution of independents to: feminist publishing (Poland, 1997, Murray, 2004); Indigenous publishing (Heiss, 2003); developing new writers and new readerships (Flanagan, 2007); and importing overseas titles that contribute to public debate (Flanagan, 2007, King, 2007b). Mark Davis (2008) draws attention to the potential broader significance of this activity:

> While many see small publishers as beacons of hope in an industry dominated by global conglomerates, I want to suggest, without idealising them, that they also play a useful role in signalling the possibility of non-market cultures and values that undercut prevailing ideological assumptions about how free-market societies function (p 4).

Flanagan calls for further examination of this sector, with one eventual aim being to develop government policies that would make the difference between loss and break-even on many titles, thus contributing to the long-term viability of small houses, and enabling the publication of more commercially marginal but important books (Flanagan, 2007 p 138). Davis (2008) articulates a possible theoretical link:

> …the very existence of independent publishing shows that there's more to culture than markets can anticipate…

> Obviously the stakes in all this rise far above the publishing industry. They bear on the broader question of the relationship between markets and cultural values per se (Davis, 2008 p 11).

Major Australian independent publisher

An Australian independent publisher of interest to this research has been included in a category of its own. Allen & Unwin was originally established in 1976 as the Australian arm of the UK company, George Allen & Unwin Ltd. In 1990, with the sale of the UK company, the Australian directors bought control of the Australian operation and Allen & Unwin became Australia's

---

[14] (Wilkins, 2008 also commented on their success.)

largest independent publisher. It has retained its independence since, and has been able to operate on a scale comparable to other major multinationals operating in Australia. Although all publishers face a competitive environment, Allen & Unwin has well-established marketing and distribution capabilities and is able to operate on a much more ambitious scale than other Australian independent publishers.

Overseas-based independent and scholarly publishers

A number of overseas-based independent publishers have a presence in the Australian market. These were often self-defined in their marketing materials as: "the largest independent, radical publishing house in the English-speaking world" (Verso); "one of the most distinctive voices in independent, progressive publishing" (Zed); or "the oldest and largest publishing house owned wholly by its employees" (Norton). Perhaps controversially, this category also includes international university presses, while acknowledging that some have extensive international operations. These publishers have been grouped together because there has been a considerable body of academic literature about threats to the traditional business models of university presses, which face many of the same challenges as those faced by independent publishers in relation to their size, scale of print runs and distribution networks (Wilding, 1999, Stanton, 2004, Greco, 2005). Although there are several major international university presses such as Cambridge University Press and Oxford University Press, which could be characterised as multinationals, the majority operate on a much more restricted scale and hence have been grouped in this category.

Amber-Allen Publishing, Anness Publishing, Aurum Press, Blake Publishing Ltd, Bloomsbury, Cambridge University Press, Canongate Books, Canterbury University Press, Carlton Books, Chronicle Books, Chrysalis Books, David Bateman Ltd, Duncan Baird Publishers, Faber, Granta Book, Grove Atlantic Ltd, Icon Books Grp, Kogan Page Grp, Lion Hudson, Michael O'Mara, Oxford University Press, Perseus Books, Profile Books, Quercus Editions, Rodale Press, Running Press, Seven Stories Press, Verso Books, W W Norton, Workman Publishing, Yale University Press, Zed Books

---

Figure 5 List of overseas-based independent and academic publishers in this research

Another important term in this research is narrative non-fiction, which the next section introduces as part of "the much-documented turn towards 'reality' that has been identified as a phenomenon since the late 1990s" (Glastonbury and Smith, 2009).

2.7 Defining narrative non-fiction genres

This thesis takes as a definitional starting point Australian journalism professor Molly Blair's work on creative non-fiction (Blair, 2007 p 59); however in this research "narrative" was chosen as a descriptor to avoid classifications of the titles according to whether or not a particular work is deemed "creative" or "literary". Examples of narrative non-fiction genres include

autobiography, biography, memoir and other life-writing such as diaries and letters, speeches, and extended journalism. After Blair (2007), narrative non-fiction in this study is defined as follows:[15]

A.   It is based on facts and does not fabricate places, people or events *within the conventions of the particular narrative non-fiction genre*.

Narrative non-fiction genres based on journalistic forms have no licence to fabricate information which the writer knows to be false, although it is acceptable for the author to fictionalise or recreate scenes, carefully based on the information available. No embellishment is acceptable because it contravenes an implied contract with the reader that the account is entirely factual and reliable. Narrative non-fiction literary forms such as memoir and autobiography are different genres and more flexibility is acceptable within the conventions of these genres. Examples include the use of stylised literary devices to indicate a state of mind or an altered perception of reality, such as in Inga Clendinnen's *Tiger's Eye* (Clendinnen, 2000), which incorporates passages based on her hallucinations while being hospitalised, or Jacob Rosenberg's *East of Time* (2005) and *Sunrise West* (Rosenberg, 2005, 2007), which incorporate myths, song lyrics, poems, dreams, and conversations with the ghosts of his family members who were murdered in Auschwitz. These stylistic literary devices are not intended to deceive the reader. Narrative non-fiction forms which are centred around humorous observation, for examples the works of David Sedaris and Bill Bryson, are part of a genre in which it is understood as part of the implied contract with the reader that there may be embellishment or exaggeration for humorous effect, as Sedaris has acknowledged of his work.[16]

B.   It employs techniques which were previously associated with fiction: including theme, action oriented scenes, dialogue, evocative description, characterisation, point of view.

C.   It includes personal and/or private moments with the intent to both provide readers with an understanding of the significance of the event and affect them emotionally. *This may occur through the direct presence of the author in the narrative writing, or it may occur through the use of skilful writing in the third person.*

D.   There is an emphasis on fine storytelling and fine writing (Blair, 2007 p 59).

In brief, narrative non-fiction is based on facts and does not permit fabrication within the conventions of the relevant genre, so, for example, humorous work by David Sedaris or Bill Bryson is permitted more latitude than, say, Bob Woodward's *Bush at War* (Woodward, 2002) where fidelity in reporting is paramount.

---

[15] Blair's definition is in standard font in the brief points listed A, B, C & D. My amendments are in italics.

[16] Sedaris has stretched this contract to its limits and it has been argued that his work transgresses the boundaries of non-fiction and should therefore be categorised as fiction (Heard, 2007). However, there was lukewarm support for Heard's position (Shafer, 2007). Sedaris, who describes himself as a "humorist", continues to have his work officially categorised as non-fiction and the challenge has abated. Other writers utilising his degree of inventiveness may not have been so successful.

Narrative non-fiction writing is of interest in a number of parts of the academy, in particular creative writing, literary studies, and journalism studies, with different terminology used including: creative non-fiction, literary non-fiction, literary journalism, narrative journalism and narrative non-fiction. It has been referred to as the "kinds of writing that privileged the experiential and the real" (Glastonbury and Smith, 2009). Australian academics with an interest in creative non-fiction are aware of terminological and definitional issues. They see this multiplicity of terminologies and approaches as characteristic of the field (Eisenhuth and McDonald, 2007) and as a source of creative renewal and literary richness that encompasses both creative writing practice and critical approaches.

The various terms reflect to some extent the different disciplinary and industry perspectives. For example, "creative non-fiction" is used in creative writing and journalism courses in Australian universities, whereas the term "literary journalism" is more likely to be used in schools of journalism in the US. There are differences in emphasis too. Journalism teachers highlight opportunities for students to take their writing to a higher level of quality without diminishing the requirement to report truthfully. The term "literary non-fiction" is sometimes used in book reviews but it is abhorred by most publishers. The publishing industry perception is that labelling a book as literary, be it literary fiction or literary non-fiction, detracts from the book's potential commercial performance. This is not to deny that publishers aspire to publish fine writing, however their experience has been that using the phrase "literary" sends a misleading message to some potential buyers that the book is going to be hard work to read.[17] To conclude this section, all types of writing that fall under these disciplinary areas are included in the term "narrative non-fiction". (Examples of genres which are excluded are satire, standard reference works, and how-to books.)

2.7.1 Renewed interest in narrative non-fiction genres

Gillian Whitlock's (2000) survey of biography and autobiography in Australia reminds us that "the early years of settlement produced an extraordinary amount of writing: diaries, journals, letters and memoirs. The absence of 'Literature' was lamented in the colony ... and yet a great deal of writing went on, much of it autobiographical" (Whitlock, 2000 p 233). Whitlock makes several relevant points. Firstly, from the time of settlement, narrative non-fiction forms were widely used by Australians although these forms were not accorded the status of literature. Australian literary establishments considered the novel and poetry as the highest forms of literature, through which a mature nationalist artistic sensibility would be expressed. (As Katherine Bode observes, strains of this view can be detected in contemporary concern about a crisis in the publication of literary fiction (Bode, 2010 p 32).)

---

[17] This perception is consistent with a finding by Ingrid Day in her 2000 study of the reading tastes, perceptions and practices of Australian adult fiction readers. "Reading 'literature' was closely linked to 'work', in contrast to light reading which was most often described as 'easy to read'" (Day, 2006 p 369).

However, from the 1980s onward Australian literary academics found new, rich research interests in life-writing, which, rather than being viewed as descriptive, raised interesting questions about the construction of the self narrating the story, the use of language, and a range of political and social issues connected with nationhood. (Who writes as an Australian and from what position in society? How is the autobiographic self constructed and represented through language? How is the nation of Australia imaginatively constructed in these forms of writing?) As such, life-writing was seen to offer rich literary opportunities. David McCooey has argued that a change has occurred in Australian memoir and autobiography over the last decades; that writers are experimenting with the form and using the platform of autobiography to incorporate into their work reflections on contemporary issues (McCooey, 2006). In a similar vein, Ian Donaldson (2006) highlights a "spirit of experimentation" in biography (Donaldson, 2006 p 23). It is not necessary to survey in detail the developments, suffice to say that academics of Australian literary studies now have a broad range of research interests in life-writing:

> The legacies of colonisation – the displacement of Indigenous peoples, ongoing immigration from Europe and (recently) Asia, the idea of Australia as peripheral to European centres, the desire to establish a distinctive national culture and identity – remain important in reading contemporary Australian life-writing (Whitlock, 2000 p 233).

Along with a renewal of academic interest, in the 2000s there was considerable public speculation about whether Australian readers were turning from fiction to non-fiction genres. Newspaper commentators discussed a perception that non-fiction was becoming more prominent on publishers' lists, in bookstore displays and in sales. "Fiction is dead. Long live non-fiction" (Mordue, 2003). The enquiries of journalist Mark Mordue were met with scepticism from Ivor Indyk, Giramondo Publishing, and Ian Syson, Vulgar Press, but Mordue's discussion refers to Drusilla Modjeska's suggestion that readers had become weary of postmodern fiction (Modjeska, 2002a, Modjeska, 2002b). According to Modjeska, reality seemed to be "a world ruled by fictions of every kind – mass-merchandising, advertising, politics conducted as a branch of advertising, the pre-emption of any original response to experience by the television screen" (J.G. Ballard in Modjeska, 2002b), and in response, readers turned to narratives in non-fiction books.[18] Mordue also interviewed booksellers, who commented on the preference of Australians to buy fiction by authors with whom they were familiar, in contrast with a willingness to buy non-fiction books by unfamiliar authors after the World Trade Centre attacks in 2001.

While Davis included literary non-fiction in a 2007 article in which he mourned a decline in the authorship, publication and sales of both literary fiction and non-fiction, most commentators focussed on discussion about Australian literary fiction. Indyk referred to a collapse in the

---

[18] "The fiction we were producing was either too postmodern, too self-referential, too badly edited, leached of feeling, or pitched to an international audience. As fiction turned its face elsewhere, detaching itself more and more from local realities and experience, there was a space waiting, an opening. It was filled by writing that wasn't fiction" (Modjeska, 2002a p 206).

publication of literary fiction on Radio National's "Books and Writing", suggesting that readers were looking for "a more disciplined kind of writing" in non-fiction (Koval, 2005b). Rosemary Neill wrote a feature article in *The Australian* which noted the popularity of non-fiction, but concluded that the decline in the publication of literary fiction could be cyclical (Neill, 2006). Discussion of the decline became a truism based on commentators' industry knowledge: "the nineties were rewarding for writers of literary fiction; the 'noughties' are not" (Fisher, 2006).

Currie and Brien (2008) have challenged accounts of increases in sales of life-writing. They argue that there has always been a strong interest from Australian readers in various forms of life-writing, and the change in perception is due to "a significantly increased interest by public commentators, critics, and academics in this genre of writing". Currie and Brien were working with limited data sources and they acknowledged the methodological difficulties in investigating whether there had been an increase in sales of life-writing. They examined Nielsen BookScan data in Australia in 2006 and 2007, counting the number of life-writing texts in the top 10, top 100 and top 5000 lists. Based on this, they concluded that life-writing represented four percent of the top 5000 titles in those years "and there was no significant growth". They do not appear to have analysed the sales of these titles. (Perhaps they did not have access to this data.) If the same proportion of titles was responsible for a larger proportion of sales, there would be evidence of an increase in popularity. Chapter 5 reveals an increase in the sales of books categorised as biography and autobiography from 2003-2008, and suggests that these figures may be under-represented.

Regardless of whether there has been a shift in reader tastes, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of Australian biographical and autobiographical titles published over the last two decades (Bode, 2010 p 36) as shown in Figure 6. This suggests that these titles were financially rewarding for publishers, barring other incentives. Many popular celebrity biographies are not of literary interest but the popularity of these non-fiction genres is relevant to uncovering "reading patterns" in this research.
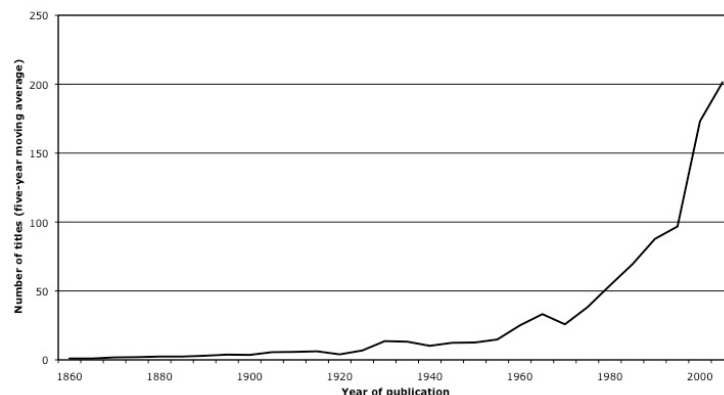
Figure 6 Authored and edited Australian auto/biographies, 1860-2007 (source: AustLit: The Australian Literature Resource) Reproduced from Bode (2010)

Bode related changes in publication rates of autobiography and biography to the debate about a decline in the publication and sales of literary fiction. Her interest was in counterpointing the increase in publication of auto/biographies against a decrease in the publication of novels (which she argued could be temporary), but the current research does not seek to make comparative statements about fiction and poetry versus narrative non-fiction. Rather, a portrait is emerging of a collection of non-fiction genres which have attracted renewed academic interest, an increase in publication rates, and anecdotal industry discussions of increased sales of non-fiction at the expense of literary fiction.

In the 2000s individual publishers also developed narrative non-fiction lists inspired by their personal interest. Morry Schwartz, the publisher of Black Ink Press, published US self-help books prior to launching *The Monthly* and the *Quarterly Essay*, inspired by the *New Yorker* and the *Atlantic Monthly* (Wyndham, 2004). Michael Heyward of Text Publishing referred to these US magazines and also to *Harper's Magazine* and *Vanity Fair* as inspiration from the US non-fiction literary scene (Mordue, 2003). Henry Rosenbloom at Scribe has had a long-standing interest in "serious non-fiction" (King, 2007a p 156). Another development in the 2000s was the annual publication of *Best Australian Essays*, which outsold *Best Australian Short Stories* each year and which, along with strong sales of the *Quarterly Essay*, indicated a new popularity in the long essay form.

Yet another development is worth noting here. During the 2000s there was an increase in the publication of works of extended journalism. According to Shona Martyn, publishing director of HarperCollins Australia "there have always been journalists writing books (but) it has increased over the last decade" (Jackson, 2009). In recognition of this trend, the Walkey Awards for journalism introduced a Non-Fiction Award for the best book in 2007. Many Australian journalists write books as a means to move beyond standard journalistic writing genres and conventions (Blair, 2007, Eisenhuth and McDonald, 2007) and to give extended treatment of subjects.[19] Risk is attached to any individual publishing endeavour and not all books of extended journalism are bestsellers, however, when sales data is analysed in relation to public debates, the popularity of works by Australian journalists is evident.

Lastly, in the 2000s non-fiction writing became consolidated as a serious area of study in creative writing and journalism departments in universities. The entry of creative writing to the university sector was not without controversy, especially regarding its status in relation to traditional literary studies and whether the students' and staff members' creative output should be included as research in university assessments (Dawson, 2005). In 2008 the Australian Association of Writing Programs held Australia's first national creative writing non-fiction conference at the University of Wollongong, cleverly titled "The Art of the Real". Journals such as *Text* provide an academic forum for university teachers of creative writing. Likewise, there

---

[19] Australian journalists who have written bestseller non-fiction titles include: Sarah Turnbull, John Silverster and Andrew Rule (authors of the *Underbelly* series), Sara MacDonald, Peter FitzSimons, Les Carlyon, Gerald Stone, Chris Masters, George Negus, Susan Duncan, Ian McPhedram, Paul Ham, Adam Shand and Gideon Haigh.

has been growing involvement in teaching creative non-fiction writing in journalism courses in Australian universities (Blair, 2007). Internationally, the formation of the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies in 2006 to improve research and education in "not journalism about literature but journalism that is literature" has occurred with active Australian involvement. These developments in creative writing and journalism departments have added to the institutional support for teaching the appreciation of fine non-fiction writing, and for instructing students in the art of writing it themselves.

2.8   Conclusion

Although the interests and methodologies of economics and literary studies have differed substantially over the last centuries, to the extent that there have been perceptions of hostility between the camps, innovative developments in both disciplines over the last two decades have sought to bridge the gap. This has occurred in cultural economics, in particular in the investigation of theories of cultural value, and in a turn to "new empiricism" in Australian literary studies. The current research draws on both developments and is situated in book history, itself a cross-disciplinary field.

A related area to economists' investigations of cultural value is that of cultural diversity. Although there have been some studies of cultural diversity in book publishing, they have (of necessity) relied on bestseller lists and this study provides an opportunity to examine theories of cultural diversity using in-depth sales data.

This chapter has discussed the roles and contributions of different types of publishers in the Australian industry. As multinational publishers increasingly move to a model based on individual profit centres for each title, recent scholarship has proposed that Australian independent publishers make distinctive cultural contributions through the books they publish. They do this because of their publishers' willingness to produce economically marginal titles based on passion or conviction about the merits of a particular book. This research does not study the *motivations* of publishers, but it examines the sales data for evidence of distinctive contributions as proposed by Davis (2008) and Flanagan (2007).

This chapter has also outlined the growth in popularity of narrative non-fiction writing, including its renewed status in the academic disciplines of literary studies, journalism studies and creative writing.

The next chapter draws on book history scholarship. It examines the development of book publishing industries, the impact of the explosion of print, and draws attention to major scholarly works which have challenged conventional understandings of the ways in which "everyday readers" engage with books.

Chapter 3. Conceptualising books and readers

3.1 Introduction

The belief that books contribute ideas to the public sphere, which in turn promotes the betterment of society, is widely held within the publishing industry. In her study of the US book retailing sector, Laura Miller (2006) observes: "Books are widely considered to be a 'different' kind of commodity, deserving of so much more respect than other commercial goods" (Miller, 2006 p 389). She quotes an independent publisher commenting on the industry: "It functions … as a place to … exchange ideas in a way that nothing else does" (Miller, 2006 p 220). However, importantly, the way this is conceptualised depends on the different perspectives and motivations of individuals. Radical presses publish critiques of capitalism and propose different ways of organising society. Publishers with "small l" liberal philosophies may seek accountability and reform from within. Politically conservative publishers may resist calls for progressive reform. Some publishers have an explicit agenda to publish voices that could otherwise be marginalised, such as feminist, gay and lesbian, Indigenous, migrant and working-class writers, or to preserve works which would otherwise be lost. Scholars such as Elizabeth Eisenstein, whose work is discussed in this chapter, link the contribution of books to Enlightenment ideals, whereas others, such as Terry Eagleton, criticise humanist endeavours as "part of the problem rather than the solution" because of their failure to pursue radical reform (Eagleton, 1996 p 208). In summary, although many members of the publishing industry and publishing academics agree in principle that books contribute to debate, beyond that there is no universally shared conceptual framework as to the mechanisms by which this occurs.

This chapter begins by drawing on contemporary scholarship that examines books, the printing press and the Enlightenment. Book historians rarely consider books in isolation from other forms of communication, and if books are the subject of a scholarly inquiry, the complexity of the media environment in any historical age is acknowledged. Next, an important conceptual link between print-capitalism, imagined communities and the development of national literatures is discussed. Benedict Anderson's work is central, although other book history scholars have examined in more detail the development of specific bodies of national literature. This leads to a discussion of books and the Enlightenment in which two important dimensions are examined. First, key studies about books and the role that printing played in the Enlightenment are considered and findings of relevance to this research are highlighted. With the dramatic increase in the number of books printed, trends developed that have parallels today. Second, this research situates itself in a humanist tradition, drawing on the work of a number of book history scholars but also incorporating important insights and perspectives from social constructivists such as Adrian Johns. A concept of particular importance to books and public enquiry was the achievement of "fixity of meaning" and this is discussed both in a historical and a contemporary context.

The next section considers some of the very different ways in which readers have been conceptualised in academia. This may seem a surprising detour given that the topic of this research project is about *books and public debate*, but analysis of the empirical findings about reading patterns depends upon assumptions about readers. This part of the discussion is as much concerned with *inappropriate* or even *wrong* ways of conceptualising readers and therefore drawing inappropriate inferences from the reading patterns which are identified in later chapters.[20]

Following this, recent Australian scholarship about books, public intellectuals and public debate is considered. The revitalised Australian publishing industry of the 1960s and 1970s saw the publication of fresh new perspectives on Australian society and culture from a liberal, revisionist viewpoint. However by the 1990s and early 2000s there was a sense of anxiety that these perspectives had lost traction in public life, a situation addressed first on radio and then in print by Robert Dessaix (1998). Other provocative, polemical works by Paul Sheehan (1998) and Mark Davis (1997, 1999) present very different criticisms, which are briefly outlined. The work of David Carter is then examined, who acknowledged the pessimism and found serious grounds for concern, but who also found positive changes in the way other public forums operated, drawing in particular on examples of renewed readerships for non-fiction books. Finally, some propositions for conceptualising contemporary Australian readers are proposed, drawing on the scholarship in this chapter.

3.2 Important "book history" theoretical approaches to books, capitalism and the circulation of ideas

3.2.1 An awareness of books in their broader context

Although book historians have engaged in ongoing debate about the boundaries of book history research interests, (e.g., (Darnton, 2002 (reprinted from 1990), Adams and Barker, 2006, Hillesund, 2007), they all agree that it makes no sense to separate out the book from other forms of communication. Rather, the books must be studied in their broader context: "[I]it is critical to study the system itself—that is, to concentrate on intertextual combinations rather than on the book as a self-sufficient unit" (Darnton, 2007 p 507). Elizabeth Eisenstein (2005), whose work is discussed later in this chapter, agrees that it was "misguided to place 'the book at the centre of a cultural web'" (Eisenstein, 2005 p 319). The implications for this research project are clear. Attempts to separate out books as a medium and to examine them in isolation from the complexity and sophistication of daily communication in all its forms are counter to the nuanced analysis to which book historians aspire. Yet, paradoxically, the book as a material form and the

---

[20] The scope of this study does not include empirical research into reader responses to the books identified in the reading patterns. Therefore, although there is a vast realm of literature about methodologies for studying readerships, this discussion limits itself to perspectives that are relevant to this research.

circuits involved in authorship, production, distribution, reader reception and survival have served in defining boundaries for this cross-disciplinary field.

3.2.2 Print-capitalism and imagined communities

An important conceptual contribution was made by Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities* (Anderson, 2006), whose arguments are well known to book historians but may be less familiar in cultural economics. Anderson argues that after the Middle Ages, the development of print-capitalism played a crucial role in changing the ways in which people conceived of themselves in relation to other people as part of imagined communities. Anderson defines a nation as:

> …an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.

> It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (Anderson, 2006 p 6).

Briefly, Anderson characterised pre-Enlightenment "taken-for-granted frames of reference" of people, for example, as being part of a religious community and being subject to a dynastic community. As the primacy of these affiliations declined after the Middle Ages, other forms of imagining emerged. Anderson used the novel and the newspaper, both dispersed through the energies of capitalism, as examples.

> The slow, uneven decline of these interlinked certainties, first in Western Europe, later elsewhere, under the impact of economic change, 'discoveries' (social and scientific), and the development of increasingly rapid communications, drove a harsh wedge between cosmology and history …the search was on … for a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together. Nothing perhaps precipitated this search, nor made it more fruitful, than print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways (Anderson, 2006 p 36).

Anderson argues that the Latin language was the first of "capitalism's restless search for markets" (p 38) through providing printed books for scholarly communities, which was saturated after about 150 years. Then printers turned to other languages, and this coincided with the Reformation. The importance of printing is well-known to Luther's success in conveying his ideas, and Anderson named him as "the first writer who could 'sell' his new books on the basis of his name" (p 39). Printers pursued markets on the basis of language, not nationality, and Anderson argues that this led to a "fixing" of vernacular languages for mass reading publics which later became associated with their "elevation … to the status of languages-of-power" (p 42).

What, in a positive sense, made the new communities imaginable was a half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity (Anderson, 2006 p 42-43).

Anderson's thesis has been extremely influential in book history, literary studies and political science.[21] His interest lies in tracing these changes to the point of national consciousness and their implications for nationalism but the key relevance for this research is to both underscore and problematise the economics of publishing and its relation to national frameworks. It is widely accepted among scholars that print-capitalism is one of a complex set of factors that created the conditions for nationalism, and that these changes brought about the now "natural" way in which people think of themselves based on nationality (as Australian or English etc.). Further, as noted in the previous chapter, moves to canonise literature, *especially* the literature of nations that perceive themselves as being on the margins of global literary production, is advocated using national frameworks. However, print-capitalism does not observe national boundaries. The transnational structure of the contemporary publishing industry may differ from the pan-European, multilingual, pre-digital print operations of the Enlightenment, but two important features can be observed. First, printers pursued markets based on language rather than national boundaries, and second, their books enabled readers to imagine themselves as part of new and different communities. This research makes provision for the unknown extent to which readers demonstrate participation in nationally-framed and other imagined communities, which is discussed later in this chapter.

3.2.3   The contemporary relevance of the Enlightenment to books and public debate

The influence of print-capitalism has been studied extensively in relation to debates about the Enlightenment. Such scholarship is relevant to this research in two main ways. First, this movement is most strongly associated with the ideal that books and ideas can contribute to the betterment of society through their contributions to public debate. Second, the Enlightenment has been studied itself as an example of this ideal put into action, albeit imperfectly achieved, and therefore is of particular interest to book history academics. However, the twentieth century has been characterised by waves of anti-Enlightenment academic movements. These ranged from criticising the goals and methods of the Enlightenment (particularly well-known examples include Adorno and Horkheimer (1947), and postmodernist claims that it was the forerunner of state-sponsored atrocities in the twentieth century) to the idea that local, inconsistent Enlightenment-style changes occurred but there was no single development that could be called

---

[21] Darnton (2003) refers to an intermediary stage: in the 1700s French replaced Latin as the language of diplomacy, and printers produced French-language books and newspapers in a range of countries across Europe. "If reading then resulted in what Benedict Anderson calls an 'imagined community,' it was European before it was nationalistic" (Darnton, 2003 p 83).

the Enlightenment, to claims that there was no such thing as the Enlightenment in any form.[22] Richard B. Sher (2006) , however, argues that

> [T]he common core resides not in a fixed body of doctrine ... but rather in a set of general values to which proponents of the Enlightenment adhered … They included improvement, or a commitment to bettering the human condition, morally and perhaps spiritually as well as materially … humanity and cosmopolitan sensibility, or a sense of sympathy and fellow feeling towards other human beings, and opposition to torture, slavery, and other practices judged to be inhumane; sociability, or an awareness of, and a preference for, the social character of human nature and human society; toleration of those holding different beliefs about religion and other matters, and a corresponding adherence to basic liberties of worship, speech, and written communication (even if there was disagreement about just how far those and other liberties should extend); intellectualism… and a concomitant belief in the power of learning as a means of bringing about improvement; and aestheticism, or an appreciation for the arts (Sher, 2006 p 16).

Despite this, in the face of extensive bodies of academic criticism of Enlightenment values, Sher acknowledges that most contemporary scholarship about the Enlightenment has been defensive (p 15). Given the centrality of this issue to the current study, we will also consider a response to anti-Enlightenment positions by Darnton, who refers to a change in the nature of criticism: "In place of the old accusations—shallow positivism, naïve optimism, bourgeois ideology— postmodernists have arraigned the Enlightenment under a new set of headings" (Darnton, 2003 p 12). Darnton provides an overview of the contemporary criticism which is summarised as follows:

- The universalism which was ideally proposed by the Enlightenment was in fact a cover for Western hegemony.
- (Related to the first criticism) the rationality proposed by the Enlightenment was a form of cultural imperialism.
- The Enlightenment undermined ethics in its pursuit of knowledge.
- The Enlightenment had excessive faith in reason, which left its defences down against irrationality and the atrocities of the twentieth century.
- The Enlightenment "belongs to the origins of totalitarianism" (p 18), including the terror of the French Revolution, and those of Hitler and Stalin.
- The Enlightenment as an approach is out of date and insufficient for contemporary problems. It championed an instrumentalist view of reason and contributed to ecological disasters and a masculinised view of civic life (Darnton, 2003 pp 12-19).

---

[22] A detailed examination of these positions is given in the introduction to Richard B. Sher's *The Enlightenment and the Book* (Sher, 2006 pp 11-22).

Darnton devotes considerable space to responding to these claims, and this paragraph gives only an outline of his arguments. First, he does not seek to "minimize the damage wrought by Westerners when they came into contact with other parts of the world … but it was driven by trade, disease, and technology rather than philosophy" (p 12). He also notes that *philosophes* (intellectuals) attempted to understand other people and to improve their situation, for example, through the abolition of slavery. Second, he agrees that "othering" and "essentialism" were features of written sources from this period, but "Imperialism is essentially a nineteenth-century phenomenon, and it took its inspiration from the Romantics rather than the *philosophes*" (p 13). In response to the third criticism, Darnton argues that "the Enlightenment provided the main defense against the barbarism that they [its later critics, such as Horkheimer and Adorno (1947)] deplored", (p 15) giving as examples the stances of Montsequieu, Voltaire, Rousseau and Diderot against abuses of power. Fourth, Darnton defends the use of reason and argues for belief in "progress with a lowercase *p*" (p 17). Next, he refutes the Enlightenment as an "attempt to force the social order to conform to an ideological blueprint" (p 18) and countered that the crimes inflicted by States in the twentieth century "violated basic principles of the Enlightenment: respect for the individual, for liberty, for all the rights of man".[23] Finally, while acknowledging that the Enlightenment was time-bound as well as culture-bound, and thus, for example, inadequate in terms of women's emancipation, Darnton gives a defence of the relevance of the Enlightenment to contemporary life.

> To defend the Enlightenment is not to reject the poetry of T.S. Eliot, the painting of Picasso, the physics of Einstein, or even the grammatology of Derrida. Nor is it to reject the rights of women …The point is not to make an inventory of ideas, crossing some off the list and adding others. It is to adopt an intellectual stance that will serve when lines are drawn and one's back is to the wall. When challenged to condemn torture in Argentina, war in Vietnam, or racism in the United States, where can we make our stand if not on principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen? (Darnton, 2003 p 19)

Book historians sympathetic to this position, such as Richard B. Sher (2006), aver that postmodern critics of the Enlightenment had not studied the original writing of Enlightenment thinkers, but rather attacked a "straw-man" construct (Sher, 2006 p 13), a position which was also upheld by the philosopher Robert Louden (2007). Some book history scholars have referred to Louden's work (and he in turn cited Darnton) because Louden returns to the original writings of the Enlightenment and assesses the ideals of leading Enlightenment thinkers for the future of

---

[23] This position is also adopted by the Australian literary studies academic, Richard Freadman. Freadman wrote that "in order to pursue their lunatic utopian racial vision it was necessary for the Nazis" [and he quoted Yehuda Bauer, a Holocaust historian] "to revolt against everything that had been before: middle-class and Judeo-Christian morality, individual freedom, humanitarianism—the whole package of the French Revolution and the Enlightenment" (Freadman, 2007 p 58).

religion, education, economics, politics and international relations. Interestingly, Louden soberly assessed the failure to achieve their ideals in the subsequent centuries. As such, he addresses the Enlightenment belief in progress. While arguing that many critics of Enlightenment thinkers overstated their naïvety and their awareness of human impediments to progress, he concluded:

> Nevertheless, most Enlightenment writers did believe that the line of progress across the centuries was clear, and that it would remain clear in the future. However, this assumption has not been feasible for some time, and the present study rejects it. In many respects, post-Enlightenment history has simply not gone in the direction that Enlightenment intellectuals predicted and hoped it would go (Louden, 2007 p 206).

Despite this, Louden believed that the Enlightenment thinkers had made an important contribution. Louden justified his position for their continued relevance in philosophical terms on a number of grounds, which can be summarised as the possibility argument (that improvements can be legitimately hoped for); a sense of duty; and moral faith that is a "hope after horrors". Ultimately, these are all different forms of possibility arguments.

> …what existed for a brief period during the Enlightenment was an enviable level of international consensus on, and commitment to, making a moral world—a new force in history that has yet to be matched …Whether humanity will ever succeed in releasing again these forces remains to be seen. But if we give up trying, we are lost (Louden, 2007 p 223).

In conclusion to this section, it is acknowledged that debates about the Enlightenment will continue. The current study acknowledges the debate and its place in a humanist tradition; not on the basis of evidence of "progress" but on the basis that these are goals worth aspiring towards. As such, it situates itself with the work of Louden, Darnton, Freadman and Eisenstein; the latter's work is discussed in the following section.

3.2.4 An "explosion" of printed works in the 1500s: printed books and the Enlightenment

Book history scholars have identified key phases in the development of the printed codex, including those set out in Figure 7:

Period	Feature
Prior to 1500	"Assuming an average print run to be no greater than 500, then about 20 million books were printed *before 1500*" (Febvre and Martin, 1976 p 248).
1500	The age of the scribes had ended and the age of printers had begun (Eisenstein, 2005).
1500-1650	There was a profusion of printed texts, including classical, mystical, and nonsensical, so that mechanisms for dealing with authenticity, accuracy, reliability and attribution were required. With this achievement of *fixity in*

	print, methodologies for attainment in knowledge using books were being put to use and contributing to the classical revival, the Reformation and the rise of modern science (Eisenstein, 2005).
1650s onwards	"The achievement of fixity came later than has generally been supposed" (Johns, 1998 p 628). Moreover, many of the negative characteristics that fixity was developed to counter can be identified in the contemporary publishing industry: piracy, false attribution, unreliable editing, lack of trust in published works. "Print, like scientific truth [attained] the level of universality—by the hard, continuous work of real people in real places" (p 42).

Figure 7 Some key claims by book history scholars about books, printing and the Enlightenment

Eisenstein (2005) undertook a detailed study of the impact of printing, on the basis that it was underestimated when considering major changes in European thought. Eisenstein's key argument is that the invention of printing enabled the broader dissemination of works with a greater degree of fixity (that is, with more reliability than hand-copied scribal works). During the first centuries of printing, old texts were duplicated more rapidly than new ones were produced (a point also made by St Clair (2004)), and the effect of this on scholarship and science is not clear (Eisenstein, 2005 p 46). However, she made the following points relevant to this study:

- Innovative scientific and scholarly work was able to be carried out outside academic centres (p 49).
- A gap was bridged between scholars and practitioners (p 154).
- There were new forms of mystification as well as new forms of enlightenment. The reprinting of alchemy, astrology, mystical works in Greek, Hebrew and Syriac, and fraudulent writings which appeared arcane and authoritative, captured the imagination of readers (p 51). "An enrichment of scholarly libraries came rapidly; the sorting out of their content took more time" (p 51). "For at least a century and a half confusion persisted … What later came to be described as a 'natural history of nonsense' was greatly enriched" (p 157-158).
- Eisenstein noted that the quest for truth was initially a quest for rediscovery: the prevailing idea was that the ancients possessed superior knowledge which had been lost over time (p 96 and p 160). It was some time before emphasis shifted to new discoveries.
- How-to books proliferated, but these were often combinations of practical and mystical content. "The new wide-angled, unfocused scholarship went together with a new single-minded, narrowly focused piety. At the same time, practical guidebooks and manuals also became more abundant, making it easier to lay plans for getting ahead in this world" (p 53).
- Eisenstein also observed the popularity of lewd popular culture as well as pious publications (p 104).

- Early printed copies were not precisely alike. Whereas scribal copies were subject to human error, printed copies enabled the broader dissemination of errors (p 57). In time this led to a desire for the standardisation of texts.
- The move towards the standardisation of printed works was correspondingly accompanied by a fuller recognition of diversity (p 59). "Sixteenth-century publications not only spread identical fashions but also encouraged the collection of diverse ones. Books illustrating diverse costumes, worn throughout the world, were studied by artists and engravers and duplicated in so many contexts that stereotypes of regional dress styles were developed … and may be recognized even now on dolls, in operas, or at costume balls" (p 59).
- Old messages and themes were applied to new events.[24]
- With the proliferation of texts, authors benefited from scandals to increase public awareness of their work (p 116).
- Likewise, there developed a market to satisfy public curiosity about the private lives of individuals, the beginning of the cult of personality (p 146).
- Latin-language publishing was different in character from more popular styles of vernacular-language publishing. Latin remained the language of scholars (p 209).

Eisenstein emphasises that with the coming of printed text, illustrations and other visual references remained important (p 43-45). Likewise, despite the spread of silent reading, the spoken word was also important (p 103). Further, diverse geographic regions in Europe, with various vernacular languages and religions, were affected differently by the availability of printed texts. However, Eisenstein characterises this period post-1500 as having two important consequences. First, there was a negative, deadening of knowledge by prolonging the retrieval of old texts and disseminating them, and second, an inventive, imaginative counter-development, with a heightened sense of individuality (p 163).

Eisenstein's (2005) account has implications for this contemporary research. Although there can be no direct comparison, she describes many phenomena which are antecedents to those in this study: the plethora of texts published, which range from scientific to mystical and nonsensical content; the popularity of how-to books; their enabling role in guiding practitioners who were not scholars of the subject under instruction, and their concern with "getting ahead" in life; the popularity of lewd and sacred books; differences in approach depending upon whether books were targeted at scholarly readers or vernacular readers; the eventual mass standardisation of textual formats and a concurrent interest in "diversity"; the cult of the individual; interest in authors' personal lives and scandals; and the recycling of tropes, allegories and symbols in various accounts and genres. These are all recognisable in some form in the contemporary

---

[24] "When it comes to coining familiar quotations, describing familiar episodes, originating symbols or stereotypes, the ancients (that is, those who went to press first) will generally outstrip the moderns. How many times has Tacitus's description of freedom-loving Teutons been repeated since a single manuscript of Germania was discovered in a fifteenth-century monastery? And in how many varying contexts – Anglo-Saxon, Frankish, as well as German – has this particular description appeared?" (Eisenstein, 2005 p 100).

publishing market today, and if they are interpreted as evidence of a decline in standards of publishing and reading tastes, it is helpful to understand that these trends originated with (and even prior to, in the case of handwritten manuscripts) the print age.

Eisenstein's work has been the subject of considerable scrutiny, and scholars such as Roger Chartier (2007) and Adrian Johns (1998) (whose work is discussed in the next section) have either distanced themselves from her position (in the case of Chartier) or challenged it directly with an alternative model (Johns).[25] Chartier criticises "hagiographic discourse" about the invention of the printing press and observes that "we have sometimes lost sight of a counterdiscourse that repeatedly denounced the ability of print to introduce corruption" which also took place (Chartier, 2007 p 516). Chartier characterises such concerns about the impact of printing as including "moral corruption" (printing "unecessary books" or making books more broadly available when they should have been restricted to literati); "textual corruption" by inept or lazy printers; corruption through commercialising the book trade; and "corruption of meaning" through misreadings by ignorant readers. Chartier concludes that "in the end, such denunciations may go some way towards explaining the lengths to which booksellers and printers went to propagandize their own social worth in the age of print" (p 517).

One last related point to note here is that publishers have been characterised by book history scholars in different ways. St Clair's (2004) study, located primarily in England, focuses on publishers as operators of cartels who sought to maximise their profits by lobbying for favourable copyright provisions. St Clair is critical of copyright restrictions, on the basis that publishers restricted the flow of new works and new ideas by reprinting cheap, out of copyright material when it was more profitable to do so, thus delaying by two hundred years access by poorer and more geographically remote readers in England to contemporary ideas. These readers in the Romantic era were supplied with outdated, out of copyright chapbooks, conduct books on morals and religious advice, ballads and astrological almanacs (St. Clair, 2004 pp 138-139). However, Sher portrays his Scottish publishers with more heroic overtones, and in his account they sometimes collaborated in a gentlemanly fashion, or made non-economic decisions to publish texts which they believed were important. The current research operates on the hypothesis that, in the contemporary period under investigation, publishers were both profit-motivated *and* had the capacity to make non-economic decisions.

3.2.5 Fixity of meaning

The profusion of printed works was characterised by a confusing mix of ancient, classical texts, mysticism, superstition and speculative writing from a variety of historical periods. Scholars looked to the past to discern and recover ancient wisdom. As improved editions of ancient texts were accumulated, scholars could afford to compare different sources and different traditions. Because "the task of preservation had become less urgent" (p 98) scholars could afford to edit

---

[25] And by D.F. McKenzie, whose work is also discussed later in this chapter. McKenzie refers to the "European myth of the technologies of literacy and print as agents of change…" (McKenzie, 1984 pp 336-337).

and select from texts. Norms were developed for printing technical information, and deciphering it was no longer the province of the initiated. Eisenstein's (2005) thesis draws direct connections between these cultural changes associated with printing, to forces which brought about the Reformation, the Renaissance, and the scientific revolution.

Eisenstein concludes that "of all the new features introduced by the duplicative powers of print, preservation is possibly the most important" (Eisenstein, 2005 p 87). She contrasts the impact of print with the previous era, in which manuscripts were unreliably copied and recopied over generations and were subject to deterioration and loss. "To be transmitted by writing from one generation to the next, information had to be conveyed by drifting texts and vanishing manuscripts" (Eisenstein, 2005 p 87). She also compared a pre-print mentality that the information in rare manuscripts could best be preserved by keeping them in private hands, with the later view that their protection was more likely by being made public (p 90). So the first consequence of Eisenstein's transition to "fixity of print" is that after a period of a flurry of texts of all types becoming more available, systems for assessing the knowledge contained in individual manuscripts were developed, and scientists were then able to consider far greater bodies of information than they had in previous ages. Another important consequence of fixity was that through widespread publication in vernacular languages, "the linguistic map of Europe was 'fixed'", a point which Eisenstein observes has been widely acknowledged (Eisenstein, 2005 p 91). Fixity in print also created the circumstances that enabled greater recognition of individual authorship, "and encouraged the staking of claims to inventions, discoveries, and creations" (p 93).

Eisenstein's work is now regarded as classic within book history, but it has also been challenged by Johns (1998) who accuses her of technological determinism and responded that "people, not printing, had created change".

> We may consider fixity not as an inherent quality, but as a transitive one. That is, it may be more useful to reverse our commonsense assumption. We may adopt the principle that fixity exists only inasmuch as it is recognized and acted upon by people—and not otherwise ... In contrast to talk of a "print logic" imposed on humanity, this approach allows us to recover the construction of different print cultures in particular historical circumstances. It recognizes that texts, printed or not, cannot compel readers to react in specific ways, but that they must be interpreted in cultural spaces the character of which helps to decide what counts as a proper reading (Johns, 1998 19-20).

Johns' work is regarded as an advance on Eisenstein's theorising, and the implications of his scholarship for conceptualising contemporary readers will be discussed in a later section of this chapter, however, his work is not as far from Eisenstein's as he professes, as several reviewers

have observed. [26] Johns' contribution lies in taking a social constructivist perspective to give localised, nuanced analysis of print culture as something which is constantly in flux, and constantly reliant on the efforts of printers, publishers, authors and other members of the publishing profession to achieve the conditions for civilised public discourse.

As such, Johns made several important criticisms of Eisenstein's work. Firstly, according to Johns (1998), Eisenstein put forward an *ideal* of intellectuals developing new means of pursuing knowledge as a description of behaviour at this time, rather than recognising that this ideal was rarely, if ever, achieved. He charged Eisenstein with implying a sense of historical inevitability in the development of systems for public confidence in the reliability of information in printed books. On the contrary, "early modern printing was not joined by any obvious or necessary bond to enhanced fidelity, reliability and truth. That bond had to be forged" (p 5). Johns, whose study focused on scientific literature in England, attributed the development of such systems to the "hard work" of people working in and with the Stationers Company and the Royal Society in England. He therefore claimed to have moved historical accounts away from technological determinism to the efforts of individuals and their colleagues.[27] An important implication is that "authority and fixity were essentially cultural, even moral" (Sommerville, 1999 p 1751). Another important implication is that Johns dated the development of methods within the publishing industry for trust, attribution, authorship, copyright and ways for exploiting fixity to acquire new knowledge at a later time: in the mid-eighteenth century.

Johns concluded his work by arguing that fixity of knowledge remained elusive in later periods. His proposition about the ongoing fraught nature of fixity was borne out recently by Jonathan Franzen's experiences with the publication of his novels *The Corrections* and *Freedom*. They were both first published containing substantial errors which Franzen believed had been corrected (*The Corrections* in the US edition and *Freedom* in the UK edition), and were rapidly reprinted by the publisher. Franzen publicly dissociated himself from the error-laden *Freedom* and asked his readers to wait for the corrected edition (Clark, 2011). Commentators noted that Franzen was an eminent and popular literary writer whose books received extensive support and resources from his publishers, and speculated that if this could occur in his case, the situation must be worse for the authors of lower-profile books.

---

[26] "That the printed book actually sits at the center of a sprawling web of social and economic relations is certainly a compelling vision (even if we object that Eisenstein and others were less insensitive to this set of relations than Johns acknowledges)..." (Hudson, 2002 p 85). "Ironically, his achievement is much closer to Eisenstein's than Johns admits" (Stewart, 2000 p 403). "The attack on Eisenstein is not entirely fair: many of the pages in Eisenstein that Johns cites as evidencing her tendency to equate print with fixity and print revolution with scientific revolution are in fact the very pages in which she offers her own scrupulously balanced views …" (Manley, 2000 p 91).

[27] Eisenstein has responded to such criticisms. "Surely one may fully acknowledge the role played by human agents without denying that impersonal processes also came into play after the widespread adoption of printing and engraving" (Eisenstein, 2005 p 355).

3.2.6 Positioning this project in relation to frameworks about books and the Enlightenment

Johns' contribution to our understanding of the ways in which books, publishers and authors acquire public authority and trust is that the achievement of these ends is contingent, not inevitable. It fits within a framework analysing cultural value and books in public debate. Incidentally, Johns did not make it clear whether he regarded scientific knowledge entirely as a construct also.[28] However, the current research is positioned carefully in relation to the debates discussed in the previous sections. It situates itself in a humanist tradition, but not one which is based on the inevitability of progress (which, incidentally, Loudner argued would also overstate the position of most of the best-known Enlightenment intellectuals), rather, in a humanist position *despite* the lack of progress in achieving many Enlightenment ideals of universal peace, prosperity, advancement to well-being through education and free-thinking debate. A commitment to the achievement of these ideals may not be realistic, but their pursuit can be justified in terms of hope, duty and some sort of commitment to "making a moral world" (Louden, 2007 p 223). Lest this sound naïve or idealistic, it is worth foreshadowing that although the contemporary research in the following chapters demonstrates that books did have relevance to public debates in a variety of ways, the research also underlines the *limits* to which the books, authors, publishers and their advocates were able to shift the grounds of the debates. However, based on the position outlined here, such efforts are still important and valuable.

Johns' work contains excellent examples of detailed studies in book history scholarship that destabilise broad conceptual approaches to histories of books, print and readers. The current research acknowledges that on close examination terms and concepts such as "the Enlightenment", "print culture" and "fixity" do not stand up as generalisations that are consistent across hugely variable localised print cultures and historical periods. Therefore, these terms are applied because they are deemed to be productive and useful for organising the ideas in this research, while acknowledging that when applied to specific examples they are contingent and inconsistent. As such it is hoped that the important insights of scholars such as Johns can be held in a productive tension with those of his predecessors. In a survey of book history "after theory" Peter McDonald (2006a) is not kind about humanists: "Though small sects of stubborn liberal humanists, touchingly innocent positivists, dogmatic historicists, or 1950s moralists … may live on the hinterlands, they are, thanks to the knights-errant of the theory struggle—among them Eagleton himself—now largely silent, or at least ineffective, specters" (McDonald, 2006a p 216).

---

[28] "It should be possible to assent conjecturally to the notion that 'the *history* of modern science' might have been different without subscribing to the notion that the *content* of modern science as it exists is less than a rationally coherent account of a physical universe that exists … the question of the contingency of scientific knowledge is both the most genuinely pertinent and the one most amenable to "social constructivist" interpretation; the non-constructed reality that science describes and the fundamentally rationally consistency with which it does so over time are 'sticking points' more resistant to demythologizing" (Manley, 2000 p 96).

If possible, this research seeks to utilise the insights offered by various literary theories while adhering to a "watered down" but recognisable humanist position. As such, it does not seek to "remain trapped in the sterile polemics of the past" (McDonald, 2006a p 227) nor to be dismissive of popular culture and the choices of everyday readers, but rather to look at the best that literary theory has to offer within a progressive, reflexive, humanist framework. It may not be such a lonely position as McDonald implies. For example, New York University and the New York Library have embarked on a Re-Enlightenment project (The Re:Enlightenment Project, 2011) and in 2008 in Britain, a group founded by Cambridge scholars launched Open Book Publishers which provides free access to refereed, scholarly work to promote the spread of knowledge (Open Book Publishers, 2011).

3.3   Conceptualising readers

The first part of this chapter discussed the ways in which, although a single copy of a book gives cause to infer a sense of stable, fixed meanings, that in fact the processes of authorship and publishing involve multiple versions of manuscripts, and there is no automatic certainty that the author's preferred version will be published. Considering the ways that readers respond to books is also uncertain. A central concept is the "bibliographic fallacy", that is, the false idea that by examining a book we can reconstruct how particular readers interpreted it and responded to it (Allen, 1993 p 323).[29]

Although the act of reading may appear natural and unproblematic, book history scholarship has revealed the complexity of individual and social approaches to reading. In *The Nature of the Book*, Johns (1998) examines ideas about reading in the early modern period. People understood the mental and physical aspects of the body in terms of "the passions", which could be metaphysical, physical and moral, and which were linked to various spirits and energies. The cultivation of good habits was seen to be the best means of disciplining one's passions. However, dangerous passions could be invoked through the excitements of reading, which could damage a person irreparably for life. "Physicians … became as accustomed to treating the symptoms of improper or excessive reading as those of the passions. They found that excessive reading could bring on a vast range of conditions" (Johns, 1998 p 408). Women were particularly liable to be treated medically for conditions brought on by reading. There was a desire expressed broadly within society to restrain overly enthusiastic reading which could cause irreparable physical and mental strain (and, in the case of reading of religious literature, "enthusiastic" readings which

---

[29] Two other theoretical fallacies are well known within literary studies. The intentional fallacy is "the error of criticizing and judging a work of literature by attempting to assess what the writer's intention was and whether or not he has fulfilled it rather than concentrating on the work itself." This is because we do not have direct access to an author's mind. This position arose in relation to new criticism, which advocated the close reading of texts independently from other considerations (Cuddon and Preston, 1999 p 421). The "affective fallacy" refers to confusion between a work of literature and its results in the minds of readers. That is, it would be inappropriate to judge that a work is bad because it inspires in readers negative associations or feelings (ibid p 13).

could lead to excessive religious zeal). John's overall point is that although reading may appear to be a natural, unmediated process, it is in fact highly culturally constructed.

Darnton (2007) underlines the complexity of reading practices uncovered in his research in pre-revolutionary France. "One of the many kinds of reading that developed in early modern Europe… is reading as game-playing. You find it everywhere, in libels, novels, and literary reviews, which constantly invite the reader to penetrate into secrets hidden between the lines or beneath the text" (Darnton, 2007 p 506). Darnton's scholarship on seditious, pornographic and libellous books showed the inventive recycling of anecdotes, scandals, and other hidden incidents attributed to public figures which threw into question official versions of events. It cautioned scholars from assuming that the games played between authors and readers were any less complex, sophisticated or witty than those in our contemporary era. Further, this material from "Grub Street" was consumed by readers in highly complex communications environments.

> We tend to think of them [the media in eighteenth-century Paris] by way of contrast with the all-pervasive media of today. So we imagine the Old Regime as a simple, tranquil, media-free world-we-have-lost, a society with no telephones, no television, no E-Mail, Internet, and all the rest. In fact, however, it was not a simple world at all. It was merely different. It had a dense communication network made up of media and genres (p 35).

> The media of the Old Regime were mixed. They transmitted an amalgam of overlapping, interpenetrating messages, spoken, written, printed, pictured, and sung (Darnton, 2007 p 38).

The history of reading reveals a complexity of historical and geographically dispersed reading practices and reading environments that require us to carefully consider assumptions about the contemporary readerships in this research. Therefore, in the next section we consider some key theoretical approaches to readers and the act of reading.

3.3.1   Exposition and appropriation

Roger Chartier (1994) proposes "three fundamental cleavages" through which different meanings can be read from the same text. The first is whether the book is accessed aurally or visually. Second is whether it is read intensively and reverentially, or as part of extensive reading in which the reader moves lightly from text to text.[30] The third is whether a reader undertakes private, solitary reading or is part of collective reading in a communal space (Chartier, 1994 p 17). Chartier's interest is in examining the extensive differences in reading practices among different communities and individuals, geographically and over time and how this changed understandings of how the meanings are formed by readers.

---

[30] This refers to Rolf Engelsing's thesis that reading practices in Europe developed from a reverential rereading of few texts to extensive reading. Critics have responded that both practices can be present in individual readers and in societal groups (Hall, 2007 p 539).

The dialectic between imposition and appropriation, between constraints transgressed and freedoms bridled, is not the same in all places or all times or for all people. Recognizing its diverse modalities and multiple variations is the first aim of a history of reading that strives to grasp – in all their differences – communities of readers and their 'arts of reading' (Chartier, 1994 p viii).

The consequences for the current research are significant. We must infer with great caution judgments about contemporary Australian *readers* based on the books alone, because, in the words of Chartier, accounts of what was read "must be radically distinguished" from accounts of the readers of those books (Chartier, 1994 p 5). As will be discussed further below, readers may draw radically different (or merely indifferent) meanings from books to those expected by authors or publishers.

3.3.2   The sociology of a text

In 1994 the New Zealand bibliographer D.F. McKenzie (1984) argues that bibliographers needed to study books in the context of ongoing and interactive dynamics of *orality*, *literacy* and *print*, rather than focusing on these three aspects as successive stages; as though each displaced the former (McKenzie, 1984 pp 333-334). He challenged the academy to bring to bear historicist methods, with an appreciation that the physical object of the book is subject to individual readings "since it is re-creatively read in different ways by different people at different times, its so-called objectivity, its simple physicality, is really an illusion" (p 335). McKenzie gives a powerful analysis of the Treaty of Waitangi and the different perceptions of reading which were applied by the British and the Maori chiefs; the latter having not accorded reading the same priority they placed on oral negotiations, and oral condition-making. McKenzie concludes, "I myself cannot help but see texts, their distinct versions, their different physical modes, and their comprehension in social contexts—in a word, the sociology of texts—as the substance of bibliography" (McKenzie, 1984 p 365).

This influential work encouraged further scholarship that examines the social and political contexts in which people interact with books; the complex interplay of oral, visual, print-based and other forms of communication that influence the ways in which books are perceived; and the provisional nature of each individual act of reading. In a recent article, James F. English (2010) identifies different research approaches that stemmed from the interest in the "sociology of literature" in the 1980s. Although that term is now defunct, he proposes that interest in its themes remain evident in several different strands of academia, which are summarised as:

- "The triumph of critical theory and the paradigm of 'critique'" (p vii) so that postcolonial studies, queer theory, and new historicism, to quote the examples he gives, relate literary texts to the social effects of their circulation;
- The material processes by which books reach readers, which is of interest in book history;

- "The history and logic of literary values and literary canon formation" (p ix). Bourdieu's work is noted as being particularly influential;
- Examining the relations between literary studies and other disciplines and, more broadly, with the social world. Eagleton's (1996) *Literary Theory* is given as an example; and
- The social practices of readers, based on empirical studies, in book history. Radway's (1984) *Reading the Romance* was an agenda-setting example of such research.

There has been considerable debate about the best methodologies for studying reader practices and experiences, but because this research does not include empirical studies of readers, it is not necessary to survey this field of discussion.

3.3.3 Overturning assumptions about readers through empirical research

It could be argued that one of the most common effects of studies of actual readers is to overturn prior assumptions about the behaviour of readers. Jonathan Rose (1992) sets out a number of assumptions about readers, which he argues, empirical research has not borne out. Because this is crucial to the interpretation of the empirical findings in the current research, it is worth quoting at length.

> Of course, critics of all stripes, from literary historians to the most avant-garde theorist, have tried to discern the ideological messages that books transmit to readers. But in doing so they usually commit as least one of the following common fallacies of reader response:
>
> first, all literature is political, in the sense that it always influences the political consciousness of the reader;
>
> second, the influence of a given text is directly proportional to its circulation;
>
> third, "popular" culture has a much larger following than "high" culture, and therefore it more accurately reflects the attitudes of the masses;
>
> fourth, "high" culture tends to reinforce acceptance of the existing social and political order (a presumption widely shared by both the left and right); and,
>
> fifth, the canon of "great books" is defined solely by social elites. Common readers either do not recognize that canon, or else they accept it only out of deference to elite opinion.
>
> My own research into British working-class readers—and other recent studies in the history of reading—do not bear out any of these assumptions. Even when literature was written as propaganda, it often had no appreciable impact on the politics of the reader— or an impact entirely different from what the author or publisher intended (Rose, 1992 p 48).

On a more prosaic level, following are some additions arising from the body of empirical studies of readers:

- Individual readers can read works in remarkably individualistic ways, which cannot be inferred from their class, ethnic group, gender or educational level (Ginzburg, 1980);
- Readers of popular genres read more actively and intelligently than was assumed (Radway, 1997); and
- Books that are now predominantly discussed in relation to a particular era may not have been widely known at the time (St. Clair, 2004).

Another book historian summarises the resultant situation as follows: "Studies of literacy are more notable for the generalizations they debunk than for those they develop. The received wisdom has been replaced by received skepticism" (Price, 2004 p 316). Therefore, although it is tempting to draw conclusions about reader responses to the books identified in later chapters, this body of research reminds us to exercise caution.

The next parts of this chapter shift the focus to Australia. First some contemporary context is provided that examines recent Australian academic interest in books and public debate.

3.4   Australian literary scholarship about books and public debate

This section briefly considers the ways in which the public spaces for debating Australian issues have changed recently, including developments in the publishing industry and the media, the growth in writers' festivals, an increase in sales of narrative non-fiction works relating to public issues, and changes to the status of the academy in contributing public commentary.

3.4.1   Contemporary debates about public intellectuals

One feature of expanded publishing lists of Australian titles in the 1960s was the number and success of Australian non-fiction titles. Carter (2009b) associates this with a "new liberalism" in books about Australian culture and public affairs (Carter, 2009b p 372). Titles including Manning Clark's *History of Australia* series, Geoffrey Blainey's *The Tyranny of Distance* and Donald Horne's best-selling *The Lucky Country* were

> … not just new books but new kinds of books in the local marketplace: intellectually driven, mostly from authors with a university education – rare enough in earlier Australian publishing – and focused on Australian social and cultural issues for Australian readers. The general reader could now be conceived as the educated general reader (Carter, 2009b p 373).

Australian publishing flourished in the 1970s and 1980s, with the publication of important narrative non-fiction books including, for example, A.B. Facey's *A Fortunate* Life and Sally Morgan's *My Place*, an expansion of voices and perspectives about Australian life and nationhood with strengthened feminist, Indigenous, working class and multicultural titles, and the emergence of gay and lesbian writing. However by the 1990s and 2000s there was a spate of introspection about the role of public intellectuals, ranging from Robert Dessaix's thoughtful

interviews about the assumptions underlying the role of public intellectuals, to more polemical, provocative works by Paul Sheehan and Mark Davis.

Dessaix began by considering mistrust of the term "intellectual" in Britain and Australia and the implication that the term defined someone as set above others (Dessaix and Australian Broadcasting Corporation., 1998 pp 7-10). He interviewed a range of Australian public intellectuals, in which they reflected upon whether Australians were resistent to intellectual debate, the role of the academy and the changing nature of public forums. As such, Dessaix's work is conceived along traditional humanist liberal lines (although McKenzie Wark and Catharine Lumby, two interviewees, resisted such conceptualisations in their reflections).

In contrast, Paul Sheehan's best-selling polemic *Among the Barbarians* accused the Hawke-Keating Labor government of betraying multiculturalism by contributing to community resentment through welfare benefits and giving grants to obscure causes, by combining economic rationalism with racial politics, and for laying the groundwork for a populist response to Hansonite[31] outbursts (Sheehan, 1998 p 111). Sheehan refers to organisations such as the left-liberal media and state multiculturalism bodies that tried to shape the ways in issues about race and immigration were debated as "the thought police" (p 343) and concluded that "everyday freedoms are being eroded by the rhetoric of equity" (p 349).

Mark Davis takes a provocative stand from a more academic position. He argues that there had occurred a decline in social commentary from 1970s liberalism into defensiveness (Davis, 1997 p 278) which referred nostalgically to Western notions of high culture which were class-bound and suspicious of popular culture (p 281). "They overlook the fact that popular culture is full of ethical and critical content, and that most of us quite satisfactorily draw meaning from it and are more capable of filtering out what we don't want than media critics often give us credit for" (Davis, 1999 p 283).

Davis proposes that with new multimedia technologies and dynamic social shifts it was an exciting time for "reanalysis and realignment", to move towards new conceptions of Australian cultural life and to hear from fresh contributors (Davis, 1997 p 276). It is not within the scope of the current research to investigate these concerns, except to establish that prior to the period of this research, there were a range of publications expressing anxiety about the quality of serious public debate. Rather, here we will focus on the analysis in David Carter's (2004a) collection of essays *The Ideas Market*, in which he argues for new ways of framing discussions about public spaces for debate in Australia. Carter identifies two waves in the rise of public intellectuals. The first relates to the "culture wars" and the second to the "history wars".[32] The most noticeable

---

[31] A reference to Pauline Hanson, founder of a new conservative political party called One Nation (now defunct).
[32] Culture wars: "a series of arguments over 'political correctness' …; minority rights (women's, gay, ethnic, etc.); and the 'betrayal' of the academy from within by politics, theory or pop. The second [debate], with the republic debate as a kind of hinge between them, has been characterised as the 'history wars' (another import) and focuses more specifically on Indigenous issues" (Carter, 2004a p 25).

feature is "the degree to which they have been conducted, not by politicians in parliament, but by historians, lawyers, shock jocks, novelists, columnists, *former* politicans and so on" (Carter, 2004a p 26). Carter identifies a number of possible causes for shifts in the political and cultural environment that invoked a sense of crisis for some commentators, including:

- The transition from the Keating to the Howard years of government;
- The emergence of national debates about Indigenous issues, multiculturalism, and asylum-seekers [and later the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan];
- The increase in neoconservative public interventions through thinktanks, newspaper columns and journals such as *Quadrant*. "Attacks on public intellectuals have produced more public intellectuals. If opinion-making was once assumed to be small-l liberal or left-wing domain, this is clearly no longer the case" (Carter, 2004a p 17);
- Changes in the roles of the media and the academy and relations between them. These included a decline in the high cultural authority of humanities faculties and criticism of academics for being both too media-friendly and too specialised and remote from the "real world".

The introduction of popular, persuasive neoconservative public opinion leaders during the late 1990s and the 2000s was a marked shift from the previous decade. Conservative opinion-making led by the Prime Minister, John Howard, received widespread media coverage and found popular support. However in his analysis of this period, Carter (2004a) stresses the "spectacular rise to prominence" of public intellectuals in the 1990s and 2000s (p 22). He welcomes developments in scholarship on race, history, and sovereignty as an "undeniably a good thing" (p 22), but confesses to an unease that particular public figures and particular forms of public discussion were perhaps given privileged postitions in the debates. (He links these to a modernist sense of an intellectual as someone who is seen to be intellectually superior, or the romantic view of an intellectual as an outsider (pp 28-29)). Carter concludes that the term "public intellectual" has outlived its usefulness and calls for a greater variety of public contributors from all walks of life rather than self-proclaimed "intellectuals". He also observes that what some commentators perceive as a decline in public life "might just be that the other side is winning" (p 23).

Carter identifies significant structural shifts that are relevant to the current research. New readerships were established for books of essays and memoirs; periodicals including the *Australian Book Review* and *Meanjin* were rejuvenated; the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's Boyer Lectures found national audiences on air and in print; and a younger generation of novelists and academics participated in public life by writing media opinion pieces, appearing at writers' festivals, and writing "intellectual autobiography" (p 24). Carter also praises the work of the academy in writing serious, sophisticated scholarship about Australian history and contemporary issues. In terms of quality, he assessed it as a rich and productive period. However, he observed, in structural terms the publishing environment for such work was fraught, the markets were small and the payments to scholars were very small.

Despite this fraught situation, there was also growth in the diversity of Australian reading cultures. Carter contrasted the pessimism discussed previously with the role of the media and the publishing marketplace in promoting contributions to debates. (p 30) By emphasising the expansion in the marketplace for books, 'the unprecedented popularity of new 'crossover' genres: books of essays, memoirs and autobiographies, 'creative nonfiction', high-art travel and food goods' (p 31) at the quality end of the publishing spectrum, he also underlined the expansion in Australian readerships for such works. This occurred in the context of expanded audiences for writers festivals, the popularity of book clubs, and other aspects of literary and publishing infrastructure such as quality bookstores (p 31). Therefore, Carter's analysis opens up that possibility that, despite the alarmist comments of the death of the book referred to in the opening chapter, this period was in fact a rich and lively study of books playing constructive roles in public debates in a variety of ways.

3.4.2   The literary academy and the media

One recurring theme in the debate about the role of public intellectuals was the growing gap between humanities academics and the media. Contributors referred to a loss of authority on the part of humanities academics in the public sphere, with many academics criticising changes in university structures and priorities. Ivor Indyk singled out three ways in which the public role of academic as critic was constricted: first, pressure to pursue large grants with heavy administrative requirements 'do not encourage the kind of topical activity, the essayistic intervention, the readiness to comment' (Indyk, 2000 p 2). Second, the requirement to use specialised language to demonstrate authority within the academy was a barrier to public communication. (This was linked by other commentators to pressure to publish in referreed journals at the expense of works that would be more accessible to general readerships (Orr, 2011 p 25).) Third, due to financial pressure, postgraduate students were enrolled and trained in specialised literary criticism with language and methodologies for which there were insufficient jobs in academia but were not suitable for the public realm. Some writers mourned the loss of the high cultural authority associated with Leavisite literary studies and blamed the levelling implicit in cultural studies. Commentators including David Marr criticised postmodernism for obscure jargon and for its lack of diagnostic utility in social and political issues (Lumby, 2004 pp 200-201). Catharine Lumby, a journalist, academic and media commentator, acknowledges that there have been direct journalistic attacks on academic discourse and that members of the media face pressures, often acted upon, to simplify or dramatise topics by editing quotes from academics. Despite this, she urges academics to become more proficient at learning the "new modes of speech" of the media because in the public realm "traditional hierarchies of expertise and knowledge" no longer apply. Rather, those who "got their message out" were individuals who understood the discourses of the media and used them appropriately (Lumby, 2004 p 217).

Therefore, the prelude to the timeframe of this research was one in which a considerable number of academic commentators expressed anxiety about conditions in which they could make meaningful contributions to public debate, for reasons to do with the demands of the media for

brief opinion-oriented comments rather than sustained, contextualised analysis, and the demands of universities to use specialised jargon and to publish in refereed journals. Carter (2004a) is more positive, observing that most of the intellectuals interviewed in Dessaix's (1998) book are academics, wondering: "Under what kinds of conditions … have the universities produced such a mixed and interesting bunch of writers and speakers, including Robert Dessaix? And how have they produced the listeners and readers, the consumers, for this kind of work?" (Carter, 2004a p 29).

3.4.3   The writer as celebrity

In *The Making of the Australian Literary Imagination* Richard Nile (2002) wrote about the 1970s as the beginning of a new era of readers as "literary watchers" and writers as "celebrity-packaged along with their books" (Nile, 2002 p 281). This change was interpreted as having several significant consequences over time for publishers and readers. First, it coincided with a shift in publisher budgets towards publicity, promotion, and point-of-store retail marketing of "brand-name" authors which, critics argue, occurred at the expense of attention to editing and the quality of published texts (Koval cited in Nile, 2002 p 282). The media played a greater role in canonising authors, for example, Robert Dixon observes that the popularity and celebrity of Tim Winton dating from the 1980s was based not on tertiary academic canonisation (Winton distanced himself in interviews from the academy), but rather due to his high media profile in popular formats including weekend newspaper coverage and television interviews (with publicity fuelled in cycles by new book promotions and the announcement of annual literary awards); his working-class public persona; and the inclusion of his work in secondary school and under-graduate curricula (Dixon, 2005).

Second, in the 2000s, large publishers shifted their resources away from niche-market Australian literary fiction to focus their recources on bigger-selling titles (Davis, 2007 p 120). Concurrently, Carter and Ferres (2001) observe that the shift towards non-fiction in the 2000s fitted with the non-fiction writer as a celebrity in the form of a public intellectual, and cited the extraordinary popularity of books by Australian historians (Carter and Ferres, 2001 p 151). A third change was the international celebrity of Australian writers such as Peter Carey and Germaine Greer. This generated both "the marketing of Australia as an export product (from within Australia) and the marketing of Australia as a remembered homeland (from offshore)" (Huggan, 2009 p 51). Huggan proposes that "the cultural phenomenon of celebrity is reshaping perceptions not just of 'who counts' as an Australian writer, but also … what the nation itself represents within an increasingly transnational public sphere" (Huggan, 2009 p 47). He argues for more nuanced understandings of Australian literature, including that which is written outside the national boundaries.

In summary, the rise of literary celebrity has changed the way publishers allocate publishing budgets towards various kinds of writing (i.e., the makeup of their publishing lists) and the spread of resources allocated within individual titles; increased the ability for the media as well

as the academy to play a part in canonising writers; and enabled internationally-recognised Australian writers to project influential ideas about what constitutes Australian literature abroad and domestically. Although these shifts were uncomfortable for literary writers who were used to playing a traditional role of a literary public intellectual, Carter and Ferres (2001) suggest that this did not mean a decline in the role of books in the civic sphere. "If literary texts are now produced, distributed and – perhaps – consumed in much the same way as pop culture commodities, this might also be a sign of literature's contemporary proliferation, its entry into new social relations and public spaces" (Carter and Ferres, 2001 p 149).

3.5 Propositions regarding contemporary Australian readerships

This section puts forward some general propositions about contemporary Australian readerships informed by the scholarship in the previous sections and by Australian research into readers. Arguably the first Australian conference on readerships was held in 1990 at Griffith University, which examined the social context of reading and its effects on the formation of social subjects (Macleod and Buckridge, 1992). Its effect and that of other related scholarship was to highlight the variance between the canon and the actual reading practices of Australians and their attitudes towards books. Two examples are mentioned here: *Australian Readers Remember* by Martyn Lyons and Lucy Taksa, which was based on oral interviews with 61 interviewees who were over 70 at the time, giving the research a timespan of 1890-1930 (Lyons and Taksa, 1992). Second, Tim Dolin used IT software to digitise two sets of library lending records in Lambton, Western Australia and Collie, NSW to examine reading preferences in 1908-1909 (Dolin, 2004). These made visible the *non-literary* and often *imported* books which made up the majority of Australians' reading in this period.

> The project of a national literature therefore coincided with the rise of a vast new readership for fiction that was indifferent to the boundaries of nation-states … They belonged to an entirely new sort of reading community, one that spanned the English-speaking world, and seems on the face of it to have been markedly at odds with the imagined community of the nation-state or the symbolically powerful community of the British Empire (Dolin, 2005).

One effect of this shift in attention to readers has been to rewrite aspects of Australian publishing history to include the publication of mass-market genre fiction, as will be discussed in the next chapter. It is perhaps a leap from these historical studies to the present era, however the next section draws on these and other works to set out some frameworks for thinking about the contemporary Australian readers in this research, bearing in mind our caution in drawing specific conclusions about readers without studying their responses.

Theoretical propositions

1. Conceiving of readers as consumers is not viewed as ideologically problematic.

In the discipline of economics, the most obvious way of analysing readerships is to analyse sales figures. Conflating readers as consumers is not viewed as problematic, rather it is seen as a pragmatic methodological approach to a complex set of questions about preferences and trends. However, as Laura J. Miller (2006) observes, in the social sciences and humanities, the idea of readers as consumers is overlaid with strong ideological traditions:

> Theoretical debates about consumer culture tend to center on the question of whether consumption is an instrument of oppression or a legitimate expression of popular pleasure. This question has been at the heart of numerous studies that examine the manipulative powers of institutions of consumption or, alternatively, the abilities of people to use consumer goods to affirm identities and subvert the dominant meanings of popular culture (Miller, 2006 p 214).

The tensions and contradictions between market-based economics and cultural value is discussed in Chapter 8, but it is important to note here that this research adopts neither of the positions alluded to by Miller and for the purposes of this research, conceiving of readers as consumers is not viewed as ideologically problematic.

2. Books with strong narratives have maintained their appeal for readers

Steven Connor (1996) observes in a study of postwar fiction in Britain that "if the meanings and values of narrative have diversified in this period, the demand for narrative explanation has by no means diminished and appears in fact to have intensified" (Connor, 1996 p 8). The same could be said to apply to the current research. The twentieth century was a period of important innovation in narrative forms through modernist and postmodernist experimentation. These movements also raised philosophical questions about the capacity of narratives to create the appearance of an objective reality with a cause-and-effect chain of consequences and stable sets of meanings.[33]

However, modernist tastes were not popularly embraced in the UK, US or in Australia in the early- to mid- twentieth century.[34] In the 1930s and 1940s middlebrow institutions developed in

---

[33] As an alternative, consider Barbara Herrnstein Smith's relativist proposal (discussed further in Chapter 8): "...not only are the elements that interact to constitute our motives and behaviour ... incomplete and heterogeneous, like scraps of things, but also ('scrap being a slang term for fight') that they are mutually conflicting or at least always potentially at odds. That is, the relations among what we call our 'actions,' 'knowledge,' 'beliefs,' 'goals,' and 'interests' consist of continuous interactions among various structures, mechanisms, traces, impulses and tendencies that are not necessarily... consistent, coordinated, or synchronized and are therefore always *more or less* inconsistent, out-of-phase, discordant, and conflictual" (Smith, 1988 p 148).

[34] Christopher Hilliard (2006) observes the gap between the aspirations of British working-class and middle-class writing groups and modernist experimentation, and in the US the period was of strong growth in "middlebrow" markets (Radway, 1997).

Australia offering a "modern, mid-range, commercial but quality urban culture for Australia" (Carter, 2004b). Carter emphasises that there were many modes of middlebrow reading, including "modernising" modes but "resistance to the modern, was always present" (Carter, 2010).

> For the present we might simply recall that however respectable or reactionary some of the books now seem, they came to their original consumers as new and contemporary books, as *modern* books, even if ultimately they helped their readers turn away from modernity's challenges or to incorporate them into more reassuring narratives (Carter, 2010).

In contrast, by the end of the twentieth century postmodernist metafictional techniques such as self-referential pastiche and parody found broad audiences in popular culture including film, TV, music and books (an example of the latter is the combination of vampire genres with Jane Austen novels such as Seth Grahame-Smith's (2009) *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*).

Therefore, although this research confirms the popularity of narrative non-fiction books, it is outside its scope to examine the variety of narrative techniques employed and the ways in which Australian readers engaged with them. The narrative strategies range from those offering "cause and effect" narrative explanation, to those that reflect on the role of the writer and language in constructing a sense of reality.

3. Readers are able to suspend aspects of their identity or convictions to enter the world of the book

We cannot extrapolate from texts any guaranteed knowledge of which aspects specific readers affirmed, and which ones they temporarily distanced themselves from in the act of reading. Jonathan Rose makes the point that not all literature can be shown to have influenced the political consciousness of readers. Readers have the capacity to read books as "harmless entertainment" (Rose, 1992 p 50). That is to say, there is a huge gap between the ideological ways in which a text can be read, and the ways in which actual individual readers have read them. This point was made from another perspective by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, a Maori academic from New Zealand about her own reading practice: "When I read texts ... I frequently have to orient myself to a text world in which the centre of academic knowledge is either in Britain, the United States or Western Europe; in which words such as 'we', 'us', 'our', 'I' actually exclude me" (Smith, 1999 p 35).

Readers may temporarily distance themselves from a key part of their identity or convictions when reading a book (for example, an anti-war protestor reading a thrilling military history, or an Arab-Australian reading a rather lurid life narrative of a Muslim woman).[35] It is entirely feasible

---

[35] Likewise, the Lyons and Taksa study revealed examples of reader resistance. "Keen Australian readers of British children's stories were not necessarily Anglophiles. Several were resentfully aware that the English settings of such stories did not have the local resonance that publishers intended" (Lyons and Taksa, 1992 p 188).

that individual Australian contemporary readers obtained some types of reading satisfaction from a work and disregarded other aspects with which they disagreed or which held no interest for them. "The world view of the novel [or in this research, the narrative non-fiction book] does not necessarily equal the beliefs of the reader, no matter how popular the work may be. We cannot even assume that popular fiction [and non-fiction material] does not offend its readers" (Rose, 1992 p 59).[36]

4. Readers make calculated choices about the anticipated demands of a book

Ian Collinson (2009) conducted an empirical study of a group of contemporary readers in Sydney. He found that that readers made judgments about the likely demands of a book and chose according to a range of factors (e.g., whether the book would be read in short bursts, on public transport, in solitude, in the time available etc). That is, readers may have been open to a challenging reading experience, but made the calculation that a less challenging book would be appropriate for noisy train travel or a brief break from work (Collinson, 2009 pp 32-56).

5. Readers make heterogeneous reading choices

This is one of the best-known findings from book history studies of actual readerships, and perhaps most challenging for interpreting the findings based on the commercial data in the current study. Reader choices can include wide-ranging combinations across genres, rendering the old high/low culture divide assumption problematic. Even the most reputable book historians have come under criticism if, by studying readers of particular material such as romances or crime novels, their focus implies that the readers being studied are reading these types of books exclusively, rather than reminding us that they read other material too and they may apply different reading practices (e.g., by reading one work intensively and attentively and another lightly or indifferently). Unfortunately, it was not possible to examine the *combinations* of books chosen by readers in this project and their responses: perhaps it will be possible in future studies.

6. Readers fashion individual senses of themselves as part of "imagined communities"

"Being a reader is a primary form of self-fashioning" (Wevers, 2009 p 5), but to understand how readers fashion their own identity as readers as part of communities, we would have to know more about the *groups* of books they read, or to ask them. Individuals may see themselves as part of multiple reading communities, for example, readers of gardening books, thrillers, business books and poetry. Geographical communities may also be important for some readers who read about local history, local environmental issues, state-based issues (such as education or police corruption) and other imagined communities influenced by where they live. "The 'imagined community' of the nation has given way to a proliferation of cross-cutting identities, communities and allegiances" (O'Connor, 2006 p 90).

---

[36] The conflation of the content of books with the views of their readers has been called "the reception fallacy".

7. We cannot gauge the extent to which readers position themselves in imagined communities based on national or patriotic considerations

Contemporary sales of Australian-authored books are strong, as will be discussed in the following chapters, but we do not know whether they were selected by readers because of their "Australianness" or some other criterion. Nile (2002) observes that "Australian reading publics were never fight shy of Australian books, rather those writers professing nationalist ideals through socially conscious writing too infrequently produced writing to suit Australian reading tastes" (Nile, 2002 p 161). While Australian intellectuals were bemoaning the lack of Australian "capital L" Literature, Australians were reading popular genres by Australian as well as international authors. Indeed, Nile (2002) has criticised conventional, civilising nationalist endeavours of the mid-twentieth century because "Within the terms they themselves identified, Australian literature became somewhat predictable and sometimes quite dull" (p 159).

The concerted and ultimately successful nationalist literary movement was followed by a backlash in Australian academia, and cultural nationalism came to stand for oppressive influences. Carter describes a reaction from the 1980s:

> The earlier project of "completing" the national cultural history was problematised by this rendering of nationality as a form of imposed and therefore oppressive identity, singular and organic, the very opposite of the multiple, shifting or hybrid subjectivities that both postmodernism and postcolonialism learned to celebrate (Carter, 1999 p 137).

This may seem far removed from whether "everyday" readers chose books based on whether they were Australian or not, but conceptually there are two different points here, with some tension between them but not ultimately contradictory. First, the self-fashioned imagined communities created by individual readers may consciously include nationality as a component, but it is not possible to say that nationality predominates, and this may vary as a factor with different book purchases.[37] Secondly, Australian *writers* also position themselves as part of international communities.

"Australian literature has always been transnational—which is not to say that it has always been cosmopolitan in its outlook, or that the project of national self-affirmation has been diminished by the obvious fact that many of the nation's best-known writers have lived, and continue to live, abroad" (Huggan, 2009 p 50). Ultimately, the expansion of our understanding of Australian readers and Australian authors to include international reading and writing practices does not invalidate the importance of national cultural policy, as will be argued in later chapters.

---

[37] "Less clear are the kinds of attachment to 'Australian literature'– to the nation and to the literary that remain". Carter (2009b) refers to a Canadian study, "Can Lit" which found that younger Canadian readers were not as invested in the idea of reading national literature as older readers. Carter wonders whether "Australian readers, too, might be happy enough with the books and other forms of writing that global markets and new media deliver to them, mostly unconcerned about their national provenance" (Carter, 2009b p 390).

3.6 Conclusion

Both the acts of achieving fixed texts in books through the print publishing processes, and making meaning from books through the act of reading, are far more complicated than might first appear. A great deal of book history scholarship is concerned to avoid oversimplifications of these processes, or reductionist analysis. However, book history scholarship draws strongly on economic methodologies to create specific accounts of publishing and reading practices, to understand the factors influencing the reading choices made by people in different eras, and the social conditions in which books were read. This is also evident in Australian book history scholarship, for example in Carter's (2004a) analysis of the growth in sales of "serious books" as part of changing contemporary book markets to counter pessimism about a decline in the quality of public debate. (Likewise, Carter also observes that increasing economic pressure on university presses gives reason for concern about the impact on book culture and debate.) Finally, although an extensive body of scholarship cautions us from making assumptions about how individual readers read the books identified in this research project, some conceptual approaches to contemporary Australian readerships are proposed.

The next chapters turn specifically to the Australian setting of this research. The following chapter examines the structure of the Australian publishing industry, and the growth to maturity of a literary infrastructure extending to academia, writers' festivals, reading groups, journals and media coverage.

Chapter 4. The organisation of the Australian publishing industry

4.1 Introduction

Although the book publishing industry has arguably received less attention from cultural economists than other parts of the cultural sector, scholars from other book history disciplines have produced a number of influential studies in recent years. In addition, the industry in Australia was the subject of an inquiry by the Productivity Commission in 2008-2009 and the subsequently formed Book Industry Strategy Group[38], which generated useful data and analysis. This chapter draws on these and other sources to provide an overview of the industry in Australia during 2003-2008. The first part of this chapter examines key structural changes affecting the international English-language publishing industry. The second part gives a brief history of Australia's publishing industry and then provides an analysis of the structure, conduct and performance of the Australian industry from 2003-2008 (with some contemporary updates where major changes have occurred).

4.2 Three factors changing the international English-language publishing industry

In 2010 the Cambridge sociologist, John B. Thompson (2010), published an account of the US and UK English-language trade publishing industry, including key changes over the last 40-50 years. A theme throughout his analysis was the shift from publishing and bookselling as a long-term to a short-term business. In particular, Thompson examined the contradictions involved the pursuit by the largest publishers of "substantial growth in a market that is largely flat" (Thompson, 2010 p 373) to meet the expectations of corporate shareholders. Thompson argues that the logic of the field of contemporary publishing was shaped by a number of factors, which are set out in Figure 8 below and discussed in the next pages.

---

[38] The formation of the Book Industry Strategy Group (BISG) was announced in February 2010 by the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research. It comprises representatives "from across the industry supply chain to map out the way forward for this important sector". (Book Industry Strategy Group, 2011)

1 Growth of retail chains

2 Rise of literary agents

3 Consolidation of publishing houses

1 Polarization of the field

2 Preoccupation with big books

  (i)   Track record [*of author sales*]
  (ii) Comps [citing supposedly comparable successful books when agents pitch and publishers buy rights to "big books"]
  (iii) Platform [the author's public standing]
  (iv) Web of collective belief [*that the book will sell*]

3 Extreme publishing [by multinational publishers]

4 Shrinking windows [*of time*]

5 High returns [of books to publishers]

Figure 8 The logic of the publishing field; adapted from Thompson (2010 p 292).

The growth of retail bookseller chains

The growth of retail bookselling chains from the 1960s, located in shopping centres (or "malls") in the US, tapped into college-educated and relatively affluent demographics in the surrounding suburbs, and expanded the market for books. Such chains prospered in the 1970s, but by the 1980s were overtaken by the rise of superstores such as Barnes & Noble and Borders. These superstores expanded rapidly during the 1990s and succeeded in attracting different types of customers: those who were comfortable with shopping centre-based consumption as well as those who frequented independent bookstores (Miller, 2006 p 94-96).

These operations centralised stock control and concentrated on frontlist titles, although the range of titles included those by independent publishers (often stocked at the back of the store) to add gravitas to the surrounds (Miller, 2006 p 99). Although "mall stores" were closed during the 1990s in favour of superstores, Thompson estimates that in 2006 superstores and mall stores were responsible for 45 percent of US book retail trade (Thompson, 2010 p 30). A key effect was to increase the availability of books to "millions of ordinary Americans" (Thompson, 2010 p 30) but at the cost of the closure of independent bookstores. Both Thompson (2010, p 54) and Miller

(2006, p 32) refer to nostalgia about these closures while acknowledging that many of these stores were not particularly efficiently run. An additional development in the UK was the entry of supermarket chains into bookselling in the 1990s, focusing on selling a narrow range of best-sellers in large volumes purchased at deep discounts from the UK publishers (up to 65 percent according to Thompson (2010, p 304)). Supermarkets now represent approximately 17 percent of the retail trade market in the UK (p 305). In summary, although best-selling books are available in greater numbers at cheaper prices to US and UK consumers, the industry focus has intensified on shifting large volumes of best-selling titles.

The rise of literary agents in the US and UK

The second factor is the rise of the literary agent in securing maximum advances worth millions of dollars for "hoped-for bestsellers", particularly in the US. The change in the split between sought-after authors and their publishers is estimated to have shifted from 50:50 to 75:25 in the last 15-20 years (Thompson, 2010 p 215). This will not be dealt with in detail, however the logic expressed by agents is that if the rights to a title are purchased for millions of dollars, the publisher will invest more resources in marketing and publicity to return a profit (Caves, 2000 p 143, Thompson, 2010 p 68).

The rise of publishing corporations

The third factor is the rise of publishing corporations. Thompson characterises these as "middlemen" (2010, p 100) between the power of major retailers who control access to markets and the power of agents who control access to major new titles.

> There can be little doubt that the rise of large corporations has transformed profoundly the landscape of trade publishing, so much so that today it bears little resemblance to the publishing world that existed half a century ago. In the 1950s and before, there were dozens of independent publishing houses in New York, Boston and London …These publisher-owners were often men of strong character and opinion – and they nearly always were men. They knew what they wanted to publish and they built their lists on the basis of their own judgment and taste – and, as they grew larger … on the basis of the judgment and taste of their editors (Thompson, 2010 p 101).

Large corporations began to acquire independent publishers in the 1960s, at the time when many of these independent publishers were retiring or were thinking about the recapitalisation of their businesses. The 1970s were characterised by takeovers and mergers on the basis of synergies with American entertainment conglomerates, such as film production companies, however generally these ambitions were not realised in terms of profits. A second wave of mergers and acquisitions began in the 1980s and continues still. European media conglomerates (e.g., Bertelsmann, Hotzbrinck, Lagardere, and Pearson) sought to expand their markets internationally, particularly by entering the US market.

Acquiring publishers with established lists became a way of pursuing expanded sales and increased market share in mature markets. Costs could be rationalised either via a centralised model with mergers of sales forces, back office, marketing and editorial functions, or a "federal model" that allowed greater editorial independence (Thompson, 2010 p 126). As a consequence, it became more difficult for an editor to buy the rights to a book without the approval of the marketing department, and there was increased pressure on acquisitions editors to focus on "hoped-for bestsellers". In reality, most hoped-for bestsellers do not fulfil expectations, but editors in multinational conglomerates are discouraged from developing lists of small, quality titles because they diffuse the company's resources at the expense of promoting sales of frontlist titles.

This international context provides a backdrop for a brief history of the Australian publishing industry.

4.3   Background and brief history of Australian publishing

There are three stages in the history of Australian publishing which are broadly agreed upon by book historians: first, a stage of British colonialism; second, increasingly successful nationalist endeavours and the maturation of an indigenous Australian industry; and finally a contemporary period of domination by conglomerates (Bode, 2009 p 194). Australia's publishing market developed as an outpost of the British publishing industry, to the extent that many Australian writers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century had to gain contracts with British publishers in order to have their work published in Australia. From white settlement in 1788, British works, especially those of mass market fiction, were popular among Australian readers, and although by 1900 Australian-authored poems, short stories and serialised novels were also eagerly read by Australians (most easily available in newspapers and *The Bulletin*), Australian reading tastes were strongly influenced by the availability of British books. "Australia was the largest market for British book exports continuously from at least 1889 until 1953" (Dolin, 2004 p 115). Australia became valued as Britain's most lucrative colonial market (rather than as a source of writers), accounting in the mid-twentieth century for 10 percent of Britain's publishing output, supplying both canonical books and popular genres (Webby, 2000 p 50, Munro and Curtain, 2006 p 4).

Britain's domination over the Australian market for books was formalised by the Traditional Market Agreement in 1947, although it had been in practice unofficially long before then (Bryant, 1979 p 371). The agreement arose from a pact amongst British publishers to maintain dominance over their "traditional markets" of about 70 countries and was negotiated as such with US publishers. The effect was to divide the world's English-language publishing markets between them. "A British publisher buying rights from an American publisher automatically obtained rights to the whole British Empire (except Canada); the US publisher was then obliged

to cease supplying the book to Australia and could not sell Australian rights to any publisher" (Magner, 2006 p 8).

Another consequence of the Traditional Market Agreement has been less well understood by book historians until it was addressed recently by Katherine Bode. The TMA gave an impetus to Australian publishers to commission Australian writers of genre "pulp" fiction (westerns, war novels, crime and romance) in the post-war decades. "Unable to 'acquire separate rights to British-originated books', or to American-originated books where British publishers were involved, these [Australian publishers] had little alternative but to use Australian authors" (Bode, 2009 p 199). Bode observes the irony that a restrictive trade agreement provided incentives to use Australian authors, but she is careful to point out the distinction between mainstream and mass-market publishers in the 1950s-60s, a distinction that has since been substantially eroded. Australian pulp fiction authors achieved popular sales and large domestic readerships which were not recognised or valued by Australia's leading arbiters of literary taste, including Vance and Nettie Palmer, at the time. These were also decades of nationalist endeavour by Australian writers and intellectuals, at the centre of which were the Palmers, who supported a concerted effort to establish an Australian body of literature (Nile, 2002 pp 152-155). However, their aspirations for these earnest works (often in a social-realist mode) were not met with enthusiastic or large Australian readerships.

The hitherto invisible pulp fiction industry thrived during the 1950-1960s, and "new and more diverse institutions dedicated to Australian books and authors" developed so that by the mid 1970s "universities, publishing, criticism, bookselling and professional associations" which supported Australian literature had become established (Carter, 2009b p 360). The 1970s and 1980s are viewed by many as the time of the development of a flourishing *mainstream* Australian publishing industry owing to a number of factors: expanded state and federal government support including the establishment of the national Literature Board; the effects of the Book Bounty scheme (established in 1969) which provided incentives to print in Australia; the end of the British Publishers' Traditional Market Agreement (TMA) and the importation of British colonial editions; and growth in self-publishing and in the activities of Australian university presses.

An important structural change was that the heads of the Australian arms of multinational publishers now actually resided in Australia. These factors, combined with the personal commitment of industry figures who established innovative Australian presses or who expanded the proportion of Australian titles on the lists of multinationals and demonstrated that the domestic market would support them, established the 1980s as a "golden age" (Bode, 2009 citing Galligan p 205) in which multinational and new independent presses published greater numbers of innovative Australian fiction reflecting a greater diversity of Australian voices. (Scholarship to date has focused on the publication of fiction.)

An important development during this period relates to the formal disbanding of the Traditional Market Agreement, thus opening up the supply of US-published books directly to the Australian market. The agreement was successfully challenged via an antitrust suit filed in 1974 by the US Department of Justice against a group of US publishers for complying with the TMA, although the action was directed in effect against the British publishers. However, as will be discussed in the Chapter 6, it appears that in the timeframe of this study, a significant number of US-authored books reached Australia via the British rights holder, suggesting that it may have continued unofficially to influence the conduct of some international publishing trade.

In contrast to the celebratory accounts of the industry during the 1970s and 1980s, analysis of the 1990s and 2000s emphasises the increasingly deregulatory policy environment and the changing nature of multinational publishers. A new development was that multinational conglomerates held interests in a broad mix of entertainment industries, for example News Corporation and Bertelsmann, in which publishing was one amongst other international media operations. Some Australian commentators expressed nostalgia for the end of an era of "gentlemanly publishing" and the acquisition or closure of Australian independent publishers.

> In Australia most of that dynamic wave of independent publishers active in the 1970s and 1980s have now closed down, been taken over and absorbed, or effectively ceased literary publishing – ANZ books, Australasian Book Society, Alternative Publishing Co-operative, E. J. Dwyer, John Ferguson, Goldstar, Outback Press, Greenhouse, Ure Smith, Second Back Row Press, Left Book Club, Primavera, Wentworth Press, Widescope, Wren. Jacaranda was acquired by John Wiley; Craftsman House, Fine Arts Press, and Paper Bark are now part of Gordon and Breach. The university presses of Deakin, La Trobe, Sydney, and the Australian National University have all ceased to operate (Wilding, 2000 p 152).

The conglomerates pursued diverse strategies with regard to the publication of Australian-authored fiction titles. Some attempted to build up an Australian list and then abandoned the field, such as Simon & Schuster and Scholastic (Bode, 2009 p 213) while others maintained the size of Australian lists of the publishers they purchased or expanded them, such as Pearson and News Corporation (Bode, 2009).

The next section provides an overview of the Australian publishing industry in the research timeframe, with relevant context about the UK and US industries, following the conventional analytical approach of industrial organisation theory, which distinguishes an industry's structure, conduct and performance.

4.4   Structure, conduct and performance of the Australian publishing industry

There is a lack of comprehensive data about the Australian publishing industry, but a number of reports and articles published in the 2000s give a sense of its size and operations.

4.4.1 Structure

In 2003-2004, the Australian publishing industry generated $1,560.6m from book publishing activity (ABS, 2005). The industry was dominated by six multinationals (Pearson Australia, which includes Penguin Group Australia, Random House Australia, HarperCollins Publishers Australia, Hachette Livre Australia, Scholastic Australia, Pan MacMillan) and a major independent (Allen & Unwin). "According to [a] retail survey [by] Nielsen BookScan, the top 10 publishers together account for just over 70 percent of the market" indicating a high level of market concentration (Wilkins, 2008 p 150).

The major threat to sales prior to the beginning of this study's timeframe was the introduction in Australia of the Goods and Services Tax (or GST, a value-added tax of 10 percent) on 1 July 2000. The University of Melbourne Book Survey reported a slump in book sales following the introduction of the GST; growth in sales fell to 1.6 percent per year between 1999-2000 and 2003-2004 and then recovered, with annual growth averaging 6.5 percent per annum since (Trounson, 2010).[39] However a PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) report found that growth in sales averaged 1.6 percent from 2001-2010, with trade books growing 4.8 percent (PWC, 2011 p 9). These lower figures can be attributed to lower growth in sales in the early and the latter part of the decade.

In 2009 the Australian Productivity Commission released a report estimating the annual contemporary sales of new books at about $2.5 billion (Productivity Commission, 2009 p xv) and PWC estimated sales in 2010 at $2.3 billion, including ebooks and sales over the Internet (PWC, 2011 p 5). The most useful breakdown of the market for this research comes from ABS data published in 2004. In 2003-2004, 60 percent of book sales were trade (books sold to the general public) and 40 percent were educational sales.

Since then, the proportion of trade book sales has increased to 68 percent in 2010.(PWC, 2011 p 23).[40]

---

[39]Recent media coverage reported a decline in the value of book sales in 2010 of 4.2% from the previous year after seven years of growth; however the volume of book sales increased "from 60 million in 2007 to 66.2 million in 2010. Those figures did not include the growth in online sales from Amazon and the Book Depository nor the migration to e-reading." (Tippet, 2011)

[40] The PWC report found that "the rates of increase in the value of sales recorded by trade books [was] (4.8 per cent) and educational books (2.6%)" from 2001-2010 (PWC, 2011 p 24) .
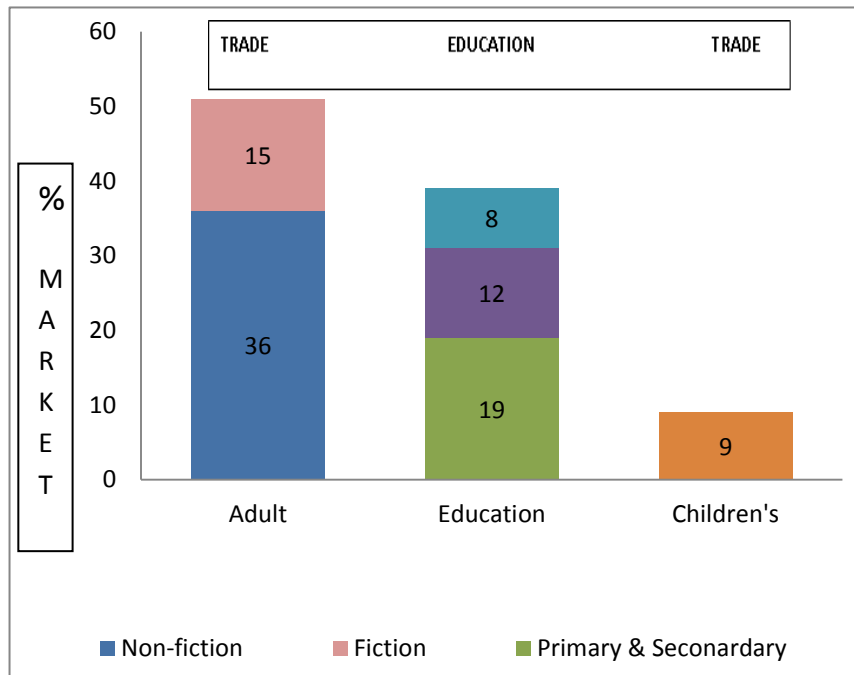
Figure 9 Sales of books to consumers by category of book, 2003-04, (Productivity Commission, 2009 p 2.4, citing ABS figures).

Australians buy about six books per annum per head (Wilkins, 2008 p 149) and spend about 0.4 percent of their income on books, (ABS 2006 in Productivity Commission, 2009 p 2.8) a figure which does not vary substantially according to household income. A survey by the ABS found that approximately half of the population including and over 15 years "read books at least once a week" (ABS 2006 in Productivity Commission, 2009 p 2.7). However, people who read books frequently are more likely to be: over 45; women rather than men; and university-educated (Productivity Commission, 2009 p 2.7).

The Australian market, like those of other English-speaking markets, is flooded with approximately 10,000 new books every year (Fisher, 2006 table 6).[41] The Productivity Commission refers to 460,000 trade books on the Nielsen BookScan Australian database (Productivity Commission, 2009 p 2.5).

The Productivity Commission (2009) report recommended that restrictions on the parallel importation of books be lifted as part of economic reform. Ultimately its recommendations were not taken up by the Australian government after a protracted debate, which will not be addressed in detail in this thesis. Prior to the release of this report, the most significant policy change was in the form of amendments in 1991 to the Copyright Act 1968, which allowed 30 days for Australian copyright holders to provide copies domestically otherwise parallel importation would

---

[41] Fisher cited ABS data of 9078-8602 new books for 2001-2 to 2003-4. The number of new books appears to have increased since.

be permitted. Despite industry concerns at the time, the success of entrepreneurial Australian publishers who pursued sales rights from international sources has been attributed in part to this policy framework, with especial benefits to independent publishers.

The publishing industry is polarised between multinational conglomerates and much smaller independent publishers. It is virtually impossible for an independent publisher to grow to the scale of the majors because they operate in a "parallel universe" of small author advances, small print runs, modest marketing resources and reduced access to discount retail channels.

In the next section, each category of publisher that has relevance to this research is considered.

Multinational publishers

Thompson (2010) attributes the domination of English-language publishing markets by a small number of corporations to several factors: benefits of scale, including back office rationalisation, and dealing with suppliers such as typesetters and printers; the ability to negotiate more favourable terms with booksellers and to gain access to the broadest range of distribution channels; the capacity to pay large advances for "hoped-for bestsellers", back them with large marketing budgets, and to absorb financial hits on poor performing titles; and the capacity to invest in IT as the newest platform for retail sales and marketing. As such, major multinationals account for the majority of book sales and have achieved the greatest visibility for their frontlist titles (Thompson, 2010 p 146-151). These characteristics are evident in the Australian market, as will be discussed further below. However, an important development is that Australian multinational publishers have achieved more independence from their head offices:

> The publishing industry now makes its own decisions because of the particular territorial copyright regime that's in place now. It makes more sense for Australian CEOs of multinationals here to make decisions here rather than defer to London or New York, which is a big change. Even they're still owned by London or New York, the number of titles that they shove down the pipe and force the local industry to take is less and less (Borghino, 2010).

Jose Borghino, an academic, the editor of *The New Matilda* (an independent online publication) and Manager – Industry Representation at the Australian Publishers Association, stated that the mix of multinational and Australian publishers enabled the availability of a diversity of books. "It doesn't matter that 50 percent of the books that we buy are overseas sourced. I don't want to hear about just Australians. I think Australia has a really good mix. We produce our own stuff and we don't cringe over it, it's there with Pulitzer prize-winners. You can get both if you want. I think it's a really good system" (Borghino, 2010).

Major Australian independent publisher

Allen & Unwin is Australia's only major independent publisher with the scale and resources of a multinational publishing arm. It has extensive international acquisition and distribution networks

and operates under the same market constraints as multinationals; however, it has positioned itself in the market on the strength of its Australian-authored lists and its commitment to publishing Australian-authored titles. Allen & Unwin is able to operate on a much more ambitious scale than other Australian independent publishers. According to its submission to the Productivity Commission, it publishes 225-250 Australian titles per year, and has annual turnover of $60-70 million (Allen & Unwin, 2009).

Australian independent publishers

Estimates of the number of Australian independent publishers range between 240-280 (ABS, 2005, Freeth, 2007, Wilkins, 2008).[42] Independent publishers are dispersed across Australia, although the majority are located in Melbourne and Sydney. An industry report prepared by Kate Freeth characterises both the satisfaction gained by small publishers but also the precarious financial conditions of independent publishing, with particular weaknesses in publicity and distribution. Independent publishers' operating models are characterised by "relatively small print runs, low margins... and a lack of resources (both financial and human)" (Freeth, 2007 p 1).

There were about 30 *named* Australian independent publishers of narrative non-fiction in the Nielsen BookScan data.[43] "Other publishing groups" was responsible for 144 titles, and initial investigation suggests that over 100 individuals or organisations self-published at least one title. This fits with Bode's (2008) observation about the rise and enduring popularity of self-publishing from the 1980s.

Low barriers to entry (through the ability to outsource costs such as book design, printing, sales forces and distribution) encourage the establishment of new independent publishers. Freeth (2007) found that almost half of the 46 small-to-medium independent publishers surveyed were less than five years old (Freeth, 2007 p 8) although most of these publishers were not represented in the top 5000 non-fiction data because they specialise in fiction, poetry and other genres. Operating an independent publishing house was described as "a lovely kind of madness", the title of Freeth's report, but despite the satisfactions nearly all Australian small independent publishers, with some fortunate exceptions, are undercapitalised and are vulnerable to downturns which could bankrupt the businesses.

Other weaknesses identified by Freeth (2007) in the Small Press Underground Networking Community (SPUNC) report include: reliance on hours of unpaid labour and enthusiasm of the owner; small or non-existent marketing budgets; access to limited retail distribution channels;

---

[42] The Productivity Commission (2009) found that about 4000 organisations had published at least one book in Australia, but the vast majority were not specialist book publishers (Productivity Commission, 2009 2.14).
[43] Note that the Scottish publisher Canongate acquired 50% of Text Publishing in 2004, described at the time by Canongate's managing director, David Graham as "uncharted territory where two independent publishers are forming a very interesting strategic alliance across the world. It's the only way independents can remain independent and compete with the multinationals" (Steger, 2004).

difficulty in capturing attention for their titles in crowded marketplaces; and the risk of losing authors to bigger publishers if the authors proved successful. These models can compound a situation that results in difficulties in attracting mainstream media interest in their product, low public awareness, and therefore less interest from booksellers. The consequences are that independent publishers who want to contribute to public debate must exercise ingenuity in drawing attention to their books.

Independent publishers run their businesses in an "economy of favours" (Thompson, 2010 p 155), securing lower rates from freelance contractors than the rates charged to multinationals, and exchanging knowledge, expertise, and favours within the independent sector. Australian independent publishers are not dependent on authors' agents because they can't afford to pay high advances (p 158). They have lower print runs overall than multinationals: 500-3000 (Freeth, 2007 p 32) while Henry Rosenbloom, publisher of Scribe, one of Australia's larger independent publishers of about 30 books per year, describes a typical first print run for a serious non-fiction work as 3000-4000 copies (King, 2007b p 155).

A subset of Australian independent publishers is made up of university presses. Academic publishing in English-language markets has undergone structural changes since the 1970s, and as a result, is experiencing financial difficulty. Thompson (2005) identifies several factors, the most prominent being the decline of the scholarly monograph as an economically viable and institutionally valued form. In the US and UK, average unit sales of monographs in the 2000s have fallen "to one quarter or less" than in the 1970s, mostly fewer than 500 copies (Thompson, 2005 p 93). In the US, the publication of scholarly monographs is now a "serious financial liability" (Thompson, 2005 p 169). Thompson also addresses other factors on the demand side: the effect of higher education budget cuts in the 1980s on university libraries; consolidation in the field of journal publishers, notably Reed Elsevier, and their aggressive pricing practices which left less capacity for other types of library purchases. In addition, many universities were, and still are, placing increased pressure on their presses for reduced institutional support.

The scenario Thompson describes appears to be applicable to Australia, but the implications for Australian academic publishing are subject to disagreement.

> … Iain McCalman …..proposes that scholarly publishing in this country is in decay. But this view is difficult to support. Innumerable scholarly books are on the bookshop shelves and are reviewed widely. They come, however, largely from what scholarly publishers pejoratively call "trade" houses (Arms, 2004 p 103).

Anecdotal discussion amongst publishing executives and academics suggests there has been a shift in university publishing lists towards a mix which is accessible to the trade market. Therefore, books about international politics, the environment and other topical issues are more likely to be published by a university press than scholarship of a comparable quality in less

saleable areas such as literary criticism. The second development is the increasing pressure from university presses for a financial subsidy in order to print a scholarly monograph or some other scholarly work with a niche market. And finally, enterprising trade publishers have expanded their lists of books by academics intended for general readers. While the benefits of this latter shift arguably include the communication of scholars' research to broader readerships, the nature of the publishing venture changes.

> There are substantial differences between the publishing objectives, rationale and philosophical approach of the commercial trade publisher and the role of the publisher with an institutional base. The latter is more likely to be primarily concerned with stimulating cultural debate, sharing research knowledge with the community and promoting the scholarly capital of the host institution – whether that is a university or museum – than measuring success by publishing profitability and market share. ..

> [T]he key difference lies in the why of publishing (Templeman, 2004 p 147).

Templeman's objections may appear to be overstated: many commercial publishers (especially the independent publishers in this study) share the goals he outlines. But the type of book published is often indisputably different.

> The scholarly monograph is a focused work of scholarship pitched at a relatively high level of sophistication. It takes a good deal for granted on the part of the reader; it assumes that the reader is knowledgeable about the subject matter and has a professional interest in it. It is not a book written for the general reader with no background in the field (Thompson, 2005 p 85).

Overseas-based independent and scholarly publishers

There were 37 overseas-based independent publishers in this research, with the most prolific being:

Publisher	No. of books (2003-2008)
Bloomsbury Pub Group	80
Other Publisher Groups (i.e., not named)	49
Faber Group	37
Quercus Editions Group	32
Grove Atlantic Ltd	26
Anness Publishing Group	26
Cambridge University Press (CUP)	20
W W Norton Group	18
Carlton Books Group	17
Profile Books Group	15
Constable Robinson Group	14

The country of publication for titles released in Australia by these publishers was divided amongst the UK (379 titles); the US (52); New Zealand (2); Canada (1) and Italy (1). Note that this does not include works licensed from these and other overseas independent publishers which were published in Australia by other types of publishers. Even if the combined total of 30 titles by CUP and OUP (with 10 titles) are removed, the UK is still by far the largest source, with the US a distant second. However "Other publisher groups" of unknown origin were responsible for 49 titles, which could alter the balance. The presence of titles by overseas-based independent publishers is acknowledged by scholars but has not been the subject of academic enquiry to date. Those independents whose titles have a presence in Australia tend to be larger and well-established in their domestic market and operate on a much larger scale than Australian independents, however, depending on individual circumstances they are still subject to the constraints outlined in the previous section. There are some anomalies to note in this category. Cambridge University Press and Oxford University Press are atypical scholarly presses, and the well-known Australian Lonely Planet publisher is counted as overseas-owned since 75 percent was acquired by BBC Worldwide in 2007.

Authors

In contrast to the concentrated nature of the publishing industry, authors in Australia work independently in unstructured environments. Thousand of Australians aspire to become published authors, with the Productivity Commission (2009) estimating the number of full-time and part-time authors at 5,000-10,000 (Productivity Commission, 2009 p 2.1). Very few of these people earned a living salary from writing books, and the PC noted that in the 2006 census a much smaller number, 2,600 people, described their occupation as "author" (ibid).

It is difficult to find specific information about Australian book authors' income, but Throsby and Zednik's survey of artists' incomes in 2009 found that "professional writers remain the least well rewarded artistic occupation for their creative work", with annual income from their creative work ranging from under $1,000 for members of writing centres, to slightly more than $12,000 for other professional writers (Throsby and Zednik, 2010 p 45). A submission by the Australian Writers Association to the Taxation Review Panel recounted that writers can spend three or more years of unpaid labour writing a book, and then obtain a modest advance (which may be recoverable if the book doesn't sell in sufficient quantities) when a book goes into production, which may be during the following year and-a-half to two years (Fisher, 2008).

Australian authors who earn a living from their writing are a privileged few. Most support themselves by earning income through other means. These include casual labour or, for some academics, work teaching literature, creative writing or other subjects. A broader categorisation of authors would also include academics and journalists who write as part of their profession, but for whom, nevertheless, authoring a book is an additional labour which does not provide a living wage. For the majority of Australian writers, the income from publishing their work is not

sufficient to support their livelihood; however, this model of cross-subsidisation is not new, and extends back to the invention of the printing press.[44]

A recent survey of US publishing industry professionals found that "media platforms have become increasingly important. A number of [the] respondents indicated that a media platform or program was now part of what publishers expected authors to bring to the table (along with their book manuscript)" (Greco et al., 2007 p 184).

Printers

The book printing industry declined during the 2000s as publishers increasingly outsourced print work overseas, particularly to Asia. The revenue decrease was estimated at 4.1 percent annually, to approximately $220 million in 2010, with over 200 companies in Australia employing approximately 2000 people (PWC, 2011 p 22-23).

The retail market

Several key retailing trends occurred in the 2000s. The first was an increase in book sales by discount department stores, up from 21 percent in 2004 to 30 percent in 2010; and the second was a decrease in book sales by chain bookstores, declining from 60 percent in 2004 to 50 percent in 2010. (PWC, 2011 p 14). Another development was the increase in online sales of books over the Internet, estimated at up to 5 percent in 2009 (Productivity Commission, 2009 p 2.9) and 12 percent in 2010, including ebooks (PWC, 2011 p 18).

Kaye and Johanson have referred to tensions between publishers and booksellers, based on the terms of trade, especially the varied discounts on the recommended retail price (RRP) of books given by publishers to retailers, depending on their size and importance in terms of their potential to sell large numbers of stock. "While one customer may receive as little as 35 per cent, others may receive 60 per cent" (Kaye and Johanson, 2007 p 69). Another source of tension is the low profit margins in the industry: "The most recent ABS figures show that in 2003-2004 the 20 largest publishers had a profit of 4.4 percent, while the average profit for publishers is around 6 per cent. For 2002-3, bookshops recorded a profit margin of 2.0 per cent" (Kaye and Johanson, 2007 p 69-70).

Independent publishers were disadvantaged in gaining access to mainstream retail outlets because of their lack of distribution structures until multinational publishers operating in Australia realised that they could make a profit by providing a book distribution service to the independent sector. Penguin and Pan Macmillan currently provide this service, and Alliance did until it was bought by Hodder and abandoned this activity. Mid-sized independent publishers, such as Scribe, engage the distribution services of multinationals to achieve broader retail exposure for their books. Rosenbloom has described this as a significant factor in their success

---

[44] Steven Connor observed of the UK industry that "publishing has always depended on somebody else paying the author's wages while they produce their product" (Connor, 1996 p 18).

(King, 2007b). Another important distribution outlet for independent publishers is Leading Edge Books, a cooperative buying group formed by Australian independent bookstores.[45] However, the smallest independent publishers find it virtually impossible to gain access to major book chains and discount department stores (apart from break-out bestsellers in exceptional circumstances), and are particularly reliant on independent bookstores for retail sales.

4.4.2 Conduct

Pricing

The entry of major retailers, including discount chains such as Target and Big W, has changed the pricing of books. A concern in the Australian industry is the effect of deep discounting of top-selling books by discount department stores on consumers' perceptions of price and value for books generally. Richard Flanagan recounted:

> I am often asked why my books are so overpriced, by which people fairly mean: why is it they can buy a very thick Bryce Courtenay for $20 at Big W but have to pay $50 for a hardback of mine from a bookstore? There is a reasonable perception that $20 is a fair price for a book, and $50 is an unjustifiable rip-off (Flanagan, 2007 p 143).

The same concern was, and continues to be, expressed in the UK as a result of the discounting by supermarket chains, thereby lowering consumer expectations of what was a reasonable price to pay for a book (in one infamous example, Asda sold the last Harry Potter book in the series for £5, severely undercutting the RRP of £17.99 (Thompson, 2010 p 308)). Naturally consumers benefit from the deep discounting of individual titles, but not so independent booksellers who cannot obtain such favourable terms of trade nor afford the loss-leading practice. It also makes the market more difficult for mid-list and for other titles with modest expectations to be seen to offer competitive value at their RRP. Publishers are seen by Thompson as being under pressure to deliver volume sales in discount outlets to retain market share while also being reliant on the broader book retail industry to sustain perceptions of higher prices for books in general (Thompson, 2010 p 308).

The majority of retail competition in Australia centres on front-list titles and most books achieve the majority of their sales in the first year of release. However, unlike the UK, supermarkets are not major book retailers in Australia. Further, independent booksellers are responsible for around 20 percent of retail sales (about double that of the US). The health of Australia's independent booksellers has been linked to the health of Australian independent publishers and their diverse offerings. For example, hand-selling is important to give titles without large marketing budgets an opportunity to find readerships through word of mouth. The collapse of REDGroup Retail led

---

[45] Leading Edge had 176 members in 2007, according to Kaye and Johanson, and in 2011 (after the end of the research period), another 20 former Angus & Robertson franchisees joined following the collapse of REDGroup. According to Thomson's report, with the addition of another 10 independent bookstores, the market share of independent booksellers rose to over 23 percent (Thomson, 2011).

to initial media debate about the health of the Australian book retail sector, but subsequent coverage focused on the management of REDGroup itself and whether the superstore model, with premium rents, upmarket fittings and high overheads was suited to contemporary market conditions.

Online sales represent a large and increasing proportion of sales in the US, UK and Australia (estimated in 2009 as 13-16 percent in the UK, up to 22 percent in the US and over 5 percent in Australia (Productivity Commission, 2009 p 2.10-2.11) but were not significant for this research period.

When Australian publishers import books, the pricing model is affected by a number of factors. Beth Drumm, Sales & Marketing Manager-Asia Pacific, Publications International Ltd, outlined three main scenarios under which an Australian publisher imports books:

- The purchase from an overseas-affiliated company of a standard new release title;
- The purchase from an overseas-affiliated company of a new release in high volumes; and
- A third party distributor buying from a UK or US supplier on either a net price or discount from the agreed ARP .

The first two scenarios are discussed in more detail in the following sections.[46]

Model 1. A low-key new release, a title from the standard range or from the backlist
This model applies to lower volume orders: from several hundred up to about 2,000 copies, which could be a new release or a backlist title.

First, discussions are held between the Australian company and the overseas affiliate to determine the Australian retail price, based on the competition and the planned positioning of a title in the local market. The goods and services tax of 10 percent is also factored in. The standard convention is that the goods are sold from the overseas company to the Australian publisher at 75 percent off the Australian RRP, and these calculations define the purchase price.

In most cases, the order is *free into store* (FIS), the term used for goods delivered directly to the domestic publisher's warehouse in Australia. The overseas supplier covers all of the terms of freight and clearance.[47] These are referred to as landed costs; all the costs of bringing a book into the country including freight, customs clearance, and delivery into the warehouse.

Meanwhile, terms of trade are negotiated with book retailers. These different terms have to be managed with the businesses so that the publisher can achieve a minimum 40 percent gross

---

[46] Thanks to B. Drumm (personal interview, Sydney, 2011) for providing clarification regarding this less understood aspect of the industry.

[47] The other industry term is free on board (FOB), which means the supplier will in essence take the goods to the port in the country of origin. The Australian company pays the shipping costs plus all the clearance costs when it reaches Australia, as well as import duties and taxes and the cost of shipment into their warehouse.

margin. That will comprise a parcel of a range of different discounts to customers and apply to a variety of books. Some books will be more heavily discounted than others, so one of the challenges for publishers is to achieve the level of 40 percent, which is the base level needed to operate a functioning business, to cover their internal costs (salaries, rentals, fixed costs, warehouse and distribution, support functions) and to aim for a net profit of 5-10 percent.

A retailer will generally prefer to buy on terms of sale or return, which is the standard situation in Australia. After an agreed period of time, usually three months, the retailer is able to return unsold stock for full credit. Firm sale will have a higher discount involved because the retailer has to take full responsibility for the stock. There are three main groups of customers:

1. Specialist book sellers/book chains

These include large book chains such as Dymocks and Collins, buying collectives such as Leading Edge, and independent book sellers/sole traders. In a normal scenario where the title is a new release going to the market, there is a 50 percent discount from the RRP. Some of the bigger chains may negotiate a 55 percent discount while some of the smaller chains may be charged 40 percent, and broadly it works out at 50 percent as an average.

2. Department stores

Examples of department stores include Myer and David Jones. They have a central buying office and order for a large chain, therefore they are able to command large discounts. A Myer store will take on a narrow range of books as their active lists of 20,000-30,000 titles (20,000 titles is considered a "pretty small product range"[48]), consisting of major new title releases, especially books promoted on TV or with a public profile; core backlist fiction; core non-fiction with a focus on domestically published titles; a range of children's books; and a heavy focus on lifestyle books including cookery titles, craft, and home decoration. An order might include 20 copies of a new title with the plan to promote and discount it whereas a small book seller, by contrast, might order two to three copies.

3. Variety stores

Variety stores dominate the industry and command very high discounts of up to 60 percent. Examples of variety stores include Target, K Mart and Big W, which are also known in publishing studies literature as discount department stores. These stores also carry a narrow selection of titles and have an internal, centralised buying decision process. Buyers are interested in "new release fiction and all the big titles" and will buy new release books with the plan to promote and discount them. They carry a core range of non-fiction and of backlist which is very tightly monitored in terms of its sell-through. Variety stories are more likely to be based around lower price points than department stores, so may not stock books over a certain price, e.g. $40.

---

[48] B. Drumm, personal communication, Sydney, 2011.

An important segment for these stores is children's books, particularly novelty and licensed books. The central office will make corporate decisions about which licenses they support, (e.g.., Disney, a new movie release). The licenses have a grading system (A, B, C licence) and the buying office determines the licence based on the product range they decide to stock and whether it includes children's apparel, books, school lunch boxes etc. "They'll have made that decision before the publisher fronts up"[49].

Drumm points out that in the scenario outlined in this model the publisher and the retailer make roughly the same margin (50 percent) but the profit for the retailer is double that of the publisher.

Model 2: A high volume title

This model applies to a narrower range of titles that are more likely to be promoted. The publisher is driven by achieving higher volume sales and these tend to have a separate pricing structure. The same process applies as in the first model to buy the goods wholesale into Australia, but the terms of trade for book retailers change.

The large chains negotiate a higher discount – around 60 percent – in exchange for ordering larger numbers of stock. This comprises the base discount of 50 percent plus a number of other discounts, including one for early settlement ("which means they pay on time" for which up to 2.5 percent is deducted from the invoice). An advertising subsidy is also negotiated for books ordered in large quantities. This is a point of negotiation but is increasingly becoming a standard term for books ordered in over 500 copies.

Another factor that increases the discount is the process in place for large retailers to handle returns. Even if copies of a book have been sold "firm sale", if a title hasn't sold well, a publisher has to decide how to resolve a difficult situation with a major customer, given the new books in the pipeline it wants the retailer to order. The two main scenarios include giving full credit to the retailer and all stock is returned to the publisher (sales of returned books by a publisher to a remainder merchant may be at $1 per book) or credit in place. Credit in place involves giving further discount to the retailer, which allows the retailer to dramatically reduce the price and remainder the book. It often involves approximately 25 percent extra off the original retail price. When the retailer sells the remaindered copies at half their price, they are still making a margin on it, but the publisher has come down to cost.

The two models are illustrated in Figure 10 below.

---

[49] B. Drumm, personal communication, Sydney, 2011.

Import Pricing Model

	Convention	Example	Margin
Model 1: Pricing model for low-moderate sales volumes:			
ARP		**$29.95**	
ARP excluding GST		$27.24	
Transfer price from source (US or UK)	75% off ARP	$6.81	
Publisher gross margin	40% margin	$6.81	50.00%
Retailer cost price (average, sale or return)	40-50% off ARP	$13.62	50.00%
Retailer margin		$13.62	
Model 2: Pricing model for higher volume sales (variety stores, chain stores, department stores):			
ARP		**$29.95**	
ARP excluding GST		$27.24	
Transfer price from source (US or UK)	75% off ARP	$6.81	
Publisher gross margin (average aimed for)	40%	$4.09	37.50%
Retailer cost price (average for chain inc rebates*)	60% off ARP	$10.90	60.00%
Retailer margin		$16.34	

*rebates include any/all of the following:
  = early settlement fee, generally 2.5% of invoice value
  = advertising subsidy (5-10% of invoice value)
  = standard discount (50-55% discount off ARP)
  = returns/credit in place (variable depending on chain)
  = volume rebate

Figure 10 Two main pricing scenarios for an overseas-authored title brought in to Australia by an Australian-affiliated company

Drumm referred to an unusual feature of the publishing industry; the sale or return policy. In her words, "publishers lend books to booksellers to sell", or, as the Productivity Commission (2009) expressed it, they are "effectively acting as a banker to the industry" (Productivity Commission, 2009 p 2.16). If new trade titles don't sell, they are returned and the sellers' orders refunded (depending on the terms of trade). This historical practice in Europe was introduced in the US in the Great Depression and is now standard practice in the industry. It can prove fraught in a number of ways. Small publishers face the threat of going bankrupt if large numbers of a promising title fail to sell and are returned months later (as has occurred in the US (Miller, 2006 p 78)). At the very least the practice can place a severe strain on small presses' cash flows. The overall effect is that the risk associated with publishing a new title is carried by a publisher rather than the bookseller, however, booksellers can also experience cash flow difficulties if a publisher is slow to issue credits for books returned or goes into receivership.

In the late 1990s, five major publishers (Allen & Unwin, HarperCollins, Hodder Headline, Pan Macmillan and Penguin books) made backlist titles ("those published more than twelve months ago" (Kaye and Johanson, 2007 p 177)) available on firm sale only, angering booksellers (although Random House maintained a sale-or-return policy on backlist titles). One consequence

for this research is that booksellers have a greater incentive to stock new releases than backlist titles.

Non-price competition in product differentiation

Because books are experience goods and are not perfectly substitutable, publishers have developed a range of promotional strategies to differentiate their product and to mitigate the uncertain market for new books. Publishers use a range of branding strategies to appeal to a perceived market segment, including marketing the author (if well known) the book's genre through appropriate cover design, and in establishing imprints or series which have consistent appeal for particular book buyers. Publishers also invest resources in promoting books in order to shape perceptions of a book's status in the market before it is released (Squires, 2007). Greater marketing prominence through TV interviews and other media coverage is important for persuading booksellers to order titles in larger numbers and to display them prominently (although in the US this is considered a "declining asset base" because of the reluctance of traditional mainstream media to give time to fiction writers (Thompson, 2010 p 245).

Considerable resources are invested by major publishers in promoting titles to achieve online bestseller status. Online environments are also an important new arena for the marketing and promotion of mid-list and genre titles. Publishers have reduced their print advertising budgets and increased the resources for online interest groups and bloggers with interests in specialist titles. Authors are supported to develop websites, blogs and in some cases to use Twitter to build relationships with readers. Sometimes a strong online 'buzz' can propel online sales which can motivate bookstores to increase orders for a title and to give it prominence. In many cases the online environment is an important part of the "parallel universe" for promoting mid-list titles to niche market audiences, and thereby opening up new market possibilities for publishers to use to communicate directly with the potential readers of their books.

Backing 'hoped-for bestsellers'

Thompson's (2010) analysis of the competitive practices in the UK and US industries helps illustrate the contemporary Australian publishing industry, although the extent to which these factors directly shape practices domestically varies.

In the US and the UK, the willingness of discount book retailers to take on titles is affected by the funds a publisher is willing to invest in buying retail space and promotional support, although Drumm observed that the practice of publishers buying display space is not standard practice in Australia. Rather, the publisher is motivated to achieve high quantity orders, knowing that the retailer will have an incentive to display the titles prominently. The size of retail orders is also affected by the author's public standing and potential platform for publicity, and the capacity of the publisher to generate "buzz" amongst booksellers and publicists that the book will become a best-seller. In Thompson's term, if the "web of collective belief" in a book is sufficiently strong, then booksellers will order greater numbers and display them prominently, and the book will be

reviewed more widely and rate mentions in newspapers or on TV programs with higher visibility. Once again, the impetus is for major publishers to acquire titles with the potential to be pushed as bestsellers rather than to develop quality, mid-list titles with solid but more modest sales prospects.

In Australia these dynamics have been linked to the introduction of Nielsen BookScan. Malcolm Knox (2005) has argued that the introduction of NB has "skewed the behaviour" of the industry and consumers towards titles which gain early sales momentum.

> Thanks to BookScan and the way people use it, we live in an age of monsters. Gemmell's *The Bride Stripped Bare* and Norma Khouri's *Forbidden Love* were not just best-selling books in 2003. They were mega-sellers … They appeared on BookScan, created a fuss, and then BookScan itself became their sharpest marketing tool. They passed the critical mass – about 10,000 to 20,000 sales in a country the size of Australia – where readers cease to care about the distinction between non-fiction and fiction, or about other ethical and literary nuances, where people want to be entertained and diverted and to keep up with the crowd. This is how BookScan skews behaviour. It creates a fever for keeping up with the crowd. And this is a conclusion that authors, booksellers and publishers share (Knox, 2005).

Another related form of conduct in the industry is in resorting to what Thompson calls "extreme publishing" in the US and the UK, and this affects the books imported into Australia. It involves the signing and fast production of hoped-for best-sellers to tie in with movie releases, celebrity bio-pics and titles imitating recent bestseller genres, which can be added to the publishing list at short notice and taken to market in a matter of months with heavy marketing and promotion. These gambles represent attempts by publishers to generate fast, short-term growth (with the knowledge that if the titles fail, the copies will be returned and will be a loss in the following year's accounts). Although a number of these titles will inevitably incur substantial losses, a bestseller among the mix will enable a profit overall.

These factors all contribute to a shrinking timeframe in which a book can demonstrate sales potential before it will be withdrawn from prominent retail positions or withdrawn altogether. The time varies according to various genres but a general estimate is that a book has six weeks to three months to demonstrate sales strength before it will be withdrawn (Thompson, 2010 p 266). These shrinking timeframes result in high numbers of returns to publishers. Publishers have responded by using more sophisticated sales forecasting software and improved supply chain capabilities which can gear up rapidly to meet demand, but the problem of dealing with large volumes of returns is unresolved. However, the PWC report cites confidential data indicating that trade returns in Australia have declined over the past decade (by approximately 5 percent) and notes that return rates are lower than in the US, estimated at 33 percent (PWC, 2011 p 56).

Digitisation and logistics

The PWC (2011) report found considerable potential for improvement in Australian book distribution systems, identifying four relevant factors: the geographic size and dispersion of Australia's population; the fragmented book distribution system; a lack of agreed standards for book distribution pertaining to supply chain tracking; and the problem of access for smaller publishers. Although digitisation and point of sales data collection has contributed to more efficient warehousing and stock control, the PWC report recommends greater industry collaboration to set standards and reduce distribution costs. It estimates that inefficiencies could be adding $0.40 to $1 to the cost of a book "relative to the book distribution system in the United Kingdom" (PWC, 2011 p 60).

Non profit-maximising activity

Throsby (2001) observes that cultural producers may not necessarily behave as profit-maximisers (Throsby, 2001 p 24). There are several ways in which publishers may not behave as rational profit-maximisers. Both John B. Thompson and Richard Caves examine the pressures on elite publishers in New York to bid unrealistic figures for the rights to books "in order to stay in the game". Thompson also examines the deep discounts offered in the UK by publishers to supermarket chains. Nevertheless, these actions are presumably rationalised on the grounds of longer-term strategies, to maintain future access to potential bestsellers from key agents in New York or to continue supplying lucrative retail outlets in the UK. Neither of these behaviours occurs in the findings in the current Australian research. However, it is not clear if market demand is the sole explanatory factor as to why some or many of the books about the public debates were published, as is considered further in later chapters.

4.4.3 Performance

The Australian market is regarded within the industry as mature, that is, not capable of extreme growth in profit margins or turnover. As such, publishers face the dilemma, described by Thompson, of pursing real growth in a saturated market. This is borne out by the PWC report, which found that "relative to other industries, the Australian book industry underperformed over the past decade, with the total value of book sales from 2001 to 2010 growing less than other retail sectors in Australia…[but it] fared better compared to the performance of other creative industries in Australia and overseas book industries" (PWC, 2011 p 11).

The PWC report found that the Australian industry grew more than its overseas counterparts.

> While the total value of book sales in Australia grew by an annual average of 5.2 per cent from 2005 to 2010, the growth rates in other international markets for the same period were:

- The United Sates, an annual average increase of 0.6 percent;
- The United Kingdom, an annual average decrease of 0.3 percent;

- In Canada, an annual average increase of 2.4 percent; and
- In New Zealand, an annual average increase of 0.6 percent (PWC, 2011 p 12).

Profitability

The (ABS, 2005) found that:

> Book publishers and other major contributors reported an average profit margin of 9.7%. For the largest 20 book publishers, the profit margin was 9.5%. For other book publishers, the profit margin was 12.7% while other major contributors had a profit margin of 1.4% for their book publishing activity.

Thompson's (2010) study of the UK and US industries found that trade publishing consistently yielded returns below 10 percent compared to educational, scientific, technical and medical publishing, which was in the region of 20 percent and above (Thompson, 2010 p 106). Peter Donoughue, an Australian publishing industry professional, nominated romantic fiction and the non-fiction categories of "self-help, travel, personal investment, [and] children's" as the "traditionally profitable legs to publishing stools" (Donoughue, 2011).

Mid-sized Australian independent publishers whose books featured in this research include Scribe, Black Inc., Text, and Pluto Press. Some of these publishers actively seek international rights to US- and UK-authored books which might otherwise have "slipped through the cracks", notably Scribe (King, 2007b). Some independents, such as Wakefield Press, undertake publishing consultancy services as another source of revenue (Wakefield Press, 2011). Text Publishing's joint venture with Scottish independent publisher Canongate, mentioned earlier, was motivated by the difficult market prospects for small independent publishers.

Exports and imports

"Without a doubt, export is an area where Australian publishing excels. Overall, Australian publishers derive over 13.5 percent of their income from exports and this has increased significantly over the past decade" (Wilkins, 2008 p 150). The PWC report was less effusive, noting a decline in the share of publisher revenue "from an average of 14 percent over 2001-2005 to an average of 12.7 percent over 2006-2010" (PWC, 2011 p 88).

In 2005 the ABS reported exports in 2003-4 of 14 percent of total book sales, worth $190.5 m, including $7.8 m of re-exports. (The ABS, PWC and Wilkins' export figures are not directly comparable so it is not possible to comment on the variations.) The ABS found that the USA "was the biggest single market for books exported from Australia, with sales to the USA totalling $57.8 m, almost one-third (30 percent) of the total value of exports", with other notable markets being New Zealand ($42.2 m) and the United Kingdom ($33.5 m). Rights sales were worth $5 m (ABS, 2005). Wilkins (2008) also lists "Europe (especially Germany, Italy and France),

Scandinavia. Asia and South America" as territories into which Australian books are sold (Wilkins, 2008 p 150).[50]

Wilkins refers to a *Bookseller + Publisher* survey, which found that of 1455 rights deals in the previous year:

> The largest deal reported was worth US$600,000, while the smallest reported was for no advance at all! The average highest deal was worth A$146,000 (US$128,000, which is 6 percent less than last year's average high), and the average smallest deal was worth A$1800 (US$1574, which was about 5 percent less than last year's average low).

> The largest number of deals made by a single business was a mammoth 500, while the smallest was five. Overall, the average Australian rights seller made 60 deals in the past 12 months (Wilkins, 2008 p 152).

Australian independent publishers have achieved significant success:

> Companies such as Hinkler Books, Lonely Planet, Murdoch Books, Funtastic Publishing, The Five Mile Press, Hardie Grant, ABC Books, Black Dog Books, University of Queensland Press and Black Inc. (the 2007 Small Publisher of the Year) not only have a strong presence in the local market but also have significant export businesses too (Wilkins, 2008 p 150).

A new debate in the international publishing industry is about one issue that affects the ability of independent publishers to obtain the rights to books from other territories and to exploit them in print and digital form in Australia. Both UK and US publishers have proposed that they retain the global digital rights to books even when they licence territorial rights. This affects the ability of territorial publishers to maximise the return on their investment, particularly as the proportion of ebook sales grows. This was the subject of a widely reported session at Digital Book World in 2011. This debate was foreshadowed in online discussion following the 2010 Frankfurt Book Fair.

> Being a small market English language publisher is going to get harder as digital grows.

> Put simply I believe that US and (initially less aggressively but shortly with the same fervour) UK Publishers will seek to control world English language rights for digital and with it any rights (enhanced/video/audio etc.) they may need in order to sell ebooks and enhanced ebooks on a global basis (Purcell, 2010).[51]

The implications are that Australian independent publishers could be able to license the print rights to overseas-owned works but not the digital rights, making it less viable. It is not within

---

[50] These proportions had not changed substantially in the PWC report in 2011 (PWC, 2011 p 29).

[51] This issue is still being debated. An informal report of the 2011 Digital Book World debate can be found in (Jones, 2011).

the scope of this research to examine this debate in depth, but it underlines the point that the new economy for digital books may disadvantage Australian independent publishers. Therefore, any policy considerations regarding Australian independent publishers should not assume that the global reach of the Internet will prove more advantageous overall.

The publication of Australian fiction and non-fiction titles

The PWC report commented on the strong performance of Australian books in the trade sector, increasing by an average of 8.7 percent annually compared to 3 percent for imported/agency books over the decade (PWC, 2011 pp 24-25).

In 2003-04:

> Overall, sales of Australian originated titles to book retailers, other distributors and to final consumers generated more income ($750.5m) than the sales of imported titles ($539.5m) … For non-fiction books, income from Australian originated publications ($310.1m) was 75% higher than the equivalent figure for imports ($177.1m). However, income from Australian originated fiction books ($73.1m) was lower than that for imported fiction ($116.6m) (ABS, 2005).

Although these proportions may have changed since this survey, it is interesting to note the preference for "Australian originated" non-fiction titles, which is discussed further in later chapters.

During the 2000s there was an ongoing debate about a perceived (and possibly real) decline in support for the publication of Australian literary writing. This debate was intertwined with other themes, such as the unwelcome news of low sales for most literary writing, which became industry-wide knowledge after the introduction of Nielsen BookScan. Analysts compared the situation in the 2000s unfavourably with the 1970s and 1980s, when government support and publishing pioneers contributed to a resurgence in Australian fiction. The debate attracted wider attention due to an influential article by Mark Davis (2007) in which he wrote:

> Perhaps the biggest problem with the literary paradigm was that it did not prove profitable, and always required external, non-market support to survive. It was a paradigm driven not by its commercial viability, but by cultural nationalism, communities of enthusiasts, the education system and government funding...

> Quite simply, there can be no going back, because the cultural nationalist, protectionist moment is over (Davis, 2007 p 105).

Davis (2007) and Bode (2010) both undertook empirical investigations into whether the largest publishers in Australia have increased or decreased their publication of Australian fiction (which was assumed to be a reflection of their support for the publication of Australian trade titles more

generally),[52] but while (Davis, 2007) argues that there was a declining commitment, especially to Australian literary publishing, (Bode, 2010 p 43) responded that the situation was fluctuating and was not clear.[53]

Michael Wilding (2000) and Nathan (Wilding, 2000, Hollier, 2007) have both attributed a decline in the publication of Australian literary fiction to a lack of support from multinationals for mid-list titles (that is, titles which sell 3,000-4,000 copies), and a move away from supporting the development of an author throughout his or her career, to requiring that each book be assessed as an individual profit centre. According to Galligan (2007) "the focus has shifted from publishing prestigious literary works, which sell slowly over a long period, towards mass-market titles that will command an instant readership" (Galligan, 2007 p 25). One consequence is that the major presses have effectively ceased publishing non-commercial genres such as Australian poetry.

The price of books in Australia compared to other English-language book markets

Intense debate has occurred around the belief that books are more expensive to buy in Australia than in the UK or US. The data is complex and drawing comparisons is complicated but the PWC report found evidence that there is a price difference (PWC, 2011 pp 66-81). It identified four relevant factors: the threshold of $1000 for the imposition of GST on imported books ordered online by individual consumers, meaning that most books purchased overseas online are GST-free; the strength of the Australian dollar; the value of wholesale book prices[54]; and postage costs (PWC, 2011 p 72). This was a significant finding, especially considering that the report was commissioned by the Book Industry Strategy Group which comprises advocates for the industry. Future discussions about potential policy changes in the next years will inevitably refer to public dissatisfaction about the cost of books in Australia. This research does not engage directly in this debate about pricing, but it is acknowledged that future policy deliberations will encompass this issue.

---

[52] It was not possible to examine the proportion of Australian-authored titles for the top 5000 data because the nationality of the author is not provided as part of the dataset, understandably. However, in the next two chapters the nationality of the authors and the types of publisher are considered in relation to specific public debates.

[53] The Productivity Commission found that approximately one-third of trade books sales were Australian-authored, based on analysis of the trade top 5000 (including fiction and non-fiction) titles in 2007-2008. However, its research mandate did not include whether this proportion was changing nor to give attention to the genre of the works (Productivity Commission, 2009 section E.2).

[54] "On the weight of the available evidence, we conclude there is a conceptual case that the PIRS [Parallel Importation Restrictions] do have an impact on the value of wholesale book prices in Australia. The exact magnitude, however, is difficult to ascertain – particularly in the context of the strengthening Australian dollar and the growing market share of discount department stores (which, as the Productivity Commission states, 'apply some downward pressure on prices in the segments that they choose to stock')" (PWC, 2011 p 79).

4.5 Conclusion

At the beginning of the twentieth century publishing and bookselling were regarded as noble professions (Thompson, 2010 p 32). Booksellers prided themselves on the high culture connotations of their stores and product ranges. Such associations of books with moral worth are still prevalent in the industry, although changes in bookselling have made a greater number of books available to a much broader demographic, including those who felt excluded by the high culture associations of old-style bookstores (Miller, 2006). However, along with the corporatisation and professionalisation of book retailing in the twentieth century, a parallel cultural revolution has been the dismantling of the high-low culture divide, which has meant that "high culture … is no longer 'the dominant culture' but is rather a *pocket* within commodity culture" (Frow, 1995 p 86). This has been exacerbated internationally by the shift in the publishing industry to business models which prioritise short term sales volumes.

The Australian publishing industry has undergone successive transformations from its origins as a lucrative colonial market for UK publishers, through successful nationalist endeavours to develop its own publishers, books and readerships for them, to the stage that this research focuses on, in which the Australian arms of multinationals exercise more autonomy from their head offices. Australian independent publishers were also active in the 2000s, with research revealing high rates of new entrants to the market and a high proportion of exits; however, there has also been a number of independent players who have achieved longevity (more than five years). The most recent report found that the Australian industry has grown at higher rates than the US, UK, Canadian and New Zealand industries, and that sales of Australian trade books have achieved stronger growth than imported titles. However, improvements in distribution standards to match innovations in other countries were recommended and attention was drawn to the underperformance of the industry compared to other Australian retail sectors. The sensitive issue of the price of books in Australia compared to other major English-language markets remains unresolved.

The next chapter examines the overall market for non-fiction books in Australia. Bearing in mind the caution that highbrow and popular works can be read by a single reader, we examine the Nielsen BookScan commercial sales data to find out what types of non-fiction books Australians were reading, from the sublime to the ridiculous, and a multifarious mix in between. Along with the autobiographies of sporting heroes and the latest cookbooks, other pressing issues for book buyers, judging by the sales figures, included passing the time with Sudoku puzzles and learning tips for stain removal.

Chapter 5. The Australian market for trade non-fiction books

5.1 Introduction

Earnest academics who are interested in the book-buying patterns of everyday readers have to accommodate their own research preoccupations with the seemingly light-hearted approach of most Australian book consumers. Whether a scholar's research is about the market for enduring works of literature or, in the case of the current research, books and public debates, the reality is that most books are purchased with far less serious purposes in mind.

Each year a handful of top-selling non-fiction books, be they narrative non-fiction or otherwise, sell over 100,000 copies. An exceptionally successful title may sell close to 300,000 copies; a stellar performer indeed, such as the extraordinary and unexpected success of Jennifer Fleming and Shannon Lush's *Spotless: How to Get Stains, Scratches and Smells Out of Almost Anything*, which surprised even its publishers. However, sales of over 5,000 are generally considered successful for an Australian author (depending on the expectations of the individual work) and the lowest annual sales in the Nielsen Bookscan (NB) top 5000 data were approximately 500.

The first part of this chapter surveys Australian trade non-fiction reading patterns in general by aggregating NB categories. The second part of this chapter examines sales of narrative non-fiction books in general to provide a broader context before we examine reading patterns in relation to specific public debates in the following chapters.

5.1.1 Empirical methodology: the Nielsen BookScan data

Nielsen BookScan was established in Australia in the early 2000s, with current datasets comparable from 2003. It "collects total transactional data at the point of sale directly from tills and despatch systems of all the major book retailers … In a typical week BookScan Australia collects [data about the sales of] over 60,000 different titles representing more than $14 million from over 1000 retailers" (Nielsen Bookscan, 2011). The challenges in using the commercial data for academic research can be summarised as follows:

- There was an overwhelming quantity of data (30,000 spreadsheet rows in this case)
- There was no category called "narrative non-fiction" (nor should there be). Narrative non-fiction techniques are used in a variety of genres, including how-to books, some reference guides and books of photography. There were no obvious boundaries.
- The title and author details did not give sufficient information about the nature of the writing style and genre
- How-to books dominated many of the categories

- The NB classification by publishers was not consistent, and the categorisations did not suffice as a method of sorting the data for research purposes.
- Keyword searches of titles and authors did not identify all the books relevant to a public debate and brought up many irrelevant books.

An important methodological issue was raised by Elizabeth Weiss, the Academic and Digital Publishing Director for Allen & Unwin:

> For "issues" books ... in our experience Bookscan sales figures rarely represent total sales as recorded by the publisher.
>
> Several years ago I checked Bookscan figures against our actual sales figures for titles like this, and I found Bookscan typically underestimated real sales by 15 percent ... This gap is explained by the fact that Bookscan only had access to sales data from the major trade chains and a small number of independents. Even though they did some scaling with the figures provided by independents, sales for any book which sells disproportionately well through independent, specialised and campus booksellers ... will have been under-reported during that period. Bookscan has increased its coverage of the book trade and its data for these kinds of titles is more reliable now, though I suspect we would still find a gap if we checked against our own sales data, albeit smaller [55].

Economists are experienced in working with imperfect data sets, and the approach in this case was to demonstrate broad reading patterns, with the proviso that there is a margin for error. In cases where one book or category records sales of, say, 100,000 units, and another records 1,000 units, broad conclusions can be confidently made about the overall reading trends. However, Weiss's point means that the role of books in public debate may be underestimated in this research, and as such the findings are conservative.

The data is used in this chapter for two purposes: first, to provide an overview of non-fiction sales in general, and then to examine narrative non-fiction sales.

---

[55] E. Weiss, personal communication, Sydney, 2011.

5.2   Broad trends in non-fiction book sales

The next part of this chapter focuses on non-fiction book sales, in order to provide context for the closer examination of trends in narrative non-fiction genres. In 2004 the ABS estimated that trade non-fiction book sales accounted for 36 percent of the Australian market (ABS, 2005).
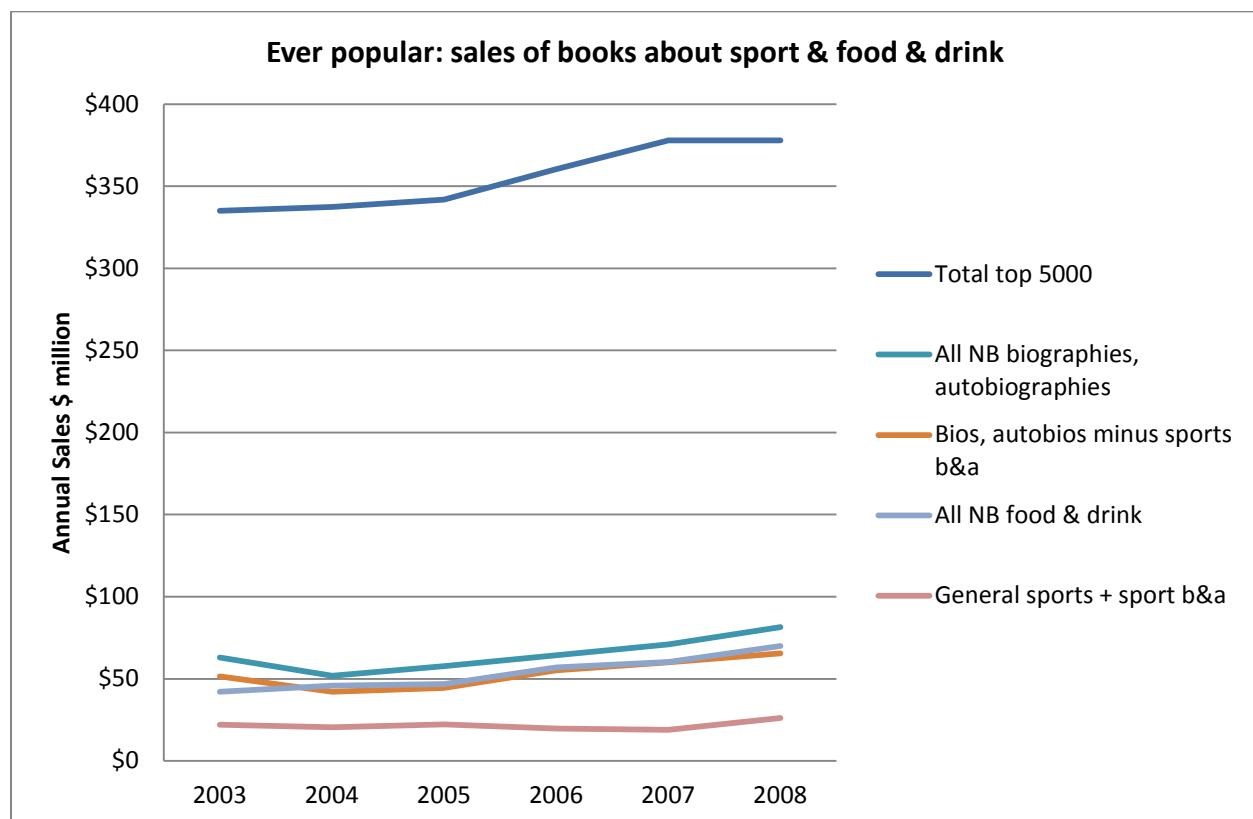
Figure 11 Sales of narrative non-fiction in relation to food, drink & sport

One way to draw a portrait of Australian non-fiction book-buying is to group related NB categories, as shown in Figure 11. If we combine all the sub-categories of biography and autobiography[56] this combined "megacategory" is the most popular, outselling even all books about food and drink.[57] To give an idea of the proportion of the top 5000 market, biographies and autobiographies comprised roughly 18.8-21.5 percent of the total top 5000, and books about food and drink 12.5-18.5 percent.

However, if we take into account Australians' love of sport and we take out all sports biographies and autobiographies to group them with the other books about sport, the

---

[56] The subcategories for biography and autobiography are: General; The Arts; Historical, Political & Military; Royalty; Sport; Literary; Science, Technology & Medical; Religious & Spiritual; and Business.
[57] The subcategories for food and drink are: General; National & Regional Cuisine; Health, Dieting & Wholefood Cookery; Vegetarian Cookery; Wines; and Other Beverages.

megacategories of biography/autobiography and food/drink are roughly equal, as shown in Figure 11. Sports autobiographies (whether ghost-written or assisted in some other way is not clear) rose in popularity in preference to sports biographies, although the reason for this trend or its duration past 2008 is not clear. Books by or about Australian cricketers were particularly popular, with Adam Gilchrist's *True Colours: My Life* and Glenn McGrath and Daniel Lane's *Glenn McGrath – Line and Strength: The Complete Story* contributing to a sales spike in 2008.

Figure 12 shows that books relating to health, fitness and diet, parenting, coping with problems and illnesses comprise the next biggest megacategory[58] (the spike in 2005 can partly be attributed to the success of *The CSIRO Total Wellbeing Diet*), followed by travel guides combined with books about where to eat and drink. This was followed by books about succeeding in business, improving one's wealth, being a motivational manager and investing in shares and real estate:[59] well-established genres but total sales declined during this period. Perhaps in the early years of the period under study, when Australia was experiencing strong economic growth, these latter-mentioned books were particularly popular. In contrast, the demand for travel guides and books about where to eat and drink[60] was comparable at the beginning of the research period, but these continued to grow in popularity.

Books centred around home life: home improvement, crafts, hobbies and caring for pets[61], appeared to be a mature set of categories. Perennially popular in Australia, this megacategory declined overall (-5.8 percent in volume and -20.8 percent in sales value), although it experienced a jump in 2006 with the success of *Spotless: How to Get Stains, Scratches and Smells Out of Almost Anything*.

Books about the arts declined over this period but this megacategory encompassed a particularly mixed range of titles;[62] from coffee-table books of photography (collections of Australian landscapes, cutting edge architecture, and photos with sentimental captions were particularly popular) to how-to draw guides, to art appreciation. This megacategory did not include "TV Tie-In Humour" or "Cartoons & Comic Strips": if so, books about The Simpsons would boost these numbers (although some were categorised under Design & Commercial Art, which is part of this megacategory). Guides to art appreciation were less likely to be bestsellers, although many sold strongly, such as how-to guides. Books relating to the performing arts which were bestsellers, such as autobiographies or biographies, were classified elsewhere.

---

[58] The combined NB categories are: Family & Health: General; Marriage, Family & Other Relationships; Sex & Sexuality; Pregnancy & Parenting; Fitness & Diet; Coping with Problems & Illness.
[59] The combined NB categories are: Business, Accounting & Vocational: Textbooks & Study Guides; Management Techniques; Management & Business: General; Sales & Marketing; Finance & Accounting; Entertainment & Etiquette; Self Improvement: General; Careers & Success; Money & Consumer Issues.
[60] Travel & Holiday Guides: General; Where to Stay / Where to Eat & Drink.
[61] Gardening; House & Home; Pets & Equine; Hobbies, Pastimes & Indoor Games; Handicrafts, Arts & Crafts
[62] The Arts: General & Reference; Fine Arts / Art History; Individual Artists / Art Monographs; Design & Commercial Art; Photography; Architecture; Film, TV & Radio; Music & Dance; Other Performing Arts; Antiques & Collectables
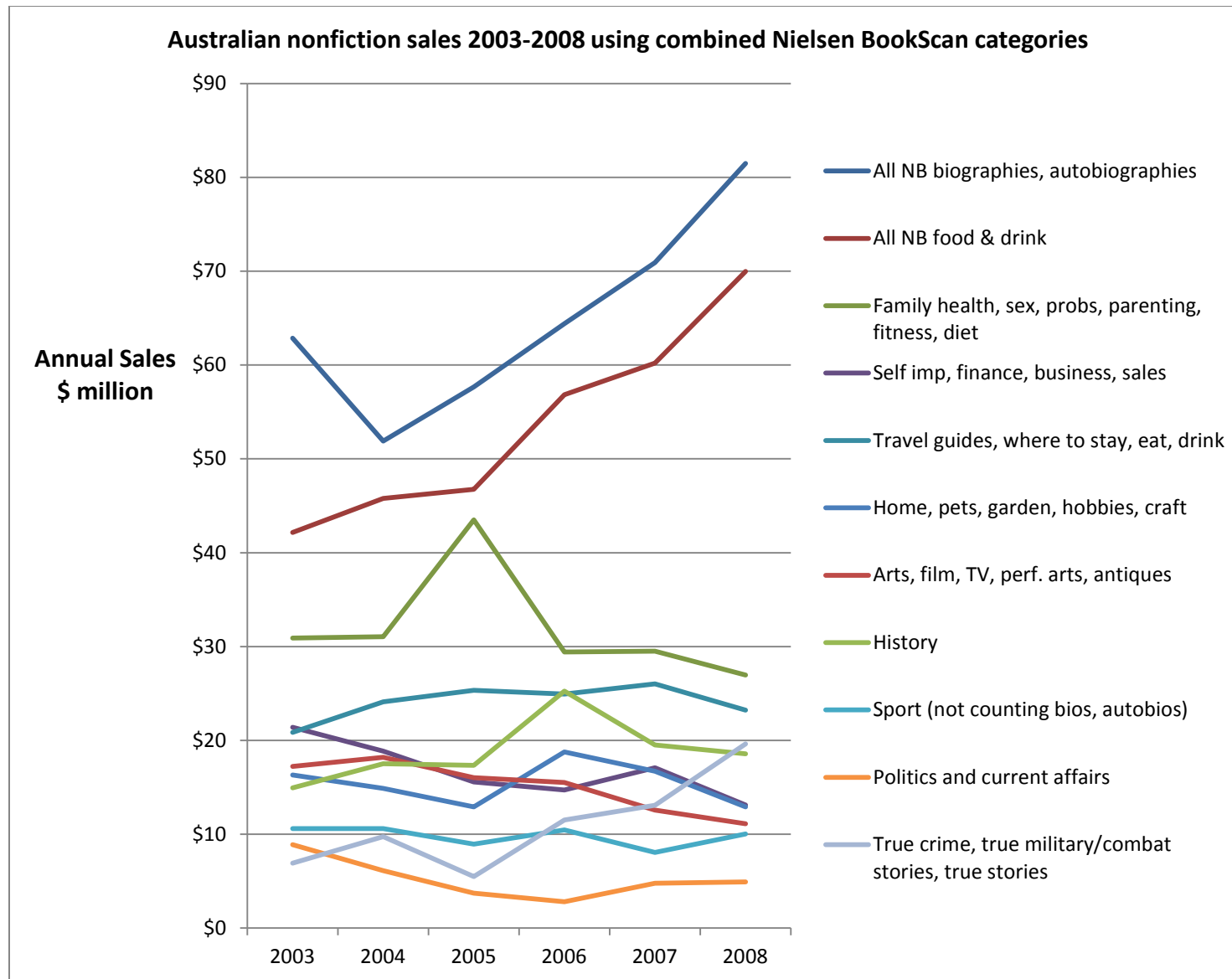
Figure 12 An overview of the top 5000 non-fiction sales

There was strong growth in books classified under history subcategories. These titles did not include histories such as those of cooking, cars, fashion, sports, TV programs or notorious murders, which were classified elsewhere.[63] There was a spike in 2006, with best-selling histories including several titles published by Pier 9: *History's Worst Decisions and the People Who Made Them* by Stephen Weir, *History's Great Untold Stories: Obscure and Fascinating Accounts of Lasting Importance* by Joseph Cummins and *History's Greatest Scandals: The Salacious Stories of Powerful People* by Ed Wright. Books relating to military history were particularly popular, including *Tobruk* and *Kokoda* by Peter FitzSimons, *The Great War* by Les Carlyon, *18 Hours: The True Story of an SAS War Hero* by Sandra Lee and *The Great War for Civilisation: The Conquest of the Middle East* by Robert Fisk.

Another megacategory that experienced exceptionally strong growth included true stories, true crime and true military stories.[64] Helen Garner's *Joe Cinque's Consolation: A True Story of Death, Grief and the Law* (classified under True Crime), was a bestseller in 2004. Later, the *Underbelly* books sold extremely well, driven no doubt by the mass appeal of the TV series. However, the popularity of this genre cannot be attributed entirely to works of literary acclaim or TV spin-offs. Its appeal was the subject of a First Tuesday Book Club program on ABC TV, with the presenter Jennifer Byrne noting bookseller estimates that roughly half the readers of true crime were women.[65]

Finally, books about current affairs and politics[66] declined during this period, but taking this downward trend out of context is misleading. In 2003 the number one top-selling non-fiction book was Michael Moore's *Stupid White Men ...and Other Sorry Excuses for the State of the Nation*. After the phenomenal popularity of Moore's books in 2003 and 2004, overall sales declined in the later years but this was in the context of strong sales for books about current issues during this period.

Other popular genres include puzzles and quizzes (it was the period in which Sudoku puzzles became popular), jokes, and travel memoirs. It's fair to say that most of the non-fiction books sold in this period reflected the lifestyles and preoccupations of Australians at the time: cooking, travelling, losing weight, getting rich, turning one's life around, predicting one's future and reading about other people's interesting lives. The patterns also revealed Australians as physically active and interested in the natural world around them. How-to books about sport were popular, as were books about bushwalking, bird-watching, fishing, camping and, closer to home, cooking, making one's home a more enjoyable place to live in (and a more valuable investment), and creative crafts and hobbies.

A summary of our survey of the megacategories is as follows:

---

[63] History: World & General; Ancient History; Regional History; History: Specific Subjects; Military History; Archaeology; Local History, Names & Genealogy. As an example of the anomalies in classifications, the last category includes books of baby names, a perennially popular sub-genre.

[64] True Crime; True Military / Combat Stories; True Stories

[65] (First Tuesday Book Club, 2009)

[66] Politics: General & Reference; Political Science & Theory; Political Ideologies & Parties; Government & Constitution; International Relations; Current Affairs & Issues

- Biographies and autobiographies were very popular genres, even when sports titles were extracted. The figures were slightly underrepresented, because biographies and autobiographies were classified in other categories too.
- Books about food and drink were the next most popular megacategory.
- Books about family health, diet, parenting, fitness and mental health were the next most popular, with *The CSIRO Total Wellbeing Diet* driving a spike in sales.
- How-to books in sales, management, motivation and wealth creation were the next most popular megacategory at the beginning of this study, although sales declined.
- Travel guides and where to eat/drink books started 2003 at roughly the same level as sales/management/motivation/wealth creation but the former increased steadily in sales whereas the latter declined.
- Books about the arts, film, TV programs, architecture, design, photography and antiques appear to have declined during this period, although this remained a popular megacategory, but biographies and autobiographies of artists (particularly film and TV performers) remained very popular.
- Books categorised under history increased in sales, with a spike in 2006 which is associated with three very popular books about Australian military history (*Kokoda*, *Tobruk* and *Gallipoli*).
- Books categorised under politics and current affairs were popular at the beginning of the research period due in part to the success of Michael Moore's books, and although the total numbers declined over this timeframe, this period is still notable for the popularity of these types of titles.
- There was extremely strong growth in true crime, true military/combat stories and true stories.

How-to books dominated many categories and appear to be a very profitable set of genres. Their popularity was such that they distorted the data. As shown in Figure 13 below, these were classified in a range of surprising categories. For example, diet books could be found under medical textbooks, and get-rich-quick books under sociology, business, economics, finance and consumer issues.

NB Category	Titles in NB category
Medicine: Textbooks & Study Guides	*The Ultimate Weight Solution Food Guide*
	Pocket Food Guide
	Fit for Life Not Fat for Life
	Losing it: Lose Fat without Ruining Your Metabolism
Sociology & Anthropology	*How to Handle a Bear Market: An Investor's Guide*
Economics: Professional & General	*Trend Trading: A Seven Step Approach for Success*
Finance & Accounting	*$1,000,000 in One Year*
	Real Estate Riches: Rich Dad's Advisors Guides
	The Secret of Candlestick Charting
	How to Beat the Managed Funds by 20 Per Cent Using Simple DIY
Money & Consumer Issues	*Rich Dad, Poor Dad: What the Rich Teach Their Kids About Money That the Poor and Middle Class Do Not!*
	How to Get Rich by Donald Trump
	How You Could Build a $10 Million Property Portfolio in Just 10 Years
	Think and Grow Rich
Industrial Studies: General	*Glam Girl's Guide to Sydney Shopping*

Figure 13 The ubiquity of how-to books in Nielsen BookScan non-fiction categories

As noted in the previous chapter, Elizabeth Eisenstein and William St Clair have addressed the popularity of how-to books historically in Europe and the UK, while Michael Korda observed that in the US their sales success dated back to the 1920s and even earlier.[67]

5.3   The market for narrative non-fiction books

The next section discusses findings based on the narrative non-fiction data in particular. To clean the data, the annual datasets were combined using their ISBNs. Titles that were obviously *not* narrative non-fiction were deleted. If in doubt, a search was conducted on the

---

[67] The catchphrase "Every day, in every way, I am getting better and better", was part of the Coue method of optimistic autosuggestion invented by Frenchman Emile Coue. His book became a US bestseller as *Self-Mastery Through Conscious Auto-Suggestion* in 1923 (Korda, 2001 p 47). Bestselling US titles in the 1930s included *Life Begins at Forty*, *You Must Relax*, *Wake up and Live!*, and *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

Internet for descriptions and reviews. Those remaining became the data subset for detailed analysis, comprising approximately 6,500 titles.

5.3.1 Methodologies for identifying narrative non-fiction works

Drawing boundaries to select narrative non-fiction data

Exploration of the data revealed the extent to which narrative non-fiction techniques are blended with other genres. For example, *Sustainable House*, is an account by Michael Mobbs of building a house in Sydney which is almost completely self-sustainable in electricity and water. He narrated a story and took the reader through his experiences of design and construction; however, the book was also a how-to guide. Furthermore, there was an overlap between books which were marketed as straight reference works, and books incorporating reference material in which the writer sought to enliven the content using narrative techniques. Some subjects lent themselves to visual representation, including landscape, wildlife, art, and architecture and the books were essentially intelligently-ordered compilations of photography with brief captions. Other books of photography were accompanied by brief passages of narrative non-fiction writing. The most noticeable example was *Down to Earth: Australian Landscapes*, a book of photography published by Freemantle Arts Press with text passages by Tim Winton. If the narrative writing in a how-to book was an important, separate component from its instructive function, it was coded positively. In other cases, a judgment was made based on product descriptions as to whether titles contained more than simply reference information or captions.

Researching beyond the product categories

Another complication was that the Nielsen BookScan categorisation by publishers was not consistent, and most books could potentially be classified in more than one category. Two different editions of *18 Hours: The True Story of an SAS War Hero* by Sandra Lee were classified under Military History and True Military/Combat Stories respectively. The following books were all examples of biography and autobiography, which were categorised elsewhere by the publisher:

Title	Author	NB Category
Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence	Doris Pilkington	Social Studies: General
Life by Design: The Art and Lives of Florence Broadhurst	Siobhan O'Brien	Design & Commercial
There's Always More to the Story	John Laws	True Stories
Mark Latham	Barry Donovan	Government & Constitution
Hazel's Journey: A Personal Experience of Alzheimer's	Sue Pieters-Hawke and Hazel Flynn	Coping with Problems & Illness

Full Time: A Coach's Memoirs	Bob Dwyer & Neil Jameson	Ball Games: Field & Outdoor
Austerlitz	W.G. Sebald	True Military / Combat Stories
A Fortunate Life	A.B. Facey,	Regional History

Figure 14 Autobiography/Biography/Memoir NB Classifications

The task of cleaning the data was further complicated because narrative non-fiction works which offered critiques of political, social and economic trends were often classified in the same categories as books which promoted and even glamorised the trends being examined. Despite this, there were no direct critiques of the Howard government categorised under Current Affairs & Issues in 2004 (although there were US-authored titles critiquing the Bush government's polices). Instead, direct critiques were found in a number of other categories:

Title	Author	NB Category
Not Happy, John	Margot Kingston	Government & Constitution
Memo for a Saner World	Bob Brown	Politics & General Reference
Run Johnny Run	Mungo MacCallum	Political Ideologies & Parties
Axis of Deceit	Andrew Wilkie	International Relations
True Believer: John Howard, George Bush and the American Alliance	Robert Garran	
The Late Night Correspondence of John Howard	Barry Everingham	Humour: Collections & General
The Howard Miracle: Interviews from the 7:30 Report	John Clarke	
John Howard's Little Book of Truth	Andrew Pegler	Anthologies, Essays, Letters & Miscellaneous
The Howard Years	Robert Manne (editor)	Regional History
Howard's War: Scribe Short Books	Alison Broinowski	Military History
Death Sentence: The Decay of	Don Watson	Linguistics

Figure 15 Examples of NB Categories and Direct Critiques of the Howard Government

Therefore, although the Nielsen BookScan classifications were helpful in general they did not stand up to fine-grained academic analysis.[68]

Finally, there are several caveats to these totals. The first, as Weiss pointed out, is that Nielsen BookScan data has been criticised for being weighted towards sales in department stores and book chains, and away from independent bookstores. This means that the high-volume sales of the big outlets are favourably weighted and distorted, and the nuances of low-volume title sales are lost. Second, although most books appear on the top 5000 list for one or two years at most, some books have extremely long "tails" (or sales lives). Low sales figures may belie the enduring appeal of a title which has been selling for decades. *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank and *The Art of War* by Sun Tsu are two examples. As has already been noted, sales to Australia via the Internet were estimated at between 1-5 percent towards the end of this period, and this is not included in the data.

5.3.2 Narrative non-fiction books in the non-fiction market segment

Analysis of the Nielsen BookScan data indicates that narrative non-fiction books comprised approximately 40 percent of the top 5000 adult non-fiction trade market with variations between 39-44 percent of volume and 39-46 percent of revenue.

	2003 Volume	2004 Volume	2005 Volume	2006 Volume	2007 Volume	2008 Volume
Nielsen BookScan 5000	11,572,541	11,577,758	11,623,234	12,525,739	13,663,173	14,081,365
All NNF	4,690,942	4,645,174	4,422,806	4,817,372	5,291,446	6,205,824
Proportion NNF/5000	40.54%	40.12%	38.05%	38.46%	38.73%	44.07%

Figure 16 Top 5000 non-fiction total volume trade in books

	2003 Value ($)	2004 Value ($)	2005 Value ($)	2006 Value ($)	2007 Value ($)	2008 Value ($)

---

[68] The publishing industry has since adopted the ONIX system and in particular the Book Industry Communications system for classifying titles. ONIX is the international standard for storing and sharing title information between publishers, distributors and booksellers. There are two international title classification systems; BIC and its successor BIC2, which are of UK origin; and BISAC of US origin. The intention is that the two systems will eventually be unified. The Australia Publishers Association ONIX project was completed in 2004 with government funding, and the APA has continued to provide support to publishers given the level of interest. (http://publishers.asn.au/index.cfm?doc_id=201)

Nielsen Bookscan 5000	282,302,493	291,864,152	304,062,371	330,951,825	357,368,079	370,568,212
All NNF	117,312,913	119,863,023	119,510,865	134,727,723	145,014,133	171,013,527
Proportion of NNF in top 5000 of total industry revenue	41.56%	41.07%	39.30%	40.71%	40.58%	46.15%

Figure 17 Top 5000 non-fiction turnover trade in books

The multinational publishers with the most narrative non-fiction titles in this research project are: HarperCollins Publishers (878 titles); various arms of the Hachette conglomerate (855); Penguin Books (704); Random House (680); Pan Macmillan (412); Transworld (262); Simon & Schuster (209); and Hardie Grant (121). (Allen & Unwin published 372 narrative non-fiction titles in this research, placing it in the midst of the multinationals.)

No. of NNF titles in top 5000 2003-2008

- Australian Independent
- Major Australian Independent
- Multinational
- Not Identified
- Overseas-based Independent
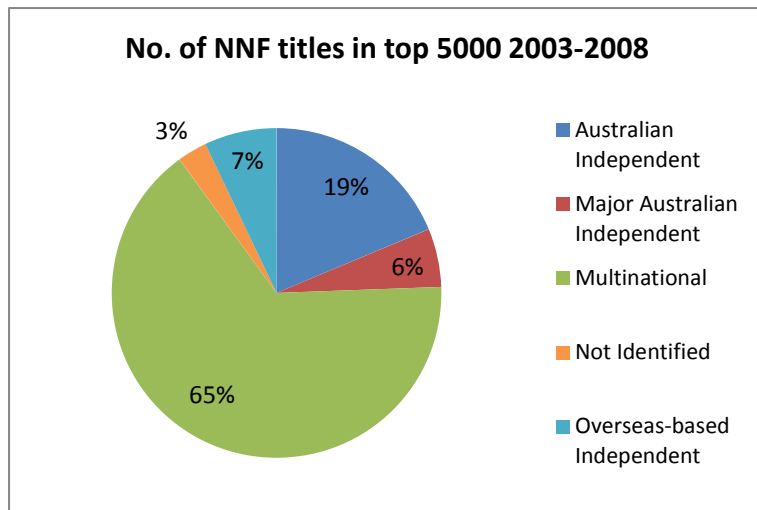
Figure 18 Number of narrative non-fiction titles in the top 5000 by publisher type, 2003-2008

Multinational publishers accounted for nearly 2/3 of the narrative non-fiction titles in the top 5000 data (illustrated in Figure 18), and 3/4 of the sales volume (see Figure 19).

Market share by publisher type
NNF books in top 5000 2003-2008
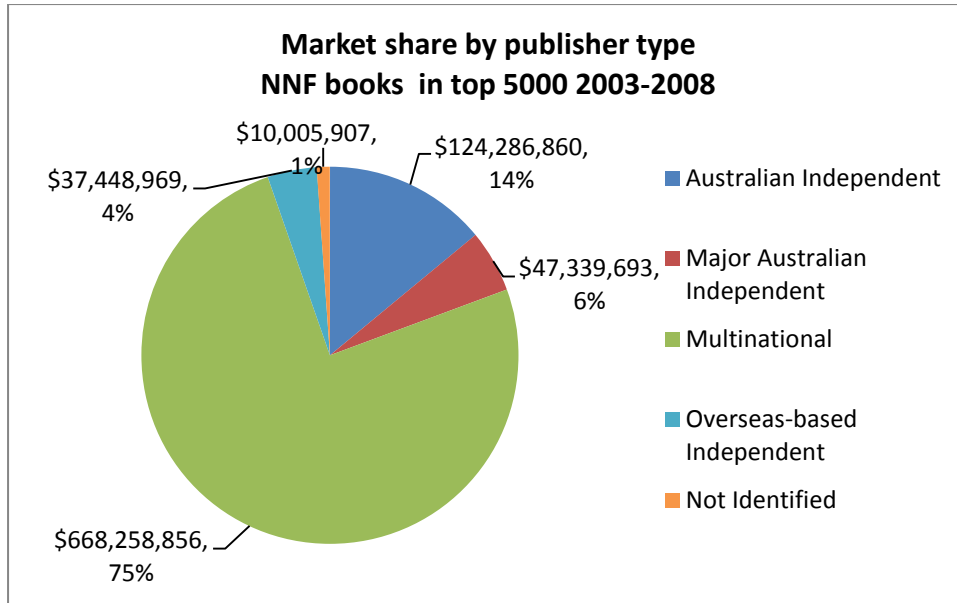
Figure 19 Top 5000 narrative non-fiction market share by publisher type 2003-2008

Narrative non-fiction bestsellers

Multinational publishers were responsible for 84 percent of sales of the top 100 narrative non-fiction bestsellers (which were recorded with sales of between 40,000-300,000 copies).

Sales of the top 100 narrative nonfiction titles by publisher category 2003-2008
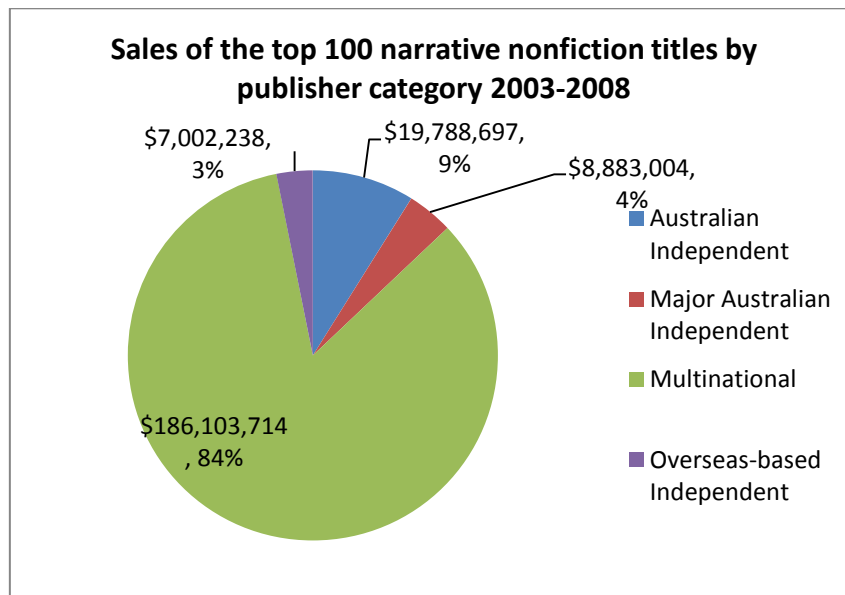
Figure 20 Sales of the top-selling narrative non-fiction titles by value/publisher type 2003-2008

The strong performance of Australian independent publishers shown in Figure 20 can be attributed in part to the success of top 100 titles by Text Publishing (publishers of *The Weather Makers* by Tim Flannery and *In My Skin* by Kate Holden), Floradale Press (publishers of true crime, including the *Underbelly* series) and Melbourne University Publishing (publishers of political memoirs by Mark Latham, Peter Costello and John Howard).

Figure 21 sets out a list of the top-40-selling narrative non-fiction books in Australia by volume during this period. (Note that the numbers are not weighted according to the year of publication.) Just over half the list (21 out of 40) is Australian-authored. The list demonstrates some of the characteristics of the market discussed earlier: the predominance of authors with established public profiles; the presence of international bestsellers; Australians' affinity for books about sport, especially cricket; true crime; military history; travel memoir; celebrity biography and autobiography. Two books in the list were later exposed as frauds: Norma Khouri's *Forbidden Love* and James Frey's *A Million Little Pieces.* A significant feature is the presence on the list of Australian journalists: ten of the 21 Australian-authored titles were written at least in part by journalists or former journalists.

The extent of the success of some of these books could not have been predicted. Sarah Turnbull's *Almost French* exceeded expectations, and *Mao's Last Dancer*, written by ballet dancer turned stockbroker, Li Cunxin, in English, which is not the author's first language, was a sales phenomenon. Lynne Truss's *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*, a guide to punctuation for which sales hopes were originally modest in the UK, became promoted heavily internationally as a bestseller, supported by author interviews, feature articles, and prominent book displays in retail outlets. Celebrity auto/biographies by Anthony Kiedis, Pamela Stephenson, Dawn French, Michael Parkinson and the late Princess Diana's butler (nearly seven years after she died) were popular, as were accounts by Australian cricket celebrities.

Title	Author	Publisher Group	Publisher Category
Mao's Last Dancer	Cunxin, Li	Penguin Books	Multinational
Underbelly: The Gangland War	Silvester, J. & Rule, Andrew	Floradale Press	Australian Independent
A Short History of Nearly Everything	Bryson, Bill	Transworld	Multinational
Out of My Comfort Zone: The Autobiography	Waugh, Steve	Penguin Books	Multinational
Stupid White Men... and Other Sorry Excuses for the State of the Nation	Moore, Michael	Penguin Books	Multinational
Eat, Pray, Love	Gilbert, Elizabeth	Bloomsbury Pub	Overseas-based Independent
It's Not about the Bike: My Journey Back to Life	Armstrong, Lance & Jenkins, Sally	Allen & Unwin	Major Australian Independent
Marley and Me	Grogan, John	Hachette ANZ	Multinational
Scar Tissue	Kiedis, Anthony	Hachette Little, Brown	Multinational
Almost French: A New Life in Paris	Turnbull, Sarah	Transworld	Multinational
Forbidden Love: A Harrowing True Story of Love and Revenge in Jordan	Khouri, Norma	Transworld	Multinational
True Colours: My Life	Gilchrist, Adam	Pan Macmillan	Multinational
The God Delusion	Dawkins, Richard	Transworld	Multinational
My Story	Corby, Schapelle & Bonella, K.	Pan Macmillan	Multinational
Bravemouth: Living with Billy Connolly	Stephenson, Pamela	Hachette Headline	Multinational
Tobruk	FitzSimons, Peter	HarperCollins Publishers	Multinational
Tuesdays with Morrie	Albom, Mitch	Hachette ANZ	Multinational
Great War,The	Carlyon, Les	Pan Macmillan	Multinational
Marching Powder	Young, Rusty	Pan Macmillan	Multinational
Down Under	Bryson, Bill	Transworld	Multinational
Kokoda	FitzSimons, Peter	Hachette ANZ	Multinational
Dear Fatty	French, Dawn	Random House	Multinational
The Weather Makers: The Past and Future Impact of Climate Change	Flannery, Tim	Text Publishing Company	Australian Independent
My Steve	Irwin, Terri	Simon & Schuster	Multinational

Title	Author	Publisher Group	Publisher Category
Parky: My Autobiography	Parkinson, Michael	Hachette Hodder	Multinational
Dude, Where's My Country?	Moore, Michael	Penguin Books	Multinational
Holy Cow!: An Indian Adventure	MacDonald, Sara	Transworld	Multinational
Too Soon Old, Too Late Smart	Livingston, Gordon	Hachette ANZ	Multinational
Jason McCartney: After Bali	McCartney, Jason & Slattery, Geoff	Hachette ANZ	Multinational
Leadbelly:Inside Australia's Underworld Wars	Silvester, J. & Rule, Andrew	Floradale Press	Australian Independent
Who Killed Channel 9?	Stone, Gerald	Pan Macmillan	Multinational
Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation	Truss, Lynne	Profile Books	Overseas-based Independent
Million Little Pieces,A	Frey, James	Hachette Hodder	Multinational
Short History of Nearly Everything,A	Bryson, Bill	Random House	Multinational
Joe Cinque's Consolation: A True Story of Death, Grief and the Law	Garner, Helen	Pan Macmillan	Multinational
Anzac's Story,An	Kyle, Roy & Courtenay, Bryce	Penguin Books	Multinational
Kokoda	FitzSimons, Peter	Hachette ANZ	Multinational
My Story	Cosgrove, Peter	HarperCollins	Multinational
My Life	Clinton, Bill	Random House	Multinational
Royal Duty,A	Burrell, Paul	Penguin Books	

Figure 21 The top-selling narrative non-fiction books by volume 2003-2008 (not weighted according to year of publication)

The selection of titles shown in Figure 21 is also notable for books by Australians who became celebrities through news and current affairs, including Shapelle Corby's *My Story* and McCartney and Slattery's *Jason McCartney: After Bali*. Two books are on the list by Michael Moore, who was the top-selling narrative non-fiction author in 2003. Robert Darnton (2003) has documented the taste for scandalous literature in pre-revolutionary France, which satirised senior political figures (eg., Darnton, 2003 pp 71-75), once again indicating that many contemporary reading tastes have deep historical precedents. Some titles bear a striking relation to prominent public debates at the time, including books by Michael Moore, Jason McCartney (the victim of a terrorist attack in Bali) and Tim Flannery's *The Weather Makers*, about climate change. However, it is not possible to discern readership patterns, rather than noting individual titles, and to that we turn in the next chapters.

5.4 Conclusion

Examination of the Nielsen BookScan data reveals the popularity of genres that date back to the invention of publishing, although naturally it is not possible to determine the shifts in their popularity over time in Australia. Nor is it possible to make obvious links between reading patterns and important public debates. The following two chapters apply more detailed scrutiny to the narrative non-fiction sales data for the two case-study applications to locate important, but less obvious, developments.

Chapter 6. Books and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

6.1 Introduction

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan precipitated a flood of books onto English-language markets: books opposing the wars paved the way for books commenting on their conduct and placing them in broader historical and political contexts. The current study identifies 315 narrative non-fiction books which could be read directly in relation to the wars, and hundreds of other books fitting less obvious, but related reading patterns. The top-selling non-fiction book in Australia in 2003 was *Stupid White Men ...and Other Sorry Excuses for the State of the Nation*, and the third-best selling non-fiction book (with the *Guinness Book of Records* sandwiched between) was the fraudulent honour-killing "expose" *Forbidden Love: A Harrowing True Story of Love and Revenge in Jordan* by Norma Khouri (later revealed to be Norma Bagain Toliopoulos). Clearly, some books touched a nerve with Australian readers and became runaway bestsellers, while other books with seemingly impressive credentials made little impact in the market. This study examines short-term reading responses and longer-term reading patterns. It is also an opportunity to consider the dynamics at work when English-language publishers seek to supply a market to English-language readers on subject matter where many potentially authoritative sources are not located in these markets (e.g., in the case of *Forbidden Love*, the Middle East).

The hypotheses of the current research regarding the role of books in public debate were:

- That it is possible to map reading patterns in the case of narrative non-fiction books to investigate whether Australians turned to books in relation to public debates; and
- That Australian independent publishers made a contribution to public debate distinct from that of multinational publishers in the types of books they released.

This chapter tests these propositions by undertaking fine-grained analysis of the NB sales data. The first part of this chapter discusses the reading patterns (based on sales) using taxonomies developed as part of this research The second part of this chapter examines the contributions of Australian independent and multinational publishers, in the context of cultural diversity in publishing markets.

6.2 Reading patterns

6.2.1 Methodologies for identifying reading patterns

The previous chapter explained that the commercial categories used in the NB data were not suitable for fine-grained academic research. To recap, a total of 6,495 books were coded as narrative non-fiction titles in the top 5000 data for each of the years 2003-2008. The two public debates discussed in this thesis were selected and the subset was examined to decide if the books

could be read in relation to the debates. This approach is in keeping with book history methodologies, which recognise that readers engage with ideas and issues by making creative, unexpected choices in reading materials and by responding to them in often unpredicted ways.

For the purposes of this chapter, which deals with the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, these titles were coded yes/no as capable of being read in relation to the wars, resulting in 938 books being examined in more detail. These were coded as capable of being read directly or indirectly in relation to the wars (e.g., an account of a soldier's experiences in Iraq or a politician's commentary on the war could be read directly, while a general book about Islam could be read indirectly in relation to the war). As a result, 315 books were coded as capable of being read *directly* in relation to the wars. One of the benefits of this approach is that the for the first time empirical data can be used to show the extent of Australian reading interests for potential use by other academics specialising in particular genres.

6.2.2   Broad reading patterns

The next step involved developing taxonomies for these titles, with the resulting groupings as follows:

- Extended journalism
- Polemics
- Political autobiographies and biographies
- Contemporary military stories
- Life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women
- Australian military history
- Life narratives of terrorism survivors (or their family members)
- Works by academics
- Long essays
- Activists' books (ie, which weren't polemics)
- Former intelligence officers' accounts
- Terrorists and accused terrorists' personal stories
- Interventions by public figures without an association with the wars
- Travel memoir/history
- Literary authors
- Religion
- Other

Because the interest of this project is in identifying reading patterns, different categorisations were experimented with before those above were finalised. For example, there was an attempt to code the different types of academic books; this proved complex and fruitless. There was some overlap between the categories, for example, included in bestselling books is the autobiography of Peter Cosgrove (a former Chief of the Defence Force in Australia). This book could have been

categorised as a contemporary military story or Australian military history (or as a biography of a political figure, although Cosgrove strived to remain separate from the political sphere publicly). The book was categorised under Australian military history because its characteristics fitted more closely with earlier military autobiographies than the modern, real-life action-adventure genre of contemporary military stories.

The most popular categories in terms of sales were as follows:

Total sales direct reading
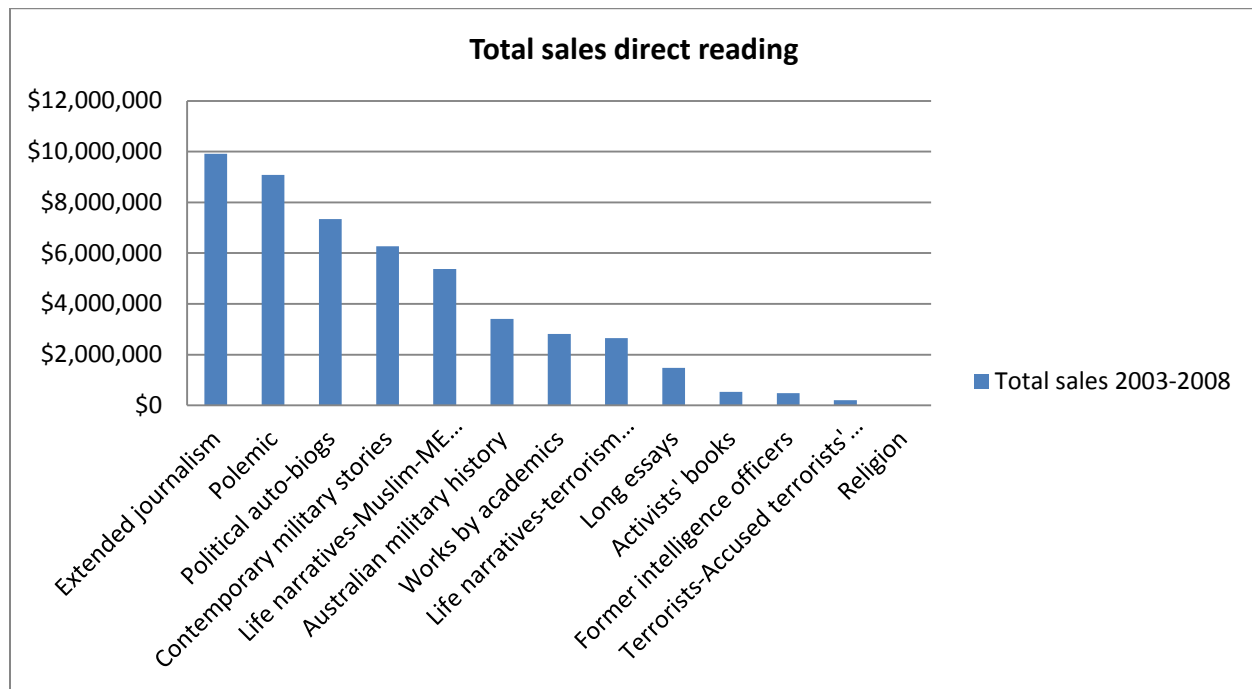
Figure 22 The most popular categories of books directly about the wars by total sales 2003-2008

It is apparent from Figure 22 that extended journalism, polemics and political autobiographies and biographies were the most popular categories. Sales of polemics peaked early in the research timeframe (2003) and declined thereafter as Australians shifted to different authors and genres. The popularity of political autobiographies and biographies was characterised by a number of new releases by or about US Democrat figures and a number of contemporary federal Australian politicians in the latter years of the period. The most sharply growing trend was that of contemporary military stories: true life, narrative accounts of contemporary warfare. Life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women were popular at the beginning and end of the timeframe, but dived in the middle, perhaps due to publisher reticence after a couple of frauds were exposed. (All of these patterns are discussed further in this chapter.)

However if we include books which could be read indirectly as well, the reading patterns change:

Total sales direct and indirect reading
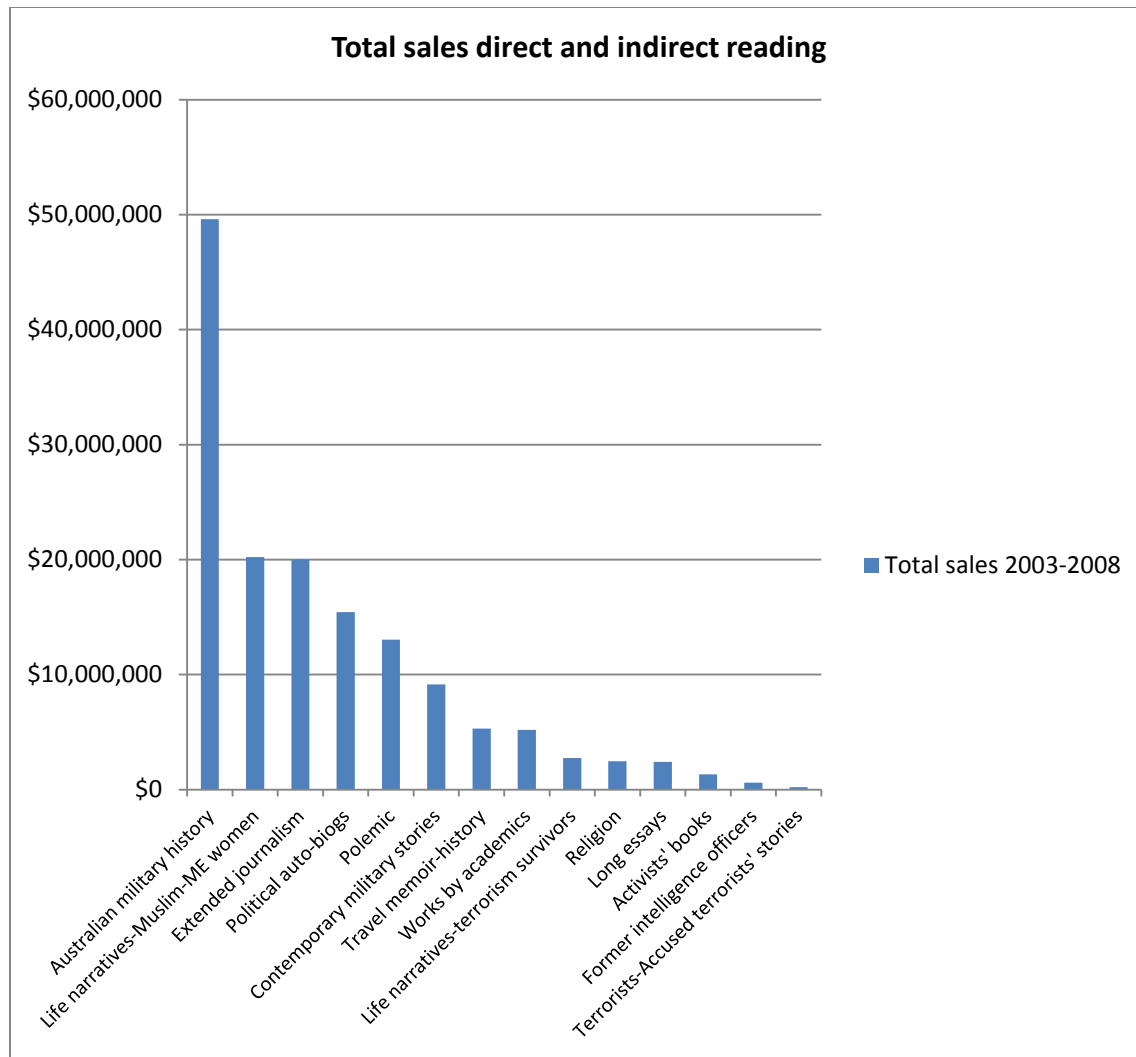
Figure 23 The most popular categories which could be read directly and indirectly in relation to the wars

Figure 23 demonstrates that books about Australian military history (from any period) made that category by far the most popular. Extended journalism and various forms of life narratives were the next most popular categories, followed by polemics and contemporary military stories, which were often written in exciting action-adventure prose. Another genre becomes more prominent: travel memoirs and histories by authors such as Christopher Kremmer, Simon Montefiore and William Dalrymple, which address themes of Western and Islamic coexistence in other (non-Western) geographic settings or other historical periods.

While these summaries provide a broad comparative means, tracking the sales over the consecutive years gives a more nuanced account of reading patterns (see Figures 24 and 25). Anti-war polemics, driven by the popularity of Michael Moore's books (and the media campaign associated with the film *Fahrenheit 9-11*) were the most popular books read in relation to debate about the wars in 2003 and sales were also strong in 2004, before dropping away for the rest of the period. The next most popular group, life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women,

117

started at a high point with the success of Norma Khouri's *Forbidden Love*, dropped after it and *Burned Alive* were exposed as frauds, but picked up towards the end of this period partly due the success of books by Hirsi Ali. The popularity of Australian military history rose overall during this period, with a peak in 2006 due to several best-sellers including Peter Cosgrove's *My Story*. Books of extended journalism which could be read in relation to the wars were generally consistently popular.

Political biography was popular in the early in the period due to the release of biographies by or about Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton, Rudolph Giuliani, and Madeleine Albright and then by Barack Obama in 2008. In the latter years, works by or about Australian political figures, including Mark Latham, John Howard and Peter Costello, also drove the popularity of this category. Other points of note include the strong growth of contemporary military stories from a low base. Finally books of long essays were consistently popular during this period, although at a fraction of the sales of more commercial genres. Less popular, in general, were critical interventions by public figures, academics and literary figures in individual books, which will be discussed further below.
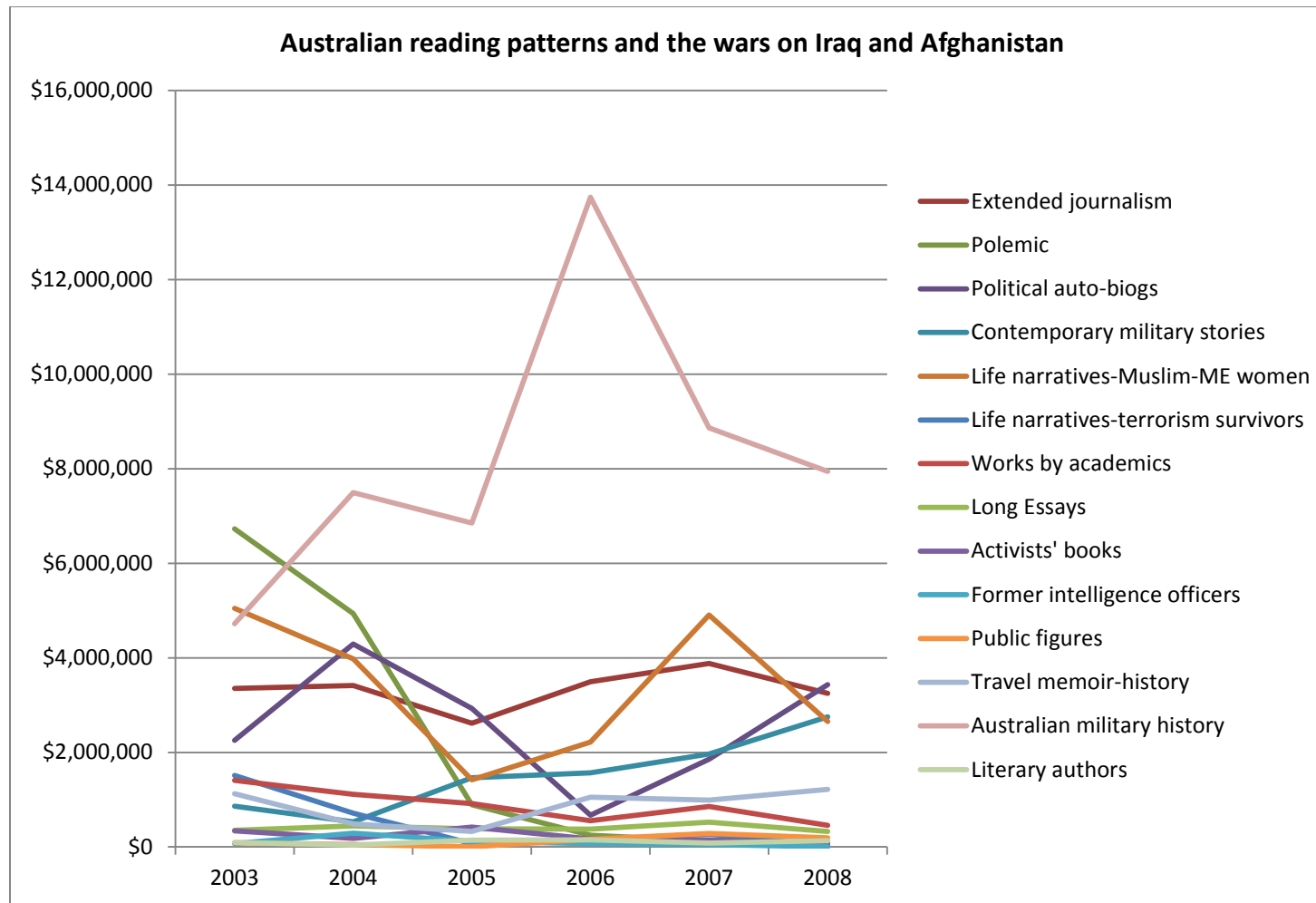
Figure 24 Graph: Changing reading patterns in relation to the wars (direct and indirect)

Book categories	$'000s (adjusted for inflation to 2009 values)					
	2003	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**
Extended journalism	3,352.3	3,414.6	2,616.0	3,490.9	3,883.2	3,251.4
Polemic	6,724.7	4,937.4	892.9	248.8	126.3	102.5
Political auto-biogs	2,251.9	4,289.7	2,929.8	673.4	1,857.9	3,429.9
Contemporary military stories	860.2	530.2	1,462.3	1,564.5	1,967.7	2,749.8
Life narratives-Muslim-ME women	5,043.6	3,975.9	1,421.0	2,215.2	4,903.6	2,651.0
Life narratives-terrorism survivors	1,509.4	717.5	67.4	148.5	275.1	22.5
Works by academics	1,405.9	1,111.3	920.0	552.6	853.8	457.9
Long essays	350.6	443.1	380.5	376.1	524.5	330.5
Activists' books	337.6	180.0	418.7	170.6	151.9	59.0
Former intelligence officers	69.0	289.6	122.1	71.4	50.9	-
Public figures	88.1	49.3	-	160.5	283.5	191.3
Travel memoir-history	1,126.4	486.3	330.1	1,049.5	988.4	1,215.7
Australian military history	4,721.0	7,493.1	6,850.2	13,741.3	8,863.5	7,939.5
Literary authors	95.7	38.9	143.6	152.4	80.6	133.4
Other	26.3	170.4	44.1	252.2	309.5	484.1
Totals	**28,231.1**	**28,503.0**	**18,780.6**	**25,312.8**	**26,103.4**	**23,439.6**

Figure 25 Table: Changing reading patterns in relation to the wars (direct and indirect)

Next, we turn to each of the major categories in more detail.

6.2.3 Extended journalism

Journalists played an extensive role in writing books about the war, offering greater breadth and depth of coverage than was possible in 24 hour news media, and offering coverage of additional dimensions of the wars. These books are further divided as follows:

- War reporting and coverage of the Bush and Howard administrations' prosecution of the war
- Detailed reporting of the wars' atrocities
- Extended analysis of issues that became related to public debates about the wars

1. War reporting and the Bush administration's prosecution of the wars
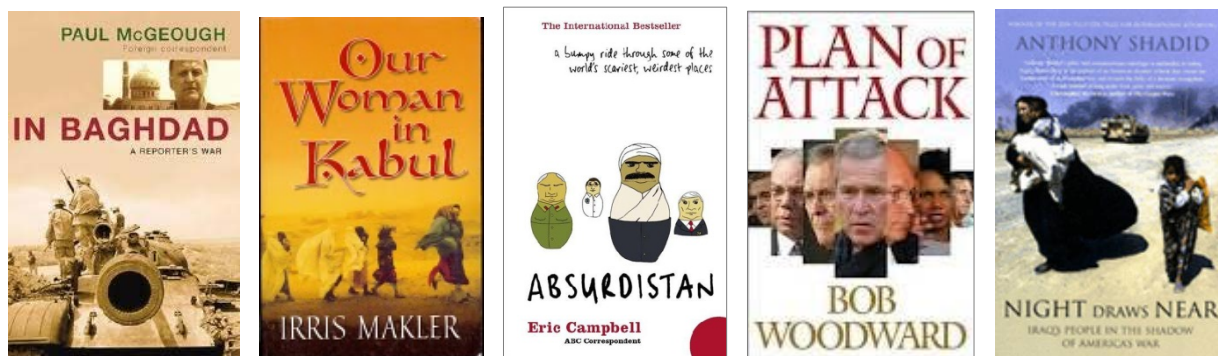
Figure 26 Examples of extended journalism reporting on the wars. Books by Australian journalists were particularly popular.

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Aust-authored	14	900+	4,050	25,000+
US-authored	13	630+	1,564	7,000+
UK-authored & other	2	630+	738	830+

Figure 27 Sales ranges: war reporting and the Bush administration's prosecution of the wars

Australians bought works by US, Australian, UK and other overseas journalists in every year but generally the most popular books were by Australian journalists. These included books by ABC reporters Eric Campbell (*Absurdistan*) and Jonathan Harley (*Lost in Transmission*), which were particularly popular, as was Leigh Sales' (*Detainee 002: The Case of David Hicks*). Works by Irris Makler (*Our Woman in Kabul: A Memoir*), Sally Neighbour (*In the Shadow of Swords*, about Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia) and Paul McGeough (*In Baghdad: A Reporter's War* and *Manhattan to Baghdad: Despatches from the Frontline in the War on Terror*) also sold strongly

with each author achieving total sales of over 10,000 copies. Many of these books drew on the journalist's specialist role as a war correspondent, and offered detailed, contextualised analysis of the war's progress.

US war correspondents present in the top 5000 included Anthony Shadid, Washington Post National Editor Rajiv Chandrasekaran, and Chris Ayres, author of *War Reporting for Cowards: Between Iraq and a Hard Place*. Other reporters examined the role of the CIA (e.g., *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan and Bin Laden* by Steven Coll) and the rise of privatised military and war profiteering (e.g., *Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army* by Jeremy Scahill, and *How Much Money Did You Make on the War, Daddy? A Quick and Dirty Guide to War Profiteering in the Bush Administration* by William D. Hartung). Although according to publicity material some of the non-Australian authored books were bestsellers overseas, they sold modestly in Australia (barely in four figures although Bob Woodward's books were of particular interest to Australian readers). Regardless of sales, the release of these works was accompanied in Australia by author interviews, feature articles and book reviews that multiplied the size of audiences exposed to their analysis.

Gillian Whitlock (2007), an Australian literary studies academic, has raised ethical questions about the role of war correspondents:

> What are the ethics of using memoir to bear witness to trauma? What rights do journalists have to craft a powerful and professional self through witnessing in this way? When do they become complicit by trading in the damage? (Whitlock, 2007 p 139).

Whitlock examines the construction of journalists' authorial personas, sometimes devised to provide a comforting point of connection to US readerships and the flawed capacity of reporters to give voices to Iraqi civilians (barriers include not only the daily privations of war and the need to use interpreters but also the need to shape the texts into cultural forms that would be accessible to US readers). She distinguishes between works that feature empathetic, ethical engagement and those that foster complacency, prejudice and vicarious pleasure. Ultimately she finds an ethical place for the best of these works.

> The terrible and spectral presence of the victims of war are embedded in the American experience of Iraq, they carry into memoirs in sticky presence and ensure that the living will continue to be haunted by the violently dead and by those places where "man strayed into the territories of animal" (Whitlock, 2007 p 160).

2. Detailed reporting of the wars' atrocities
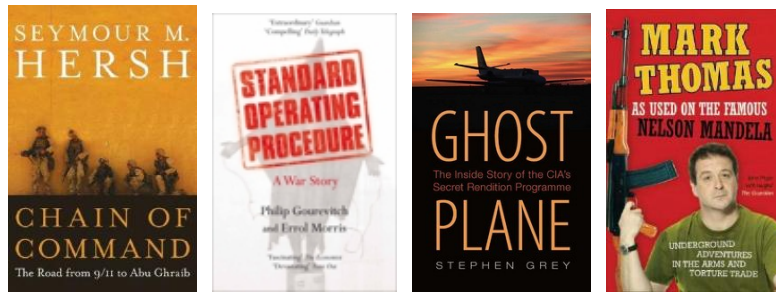
Figure 28 Books of extended journalism which detailed the wars' atrocities

No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
	Lower end	Median	Higher end
4	670+	1,897	3,300+

Figure 29 Books which detailed the wars' atrocities did not reach the sales peaks of other types of extended journalism.

These books are noteworthy for the grim, detailed accounts of atrocities, including *Chain of Command: The Road from September 11*[th] *to Abu Ghraib* by Seymour M. Hersh and *Standard Operating Procedure: Inside Ghraib* by Philip Gourevitch. UK-authored books also examined the less palatable aspects of the wars: *Ghost Plane: The Untold Story of the CIA's Secret Rendition Programme* by Stephen Grey and *As Used on the Famous Nelson Mandela: Underground Adventures in the Arms and Torture Trade* by Mark Thomas. These unrelenting and important works sold modestly but their public and historical value can be regarded as being very strong.

3: Analysis of issues that became related to public debates about the wars
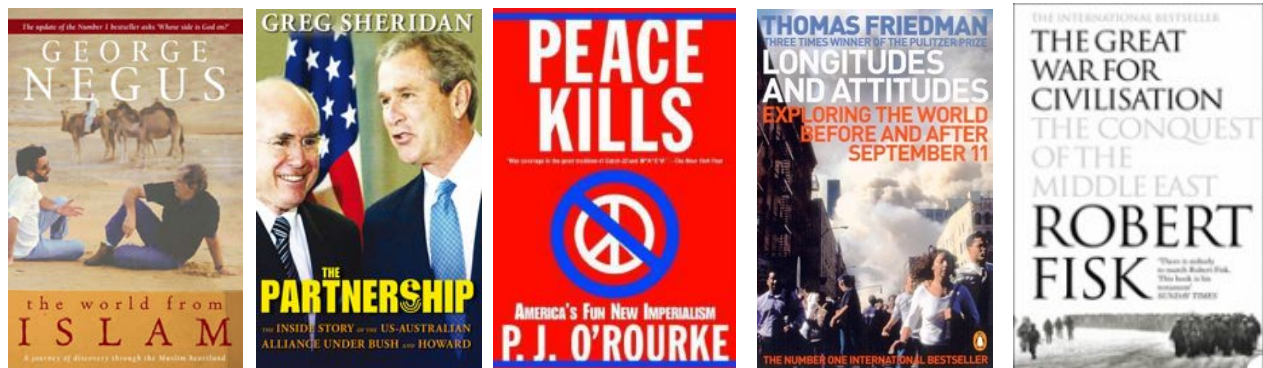
Figure 30 One hundred and forty-six titles (with new editions counted separately) were published (including the republication of older titles) which offered analysis of a range of issues related to the wars but only a few became bestsellers.

In Australia and internationally, journalists took up themes in public debates and developed them according to their individual experiences and skills in areas including history, religion, the media, US voters, and activism.

	No. of titles	**Sales range (volume)**		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	58*	570+	1,954	68,000+
US-authored	47	540+	1,455	13,300+
UK-authored	27	540+	1,962	24,500+
Other	14*	640+	2,060	21,000+

Figure 31 Sales of extended journalism on a range of issues which became related to debate about the wars

*New editions counted separately

Works by Australian journalists were particularly popular with one best-selling work selling over 60,000 copies. Popular authors in terms of book sales included George Negus (*The World From Islam*) and books about the 2007 election by Margot Saville (*The Battle for Bennelong*) and Mungo MacCallum (*Poll Dancing: the 2007 Election*). *Kickback: Inside the Australian Wheat Board Scandal* by Caroline Overington, released in 2007, sold several thousand copies and made an important contribution to the public record. Another Australian polemicist who achieved high sales was John Pilger (e.g., *The New Rulers of the World*). Greg Sheridan, the foreign editor of *The Australian* newspaper, wrote *The Partnership: The Inside Story of the US-Australian Alliance Under Howard and Bush*. Sheridan's book was intended as a serious analytical work and important contribution to international relations scholarship. Like many more serious works, it sold modestly; however, it is entirely feasible that this work will have a longer reading life in foreign policy circles.

The best-selling work by a UK journalist was *The Great War for Civilisation: The Conquest of the Middle East* by Robert Fisk, who placed debate about the wars in the context of the colonial history of the Middle East. Books by international journalists such as John Pilger, Thomas Friedman and a number of New Yorker writers proved popular. *The Bookseller of Kabul* by Norwegian freelance journalist Anne Seierstad was a bestseller although her other title *A Hundred and One Days: A Baghdad Journal*, was not. A small but significant number of books examined the role of the US media, including *Don't Think of an Elephant* by George Lakoff and *The Greatest Story Ever Sold: The Decline and Fall of Truth from 9/11 to Katrina* by Frank R. Rich. One of the better-selling works by a US journalist bore the unforgettable title *Deer Hunting with Jesus: Dispatches from America's Class War* by US author Joe Bageant, cleverly promoted and marketed by independent publisher Scribe. This was one of a number (another is *The Middle Mind: Why Americans Don't Think for Themselves* by Curtis White) that took a humorous approach to examining the US voting public, especially Republican voters.

An offbeat examination of the US military was made by British writer and *Guardian* contributor Jon Ronson, whose book *The Men Who Stare at Goats* examines research attempts by the US army into the potential military use of paranormal forces. (It has since been made into a movie starring George Clooney.) Some books sold close to 10,000 copies but generally these books sold in the low- to mid-thousands, suggesting that they had reasonable followings but were not mainstream bestsellers.

The performance of the Western news media in the lead-up to the wars, in particular its failure to sufficiently challenge claims that Saddam Hussein had links to Al Qaeda and that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, inspired extensive debate about the operation of the news media. Nick Davies (2008), a *Guardian* journalist, inflamed the discussion with the publication of *Flat Earth News*, which draws on research with Cardiff University examining the extent to which quality UK broadsheets enabled journalists to initiate and research their own stories. The research found that 60 percent of all news stories in a two week sample period were drawn wholly or mainly from wire news services and public relations releases. Davies argues that through the application of contemporary commercial news business models, journalists have become "churnalists" and that fact-checking by journalists is now a luxury (ibid p 53). Although this may seem at first glance a convincing argument, the full explanation is likely to be much more complex and falls outside the ambit of this thesis.

However, media analysts have examined other factors including the impact on journalism of technological change and the deregulation of labour markets, and as a consequence, the use of short-term contracts and contracting out. These decrease the power of individual journalists and increase the power of management (Örnebring, 2009). There is also a growing disparity between the role of public relations companies, which are often better resourced than news organisations, and the increased use of "spin" by PR firms whose clients include governments (Miller and Dinan, 2008). Also relevant was the power of neo-conservatives in the Bush administration, and their conviction that they would "make reality", which the media would then report (Danner, 2007 p 23). Finally, another factor was the popularity of entertainment rather than serious news, and the trivialisation of much news content because it brought ratings success (Kaplan, 2007).

Also notable during this period was the popularity of books with activist overtones, often written by journalists, but not always.[69] *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* by Naomi Klein is one such popular example. These books seem to be part of a connecting pattern of debates about globalisation and inequality, or other aspects of global citizenship and activism (e.g., environmental issues). Although marketing materials claim many were bestsellers overseas, most sold in the low thousands in Australia.

---

[69] These included *Heat: How to Stop the Planet Burning* by George Mobiot; *Stuffed and Starved: Markets, Power and the Hidden Battle for the World* by Raj Patel; *Not on the Label: What Really Goes into the Food on Your Plate* by *Guardian* correspondent Felicity Lawrence; *Rogue Economics* by UK-Italian journalist Loretta Napoleoni; *365 Ways to Change the World: How to Make a Difference One Day at a Time* by former merchant banker Michael Norton; *One No, Many Yeses: A Journey to the Heart of the Global Resistance Movement* by Paul Kingsnorth.

6.2.4 Polemics
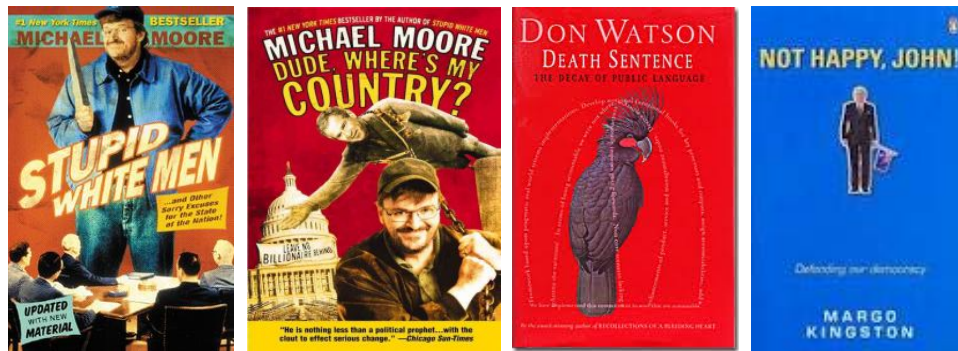
Figure 32 Although there were US and Australian attempts to emulate the success of high-profile polemics, a small number were clear favourites

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	12	600+	4,597	78,000+
US-authored	14	650+	2,666	190,000+
Other	5	550+	1,843	3,400+

Figure 33 Sales of polemics

Australians turned in vast numbers to books by Michael Moore in the years 2003-2004. Moore's works sold over a quarter of a million copies in Australia in the period of this study. It could be reasonably assumed that these best-selling books were stocked by major department stores and discount department stores, further increasing their accessibility to potential readers. Moore's three most outstandingly successful titles were *Stupid White Men ...and Other Sorry Excuses for the State of the Nation*; *Dude, Where's My Country*?; and *The Official Fahrenheit 9-11 Reader*.

Many other polemics were recognisable by their titles and their stridency suggested an intent on the part of publishers to tap into the market created by Moore's success: *The Bush Hater's Handbook: An A-Z Guide to the Most Appalling Presidency of the Past 100 years* by Jack Huberman, an activist writer and blogger, and *Worse Than Watergate: The Secret Presidency of George W. Bush* by John Dean, a former counsel to Richard Nixon. A sub-group comprised works by humourists, including Al Franken's *Lies (and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them): A Fair and Balanced Look at the Right*[70] and Jon Stewart's *America: A Citizen's Guide to Democracy Inaction* (2005), but Moore's books dominated sales in this genre. He also wrote *Mike's Election Guide: 2008* but by then Moore-mania had subsided in Australia.

A similar pattern is evident with Australian writers. Australians turned in large numbers to a small, select handful of polemicists while other books provided colourful additions to the titles

---

[70] Franken, now a Democrat senator, is also a Harvard fellow and Harvard University made available a room and a team of undergraduate researchers to work on his project.

listings but sold more modestly. Don Watson (a former speechwriter to then Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating) achieved bestsellers with *Death Sentence: the Decay of Public Language* and *Watson's Dictionary of Weasel Words*, which sold in the tens of thousands of copies as did journalist Margo Kingston's *Not Happy*, *John!* published by Penguin.

Andrew Bolt, a media commentator and columnist with *The Herald Sun*, was one of two Australian authors identified in the data who supported the wars (the other was Greg Sheridan). Bolt's book *Still Not Sorry: The Best of Andrew Bolt – Australia's most Controversial Columnist* sold modestly, but he had other extensive media platforms for his public interventions. In general, works offering a polemical anti-war approach combined with humour, by a high-profile author, often a journalist, were most popular.

By 2007 the market was exhausted, as perhaps were the readers. Of course by this year readers were aware that the Bush administration was coming to an end. The number of critiques in the top 5000 relating to the wars had halved, to about 15. The top-selling US-authored critique in 2007, *The Assault on Reason*, by Al Gore, sold about 8000 copies, vastly fewer than the 145,000 copies of *Stupid White Men* in 2003.

6.2.5   Political biographies and autobiographies

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	17	970+	3,943	45,000+
US-authored	31	570+	2,906	73,000+
UK-authored	9	770+	2,481	8,000+
Other	2	1,100+	1,883	2,600+

Figure 34 Sales of political biographies and autobiographies

The early years of the timeframe in this study are notable for the release of memoirs from the previous Democrat administration. Madeleine Albright's *Madam Secretary: A Memoir* was published in 2003 and Bill Clinton's *My Life*, a bestseller in 2004, also sold strongly in 2005 and was still selling in 2007. The best-selling US political memoir in 2003, however, was Hilary Clinton's *Living History*, which was released as part of her positioning for the Democratic Presidential nomination. *The Right Man: The Surprise Presidency of George W. Bush* published by former Bush speechwriter David Frum sold very modestly in 2003 and then dropped off the chart. The strong performance of Democrat memoirs could be attributed to a number of possible factors: the releases are a feature of the early years after a change in a US political administration; Hilary Clinton was attracting interest as potentially the first female US President, and in a time of heated debate about US foreign policy, there may have been added interest in the perspectives of Bill Clinton and Madeleine Albright.
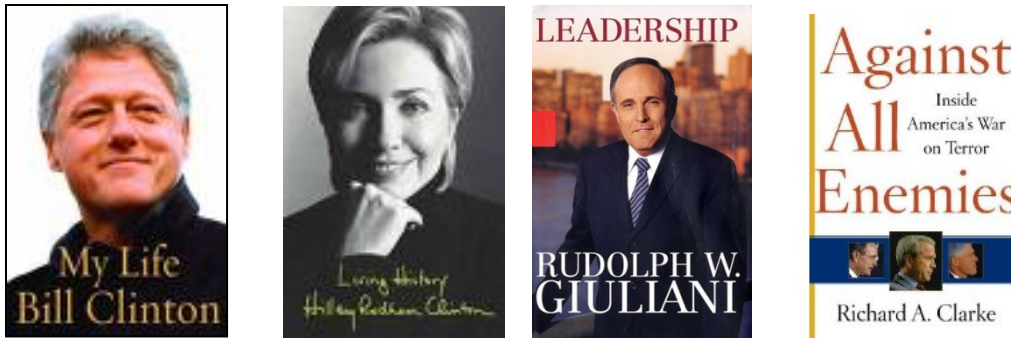
Figure 35 The early 2000s were characterised by the publication of memoirs from the previous Clinton administration, and books by or about Democratic presidential contender Hilary Clinton. Few accounts from within the Bush administration were published in this time.

After Hilary Clinton's *Living History*, the next best-selling political memoir in 2003 was Rudolph Giuliani's *Leadership*. This book was categorised under the Nielsen-BookScan's classifications as "S4.2 Management & Business: General", indicating a different approach to packaging and marketing. Guides to achieving success in business and management are among the staples of the non-fiction market. The positioning of Giuliani's memoirs of his experiences as mayor of New York during and after the September 11 attacks in the potentially lucrative business leadership genre is likely to have expanded its potential readership and extended its longevity in the market. The book sold strongly in Australia in 2003 and sales continued until 2006. Barack Obama's *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* and *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream* first appear in the data in 2007 and became bestsellers in 2008.

Several UK biographies sold well during this period, notably Alastair Campbell's *The Blair Years*, based on the diaries Campbell kept during his years in the Blair administration. It was one of the few books published in the research period by a senior government member of the Allied governments. It sold in the mid-thousands and generated extensive news coverage. Cherie Blair's *Speaking for Myself: The Autobiography*, published in 2008, was framed in marketing terms as the story of a woman from a working-class background with a strong sense of social justice, who forged a new role as a professional worker and wife of the PM. Stella Rimington's *The Open Secret: Autobiography of the Former Director-General of MI5* appeared in three years of the data. It seems that her fiction, novels which drew on her MI5 experience, also sold steadily to a loyal audience, although those figures were not part of this study. Chris Patten's *Not Quite the Diplomat: Home Truths About World Affairs* was also a successful title.

There were a number of Australian political biographies and memoirs that captured public attention during this period. The mid-2000s were noteworthy for books by or about Mark Latham: first his long essay in 2003 *From the Suburbs: Building a Nation from Our Neighbourhoods*, and then after he became leader of the opposition, *Latham and Abbott: The Lives and Rivalry of the Two Finest Politicians*, by Michael Duffy in 2004. After Labor lost that year's federal election and Latham resigned with considerable bitterness in 2005, *Loner: Inside a Labor Tragedy* by

Bernard Lagan was published in that year. This was followed in 2006 by *The Latham Diaries* (two editions). In 2007 a biography of John Howard attracted strong sales: *John Winston Howard: The Definitive Biography* by Peter van Onselen and Wayne Errington, and in 2008 Peter Costello's memoirs were released, also achieving strong sales.

6.2.6 Contemporary military stories
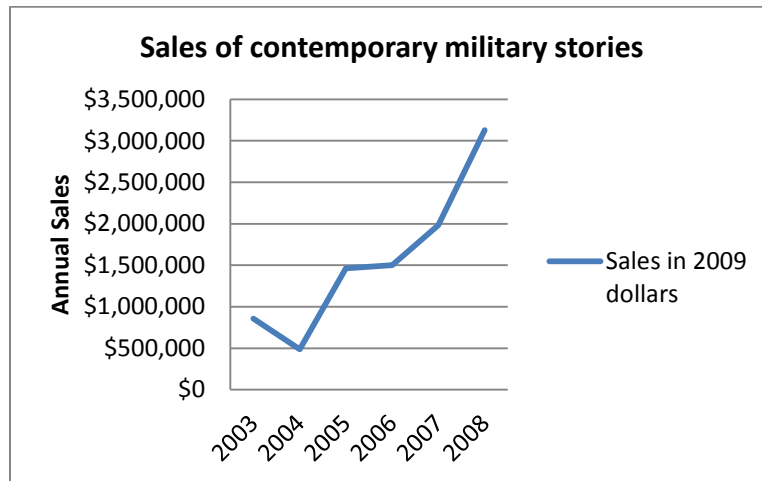
Figure 36 Contemporary military stories grew rapidly from a low base

Contemporary military stories constituted the fastest growing genre, with growth of 265 percent, particularly because it started from a low base. Examples include *The Amazing SAS* by Ian McPhedran; *Bali to Baghdad and Beyond: One Man's Story from the UN Front-line* by Rodney D, Cocks; *Terminate with Extreme Prejudice: An Expose of the Assassination Game* by Richard Belfield; and *From Baghdad with Love: A Marine, the War and a Dog named Lava* by Jay Kopelman. Books about Australians were particularly popular, especially those by Ian McPhedran and Sandra Lee (*18 Hours: The True Story of an SAS War Hero*).

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Aust-authored	10	1,800+	12,615	35,000+
US-authored	26	530+	1,112	28,000+
UK-authored	47	570+	1,558	14,000+
Other	2	1,500+	2,381	3,200+

Figure 37 Sales of contemporary military stories

The genre characteristics included a striking, militaristic cover featuring a close-up of an armed soldier, some sort of weapon or military transport, and the text paid close attention to operational detail.
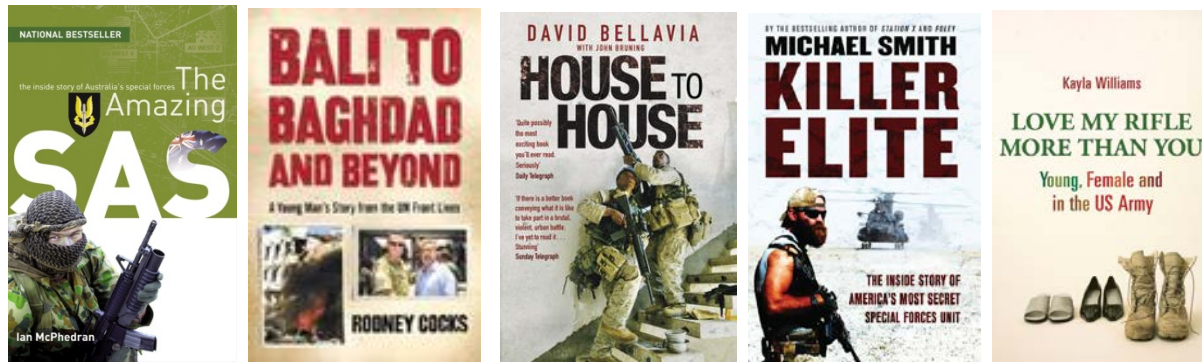
Figure 38 Books offering exciting real-life action adventure based around contemporary military service were the fastest growing sub-genre. Those which deviated from the mainstream did not sell so well.

Some books deviated from the genre, and these did not sell so well, although it's difficult to know whether this was to do with other factors, for example, marketing and distribution. One such book was written by a woman, with the evocative title *Love My Rifle More Than You: Young, Female and in the U.S. Army* by Kayla Williams. Likewise *Deserter's Tale: Why I Walked Away from the War in Iraq* by Joshua Key and Lawrence Hill, sold relatively modestly.

Based on the marketing descriptions of the books and reader reviews on the Amazon website, the books were offering the capacity of the authors to convey a forensic examination of the experience of being at war. These types of books appeared to offer critiques of the horror and randomness of war, and of particular military strategies, while valorising the bravery and resourcefulness of the Allied soldiers, but they mostly did not offer a critique of the policy rights and wrongs of the wars themselves. Those that did experienced lower sales and some vitriolic reader reviews online.

However, another way of reading the books by Iraq and Afghanistan veterans was offered by Michael Massing, a contributing editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*. In a critique of US news media coverage of the wars, Massing argued most Americans were reluctant to confront certain aspects of the war, particularly some of the behaviour of US troops. The news media, according to Massing, is complicit in "an unstated, unconscious, but nonetheless potent co-conspiracy between the public and the press to muffle some important truths".

> For a truly unsanitized look at the nature of the occupation, one must consult the many books that have been written about it. Just as the most graphic footage from Iraq has been tucked away in documentaries, so has the rawest reporting been relegated to books that only the most motivated will seek out. Especially revealing are the many firsthand accounts produced by ordinary soldiers. Among them are *My War: Killing Time in Iraq* by Colby Buzzell, a pot-smoking admirer of Charles Bukowski, Ralph Nader and George Orwell and the operator of one of the most widely read milblogs (until it was shut down by the military); *Love My Rifle More than You: Young and Female in the U.S. Army* by Kayla Williams, a free-wheeling, foulmouthed military intelligence specialist; *The Deserter's*

Tale by Joshua Key, a private from Oklahoma who, appalled by the brutality and cruelty of his fellow soldiers; left his unit and fled to Canada; and *Operation Homecoming*, a collection of eyewitness accounts, private journals, and short stories by U.S. soldiers sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts. In these books are recorded not only many acts of courage, self-sacrifice and benevolence but also many deeply disturbing aspects of the U.S. presence in Iraq-realities that tend to get airbrushed out of news accounts (Massing, p 180).

Massing summarises these realities as follows:

- The extent of drug use among U.S. troops;
- The use of pornography by troops in Iraq, a country in which it was previously virtually unobtainable. Its use has spread to Iraqis through trade by U.S. soldiers;
- Stealing from Iraqis by U.S. troops;
- The contempt in which Iraqis are held by U.S. troops;
- The mistreatment of Iraqis by U.S. soldiers as part of standard practice;
- The killing of Iraqis by U.S. soldiers at checkpoints; and
- The high civilian death toll in Iraq (Massing, pp 181-182).

Of the four titles mentioned by Massing, two are noteworthy for their modest sales in Australia, and two (*My War* and *Operation Homecoming*) did not appear at all in the top 5000. Therefore, just as aspects of the war which confronted important heroic myths about the US defence forces were not popular with US television news viewers, it is possible that books which wittingly or unwittingly challenged these assumptions were also less popular.

6.2.7 Life narratives of Middle-Eastern and Muslim women

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
US-authored	17	1,000+	4,425	115,000+
UK-authored	18	660+	3,104	23,000+
Aust-authored[71]	14	830+	3,969	19,000+
Iraq	4	1,000+	1,341	11,000+
Afghanistan	4	550+	2,005	8,000+
Other	48[72]	600+	3,725	56,000+

Figure 39 Sales of life narratives of Middle-Eastern and Muslim women

Books in this genre were known as "lifting the veil" in the publishing industry. One hundred and one titles were coded in this category. They often featured a woman in brutal or savage

---

[71] In cases where the author had a country of origin (e.g., Iraq) and another country in which the author lives or holds citizenship, the nationality of the author may be counted twice. It was not feasible to make strict demarcations and count one country per author.

[72] Includes Nigeria; Pakistan; Canada/Egypt; New Zealand/Jordan; Jordan; France; Sudan; Palestine; Togo; New Zealand/Sudan.

circumstances, which were in some way associated with Islam in the text, who escaped or was rescued to the civilisation of western society. After the success in 2004 of *Forbidden Love: A Harrowing True Story of Love and Revenge in Jordan*[73] it was overtaken in this sub-genre in 2004 by *Burned Alive* by Souad, supposedly a Palestinian woman. Both books were shortly after denounced as frauds.[74]
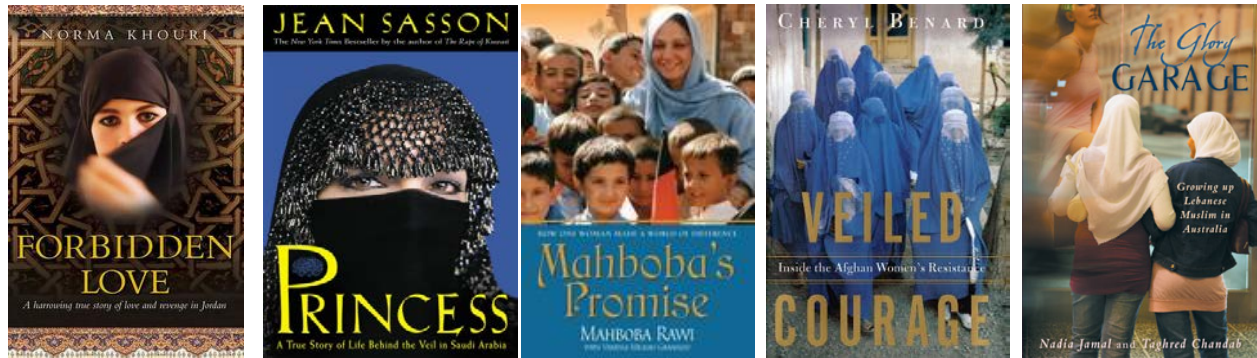
Figure 40 *Forbidden Love***, the third best-selling non-fiction book in Australia in 2003, was later exposed as a fraud. While some books reinforced exotic stereotypes, others in this genre offered Afghani, Iraqi and Australian Muslim women a public platform.**

Many of these books reinforced orientalist notions of "exoticism and primitivism" and mapped out differences between their subjects and the readers. However, many of the books' subjects were also presented as advocates and activists. Some of these books, such as *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Iranian literary professor Azar Nafasi, were sensitively written and nuanced in their representation of Islamic woman and the complexity of their political situation. These types of books experienced a sales slump in 2005, perhaps following the publicity associated with the fraudulent books. Sales increased with the release of Hirsi Ali's *Infidel: My Life* and *The Caged Virgin: A Muslim Woman's Cry for Reason* and Ali was a guest of the Sydney Writers' Festival in 2007. Ali presented the closing address and received broad media coverage during her visit.

---

[73] Published overseas as *Honor Lost*.

[74] Nearly a decade earlier, questions were also raised about the veracity of *Princess* by Jean Sasson. Friederike Adsani, a writer who engaged in legal disputes with Sasson and her publisher, obtained an affidavit in which former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, James Akins stated that "the books were not 'written' or 'inspired' or 'approved' by any Saudi princess" and that "it is quite clear that 'Sultana' does not exist" (Curtiss, 1996).

Life narratives of ME and Muslim women

Figure showing a line graph titled "Life narratives of ME and Muslim women". The y-axis is labelled "Annual sales" ranging from 0 to 6,000,000. The x-axis shows years 2003 through 2008. The line labelled "Sales in 2009 dollars" starts near 5,200,000 in 2003, declines to about 3,900,000 in 2004, drops to roughly 1,250,000 in 2005, rises to about 2,300,000 in 2006, peaks near 4,800,000 in 2007, and declines to about 2,400,000 in 2008.

Figure 41 Sales of life narratives of Middle-Eastern and Muslim women declined 54 percent during this period, starting from a high point

Gillian Whitlock (2007) examines the complex ways of reading these books in *Soft Weapons: Autobiography in Transit*.

> Autobiography circulates as a "soft weapon." It can personalize and humanize categories of people whose experiences are frequently unseen and unheard. To attend to a nauseated body at risk in Baghdad, or to hear a militant feminist body beneath a burka, to attach a face and recognize a refugee is to make powerful interventions in debates about social justice, sovereignty, and human rights … But it is a "soft weapon" because it is easily co-opted into propaganda. In modern democratic societies propaganda is frequently not the violent and coercive imposition of ideas but a careful manipulation of opinion and emotion in the public sphere and a management of information in the engineering of consent. Life narratives can be complicit in these processes (Whitlock, 2007 p 3).

The combined sales figures of these types of books should be regarded as indicative only, because there was a wide range of books about women in exotic or harrowing circumstances on the market, although stories with Islamic connotations were prominent. The sub-genre could also be considered in relation to the popularity of what the publishing industry called "misery memoirs" which included survivors' accounts of incest and other forms of abusive childhoods, violent marriages, mental illness and drug addiction. Towards the end of the study's timeframe, books in this sub-genre addressed Mormons (*Shattered Dreams: Surviving the Hell of a Polygamous Marriage* by Irene Spencer (2008)), the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints (*Stolen Innocence: My Story of Growing Up in a Polygamous Sect* by Elissa Wall and Lisa Pulitzer (2008)), and even a Jewish account (*The Rabbi's Daughter: A True Story of Sex, Drugs and Orthodoxy* by English author Reva Mann (2008)), suggesting that publishers were willing to experiment with true-life accounts of non-Muslim religions with sensationalist overtones. However, these titles are notable

133

because they were unusual and were released after the peak of this genre's sales, selling in modest numbers.

Another trend worth mentioning was the linking of other human rights issues with personal stories, in particular, the child slave trade (e.g., *Sold: Story of Modern-day Slavery* by Zana Muhsen and Andrew Crofts) and child soldiers (e.g., *A Long Way Gone:The True Story of a Child Soldier* by Ishmael Beah, a work whose authenticity was later seriously questioned by three Australian journalists (Gare, 2008)). Also popular were stories of "Western" women who worked as aid workers in Africa and Asia.[75] The sales figures do not tell us who bought these books or how they were read. Whitlock's considered analysis opens up the complex ways, both within and without a framework of communicative ethics, in which they could be read.

6.2.8 Life narratives by survivors of terrorist attacks or their family members

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored & German-Australian	6	1,000+	4,703	70,000+
US-authored	7	500+	1,209	8,000+
UK-authored	2	980+	1,532	2,000+

Figure 42 Sales of life narratives by survivors of terrorist attacks or their family members

A small but important subset of life narratives related to survivors of terrorist attacks, indicating that Australians were very interested in these personal stories, particularly in the experiences of other Australians. In 2003 and 2004 *Jason McCartney: After Bali* by McCartney and Geoff Slattery sold over 30,000 copies each year and sold strongly in 2005. McCartney, a former Australian Football League player, was badly injured in the October 2002 bombings near the Sari Club in Bali. Another title that performed strongly in 2003-2004 was *Back from the Dead: Peter Hughes's Story of Survival and Hope after Bali*. Throughout this period a small number of books by survivors of terrorist attacks were present in the top 5000, including *A Mighty Heart* by Mariane Pearl; *One Day in July: Experiencing 7/7* by John Tulloch; *Dancing in the Sea* by Catherine Hill; and *One Unknown: A Powerful Account of Survival and One Woman's Inspiration* by Gill Hicks, an Australian who was severely injured in the 7/7 attacks in London. Although not strictly part of this category, another title included was *Escape From Kabul* by lead author Eberhard Mulahn and Australian Diana Thomas, about eight aid workers (including two

---

[75] Examples include *The Hospital by the River: A Story of Hope* by Catherine Hamlin and John Little; *Christine's Ark* by John Little, about a Christine Townsend's work for an Indian animal shelter; *Heart of Darfur* by Lisa Blaker, a New Zealand nurse; *There is No Me without You: One Woman's Odyssey to Rescue Africa's Children* by Melissa Fay Greene; and *In the Land of Invisible Women* by Qanta Ahmed, a British Muslim doctor of Pakistani background, who practiced medicine in Saudi Arabia.

Australians) kidnapped and accused of working secretly as missionaries by the Taliban prior to the September 11 attacks.

6.2.9   Works by academics

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	32	540+	1,718	12,000+
US-authored	33	530+	1,628	20,000+
UK-authored	13	500+	1,196	4,300+
Other	5	570+	1,498	1,800+

Figure 43 Sales of works by academics

Academics and historians sought to place the Bush presidency and the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan in the context of international relations and historical frameworks.[76] Generally, these books sold modestly: in the hundreds and low thousands.[77] Despite this, the arguments of these writers still reached broader readerships. Most of these authors, if not all of them, were interviewed in television, radio and newspaper current affairs coverage. Some were guests at Australian writers' festivals (e.g., Andrew Bacevich). Their writing did not reach large numbers of Australian readers directly, but was mediated indirectly. (The next chapter considers empirical evidence of books reaching readerships indirectly in more detail.)
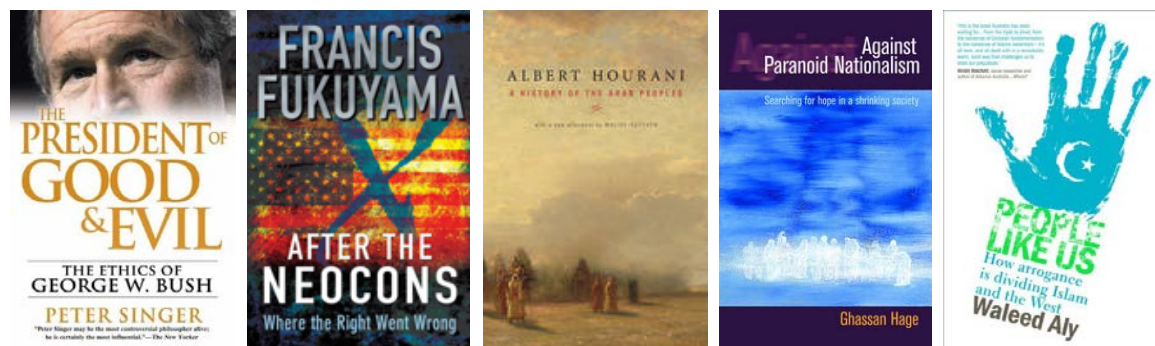
[76] Examples of books by academics include, in alphabetical order, Andrew J. Bacevich, *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism*; William Blum, *The Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*; George Friedman, *America's Secret War: Inside the Hidden Worldwide Struggle*; Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback*, *The Sorrows of Empire: How the American People Lost* and *Nemesis: The Last Days of the American Republic*; Francis Fukuyama, *After the Neocons: America at the Crossroads*; Joseph Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes, *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict*; and Fareed Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad and The Post-American World*. UK contributions included *Lawless World: America and the Making and Breaking of Global Rules* by Philippe Sands; *Why Do People Hate America?* and *American Dream, Global Nightmare* by Ziauddin Sardar and Merryl Wyn Davies; and *Over There: How America Sees the Rest of the World*, a special issue of *Granta*.

[77] Elizabeth Weiss's caution about the under-representation of serious books about public issues, especially in the early years of Nielsen BookScan's operations, is pertinent here.

Noam Chomsky was represented in every year of the top 5000 data, with 14 books and editions selling close to 60,000 copies in total according to the data, and more by his Australian publisher's (Weiss's) account. His popular works included *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance*; *Failed States: The Abuse of Power and the Assault on Democracy*, and *Power and Terror: Post 9-11 Talks and Interviews*. (Arguably these works could be grouped with the other polemical titles.) Popular Australian academic authors included Sarah Maddison (co-authoring *Silencing Dissent* with Clive Hamilton), Keith Suter, a terrorism expert with a TV profile, Waleed Aly, Peter Singer, Marion Maddox and Robert Manne.

Importantly, there is evidence of broader ongoing debates which are worth noting although they cannot be explored here. They include works about the limits of international law for containing atrocities inflicted by nation-state leaders, reflections on Enlightenment values and the achievements of modernity, and philosophical examinations of the constituents of ethical conduct.

6.2.10 The popularity of long essays

	No. of titles	**Sales range (volume)**		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	32	550+	2,872	9,700+
Other	4	580+	686	1,600+

The popularity of Australian long form essays is a striking feature of this period. Some editions of *The Quarterly Essay* and the annual *Best Australian Essays* achieved sales of over 5,000 copies (and in one case close to 10,000 copies) in addition to their subscriber bases. Given that sales of over 3,000 for many Australian titles are considered healthy, this was an exceptional trend. The bestselling *Quarterly Essay* His Master's Voice: Public Debate in Howard's Australia by David Marr sold nearly 10,000 copies (and possibly more but is not captured in the data). The publication of long essays is a distinctive contribution made by Australian independent publishers, as will be discussed further below. Australian publishers have suggested informally that this peak occurred at a time of distinctive Australian hunger for books about serious public issues, which has since abated.[78] Further, it was a distinct avenue for academics to communicate to broader readerships. For many academics, books of essays in which their work was included outsold the number of their individually-authored works in the general trade publishing market.

At this point an additional theme is taken up in this research. That is, that modestly-selling books can play into public debate in far-reaching ways, and that some of these can be mapped out empirically. This theme is examined in greater depth in the following chapter; however, here a

---

[78] E. Weiss, personal communication, Sydney, 2009.

case study is introduced in relation to debate about the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2003 a new journal was founded at Griffith University. The *Griffith Review*, edited by Julianne Schultz, is a quarterly journal[79] that sold fewer than 2,000 copies through retail outlets in its first edition (plus 230+ copies to subscribers), and yet achieved broader impact in a number of ways[80]:

Newspaper extracts/other newspaper coverage	25 Aug 03	*Sydney Morning Herald* publishes extract of Allan Gyngell's GR1 essay under the title "There's rhetoric and dinner talk but little debate of foreign policy"
	5 Sep 03	*The Courier-Mail* publishes an edited version of Julianne Schultz's GR1 introduction under the title "Will she be right, mate?"
	9 Sep 03	GR1 mentioned in "Non-advice most welcome", Tony Harris' opinion piece regarding culture of compliance in the Foreign Affairs Dept., *Australian Financial Review*
	12 Sep 03	*Sydney Morning Herald* publishes an extract from GR1 by Charles Firth, under the title "A fail-safe recipe for world domination: first, snare the bunny"
	12 Sep 03	*Australian Financial Review* publishes an extract from GR1 by Frank Moorhouse under the title "Dreaming of perpetual peace"
	17 Sep 03	Letter to the editor in response to the 12 Sep Moorhouse extract, *Australian Financial Review*, under the title "United Nations peace just a pipedream"
Radio/TV coverage	29 Aug 03	ABC Radio's *AM* program mentions research published in GR1 about the "culture of compliance and diplomatic self-censorship" in the Howard government's Foreign Affairs Department. Relayed on ABC Radio National
	29 Aug 03	ABC 666 Canberra interviews Alexander Downer regarding claims made in GR1. Syndicated to 40 ABC Local Radio stations across the country.
	29 Aug 03	Brisbane station 4AAA interviews Alexander Downer about claims made in GR1
	Sep 03	GR1 outlined in "Insecurity at Griffith", Advances section, *Australian Book Review*
Parliament	2 Sep 03	Hansard: Graeme Dobell GR1 essay mentioned in *Senate inquiry into members of parliament staff*
United Nations	24 Sep 03	Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer mentions Frank Moorhouse's GR1 article in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly

Figure 46 The broader reach of the *Griffith Review: Insecurity in the New World Order*, Edition 1, in 2003

---

[79] Although some definitions of a book exclude journals, this research includes sales of one-off journal editions that were sold separately in retail book outlets. To exclude these would be to miss a significant reading pattern relating to long essays in this period.

[80] The information in the table is drawn directly from an internal marketing report. Thanks to Julianne Schultz at *Griffith Review* for permission to use this material and to Alan Vaarwerk for compiling it.

The table does not include media coverage and public events around the launch of the journal, include a panel at the Brisbane Writers Festival and a speech by Schultz at The Sydney Institute. *Griffith Review's* internal market research concluded that "based on official circulation figures we can presume that the media extracts reached a combined audience in the millions" (Griffith Review, 2003). The implications for this research are that, along with widespread reading patterns, such as the popularity of Michael Moore's polemics and Norma Khoury's fraudulent *Forbidden Love* in 2003, publications with much lower retail sales reached large readerships by other means. Therefore, the current research into reading patterns should not be misinterpreted as implying that only books with large sales reached large numbers of readers. On the contrary, basic empirical work underlines the variety of ways in which books played into public debates during this period, a theme which is considered further in the next chapter.

6.2.11 Activists' books

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
US-authored	4	600+	1,719	3,000+
UK-authored	9	600+	1,145	8,400+
Other (including Australian-authored)	9	670	1,673	12,000+

Figure 47 Sales of activists' books (not including those classified as polemics or works by academics)

The Collapse of Globalism: And the Reinvention of the World by John Ralston Saul and *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* by Naomi Klein were best-selling Canadian critiques, while high profile critic, Arundathi Roy, contributed three books including *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* and *The Algebra of Infinite Justice*. Another activist title present in the low thousands for several years was *50 Facts That Should Change the World* by New Zealander Jessica Williams. *The Baghdad Blog* by "Salam Pax" sold very modestly, however, he not only achieved a public platform through his online following, he also received widespread coverage in the Australian media.

6.2.12 Interventions by former intelligence officials

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
US - authored	4	600+	743	4,000+
Other (including Australian-authored)	4	1,400+	2,592	8,000+

Figure 48 Sales of books by former intelligence offers

Public officials published works to discredit government versions of events or to defend their own legacy. Former weapons inspector Scott Ritter became an international activist against the Bush

prosecution of the wars through several books[81] and George Tenet sought to defend his legacy with *My Years at the CIA*. Another notable international author was Hans Blix, former chief UN Weapons Inspector, who wrote *Disarming Iraq* (2004). These books were part of a pattern of authors whose books sold relatively modestly but who reached broader readerships through coverage by the Australian media. (Ritter travelled to Australia to promote his book and Hans Blix visited to receive the 2007 Sydney Peace Prize.) One Australian-authored best-seller was *Axis of Deceit* by Andrew Wilkie, an Australian intelligence officer who resigned in protest against the war on Iraq prior to its invasion. Apart from Tenet, it would be several years after the end of the Bush administration before its most senior members published their accounts.

6.2.13 Terrorists and accused terrorists' personal stories

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
UK, Australian-authored and other	5	600+	848	2,500+

Figure 49 Sales of books by terrorists and accused terrorists

Two books examined the treatment of Australians detained on suspicion of terrorism. *Detainee 002: The Case of David Hicks* by Leigh Sales, published in 2007 by Melbourne University Press, sold over 10,000 copies in the remainder of the research period and is categorised as "extended journalism" in the current research. *My Story: The Tale of a Terrorist Who Wasn't* by Mamdouh Habib and Julia Collingwood was released in October 2008 by Scribe and sold nearly 1000 copies in the months to December 2008, suggesting that it went on to achieve strong sales. Both books received extensive media coverage and book reviews. *Enemy Combatant: A British Muslim's Journey to Guantanamo and Back*, by Moazzam Begg, was published under the Free Press imprint by Simon & Schuster (a multinational) and sold several hundred copies; once again demonstrating a particular interest in the experiences of Australians.

6.2.14 Interventions by other public figures

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	6	550+	1,093	3,400+
US&UK-authored	6	800+	1,560	8,700+

Figure 50 Sales of books addressing the debate by other public figures

---

[81] *Frontier Justice: Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Bushwhacking of America*, *Target Iran: The Truth About the US Governent's Plans for Regime Change*, *Iraq Confidential: The Untold Story of America's Intelligence Conspiracy* (co-authored with Seymour M. Hersh) and *War on Iraq: What Team Bush Doesn't Want You to Know* (co-authored with William Rivers Pitt).

Prominent US, Australian and UK public figures placed their public profile behind critiques of the Bush presidency and the wars. US[82] and Australian[83] authors who wrote books or contributed book chapters include many recognisable names. Despite their eminence, most of these books sold very modestly although there were limited exceptions (e.g., *Assault on Reason* by Al Gore). *Not One More Death* a collection of essays by authors including John le Carre and Richard Dawkins sold a fraction of the books by the authors' better-known genres. The popularity of long essays suggests there was an interest in this type of debate, but most books without the branding and reader association with journals such as *The Quarterly Essay*, the *Griffith Review* and the annual *Best Australian Essays* did not find their way to broad readerships.[84]

6.2.15 Travel memoir/history

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	11	1,200+	4,976	17,000+
UK-authored	14	660+	3,649	16,000+
Other	2	550+	609	660+

Figure 51 Sales of travel memoirs and histories which addressed themes relevant to debate about the wars

Christopher Kremmer and William Dalrymple were the authors of travel memoirs or histories relating to Muslim civilizations that were extremely popular and sold consistently during this period. Examples of other authors who wrote travel memoirs that could be read in relation to debates about the wars included Don Watson (*American Journeys*), Michael Palin (*Sahara*) and Suzanna Clarke (*A House in Fez: Building a Life in the Ancient Heart of Morocco*).

6.2.16 Literary authors

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
US-authored	4	530+	650	1,900+
Other	8	620+	1,378	8,000+

Figure 52 Sales of books by literary authors (not addressed elsewhere)

---

[82] Naomi Wolf, *The End of American: Letter of Warning to a Young Patriot;* George Soros, *Bubble of American Supremacy, Age of Fallibility: The Consequences of the War on Terror,* Lee Iaccoca and Catherine Whitney's *Where Have All the Leaders Gone?;* Gore Vidal, *Dreaming War: Blood for Oil and the Cheney-Bush Junta;* Kurt Vonnegut, *A Man without a County: A Memoir of Life in George W. Bush's America*; and Norman Mailer, *Why We are at War.*

[83] John Pilger, Bob Ellis, Alison Broinowski, Robert Manne, Ghassan Hage, Paul McGeough, Peter Singer, Raimond Gaita, Owen Harries, Frank Brennan, Keith Suter, Marion Maddox, Julianne Schultz, Judith Brett, Carmen Lawrence, Peter Mares, Martin Flanagan, Judith Brett, Chris Masters, Ghassan Hage, and Waleed Ali

[84] In 2006 the Sydney Writers' Festival featured guests from *The New Yorker*, including Andy Borowitz, Susan Orlean and Aleksandar Hemon, and Hendrik Hertzberg in a number of popular sessions, suggesting that Australians' interest in long-form essays may have extended to other journals, which is not captured in the data.

It is a rather fraught exercise to create a heading "literary authors" and this does not imply that the authors of books in other categories were not accomplished literary writers. Rather, this refers to a number of international literary figures who intervened in the debate, including Norman Mailer, Gore Vidal, Salman Rushdie, and Margaret Atwood. These books generally did not sell in large numbers in Australia, and the numbers in this category are boosted by the inclusion of Orhan Pamuk's *Istanbul: Memories of a City* and Amos Oz's *A Tale of Love and Darkness*. The inclusion of the latter two titles is a reminder that we cannot know whether particular books were read in relation to this debate and that it is a difficult exercise to draw boundaries (but nevertheless, a useful pursuit).

6.2.17 Books about religion

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	3	1000+	1,143	2100+
UK-authored	12	600+	1,770	29,000+
US-authored	16	600+	835	4,400+
Other	1			

Figure 53 Sales of books about religion (not addressed elsewhere)

There were few noticeable trends relating to books and religion based on the NB categories apart from the bestseller success of George Negus's *The World from Islam*, which has been addressed elsewhere in this thesis. Initial strong sales of books categorised under "Biography: Religious & Spiritual" turned out to be the fraudulent *Forbidden Love: A Harrowing True Story of Love and Revenge in Jordan*. Likewise, a peak in sales of books categorised under "Autobiography: Religious & Spiritual" was due to the success of *I, Safiya* which has also been dealt with elsewhere. Although there were a number of Australian- and overseas-authored interfaith publications, these sold steadily, even strongly, but it appears that Australian readers turned to life narratives, extended journalism, and travel memoirs/histories in large numbers for reading material related to Islam and Muslims. However, there was a strong upwards sales trend in books about religion towards the end of this period. Perhaps ironically, it was propelled by the success of Christopher Hitchens' *God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*, which was part of a series of books debating religion and atheism which extended beyond the current research timeframe.

6.2.18 The prevalence of anti-war titles

A notable feature of the books mentioned in this study is that most authors are critical of the wars. Is this because readers who buy these types of "issues" books in Australia tend to be left-wing? Michael Korda (2001) recalls the surprise of New York publishers in the 1960s when US Senator and Presidential candidate Barry Goldwater's book *The Conscience of a Conservative* became a

bestseller. According to Korda, many New York publishers at the time were liberal democrats and they were not entirely comfortable to discover such a vast, politically conservative readership. However, they moved quickly to meet the market (Korda, 2001 p 122-123).

An initial examination of the data in this period suggests that Australia does not appear to have broad conservative reading markets comparative to those of the US, although the success of conservative Prime Minister John Howard's autobiography must be acknowledged.[85] Perhaps Australians who supported the wars did not feel the need to buy books justifying them. Perhaps Australians who supported the war or who were unsure about it, developed other reading patterns in categories that accommodated a range of positions, such as life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women and contemporary military stories. Australians also demonstrated another distinctive reading pattern, which is outlined next.

6.2.19 Growth in sales of books about Australian military history

	No. of titles	**Sales range (volume)**		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	219	500+	2,320	96,000+

Figure 54 Sales of books about Australian military history indicated a broad range but the median was relatively modest.

This was a period of strong growth in sales of books about Australian military history of 68 percent, which does not include a remarkable peak in 2006. [86]

Figure 55 The growth in sales of Australian military history was one of the most significant trends in this period

---

[85]By August 2011 it had sold over 77,000 copies, making it the most popular Australian contemporary political autobiography (Romei, 2011).

[86] Books were coded as being about Australian military history based on the title and marketing information. Figures are based on the Nielsen BookScan top 5000 non-fiction data and adjusted for inflation to 2009 dollar values using the Reserve Bank of Australia inflation calculator.

The 2006 sales peak coincided with several bestselling titles: *My Story* by the former Chief of the Australian Defence Force, Peter Cosgrove, *The Great War* by Les Carlyon, and *Tobruk* and *Kokoda* by Peter FitzSimons.
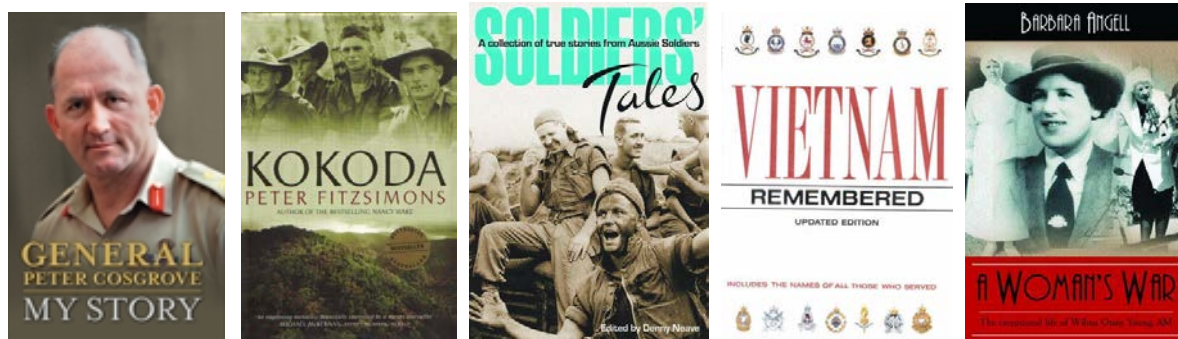
Figure 56 Sales of books about Australian military history rose strongly during this period, a trend which began earlier.

Although there is a perception that interest revolves around the Anzac story of World War 1, analysis of the data reveals that the interest applies broadly to Australia's involvement in both world wars. The strong sales of male biographies are primarily due to interest in books by or about Peter Cosgrove. Sales of books by or about Vietnam veterans lag substantially behind those about WWI and WWII, and sales about Australians' involvement in the Boer and Korean wars are a fraction of these again. These titles can be grouped by subject matter and publisher type as follows:
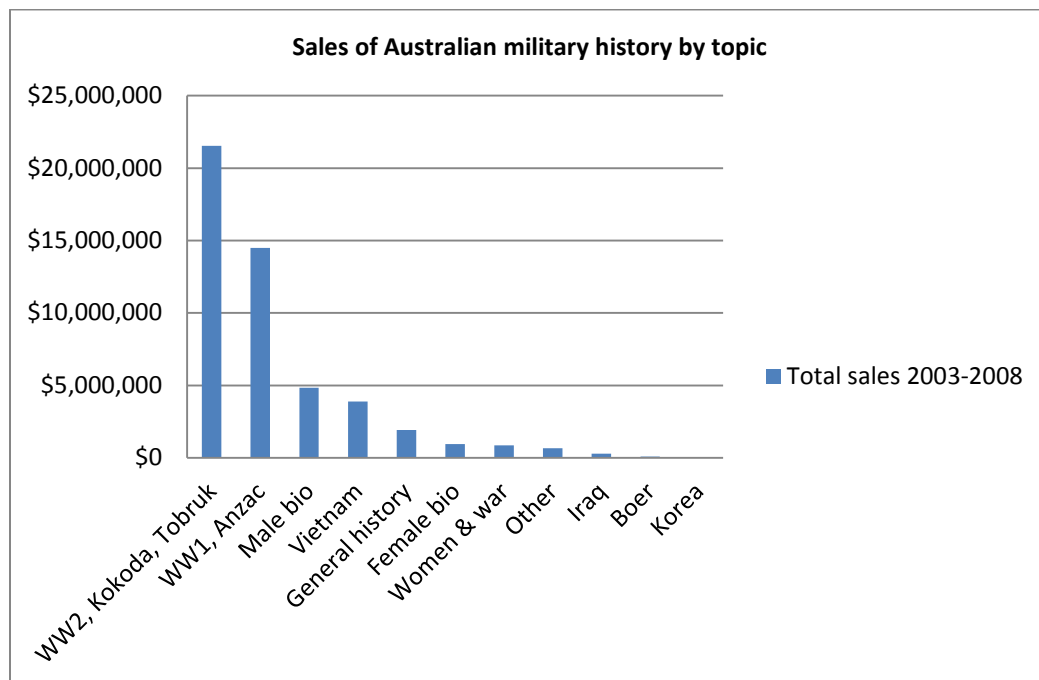
Figure 57 Sales of Australian military history by topic

Publishing on the subject of Australian military history occurred across the spectrum of publisher size. Although there were outstanding bestsellers, this group was characterised by the large number of titles (219). Of these 46 were by Australian independent publishers, of which 11 were classified as by Other Publisher Groups and appear to have been self-published. A common theme that emerged from the online marketing materials was the intent to preserve the testimonies of veterans while they were still alive. Also notable was the involvement of academics or journalists working in conjunction with veterans, on what appear to be high-quality, small-scale publishing projects. Australian independent publishers achieved the highest sales from 10 books about the Vietnam War although they published a greater number of titles about WWII. (Multinational publishers also released 10 titles about the Vietnam War which sold 2 ½ times as many copies). The sales figures fit with the marketplace dynamics outlined by Thompson in the previous chapter: although small independent publishers released 22 percent of these titles, as shown in the following graphs, they achieved 5 percent of the total sales.
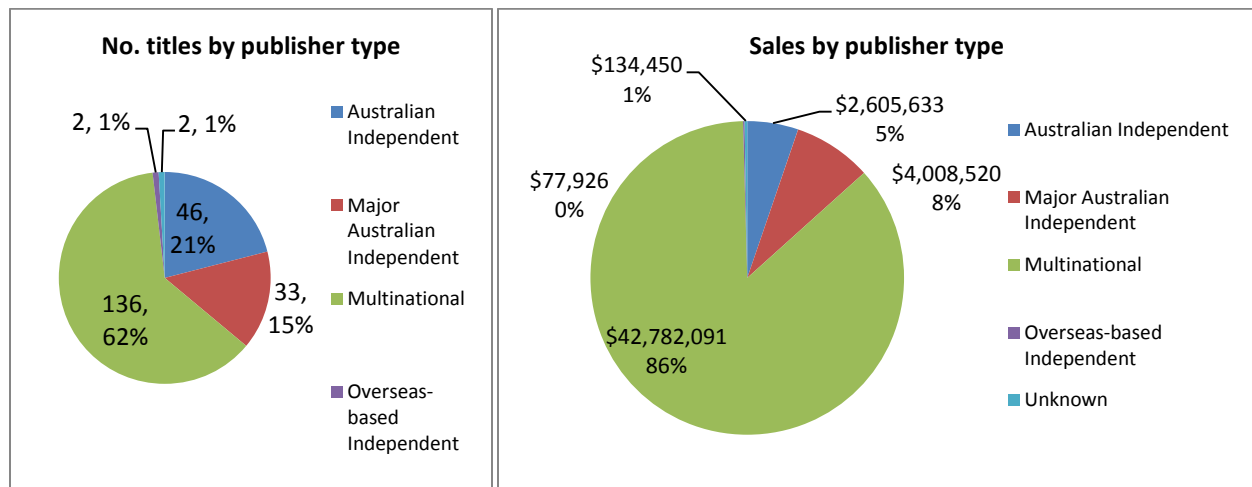
Figure 58 Multinational publishers released the largest number of titles about Australian military history but Australian independent publishers were also active in the market.

Publishing industry professionals have long been aware of the sales growth in Australian military history. Jose Borghino, Manager – Industry Representation, Australian Publishers Association recalled:

> In the 1970s and 1980s war histories sold a couple of hundred, maybe a thousand or two thousand copies. I can remember a time when military histories were a strange category that the geeky guy in the publishing company did. Suddenly with Peter FitzSimons and Les Carlyon they become megabestsellers ... Suddenly they became normalised.[87] (Borghino, 2010)

The complex mix of political and cultural influences that preceded this shift in publishing became the subject of academic interest in *What's Wrong With Anzac? The Militarisation of Australian*

---

[87] Jose Borghino, personal interview, Sydney, 2010

History (Lake and Reynolds, 2010). In this collection of essays, Australian historians Marilyn Lake, Henry Reynolds, Carina Donaldson and Joy Damousi, and Mark McKenna argue that the refashioning of the symbolism of Anzac Day can be traced back to Australia's bicentenary celebrations in 1988. Politicians and the media increasingly turned to Anzac Day as a point of national pride in response to the lacklustre patriotic response to Australia Day and its disconcerting association with questions about invasion and Indigenous displacement (Lake and Reynolds, 2010, McKenna, 2010 pp 114-122). Former prime ministers Hawke, Keating and Howard developed the mystique of Australian soldiers' sacrifices overseas as emblematic of the Australian spirit, with McKenna arguing that Howard embraced Anzac Day as a "positive counter-narrative" (ibid p 125). Increased federal funding in the 1990s to the Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Australian Army History Unit of the Department of Defence and the Australian War Memorial enabled the production of books, documentaries and school curriculum materials about Australia's military history. Lake (2010) cites an estimate that "books published on Australians at war increased from less than sixty in the 1970s to over two hundred and fifty in the 1980s, to more than three hundred and sixty in the 1990s" (Lake, 2010p 136).[88]

The questions of who read the military histories cited in this thesis and how they were read are extremely nuanced. It cannot be assumed that the readers of military history were different to the readers of Michael Moore's anti-war polemics. Maree McCaskill, Director of the Australian Publishers Association, indicated the complexity when she recounted an anecdote about a university student (majoring in music) who bought all the Michael Moore books referred to in this study and who is also an avid reader of Australian military history.[89] (MacCaskill, 2010) Further, the Books Alive programme, which promotes the reading of Australian-authored books to primary and secondary schoolchildren, includes Australian works of military history. This area is open for further research, but it seems possible that many buyers of Moore's anti-war polemics, young and old, may also have been reading military histories, some of which affirmed Australia's national identity through its achievements in war. If so, it would demonstrate Rose's contention, as discussed in the previous chapter that readers judiciously select aspects of books which are of interest to them in their reading practices.

6.2.20 Drawing together the findings about reading patterns

Despite claims during the 2000s that the book was dead, distinctive reading patterns were evident in relation to debates about the wars. Australians were part of the international readerships who embraced books by Michael Moore and they also displayed an appetite for other mass-marketed

---

[88] The historians in (Lake and Reynolds, 2010) argue that through these books and school curricula children have been taught to understand Australia's nationhood through military discourses which distort the accuracy of the historical detail of the original military campaigns, including ignoring or downplaying the fierce debate about Australia's involvement at the time and which normalise the idea of Australian engagement in contemporary wars. Lake and Reynolds "suggest that Australians might look to alternative national traditions that gave pride of place to equality of opportunity and the pursuit of social justice: the idea of a living wage and sexual and racial equality…slow and patient nation-building…" (ibid p 167).

[89] M. MacCaskill, Personal Interview. Sydney, 2010.

reading trends including life narratives of Middle-Eastern and Muslim women, contemporary military stories, and political autobiographies and biographies by or about members of the former US administration or presidential candidates. For analysis of the wars' conduct and progress, Australians turned in largest numbers to works of extended journalism, especially by Australian journalists. In contrast, works by academics with relevant specialist knowledge were less widely read with the exception of academics with established public profiles and publishing history. However, another avenue for reaching readerships opened up in the form of long essays, which sold strongly during this period in a remarkable resurgence of popularity. Overarching all of these patterns was the growth in popularity of Australian military history, characterised both by bestselling titles achieving sales of close to 100,000 copies and also by the large number of books published that achieved more modest sales.

The first part of this chapter demonstrates that publishers were active in releasing a range of books in relation to debate about the wars. The second part of this chapter examines the contributions of publishers in more detail and considers the findings in terms of the cultural diversity of the titles.

6.3   The contributions of publishers to the cultural diversity of books

This thesis argues that there is a relationship between theoretical interests in cultural value and cultural diversity. The presence of cultural diversity delivers direct benefits for its own sake, through the interconnection of cultures and through contributions to innovation and experimentation. It strengthens the potential for the development of future artistic forms and genres. In addition, there has been scholarly interest in the trade flows of the book trade to identify the extent to which international trade promotes cultural diversity through the flow of books between nations.

6.3.1   The contributions of multinational and Australian independent publishers

The data revealed that both multinational and independent publishers contributed to the diversity of authors and books. Although Australian independent publishers made distinctive contributions, multinational publishers also made important and substantial contributions to the diversity of books published. For example, titles published by multinationals included:

Out of Iraq…	Lewis Alsamari
People Like Us	Waleed Aly
The Chequebook and the Cruise Missile: Conversations with Arundhati Roy	Arundhati Roy & David Barsamian
Five Moral Essays	Umberto Eco
A Hundred and One Days: A Baghdad Journal	Asne Seierstad
Islam and the West: Conflict or Cooperation?	Amin Saikal
Who Killed Daniel Pearl?	Bernard-Henri Levy
The Islamist: Why I Joined Radical Islam in Britain, What I Saw Inside and Why I Left	Ed Husain
What's Right with Islam: Is What's Right with America	Feisal Abdul Rauf
The Trouble with Islam	Manji Irshad
Mahboba's Promise	Mahboba Rawi
Dreaming War: Blood for Oil and the Cheney-Bush Junta	Gore Vidal

Figure 59 Examples of titles published by multinational publishers that contributed to the cultural diversity of books

These titles serve as a basic illustration. The table in Figure 60 provides an overview of the taxonomies in this chapter and their representation by different categories of publishers. Multinational publishers are strongly represented in popular categories including polemics, contemporary military stories, life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women and travel memoirs/histories. Independent Australian publishers are strongly represented in long essays and both types of publisher are strongly represented in extended journalism, political auto/biographies, works by academics and Australian military history. But, as will be discussed further, it is necessary to examine the dynamics of diversity *within* the taxonomies to reach conclusions about cultural diversity.

Book categories	Total sales 2003-2008 $'000s (adjusted for inflation to 2009 values)						No. of titles in the NB top 5000 non-fiction					
	AIP	MAI	MN	OSI	U	Grand Total	AIP	MAJ	MN	OSI	U	Grand Total
Extended journalism	2,951.2	666.2	15,379.2	1,011.7		20,008.4	34	8	121	16		179
Polemic	196.0	*	12,711.5	*	*	13,032.5	4	1	23	2	1	31
Political auto-biogs	6,259.3	*	8,741.9	172.2		15,432.7	17	1	37	4		59
Contemporary military stories	*	*	8,802.3	*		9,134.7	2	2	76	3		83
Life narratives-Muslim-ME women	144.3	*	18,193.1	1,834.2		20,210.3	4	1	85	11		101
Life narratives-terrorism survivors	*	*	2,416.9	*		2,740.5	2	1	11	1		15
Works by academics	1,745.0	1,306.4	1,490.4	735.3	*	5,301.5	28	10	30	13	1	82
Long Essays	2,139.5	*	209.5	*		2,405.5	30		5	2		37
Activists' books	190.6	*	651.6	428.3		1,317.8	4	1	8	5		18
Former intelligence officers	*	*	*	*		603.0	3	2	2	1		8
Terrorists-Accused terrorists' stories	*	*	*	*		207.9	3		2			5
Public figures	*	*	230.8	*		772.7	2	2	5	3		12
Religion	*	909.5	1,198.8	213.1	*	2,467.1	2	4	21	4	2	33
Travel memoir-history	*	-	4,380.4	614.9		5,196.3	2		19	5		26
Literary authors	*	-	174.2	419.9		644.6	1		5	6		12
Other	314.1	53.2	615.5	*	*	1,286.5	6	2	6	2	2	18
Australian military history	2,605.6	4,008.5	42,782.1	*	*	49,608.6	46	33	136	2	2	219
Grand Total	**17,658.2**	**7,659.8**	**118,219.7**	**6,443.5**	**389.3**	**150,370.4**	**190**	**68**	**592**	**80**	**8**	**938**

Figure 60 Number of titles and value of sales by publisher category

6.3.2   Contributions to diversity via nationality and ethnicity

To investigate the diversity of books published by the nationality and ethnicity of the author, the books that could be read directly or indirectly in relation to the wars were coded for nationality, and if there was a variety of ethnic backgrounds mentioned in the online marketing materials, these were coded as distinct variations. Between them, 60 backgrounds were coded in the data.[90]

The findings show that multinational presses published writers from the largest combinations of countries and ethnic backgrounds (49).[91] Australian independent publishers published writers from 13 different backgrounds,[92] and overseas-based independent publishers also published writers from 13 different backgrounds[93]. Finally, the major Australian independent press published writers from 6 backgrounds.[94]
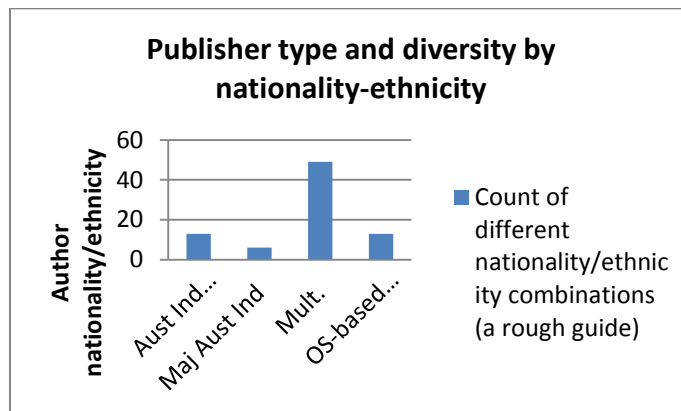
Figure 61 Multinational publishers made a striking contribution to the diversity of debate via the national and ethnic background of the authors published, however, overall (across all the publisher categories) 16 of the 60 nationality markers were connected to the UK, and 6 were connected to the US.

---

[90] It was not possible to determine the background of all the authors and given that these are multicultural countries, the categorisations could have gone into ridiculous detail. However given that the books related to wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan, it was noted if the writers had links to these areas. If one author from a "hyphenated" background was coded, this combination was represented in the data.

[91] Authors published by multinational presses include the following nationalities: Afghanistan, Australian, Aust-Afghanistan, Aust-Arab, Aust-Iraq, Can/Israel/US, Canada, Canada-Afghanistan, France, France-Morocco, India, Iran, Iran-Aust, Iran-Germany, Iran-US, Iraq-UK, Israel, Israel-UK, Italian, Jordanian, Kenya, Kenya-UK, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, New Zealand, NZ-Sudan, NZ-UK, Pakistan, Palestine-UK, Somalia, Somali-Dutch , Sudan, Swiss-Saudi Arabia, Togo, UK, UK/Irish, UK-Bangladesh, UK-Egypt, UK-Morocco, UK-Pakistan, UK-Pak-Yemen, UK-Sudan, UK-US, UK-Yemen, US, US-Arab, UK-Welsh

[92] Authors published by Australian independent publishers included: Australia, Aust-Arab, Canada, Iran, Aust-Can, Iraq-UK, Morocco, NZ, UK, US, Germany, Iraq, US-Pakistan

[93] Authors published by overseas-based independent publishers included: Australia, NZ, UK, Eritrea-Germany, US, Israeli-US &Palestine, Italy, Palestine, Somalia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK-Pakistan

[94] Authors published by the major Australian independent publisher included: Australia, Aust-Arab, UK, US, Israel, UK-Italy.

This is an approximate methodology and is not comprehensive, but it demonstrates that multinational publishers contributed to a diversity of debate in a way that has not been empirically demonstrated before. Importantly, many of these markers of diversity come from the UK or the US. One-third of the diversity represented was connected to the UK or the US or both. They reinforce Australia's close ties with the UK and US publishing industries. (Another factor was that a large number of author exiles or migrants chose to reside in the UK and the US, thus generating a large number of blended nationalities in the data.)

 The key to understanding the economic dynamics behind this lies in the international publishing industries' interest in the debate and the fact that so many books were generated in the UK and the US: the two centres of global English-language publishing. Hannah Westland (2006) describes the processes by which multinationals contributed to this diversity.

> Taking Random House's approach as an example to begin with, once a year David Parrish travels to Australia and pitches the entire Random House UK list to Random House Australia. Random House Australia will then select the titles they think they can most successfully promote, usually around 8 a month, or 100 per year, and will commit to significant quantities, as well as marketing and publicity budgets for around 25-30 of these titles. The 70 titles not given a publicity/marketing budget are at least sent out for review and included in their catalogue and will be ordered in quantities of 400-500 copies. The rest of the Random House UK list will be available in Australia through the indent system, whereby these titles are included on reps' selling sheets and can be ordered in by booksellers, but Random House Australia make no advance stock commitment. This is the general model that all the multinationals adhere to.

The best chance for Iraqi and Afghani women to have their voices heard was through the genre of life narratives, a mixed genre as we have seen ranging from outright fraud to exoticised fantasy to ethical account. The other taxonomy of internationally-diverse perspectives came from political scientists and other academics. The following table sets out the books classified as "works by academics" (which does not include books of long essays, specific activist works or polemics by academics). Once again, the multinationals contributed books by academics from the greatest variety of national backgrounds although they were followed closely by Australian independent publishers. The largest number of works by academics came from the US (33), then Australia (26), followed by the UK (12). The biggest-selling author of academic works was Noam Chomsky. The Australian terrorism expert Keith Suter also achieved strong commercial sales with *50 Things You Want to Know About World Issues: But Were Too Afraid to Ask*, which was obviously geared towards the general trade market. Australian independent publishers were the largest publishers of works by Australian academics (17).

	Aust Ind	**Major Aust I**	**Multin**	**OS Ind**	**Grand Total**
Works by academics	**28**	**11**	**30**	**13**	**82**
AUST	18	4	4	2	28
AUST-ARAB	1	1	1		3
AUST-CAN	1				1
CANADIAN	1				1
ISRAELI		1			1
ISRAELI-US&PALEST				1	1
KENYA			1		1
MOROCCAN			1		1
UK	1		4	3	8
UK-Pak				3	3
UK-US			1		1
US	6	5	18	4	33
Grand Total	**28**	**11**	**30**	**13**	**82**

Figure 62 Multinationals published academic works by a range of nationalities but Australian independent publishers published the most books by Australian academics.

6.3.3 Contributions via gender

Coding by gender authors of books that could be read directly in relation to the wars was more straightforward. Men were responsible for nearly ¾ of the titles sales of the 315 books which could be read directly in relation to the wars.
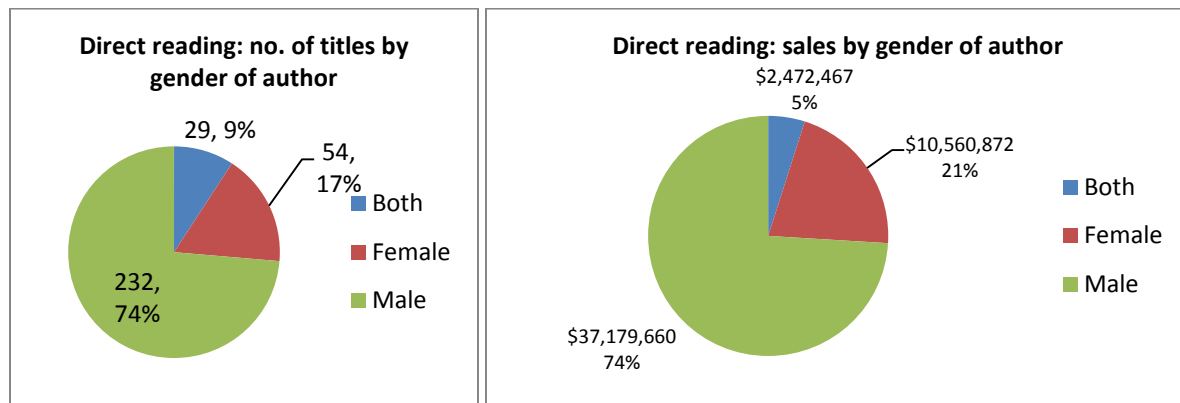
Figure 63 Men were responsible for most of the books written and sold which could be read directly in relation to debate about the wars

Female authors of individually-authored books were most likely to be published if they were written in the "lifting the veil" genre (18 titles), or were written by journalists (15 titles). However, the success of two women writing contemporary military stories, Sandra Lee and Kayla Williams, is also worth noting (4).

Gender of author – direct reading	No. titles	Total sales ($'000)
Male	**232**	**$37,179.6**
Both	**29**	**$2,472.4**
Female	**54**	**$10,560.8**
Life narratives-Muslim-ME women	18	$5,377.4
Extended journalism	15	$2,205.7
Contemporary military stories	4	$1,128.4
Polemic	6	$930.5
Life narratives-terrorism survivors	4	$438.2
Political auto-biogs	2	$156.8
Long essays	2	$94.4
Public figures	1	$81.8
Works by academics	1	$77.0
Activists' books	1	$70.2
Grand Total	**315**	**$50,212.9**

Figure 64 The most popular categories of books by female authors which could be read directly in relation to the wars

The largest number of books authored by both genders was in books of essays (11 in Australia and one published by an overseas-based independent publisher), representing another important source of publication for women writers.

When books that could be read directly and indirectly in relation to debates about the wars are counted, the gender balance changed only slightly.
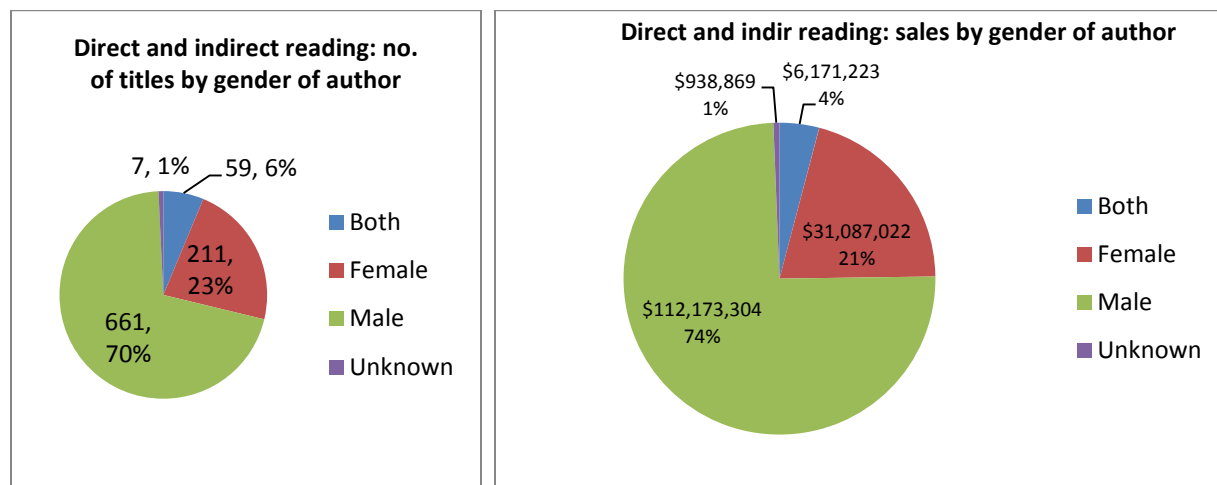
Figure 65 Male authors also predominated in books which could be read directly and indirectly about the wars.

Once again, the most popular female-authored genres in the top 5000 were life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women, and then a large number of books about Australian military history.[95] However, extended journalism by authors with a public platform generated more sales.

Female authors – direct & indirect reading	No. Titles	Total Sales ($'000)
Life narratives-Muslim-ME women	94	$18,848.5
Extended journalism	23	$2,917.4
Political auto-biogs	12	$2,400.5
Australian military history	29	$1,809.7
Contemporary military stories	5	$1,144.4
Polemic	6	$930.5
Religion	7	$643.6
Works by academics	13	$638.2
Travel memoir-history	5	$543.4
Life narratives-terrorism survivors	5	$497.4
Long essays	7	$411.5
Activists' books	2	*
Other	1	*
Public figures	1	*
Literary authors	1	*
Grand Total	**211**	**$31,087.0**

Figure 66 The most popular categories of books by female authors which could be read directly and indirectly in relation to the wars

Interestingly, Australian women have been commercially successful in writing books about Australian military history, plus other genres as follows:

---

[95] Popular Australian military history titles by women include *To Hell and Back* by Susanna De Vries (about Gallipoli); *Heroic Women of War* by Susanna deVries; *Swing by Sailor: True Stories from the War Brides of the HMS Victorious* by Catherine Dyson; *Blood, Sweat and Tears: Australia's WWII Remembered by the Men and Women*, by Margaret Geddes; *Tears on My Pillow* by Narelle Biedermann; and, *Angels of Aceh: The Compelling Story of Operation Tsunami Assist* by Sophie York.

Australian authors	No. Titles	Sales ($'000)
Male	**321**	**$72,831.2**
Both	**38**	**$3,777.0**
Female	**79**	**$8,757.2**
Australian military history	29	$1,809.7
Life narratives-Muslim-ME women	12	$1,701.6
Extended journalism	13	$1,685.7
Contemporary military stories	2	*
Polemic	3	*
Travel memoir-history	3	$513.5
Works by academics	7	$415.9
Long essays	6	$369.0
Life narratives-terrorism survivors	1	*
Political auto-biogs	1	*
Public figures	1	*
Religion	1	*
Unknown	**7**	**$938.8**
Grand Total	**445**	**$86,304.4**

Figure 67 Australian authors by gender – direct and indirect reading

The contribution of different types of publishers by publishing female authors is investigated in the next section, which examines political biographies and autobiographies, and works by academics/long essays. These were chosen because they contained a mix of works by male and female writers, and a mix of Australian and overseas-authored works. (They were selected to provide insights but clearly each genre has different characteristics.)

Political biographies and autobiographies by female authors

Multinational publishers released titles by or about prominent international women, as follows:

Multinational titles	Author
Daughter of the East: An Autobiography, and *Reconciliation*	Benazir Bhutto
The Family: The Real Story of the Bush Dynasty (2 editions)	Kitty Kelley
Living History (3 editions)	Hillary Rodham Clinton
Madam Secretary: A Memoir (2 editions)	Madeleine K. Albright
Open Secret: The Autobiography of the Former Director-General of MI5	Stella Rimington
Speaking for Myself: The Autobiography	Cherie Blair

Figure 68 Political biographies and autobiographies published by multinational publishers

A search of political biographies and autobiographies revealed five works by Australian female authors.[96] Two included a politician who was in power during 2003-2008: *Bob Carr: The Reluctant Leader*, by Marilyn Dodkin, about a former NSW state premier, and *Australian Prime Ministers*, edited by Michelle Grattan, covered prime ministers back to federation. Biographies of figures who were elected to federal politics during this period: John Howard, Mark Latham, Kevin Rudd, and Tony Abbott, had male authors. It is not possible to read any significance into this on the available information, however it is worth mentioning.

Next, two categories were examined: works by academics and long essays (because long essays were a notable means by which academics participated during this period). Of the 82 books which were coded as "works by academics" (and could be read directly or indirectly in relation to the debate), 60 were by males, 13 by females, and 9 by both. Of 37 books of long essays, 13 were by males, 7 by females and 17 contained essays by both. Examples of the female-authored books and publishers are as follows:

Works by female academics[97]

Multinationals	Australian Major Independent	Australian Independent Publ's
Regarding the Pain of Others, Susan Sontag, (US) (twice in NB data)	*National Insecurity: The Howard Government's Betrayal of Australia*, Linda Weiss & Elizabeth Thurbon (Aust)	*Party Games: Australian Politicians and the Media from War to Dismissal*, Bridget Griffen-Foley (Aust)
Unbowed: One Woman's Story, Wangari Maathai (Kenya)	*Israel/Palestine: How to End the War of 1948*, Tanya Reinhart (Israel)	*Your Call is Important to Us: The Truth About Bullshit*, Laura Penny (Canada)
	God Under Howard: How Religion Took Over Australian Politics, Marion Maddox (Aust)	*Question of Zion*, Jacqueline Rose (UK)
		The Ethical Imagination, Margaret Somerville, (Aust-Canada)
		Howard's War: Scribe Short Books, Alison Broinowski (Aust)
		Power without Responsibility?: Ministerial Staffers in Australian Government, Anne Tiernan (Aust)

[96] *Australian Prime Ministers*, Ed., Grattan, Michelle, New Holland; *Bob Carr: The Reluctant Leader*, Dodkin, Marilyn, UNSW Press; *Enid Lyons: Leading Lady to a Nation*, Henderson, Anne, Pluto Press; *Gough Whitlam: A Moment in History*: (volume 1), Hocking, Jenny, Melbourne University Press; *The Hawke Government: A Critical Retrospective*, Ed., Susan Ryan and Troy Bramston, Pluto Press

[97] An additional book which is not included in the table is *How to Argue with an Economist: Reopening Political Debate in Australia*, Edwards, Lindy, published by Cambridge University Press.

Long essays by female authors

Multinationals	Australian Major Independent	Australian Independent Publ's
The Algebra of Infinite Justice, Roy, Arundhati (India)		*Exit Right: The Unravelling of John Howard: Quarterly Essay*, Judith Brett (Aust)
		Relaxed and Comfortable: The Liberal Party's Australia: Quarterly Essay, Judith Brett, (Aust)
		On the US Election: Quarterly Essay, Kate Jennings, (Aust-US)
		Australian Liberals and the Moral Middle Class: From Alfred Deakin to John Howard: Quarterly Essay, Judith Brett (Aust)
		Latham's World: The New Politics of the Outsiders: Quarterly Essay, Margaret Simons (Aust)
		Voting for Jesus: The Christian Revival in Australia: Quarterly Essay, Amanda Lohrey (Aust)

Figure 69 Examples of works by female academics and long essays by female authors, and the type of publisher responsible for them

Because the current research only addresses a subset of works by female academics, it cannot be assumed to be indicative of the publishing market as a whole, but nevertheless, a clear pattern emerges. Australian independent publishers were the most likely to publish the works of Australian female academics through Australian academic presses and publishers of long essays. Multinational publishers contributed the work of female international political and academic figures. Both contributed to the diversity of female authors, but Australian independent publishers were crucial for the publication of Australian women's scholarship.

6.3.4   Books by Australian authors

Although this research does not address all Australian political biographies, autobiographies and memoirs released during this period, the role of Australian independent publishers is striking regarding those in this chapter.

The number of Aust political bio, auto-bio & memoir titles by publisher type

- 4, 23%
- 1, 6%
- 12, 71%

■ Australian Independent
■ Major Australian Independent
■ Multinational
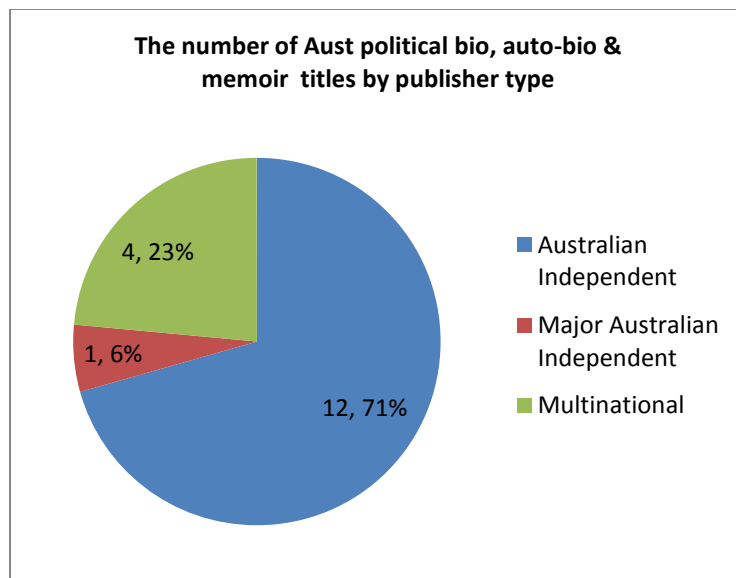
Figure 70 Australian small to medium independent publishers were responsible for nearly 3/4 of political auto/biographies about Australian figures which could be read in relation to the wars

Of 17 books (including second editions), 11 were published by Australian independent publishers and an additional one by the major Australian independent. The three published by multinationals were Richard Woolcott's *The Hot Seat: Autobiography*, published by HarperCollins; *Kevin Rudd: The Biography* by Robert Macklin, published by Penguin under the Viking imprint (two print runs); and *Latham and Abbott: The Lives and Rivalry of the Two Finest Politicians*, by Michael Duffy, published by Random House.

This is one market niche in which Australian independent publishers appear to dominate sales. When sales were measured (Figure 71), the contribution of Australian independent publishers became more significant.

Sales of Aust political bio, auto-bio & memoir titles by publisher type

- 515,466 , 10%
- 259,256 , 5%
- 4,390,733 , 85%

■ AUST Political auto-biogs Aust Ind
■ AUST Political auto-biogs Maj Aust Ind
■ AUST Political auto-biogs Multi
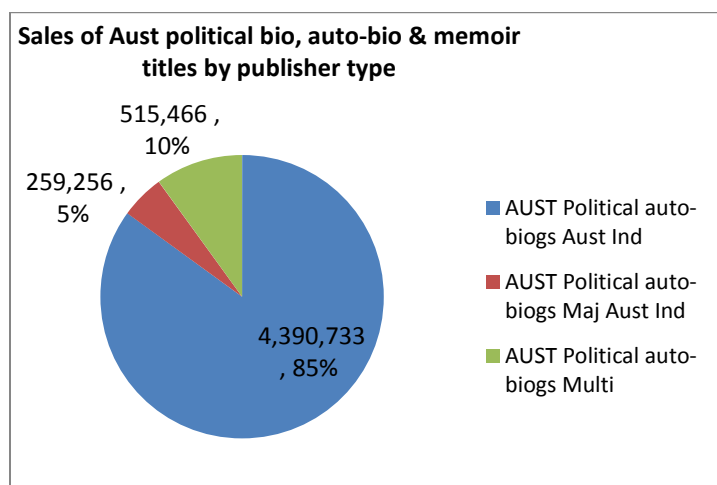
Figure 71 When sales are taken into account, Australian independent publishers played an even greater role in publishing Australian contemporary political autobiographies

Another way to examine the distinctive contribution of multinational and Australian independent publishers relates to the backgrounds of Australian authors. Australian multinationals published large numbers of Australian writers (although this depended on the strategies of individual organisations) but there was one respect in which they differed. Multinationals were more likely to publish books by *Australian journalist*s while Australian independents, large and small, published a higher proportion of works by *Australian academics* as well as journalists.
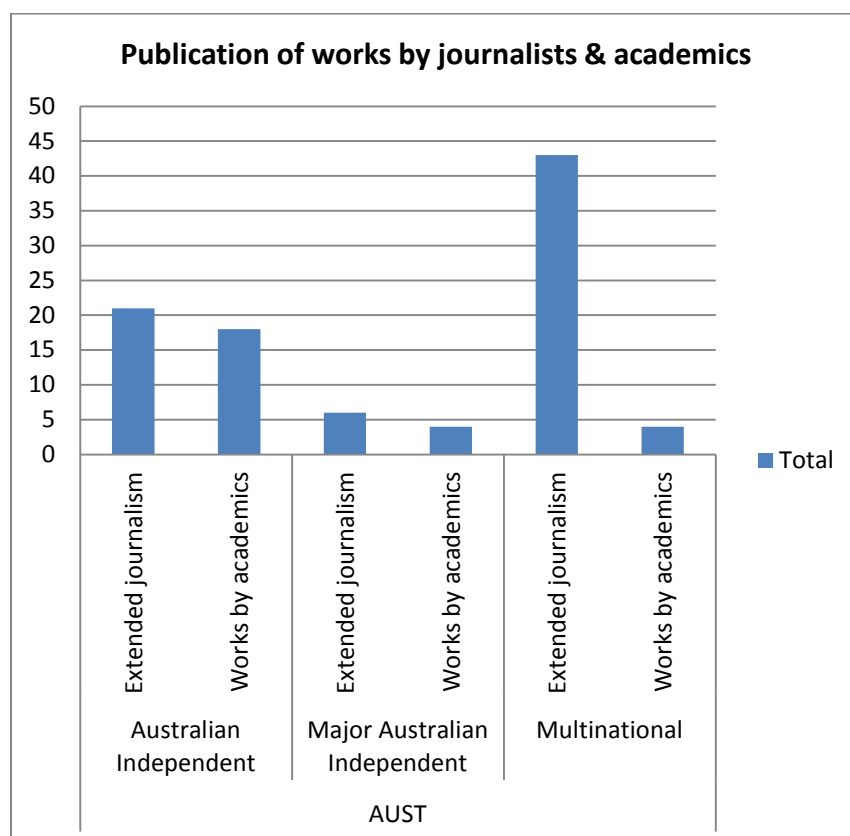
Figure 72 Australian independent publishers were more likely to publish works by academics as a proportion of their list.

As such, Australian independent publishers also played a crucial role in the publication of Australian men's academic scholarship.

6.3.5 Applying three maxims proposed for cultural diversity in book publishing to the findings

Chapter 2 draws attention to the concern of some analysts that the market for books was characterised by "the growing predation of market share by a small number of titles" with negative implications cultural diversity in general and for individual consumer choice in particular (Benhamou and Peltier, 2007 p 103). Benhamou and Peltier propose three criteria for establishing the presence of cultural diversity in book publishing, to which we now turn our attention.

1. Diversity increases in direct proportion to the number of titles published

Benhamou and Peltier (2007) propose that "diversity is maximized when all the titles have similar market shares (balance) and when the contents of each title are as 'different' as possible (disparity)" (Benhamou and Peltier, 2007 p 89). It is not within the scope of the current research to consider whether this maxim is appropriate in relation to bestseller lists, but it clearly is not feasible when applied to more extensive book sales including low-selling titles. Benhamou and Peltier gracefully acknowledge that "the implicit assumption that consumers' preferences are uniformly distributed on all the categories of each form of categorization may be challenged" (p 89), as is the case in the current study.

As Chapter 4 demonstrates, publishers back books based on the sales track record of the author and (or) that have genre characteristics they hope could lead them to become bestsellers (celebrity biographies, sports-related autobiographies, movie tie-ins, current affairs notables or scandals). The characteristics of the contemporary Australian market do not fit with Benhamou and Peltier's notion of a "balance" of titles with diverse content. Rather, diversity should be present in the range from best-sellers to low-selling titles. (For example, the only book by an Iraqi citizen who was resident in Iraq was *The Baghdad Blog* by the anonymous Salam Pax, written in English and published by Text Publishing. It sold modestly, perhaps in part because the book was based on a blog which was available free online.) Diversity, in the sense of diversity from high-selling to low-selling titles, was evident in the availability of books in Australia which sold strongly in other English-language markets, and the availability of commentary and analysis from a range of Australian perspectives, including journalists, academics, other public figures and writers from diverse ethnic backgrounds and representation from both genders.

One of the important outcomes of this period has been to highlight the limited Australian public voices from Muslim and Middle-Eastern backgrounds. Notable contributions were by Australian academics: Waleed Ali's *People Like Us* by Pan MacMillan; and *Islam and the West: Conflict or Cooperation?* by ANU's Amin Saikal, published by Palgrave Macmillan. There is scope for optimism that over time this aspect of diverse representation will be improved, for example, Waleed Ali has since assumed a more public profile on ABC and SBS TV and in newspaper columns, and Randa Abdel-Fattah has published a series of young adult books (novels) from the perspective of an Australian Muslim teenage girl. (The next chapter discusses the ways in which Australian publishers and PEN championed the publication of work by Iraqi, Afghani and other Middle-Eastern and Muslim writers held in detention, as well as asylum seekers from other backgrounds.)

2. Diversity increases in direct proportion to the number of genres available

Benhamou and Peltier's (2007) categorisation is clearly relevant, because the current research suggests that readers turned to many different genres in relation to the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan, as observable in the list of genres at the beginning of this chapter. However, diversity in content *within* the genres is also critical. For example, some of the best-selling life

narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women were subsequently exposed as frauds, while others were valued as an opportunity for Afghani and other Muslim and Middle-Eastern women to contribute their perspectives. Likewise, within the sub-genres of contemporary military stories and Australian military histories, many titles adopted a more conventional approach, while others subverted the conventions of the sub-genre, thus providing important diversity in terms of literary techniques. Other relevant aspects of cultural diversity include the diversity of subject matter (e.g., the role and contribution of Australian women in wars), and the gender of the narrator.

3. The market for books translated from foreign language

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2011) observes that:

> According to the National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters' Council, there are more than 100 metropolitan and regional stations in Australia broadcasting in some 100 languages and producing around 1700 hours of local programming each week.

> There are also more than 100 ethnic newspapers, ranging from modest periodicals to major weekly and daily publications in more than 40 languages, including Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese and Korean.

When the Australian market for books translated from foreign languages is considered, the results in terms of diversity are more problematic. As noted in Chapter 2, an estimated 2-3 percent of global rights flows in international publishing are for titles translated into English from other languages (Levisalles, 2004 p 55, Wischenbart, 2008 p 38). Independent publishers such as Pete Ayrton at Serpent's Tail Press in the UK have spoken about the struggle to fund translations of European literary fiction and to establish English-language markets for them (King, 2007c). (Kovač and Wischenbart, 2009b) found a much greater diversity in the nationalities of best-selling authors in European markets compared to English-speaking markets, with a surprising number of inter-European (non-English) translations proving popular. Furthermore, they were unable to identify pan-European trends; rather, authors from a range of national backgrounds achieved best-seller status in different European markets.

Overall, Australia has proven to be a very limited market for foreign-language book translations and this is likely to continue because of structural characteristics, which mean that English-language translations reach the Australian market in a two-step process: (1) the non-English-language books are selected and translated overseas by publishers with the financial means and commitment to do so, usually in the global English-language publishing centres of the UK and the US; (2) their distribution into Australia depends on whether multinational publishers make them available (if they are the rights holders) or sell the rights to Australian independent publishers. The economics of this activity are unlikely to change. Therefore, it appears that the greatest likelihood of increasing the diversity of books translated from foreign languages is through online sales in the future (something that was not yet widespread during the period of

this study). However, without a publisher in Australia to promote these titles, it is left to chance as to whether they can make a contribution to public debate.

6.3.6 Remnants of the Traditional Markets Agreement?

Multinationals contributed to the diversity of debate by cherry-picking from their international (often UK) lists and making small quantities of a diverse range of books available even if they did not intend to back them with marketing budgets. The negative aspect of this practice is that Australian independent publishers have complained that they were unable to obtain the rights to US-originated books that UK publishers declined. Henry Rosenbloom (2008) has been particularly vocal about this issue. He maintains that when US publishers sell rights to UK publishers, the UK publishers insist that the rights to Australia be included. He stated that UK publishers are reluctant to agree to "rights-splitting" because: profits on Australian sales added to their bottom line, without extra cost; UK acquisitions editors could factor-in notional Australian sales in their proposals in order to get internal approval, whether the book was released in Australia or not; and, UK publishers did not want to set a precedent for rights-splitting even if they were not interested in publishing a particular book.

> Every day of every week, Australian publishers offer for US books, only to hear that the publishers are holding out for a UK deal, or that the UK has already "pre-empted" (made a knock-out offer for UK and Commonwealth rights that includes Australian rights). Sometimes the wait lasts for months – and there's no UK bid forthcoming.

> ...More US publishers and agents are nowadays prepared to split rights, and some UK houses, under this market-place pressure, are being forced to give ground

> ...Nevertheless, it remains the case that most UK publishers regard themselves as entitled to Australia as a territory and refuse to cede ground (Rosenbloom, 2008).

It is not possible to investigate this fully here, but to test this proposition US-authored books that could be read directly in relation to the wars were grouped by country of publication. Over half of these titles achieved sales in Australia via UK publishers. This suggests there may be grounds to Rosenbloom's complaint but further research is required.

US-authored books by country of publication

16,
13%

40,
32%

■ Australia

■ UK

■ US

68,
55%
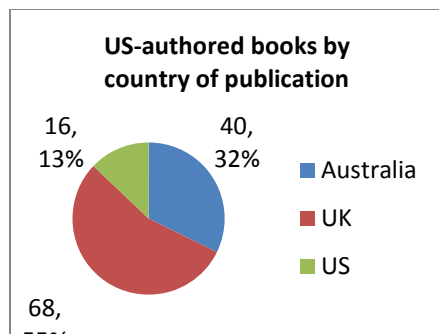
Figure 73 Over half of 125 US-authored books that could be read directly in relation to debate about the wars came to Australia via a UK publisher

6.4 Conclusion

Australians turned to books in relation to debates about the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan in large numbers. Over one and a half million books (1,688,159) worth over $50 million ($50,213,000), which could be read directly in relation to debates about the wars were sold in the six year timeframe. The figures increased to nearly 5 million books (4,919,749) and over $150 million ($150,370,000) if indirect reading is included. A notable finding was the popularity of Australian journalists as a preferred source of information, however, this period was characterised most strongly by the popularity of books about Australian military history.

The opportunity to analyse in-depth sales data enabled a closer examination of cultural diversity in book publishing. Multinational and Australian independent publishers both contributed to the diversity of debate in terms of authors from diverse national, ethnic and occupational backgrounds. A key feature of this diversity was the number of authors with UK connections: on the one hand, UK publishers contributed views from a diverse range of UK writers but on the other hand, it appears that Australia was more likely to receive books by UK-Middle-Eastern or UK-Asian (Pakistan, Bangladesh) writers than directly from Middle-Eastern and Asian countries. This is consistent with the global structure of the English-language publishing industry.

The contributions of multinationals and Australian independent publishers can be characterised overall as follows.

Multinational publishers

- predominated in popular international genres, including Australian military histories written by best-selling authors or high-profile military figures, contemporary military stories and life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women
- contributed to the diversity of debate by making available a range of books from their international lists, which overall had greater diversity of nationality and ethnicity than those published by Australian independent presses. These included works by or about internationally prominent women.

162

- published large numbers of works by Australian authors, with a strong presence of works by Australian journalists and life narratives of Australians with public profiles

Australian independent publishers

- published popular international genres "with a twist", for example, contemporary military stories by a deserter or a female soldier
- published the greatest proportion of their lists of works by Australian academics. Often these sold modestly compared to books by Australian journalists, whose work they also published. They provided a particularly valuable outlet for Australian female academics, especially when the publication of long essays is also taken into account, as well as Australian male scholars.
- published notable quantities of Australian military history titles, including self-published books in the top 5000, contributing to the diversity of perspectives.

There were very few books translated from foreign languages, a situation which is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. The representation of Australian writers from Muslim and Middle-Eastern backgrounds may increase with their continued publication by the arms of Australian multinationals and independent publishers.

Importantly, books that sold in small numbers may have reached readerships numbering in the millions if extracts were published or reviewed in newspapers. The broader media, including TV, radio and online forums, as well as public events, played a crucial role in mediating the ideas and analysis of authors to Australians who may never have heard of the writer or seen a copy of his or her book, as well as high-profile figures. In this sense, rather than viewing the media as competing with books for readers' time (which may also have occurred), the more significant dynamic is the role of the media in broadcasting the discussion of books and their authors. This theme is taken up in more detail in the next chapter, which examines books and public debate about Australia's treatment of asylum-seekers.

Chapter 7. Books and the Australian government's policies towards asylum-seekers

7.1 Introduction

Arguably the most divisive Australian policy debate in the 2000s was about our country's treatment of asylum seekers, particularly those arriving at Australia's shores by boat. It became a political flashpoint when on 26 August 2001 the MV Tampa, a Norwegian freighter, rescued 438 people from a sinking boat who were headed to claim asylum in Australia. The Australian government's refusal to accept the asylum-seekers onshore proved politically popular, and the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York further compounded anti-Muslim sentiment. (Many asylum-seekers in the 2000s were from Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran.)

This debate was also notable for the intervention of authors and publishers, including the writers' organisation, PEN.

> Among intellectual and artistic elites, condemnation of the government's policies and practices in relation to refugees has been almost unanimous, activism on behalf of asylum-seekers is wide-spread, and the output of literary, artistic, journalistic and academic works which engage with these issues, generally from a highly critical perspective, has grown to massive proportions (Ommundsen, 2006 p vii).

In the often heated context of the times, to recap, this research offers the following hypotheses:

- That it is possible to investigate whether Australians turned to books in relation to public debates by mapping out reading patterns of narrative non-fiction books; and
- That Australian independent publishers made a distinct contribution to public debate from multinational publishers in the types of books they published.

The first part of this chapter adopts a similar format to the previous chapter, considering the types of narrative non-fiction books published, identifying reading patterns, and analysing the contributions of different types of publishers. The second part examines detailed empirical mentions of these books playing a part in public debate beyond the sales figures, and concludes by reflecting upon the successes and limitations uncovered in the findings of books in relation to this public debate.

7.2   Reading patterns

7.2.1   Background: A rise in the publication of non-fiction books and reports concerning asylum-seekers

Although this issue became nationally prominent in the 2000s, a search of the National Library of Australia's online catalogue revealed that during the 1990s approximately 20-30 publications were catalogued each year that dealt with Australia's treatment of asylum seekers. In 2001 this jumped to 51 publications and an extraordinary 105 publications in 2002. In total, 307 publications were catalogued during 2003-2008 relating to this debate.
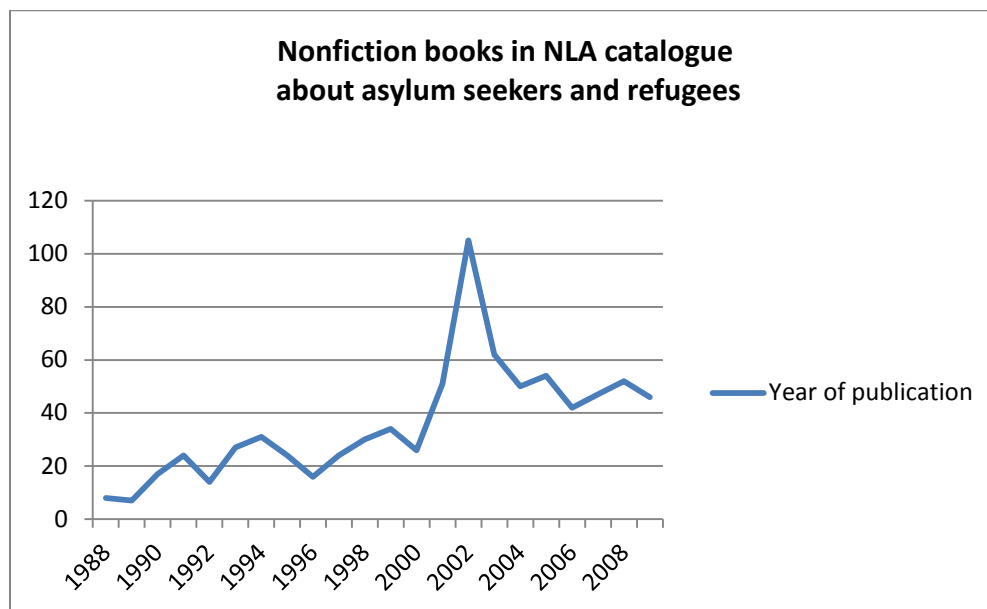
Figure 74 Non-fiction books in the National Library of Australia catalogue about asylum seekers and refugees[98]

This list is not exhaustive; in fact it does not include some of the titles of books about the asylum-seeker debate discussed in this chapter. For example, it does not include editions of *Best Australian Essays* and the *Griffith Review* that contain essays about the debate. Rather, the list contains a large proportion of government reports and policy documents by non-government organisations ranging from the United Nations to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission, to local refugee support groups.[99] As such, the majority of books and reports

---

[98] These titles were counted by collating the results of three searches: (1) "asylum seeker" (2) "refugee" and "Australia" (3) "immigration", "detention" and "Australia". The titles were also checked for relevance.

[99] Examples include *The People Smugglers: The People Smuggling Industry and the Secret Cost to Australia* by Greg Clancy (2002), Sunda Publications; *News Overboard: The Tabloid Media, Race Politics and Islam* by Iain Lygo (2004), Southerly Change Media*; Immigrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers: A Global View* by Helen Hughes (2002), Centre for Independent Studies; and *Refugees, Morality and Public Policy: The Jesuit Lenten Seminars 2002 & 2000* (2002), David Lovell Publishing.

published in relation to the debate were not narrative non-fiction works, and most of these were not distributed through retail outlets. This does not change the terms of this study, because arguably all contentious policy issues in Australia include the publication of policy documents arguing various points of view. However, it is helpful to understand the environment in which our case study narrative non-fiction books were published.[100] In summary, there was a plethora of Australian publishing in relation to this debate.

7.2.2   Identifying narrative non-fiction reading patterns

It was more difficult to identify reading patterns in relation to the asylum-seeker debate than it was for patterns relating to the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan in the previous chapter. Twenty-one titles were found, of which three were reprints (sometimes updated) of existing works.[101] However, to consider the range of books published and the bestsellers in 2003-2008 is potentially misleading. *Borderline*, by Peter Mares, was first published in 2001 before the Tampa standoff, and was reprinted three times in 2001-2002, selling approximately 8,000 copies in total, a bestseller for a work of Australian serious non-fiction. As such, a number of policy-oriented books generated extremely strong sales from 2002-2004. Elizabeth Weiss (the Academic and Digital Publishing Director for Allen & Unwin) observed:

---

[100] The NLA online catalogue provides decade by decade overviews of publishing activity. This reveals that of the 83 titles under 'Refugees -- Government policy – Australia' published between 2000 and 2010, 58 were published by NGOs and government organizations, and only 23 by Australian publishing companies. Of these, 83 are catalogued as books and 31 are online publications. Although all are counted as books, some are only available through the NLA in online format.

[101]   Amor, Meaghan, and Janet Austin, *From Nothing to Zero: Letters from Refugees in Australia's Detention Centres. Lonely Planet Journeys* (Melbourne: Lonely Planet), 2003; Bilkuei, Cola, *Cola's Journey: From Sudanese Child Soldier to Australian Refugee* (Sydney: Macmillan), 2008; Brennan, Frank, *Tampering with Asylum: A Universal Humanitarian Problem* (St Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press), 2003; Briskman, Linda, Christopher R. Goddard, and Susie Latham, *Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia* (Carlton North, Vic.: Scribe Publishing), 2008; Deen, Hanifa, *Caravanserai,* Freemantle WA, Freeman Arts Centre Press; Kevin, A. C. *A Certain Maritime Incident: The Sinking of Siev X* (Carlton North, Vic.: Scribe Publications), 2004; Lee, Sandra. *Guzin Najim's the Promise: An Iraqi Mother's Desperate Flight to Freedom* (Sydney: Bantam Books), 2004; Manne, Robert, and David Corlett. *Quarterly Essay 13 Sending Them Home: Refugees and the New Politics of Indifference* (Melbourne: Black Inc), 2003; Mares, Peter. *Borderline: Australia's Response to refugees and asylum seekers in the wake of the Tampa* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press); Marr, David and Wilkinson, Marian *Dark Victory* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin), 2003; Millar, Heather, Eva Sallis, and Sonja Dechian. *Dark Dreams: Australian Refugee Stories* (Kent Town, South Aust.: Wakefield Press), 2004; Neumann, Klaus. *Refuge Australia: Australia's Humanitarian Record*. Briefings Series (Sydney, NSW: UNSW Press), 2004; O'Neill, Margot. *Blind Conscience* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press), 2008; Rawi, Mahboba *Mahboba's Promise: How One Woman Made a World of Difference* (Sydney: Bantam Books), 2005; Schultz, Julianne. *People Like Us: Griffith Review Winter* (Meadowbrook, Qld: Griffith University), 2005; Singer, Peter, Tom Gregg, and Australian Collaboration. *How Ethical Is Australia?: An Examination of Australia's Record as a Global Citizen*. Public Interest Series (Melbourne: The Australian Collaboration in conjunction with Black Inc.), 2004; Thorne, Sandy. *Beyond the Razor Wire: --Is Australia, Where Everything's Free: The True Story of a Detention Officer's Experiences at Woomera and Curtin Illegal Immigrant Camps and at a Queensland Maximum Security Prison* (Lightning Ridge, NSW: S. Thorne), 2003; Tiernan, Anne. *Power without Responsibility: Ministerial Staffers in Australian Governments from Whitlam to Howard*. ANZSOG Program on Government, Politics and Public Management (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press), 2007; Tyler, Heather. *Asylum: Voices Behind the Razor Wire* (South Melbourne, Vic: Lothian), 2003. There were two editions of *Dark Victory* and *Guzin's Promise* in this period.

It seems to me as a (very interested) observer that having a recently published book means that a commentator has more credibility and more leverage in getting their message across. With mixed success of course: a few books seem to set the tone for a debate and others fall by the wayside or only have a modest impact upon publication, despite best efforts[102].

The 21 titles coded as directly addressing the debate in the Nielsen BookScan 2003-2008 non-fiction top 5000 data are listed in the following table:

Title	Author
Australian Independent Publishers	
Beyond the Razor Wire: Is Australia, Where Everything's Free? (2003)	Sandy Thorne
Blind Conscience (2008)	Margot O'Neill
Borderline (2003 edition)	Peter Mares
Caravanserai (2003 edition)	Hanifa Deen
A Certain Maritime Incident (2004)	Tony Kevin
Dark Dreams: Australian Refugee Stories (2004)	(eds) Sonja Dechian, Heather Millar, Eva Sallis
How Ethical is Australia?:An Examination of Australia's Record as a Global Citizen (2004)	Peter Singer & Tom Gregg
Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia (2008)	Linda Briskman, Susie Latham & Chris Goddard
People Like Us: Griffith Review (2005)	Julianne Schultz (ed)
Power without Responsibility? Ministerial Staffers in Australian Government (2007)	Anne Tiernan
Refuge Australia: Australia's Humanitarian Record (2004)	Klaus Neumann
Sending Them Home: Quarterly Essay (2003)	Robert Manne & David Corlett
Tampering with Asylum: A Universal Humanitarian Problem (2003)	Frank Brennan
Major Australian Independent	
Dark Victory: How a Government Lied Its Way to Political Triumph (2003)	David Marr & Marian Wilkinson
Dark Victory: The Military Campaign to Re-Elect the Prime Minister (2004)	David Marr & Marian Wilkinson
Multinational	
Asylum: Voices Behind the Razor Wire (2003)	Heather Tyler
Cola's Journey: From Sudanese Child Soldier to Australian Refugee (2008)	Cola Bilkuei
Guzin Najim's The Promise (2 print runs) (2003) (2004)	Sandra Lee
Mahboba's Promise (2005)	Mahboba Rawi
Overseas-based Independent	
From Nothing to Zero: Stories from Australia's Detention Centres (2003)	Amor, Meaghan, and Janet Austin (eds.)

Figure 75 Books of direct commentary about the asylum-seeker debate

---

[102] E. Weiss, personal communication, Sydney, 2011.

The reading patterns are summarised as follows:

7.2.3 Extended journalism
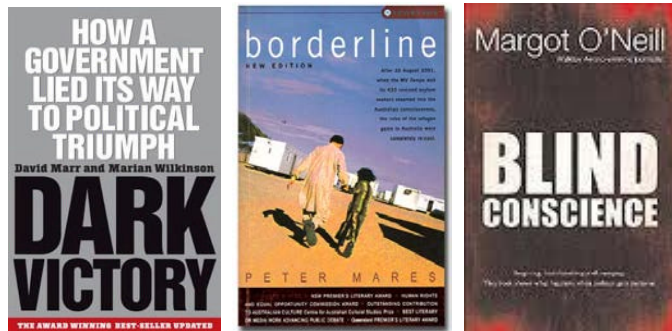
Figure 76 A small number of books of extended journalism proved popular from 2001 onwards but the research data commences from 2003

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	3 + 1 new edition	600+ (in the research timeframe)	720	25,000+

Figure 77 Sales of extended journalism from 2003

Dark Victory, a work of extended journalism, was the best-selling title, selling over 25,000 copies.[103] Although there were other books of extended journalism, for example, *Blind Conscience* by Margot O'Neill released in August 2008, *Dark Victory* was the only best-seller in the period of the research.[104]

---

[103] The NB data was checked with Allen & Unwin for *Dark Victory*, because the total sales figure is used in quantitative exercises further in this chapter. In this case, the NB data under-represented its sales by 10-15%, thus reinforcing the case that the overall figures for books about public issues in this thesis are conservative.

[104] Although it falls outside the period of this research, it is worth noting that *The Happiest Refugee*, a humorous autobiography by a well-known comedian, Ahn Do, published in 2010 by Allen & Unwin, has become a best-seller according to publicity materials. It could be considered the next bestseller in relation to this debate.

7.2.4   Other investigative writing
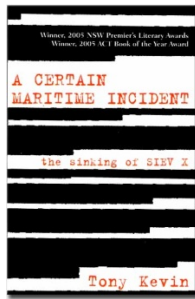
Figure 78 *A Certain Maritime Incident* **by Tony Kevin**

A comparable book of investigation, although not written by a journalist, was *A Certain Maritime Incident* by Tony Kevin. This book, released in 2004, sold out its initial print of 4,000 in one year (Kevin 2008). Like many other books addressing the debate it was reviewed extensively and was mentioned on the floor of Parliament (in this case, to debate its contentions, as is discussed further in this chapter).

7.2.5   Life narratives
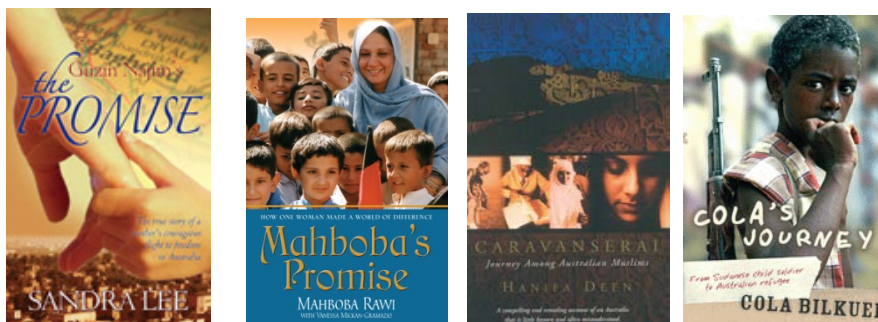
Figure 79 Life narratives of Middle-Eastern and Muslim women by Australian authors (and an Australian-authored title about a child soldier who came to Australia as a refugee)

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	5, including 2 new editions	1,300+	1,966	10,000

Figure 80 Sales of life narratives about Middle-Eastern and Muslim women (and one other) by Australian authors

Life narrative was arguably the broadest-selling genre. The largest sub-genre grouping was of live narratives of non-Australian Muslim and Middle-Eastern women. These were considered in the previous chapter and will not be addressed as a genre. Three that are by or about Australian women are included here: two editions of *Guzin Najim's the Promise: An Iraqi Mother's Desperate Flight to Freedom* (2004) by Sandra Lee, a bestseller about an Iraqi woman who

settled in Australia; an updated edition of *Caravanserai* (2003) by Hanifa Deen, ten years after its original publication; and *Mahboba's Promise: How One Woman Made a World of Difference* (2005) by Mahboba Rawi, an Australian-Afghani. Although other titles in this sub-genre were proved to be fraudulent, no such scandal was associated with these works. Another title, *Cola's Journey*, by Cola Bilkuei, is about a former child soldier in Africa who settled in Australia.

7.2.6   Memoir – detention centre worker

Figure 81 *Beyond the Razor Wire* **by Sandy Thorne**

One memoir and independent publishing success is *Beyond the Razor Wire… Is Australia, Where Everything's Free* by Sandy Thorne. Thorne is a live entertainer, storyteller and author of Australiana books who worked at a detention centre. Her self-published book sold nearly 2,500 copies in retail outlets and it is reasonable to assume it sold more copies through her live appearances and online (although the book is no longer listed on her website). Thorne's account was supportive of the Howard government's policies, unlike the other publications.

7.2.7   Long essays

Figure 82 Examples of books of long essays that addressed the debate

Long essays were another important reading pattern, as has been discussed in the previous chapter. *Sending Them Home,* a Quarterly Essay by Robert Manne, sold over 5000 copies in bookstores, in addition to the Quarterly Essay's subscription base. The debate was also acknowledged by contributions in various editions of the annual *Best Australian Essays* and in

Griffith Review. After sales of books that focused solely on this debate died down, books of essays continued to include works related to this issue in the later years.

7.2.8   Ethical and legal analysis (including works by academics)

Figure 83 Books of ethical and legal analysis which directly addressed the debate

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	5	640+	1,256	3,200+

Figure 84 Sales of books of ethical and legal analysis

Such books addressed ethical or legal issues in a considered, abstract framework.[105] The best-selling of these were *Tampering with Asylum: A Universal Humanitarian Problem* by Frank Brennan, and *How Ethical is Australia? An Examination of Australia's Record as a Global Citizen* by Peter Singer and Tom Gregg.

7.2.9   Writing by detention centre detainees

Figure 85 Books containing writing by detention centre detainees

---

[105] This coding of law/ethics is particular to this chapter. In the previous chapter, these works were coded differently, e.g., by academics or activists' books, because larger, broader categories were required. Because of the smaller number of books discussed in this chapter, more specific detail is possible in this regard.

	No. of titles	Sales range (volume)		
		Lower end	Median	Higher end
Australian-authored	5	750	1, 753	2,200+

Figure 86 Sales of books of writing by detention centre detainee

Collections of writing by people seeking asylum in Australia who were being held in detention centres generally sold modestly, but provided a rare opportunity to have their voices heard outside the formats of popular genres.

7.2.10 Combined sales of direct commentary

The sales of books as shown in the graph below are shaped by the impact of the two best-selling books (*Dark Victory* and *Guzin Najim's the Promise*) on 2003 and 2004 sales.
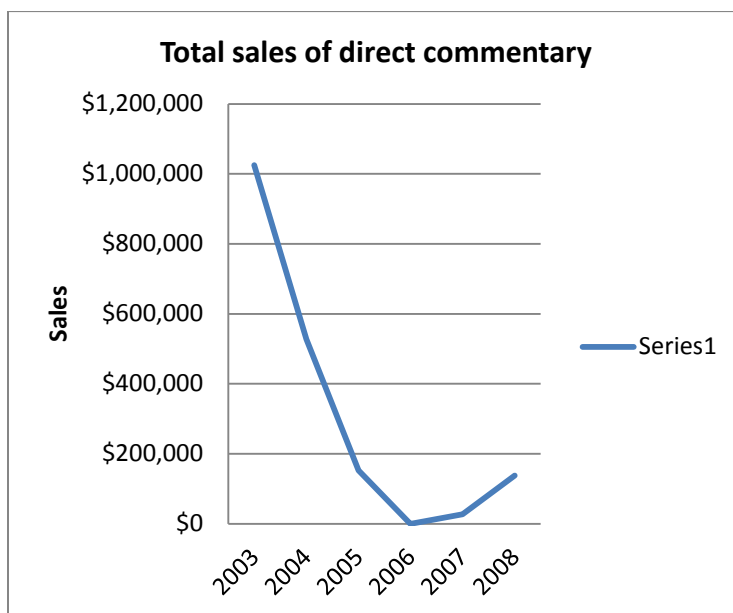
Figure 87 *Dark Victory*, by David Marr and Marion Wilkinson and published by Allen & Unwin, and *Guzin Najim's The Promise* by Sandra Lee and published by a multinational, were bestsellers in relation to direct debate about asylum seekers.

Figure 87 breaks down this activity: the majority of book publishing which was directly about the debate dropped away after 2004.

Direct reading

Legend:
- Extended journalism
- Aust Life narratives-Muslim-ME women
- Aust asylum seeker accounts
- Ethics/law/works by academics
- Aust Life narratives-Afr child soldier
- Memoir - detention centre employee
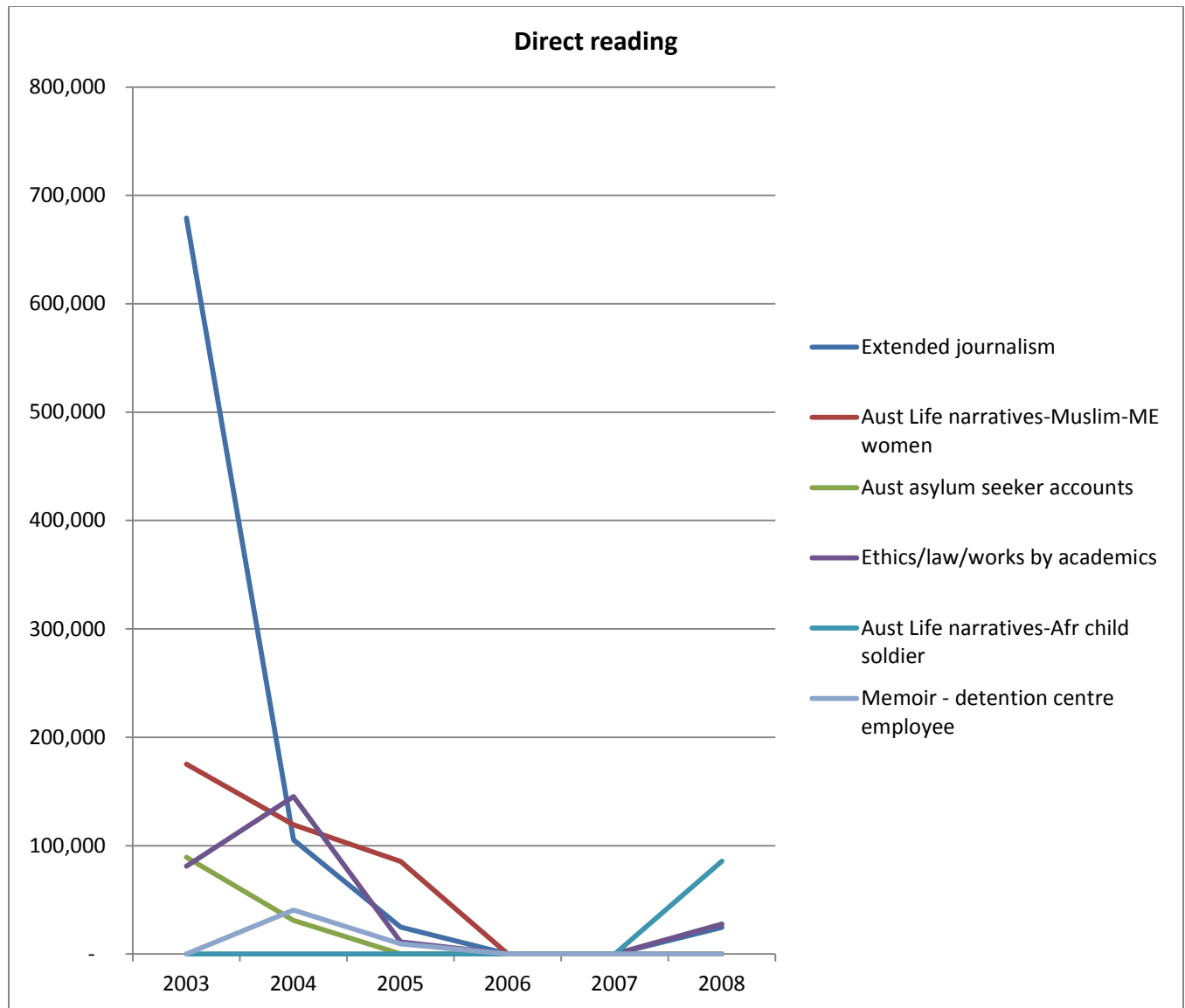
Figure 88 Breakdown of direct reading patterns

However, as a discussion of broader reading patterns shows, publishing in relation to this debate did not cease. Rather, it occurred as part of broader critiques and discussions.

7.2.11 Broader reading patterns

The formulation of broader reading patterns proved challenging because there were less definitive groupings of books and trends. The best methodology for determining broader reading patterns would be to interview readers, however that falls outside the scope of this study. Therefore, the following taxonomies should be taken as suggestions only. Life narratives of (non-Australian) Muslim and Middle-Eastern women were the most popular category (approximately $20 million), but they have been excluded from the graph below because they dwarf the other data. A popular category, particularly in the latter years of the current study's

timeframe, was Australian political autobiography and biography. Best-selling polemics about the Howard government's policies in general, for example by Don Watson (*Death Sentence: The Decay of Public Language*, *Watson's Dictionary of Weasel Words*) and Margot Kingston (*Not Happy, John!*) were the next largest-selling category.
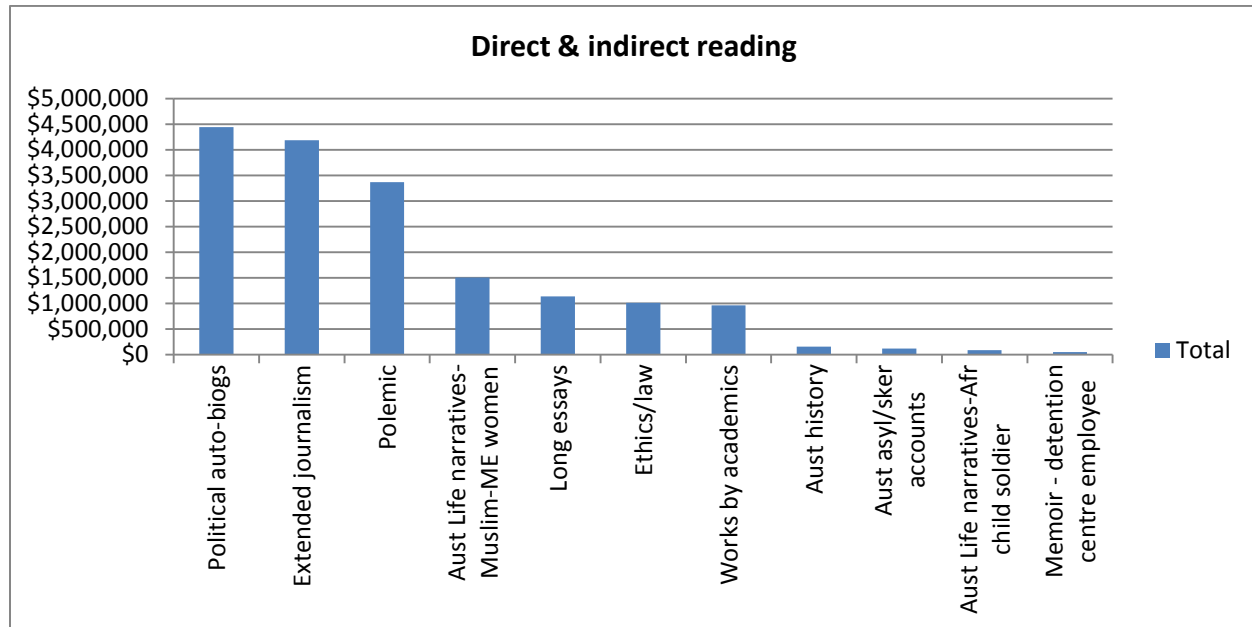
Figure 89 Sales of books which could be read directly and indirectly in relation to the debate (not including life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women by non-Australian authors)

Books of extended Australian journalism were responsible for a large number of sales, particularly George Negus' *The World From Islam*, and David Marr and Marian Wilkinson's *Dark Victory*. Two other books of extended Australian journalism by George Megalogenis, *Faultlines: Race, Work and the Politics of Changing Australia*; and *The Longest Decade: Paul Keating, John Howard, and the Struggle for Australia* also achieved solid sales. Another book, *Girls Like You: Four Young Girls, Six Brothers and a Cultural Timebomb* by Paul Sheehan bore no direct relationship to the debate about asylum-seekers; it was about the gang rapes by and the consequent trials of young Australian men of Pakistani origin. However, in the heated polemic of the time, it was perceived to contribute to anti-Muslim sentiment, and after some reflection, was included in the data. (For an example of the book being linked to the broader debate about Muslims and asylum-seekers, see Ho (2007).)

The long essays about the asylum-seeker debate were all published as part of ongoing series by the Quarterly Essay, the Griffith Review or Best Australian Essays with the exception of *True Blue? On Being Australian*, edited by Peter Goldsworthy and published by Allen & Unwin. Note that these groupings do not include several books about Islam and interfaith consciousness,

which generally sold modestly (apart from George Negus's *The World From Islam*, as noted in the previous chapter).[106]

Reading patterns over time also changed when a broader range of books that could be read in relation to the debate were included.
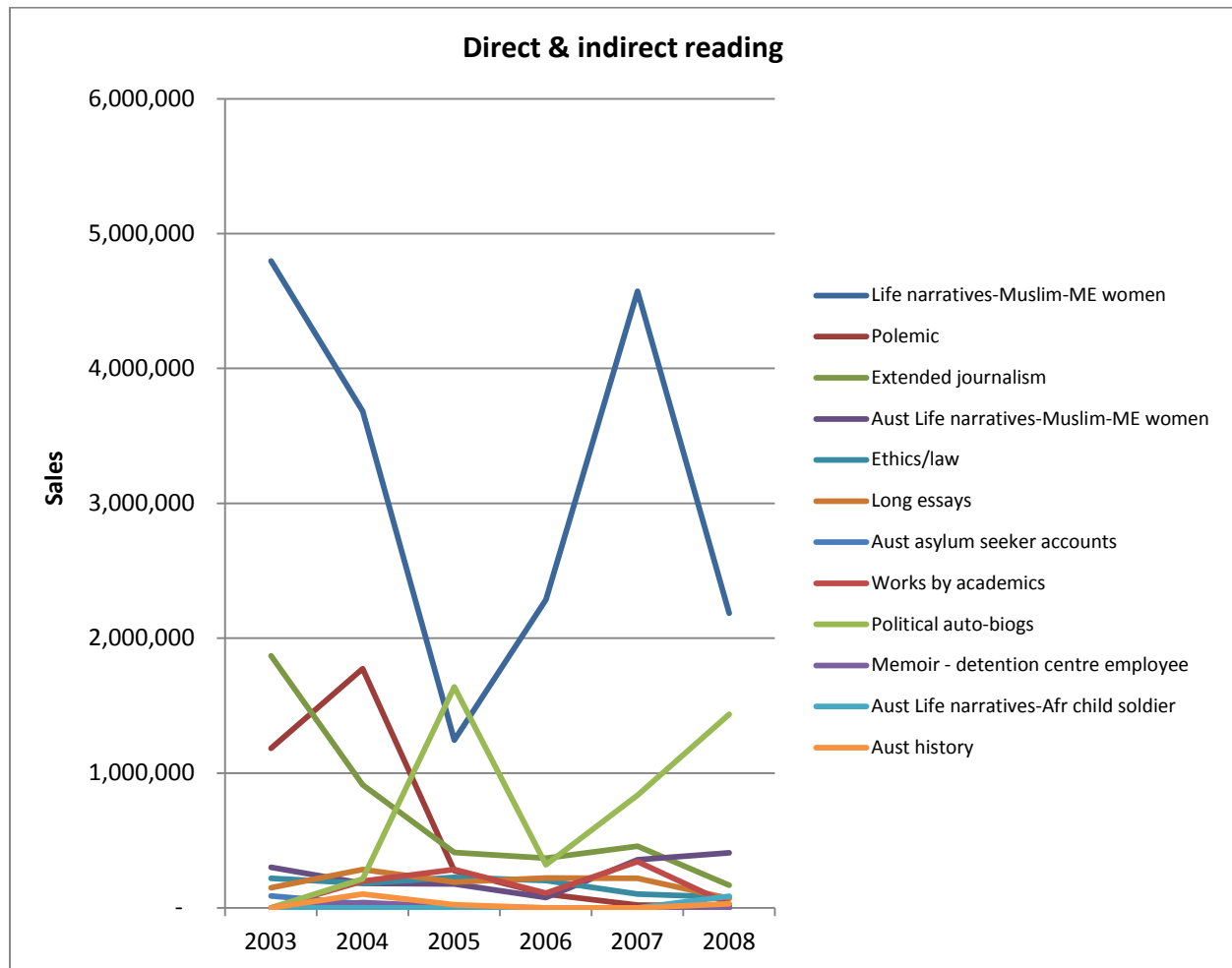
Figure 90 Sales of direct and indirect reading (including life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women by non-Australian authors)

The peak in sales of extended journalism in 2003 (indicated by the dark green line) is due to the success of *The World From Islam*, and *Dark Victory*, while the peak in 2004 polemics reflects sales of Don Watson's *Death Sentence: The Decay of Public Language* and Margo Kingston's *Not Happy, John!* The upturn in 2005 and 2008 of Australian political biographies (the light green line) includes books by or about Mark Latham, John Howard, Kevin Rudd and Peter Costello.

---

[106] A sports biography *El Magic: The Life of Hazem El Masri* by Bill Woods was not included, although Hazem El Masri, a successful National Rugby League player has been involved in ambassadorial work on behalf of Australian Muslim communities. Likewise, *Australia's Muslim Cameleers: Pioneers of the Inland 1860s-1930s*, sold modestly and was not considered sufficiently relevant to code in the data.

7.3   The contributions of publishers to the cultural diversity of books

Unlike the debate examined in the previous chapter, Australian independent publishers played dominant roles in contributing books about this debate. Australian independent publishers (major and other) were responsible for 15 of the 21 titles directly related to the debate, including the major Australian independent's publication of *Dark Victory* (two editions). Multinationals published *Guzin Najim's The Promise* (two editions) and *Mahboba's Promise*, both published by Transworld under the Bantam imprint; *Cola's Journey: From Sudanese Child Soldier to Australian Refugee* by Cola Bilkuei,[107] published by Macmillan Australia for Pan Macmillan; and *Asylum: Voices Behind the Razor Wire* by Heather Tyler, published under the Lothian imprint by Hachette ANZ. Lonely Planet (which was categorised as an overseas-based independent publisher) published *From Nothing to Zero: Stories from Australia's Detention Centre*s.

Australian Independent	13
Major Australian Independent	2
Multinational	5
Overseas-based Independent	1
Total	**21**

Figure 91 Books in the top 5000 data directly related to the debate, categorised by publisher type

Although (smaller) Australian independent publishers were responsible for 13 of the 21 titles (or 61.9 percent), they recorded only 29 percent of the sales. However, as will be discussed in the second half of this chapter, many of these books demonstrated a reach to readerships beyond the extent of their sales.
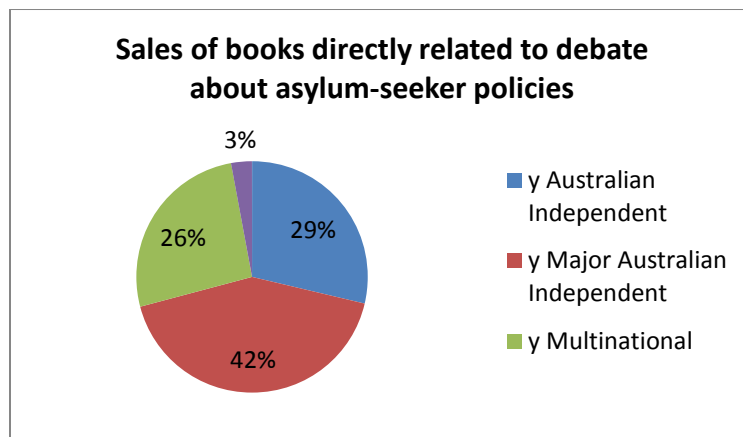
Figure 92 Australian independent publishers and the major independent publisher were responsible for majority of sales of books directly about Australian asylum-seekers.

---

[107] Another narrative non-fiction account first published overseas by a child soldier, Ishmael Beah's *A Long Way Gone,* had its veracity seriously questioned by Australian journalist**s** Shelley Gare, David Nason, and Peter Wilson (Gare, 2008) .

7.3.1   Contributions to cultural diversity via nationality and ethnicity

Smaller Australian independent publishers, multinationals, and Lonely Planet (an overseas-based publisher in terms of financial ownership but headquartered in Melbourne at the time) contributed to the diversity of voices published in terms of nationality and ethnicity. A collection of asylum-seeker accounts was published by Wakefield Press, an Australian independent publisher: *Dark Dreams: Australian Refugee Stories* Dechian, Millar and Sallis (eds.).

Collections of writing by asylum-seekers who were incarcerated at the time of publication were not bestsellers; however, they constituted an important representation in terms of diversity, and an example of the commitment of the publishers to this economically-marginal activity. Accounts published by a multinational (*Asylum: Voices Behind the Razor Wire* by Heather Tyler) and an overseas-based publisher (Lonely Planet: *From Nothing to Zero: Stories from Australia's Detention Centres*) did not appear to be typical publications for these organisations. As such, the abovementioned publishers contributed to diversity by publishing these voices in forms that offered alternatives to commercial genres of representation. However, most of these books sold in low numbers, apart from the multinationals' *Guzin Najim's The Promise* and *Cola's Journey: From Sudanese Child Soldier to Australian Refugee*, which fitted sub-genres that were successful internationally and were probably marketed as such. *Caravanserai*, about Australian Muslim women, was written by a well-regarded Australian-Arab writer, Hanifa Deen, and was published by an Australian independent publisher.

Contributions via gender

Of the 21 titles in the Nielsen BookScan top 5000 that directly related to the debate, nine were by women, seven by men, and five were jointly authored, edited or published in selections of writing by both genders.
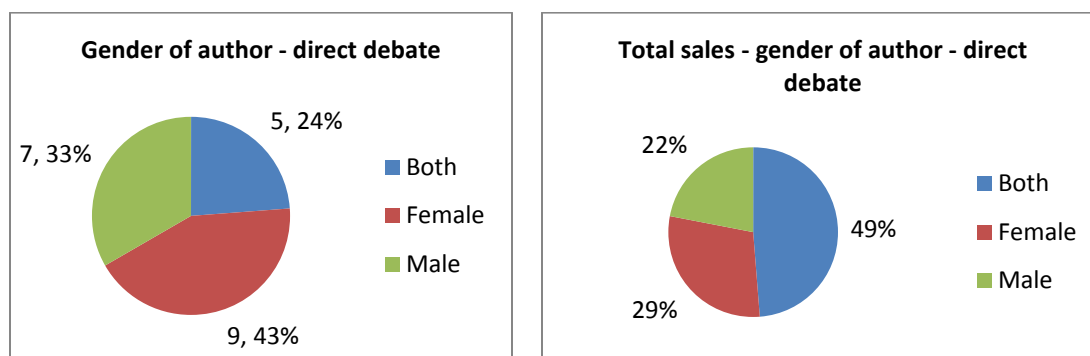
Figure 93 Women were strongly represented in the authorship and sales of books about this debate, both in the number of titles and sales

The strong sales performances of books by women can be attributed to the success of *Dark Victory*, co-authored by David Marr and Marian Wilkinson, and *Guzin Najim's The Promise* by Sandra Lee (sole author) in particular. Collections of writing by detainees were edited by both men and women.

Broader reading: publisher contributions and books by Australian authors

When direct and indirect reading patterns are combined, the important role of Australian independent publishers in making available the work of Australian academics, essayists and journalists becomes apparent. Books by Australian journalists or former journalists were published by the Australian major independent and smaller independents, with one book published by a multinational.

Book category	Aust Ind	MAI	MN	OSI	Total
Aust asylum-seeker accounts	1		1	1	3
Aust history	1				1
Aust Life narratives-Muslim-ME women	1	1	4		6
Ethics/law	5		6		11
Extended journalism	5	2	8		15
Memoir – detention centre employee	1				1
Polemic			5		5
Political auto-biogs	9		3		12
Works by academics	7	2			9
Long essays	11	1	1		13
Totals	**41**	**6**	**28**	**1**	**76**

Figure 94 Publisher contributions to Australian-authored books directly and indirectly about the asylum-seeker debate

Australian independent publishers (large and small) were responsible for all the separately published contributions by Australian academics (including those coded in the area of ethics and law). Unlike debates about the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan, because this was such a domestically-focused debate, multinationals were not able to contribute books from their overseas lists that were *directly* related. However, multinationals published polemical works (including the very successful polemics by Don Watson and Margo Kingston), political biographies and Australian life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women.

7.3.2   Did multinational and Australian independent publishers make distinct contributions?

Book category	Aust Indep	MAI	MN	OSI	Total
Aust asylum-seeker accounts	1		1	1	3
Aust Life narratives-Afr child soldier			1		1
Aust Life narratives-Muslim-ME women	1		3		4
Ethics/law	2				2
Extended journalism	2	2			4
Long essays	2				2
Memoir – detention centre employee	1				1
Works by academics	4				4
Totals	**12**	**2**	**5**	**1**	**21**

Figure 95 Publisher contributions to books which directly addressed the debate

When works that directly address the debate were considered, Australian independent publishers of all sizes made distinct contributions in the areas of extended journalism, works by Australian academics, long essays and books about ethics and law. One interpretation of these findings is that Australian independent publishers play a particularly important role in national or sub-national debates. The contributions of the Australian arms of multinationals should also be noted here: in addition to importing titles in established genres, works by and about Australians were also developed and published.

Book category	Book category	MAI	MN	OSI	Total
Aust asylum-seeker accounts	1		1	1	3
Aust history	1		1		2
Aust Life narratives-Afr child soldier			1		1
Aust Life narratives-Muslim-ME women	1	1	8		10
Ethics/law	5		6		11
Extended journalism	5	2	10		17
Life narratives-Muslim-ME women	3		80	10	93
Long essays	11	1	1		13
Memoir – detention centre employee	1				1
Other	4				4
Polemic			5		5
Political auto-biogs	9		3		12
Works by academics	8	2			10
Totals	**49**	**6**	**116**	**11**	**182**

Figure 96 Publisher contributions to books which directly and indirectly addressed the debate

When direct and indirect reading data is combined, including authors of all nationalities, the distinct contributions of Australian independent publishers also include Australian political autobiographies and biographies. Multinational publishers made significant contributions in established commercial genres including life narratives of Muslim and Middle-Eastern women (including eight Australian titles), polemics, and internationally-authored books about ethics or law relevant to the debate. The books on ethics and law were part of an even broader set of other such works by authors that included Geoffrey Robertson and John Ralston Saul.

7.4 Mapping out mentions of books in public debate

Australian publishers were very active in contributing books about the asylum-seeker debate and the next section of this chapter examines whether there is evidence that these books achieved a broader impact, despite the fact that many of them sold in modest numbers. The methodology involved mapping out mentions of narrative non-fiction books about the debate in the media, specifically, newspapers, academic citations, and Parliament.

There are both strengths and weaknesses in this approach. The obvious strength is that rather than asserting that books played a role in public debates and drawing upon anecdotal evidence for support, empirical mapping locates data to support this assertion, and to identify unexpected patterns from which inferences can be made. The most obvious weakness is that books play into public consciousness in many intangible ways: through conversations about books which cannot be documented, or their symbolic use as an authoritative source, or through individual reader experiences that are not recorded.

Mentions of case-study books in the media

In *Blind Conscience*, the ABC journalist Margo O'Neill examines activism in relation to Australia's asylum-seeker policies. O'Neill highlights the important roles of Liberal government backbenchers, TV current affairs programs such as *Four Corners* and *Lateline*, newspapers such as the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Australian*, and talk-back radio, as being the most significant. The body of her text does not consider the impact of books, but in her acknowledgements she pays tribute to "other authors who blazed the trail and whose material and insights were fundamental, like Peter Mares in *Borderline* and David Marr and Marian Wilkinson in their brilliant *Dark Victory*" (O'Neill, 2008 p vii). This chapter does not seek to engage in a debate about the relative importance of respective influences. Rather, it considers whether books played a less visible but still important role in the fabric of the debates.

Unfortunately, given O'Neill's emphasis, the data for mentions of case-study books on talk-back radio and television is not available from a public or commercial data agency. After considering several sources of media mentions,[108] the decision was made to use Factiva to trace newspaper mentions. For the empirical searches in this and the following sections, a list was compiled comprising the relevant Nielsen BookScan top 5000 non-fiction titles 2003-2008, some key books published in 2002, and a small number of other significant books. The following books appeared in the Factiva listings more than ten times, with the results summarised in Figure 97.

---

[108] The Thorpe Bowker Media Mx database was trialled but rejected because it dates from 2005. Media Monitors advised that their records do not extend back to 2002 on such a specific, non-contracted subject. Note that checks were made of each Factiva mention and in some cases searches using different words were conducted (e.g., searches for *Dark Victory* included "Marr" and "refugees". It was not possible to combine the results, so in some cases the Factiva chart summaries of year by year mentions are lower than this manually compiled list.

Title	Author/Editor	Factiva mentions 01-Jan-02–11-Oct-10
Dark Victory: The Military Campaign to Re-Elect the Prime Minister (2003 & 2004 editions)	David Marr & Marian Wilkinson	127
Guzan Najim's The Promise (2005)	Sandra Lee	32
Following Them Home: The Fate of the Returned Asylum Seekers (2005)	David Corlett	31
Borderline: Australia's Response to Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the wake of the Tampa (2001 & 2002)	Peter Mares	29
Tampering with Asylum: A Universal Humanitarian Problem (2003)	Frank Brennan	28
Blind Conscience (2008)	Margot O'Neill	24
Don't Tell the Prime Minister (2002)	Patrick Weller	24
The Bitter Shore (2008)	Jacquie Everitt	22
From Nothing to Zero: Stories from Australia's Detention Centres (2003)	Meaghan Amor & Janet Austin (eds.)	21
Another Country: Southerly Special Edition	Guest Editors: Rosie Scott and Tom Keneally	20
Dark Dreams: Australian Refugee Stories (2004)	Sonja Dechian, Heather Millar & Eva Sallis (eds.)	16
Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia (2008)	Linda Briskman, Susie Latham & Chris Goddard	14
Acting from the Heart: Australian Advocates for Asylum Seekers Tell Their Stories (2007)	Sarah Mares & Louise Newman	14
Watching Brief: Reflections on Human Rights, Law and Justice (2008)	Julian Burnside	13
Time for Change: Australia in the 21st Century (2006)	Tim Wright	13
Sending Them Home: Quarterly Essay (2003)	Robert Manne	12
Beyond the Razor Wire… Is Australia, Where Everything's Free (2003)	Sandy Thorne	11

Figure 97 Books relating to the debate about asylum-seeker policies which received more than ten newspaper mentions in the Factiva database.[109]

Seventeen books received more than ten media mentions, with *Dark Victory* recording 127. The majority of the media mentions occurred around the time of the book's publication. The pattern by *Dark Victory* is typical, which is clearly illustrated by the following graph. The patterns were also similar for other books although the total number of mentions was both lower and more sporadic in the years after publication.

---

[109] In addition, Hanifa Deen received over 40 mentions in the Factiva database. Many of these were in relation to her book *The Jihad Seminar*, which was released in 2008 and is not in the dataset used in this research. There were fewer than ten mentions for *Caravanserai,* which is included in this dataset.

Example 1: **Dark Victory** *by David Marr and Marian Wilkinson*
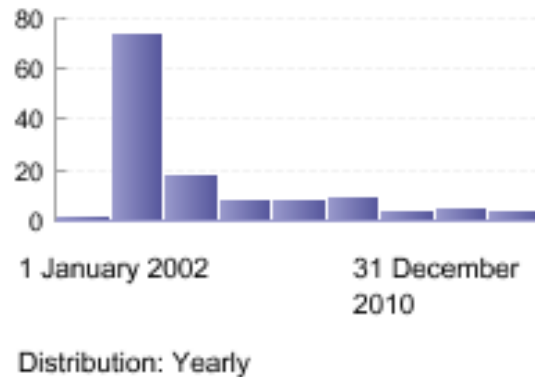
Figure 98 Newspaper mentions of Dark Victory 2002-2010 recorded in Factiva

From Figure 98 we can conclude several things. Firstly, newspaper coverage made the ideas and arguments in these books available to vast numbers of readerships. In this case, newspaper references to this book have continued to the present time of writing in 2010, demonstrating considerable longevity. There is also evidence of some pre-publicity associated with the book in late 2001.

Each newspaper mention corresponds to an individual edition with a circulation in the tens or hundreds of thousands. The next section considers ways of encapsulating the increased reach of books through such mentions in the media. In the current research, a conservative approach was taken that uses average circulation figures for the period, although circulation numbers are sometimes multiplied in readership figures, when auditors confirm the assumption that several people may read a single newspaper. Of course, most people do not read every page of a newspaper. Some people who buy a newspaper may find they don't have time to read it at all. In a simple exercise, the Factiva newspaper mentions were set out below in relation to the circulation figures averaged over 2003-2008.[110]

---

[110] Monday–Saturday circulation figures were used for daily newspapers such as *The Australian*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Canberra Times*, the *Age*, the *Townsville Bulletin* and the *Courier Mail*. Saturday circulation figures are usually substantially higher, so this raised the average; however, it is reasonable to assume that some of the coverage occurred in Saturday newspapers.

Newspaper	Average circulation 2003-2008	Factiva Mentions	Total (circulation x mentions)
The Australian	161,000	19	3,059,000
Canberra Times	41,000	18	738,000
The Age	216,000	15	3,240,000
SMH	240,000	12	2,880,000
Townsville Bulletin	29,000	7	203,000
The Courier Mail	234,000	6	1,404,000
Sun Herald (Syd)	513,000	6	3,078,000
Sunday Age (Melb)	208,000	5	1,040,000
Total of newspaper circulation	1,642,000	88	15,642,000

Figure 99 Newspaper mentions of *Dark Victory* and circulation figures

When compared to book sales there are several ways of encapsulating these findings. There is no set methodology for summarising the increase in audience reach, but one example is as follows:

Total sales volume of title x: media mentions using average circulation figures[111] (2003-2008) *counting each newspaper only once.*

(book sales) 25,000: 1,642,000 (newspaper mentions)

The result is that for each copy of *Dark Victory* sold, the book's profile was increased through over 65 mentions circulated to newspaper readers. Another approach is to count every newspaper mention.

Total sales volume of title x: media mentions x average circulation figures (2003-2008).

(book sales) 25,000: 15,462,000 (newspaper mentions)

Viewed this way, for each copy of *Dark Victory* sold, it was mentioned nearly 620 times in newspapers (if each instance of the newspaper mention is included). In the case of this book, the media provided a powerful platform for disseminating its ideas to hundreds of thousands of people beyond those who bought the book. Although they may never have picked up a copy, people had repeated opportunities to become familiar with the title of the book, the names of the authors and their arguments. Of course most books do not receive newspaper reviews or other forms of media coverage. Many independent publishers lament the difficulty of obtaining reviews for their titles. The spectrum in this case-study ranges from books that sold poorly and received no newspaper coverage, to best-selling books that attract extensive newspaper coverage. There is little to be said in this section about books that attract no media coverage, so next we

---

[111] My thanks to Victor Isaacs who provided me with the newspaper circulation figures for the period of this study. He is the joint editor of *Australian newspaper history: a bibliography* and one of Australia's foremost newspaper historians.

turn to a book which sold modestly according to the Nielsen BookScan data but which attracted some newspaper coverage.

Example 2: Borderline *by Peter Mares*

Borderline: Australia's Response to Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the wake of the Tampa by Peter Mares (2002) was recorded with sales of 702 but this figure records the book sales at the end of its sales life. By 2003 sales were tapering off but the book was still generating newspaper coverage.

Nielsen BookScan sales: 702

Newspaper	Average circulation 2003-2008	Factiva Mentions	Total (circulation x mentions)
The Age	216,000	5	1,080,000
Sydney Morning Herald	240,000	5	1,200,000
The Australian	161,000	2	322,000
Canberra Times	41,000	2	82,000
Northcote Leader	n/a	2	-
Herald-Sun (Melb)	537,000	2	1,074,000
The West-Australian	23,000	1	23,000
Townsville Bulletin	29,000	1	29,000
Sunday Age (Melb)	208,000	1	208,000
Preston Leader	n/a	1	-
	1,455,000	22	4,018,000

Figure 100 Newspaper mentions of *Borderline* and circulation figures

Total sales volume of title x: media mentions using average circulation figures (2003-2008) *counting each newspaper only once*.

702: 1,455,000

The result is that for each copy of *Borderline* sold, the book's profile was increased through over 2,073 mentions circulated to newspaper readers (if each newspaper's circulation is counted once). Note that this figure is high and close to that of *Dark Victory*, because most of the large circulation newspapers mentioned *Borderline* at least once, and repeat mentions are not counted using this method. Or, to apply the second method:

Total sales volume of title x: media mentions x average circulation figures (2003-2008).

702: 4,018,000

Viewed this way, for each copy of *Borderline* sold,it was mentioned in newspapers more than 5,700 times (if each instance of the newspaper mention is counted). Although this book sold fewer than 1,000 copies in 2003-2008, it received over *4 million* mentions in individual

newspapers during this period. Of course several mentions would have passed unnoticed by many readers, but this is a powerful example of the way in which a modestly-selling book during this period could play into a larger public sphere through the media.

In addition, although it was not possible to track media mentions of *A Certain Maritime Incident* because of the Senate Select Committee investigation of the same name, David Marr stated "my impression is that Tony Kevin's book, when it appeared in 2004, was the subject of at least as much media attention as ours".[112] In conclusion, in this case-study, books and the media (represented here by newspapers) complemented each other. Books provided occasions for filling newspaper columns through news reporting, interviews with authors and book reviews. Newspapers vastly increased the platform from which authors and publishers could disseminate their titles' ideas.[113]

Academic citations

Not unexpectedly, a different pattern occurs when examining the timeframe of academic citations.
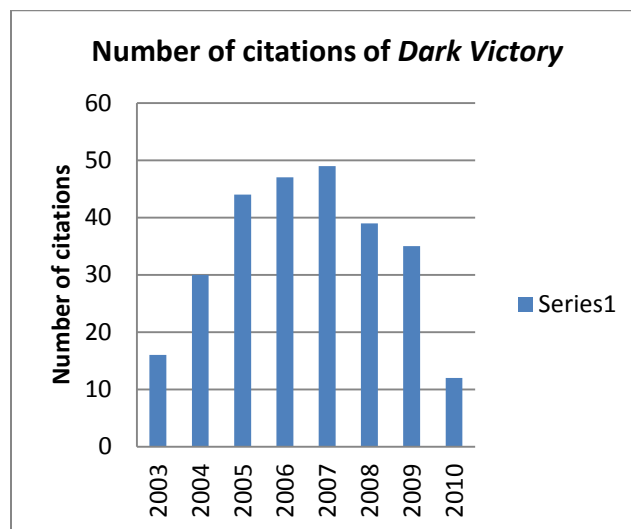
Figure 101 The academic citations of *Dark Victory* increased over several years and declined in number slowly

Rather than peaking early and dropping away, as with media mentions, the citations build over a number of years, in this case five years, before dropping away. This pattern was also observable in a number of other cited books.

---

[112] D. Marr, personal communication, Sydney, 2011.
[113] There is an ongoing debate about whether the serialisation of books in newspapers and magazines cannibalises book sales. This research does not engage with the debate but it is noted here.
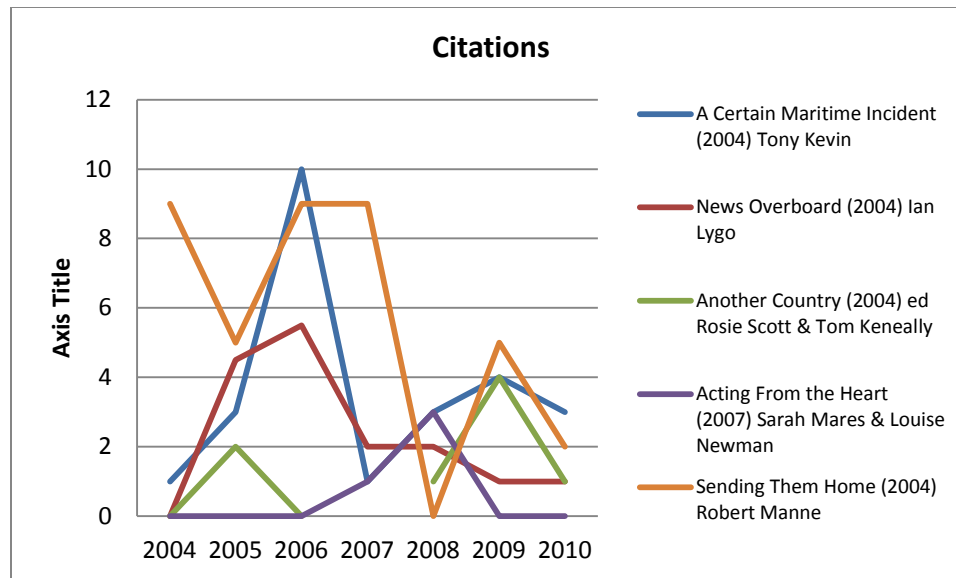
Figure 102 Citations of other case study books

Academic references to the books occurred over a number of years. In some cases, after citations had dropped off, a new spike occurred. Clearly, a longer timeframe and a different cycle (with a longer-lasting build, peak and decline) are evident. Academic citations by their nature also reach different types of audiences. To access the online journals, readers must usually have a profession that includes access to such databases or take the trouble to locate them using a public library. The journals are arguably likely to have a greater proportion of international readers. It is difficult to reach conclusions about the circulation of the journals because many online readers and researchers download individual articles without reading or scanning an entire issue. However, the patterns reflect the traditional model of academic research that builds on previous contributions to knowledge and acknowledges relevant works in a literature review or through citations. In summary, we can conclude the key features are:

- Longer timeframes lasting years before mentions of a book title generally peaks
- A longer lasting peak and a slower decline in mentions
- A more specialised professional readership: these articles are not easily available to the general public
- The likelihood of significant numbers of international readers
- A lower chance of the articles being randomly encountered and read than in newspapers

Parliament

Another way to consider whether the case-study books played into the political debate is to examine parliamentary written records. Australia's policies were determined at the national level of government, therefore research was conducted using the Hansard records of the Australian Federal Parliament.

Research methodologies

The research methodologies are summarised as follows:

1. A shortlist of 34 titles was selected from the top 5000 Nielsen Bookscan non-fiction books from 2003-2008. Other titles released in 2002 were added, on the basis that they played into debate in 2003 although they did not appear in the top 5000 list in 2003, for example: *Quarterly Essay: Girt by sea: Australia, the refugees and the politics of fear* by Mungo MacCallum, published by Black Inc., and *Don't Tell the Prime Minister* by Patrick Weller, published by Scribe. Finally, titles which were brought to the attention of the researcher (such as *Another Country*, which was released in a limited print run of 100 thereby excluding it from the top 5000) were also included. In summary, the books include a shortlist from the top 5000 non-fiction titles 2003-2008, some key books published in 2002 and a small number of other significant books relating to the debate.[114]

2. After consulting with the librarian at the Australian Parliamentary Library, searches were conducted on the ParlInfo website.[115]

Findings

The results clearly indicate empirical mentions of 18 case study books *directly* within the political sphere, including:

- Being mentioned in parliamentary debate or in a question in Parliament
- Being mentioned in parliamentary committee reports
- In submissions to parliament committees from refugee activist groups and private citizens
- Book launches in Canberra, in particular the launch of *Dark Victory* at the Canberra Press Gallery
- The one-off use by PEN of a book of writings by detainees to lobby politicians directly.

These books are discussed further in the next sections.[116]

---

[114] As noted previously, this is not an exhaustive list of titles, narrative non-fiction or otherwise, but it is suitably comprehensive for examining the role of narrative non-fiction books in relation to this debate.

[115] http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/search.w3p;adv=yes The ParlInfo online search tool enables searches of Hansard records, bills and legislation, procedural documents, submissions to inquiries, and Parliamentary Committee reports. It also enables searches of media coverage and journal articles accessible via the Parliamentary Library (although these are not available in full to members of the general public). ParlInfo does not include classified material including Ministerial briefs, Cabinet Submissions and other classified information.

[116] *Indirect* examples, which will not be considered further in this chapter, included citations of books in research reports and journal articles available through the Australian Parliamentary Library and references to books in media coverage available through the Australian Parliamentary Library. The librarian at the Australian Parliamentary Library advised that aggregate borrowing statistics for titles, download statistics for individual journal articles online, and download rates for online media items were not available.

Books mentioned in parliamentary debate or in a question in parliament

One direct empirical record of books playing a role in public debate is through mentions on the floor of parliament. There were 26 mentions of case-study books in parliamentary debate or in questions in Parliament. Of these, 19 related to *Dark Victory*, two related to *Refuge Australia* and one each to *Guzin Najim's The Promise, Another Country*, *A Certain Maritime Incident*, *The Bitter Shore* and *Human Rights Overboard*.

Title & year of publication	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Dark Victory (03)	12	4	2	1				
Guzin Najim's The Promise (03)	1							
Another Country (04)			1					
Refuge Australia (04)				2				
A Certain Maritime Incident (04)							1	
The Bitter Shore (08)								1
Human Rights Overboard (08)						1		
Total	**13**	**4**	**3**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**1**

Figure 103 Books mentioned in parliamentary debate or questions in Parliament

The following quotes indicate the tenor of the discussion.

> While on the subject of intelligence reports, we must remember that our Prime Minister is not beyond using intelligence reports for his own political ends. As noted in a just released book, *Dark Victory*, Mr Howard quoted from an Office of National Assessments report to bolster his claims during the last election that asylum seekers had thrown children into the sea. He gave no hint at the time that this report was based on nothing more than press reports of claims made by the then defence minister, Peter Reith. We all know the rest: after the election the claims were exposed as false and that John Howard presented ONA second-hand information as independent verification that asylum seekers really had thrown children overboard.

> Kim Wilkie, ALP (Australian Labor Party), Western Australia[117]

> The very clear message from my electorate, not just prior to the election but since that time, is that they wholeheartedly endorse and support the government in relation to this

---

[117] Parliament of Australia. IRAQ - House of Representatives Hansard, 19 March 2003

policy position. There are other people in the Australian community who are completely out of touch on this issue. David Marr is one of those. I understand that in his latest publication of propaganda, *Dark Victory*, he makes some mention of the government's position in relation to this policy during the course of the 2001 election campaign. He is completely devoid of any real understanding of the facts in relation to this matter.

>   Peter Dutton, Liberal, Queensland.[118]

Several politicians urged that particular books be read by Australians.

>   Every Australian politician should read *Dark Victory* by Marian Wilkinson and David Marr, which outlines the deception and cynical manipulation of human beings by the Howard government.
>
>   Anthony Albanese, ALP, New South Wales[119] (recommended again on 10 November 2005 and 28 February 2006)

>   I would commend to people the book, *Dark Victory*, by David Marr and Marian Wilkinson.
>
>   Rob McClelland, ALP, NSW[120]

>   For those who want to look at this issue in further detail—who do not just want to take my word for the statements I have made about the government's willingness to misuse its powers under the law and, I would argue, outside the law—I recommend they read the book *Dark Victory* by Marian Wilkinson and David Marr. I think it is one of the best and most comprehensive outlines detailing what happened through the period of the Tampa and afterwards. It has a political partisan perspective, but the specific details and facts it contains are very shocking and should continually be put back on the record.
>
>   Andrew Bartlett, Democrats, Queensland [121] (and recommended earlier on 25 March 2004)

Andrew Bartlett also recommended *Refuge Australia* on 8 February and 2 March in 2006.

The Hansard records also contain mentions of books years after the speaker first had contact with them. For example, five years after the publication of Tony Kevin's *A Certain Maritime Incident*, the accuracy of its contents was disputed in Parliament in 2009.

---

[118] Parliament of Australia. MIGRATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (Further Border Protection Measures) Bill 2002 [No. 2] - Second Reading - House of Representatives Hansard, 13 May 2003

[119] Parliament of Australia. GRIEVANCE DEBATE - Australian Human Rights Commission Legislation - House of Reps Hansard, 18 August 2003

[120] Parliament of Australia. MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE - National Security: Law Enforcement - House of Reps Hansard, 8 October 2003

[121] Parliament of Australia. INTELLIGENCE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2005 - Second Reading - Senate Hansard, 5 October 2005

I was on that committee and heard and read of a report of the captain of the Adelaide actually saying, "They're throwing kids overboard." That has developed through the mists of time, so now we have this continual line by the Labor Party about a "children overboard" scandal. It is not Senator Furner's fault that he is ignorant of the facts. He was not here at the time. Perhaps he only believes what he reads and only believes the commentary that is made by other people—people like Tony Kevin and others who wanted to drag it out further and have an investigation into SIEV36, as though that was something that the Australian government was responsible for. If he had been around at the time, he might realise exactly what did take place.

Senator Alan Ferguson, Liberal, South Australia[122]

In 2010, seven years after *Dark Victory* made such an impact in parliamentary circles and despite an arguable lack of policy change, opponents of asylum-seeker policies were still recommending books.

I believe Jacquie Everitt's book *The Bitter Shore* should be compulsory reading for all Australians to remind us of the devastating impact that the coalition's policies had on asylum seekers and their children. The tale of Shayan Badraie, the six-year-old boy who features in *The Bitter Shore*, is a shameful episode for this country, but most particularly for the former immigration minister, the member for Berowra, who refused to respond adequately to all[ow] humane advice on the handling of this traumatised child. The unhealthy culture that the member for Berowra fostered in his department was highlighted in the Palmer report of July 2005 and will forever be an indictment of his time in that position and a blight on this country.

Dr Mike Kelly, ALP, Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support and Parliamentary Secretary for Water[123]

How can we summarise the significance of this activity? Firstly, most of the mentions were by critics of the Australian government's policies (21 mentions), two mentions were to dispute the books and to defend the government's policies, and two others were tangential.[124] It seems clear from the number of mentions and the impassioned nature of the mentions that the arguments of *Dark Victory* achieved a high level of awareness within the political sphere. Likewise, without knowing the extent to which they were actually read, it seems feasible that the other books also acted as symbolic rallying points for politicians. Politicians who referred to a case-study book on the floor of Parliament included: *Australian Labor Party*: Kim Wilkie, Jacinta Collins, Duncan

---

[122] Parliament of Australia. BORDER PROTECTION - Senate Hansard, 29 October 2009

[123] Parliament of Australia. ANTI-PEOPLE SMUGGLING AND OTHER MEASURES BILL 2010 - Second Reading - House of Reps Hansard, 15 March 2010

[124] The two other references were by Senator Ruth Mackay, ALP, in Senate Estimates hearings. She questioned the then Director of ABC TV, Sandra Levy, about a Media Watch episode in which the *Dark Victory* author David Marr joked about "albrechting", a disrespectful reference to a member of the ABC Board, Janet Albrechtsen. (The Hansard record also included brief references to the book.)

Kerr (3 mentions); Anthony Albanese (4 mentions); Rob McClelland, Kevin Rudd, Mike Kelly, Anna Burke and John Faulkner (3 mentions); *Australian Democrats*: Andrew Bartlett (4 mentions); *Liberal Party of Australia*: Alan Ferguson and Peter Dutton; and *The Australian Greens*: Sarah Hanson-Young.

No. of mentions	ALP	Dem	Lib	Greens
	16	4	2	1

Figure 104 No. of mentions of case study books in parliamentary debate or questions by political party

It is important to note that although genuine concern was expressed about the treatment of asylum-seekers in the opposition parties and in some sectors of the governing party, *Dark Victory* in particular was also used for political point-scoring in parliamentary debates by the ALP to criticise the general trustworthiness of the Howard government.[125] However, one Greens politician used the publication of *Human Rights Overboard* as an occasion to call (unsuccessfully) for a royal commission.[126] The evidence clearly points to books playing a direct role in parliamentary debate, notably *Dark Victory* but also a number of other books on a less visible scale. The next section discusses ways in which case-study books played into more diffused debate through submissions and reports.

Submissions to Parliamentary Committees
Submissions to 13 inquiries which are publicly available through ParlInfo, either quoted case-study books directly or cited them.

- The Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee Inquiry into the Migration Legislation Amendment (Further Border Protection) Bill 2002 and related matters. (The Committee released its report in October 2002).
- The Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee Staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (October 2003).

---

[125] For example: "It appears, as was the case in the lead-up to the 2001 federal election, that our Prime Minister has tried to deceive us about the commitment of our troops in terms of the predeployment. As was well described by Senator Bishop earlier, our Prime Minister has also confused aggression with leadership. He is supporting a new US doctrine of pre-emption which is now in conflict with the classic American conservative internationalism of Colin Powell. A recently published book by David Marr and Marian Wilkinson, *Dark Victory*, highlights how the Howard government has compromised, to the very core, Australian public administration and defence institutions. So, Senator Tchen, I do not think it is the Labor Party you should be describing as 'confused' or 'conflicted'" Jacinta Collins, ALP. Parliament of Australia. IRAQ - Senate Hansard, 20 March 2003

[126] Senator HANSON-YOUNG (South Australia) (2:22 PM) "My question is to the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Evans. In light of the publication of a new book, *Human Rights Overboard*, detailing the horrific stories of children in detention and the ongoing long-term psychological effects that this has had on children and their families, as reported in the Australian [newspaper] on Monday, will the minister confirm that the government will look into establishing a royal commission looking into the effects that Australia's immigration policy has had on refugees?" Parliament of Australia. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE - Immigration Detention - Senate Hansard, 3 September 2008

- The Senate Legal And Consitutional Legislation Committee Inquiry Into The Provisions Of The Disability Discrimination Amendment Bill 2003 (The report was tabled on 25 March 2004.)
- Senate Legislation Committee Community Affairs report on the provisions of the Family and Community Services Legislation Amendment (Special Benefit Activity Test) Bill 2002 (which included examining "The ability of TPV holders to access the review and appeals systems". The report was tabled on 2 December 2002.)
- The Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee Inquiry into the provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Bill (No.2) 2005 (The report was completed on 28 November 2005.)
- Inquiry into the administration and operation of the Migration Act 1958 (The inquiry included both general submissions and submissions on children in immigration detention which cited case-study books. The report is dated March 2006.)
- Senate Select Committee on Mental Health (The committee tabled its report on 28 April 2006.)
- The Legal and Constitutional Committee Inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Designated Unauthorised Arrivals) Bill 2006 (the Bill). (The report was tabled on 13 June 2006.)
- The Joint Standing Committee on Treaties inquiry into the Agreement between Australia and the Republic of Indonesia on the Framework for Security Cooperation (Lombok Treaty) (The report was tabled on 6 December 2006.)
- The Senate Finance and Public Administrations Committee's Inquiry into Transparency and accountability of Commonwealth public funding and expenditure (The report was tabled on 1 March 2007.)
- Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity inquiry into Law Enforcement Integrity models (The report is dated 23 February 2009.)
- The Inquiry into Immigration Detention in Australia by the Joint Standing Committee on Migration. (The Committee tabled its report on 18 August 2009.)
- Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration Inquiry into the Contribution of Migration to Australian Society (18 April 2011)

Figure 105 List of parliamentary and Australian National Audit Office inquiries in which case-study books were mentioned

Most case-study books were only used in one submission to one inquiry, and most inquiries received one or two submissions which cited these books. An examination of these submissions demonstrates that a wide range of sources was cited, including government and NGO reports and legal precedents. Therefore, the case-study books can be considered as part of a broad range of books and reports which were cited in submissions. The next section examines ways in which the narrative non-fiction books, which are of interest to the current research, were used in submissions.

All of the submissions cited books in the context of expressing concern about the conditions for asylum-seekers and to request improvements. Most submissions cited books in traditional manners, although a submission to the Inquiry into Immigration Detention in Australia by the Joint Standing Committee on Migration from Kurt Esser, Chair, The Justice Project Inc. attached an appendix to the body of its submission: "Examples of mismanagement of Immigration Detention Centres, extracted from *Human Rights Overboard*".

The majority of the submissions were from organised groups, although five submissions were from individuals without any expressed affiliation beyond their professional occupation. In such an example books were cited by concerned private citizens, for example a submission from Michael Brisco (a researcher in the School of Medicine at Flinders University) to the Legal and Constitutional Committee Inquiry into the Migration amendment (designated unauthorized arrivals) bill 2006, included at the end of a five page letter listed:

> Sources:
>
> Frank Brennan SJ AO: "Tampering with Asylum", UQP, 2003
>
> Thomas Pogge, Oxford Amnesty Lecture; transcript obtained from the Radio National program "Encounter", 21 May 06 (abc.net.au/rn)
>
> Robert Manne/David Corlett: "Sending them Home": Schwartz Publishing, 2004[127]

One notable submission from an individual is a letter on plain paper from Mr Harry Evans to the inquiry into the Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee Staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (October 2003). The opening paragraph notes "Thank you for your letter of 7 April 2003, in which the committee invites me to make a submission on its terms of reference." Mr Evans was the Clerk of the Australian Senate at the time of penning the submission.[128] In Evans's submission Patrick Weller's *Don't Tell the Prime Minister* is cited in a discussion of the different types of ministerial personal staff:

> Some are models of rectitude and reticence. Some meet the description of the felicitous American phrase "junk-yard attack dog".[8]
>
> [8] This expression is reported by Professor Patrick Weller, Don't Tell the Prime Minister, 2002, p. 72.[129]

Parliament Reports and Committees

There were also mentions of case-study books in three parliamentary reports, however, if books were mentioned, they were usually listed in appendices or lists of submissions:

---

[127] Parliament of Australia. Submission - Inquiry into the provisions of the Migration Amendment (Designated Unauthorised Arrivals) Bill 2006 www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/legcon_ctte/completed_inquiries/2004-07/migration_unauthorised_arrivals/submissions/sub136.pdf

[128] As Clerk of the Senate, Harry Evans, a Labor senator, reported to the Senate rather than the Government.

[129] Parliament of Australia. Submission - Inquiry Into Members of Parliament Staff (MOPS) www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/fapa_ctte/completed_inquiries/2002-04/mops/submissions/sub03.doc

- The Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee Staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (October 2003)
- Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee activities (inquiries and reports) Reform of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (September 2005)
- The Senate Select Committee on Mental Health (2 August 2005) (case study books were cited in Appendix 7 - List of tabled documents

There are also two recorded mentions of books in discussion relating to Parliamentary Committees (by Senator John Faulkner, and Dr Susan Harris-Rimmer, ANU, who was giving evidence).[130]

In summary, the evidence clearly demonstrates that critics of the government's policies used books to support their arguments through submissions to parliamentary inquiries and Committee hearings. References to case study books were made in submissions to 13 parliamentary inquiries and in three parliamentary reports. Other references were made in Senate Occasional Lectures and NGO reports. Next, we will consider less tangible ways in which books played into debate in federal parliamentary circles.

Book launches

Some of the most powerful examples of books in public debate may be intangible and difficult to trace empirically. For example, in 2008 Dr Susan Harris-Rimmer, when giving evidence in relation to the Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs inquiry into whistle-blowing protections within the Australian government public sector, recalled the launch of *Dark Victory* five years earlier:

> I remember being at a Press Club launch of the David Marr–Marian Wilkinson book *Dark Victory*, where he [Marr] was yelling at the audience of public servants and press: "Leak! Leak early! Leak often!" All the media people were going "Yeah!" and all the public servants were just going "No, no, no." It was terrible. You could see the struggles and the tensions in the room about that particular issue.
>
> Dr Susan Harris-Rimmer[131]

---

[130] Both cited Iain Lygo's *News Overboard: The Tabloid Media, Race Politics and Islam.* Other mentions of case-study books occurred in Senate Occasional Lectures (e.g., Images, Colours and Reflections: Lectures in the Senate Occasional Lecture Series 2005–2006: "Religion in 21st Century Australian National Politics"[130] and "Incumbency Dominance: an Unhealthy Trend?" Reports by non-government organisation listed on the ParlInfo website also contained references, for example, the *Isma – Listen* report (National consultations on eliminating prejudice against Arab and Muslim Australians) by Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

[131] Parliament of Australia. STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS : Whistleblowing protections within the Australian government public sector: House of Representatives Committee Hansard, 16 October 2008

Therefore, another point to note is that it was not just through reading books but by attending events associated with them or even hearing accounts anecdotally about such events that their presence was felt in political debates.

The one-off use by PEN of a book of writings by detainees to lobby politicians directly
This debate was notable for the public participation of a large number of Australian writers (and less visibly, publishers). Sydney PEN is an affiliate of International Pen, which describes itself as:

> …the worldwide association of writers [which] emphasises the role of literature in mutual understanding and world culture; and promotes literature in various ways, including opposing restraints on freedom of expression and working to promote literacy itself. Today International PEN has 144 centres in 102 countries across the globe, and is a powerful voice on behalf of writers harassed, imprisoned and sometimes murdered because of the words they write (Sydney Pen - About Us, 2011).

A number of Australian writers who were members of PEN became involved in lobbying to change the treatment of asylum-seekers. Two writers, Rosie Scott and Tom Keneally, edited an anthology, *Another Country: Southerly Special Edition* Volume 64 Number 1, 2004. This title does not appear in the Nielsen BookScan top 5000 non-fiction sales because a limited edition of 100 copies was initially printed. These were used to raise funds and were also personally presented by PEN members to politicians with requests that the cases of individual detainees whose work was included be investigated fairly. Typical of a broader range of events was a Canberra PEN lecture titled "Hysteria, tolerance, race and writing" on 15 November 2004 which was related to the book. Nick Jose, the President of Sydney PEN at the time, recalled, "around that [the publication of the book] some of the people in it gave performances, gave readings of their work, published their work elsewhere and a kind of sub-genre developed of refugee memoir, particularly from the Middle East" (Jose, 2009b p 256). The book was noted on the floor of Parliament: "A collection of poems by asylum seekers was recently published by PEN. It gives an insight into another world, another country—one of greater uncertainty, without hope, without dreams or trees and where children are placed behind barbed wire".[132]

Jose noted that mainstream Australian writers such as Eva Salis (now Eva Hornung), Linda Jaivin and Tom Keneally turned their attention to Australian refugee stories, expanding the interest of publishers and audiences in these themes. Sydney PEN set up a sub-committee called Writers in Detention, a new category which required the approval of all the major international PEN congresses. After it was passed, International PEN released formal denunciations of Australia's asylum-seeker policies, including a letter signed by ten Nobel Prize winners.

---

[132] Parliament of Australia. Anna Burke, ALP, Victoria, MIGRATION AMENDMENT (DETENTION ARRANGEMENTS) BILL 2005 - Second Reading - Hansard House of Representatives, 22 June 2005.

The role of the book *Another Country* and of Sydney PEN in this debate can be considered through a number of prisms. First, Sydney PEN members proved themselves to be articulate and astute lobbyists in communicating their messages. Already possessed of personal connections with elite circles, they expanded them and pressed their messages remorselessly, to the extent of co-opting international Nobel Prize winners to their cause. Second, individual writers such as Tom Keneally who possessed some of the cache of celebrity, were able to draw public audiences in person and through the media. Politicians presumably attempted to manage relations with the Sydney PEN executive diplomatically, even if they were unwilling to change their policies. Finally, however, it is worth noting the symbolic power in operation in this milieu. Sydney PEN executives and publishers used the symbolism associated with books and serious writers to lend weight to their gravitas and significance.

Writers' festivals, cyberspace, and other public debate

Another important way in which some of these case study books contributed to public debate was through appearances by the authors and editors at writers' festivals. The 2000s were a period in which attendances increased sharply at writers' festivals across Australia. Although coordinated national figures are not available, Ommundsen and Jacklin (2008) report the following figures:

> Adelaide Writers' Week: (2008) 100,000 attendances at individual sessions
>
> Sydney Writers' Festival: (2007) 87,000 attendances at individual sessions
>
> Melbourne Writers' Festival: increase from 34,000 (2006) to 40,000 (2007) attendances at individual sessions
>
> Brisbane Writers Festival: increases from 19,000 (2005) to 25,000 (2007) to 32,000 (2008) attendances at individual sessions.

The festivals work closely with local and national media, and since the end of this research period, have introduced online coverage of sessions, all of which increase their audience reach. The Melbourne Writers' Festival director, Rosemary Cameron, emphasises the role of writers' festivals in driving media coverage of issues to do with books.

> I think the most important thing we do is we drive media coverage. We had our media coverage valued in 2006 and it was found we had over 6 million dollars worth of media coverage. Sydney's has been valued at over 12 million … I know this sounds cynical in a way… but writers' festivals give validity to what would otherwise be seen as a PR author tour when a new book comes out. So we're adding gravitas to that somehow (Cameron in Ommundsen and Jacklin, 2008 p 128).

Dr Wendy Were, director of the Sydney Writers' Festival, observed that "…non-fiction programming has been a strength for Sydney… So our number of male attendees is very high, in

comparison to audiences at other festivals, not just Australian but international ones" (Ommundsen and Jacklin, 2008 p 144). Mapping out the presence of case-study books in online forums and in other contributions (for example, through appearances at activist forums by authors and editors) does not fall within the scope of the current research, but it is appropriate to acknowledge that this activity was also occurring during the research period.

7.5   The limitations of books in the asylum-seeker debate

7.5.1   Did activists give credence to the role of books in accounts of campaigns?

Despite the information provided in this chapter so far about the role of books in this debate, there is a striking feature in accounts of asylum-seeker activism reflecting on the period. They have not emphasised the significance of books, despite this debate being notable for the commitment of Australian writers and publishers. In "Mobilising Rural Australia" Anne Coombs, one of the founders of Rural Australians for Refugees (RAR), emphasises the centrality of email technology in mobilising Australians. "RAR could never have grown into a movement as quickly or as geographically dispersed as it is without email" (Coombes, 2004 p 133). Coombes also recounts the valuable contributions of writers in local regional communities, not through writing books, but by writing letters to regional newspapers, which led to the formation of local activist groups and committees. Perhaps books were not mentioned because the focus of her article was different, but both she and Margot O'Neill give accounts of activism in which books had a low profile.

The point here is to avoid careless triumphalism about the role of books in this debate despite clear empirical evidence of their impact at the highest level of Australian government. In fact, it cannot be ignored that the books, the writers, the publishers, and the activists did not achieve their aims. In 2010 Robert Manne reflected:

> Every recent opinion poll makes it clear that hostility to unauthorised asylum seekers represents the opinion not of a small racist minority but of the overwhelming majority of the Australian mainstream. Neither "education" nor "leadership" seem likely in the near future to make Australians open their hearts to asylum seekers or to challenge the mood of the conservative populist political culture that crystalised at the time of Tampa (Manne, 2010 p 14).

It does not fall within the parameters of this thesis to consider why such extensive activism ultimately failed. However it is important to note the failure; in fact, it is unavoidable. The consequence for this thesis is to argue that the cultural value of books in public debate cannot be based on whether successful outcomes are achieved (and of course, given that books offering competing positions are published in a range of debates, it is inevitable that many of them will not bring about direct legislative or widespread societal change). The publication of books may have impact in shaping public debate but may not lead to the desired change. The question then

becomes, can forms of cultural value contributed by these case study books be mapped despite the failure of the campaigns?

7.5.2   The Enlightenment ideal and Thompson's model of deliberative democracy

John B. Thompson (1995) draws on Habermas's argument that the development of a bourgeois public sphere was important because it provided a platform from which independent criticism of state power could be conducted (p 236). Thompson also notes considerable criticism of Habermas's thesis since the publication of his ground-breaking work (eg. Calhoun, 1992) and it is not within the scope of this research to examine this debate. Rather, this thesis acknowledges the influential Enlightenment ideal that through public debate, societies could reach a more rational basis for decision-making. Thompson (1995) concludes his study with a proposal for the establishment of "deliberative democracy".

> The deliberative conception of democracy focuses attention on the processes by which judgements are formed and decisions are taken. Individuals are called on to consider alternatives, to weigh up the reasons and arguments offered in support of particular proposals and, on the basis of their consideration of different points of view, to form reasoned judgments … the legitimacy of a decision comes from the fact that the decision is the outcome of a process of generalized deliberation …

> The formation of reasoned judgements does not require individuals to participate in dialogue with others... On the contrary, by providing individuals with forms of knowledge and information to which they would otherwise not have access, mediated quasi-interaction can stimulate deliberation just as much as, if not more than, face-to-face interaction in a shared locale. This is not to say that all forms of mediated communication will, in practice, stimulate deliberation – doubtless that would be untrue (Thompson, 1995 p 256).

It would be a trap and a falsity to portray people in one position in the asylum-seeker debate as emotive and people in another position as reasoned. Both sides were emotive at times and both appealed to intellect to shore up their positions. The arguments for the more humane treatment of asylum-seekers found a large and receptive readership, but although these books received extensive media, parliamentary and academic coverage, ultimately, many people were not swayed by these arguments. Yet the research findings also demonstrate that the Australian publishing industry actively contributed to the health of deliberative democracy, with Australian independent publishers (large and small) playing a distinctive role.

7.6   Conclusion

The asylum-seeker issue inspired many books directly about the debate, some of which became bestsellers and others sold in the hundreds or low thousands of copies. Sales of books which

directly addressed the debate within the research period were modest apart from *Dark Victory*, *Guzin Najim's The Promise* and *Sending Them Home*, part of the *Quarterly Essay* series, although sales of life narratives about Muslim and Middle-Eastern women dwarfed all other categories. Many books about this debate sold extremely modestly and could not be regarded as a highly commercial proposition.

Australian independent presses published the vast majority of direct commentary about asylum-seeker debates. Allen & Unwin, the major Australian independent publisher, was responsible for the only best-seller which directly debated the policies in this period, and the popularity of *Borderline* in 2002, published by UNSW Press, must also be mentioned. Multinationals contributed to the diversity of broader contextual reading by contributing international titles in the areas of ethics and law. Australian independent publishers were responsible for most of the long essays and works by academics. One interpretation of these findings is that Australian independent publishers play an extremely important role in the publication of books about *national* (and sub-national) public debates, which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Despite the modest sales of many books written directly about the debate, empirical investigation uncovered the surprising extent to which they were recorded in media mentions, in academic citations, and in parliamentary records. Australian independent publishers were successful in contributing to the debate through bestselling works of extended journalism and more modestly-selling works that achieved circulation and exposure beyond their sales figures. The books relevant to this debate were also part of a broader, ongoing set of works that represented longer-term reflections about the law and ethics, the media and race relations, nationalism, and globalisation, in which this debate could be framed. Multinational and independent publishers contributed to these ongoing, international discussions but Australian publishers made distinctive contributions when debates were framed in national terms, through publishing works by Australian academics in particular and other analyses of national policies.

In 2009 when Nick Jose reflected on PEN's activism, he said:

> One role for writers in society is to have that seismic sense of what are the big issues, and where the society might split or where it might need to be pushed forward in some way. This is a very difficult issue for Australia. It's an ongoing and difficult issue, a defining issue for the country…The most mature way to deal with it is not to turn it into a wedge issue but to try and keep a capacity to make policy as calmly and effectively as it can be done. Maybe there's a sense that we've been through the fire, we went through a very difficult period on this and we've come out of it and there's a greater appreciation of how delicately it needs to be handled.

> I think it was important for writers in Australia and the publishing industry, the literary community to repoliticise, which they did around this issue. It was a reenergizing of Australian writing which included the emergence of strong essayistic polemical writing

in way that hadn't been there before, and I think it restated the international context for Australian writers and Australian intellectual life.[133]

The effects on the lives of people seeking asylum comes before any consideration of the impact of Australia's writers and publishers, but that research does not fall within the scope of this paper. Clearly, individual lives were saved or made more bearable through the efforts of committed writers and activists. We can't undertake counter-factual analysis, that is, to examine what would have happened without these interventions. However, the books ultimately were not successful in contributing to a broad change of public opinion (although we do not know their effects on individual readers). It could be suggested that the books and the debate surrounding them contributed to a political climate in which the newly-elected Rudd government introduced some more humane policies, but these changes were short-lived and electorally unpopular.

Despite this, there is a range of ways in which this publishing activity had significant value. First, authors, publishers and books were actively part of the democratic process in the 2000s, enriching "deliberative democracy" in Thompson's terms. The book was not "dead" in this period and readers engaged with issues by buying books, by reading about them in the media, and by directing the attention of Australian politicians to them. As the parliamentary records show, they were particularly successful in this regard. Further, the arguments contained within had a lifespan of years in academic citations, a less visible part of the fabric of public debate, and some of this work is still being studied by university students. Also, importantly, they served as resources for journalists such as Margot O'Neill and contributed to a body of work available for future historians and interested citizens.

The next chapter draws on the empirical findings in the current research in relation to the theoretical areas of interest: the externalities of book publishing activity as a public good, and theories of cultural value.

---

[133] N. Jose, personal communication, Sydney, 2009.

Chapter 8. Cultural value and a review of the research findings

8.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters demonstrate empirically that Australian readers turned to books in relation to recent public debates, and that the Australian publishing industry contributed to the processes of deliberative democracy with even some low-selling titles potentially reaching audiences in the millions. This chapter considers the findings in the context of theoretical scholarship about the value of the arts and culture. Given that this research draws upon scholarship in the disciplines of economics and literary studies, Barbara Herrnstein Smith's (1988) observations are particularly pertinent. She refers to "two discursive domains each of which is centrally concerned with questions of value":

> On the one hand there is the discourse of economic theory: money, commerce, technology, industry, production and consumption, workers and consumers; on the other hand, there is the discourse of aesthetic axiology: culture, art, genius, creation and appreciation, artists and connoisseurs. In the first discourse, events are explained in terms of calculation, preferences, costs, benefits, profits, prices and utility. In the second, events are explained—or (and this distinction/opposition is as crucial as any other the others), "justified"—in terms of inspiration, discrimination, taste (good taste, bad taste, no taste), the test of time, intrinsic value, and transcendent value' (Smith, 1988 p 127).

Although the two camps have been characterised as concerned with commercial/monetary value on the part of economics and cultural/non commercial/intrinsic value on the part of humanities, since then scholars in economics and the humanities have sought to find common ground, while respecting their particular disciplinary methodologies and boundaries.

Chapter 4 examined books as *private goods* and examined the economic structure, conduct and performance of the Australian publishing industry. The first part of the present chapter considers the *public-good* aspects of cultural activities in economics. The second section examines other ways in which cultural economists, cultural policy analysts and humanities scholars have accounted for the value of cultural goods, which fall outside the neoclassical economic framework. The third section addresses critiques of these debates and draws on the work of literary studies scholars (John Guillory, Barbara Herrnstein Smith, Steven Connor and Regenia Gagnier) who have attempted to locate common ground.

Following on from this, the fourth section disaggregates the aspects of cultural value proposed by Throsby and relates them to the research findings about books and the Australian publishing industry.

8.2 Theory: The economic value of books

In addition to books as private goods, they produce other collective benefits at a social level that take the form of a public good. Chapter 4 reviewed the characteristics of public goods as nonexcludable (it is difficult or costly to prevent someone from benefitting from them) and nonrival (one person's use does not decrease the amount available for others). This next section applies discussion of the research findings to the ways in which books and publishing contributed forms of public good.

8.2.1 Revisiting the public-good aspects of books and the Australian publishing industry

Heilbrun and Gray (1993) summarise the collective benefits of the arts as follows:

- a legacy to future generations;
- a source of national identity and prestige;
- the creator of benefits to the local economy;
- contributors to a liberal education;
- a contributor to the social improvement of arts participants ("to understand the collective traditions of our art and culture" p 208); and
- a force for encouraging artistic innovation (Heilbrun and Gray, 1993 pp 205-209).

The public-good aspects of books and publishing evident in the period of the research fall mostly under Heilbrun and Gray's list of benefits. In fact, given the difficulties facing the Australian publishing industry in 2011, it is tempting to portray 2003-2008 as a period of considerable achievement in narrative non-fiction publishing before the "cusp of paradigmatic change" (PWC, 2011) that has followed. The research period highlighted the authorship, editorship, publishing and discussion of a range of Australian works, and engagement with overseas-authored books, from transient reading pleasures to enduring works of literature. The public-good benefits were enhanced by the strength of its institutional networks (including professional associations such as the Australian Publishers Association, the Australian Society of Authors, PEN, and writers' festivals). More broadly, university departments involved in teaching and researching Australian literature keep discussion alive about the developing forms of Australian literature (in the case of this project, narrative non-fiction), building a legacy for future generations, contributing to a liberal education and educating Australians about our own literary traditions. Australia is a marginal literary producer in world terms and both the publishing infrastructure and the academic critical infrastructure ensured its relevance and presence internationally. The success of Australian writers is cause for national pride, which can be characterised as a public good, and this is acknowledged in Heilbrun and Gray's framework (national identity and prestige).

However, an additional public good has been identified in the current research namely, the contribution to deliberative democracy, not just through the direct publishing of books that can

be read in relation to public debates, but through books' broader contributions via TV, radio, newspapers, online forums and public events. Further, as J. B. Thompson (2010) has observed, publishers drive this broader activity as part of their marketing and profile-raising functions. Books that are available in the market but are not backed by marketing effects may be overlooked, despite the worthiness of their content. Also, on critical issues in the 2000s publishers and writers galvanised to address what they saw as moral and ethical imperatives. This need not be conceptualised as an ongoing function of the industry, and indeed that is an exhausting prospect. But there is a public-good dimension in having a viable, vibrant, committed publishing industry that is equipped to respond to urgent and outstanding issues of the time.[134]

Although there is clearly a market for books about public issues, usually:

> Print runs are often relatively low, although they're not that different in the US or the UK, funnily enough, but typically it'll be a 3,000 to 4,000 print run. If there's a book you're very confident about, you'll do more. But in Australia, for the kind of book we're interested in, which is serious non-fiction and quality fiction, that's a realistic first print run (Rosenbloom in King, 2007b p 155).

The current research bore these comments out, with bestsellers such as *Dark Victory* being an exception. That is, although many people like the idea of serious books about public issues being available, they would much rather read an entertaining thriller, romance, get-rich-quick tome or cookbook. This research argues that there is *nothing wrong with these choices*, and the field of the history of the book is built around respect for the choices of "everyday readers". Importantly, this underlines the distinction between the private consumption preferences of individuals (i.e., the books they personally buy or borrow to read) and the public-good function of books (the society-wide contributions we like to know that publishers and books are making, even if we don't choose to read some or all of those books ourselves).

Therefore, the factors which facilitate the output of the public good under examination include:

- The subsidising of some Australian independent publishers, for example, through universities;
- The commercial health of other small- and medium-sized Australian independent publishers, who use a range of strategies in the competitive marketplace;
- The commitment of the major Australian independent publisher to make available these types of books, and their ability to distribute them widely in retail outlets;

---

[134] The final report of the Book Industry Strategy Group raises concerns about "the level of public discourse on many important issues (politics, climate change, human rights, refugees)" in relation to the challenges posed by the digital revolution. However the substantial contributions of the publishing industry in this regard are not featured prominently in the report. Book Industry Strategy Group (BISG), 2011, *Final Report to Government,* Commonwealth of Australia, p 10

- The ability of Australian arms of multinational publishers to exercise more independence from their head offices in compiling their publishing lists than in previous periods; and
- The health of Australia's literary infrastructure: the popularity of writers' festivals and other forums for discussing books, the role of the educational institutions in promoting appreciation of books and reading; the practice of literary critics.

The factors that threaten the output of the public good under examination include:

- The "perfect storm" of changes in the publishing industry, including the popularity of overseas-based online book retailers, the closure of Australian book retail outlets, and the growth of ebooks;
- Changes in the economics of university presses: the declining market for monographs, the reduction in university library budgets for books due to vastly increased journal subscription rates, and pressure on university presses from their host organisations to minimise their reliance on subsidies, to reduce their lists of niche academic titles and to expand their trade lists;
- The potential for changes to the policy regime on parallel importation which could affect the economics of publishing Australian titles that have marginal commercial prospects;
- The difficulty experienced by some Australian independent publishers in obtaining the Australian rights to titles, even if the overseas rights holder (especially a multinational) has no interest in publishing them here; and
- A contracting market in Australian newspapers for Australian-authored op-ed articles:

  Now, with staff cutbacks in the last few years, newspapers are buying in more op-ed pieces from overseas, because there are fewer editors employed to engage local people to write local op-eds. Even Fairfax (e.g., in the weekend segment in the Australian Financial Review) is buying in more op-eds. This reduces opportunities for local authorship of op-ed pieces relating to newly published books.[135]

Weiss believes that the contemporary changes in the Australian book publishing industry are of a greater order of magnitude than previously:

  While there certainly have been temporary or ongoing challenges in earlier years (examples would be reduction in uni library budgets for books, introduction of GST on books, exchange rate fluctuations, paper supply issues), what's happening now is a genuine paradigm shift. Or structural adjustment, or whatever you want to call it. It's

---

[135] E. Weiss, personal communication, Sydney, 2009.

much more dramatic than the kind of incremental and "normal" change which the industry has experienced over the past 20 years.[136](Weiss, 2011)

Weiss's position was echoed by the final report of the Book Industry Strategy Group, which also draws attention to the "unparallel pace" of change (BISG, 2011 p 1). Given the changes in the industry and the potential for policy reviews, the question arises as to how we can conceptualise the forms of non-economic value uncovered in the previous chapters. Economists have developed techniques to value public goods, most notably contingent valuation methods.[137] However, economics as a discipline has not developed tools for measurement to do with the nature of art and culture, to which we turn next.

8.3   Theory: The cultural value of books

8.3.1   The views of economists and cultural policy scholars

The next section discusses the approaches of cultural economists and cultural policy analysts, and then contrasts them with discussions about cultural value in the humanities. Although cultural economists and policy analysts draw upon each others' scholarship, they have also taken slightly different theoretical paths in the 2000s.

The intrinsic and instrumental value of books and publishing

In the 1990s cultural economists examined ways to measure the instrumental benefits of culture: "the ancillary effects of culture, [in] which culture is used to achieve a social or economic purpose" (Holden, 2006 p 14). The 2000s saw renewed attention to the intrinsic value of cultural goods and services: "the set of values that relate to the subjective experience of culture intellectually, emotionally and spiritually" (Holden, 2006 p 14). Generally, economists have been reluctant to ascribe inherent values in distinguishing cultural goods and services from other commodities. Even earlier economists who were influential in the development of ideas about cultural economics justified them in non-intrinsic terms (e.g., a correlation with developed economies and advanced civilisations, the development of good citizens, distractions for the working class from idleness or vice (Goodwin, 2006p 34-37)).

The move to theorise cultural value as a distinct form of value that is of interest to economics is a recent and radical development. The notion of intrinsic value is difficult to work with because economists acknowledge the socially and historically-contingent nature of cultural evaluations

---

[136] E. Weiss, personal communication, Sydney, 2011.

[137] "CVM and related techniques attempt to assign an economic value to the externality or public good by assessing what the function would be if in fact demand could be expressed through normal market channels. These estimates can be aggregated across consumers to reach a total demand price which can be compared with the costs of providing various levels of the good in order to determine whether or not supply is warranted and, if so, how much" (Throsby, 2001 p 25).

and this further complicates attempts to analyse it. Yet the limitations of economic approaches that do not account for intrinsic value have been forcefully argued by Arjo Klamer (2002):

> ...we have to do more, to develop other concepts and different arguments, in order to have a meaningful account for what is happening ... The existing manner of speaking, with its vocabulary of utility, externality and welfare is of no use when we try to be more concrete on the values that are in operation (Klamer, 2002 p 457).

Klamer puts forward a research agenda with far-reaching ramifications, including incorporating notions of social and cultural capital in economics (p 461), reconceptualising goods to include "intangibles like freedom, trust, friendship, culture, reputation, or a good conversation" (p 465), and expanding the notion of ownership to examine the commonly-owned nature of valued social and cultural possessions such as cultural heritage (p 468-469). To date Klamer's proposals have not been widely taken up, but a key development in cultural economics in the 2000s has been the attempt to encompass consideration of the intrinsic value of cultural goods and services, although the methods for doing so are still in development.

Intra-generational and inter-generational equity

Two other important economic concepts relate to the spread of benefits across a generation (intra-generational) and across generations (inter-generation). Intra-generational equity is often applied to considerations of diversity and the attainment of socially equitable outcomes. In the case of the current research, it applies to whether the diversity of books was representative of the range of people with an interest in the debates, and also whether the books were available to a diverse group of people. As noted, the range of international perspectives tended to be funnelled through the English-language publishing centres of London and New York, and translation rights for non-English books through Paris. To its credit, the Australian industry, through both multinational and independent publishers, attempted to increase the diversity of voices published, particularly in relation to Middle-Eastern and Muslim authors.

Inter-generational equity issues relate to investments now that may benefit future generations, and the techniques involved in discounting present values for future benefits. This is of less pressing relevance, although possibly a case for government support for the industry could partly be made in terms of the bequest value for future generations who seek a clearer understanding of their country's history and its influences.

8.3.2   Cultural value in cultural policy discourse

Since the 1960s and 1970s the shift away from a public and policy assumption that cultural goods and services had value as "a given" (intrinsic value) has been recorded in the US (McCarthy et al., 2004) and the UK (Holden, 2004, 2006). Cultural advocates responded by presenting their arguments in terms of the instrumental benefits: the social and economic benefits

of cultural activity ("impact" (O'Brien, 2010 p 8)) as justifications for funding. Even government ministers naturally pursued funding using the most persuasive arguments prevailing at the time.

> I acknowledge unashamedly that when I was Secretary of State, going into what always seemed like a battle with the Treasury, I would try and touch the buttons that would work ... And I still believe, passionately, that it was the right approach to take. If it hadn't been taken, the outcome would have left the arts in a much poorer condition (Smith, 2003).

These arguments held sway with governments, but research soon established that the social and economic outcomes did not always match the claims made (e.g., (McCarthy et al., 2004 pp 7-35)) and they may have skewed the programs of cultural bodies. Further, reporting on the outcomes of these socially and economically-oriented funding programs led to a ballooning of administrative reporting, with an emphasis on the evidence of effectiveness and efficiency of program delivery (Selwood, 2003), including "ever more ludicrous demands to monitor and categorise every audience member and participant" (Bestwick, 2003). All the while, the intrinsic cultural value created, which the leaders of cultural organisations believed to be unique about their organisations, was pushed to one side. "We tend to lose sight of the notion that government supports art for its own sake" (Selwood, 2003).

Therefore, the 2000s in the UK, the US and Australia saw extensive discussion among cultural policy leaders and consultants about the cumbersome, quantitative reporting measures required of arts organisations that failed to capture the cultural value they created. Moves by some prominent cultural policy researchers to reconceptualise the value of cultural initiatives to include intrinsic value tended also to include economic value as part of cultural value frameworks (Holden, 2004, Hewison, 2006, Holden, 2006). In some cases this was a matter of necessity: O'Brien (2010) "adopted a pragmatic approach to the question of cultural value, placing problems of measurement in the context of guidance from HM Treasury's *Green Book*" because of UK government guidelines on funding decision-making (O'Brien, 2010 p 48).

Hutter and Throsby (2008a) emphasise "that a distinction can be made between economic and cultural value, and that it is the twin concepts of value, how they are formed and how they relate or do not relate to each other, that needs to be investigated" (Hutter and Throsby, 2008a p 1). In contrast, Holden (2004, 2006) and Hewison's (2006) innovative conceptualisations were part of a move to shift the basis for cultural funding in the UK away from instrumental justifications to one of proposing a multifaceted concept of cultural value as the central justification, which was buttressed by the inclusion of economic value. Although it led to a broadening of the way in which cultural value could be conceptualised in making the case for funding to government authorities, it has also been criticised in online media as "frantically trying to quantify value in a way that they think can prove the worth of culture" (Jenkins, 2011).

Differences in theoretical approaches in cultural policy compared to academic conceptualisations may in part be because of the funding pressure on analysts in the cultural sector. Both cultural

economists and policy-makers desire more holistic means of conceptualising cultural value in the government and public domains, but both also acknowledge the superior clout of economic arguments. "Nevertheless, in a world still moved in policy terms predominantly by an economic agenda, acceptance of cultural value as a motivating force in policy decisions is still some way off" (Throsby, 2001 p 164). Therefore, one possibility is that economics academics are able to undertake a more disinterested theoretical investigation into conceptualisations of cultural value.

Despite this, a parallel shift in cultural policy discourse has not occurred in Australia to the same extent . Geursen and Rentschler (2002) outline what the requirements were in the 1990s for cultural institutions to demonstrate instrumental benefits, and their paper sought to "move the debate forward" on definitions of cultural value. However, consideration of the cultural policy applications of these papers, which often involve models and diagrams of cultural institutions and the various factors at play, fall outside the scope of the current study. Such research has most often focused on the performing arts and the heritage sector, which differ considerably from the book publishing industry. Recent research into the Australian publishing industry commissioned by the Australia Council and the Book Industry Strategy Group has not addressed this broader issue (SGS, 2008, Lee, 2010, McLean and Poland, 2010, PWC, 2011).

8.4 The views of humanities and literary studies scholars

8.4.1 Different fundamental approaches to cultural value in cultural economics and the humanities

Many researchers in the humanities, when thinking about cultural value explicitly place the highest forms of aesthetics in opposition to the market or beyond it. For example, theorists such as Terry Eagleton (1996) distinguish between an aesthetic of the beautiful ("as an interfusion of abstract law and sensuous experience, of form and content") and an aesthetic of the sublime ("not of the measured adaptation of form to content, but of the measureless outstripping of form by content") (Connor, 1992 p 140). That is, aesthetically beautiful works demonstrate a harmony of form and content which bring pleasure to the viewer or audience within established frameworks, but sublime works break or transcend these norms of harmony to create an impression that can be profoundly unsettling.

Assumptions about the ideals associated with culture themselves have been radically transformed over the last two centuries. A key change has been the move from Victorian ideals of progress towards unity and harmony, to contemporary ideals that accommodate multiple, non-unified concepts of culture and cultural goods. Contemporary scholarship emphasises the disparate and shifting nature of culture.

> ...for many ... nineteenth-century critics, the notion of culture also embodies an ideal of development towards wholeness, an ideal asserted in the face of an increasing awareness

of cultural split or fragmentation. [Matthew] Arnold's ideal of "the harmonious perfection of our humanity" thus joins with [Edward Burnett] Tylor's[138] methodological grasping of the unity of the process of cultural development from primitive to advanced cultures. As James Clifford has observed of Arnold and Tylor and their joint legacy to anthropology, "a powerful structure of feeling continues to see culture, wherever it is found, as a coherent body that lives and dies. Culture is enduring, traditional, structural rather than contingent, syncretic, historical. Culture is a process of ordering, not of disruption" (Connor, 1992 p 232).

Despite this shift, the humanities remain concerned with the ways in which aesthetics functions in relation to moral and ethical imperatives; the relation of aesthetic hierarchies or categories to the ideologies that shape them; whether categories of value-judgements can transcend the societies which produce them, enabling the proposition that there are universal forms of intrinsic value (e.g., Kant and other Enlightenment thinkers, Habermas), or whether all judgements are contingent upon the societies and historical periods which produce them (e.g., postmodernist thinkers, the case for relativism as argued by Herrnstein Smith (1998)); and whether categories of aesthetic value can enable an imagination of utopian societies that transcend existing social and economic systems. Some of these points are addressed further in the next section about critiques of economic and cultural value as separate domains, and the following section draws upon humanities scholarship to consider Throsby's disaggregated forms of cultural value in relation to this research's findings.

Although they approach the topic from very different starting points, a number of literary studies and economics scholars have examined debates about value, offering critiques of both discourses. In doing so, they have attempted to relate the discourses to one another, and to find areas of commonality. The next section discusses this work.

8.4.2   Relativist critiques of economic and cultural value as two domains

Attacks on the literary canon for being socially unrepresentative or hegemonic were made by literary scholars in the 1980s and 1990s, drawing attention to the potential contradictions implicit when canonising institutions claimed universality for their judgements about the literary value (and more broadly, the aesthetic value) of texts. John Guillory (1993) took issue with these Marxist-inspired and liberal-pluralist critiques in an influential work called *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation*.[139] Guillory's book is best known for drawing attention to the role of institutions and institutional values in shaping the literary canon, but the part of his text that is more relevant to this research relates to his criticisms of literary discourses about

---

[138] A Victorian era founder of anthropology and the author of *Primitive Culture*, which took a cultural evolutionist position.

[139] Guillory's work on literary canon formation used the term cultural capital in a sociological sense, drawing on Bourdieu, not in the economic sense of cultural capital employed in this thesis. Guillory also claimed that Marxist-inspired attacks on aesthetics were misinformed: "...it may be surprising to some that the concept of the aesthetic was never rejected within the Marxist tradition" (Guillory, 1993 p 273).

aesthetic value. "In retrospect, one can see that the critique of the canon opened up a privileged perspective upon the entire discourse of value, and it was thus the means by which that discourse, as a putatively absolutist or 'axiological' discourse, could be opened to an antifoundational or relativist reorientation" (Guillory, 1993 p 272).

Guillory was critical of the "thorough dismissal of the aesthetic as an 'ideology'" (Guillory, 1993 p 271).

> We should not expect that a critique of aesthetic discourse in its historical forms can proceed by rejecting the category of the aesthetic any more than a critique of political economy would have to deny the reality or specificity of the economic domain. We shall expect rather that aesthetic discourse is capable of being subjected to critique to the extent that it, like economic discourse or any discourse, is the vehicle of ideology, that is to say, an arena of social struggle (Guillory, 1993 p 282).

Guillory's work is particularly critical of Barbara Herrnstein Smith's (1998) *Contingencies of Value*, another influential work which makes the case for a relativist position in relation to value and to all constructs of human thought. Smith did not discredit the usefulness of concepts such as truth, beauty, reality and being, but rather proposed that these concepts operate not as references to objective, universal standards but as shifting concepts which could cease to be meaningful as ontologies change.

> If, reflecting on the less profitable aspects of oppositional logic, Western thought strives to do otherwise, it may redescribe any of the specific categories, hierarchies, and binary oppositions produced by Western thought—including such oppositions as Truth and Error and such metaphysical and ontological structures as Reality and Being—as structures which, while they are working, have a working integrity, coherence, distinctiveness, and stability but which can always be alternatively produced as arbitrary, unbounded, indeterminate, unstable, otherwise configurable, and more minutely differentiable (Smith, 1988 p 123).

Guillory (1993) bases his criticisms of Smith's defence of relativism on her treatment of Kant and Hegel (p 272), her references to "valuing communities" in her logical arguments despite her averrals against doing so (pp 283-288), and on what Guillory argues is the effective reduction of aesthetic value to a sophisticated form of "use value" (p 289-296). Ultimately, Guillory expresses broader dissatisfaction that "the critique of value has been conducted as the most arid exercise in philosophical debate, as the choice between the two positions of relativism and absolutism … It is as though the critique of political economy had congratulated itself for having exposed the intrinsic worthlessness of paper money" (Guillory, 1993 p 324). Guillory proposes a historical account of the determination of aesthetic value and he draws upon the sociology of Bourdieu to propose a radical "thought experiment" in which true universal access is possible for

both the production and the consumption of cultural capital, thereby enabling universally valid claims about aesthetic value.

Despite Guillory's assessment, Smith's work has been of subsequent interest to cultural economists (Hutter and Throsby, 2008b p 5). From a position of relativism she criticises the "double discourse of value" in economics and the humanities, which is discussed in the introduction to this chapter. Due to what she characterises as the false logocentrism of Western thought, she argues that separating cultural value from economic value as objectively different in their natures is misleading. Smith draws on the work of Jacques Derrida and Samuel Weber to propose that:

> ...there has been a shift from drama, where that history [of Western thought] is presented as a scene of opposition played out upon a single stage, to narrative, the telling of what is seen as an endless tale in which there is "alteration without opposition,"... where the single stage, scene, or "unity of place" is replaced by "places that are constantly in movement or on the move" (Smith and Weber in Smith, 1988 p 116).

Smith acknowledges that the once separate realms of economic discourse about utility, and humanist discourse about other forms of value "are no longer quite so stark as they were even twenty-five years ago" (p 128) and given that nearly another twenty-five years has passed since the publication of this work, the bridging between these forms of discourse has developed further. An interdisciplinary volume about cultural value by economists and humanities scholars was developed to "try to fill parts of that void" (Hutter and Throsby, 2008b p 9) and "present strong arguments for abandoning the usual assumption that such dualities are either oppositional or incommensurate" (Hutter and Throsby, 2008b p 17). Chapter 2 of this thesis discusses recent cross-disciplinary developments in both Economics and English. A contemporary example of the awareness of economists about debates in the humanities is in a statement by Throsby that (within the realm of economic discourse) whether cultural value "exists independently of the observer, or requires some interaction ... for it to be realized, remains uncertain" (Throsby, 2011 p 282).

Debates about the nature and universality or relativism of aesthetic value are likely to continue and it is not within the scope of this research to attempt a resolution. Steven Connor (1992) proposes that "...the imperative of value is clearly not to be thought of as generating a set of objective essences, rather the concept of value is necessary for the process of the evaluation of cultural goods, and the processes of evaluation themselves require ongoing scrutiny or evaluation" (Connor, 1992 p 3). As a result, he characterises "a more general sundering and multiplication not only of cultural forms, but of definitions of what culture and cultural value may be: a proliferation...not only of cultural values, but of the very economies of cultural value" ((Connor, 1992 p 235).

The sundering of these once internally-unified key concepts need not complicate attempts within cultural economics to capture non-economic forms of cultural value and to ensure that they are represented in cultural policy decisions. However, it potentially complicates the basis on which arguments are made, for example, if cultural economists make assumptions that there is agreement in the academy about the existence of universal aesthetic principles or that canonical works achieve that status without controversy, they are likely to be out of step with mainstream debates in the fields of art and literary criticism. This was recognised by Hutter and Schusterman (2006) when they stated of art that "Evaluative logic ... is clearly pluralistic. This need not be seen as a weakness. The different logics of aesthetic evaluation reflect the different motives, aims, and contexts that we have in evaluating art as well as the different competing values that art embodies and promotes" (Hutter and Schusterman, 2006 p 204).

When cultural economists recognise that the grounds on which works are elevated to a canon or are acclaimed as significant are shaped by complicated, conflicting historical debates about culture and cultural value, then incompatibility need not arise. Indeed, the ability of cultural economists to contribute empirical evidence in complex situations may assist in teasing out the nuances of shifting notions of culture and cultural value and relating them to the infrastructure which enables their creation. O'Brien (2010) refers to "suspicion of economic methods within the cultural sector" in the UK (O'Brien, 2010 p 48), but the Australian publishing industry, as a commercial industry, is used to being the subject of economic analysis. The potential for tension arises, like in other cultural sectors, when economic methodologies are seen to capture instrumental, that is individual utility-based benefits, but not the intrinsic cultural value created by the industry, and to downplay the latter because of this.

8.5   Cultural value and the contemporary Australian publishing industry

As pointed out in Chapter 2, this research does not attempt to place a quantitative measure against these categories. Instead, this next section takes the forms of cultural value proposed by Throsby and disaggregates them further by drawing on scholarship about the value of culture in the humanities. The purpose is twofold: (1) to show that what appear to be self-explanatory descriptors can become quite complicated when relevant humanities scholarship is briefly acknowledged; and (2) despite this, to demonstrate that by bridging across to this scholarship, we can deepen and extend our ideas about cultural value as they apply in cultural economics. A detailed examination of the cultural value of the Australian publishing industry, narrative non-fiction books and public debate, drawing on the insights from economics and the humanities, could be made in the following terms.

Aesthetic
The literary qualities of a text can be considered as part of its aesthetic value, but the grounds for considering whether a work has aesthetic value or could be regarded as part of a literary canon have shifted over the last century. Now such a broad variety of books can be seen to possess

aesthetic value that rather than define literature, one respected academic suggested "it is tempting to give it up and conclude that literature is whatever a given society treats as literature – a set of texts that cultural arbiters recognize as belonging to literature" (Culler, 2000 p 21-22). But even though key theoretical movements in twentieth century studies of literature have been preoccupied with reviewing, unpicking and challenging assumptions about the grounds upon which literature and writing are valued and reified, or dismissed, debates about the aesthetic qualities of texts are no less serious. (Book history has been less concerned with evaluative questions and has drawn on relevant literary studies, one of the contributing disciplines to book history, as appropriate to individual research projects.) One of the more innovative contributions to disaggregating the elements that contribute to the ways we think about aesthetic value in literature has been made by Regenia Gagnier (2000) who links changes in Victorian-era *economic orthodoxy* to shifting perspectives on *aesthetic value*. This section on aesthetic value draws in particular upon her identification of several strands of thought, including ethical aesthetics, the aesthetics of taste and pleasure and the aesthetics of evaluation, which all influence the way we think about the value of literature and other books and writing.

Ethical aesthetics
"In Kant, the moral good consists in acting autonomously, as one ought, rather than heteronomously, or from desire, emotion, or self-interest" (Gagnier, 2000 p 124). The current study does not claim to represent expertise in philosophical discourses on the arts, but key Kantian principles that shaped aesthetic thought included the association of the contemplation of a beautiful object with imaginative freedom, "that prefigures moral freedom, or freedom from desire and self-interest" (Gagnier, 2000 p 124-125). That is, the appreciation of high art can lift us out of selfish preoccupations and enable unselfish conceptions of the world, which can serve as a precondition for unselfish behaviour. A connection could be drawn here with Klamer's (2003) regretful point that Adam Smith was concerned with moral dimensions of economic actions but that in the first half of the twentieth century "social, moral, and psychological elements, common features in classical [economic] writings, got marginalized and disappeared from the discourse" (Klamer, 2003 p 459).

The activities of PEN can also be linked with these ethical and moral traditions of thought. Although a key emphasis of PEN's is on the international freedom of expression for writers, Nick Jose also characterises PEN's involvement in the asylum-seeker debate as: "PEN saw an issue which at the beginning was an issue of compassionate response, empathy, a sense of human rights. PEN writers see themselves as progressive and as citizens and they see that as part of their job description to find those issues and then give voice to them". According to Jose, prior to this issue in the 1990s there was:

> a kind of very inward looking approach in Australian literature. It was domestic, it was concerned with daily life, intimate matters. It was not political, and it was not engaged in an edgy way and there was a sense even of boredom that they're either historical novels set in the convict period, history or chats over tea and coffee, romance, there's nothing

213

big; a sense that it's been depoliticized through complacency. Drusilla Modjeska wrote an essay[140] saying why isn't Australian literature engaging with the issue of contemporary life, the big issues? And so there was a readiness to take a step.[141]

Jose's description of PEN's activism was expressed in terms of politics. He spoke of progressive politics and writers' participation in democracy, and in our interview he did not address a philosophy regarding the aesthetic processes through which Australians were affected by what they read. But at the core of his account is a conviction that writers have a particular opportunity to contribute to the progressive ethics of individuals within democratic societies such as Australia through the aesthetic power of their work (and also, pragmatically, the public platform which it provides).

Aesthetics of taste and pleasure

In brief, the scholarship cited in the early chapters of this thesis reminds us that although it used to be a source of despair to literary scholars that popular tastes did not conform narrowly to canonical works, contemporary scholarship is more sanguine both about the diversity of books which are read and their impact on readers. This returns us to the oft-emphasised points that we don't know how individual Australians responded to the books which are identified in this study, and that the reading of works for ephemeral pleasure was compatible with reading more demanding works or reading books in more demanding, attentive ways – *or* by learning *about* them in the media and other public spaces such as writers' festivals.

Aesthetics of evaluation

Steven Connor (1992) characterises the literary academy, and the humanities more broadly, in the first half of the twentieth century, as having been preoccupied with questions of evaluation: placing literary works into rigid hierarchies and fixed canons. The latter half of the twentieth century, especially from the 1970s saw a shift to interpretation and decoding meaning in texts ((Connor, 1992 p 10-11). Connor observes that this development occurred at the expense of evaluation (p 13). Robert Dixon (2009) describes a similar shift in Australian literary studies away from literary criticism to critique occurring from the 1980s and a subsequent shift from the "hermeneutics of scepticism and suspicion" to "more positive ways of approaching literature" in the 2000s (Dixon, 2009 p 20). This has resulted in a "more complex understanding of what the canon is ... The [Australian] canon, then, is not set in stone. It is not so much a thing as a process, a series of ongoing arguments that reflect different views about what it means to be an Australian writer" (Dixon, 2009 p 20).

A more recent interest in globalised spaces of literature has changed the terms of the debate again. Analysts such as Pascale Casanova (2007) and James English (2010) have examined the global processes by which literature is produced, conferred with cultural and symbolic status,

---

[140] Published in *Timepieces* (Modjeska, 2002a). Reprinted in condensed form in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (Modjeska, 2002b)..

[141] N. Jose, personal communication, Sydney, 2009

and circulated. Casanova examines the "centre" and "peripheries" of global literary production, the dominance of the UK and US in English-language publishing *and* the international cultural positioning of literary works, and France as the global centre for literary translation and thus the centre for conferring the international literary recognition of non-English works. English examines the processes by which literary awards have proliferated in recent decades and have themselves became part of international hierarchies of status, which sometimes enable the cultural output of non-mainstream producers to bypass national honours systems and to benefit from the prestige of international awards. Within these frameworks that consider the hierarchies of conferring cultural recognition and status, the canons of peripheral countries become worth defending so that these countries can function as *creative producers* contributing to global literary flows, and not just as *markets*. Therefore, in cultures which are internationally situated on the margins, such as Australia, there is renewed interest in evaluating and advocating the quality of Australian literature (Dixon, 2009). David Carter (2009b) has observed that the publication of Australian works is not sufficient for a healthy literary culture. Institutions enable these works to find audiences, to debate and reflect upon ideas and representations, and to engage in ongoing evaluations of their contributions to artistic and public life.

> A mature literary system is marked by dense institutions that are relatively stable, and professional participants. It has publishing houses and imprints in high, middle and popular registers; diverse bookselling and book promotion venues; a variety of journals of criticism and review in print and other media; scholarly infrastructure; professional associations; professional careers for writers and cultural intermediaries (literary agents, editors, critics); substantial state and private investment or subsidy; a significant domestic audience; and significant international traffic in books, rights and personnel (Carter, 2009b p 361).

In Carter's view, this developed in Australia in "the last quarter of the twentieth century" (Carter, 2009b p 361), therefore the evaluation of cultural value in this case study requires evidence that a mature literary system was in operation. Evaluation through literary reviews in journals, newspapers, radio programs and book shows on television; the inclusion of some of these works in university curricula; and their discussion in university seminars and conferences provide evidence that the evaluation of these works was occurring during the 2000s. Another significant public act of evaluation in the 2000s was the publication of the Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature, a collection of "impressive and important" works that "impl[y] different ways of being Australian as well as displaying different kinds of literary creativity" (Jose, 2009a p 2), and the Macquarie PEN Anthology of Aboriginal Literature, which demonstrates that "Aboriginal authors have created some of the best, most distinctive and most significant writing to come from this country" (Jose in Heiss et al., 2008 p x).

It is also instructive to consider some of the impediments to the evaluation of Australian writing during the research period. These include the reduction in the number of pages of book reviews in newspapers internationally (Rich, 2007) and in Australia. Although online blogs have opened

up new forums for literary debates, critics such as Georgie (Williamson, 2010) have defended the role of traditional criticism. "Critics may be uniquely equipped to elucidate those aspects of a national literature that enrich and sustain our sense of ourselves as different, as worthy inheritors of the stories we tell about ourselves". Australian literary journals also felt economic pressure, with HEAT, Meanjin and JASAL, the *Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature*, going from print to online editions. The closure of the *Australian Literary Review* and *Island* (a Tasmanian literary journal) was foreshadowed in September 2011. There was also discussion about the quality of reviewing in Australia, which will not be entered into here, suffice to say the debate raised the points that reviewing is poorly paid and that published reviews were not recognised in the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) rankings of academic publishing. Admittedly this is a complex area but although the ERA system has since been modified in Australia, the situation for recognition of published book reviews has not changed.

Gagnier (2000) concluded her study of economics and aesthetics with the proposition that:

> While the ideology of individualism has grown stronger, the culture that informs individuals has grown more diverse, more global, and more commodified. We "symbolic analysts" need an aesthetics that can analyze not only cultural and art objects that are inevitably commodified but also ... an aesthetics that can provide critical distance from, and alternatives to, the forces of the market (Gagnier, 2000 p 233).

This is a key requirement of contemporary aesthetic evaluation of cultural value. Although cultural arbiters are no longer suspicious of cultural goods that achieve commercial success, the need remains unchanged for frameworks of aesthetic evaluation that are not captive to the market. In a study of British working and lower-middle class writing movements from the 1920s to post-war England, Christopher (Hilliard, 2006) found that there was potentially (and frequently) a gap between the perceptions of cultural value on the part of readers whose tastes were shaped primarily by commercial markets and those of professional evaluators. This is part of the challenge for members of the Australian literary academia and the Australian publishing industry to encourage both scholarly and non-scholarly forms of evaluation that are both situated in traditions of criticism and permit space for non-professional participation. However, there must still be a place to recognise books and other works of art that could be considered as part of the "sublime" aesthetic, that is, they do not accord with society's norms of harmony and unity, and are unsettling and disturbing.

Aesthetics and the books in the research findings

The books relating to debate about the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan cover such a broad range of genres that it is difficult to draw together observations about aesthetic and literary value. A number of literary debates occurred during this period: about frauds in narrative non-fiction writing; about the value of war reporting and first-hand accounts by military participants; and the ethics of representing the voices of "the other" in respectful ways. It is notable as a period in

which a number of literary awards for narrative non-fiction were introduced in Australia, including the Walkley Book Award for excellence in Australian long-form journalism, and when narrative non-fiction writing attracted attention from Australia's literary academy both as an object of study and its development in university life-writing courses and centres.

With regard to debate about Australia's asylum-seeker policies, *Dark Victory* won a plethora of awards, but there are several other titles worth noting here. *Mao's Last Dancer*, which was the best-selling autobiography in 2003-2008 selling over 300,000 copies, contained a pivotal scene in which the author sought political asylum in 1981 from China to the US.[142] Cunxin eventually settled in Australia and was encouraged to write this book by children's author and illustrator Graeme Base and memoirist and essayist Peter Rose. It was published in 2003 by Penguin Australia. In some ways it was an unlikely bestseller. Cunxin wrote in English as a second language. His professional career was as a ballet dancer and he now works as a stockbroker. The phenomenal success of his book, which is a credit to the author, the publisher and those who assisted the book, could be attributed to a number of factors: the compelling and powerfully-told story of the protagonist; the depth of Australian editorial talent available to assist Cunxin to write his first book; the support of Penguin Australian while the book was written over several years and in marketing support. However two other factors could be suggested: the book is written in stark, unvarnished prose, making it accessible to a broad readership; and it sets up a dichotomy of East/communist China and West/capitalist US (and at the conclusion, Australia) in which the author's migration is portrayed in triumphant and appreciative terms.

This can be contrasted with two other books that were also acclaimed upon their release: Jacob Rosenberg's *East of Time* and *Sunrise West*, published by Brandl & Schlesinger. Rosenberg's accounts of his years as a Holocaust survivor in Eastern Europe and his migration to Australia as a post-war refugee were reviewed as non-fiction literary masterpieces.[143] They sold in modest numbers in Australia, in the mid-thousands. Rosenberg writes in a poetic, literary style (once again, with editorial support from a depth of Australian talent) and his books do not present his migration to Australia as a triumphant conclusion to his travails. Rather, the books raise deeply unsettling questions about the nature of human society and were disturbing, troubling meditations, beautifully written. These books constitute an example of John Frow's (1995) maxim, mentioned in Chapter 4, that high culture is now a pocket within commodity culture (Frow, 1995 p 86).

Australia has a rich and extensive body of diasporic writing, and while it is outside the scope of this research to examine this, it must be acknowledged that many of the life narratives in this research were part of a much larger collection of writing about migration and diaspora. A recent example of the longevity of this writing was demonstrated in 2010 (after the period of this

---

[142] A film based on the book was released in 2009.

[143] For example, "Jacob Rosenberg is Australia's greatest Jewish autobiographer and a world-class figure in Holocaust literature" (Freadman, 2009).

research). Text Publishing released a new edition of *Between Sky & Sea* by Herz Bergner, a fictional account of the journey by boat of Jewish refugees to Australia in the 1940s. *Between Sky & Sea* won the Australian Society of Literature's gold medal for book of the year in 1948. It was written in Yiddish and translated by Judah Waten, meaning that it is one of the first Australian literary award-winning books to be translated into English from another language. The online marketing information on the Text website links the book's themes to contemporary debate about asylum seekers.

> Now, more than sixty years since its publication in 1946, *Between Sky & Sea* has been resurrected to take its place among Australia's major works of diaspora fiction.

> Arnold Zable's introduction highlights the chilling parallels between Bergner's tale and the sinking of the SIEV X off the Australian coast, giving the reader pause to reflect on the unchanging plight of asylum seekers throughout history and across the globe (Text, 2010).

The ways in which books have been evaluated for their aesthetic value has changed dramatically since the early twentieth century, when there was a narrow hierarchy of "great works" in the English-language canon. Now it is fair to say that there are multiple canons which are constantly reviewed and tested, including once-excluded genres such as crime writing, extended journalism, war reportage, life-writing (of relevance to this study) crime fiction and romance. This does not make the purpose and legitimacy of canons of works less important, rather it reflects the "opening up" of literary scholarship to many forms and genres of writing, and the opening up of ways of reading and researching them.

The importance of aesthetic value is not just that the books are written and published, but that they are read, reviewed, discussed and debated: all of which require a healthy literary infrastructure. This was in evidence during the period of this study.

Spiritual value

> This value might be interpreted in a formal religious context … or it may be secularly based, referring to inner qualities shared by all human beings. The beneficial effects conveyed by spiritual value include understanding, enlightenment and insight (Throsby, 2001 page 29).

A connection can be made between Throsby's definition of spiritual value and Drusilla Modjeska's comments about the number of people in New York who visited art galleries after the September 11 attacks:

> Are we looking for confirmation of the continuity of our culture? Are we wanting to be reminded that the other side of our vulnerability is our interconnectedness with all life? Does art relieve us, if only for a moment, of anxiety and restlessness, showing us the

familiar afresh and giving shape to the strange? For two decades, more, we have been too sophisticated to say that these are the sorts of things art is about (Modjeska, 2002b).

However, belief in the extent to which a sense of transcendence or enlightenment is grounded on more than sensation varies, for example, the postmodernist scholar Justin O'Connor (2006) proposed that:

> "Art as possibility" comes with the idea of transcendence, not in the Kantian sense of leaving utility and functionality behind, nor even in the Dionysian sense of madness and abandonment, but simply in the sense of changing or transfiguring life – if only for a moment. We might call it immanent utopia (O'Connor, 2006 p 99).

Therefore, Throsby's definition of spiritual value can be read in different ways, with different qualities attributed to it, depending on the individual's philosophical position.

The categorisation of spiritual value needs to be applied in a nuanced way to books and literature for several reasons. First, as we have seen, the claim that books should be venerated as means for promoting "understanding, enlightenment and insight" have been treated with great suspicion in the late twentieth century and the role of literature as an oppressive, colonising agent has been widely studied. One is reminded of Walter Benjamin: "There is no document of civilisation which is not at the same time a document of barbarism" (Benjamin, 1968 p 256).

Second, the reference to "inner qualities shared by all human beings" is in contrast to some literary theorists' view of performative aspects of human nature. "In our most recent theories of performativity, attributes or qualities such as human nature or gender are not expressions of a soul within but performances that when repeated take on the appearance of nature" (Gagnier, 2000 p 157).

Third, many literary movements have been highly sceptical of any idea of religious or spiritual value. Religion or spiritual culture has a negative value for some critics. Indeed, a popular conception is that the veneration of literature as a source of consolation or meaning replaced the veneration of religious figures, and then literature was subsequently "dethroned" from this hallowed position also.

Despite these theoretical developments, many literary studies academics believe that studying literature does offer forms of insight and understanding. The English department at Macquarie University expresses this, with some caution, as follows:

> The study of literature involves an understanding of developments in culture, and an appreciation of the intellectual and aesthetic aspects of existence. It encourages us to conceptualise and express ideas about these things, analytically and creatively, and to reason critically (Welcome to English, Macquarie University, 2011).

Heilbrun and Gray (1993) as economists, observe that "there is no scientific evidence that understanding art and culture makes [people] better individuals in the sense of being less prone to violence, envy, greed, or other unpleasant psychological disorders" (Heilbrun and Gray, 1993 p 208). Throsby would not disagree with this, and there is a challenge in making a case for the beneficial aspects of cultural goods and services without falling into now discredited claims for the arts as elevating or civilising forces in their own right. Yet, to return to Modjeska's poetic description, feeling a connection to others or the sensation of feeling transformed, even briefly, by a sense of the strange and the sublime, is a powerful experience associated with the intrinsic value of the arts.

On a more prosaic level the evidence of the sales data, the many media and parliamentary mentions, and academic citations all suggest that people did turn to books for understanding, enlightenment and insight as well as entertainment. It is clear that during the timeframe of this study books provided a depth of information for everyday readers, policy-makers, researchers, students and activists, by offering a range of perspectives. Individual's reading experiences, of course, are beyond the scope of this study.

In the year following the September 11 attacks, Modjeska wrote that:

> As if in response to distress, there was a return to the narrative of lives and the sort of exploration of experience that could make sense of – or even just raise – some of the questions of identity and responsibility that were coming back to vex us after two decades of being dismantled and reconfigured [through postmodernism] (Modjeska, 2002b).

Perhaps Modjeska's observation that books allowed Australians to explore important questions is the best way of summarising the spiritual value in the research findings. It is encapsulated in the ability to search for answers in books during distressing and disturbing times without necessarily finding definitive answers, and to do so as part of a broader dialogue in communities of readers, authors and publishers.

Social value

> Social value: the work may convey a sense of connection with others, and it may contribute to a comprehension of the nature of the society in which we live and to a sense of identity and place (Throsby, 2001 page 29).

A key finding of the current research is that books and publishing contributed to public debate during the 2000s, despite predictions of the "death of the book". Although it was not possible to test this proposition at the individual level of readers due to the methodologies which were chosen, there is extensive evidence that bears out the proposition that books did contribute social value. First, there are the reading patterns in relation to the two public debates considered in this thesis, which show that Australians bought large numbers of books in relation to these debates, including a diverse array of genres and approaches, *and*, importantly, the growing attendance

figures for writers' festivals. (The possibility that through reading the books readers felt a *connection* to some people and a *disconnection* from others should also be noted here, a key interest of ideological critiques in literary studies.)

It is difficult to name the contribution of books and publishing to public debate as a form of more specific social value although it is tempting to try. There is potentially a connection with "the shaping of citizens for active participation in democratic society", an interest which can be traced back to John Stuart Mill in political economy and, more controversially in literary studies, Matthew Arnold (Throsby, 2010 p 142). However, most of the possible descriptors are problematic, such as "discourse value" with connections to Foucault's theories; "civic value", which is too broad; or "polemical value", which is too narrow. Perhaps we could consider "dialogue value": the ways in which humans and societies seek to engage in dialogue with one another.[144] It could refer to dialogue between two people (for example, the creator of an artistic work and a person who engages with it, or two people engaging with a work of art) or collective responses and debates that occur in broader society, which are informed, inspired, disturbed or unsettled by works of art. This might foreground the important value which books and publishers contribute.

However, there are two reasons for not proceeding in this way based on this research alone. First, it is entering dangerous territory to argue that books contribute to informed debate in a way that other cultural goods and services *do not*. John (Carey, 2005) attempts to make such an argument as part of broader claims about the superiority of literature as a form of art, an argument which was comprehensively debated by Justin (O'Connor, 2006). While the current research does not take up the postmodern position of O'Connor's or the more conservative position of Carey's, their diverse stances illustrate the breadth of approaches that categorisations of value in cultural economics may need to take into account. Scholars of popular culture have demonstrated that films, TV programs, popular music and other forms of popular culture can make political interventions and to contribute to public debate. Whether the ways in which they achieve this are different from those of books is beyond the scope of this research. Second, it is not clear whether a category of "dialogue value" would have enduring worth in cultural economics or whether it would be, briefly, another cultural policy rationale for arguing for special consideration by governments (if that).

Therefore, the preferred position is first to improve our empirical and theoretical understanding of the social value contributed by books and publishers. If further research reveals that books and publishing contribute such significant value to enhance individual and societal dialogues compared to other cultural goods and services, then this could become a separate category of cultural value. As it is, contemporary literary scholarship is vitally interested in the ways that books contribute social value according to Throsby's definition.

---

[144] Although "dialogue value" too has connotations, in this case with the work of the philosopher Martin Buber.

In fact, the argument here is that books and the Australian publishing industry make important contributions to the social capital of Australian society. The Australian Productivity Commission defined social capital as follows:

> The social capital of a society includes the institutions, the relationships, the attitudes and values that govern interaction among people and contribute to economic and social development … it is the glue that holds [institutions] together. It includes the shared values and rules for social conduct … and a common sense of "civic" responsibility that makes society more than just a collection of individuals (The Productivity Commission in The Allen Consulting Group, 2005 p vi).

A last point is worth noting here. Developments in a number of other social sciences disciplines increasingly find that when faced with a divisive issue, people instinctively respond based on emotion or intuition, and *then* select information which shores up and justifies their initial response (see, for example, (Haidt, 2007, Fine, 2011)). This falls outside the scope of the current research, but it is a potentially fascinating insight into one way (but not the only way) in which books operate in the dynamics of public debates. If future research upholds these findings, this would not invalidate the claims for the social value of books and publishing made here. It would quite possibly strengthen them because the publication of books contributes to an environment of extended debate over time, beyond the framework of instinctive responses to important issues on the part of individuals. This understanding of social value would not be based on the original Enlightenment optimism about the potential for social progress based on rational debate, but rather a neo-Enlightenment argument about the desirability of social progress which is to be pursued over the long term, within all the messy, complex ways in which human beings engage with social issues and also work towards scientific progress. (In Martin Luther King's words quoted in Chapter 1, "The arc of the moral universe is long but it bends towards justice.")

Historical value

> An important component of the cultural value of an artwork may be its historical connections: how it reflects the conditions of life at the time it was created, and how it illuminates the present by providing a sense of continuity with the past (Throsby, 2001 page 29).

The ability to read books from other periods has been valued by scholars and everyday readers throughout the history of reading. (Sometimes, as we observed of the period after the invention of the printing press, the emphasis on rediscovering lost history prevailed above interest in new discoveries and innovations.) Scholarly views about which books are of literary interest will change over time, and therefore the historical value of books in different genres will also vary. For example, the contemporary interest in life-writing was also reflected in scholarly interest in

colonial diaries and letters, which were included in the Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature, a decision the editor of the anthology specifically commented upon.[145]

The historical value of the books in the case studies in this thesis has yet to be realised given their contemporaneity. It will vary according to each book, its literary qualities, its author and its genre. The memoirs of politicians, soldiers, and other people directly involved in the wars, for example, are likely to have important historical value for future generations. Other books may help paint a broader portrait of the times for future generations as part of a collective group.

Authenticity value

> This value refers to the fact that the work is the real, original and unique artwork which it is represented to be (Throsby, 2001 p 29).

This consideration is most often applied to whether an artwork is fake or not, but it applies to the books in this research too. Australian literary scholars have a long history of interest in notions of fraud and authenticity which included the Ern Malley hoax in the 1940s and the Helen Darville/Demidenko affair in 1995. The notion of "authenticity" is heavily contested in postmodern theory; however there is an important way in which some of the books discussed in this research contributed authenticity value. The accounts by soldiers serving in the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan and of those people under occupation, the extended reporting of journalists, the life narratives of Arab and Muslim women, the experiences of asylum-seekers in Australian detention centres all had in some form "authenticity value" which is part of the appeal of narrative non-fiction writing. This is not to deny that these accounts are as constructed as fictional works, but they do contain some responsibility towards truth-telling and factual reporting which is not present in fiction and poetry (which are concerned with truth telling in different ways).

There were noticeable frauds during this period, including Norma Khouri's *Forbidden Love*, Souad's *Burned Alive* (and others outside the scope of this research including James Frey's *A Million Little Pieces*). These can be contrasted with books such as *Mahoba's Promise* and *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, both of which were respectfully received accounts of women's experiences that were not exoticised or presented in lurid overtones. Likewise, the Colombian journalism professor Michael Massing praised selected accounts by US soldiers as including contextual information which had been sanitised in mainstream media reporting.

Readers were interested in having access to authentic voices, judging by the popularity of narrative non-fiction books. Literary scholarship is interested in examining the ways in which world views presented in books appear "natural" or "realistic"; how notions of authenticity are socially constructed; how the appearance of authenticity is created by technical means in writing;

---

[145] "Writing in Australia begins with the impulse to document and chronicle the experience of a place or situation that has not been written before. That spirit extends through explorers' journals and early settlers' letters home to petitions for land rights and, later, memoirs of displacement" (Jose, 2009a p 5).

and the terms of the implied contract between author and reader. However that is not to deny that narrative non-fiction works portray themselves as having a particular value through adherence to factual reporting or truthful accounts, depending on the conventions of the genre. These areas of scholarship do not invalidate authenticity value but they do complicate the claims made on its behalf.

Symbolic value

> Artworks and other cultural objects exist as repositories and conveyors of meaning. If an individual's reading of an artwork involves the extraction of meaning, then the work's symbolic value embraces the nature of the meaning conveyed by the work and its value to the consumer (Throsby, 2001 page 29).

The very nature of books is that they function on multiple levels of symbolic meaning, from the very act of deciphering a book's text and paratext, to engaging with the thematic content. However, observing that books operate on symbolic levels is different to making claims about the symbolic value of the books in the case studies. To what extent did they operate as "repositories and conveyors of meaning"?

Perhaps the first important conclusion to draw is that they *did* operate in this way: they were still relevant as a category of cultural goods. Once again, literary scholarship complicates the way that symbolic value can be understood. For example, individuals can read the same book quite differently from one another, that is, people construct different symbolic meanings according to their own circumstances. (Presumably, the same can be said of all works of art.) Books can also be said to have broader symbolic functions as indicators of an active, democratic society. Censorship or other forms of restrictions on books are powerful symbolic indicators of a lack of democracy. In this sense, books are important symbols of a democratic society by exposing that society's institutions to criticism. Finally, the act of having authored a book gave a person a symbolic platform on which to speak out about public issues, a point made by David Marr and Peter Mares, two authors whose books were part of the case studies. As such, these authors were able to increase the reach of their books' ideas and arguments because they were asked by the media to discuss them. But while this symbolic value was in operation on a number of levels in this research, it is not clear that any stronger claims can be made for them. They did not necessarily symbolise a nation's victory, as a monument or memorial might do, or a historical period, as a heritage site may. The symbolic ways in which books operate are often subtle and can be overlooked in the broader media environment, but symbolic value was clearly in play on several levels.

To conclude this section, Throsby's categories of cultural value can be applied to this research, but in most cases the ways in which these types of value operate cannot be taken at the "face value" of the definitions. Literary studies scholarship is more concerned with investigating the ways in which these forms of cultural value operate, than in advocating that such values arise directly through books and publishing. However, the benefit of applying this scholarship is that it serves to enrich our appreciation in cultural economics of the ways in which cultural values operate.

8.6 Conclusion

The disciplines of economics and the humanities more broadly, have pursued questions about valuing culture in extremely different ways. Economics specialists have been successful in developing a more coherent body of conceptual approaches and methodologies that have been applied and refined over the history of the discipline, including a distinction between private and public consumption, a focus on maximising individual utility, notions of consumer surplus and public good. "The simplicity and unambiguity of the market mode has been identified as one of the reasons for its success" (Hutter and Schusterman, 2006 p 205). However, a contemporary development is an awareness that these instrumental approaches fail to capture the intrinsic value of cultural goods, and new conceptual frameworks about cultural value and cultural capital have been proposed. In contrast, the approach of humanities' scholars and philosophers in the twentieth century has been to tear up many previous foundational assumptions about the value of culture, opening up rich and important areas of scholarship but complicating rationales for the continued funding of the arts.

This thesis has drawn upon the strengths of both traditions. Traditional economic techniques were used in previous chapters to analyse the structure, conduct and performance of the Australian publishing industry, and contemporary humanities scholarship was applied to the analysis of reading patterns of Australians. Australians read books for a variety of purposes and pleasures, and a distinction was made between the delineation of communities of taste (e.g., for true crime, military histories etc.) and the project of making aesthetic judgements about the merits of individual works. The capacity for a book from any of the genres discussed to have aesthetic interest and value is acknowledged.

This chapter has established that books and the Australian publishing industry contributed to contemporary public debate in ways that can be characterised as a public good. There is a clear case for the benefits of book publishing, which can be made both in the traditional neoclassical framework as a public good, and in new theoretical conceptions of cultural value which introduce theories of cultural capital.

Cultural policy scholarship is moving away from an emphasis on the instrumental benefits of culture to include more emphasis on intrinsic benefits. A point of difference with pure economic

scholarship is that the latest UK cultural policy approaches combine economic and cultural value in the one field, whereas they are two separate theoretical domains in economics. Although reference was made to cultural policy scholarship that focuses on the public sector, an important difference is that the publishing industry operates in a commercial environment, with a small proportion of publishers, such as university presses, receiving some form of direct subsidy.

Regulation of the Australian publishing industry has come under scrutiny by government and industry observers and the likelihood of future policy reviews is strong. In keeping with previous policy enquiries, consideration will, no doubt, be paid to the public-good characteristics of literary achievement (aesthetic value) and the publication of Australian stories, framed in cultural nationalist terms. The current research has identified another important form of public good that should be taken into account: contributions to public debate, and the functioning of democratic, civic society, i.e., deliberative democracy. However, there is an important, additional change which the Australian publishing industry may have to make when presenting its case to policy makers. Until the beginning of the twenty-first century, there was a mystique about the sales figures of books in Australia, which bolstered the reputation of books considered to have literary or artistic merit but which has clouded the understanding of policy-makers about the economics of publishing different types of books. The representatives of Australian publishers, with the support of the industry, may benefit from presenting more upfront information about the actual sales performance and economics of different types of publishing activity. In such a context, all industries would have to balance the requirement to protect commercial-in-confidence data with the benefits of informed government policy-making, and develop various techniques for presenting industry information, and this entails an evolving set of norms in each industry.

During the research period, multinational and independent publishers operated effectively to bring a diversity of books relating to public issues from international sources (albeit, heavily skewed by Australia's ties with the UK and the US) and also published a diversity of Australian-authored books. As such, rather than finding flaws in the performance of the industry in relation to the research questions, an unexpected finding was the strength of the industry's performance in publishing books that contributed to public debate. However, as the following chapter examines, interpreting the findings as evidence that the industry achieved this without government support would be erroneous. Therefore, the final chapter considers the implications of this research for government policy that affects the industry.

Chapter 9. Implications for cultural policy and conclusion

9.1 Introduction

Although the Productivity Commission's (2009) recent recommendations for major changes to the Australian publishing industry's policy framework were ultimately not taken up by the government, they generated considerable policy discussion about the grounds on which the Australian publishing industry warranted favourable policy intervention by the government. The first part of this chapter examines the academic literature relating to economic justifications for government support for the cultural sector. The next section applies these frameworks to the research findings. Although debates about government policy relating to restrictions on parallel importation had the highest profile, other policy issues with lower visibility have also been discussed in recent years. Finally, some areas for future research are outlined.

9.2 Criteria for market intervention

Jeanette Snowball (2008) sets out two approaches to rationalising government support for the arts.

> The first is based largely on the non-market benefits or externalities that the arts are purported to provide (demand side arguments) ... and supply side arguments ... Both of these are rooted in the neoclassical economic framework. The second stream of arguments is relatively recent and attempts to redefine the framework in which the arts and culture are evaluated; in particular, by introducing the idea of "cultural capital" (Snowball, 2008 p 9).

The rationale for market intervention is most commonly expressed in terms of market failure, "including the possibilities that the arts give rise to external benefits in production and consumption, that there are non-market demands for the arts for existence, option and bequest values, and that the arts exhibit public-good characteristics" (Throsby, 2010 p 140). A related concept is that of merit goods, that is "goods which some persons believe ought to be available and whose consumption and allocation are felt by them to be too important to be left to the private market" (Cwi in Snowball, 2008 p 12-13). Ver Eecke distinguishes merit goods from public goods as "they do not take into account the will of the consumer and ... their finance is separate from their use (so payment for the good is not related to one's use of it)" (Snowball, 2008 p 13). The concept of merit goods has had a polarised reception and is not, in any case, relevant to this research. Instead, three normative grounds for market interventions in the arts proposed by (Throsby, 2010 pp 140-141) are considered.

Consumers may lack the necessary information needed to make informed market choices

Research reports have consistently found that one of the biggest difficulties faced by Australian independent publishers is in marketing and distribution; that is, conveying information about their books to consumers in a saturated market, and in gaining access to retail outlets. The Internet arguably has the potential to change this, however, marketing budgets are still required to engage people to spend time on blogs and to build and maintain websites and conduct email updates. Thompson (2010) found that in the US multinational publishers had changed the allocation of their marketing budgets to enable personnel to court online user groups with information about upcoming books which could be of interest to them. They also organise online purchases of "hoped-for bestsellers" to drive up their sales in Amazon and other online bestseller lists (Thompson, 2010 pp 251-257). Although the extent to which this is occurring in Australia is not clear, it is evident that the existence of the Internet does not automatically solve problems of consumer access to information for independent publishers. Therefore, given the plethora of books published each year and the large investments made in promoting hoped-for bestsellers, it is feasible that consumers do not learn of the existence of books in which they could have an interest.

Consumer behaviour is inconsistent with their underlying values due to "misperception, weakness of will or the fluctuation of preferences over time"

In a more conservative era in which the high/low culture divide was not questioned, the research findings could have been used to support this argument. (That is, that people should aspire to read more worthy books but that they do not do so sufficiently in practice.) However, the history of the book approach treats the choices of everyday readers respectfully, and as such, readers are pursuing a range of reading pleasures, some of which are intensely serious or demanding and many are not. This was not necessarily inconsistent with a public that valued the availability of books for more serious purposes, such as contributions to serious public debates: they may have valued their existence without wanting to read them personally in large quantities, or at all, or wanting to read them only at times of public debate about particular issues they cared about. Therefore, the "fluctuation of preferences over time" has the most validity in the case of books and publishing.

The aggregate of individual utilities may not capture the true social welfare of the collective benefit

The research findings clearly show that sales of books about public debates do not reflect their contributions to newspapers, parliamentary debate and academia. Therefore, the findings strongly support this contention. Although detail about empirical mentions can be captured, for example in an economic impact study, that does not necessarily capture the social utility of this public good. Throsby's rationale is also inherently a broader critique of neoclassical economic

approaches, and, as Snowball (2008) and Mazzanti (2002) observe, part of a move to broaden economic frameworks relating to cultural value. While ultimately the benefits of the arts, including all the benefits of books and publishing, are likely to be conceptualised more fully in a non-neoclassical framework, it's important to note that the public-good argument for books and their contribution to public debate can also be made within a conventional neoclassical economic framework.

These are all demand-side arguments: that aggregate consumer demand does not adequately reflect the benefits outlined. The supply-side argument relates to the cost of producing books that require research, fact-checking, and accuracy of information: the economics of writing, editing, publishing, marketing and distributing serious books for which there is often less consumer demand than other types of books. Multinational publishers in Australia show a preference for publishing books by Australian authors with an existing media platform and a strongly personalised narrative. Of course these books make important contributions, but independent publishers – especially in relation to specifically Australian public debates – make distinctive contributions by publishing works by other types of authors and other genres. This was during a period of increased pressure on university presses to reduce their reliance on institutional support, and on continuing pressure on industry competitiveness for independent publishers in general.

One of the arguments presented in the debate about the removal of parallel importation restrictions was that Australian publishers would have less confidence to invest in titles if they could not be confident about maximising their returns on the titles sold (because lower royalties are returned to Australian publishers and authors from the rights to an international imprint of an Australian book sold in Australia and the potential for lower profits from sales of imported titles). Yet books that sold hundreds rather than thousands of copies still made important contributions to public debate. The argument from the publishing industry that without some form of government support economically marginal but culturally valuable books would be less likely to be published by established publishers appears to hold weight.

Of course, based on the current research findings, the opposite conclusion could erroneously be reached: that during the study's timeframe, in the face of strong consumer demand for certain popular genres, the Australian publishing industry still performed strongly by publishing books that contributed to public debate, and therefore no government support is needed. This is not correct, for a number of reasons. First, this was described by Elizabeth Weiss of Allen & Unwin, as an unusual period of reader interest in these types of books. Second, many of the Australian independent publishers that made distinctive contributions were receiving government support, either through universities or individual grants. Third, the short lifespan of many small independent publishers underlined in the SPUNC report (Freeth, 2007) (five years or less) indicates the potential fragility of the independent publishing sector, although most of the Australian independent publishers whose books were highlighted in this research are older than five years.

In contrast to the rationale for government support for the arts based on the supply and demand of cultural goods, a second approach is built around the concept of cultural capital. According to Snowball (2008), "the second stream of arguments is relatively recent and attempts to redefine the framework in which the arts and culture are evaluated; in particular, by introducing the idea of 'cultural capital'" (Snowball, 2008 p 9). The addition of cultural capital to economic, human and natural capital proposed by Throsby (Throsby, 1999, Throsby, 2001) is still in the early stages of development. Maintaining Australian literary canons and upholding the high standards in book publishing associated with fixity in print require extensive investment in skills and knowledge (human capital) as well as economic capital. It could also be argued that they take the form of cultural capital:

> [C]ultural capital may be intangible, occurring as intellectual capital in the form of ideas, practices, beliefs and values which are shared by a group ... The stock of intellectual capital thus defined can decay through neglect or increase through investment ... Both the maintenance of existing intellectual capital and the creation of new capital of this type requires resources (Throsby, 2001 p 46).

The theory of cultural capital is a potentially powerful idea, but just as the previous chapter examined humanities scholarship that complicated the categories of cultural value put forward by Throsby, recent scholarship in the humanities underlines that concepts of culture, literature, literary canons and fixity in print, all of which could be associated with cultural capital, are not stable in meaning either.

9.3   Implications for cultural policy

Stuart Glover (2007) describes the multiple, uncoordinated ways in which the Australian book industry is regulated and supported as "a mess of policy" but "a productive mess" (Glover, 2007 p 83).

> The relations between Australian governments and the nation's book publishing sector are complex and productive. Over the sixty years since the Second World War, state and federal governments have developed their support for Australian literature and publishing through the expansion of existing policy instruments, such as copyright, book import regulation, and the Commonwealth Literary Fund; and through the introduction of new instruments, such as the Book Bounty scheme, the PLR [Public Lending Rights] scheme, and the Literature Board of the Australia Council ... Governments have acted to create a "space" for Australian literature and, to a degree, support Australian publishing (Glover, 2007 p 80).

The history of regulation and support for the Australian publishing industry has been well covered elsewhere (for example, (McLean, 2002, Glover, 2007, Wiseman, 2007, McLean and

Poland, 2010)) and will not be repeated here.[146] Despite a range of measures at federal, state and local levels that support Australian literature and the Australian publishing industry at every stage of a book's development, publication and consumption (Glover, 2007 pp 353-357), there is no overall coordinated policy framework. Within this policy environment the Australian industry has chalked up considerable publishing achievements commercially and culturally.

This thesis does not advocate particular policy outcomes or settings but it recommends that the distinctive contributions of the Australian book publishing industry in relation to public debate, especially those of Australian independent publishers, be treated as an important public good, one which merits continued government support in some form. Policy change is inevitable, and the most relevant implications of the research findings for future policy affecting the industry could be considered as follows.

Support for Australian independent publishers

Both multinational and independent publishers were responsible for books which won literary awards or were favourably reviewed for their quality. However, continued support is necessary to enable independent publishers to compete in a commercial market which is geared towards generating short-term profits around hoped-for bestsellers and to put into practice a philosophy such as that expressed by Veronica Surregi of Brandl & Schlesinger:

> [W]e base the books … more on the quality of writing, the ideas rather than … what I believe is the saleability … We're hoping that in the ultimate sense the books would become classics in some way … books that have a long shelf life … they're not books that go out of fashion very soon (Surregi inMcLean and Poland, 2010 p 12).

A recent report commissioned by the Australia Council recommended that its Literature Board fund publishers for suites of books and for infrastructure development, rather than funding individual literary titles (McLean and Poland, 2010). The recommendation, subsequently adopted by the Literature Board of the Australia Council, was:

> That the funding to support literary publishing in Australia be substantially increased, not only to bring the funding into line with contemporary production costs, but to allow publishers to apply some part of their funds to strategic infrastructure development, including editorial capacity, conversion to digital formats, marketing and promotion. This recommendation envisages that block grants, for an extended period, made in recognition of the value of the publisher's literary program, would offer a more effective form of support than the present scheme of annual subsidies for individual titles (McLean and Poland, 2010 p 3).

---

[146] There is also a substantial body of research evaluating the effectiveness of individual government bodies and programs, which is not referred to here.

Another issue raised was whether non-Australian-owned publishers should be eligible to apply for Literature Board subsidies. Currently they are eligible, however some multinational publishers have decided not to apply for them because, in the words of Bob Sessions "the view within the publishing industry [was] that multinationals should not accept government assistance" from the Literature Board on the basis that it should go to small, independent publishers that lack the resources of multinationals (McLean and Poland, 2010 p 18). The report noted that in Canada only Canadian-owned independent publishers are eligible for such funding. Another suggestion was a "means test" threshold based on annual turnover. McLean and Poland did not make any formal recommendations on this point. This is a fine-grained policy issue compared to the broader interests of this research project, however it is worth noting that support for Australian independent publishers *and* overseas-based independent publishers wishing to publish Australian works should be supported, and therefore the means-test approach appears to be a more nuanced policy approach.

State governments also play important roles in supporting independent publishers with active local publishing programs and finally, the contributions of university presses, in the context of continued cost pressures to minimise the subsidy from their host organisation, should be acknowledged. There is no clear measure in the academic literature which proposes an appropriate level of subsidy for university presses (and this may be unrealistic given the variation between them) but any pressure on university publishers to become self-funding will inevitably change the nature of their publishing lists.

Independent bookstores

Chapter 4 refers to the shared ethos between independent booksellers and independent publishers, discussed in *Reluctant Capitalists* (Miller, 2006); both are driven by a passion for books and a belief that they represent something more than simply consumer products In an overview of the Australian publishing industry, Andrew Wilkins (2008) observes that "A noteworthy aspect of the Australian retail sector is the relative health of independent bookselling"(Wilkins, 2008 p 150).[147]

Independent bookstores play a crucial role in the retailing of books by Australian independent publishers because many larger bookstore chains and discount department stores do not, in practice, take many of the independent publishers' product lines. The policy implications of the current research findings for Australian independent booksellers can be expressed as follows: any government policy which seeks to take into account the contributions of Australian independent publishers must also take into account the impact of potential policy changes upon Australian independent booksellers, because the strength of independent booksellers is a key institutional factor in the success of Australian independent publishers.

---

[147] Since publication of Wilkin's article the share has declined slightly: "While bookselling is very healthy in Australia (the market grew 5.8%) this growth was mainly through the Discount Department Stores and they are increasing their market share (Indies 19.8% chains 51.5% DDS 28.7%)" (Leading Edge Books, 2010).

Review of parallel importation provisions

The amendments to the Copyright Act in 1991, which restricted the parallel importation of books according to the "30 day rule" and the "90 day rule" (see (Wiseman, 2007) for more details) appear to have provided unanticipated industry benefits, particularly to some independent publishers.[148] It has created opportunities for them to obtain the rights to international works, some of which proved to be sufficiently profitable that publishers could cross-subsidise the publication of more marginal (often Australian) books.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to engage the complex arguments in detail regarding whether the current restrictions on parallel importation should be retained or not. In 2011 the Australian dollar rose strongly, at times reaching A$1.10: US$1,[149] the RedGoup Retail group entered insolvency, online sales of books from overseas sites such as Amazon grew, and there was public discussion about the cost of books in Australia compared to some other countries. In September 2011 the final report of the Book Industry Strategy Group recommended a voluntary industry amendment to "reduce the timeframe for retention of territorial copyright from 30/90 days to 14/14 days" (BISG, 2011 p 58).

Sir Alan (Peacock, 1992), an economist and former Chair of the Scottish Arts Council, observed of cultural policy in general that "public policies, regardless of the best intentions, often yield results other than those desired either by the majority of the community or even the policy makers". The risk with a radical change to the policy environment is the threat that it could destroy the hard-won competitive, internationally-oriented publishing industry infrastructure, both in terms of the independence of Australian multinationals in relation to their head offices, and the contributions of Australian independent publishers. The muted response by the industry to the BISG proposal suggests that the reform is achievable within these parameters.

One of the themes of the current research has been the critical importance of professional infrastructure at every stage of a book's conception and development, through to its marketing and the public discussion in response to it. Therefore, a strong finding of this study is that any policy measures should take into account the public good contributed by the Australian publishing industry in general and the independent Australian publishers in this case study. If policy changes are considered that would supposedly result in savings for consumers through lower prices, then a proportion of that consumer surplus should be reinvested in the industry by other policy means.

---

[148] For example, "it was generally agreed that the changes made to the Copyright Act in 1991 have had a very positive impact on the industry as a whole and have resulted in something of a renaissance in terms of the success and expansion of Australian publishing and Australian publishers and as a consequence the successful publication both locally and internationally of Australian authors" (Leading Edge Books Productivity Commission Submission – Parallel Importation of Books Study, 2008 p 2).
[149] On 29 July 2011.

Australian affiliates of multinational publishers

An unexpected finding was the contribution of Australian multinational publishers to informed, diverse public debate, particularly about public issues of international interest and also prominent Australian issues which should be acknowledged in future policy deliberations. The success of Australians working for the domestic affiliates of multinational publishers in achieving an unprecedented level of independence from their head offices in decision-making about their publishing lists have improved the relevance of their product lists for Australian book buyers. Importantly, the current study found that these contributions were not substitutable for those produced by Australian independent publishers; instead contributions by both enhanced the diversity of books available and the public debate that was generated around them.

Public access to digital works

This research concentrated on a period before e-readers became prevalent. It is not clear if they may change the way that books play into public debate, but it is worth noting a concern raised by Leanne Wiseman (2007), who argues that copyright changes to protect the digital forms of books

> [H]ave placed copyright owners in a position where they are able to exercise more control over the way digital works are used than they were previously able to exercise over analogue works. To the extent that this does occur, it will change the nature of copyright from being primarily a means of controlling copying, to being a regime that also enables owners to control the ability of users to access copyright works. This represents a significant transformation in the nature of the relationship between copyright owners and users (Wiseman, 2007 p 197).

Physical books can be freely lent to friends and made available in ways which the restrictions on digital copies cannot (for legal reasons). Publishers have clear commercial reasons to restrict the uses readers can make of digital copies of books. These imperatives should be balanced with the public-good benefit that results from books making contributions to public debate.

Library funding

Stuart Glover (2007) reports that library funding is the "third largest category of cultural spending (after broadcasting and national parks)" (Glover, 2007 p 92) by federal and state governments, with an estimated $1 billion spent annually. Libraries constitute an important market for Australian books, and they also facilitated the contributions of books to public debate by hosting public events featuring Australian and international writers. The final report of the Book Industry Strategy Group expresses concern that 'the very concept of a public library is currently under threat' (BISG, 2011 p 8) with particular reference to trends by some universities to cull large numbers of books from their collections. Although detailed policy issues fall outside the scope of this research, this thesis acknowledges the importance of public libraries to Australia's publishing infrastructure.

Writers' festivals

A more visible cultural initiative was the growth and popularity of writers' festivals. These served as vibrant and high profile public means for books and authors to contribute to public debate. In the case of major festivals, their reach was enhanced through coverage by media broadcasters such as ABC radio and TV, newspapers, and *The Monthly's* Slow TV over the Internet. Each festival is planned and funded according to its individual cultural and policy imperatives and does not require detailed comment. In brief, the cultural and social value they contributed to public debate during this period was in evidence.

9.4   Areas for future research

This research raises a number of areas for further investigation, set out in the following paragraphs.

Contemporary Australian readers

At the core of this research lay a mystery which could be explored further with a different set of analyses of contemporary Australian readers. Some of the key foundational work of this research lay in *not* making assumptions about why readers turned to books or how they responded to them. Although the Nielsen BookScan data enabled us to learn, for the first time, about the national narrative-non-fiction reading patterns of contemporary Australians, there is scope to learn much more. This includes not just more about readers' demographics (e.g., income, education level, preferences, consumption habits) but the *combinations* of books they read, and the *different ways* that different books, or even parts of the same books, are read (intensively or lightly, for example). To what extent do Australians read books in ways that generate independent interpretations of the ideologies offered by the text? What are the dynamics by which Australians decided to read some books rather than others? These types of research questions fit into both traditional cultural economics studies of consumers of cultural goods and also "history of the book" studies of readerships.

There is also scope for research into the translation of books and the readerships in potentially marginal groups. How did these readers obtain access to books (e.g., in their first language)? What are the dynamics of gaining access to translated works: do online purchases and online communities play a role? Is there is a limit to which this type of activity plays into contemporary public debate?

Australian publishers

Scholarly interest in the contributions of Australian independent publishers grew during the 2000s, and a continued interest in their economic circumstances and cultural contributions is desirable for informed policy development. The interplay between the economic performance and contributions of different types of publishers is also of interest. For example, although there

is existing research on the operations of Australian Indigenous publishers, it would be illuminating to learn more about their books and broader public life. In what ways do these books compare with the portrayals of Indigenous Australia which are most popular according to the Nielsen Bookscan sales data?

Australian-international trade flows in the publishing industry

Further research into the ability of Australian independent publishers to license the rights to books from US publishers would be of interest, both to inform policy and to understand whether the Traditional Market Agreement, which although formally disbanded, is still exerting influence. There is also potential to relate the broader research findings to the international publishing industry. One of the findings was the extent to which Australian readers, publishers and literary studies academics have reconciled their identities both as readers of international material and originators of it, as well as readers and critics of Australian works, a shift away from nationalist conceptions of Australian literature in the mid-twentieth century. This raises further possibilities for research into the economics of the Australian publishing industry and its cultural contributions in an international context.

Books and contemporary public debate

A potentially exciting area of research is using TV and radio ratings research combined with book sales to learn more about the dynamics of the interactions between books and other media in the contemporary environment. This could include the role of books, other media including social media (and other factors), in the processes of opinion-formation and public discourse.

Cultural value, books and publishing

Methodologies used by economists to gauge the valuation of a public good, such as contingent valuation and choice modelling, are increasingly being applied to the arts and cultural sector. The application of such methods to survey Australians about their valuation of the Australian publishing industry would complement the existing research in this project and would provide a useful measure for policy discussions about the future of the industry.

Bridging the gap between economics and humanities research approaches is an ongoing project for the foreseeable future, and whether it is considered desirable will depend on the specific research focus. One possible area involves relating debates about cultural value and literary canons to readers' evaluations of the merits of their choices (e.g., Rose's contention that readers knew when they were reading "great literature" or a more transient work, compared to Hilliard's observations about the hostility of aspiring British middle- and working-class writers to modernism in the mid twentieth century). Would this be comparing "apples and oranges" or can links be made?

9.5   Conclusion

The book was not dead during the period of this research. Instead, judging by the sales figures, books were a popular source of reading pleasure, instruction, and insight into some of the most pressing contemporary public policy issues. Although books which could be read in relation to public debates comprised a small proportion of the overall sales, the research uncovered a variety of reading patterns demonstrating distinctive ways in which Australians turned to very different styles and genres. However, sales data alone do not define the reach of books, which were reported in the media, cited by academics and quoted in parliament.

The recent academic interest in the role of Australian independent publishers in contributing to the diversity of books published was borne out by the empirical research, but the extent of contributions from multinational publishers was also uncovered. Recently the industry has undergone major changes, described by the publisher Elizabeth Weiss as a "paradigm shift" and this research paints a portrait of a diverse and active industry with a strong commitment to publishing Australian titles and the best of overseas English-language books. Policy reviews of the sector seem inevitable and one hopes that the forms of public good, cultural value and cultural diversity identified in this research are able to flourish in any future regulatory environments.

Weiss identified 2008 as the period in which a public hunger for books about serious issues abated, and sales have no doubt been shaped by other trends since. However, a key finding of this research is that a healthy, diverse Australian publishing industry contributed to the functioning of deliberative democracy. It may not always be in the high-profile forms identified in this research, but the research, writing, and discussion of ideas built around the extended deliberation offered by books is a key part of our democracy and is worth preserving, whether it is framed in the neo-classical economic discourse of a public good or in the developing field of cultural value. Either way, the value is real.

References

ABS (2005) Book Publishers, Australia, 2003-04, Canberra,

Adams, T. R. & Barker, N. (2006) A New Model for the Study of the Book. in Finkelstein, D. & McCleery, A. (Eds.) *The Book History Reader.* New York, Routledge.

Ahearne, J. (2009) Cultural Policy Explicit and Implicit: A Distinction and Some Uses. *International Journal of Cultural Policy,* 15**,** 141 - 153.

Allen & Unwin (2009) Allen & Unwin Supplementary Submission to the Productivity Commission: Copyright Restrictions on the Parallel Importatation of Books. in. Sydney, Productivity Commission.

Allen, J. S. (1993) From the History of the Book to the History of Reading: Review Essay. *Libraries & Culture,* 28**,** 319-326.

Anderson, B. (2006) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* London; New York, Verso.

Arms, J. (2004) 'Uneasy Truces and the Failure of Nerve in Scholarly Publishing' in Matthews, B. (Ed.) *Readers, Writers, Publishers.* Canberra, The Australian Academy of the Humanities.

Arnold, J. & Lyons, M. E. (2001) *A History of the Book in Australia: 1890-1945,* St. Lucia, University of Queensland Press.

Australia Council for the Arts (2001) Young Australians Reading: From Keen to Reluctant Readers, Council, S. L. o. V. A.

Banks, M. & O'Connor, J. (2009) After the Creative Industries. *International Journal of Cultural Policy,* 15**,** 365 - 373.

Bannock, G., Baxter, R. & Davies, E. (2003) Multinational Corporation, Multinational Enterprise. in Bannock, G., Baxter, R. & Davies, E. (Eds.) *The Penguin Dictionary of Economics.* London; New York Penguin Books Ltd.

Belfiore, E. & Bennett, O. (2008) *The Social Impact of the Arts: An Intellectual History,* London, Palgrave Macmillan.

Benhamou, F. & Peltier, S. (2007) How Should Cultural Diversity Be Measured? An Application Using the French Publishing Industry. *Journal of Cultural Economics,* 31**,** 85-107.

Benjamin, W. (1968) Theses on the Philosophy of History (1940; First Published, in German, 1950, in English, 1955). in Arendt, H. (Ed.) *Illuminations.* New York, Schocken Books.

Bestwick, D. (2003) Speech by Deborah Bestwick, Director, Oval House Theatre. in *Valuing Culture.* London, Demos.

Bishop, E. L. (2005) Book History. in *The John Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism (Second Edition).* Baltimore, Maryland & London, The Johns Hopkins University Press

Blair, M. (2007) Putting the Storytelling Back into Stories: Creative Non-Fiction in Tertiary Journalism Education (Phd Thesis), Bond University. Brisbane

Bode, K. (2008) Beyond the Colonial Present: Quantitative Analysis, "Resourceful Reading" And Australian Literary Studies. *JASAL Special Issue: The Colonial Present*.

Bode, K. (2009) From British Domination to Multinational Conglomeration? A Revised History of Australian Novel Publishing, 1950-2007. in Bode, K. & Dixon, R. (Eds.) *Resourceful Reading: The New Empiricism, Eresearch and Australian Literary Culture.* Sydney, Sydney University Press.

Bode, K. (2010) Publishing and Australia Literature: Crisis, Decline or Transformation? *Cultural Studies Review,* 16**,** 24-48.

Bode, K. & Dixon, R. (2009) 'Resourceful Reading: A New Empiricism in the Digital Age?'. in Bode, K. & Dixon, R. (Eds.). Sydney, University of Sydney.

Boggs, J. (2010) An Overview of Canada's Contemporary Book Trade in Light of (Nearly) Four Decades of Policy Interventions. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 26**,** 24-45.

Book Industry Strategy Group, (2011) Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, http://www.innovation.gov.au/Industry/BooksandPrinting/BookIndustryStrategyGroup/Pages/default.aspx

Borghino, J. (2010) Personal Interview. in. Sydney.

Bryant, M. N. (1979) English Language Publication and the British Traditional Market Agreement. *The Library Quarterly,* 49**,** 371-398.

Calhoun, C. J. (1992) *Habermas and the Public Sphere,* Cambridge, Mass, MIT Press.

Canoy, M., van Ours, J. C. & van der Ploeg, F. (2006) The Economics of Books. in Ginsburgh, V. A. & Throsby, D. (Eds.) *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture.* Amsterdam, Elsevier.

Carey, J. (2005) *What Good Are the Arts?,* London, Faber.

Carter, D. (1999) Good Readers and Good Citizens: Literature, Media and the Nation. *Australian Literary Studies,* 19**,** 136-151.

Carter, D. (2004a) *The Ideas Market: An Alternative Take on Australia's Intellectual Life,* Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Publishing.

Carter, D. (2004b) Managing the Middlebrow: Cultural Transfer and Colonial Modernity. in *SHARP 2004 Annual Conference.* Lyon, France.

Carter, D. (2004c) The Mystery of the Missing Middlebrow. in Ryan, J. & Wallace-Crabbe, C. (Eds.) *Imagining Australia: Literature and Culture in the New New World.* Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press.

Carter, D. (2007b) After Post-Colonialism. *Meanjin (Melbourne),* 66**,** 114-119.

Carter, D. (2009a) Structures, Networks, Institutions: The New Empiricism, Book History and Literary History. in Bode, K. a. D., Robert (Ed.) *Resourceful Reading: The New Empiricism, Eresearch, and Australian Literary Culture.* Sydney, Sydney University Press.

Carter, D. (2009b) Publishing, Patronage and Cultural Politics: Institutional Change in the Field of Australian Literature from 1950. in Pierce, P. (Ed.) *The Cambridge History of Australian Literature.* Port Melbourne, Vic., Cambridge University Press.

Carter, D. (2010) Modernity and the Gendering of Middlebrow Book Culture in Australia. in., Draft book chapter.

Carter, D. & Ferres, K. (2001) The Public Life of Literature. in Bennett, T. & Carter, D. (Eds.) *Culture in Australia: Policies, Publics and Programs.* Cambridge, U.K.; New York Cambridge University Press.

Carter, D. & Galligan, A. (2007c) *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing,* St. Lucia, Qld., University of Queensland Press.

Caves, R. E. (2000) *Creative Industries: Contracts between Art and Commerce,* Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press.

Chartier, R. (1994) *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press.

Clark, A. (2011) The Lost Art of Editing. in *The Guardian.* London.

Clendinnen, I. (2000) *Tiger's Eye : A Memoir,* Melbourne, Text Publishing.

Coll, B. (2006) Spanish-Language World Rights Versus Territorial Rights. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 22**,** 28-35.

Collinson, I. (2009) *Everyday Readers: Reading and Popular Culture,* London ; Oakville, CT, Equinox.

Connor, S. (1992) *Theory and Cultural Value,* Oxford, U.K. ; Cambridge, U.S.A., Blackwell.

Connor, S. (1996) *The English Novel in History, 1950-1995,* London ; New York, Routledge.

Coombes, A. (2004) Mobilising Rural Australia. *Griffith Review,* Autumn**,** 123-135.

Crain, C. (2007) Twilight of the Books. What Will Life Be Life If People Stop Reading? in *New Yorker.* New York.

Craven, P. (2008) Criticism and Fiction in Australia. in *Overland.*

Cuddon, J. A. & Preston, C. E. (1999) *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory,* London, Penguin.

Cuilenburg, J. v. (2005) On Monitoring Media Diversity, Media Profusion, and Media Performance: Some Regulator's Notes. *Communications,* 30**,** 301-308.

Culler, J. D. (2000) *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Cunningham, S. (2003) Fiction Vs Non-Fiction. in *The Age.* Melbourne, Fairfax.

Curtiss, R. H. C. (1996) "Princess" Plagiarism Suit Provides Rare Look into Literary Arab-Bashing. in *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs.* Washington DC, American Educational Trust.

Dale, L. (1999) New Directions: Introduction [to Australian Literary Culture and Australian Literary Criticism.]. *Australian Literary Studies,* 19**,** 131-135.

Danner, M. (2007) Words in a Time of War: On Rhetoric, Truth, and Power. in Szántó, A. (Ed.) *What Orwell Didn't Know: Propaganda and the New Face of American Politics.* New York, PublicAffairs.

Darnton, R. (1979) *The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopedie, 1775-1800,* Cambridge, Belknap Press.

Darnton, R. (1982) *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime,* Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press.

Darnton, R. (1984) *The Great Cat Massacre: And Other Episodes in French Cultural History,* London, Allen Lane.

Darnton, R. (1995) *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France,* New York, W.W. Norton.

Darnton, R. (2002 (reprinted from 1990)) What Is the History of Books? in Finkelstein, D. a. M., Alistair (Ed.) *The Book History Reader.* New York, Routledge.

Darnton, R. (2003) *George Washington's False Teeth: An Unconventional Guide to the Eighteenth Century,* New York, W. W. Norton.

Darnton, R. (2007) "What Is the History of Books?" Revisited. *Modern Intellectual History,* 4**,** 495-508.

Darnton, R. (2009) *The Case for Books: Past, Present, and Future,* New York, PublicAffairs

Davis, M. (1997) *Gangland: Cultural Elites and the New Generationalism,* St Leonards, N.S.W., Allen & Unwin.

Davis, M. (1999) *Gangland: Cultural Elites and the New Generationalism,* St Leonards, N.S.W., Allen & Unwin.

Davis, M. (2007) The Decline of the Literary Paradigm in Australian Publishing. in Galligan, D. C. a. A. (Ed.) *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing.* Brisbane, UQP.

Davis, M. (2008) Literature, Small Publishers and the Market in Culture. *Overland,* 190.

Dawson, P. (2005) *Creative Writing and the New Humanities,* London; New York Routledge

Day, I. (2006) Case-Study: Romancing the Reader. in Munro, C. & Sheahan-Bright, R. (Eds.) *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia 1946-2005.* St Lucia, Queensland, University of Queensland Press.

Delany, P. (2002) *Literature, Money, and the Market: From Trollope to Amis,* Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York, Palgrave.

Dessaix, R. & Australian Broadcasting Corporation. (1998) *Speaking Their Minds: Intellectuals and the Public Culture in Australia,* Sydney, ABC Books.

Dixon, R. (2003) Making Oz Lit (Review of Richard Nile's the Making of the Australian Literary Imagination). *Australian Book Review***,** 2.

Dixon, R. (2005) Tim Winton, Cloudstreet and the Field of Australian Literature. *Westerly,* 50**,** 240-260.

Dixon, R. (2007) Australian Literature-International Contexts (Conference on Elizabeth Webby's Retirement as Sydney University's Chair of Australian Literature) (Speech). *Southerly,* 67**,** 15.

Dixon, R. (2009) Curating Oz Lit: Creating the Australian Classics Library. *Australian Book Review,* 316**,** 20-21.

Dolin, T. (2004) The Secret Reading Life of Us. in Matthews, B. (Ed.) *Readers, Writers, Publishers.* Canberra, Australian Academy of the Humanities.

Dolin, T. (2005) The Secret Reading Life of Us. in *Lingua Franca.* Radio National, Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Donaldson, I. (2006) Matters of Life and Death: The Return of Biography. *Australian Book Review***,** 23-20.

Donoughue, P. (2011) Merchants of Culture - Review by Peter Donoughue Blogos - Forum of the Publishing World, http://www.blogos.eu/?p=546

Doyle, G. (2010) Why Culture Attracts and Resists Economic Analysis. *Journal of Cultural Economics,* 34**,** 245-259.

Dunning, J. H. & Lundan, S. M. (2008) Definitions and Sources of Data. in *Multinational Enterprises and the Global Economy (2nd Ed).* Cheltenham, England ; Northampton, MA, Edward Elgar Publishing.

Eagleton, T. (1996) *Literary Theory: An Introduction,* Cambridge, Mass., Blackwell.

Eisenhuth, S. & McDonald, W. (2007) *The Writer's Reader: Understanding Journalism and Non-Fiction,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Eisenstein, E. L. (2005) *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe (Second Edition),* Cambridge; New York, Cambridge University Press.

Ensor, J. D. (2009) Is a Picture Worth 10,174 Australian Novels? in Bode, K. & Dixon, R. (Eds.) *Resourceful Reading: The New Empiricism, Eresearch and Australian Literary Culture.* Sydney, Sydney University Press.

Febvre, L. & Martin, H. J. (1976) *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450-1800,* London, N.L.B.

Federico, A. R. (2004) Literature, Criticism, & the Market. *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920,* 47**,** 78-82.

Fine, C. (2011) Biased but Brilliant. in *The New York Times Sunday Review*. New York, The New York Times Company.

First Tuesday Book Club, (2009) Australian Broadcasting Corporation, http://www.abc.net.au/tv/firsttuesday/s2681097.htm.

Fisher, J. (2006) The Professional Author: Researching Creativity and Reality. *TEXT,* 10.

Fisher, J. (2008) Submission Re: Australia's Future Tax System (Australian Society of Authors), http://taxreview.treasury.gov.au/content/submissions/pre_14_november_2008/Australian_Society_Authors.pdf

Flanagan, R. (2007) Colonies of the Mind; Republics of Dreams: Australian Publishing Past and Future. in Carter, D. (Ed.) *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing.* Brisbane, University of Queensland Press.

Freadman, R. (2007) *This Crazy Thing a Life: Australian Jewish Autobiography,* Crawley, W.A., UWA Press.

Freadman, R. (2009) Once Tortured, Forever Tortured: Testimony and Autobiography in Jacob Rosenberg's East of Time and Sunrise West. *Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas,* 7**,** 279-297.

Freeth, K. (2007) A Lovely Kind of Madness: Small and Independent Publishing in Australia, Melbourne,

Frey, B. S. (2005) What Values Should Count in the Arts? The Tension between Economic Effects and Cultural Value, IEW, I. f. E. R. i. E.-.

Frow, J. (1995) *Cultural Studies and Cultural Value,* Oxford, New York, Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press.

Gagnier, R. (2000) *The Insatiability of Human Wants: Economics and Aesthetics in Market Society,* Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press.

Galligan, A. (2006) Popular Fiction / Literary Fiction / Popular Fusions: A Review of Ken Gelder's Popular Fiction: The Logics and Practices of the Literary Field *Australian Humanities Review*.

Galligan, A. (2007) The Culture of the Publishing House: Structure and Strategies in the Australian Publishing Industry. in Carter, D. & Galligan, A. (Eds.) *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing.* St. Lucia, University of Queensland Press.

Gare, S. (2008) Chasing Ishmael - Truth, Racism, the Us Media and Blockbuster Publishing. in *The Sydney Papers.* Autumn ed. Sydney, The Sydney Institute.

Gelder, K. (2006) Politics and Monomania. *Overland***,** 48-56.

Gelder, K. (2008) Criticism and Fiction in Australia. *Overland***,** 71-76.

Gelder, K. & Salzman, P. (2009) *After the Celebration: Australian Fiction 1989-2007,* Melbourne, Melbourne University Publishing.

Ginzburg, C. (1980) *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller,* London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Glastonbury, K. & Smith, R. (2009) Introduction: The Art of the Real. *TEXT (The Journal of the Australian Association of Writing Programs).*

Glover, S. (2007) Publishing and the State. in Carter, D. & Galligan, A. (Eds.) *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing.* St Lucia, Queensland, University of Queensland Press.

Gomez, J. (2008) *Print Is Dead: Books in Our Digital Age,* London ; New York, Macmillan.

Goodwin, C. (2006) Art and Culture in the History of Economic Thought. in Ginsburgh, V. & Throsby, C. D. (Eds.) *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture.* 1st ed. Amsterdam, Elsevier.

Gottschall, J. (2008) *Literature, Science and a New Humanities,* New York, Palgrave Macmillian.

Greco, A. (1997) The Market for Consumer Books in the U.S.: 1985–1995. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 13**,** 3-40.

Greco, A. N. (2005) *The Book Publishing Industry,* Mahwah, N.J., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Greco, A. N., Rodriguez, C. E. & Wharton, R. M. (2007) *The Culture and Commerce of Publishing in the 21st Century,* Stanford, Calif., Stanford Business Books.

Griffith Review (2003) Promotion and Marketing Report (Internal Document).

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

Haidt, J. (2007) The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology. *Science,* 316**,** 998-1002.

Hall, D. D. (2007) What Was the History of the Book? A Response. *Modern Intellectual History,* 4**,** 537-544.

Heard, A. (2007) This American Lie: A Midget Guitar Teacher, a Macy's Elf and the Truth About David Sedaris. in *New Republic.*

Heilbrun, J. & Gray, C. M. (1993) *The Economics of Art and Culture: An American Perspective,* Cambridge, England; New York, Cambridge University Press.

Heiss, A. (2003) *Dhuuluu-Yala = to Talk Straight: Publishing Indigenous Literature,* Canberra, Aboriginal Studies Press.

Heiss, A., Minter, P. & Jose, N. (2008) *Macquarie Pen Anthology of Aboriginal Literature,* Crows Nest, N.S.W., Allen & Unwin.

Hewison, R. (2006) Not a Sideshow: Leadership and Cultural Value, London,

Hillesund, T. (2007) Reading *Books in the Digital Age* Subsequent to Amazon, Google and the Long Tail. *First Monday,* 12.

Hilliard, C. (2006) *To Exercise Our Talents: The Democratization of Writing in Britain,* Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, Harvard University Press.

Hjorth-Andersen, C. (2001) A Model of Translations. *Journal of Cultural Economics,* 25**,** 203-217.

Holden, J. (2004) Capturing Cultural Value: How Culture Has Become a Tool of Government Policy, London,

Holden, J. (2006) Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy: Why Culture Needs a Democratic Mandate, London,

Hollier, N. (2007) Between Denial and Despair: Understanding the Decline of Literary Publishing in Australia. *Southern Review,* 40**,** 62-77.

How, R. (2010) An Overview of Taiwan's Book Publishing Industry. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 26**,** 183-186.

Hudson, N. (2002) Challenging Eisenstein: Recent Studies in Print Culture. *Eighteenth-Century Life,* 26**,** 83-95.

Huggan, G. (2008) Globaloney and the Australian Writer. in *Australian Literature in a Global World.* Wollongong.

Huggan, G. (2009) Globaloney and the Australian Writer. *The Journal of the European Association of Studies on Australia,* 1**,** 45-63.

Hutter, M. & Schusterman, R. (2006) Value and the Valuation of Art in Economic and Aesthetic Theory. in Ginsburgh, V. & Throsby, D. (Eds.) *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture, Volume 1.* Amsterdam, Elsevier B.V.

Hutter, M. & Throsby, C. D. (2008a) *Beyond Price: Value in Culture, Economics, and the Arts,* Cambridge ; New York, NY, Cambridge University Press.

Hutter, M. & Throsby, D. (2008b) Value and Valuation in Art and Culture: Introduction and Overview. in Hutter, M. & Throsby, D. (Eds.) *Beyond Price: Value in Culture, Economics and the Arts.* New York, Cambridge University Press.

Indyk, I. (2000) The Critic and the Public Culture: For Example, Walter Benjamin. *Australian Humanities Review*.

Indyk, I. (2009) Magical Numbers. in Bode, K. & Dixon, R. (Eds.) *Resourceful Reading: The New Empiricism, Eresearch and Australian Literary Culture.* Sydney, Sydney University Press.

Jackson, S. (2009) Hacks Find Escape between the Covers. in *The Australian.* Surry Hills, News Limited.

Janhsen, D. (2007) Germany--a Foreign Rights Dwarf? *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 23**,** 146-150.

Jenkins, T. (2011) Viewpoint - Valuing Culture. in *The Spectator (Magazine).* London, The Spectator.

Johns, A. (1998) *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making,* Chicago, Ill., University of Chicago Press.

Jones, P. (2011) Digital Rights Debate Headed to a Europe near You, FutureBook: a digital blog from Europe in assocation with Bookseller, http://www.futurebook.net/content/digital-rights-debate-headed-europe-near-you

Jose, N. (2009a) *Macquarie Pen Anthology of Australian Literature,* Crows Nest, N.S.W., Allen & Unwin.

Jose, N. (2009b) Personal Interview. in. Sydney.

Kaplan, M. (2007) Welcome to the Infotainment Freak Show. in Szántó, A. (Ed.) *What Orwell Didn't Know: Propaganda and the New Face of American Politics.* New York, PublicAffairs.

Kaye, L. & Johanson, K. (2007) Publishing and Bookselling. in Carter, D. & Galligan, A. (Eds.) *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publising.* St. Lucia, Queensland, University of Queensland Press.

Kennedy, B. (2010) The Middle East Books Market: A Personal Overview. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 26**,** 187-192.

King, N. (2007a) 'Amateurs, Pamphleteers and Indie Rock' Prickly Paradigm Press: And Interview with Matthew Engelke. *Southern Review,* 40**,** 78-95.

King, N. (2007b) Independent, and Emerging Satisfying: An Interview with Publisher Henry Rosenbloom. *Metro Magazine: Media & Education Magazine,* 152.

King, N. (2007c) The Main Thing We Book Publishers Have Going with Our Books Is the Books Themselves: An Interview with Pete Ayrton of Serpent's Tail Press, Islington. in *Critical Quarterly.* Wiley-Blackwell.

Klamer, A. (2002) Accounting for Social and Cultural Values. *De Economist,* 150**,** 453-473.

Klamer, A. (2003) Social, Cultural and Economic Values of Cultural Goods, Formerly Titled "Cultural Goods Are Good for More Than Their Economic Value" http://www.klamer.nl/articles/culture/art.php

Knox, M. (2005) The Exfactor: Bookscan and the Death of the Australian Novelist. *The Monthly,* May.

Korda, M. (2001) *Making the List: A Cultural History of the American Bestseller, 1900-1999* Barnes & Noble Books.

Kovač, M. (2008) *Never Mind the Web: Here Comes the Book,* Oxford, Chandos.

Kovač, M. & Wischenbart, R. (2009a) Diversity Report 2009: Cultural Diversity in Translations of Books: Mapping Fiction Authors across Europe,

Kovač, M. & Wischenbart, R. (2009b) End of the English (British?) Empire? Or Something Else. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 25**,** 188-127.

Kovač, M. & Wischenbart, R. (2010) Diversity Report 2010: Literary Translation in Current European Book Markets., Wischenbart, R.

Koval, R. (2005a) Bookscan and the Fading Mystique of Literary Australia in *Books and Writing.* Radio National, Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Koval, R. (2005b) Transforming Scholarly Writing. in *Books and Writing.* Radio National, Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Lake, M. (2010) How Do Schoolchildren Learn About the Spirit of Anzac? in Lake, M. & Reynolds, H. (Eds.) *What's Wrong with Anzac? The Militarisation of Australian History.* Sydney, University of New South Wales.

Lake, M. & Reynolds, H. (Eds.) (2010) *What's Wrong with Anzac? The Militarisation of Australian History,* Sydney, University of New South Wales.

Lamond, J. & Reid, M. (2009) Squinting at a Sea of Dots: Visualising Australian Readerships Using Statistical Machine Learning. in Bode, K. & Dixon, R. (Eds.) *Resourceful Reading: The New Empricism, Eresearch, and Australian Literary Culture.* Sydney, Sydney University Press.

Leading Edge Books (2010) Hobart Conference http://bitethebook.com/2010/03/17/leading-edge-books-conference-hobart-2010/

Leading Edge Books Productivity Commission Submission – Parallel Importation of Books Study. (2008) in. Melbourne, The Commission.

Lee, J. (2010) Digital Technologies in Australia's Book Industry, Canberra ACT,

Lever, S. (2008) Criticism and Fiction in Australia. *Overland***,** 64-67.

Levisalles, N. (2004) The U.S. Market for Translations. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* Summer.

Louden, R. B. (2007) *The World We Want: How and Why the Ideals of the Enlightenment Still Elude Us,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Lumby, C. (2004) Outside In: Journalists and Academics in the Public Sphere. in Carter, D. (Ed.) *The Ideas Market.* Melbourne, Melbourne University Press.

Lyons, M. & Taksa, L. (1992) *Australian Readers Remember: An Oral History of Reading 1890-1930,* Melbourne, Oxford University Press.

MacCaskill, M. (2010) Personal Interview. in. Sydney.

Macleod, J. & Buckridge, P. (1992) *Books and Reading in Australian Society,* [Brisbane], Institute for Cultural Policy Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Griffith University.

Magner, B. (2006) Case-Study: Anglo-Australian Relations in the Book Trade. in Munro, C. a. S.-B., Robyn (Ed.) *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia 1946-2005.* St Lucia, University of Queensland Press.

Manley, L. (2000) The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making.(Review). *Comparative Literature,* 52**,** 90(7).

Martingdale, C. (2001) The Proper Place of Humanism: Qualitative Versus Scientific Studies of Literature. in Schram, D. & Steen, G. (Eds.) *The Psychology and Sociology of Literature: In Honour of Elrud Ibsch.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Co.

Martos, M. L. P. (2008) A Model of the Book Publishing Industry in Spain (Conference Paper). in *Association for Cultural Economics International (ACEI).* Boston.

McCarthy, K. F., Ondaatje, E. H., Zakaras, L. & Brooks, A. (2004) Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate About the Benefits of the Arts, Santa Monica, CA; Arlington, VA; Pittsburgh, PA,

McDonald, P. D. (2006a) Ideas of the Book and Histories of Literature: After Theory? *Publications of the Modern Language Association (PMLA),* 121**,** 214–228.

McDonald, P. D. (2006b) 'Ideas of the Book and Histories of Literature: After Theory?'. *PMLA,* 121.1**,** pp 214-228.

McKenna, M. (2010) Anzac Day: How Did It Become Australia's National Day? in Lake, M. a. R., Henry (Ed.) *What's Wrong with Anzac? The Militarisation of Australian History.* Sydney, University of New South Wales.

McKenzie, D. F. (1984) The Sociology of a Text: Orality, Literacy and Print in Early New Zealand. *The Library,* Sixth Series, VI**,** 333-365.

McLean, K. (2002) Culture, Commerce and Ambivalence: A Study of Australian Federal Government Intervention in Book Publishing, PhD, Monash Universty. Melbourne

McLean, K. & Poland, L. (2010) A Case for Literature: The Effectiveness of Subsidies to Australian Publishers 1995 – 2005, Sydney,

Mead, P. (2011) Experiences of Reading: Kim Scott's Flinders Dance and John Kinsella's Divine Comedy (Plenary Address). in *Republic of Letters: Literary Communities in Australia.* University of Sydney.

Miller, D. & Dinan, W. (2008) *A Century of Spin: How Public Relations Became the Cutting Edge of Corporate Power,* London, Ann Arbor Pluto Press.

Miller, L. J. (2006) *Reluctant Capitalists: Bookselling and the Culture of Consumption,* Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Modjeska, D. (2002a) *Timepieces,* Sydney, Picador.

Modjeska, D. (2002b) Give Me the Real Thing. in *Sydney Morning Herald.* Sydney, Fairfax Media.

Mordue, M. (2003) Is the Novel Dead? in *Sydney Morning Herald.* Sydney, Fairfax Media.

Moretti, F. (2005) *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History,* London, New York, Verso.

Munro, C. & Curtain, J. (2006) After the War. in Munro, C. & Sheahan-Bright, R. (Eds.) *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia 1946-2005.* St. Lucia, University of Queensland Press.

Munro, C. & Sheahan, R. (2006) *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia 1946-2005,* St Lucia, Qld., University of Queensland Press.

Murray, S. (2004) *Mixed Media: Feminist Presses and Publishing Politics,* London, Sterling, Virginia, Pluto Press.

Murray, S. (2006) Publishing Studies: Critically Mapping Research in Search of a Discipline *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 22**,** 3-25.

Mussinelli, C. (2010) Digital Publishing in Europe: A Focus on France, Germany, Italy and Spain. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 26**,** 168-175.

National Endowment for the Arts (2004) *Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America*, Washington, DC,

National Endowment for the Arts (2007) *To Read or Not to Read*, Washington DC, Arts, N. E. f. t.

Neill, R. (2006) Lits Out. in *The Australian.* Sydney, News Ltd.

Nielsen Bookscan, (2011) http://www.nielsenbookscan.com.au/controller.php?page=108

Nile, R. (2002) *The Making of the Australian Literary Imagination,* St Lucia, Qld., University of Queensland Press.

O'Brien, D. (2010) Measuring the Value of Culture: A Report to the Department for Culture Media and Sport, London, Department for Culture, M. a. S.

O'Connor, J. (2006) Art, Popular Culture and Cultural Policy: Variations on a Theme of John Carey. *Critical Quarterly,* 48**,** 49-104.

O'Connor, J. (2009) Creative Industries: A New Direction? *International Journal of Cultural Policy,* 15**,** 387 - 402.

Oakley, K. (2009) The Disappearing Arts: Creativity and Innovation after the Creative Industries. *International Journal of Cultural Policy,* 15**,** 403-413.

Ommundsen, W. & Jacklin, M. (2008) Mapping Literature Infrastructure in Australia, Wollongong,

Open Book Publishers (2011) Our Vision, Open Book Publishers, http://www.openbookpublishers.com/section.php/4/1/our-vision

Örnebring, H. (2009) The Two Professionalisms of Journalism: Journalism and the Changing Context of Work. in *Working Paper, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford.*

Orr, G. (2011) Academics and the Media in Australia. *Australian Universities' Review,* 52**,** 23-31.

Peacock, A. (1992) Economics, Cultural Values and Cultural Policies. in Towse, R. & Khakee, A. (Eds.) *Cultural Economics.* Berlin Heidelberg New York London Paris Tokyo Hong Kong Barcelona Budapest, Springer-Verlag.

Poland, L. (1997) Fire in Your Belly: Independent Publishers and the Acquisition of Books, Monash University. Melbourne

Price, L. (2004) Reading: The State of the Discipline. *Book History,* 7**,** 303-320.

Productivity Commission (2009) *Restrictions on the Parallel Importation of Books: Productivity Commission Research Report / Australian Government, Productivity Commission,* Melbourne, Vic., The Commission.

Purcell, E. (2010) A Problem: Ebook Rights, Small Markets & Divergent Growth Rates, http://www.teleread.com/paul-biba/a-problem-ebook-rights-small-markets-divergent-growth-rates/

PWC (2011) Cover to Cover: A Market Analysis of the Australian Book Industry, Canberra, ACT,

Radway, J. A. (1997) *A Feeling for Books: The Book-of-the-Month Club, Literary Taste, and Middle-Class Desire,* Chapel Hill and London, The University of North Carolina Press.

The Re:Enlightenment Project, (2011) http://www.reenlightenment.org/

Rich, M. (2007) Are Book Reviewers out of Print? in *The New York Times.* New York, The New York Times Company.

Ringstad, V. & Løyland, K. (2006) The Demand for Books Estimated by Means of Consumer Survey Data. *Journal of Cultural Economics,* 30**,** 141-155.

Romei, S. (2011) Lazarus Writing. in *The Weekend Australian Magazine.* Sydney, News Limited.

Rose, J. (1992) Rereading the English Common Reader: A Preface to a History of Audiences. *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 53**,** 47-70.

Rose, J. (2004) Was Capitalism Good for Victorian Literature? *Victorian Studies,* 46**,** 489-501.

Rosenberg, Y. b. G. (2005) *East of Time,* [Blackheath, N.S.W.], Brandl & Schlesinger.

Rosenberg, Y. b. G. (2007) *Sunrise West,* [Blackheath, N.S.W.], Brandl & Schlesinger.

Rosenbloom, H. (2008) Territorial Rights and Wrongs (Aka Perfidious Albion), Scribe, http://www.scribepublications.com.au/blog/territorialrightsandwrongsakaperfidiousalbion

Rubin, J. S. (1992) *The Making of Middlebrow Culture,* Chapel Hill & London, The University of North Carolina Press.

Schiffrin, A. (2001) *The Business of Books: How International Conglomerates Took over Publishing and Changed the Way We Read,* London ; New York, Verso.

Schiffrin, A. (2010) *Words and Money,* London; New York, Verso.

Selwood, S. (2003) Valuing Culture - Measuring Culture (Speech). in *Valuing Culture.* London, Demos.

SGS (2008) Economic Analysis of Literary Publishing in Australia, Surry Hills, Sydney, Council, A.

Shafer, J. (2007) David Sedaris and His Defenders: I Guess It All Comes Down to What Your Definition Of "Exaggeration" Is. in *Slate.com.*

Shatzkin, M. (2009) Shifting Sales Channels. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 25**,** 154-158.

Sheehan, P. (1998) *Among the Barbarians: The Dividing of Australia,* Milsons Point, N.S.W., Random House Australia.

Sher, R. B. (2006) *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America,* Chicago, Ill.; London, University of Chicago Press.

Singerland, E. (2008) *What Science Offers the Humanities: Integrating Body and Culture,* Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press.

Smith, B. H. (1988) *Contingencies of Value: Alternative Perspectives for Critical Theory,* Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press.

Smith, C. R. H. (2003) Speech by Rt Hon Chris Smith, Director of the Clore Programme for Cultural Leadership. in *Valuing Culture.* London, Demos.

Smith, L. T. (1999) *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples,* London; New York, Dunedin, N.Z., Zed Books; University of Otago Press.

Snowball, J. D. (2008) *Measuring the Value of Culture: Methods and Examples in Cultural Economics,* Berlin Heidelberg, Springer-Verlag.

Sommerville, C. J. (1999) Reviews of Books: Europe: Early Modern and Modern. *American Historical Review,* 104**,** 1751-1752.

Sorensen, A. T. (2007) Bestseller Lists and Product Variety. *Journal of Cultural Economics,* LV**,** 715-738.

Squires, C. (2007) *Marketing Literature: The Making of Contemporary Writing in Britain,* Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, New York, Palgrave MacMillan.

St. Clair, W. (2004) *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period,* Cambridge, U.K.; New York, Cambridge University Press.

Stanton, D. C. (2004) Working through the Crises: A Plan for Action. *Profession***,** 32-41.

State Library of Victoria (2009) Keeping Young Australians Reading, Melbourne, Victoria, S. L. o.

Steger, J. (2004) Text Publishing Starts Next Chapter. in *The Age.* Melbourne, Fairfax.

Stewart, C. A. (2009) The Culture of Contemporary Writers' Festivals, Thesis (Ph D), Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, 2009.

Stewart, I. G. (2000) The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making.(Review). *Canadian Journal of History,* 35**,** 403.

Sydney Pen - About Us, (2011) http://pen.org.au/about-us

Szenberg, M. & Lee, E. Y. (1994) The Structure of the American Book Publishing Industry. *Journal of Cultural Economics,* 18**,** 313-322.

Templeman, I. (2004) Ideas and Imagination. in Matthews, B. (Ed.) *Readers, Writers, Publishers.* Canberra, The Australian Academy of the Humanities.

Text (2010) Beneath Sea and Sky, Herz Bergner, Text Publishing, http://textpublishing.com.au/books-and-authors/book/between-sky-sea/

Text Publishing (2011) Maureen and Tony Wheeler Acquire Canongate's Stake in Text Publishing, http://textpublishing.com.au/number-3-chiller/post/maureen-and-tony-wheeler-acquire-canongate-s-stake-in-text-publishing/

The Allen Consulting Group (2005) Valuing the Priceless: The Value of Historic Heritage in Australia, Sydney,

Thompson, J. B. (1995) *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media,* Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press.

Thompson, J. B. (2005) *Books in the Digital Age: The Transformation of Academic and Higher Education Publishing in Britain and the United States,* Cambridge, Polity Press.

Thompson, J. B. (2010) *Merchants of Culture: The Publishing Business in the Twenty-First Century,* Cambridge, Polity.

Thomson, J. (2011) Former Angus & Robertson Franchisees Join Leading Edge Buying Group, Smart Company, http://www.smartcompany.com.au/retail/20110823-former-angus-robertson-franchisees-join-leading-edge-buying-group.html

Throsby, C. D. (2001) *Economics and Culture,* Cambridge, UK ; New York, Cambridge University Press.

Throsby, C. D. (2010) *The Economics of Cultural Policy,* Cambridge ; New York, Cambridge University Press.

Throsby, D. (1999) Cultural Capital. *Journal of Cultural Economics,* 23**,** 3-12.

Throsby, D. (2003) Determining the Value of Cultural Goods: How Much (or How Little) Does Contingent Valuation Tell Us?. *Journal of Cultural Economics,* 27**,** 275-285.

Throsby, D. (2008) Modelling the Cultural Industries. *International Journal of Cultural Policy,* 14**,** 217 - 232.

Throsby, D. (2011) The Political Economy of Art: Ruskin and Contemporary Cultural Economics. *History of Political Economy,* 43**,** 275-294.

Throsby, D. & Zednik, A. (2010) Do You Really Expect to Get Paid? An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia, Sydney, Council, A.

Tian, X. & Martin, B. (2009) Business Models in Digital Book Publishing: Some Insights from Australia. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 25**,** 73-88.

Tippet, G. (2011) Our Future Is Still to Be Written. in *The Sun-Herald.* Sydney, Fairfax Media.

Trounson, A. (2010) Book Sales on Rise Despite Technology. in *The Australian.* Surry Hills, Sydney, News Limited.

UNESCO (2005) Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, Paris,

Uribe, M. (2006) Perspective of a Smaller Latin American Publisher. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 22**,** 36-41.

Vogel, H. L. (2007) Entertainment Industry Economics [Electronic Resource] : A Guide for Financial Analysis / 7th Ed

in. Cambridge; New York, Cambridge University Press.

Wakefield Press (2011) About Us: Corporate Publishing Services, Wakefield Press, http://www.wakefieldpress.com.au/pages.php?pageid=1

Webby, E. (2000) Colonial Writers and Readers. in *The Cambridge Companion to Australian Literature.* Melbourne, Cambridge University Press.

Weiss, E. (2011) Personal Communication. in. Sydney.

Welcome to English, Macquarie University, (2011) Macquarie University, http://www.engl.mq.edu.au/

Wevers, L. (2009) The View from Here: Readers and Australian Literature; Dorothy Green Memorial Lecture. *JaSAL: Special Issue Australian Literature in a Global World.*

Whitlock, G. (1999) Australian Literature: Points for Departure. *Australian Literary Studies,* 19**,** 152-162.

Whitlock, G. (2000) From Biography to Autobiography. in Webby, E. (Ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Australian Literature.* Oakleigh, Vic., Cambridge University Press.

Whitlock, G. (2007) *Soft Weapons: Autobiography in Transit,* Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Wilding, M. (1999) Australian Literary and Scholarly Publishing in Its International Context. *Australian Literary Studies,* 19**,** 57-65.

Wilding, M. (2000) Michael Wilding on Australian Publishing in a Global Environment. (Commentary). *Antipodes,* 14**,** 152-3.

Wilkins, A. (2008) Australian Book Market: An Overview. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 24**,** 149-155.

Williamson, G. (2010) Bugger the Bloggers: Old-World Critics Still Count. in *The Australian.* Sydney, News Limited.

Wischenbart, R. (2008) Diversity Report 2008: An Overview and Analysis of Translation Statistics across Europe: Facts, Trends, Patterns,

Wiseman, L. (2007) Copyright and the Regulation of the Australian Publishing Industry. in Carter, D. & Galligan, A. (Eds.) *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing.* St Lucia, Queensland, University of Queensland Press.

Woodmansee, M. & Osteen, M. E. (1999) *The New Economic Criticism: Studies at the Intersection of Literature and Economics,* London and New York, Routledge.

Woodward, B. (2002) *Bush at War,* New York, Simon & Schuster.

Wyndham, S. (2004) Developer Adds Another Story. in *Sydney Morning Herald.* Sydney, Fairfax.

Xiaoyan, T. (2006) Ten-Year Survey of China's Book Industry. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 22**,** 64-77.

Yang, E. (2004) The Trade Book Publishing Industry in South Korea. *Publishing Research Quarterly,* 19**,** 37-44.

Young, S. (2007) *The Book Is Dead: Long Live the Book,* Sydney, University of New South Wales Press Ltd.

Zuidervaart, L. (2011) *Art in Public: Politics, Economics, and a Democratic Culture,* New York, Cambridge University Press.