

so far with the newly arrived — and, temporarily, non-hostile — British settlers, before sailing off to the north-east in search of the mysterious Solomon Islands. These had been reported by the Spanish sailor Mendana in 1568, but not subsequently identified. At that point La Pérouse and his companions vanished. They thereby became themselves a mystery. It was one that generated several more French expeditions to the Pacific, and which was not resolved until 1826 when Peter Dillon (he who had brought the first missionaries to New Zealand in 1814) found relics of their demise on the island of Vanikoro in the Santa Cruz group.

For its inherent content and for its bearing on many other topics La Pérouse's is a story that demanded to be told. It is somewhat disconcerting, though, to realize that Dunmore has told it before, under the title *Pacific Explorer*, in 1985. Much of the text of the work under review is the same as that of the earlier version and there appear to be no major additions or subtractions in the material contained between the covers. But the chapter arrangements have been somewhat varied and there has been some re-writing, so that the new volume (26 pages shorter than its predecessor) is more of a re-presentation than a new edition. A short note to explain the few changes and the re-titling would have been very useful. But, having got over some irritation at having to work out which book is which, and after having endured some confusion as to why and how the second differs from the first, a reader can be expected to thank John Dunmore for making La Pérouse's life accessible in print — again. It warrants a readership, in either form.

HUGH LARACY

The University of Auckland

The White Pacific: US Imperialism and Black Slavery in the South Seas after the Civil War. By Gerald Horne. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2007. 253pp. US price: \$59.00. ISBN 978-0-8248-3147-9.

THE PRESENCE OF AMERICANS IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS privately, bonded or as representatives of the Confederate South, the Union North or the United States after the Civil War, is the theme of *The White Pacific*. In ten short chapters, and 60 pages of endnotes, Gerald Horne claims that their presence in the post-Civil War period 'unleashed enormous changes in the Pacific', that they exploited resources and, as a legacy, created a wealthy, racist, European hegemony that remains in Oceania today (pp.177–8). Horne focuses on Hawaii, Fiji, Australia and the Pacific Islands but seems to have missed the contradiction that the 'US Negroes pouring into the colonies of Australia' and elsewhere creating a 'Black Pacific' ended up as temporary visitors. He does not explain how all this Black American activity was reversed so that a White, European world dominates Pacific Islanders today.

Equally disturbing is Horne's argument that not giving Japanese workers the vote in Hawaii in the 1890s was linked to the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor (p.169), and that racism was the cause of the reduction in Pacific Islanders' labour in Queensland between 1901 and 1906 (p.148) rather than the ban on recruiting after 1901 and the beginning of deportations. Finding African Americans and West Indians on the Victorian goldfields leads Horne to jump to amazing conclusions about their influence. At best Americans amounted to 1% of the goldfields population, and an estimated 2500 were far outnumbered by Germans (c.10,000) and c.8000 other Europeans. With 29% being Australian-born and 60% coming from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, only 9% of the goldfields population were not Anglo-Saxon. The major fault in Horne's argument is that he found a deserting West Indian whaler in Palau, an ex-Confederate soldier in Fiji and a New York-born escaped slave prospering and respected in Hawaii, and extrapolated these wildly to

portray a Pacific Islands overwhelmed by post-Civil War Americanization. One problem is that Anthony Allen, the New York slave, was in Hawaii in 1810, and James Gibbon the deserter landed in Palau in 1860 before the Civil War. Horne also omits completely American involvement in the Pacific Northwest fur trade which drew Hawaii into a global trade network and other darker incidents such as the American merchantman *Eleanora's* burning, bombardment and killing of a hundred Hawaiians on Maui in 1790.

The contemporaneous effect of a more romantic, paradisiacal South Seas created in US fiction is also overlooked. Horne worryingly relies on facts plucked out of sequence, that are often inaccurate and which certainly ignore the latest scholarship in the many fields he rampages through looking for Americans as beachcombers, rebels, blackbirders, honorary consuls, company developers, annexationists and KKK members. The disregard for chronology is daunting. In one short passage, events including the visit to Australia of the 'Great White fleet' and the World Champion African American boxer Jack Johnson in 1908, A.T Mahan's influence on the US in 1912, and a KKK in Moose Jaw, Canada, in 1928, are assembled to prove that Australia was well on its way to developing a White Australia policy, which contrary to his whole argument had been the subject of debate well before it was legislated in 1901.

The reader's patience is tried also by inaccuracies. A West Indian, John Joseph, is claimed to have been a central figure in the goldfields unrest known as the 1854 Eureka riots. Horne variously calls it a notorious rebellion and an outbreak of sedition, and although Joseph is missing from the academically respected historical accounts and continuing debates on the event, he is described by Horne as having been a leader who boosted republican sentiments (p.25), and in a later chapter as having played a pivotal role (p.60). He claims the Polynesia Company was an investment scheme that tried to acquire land in Fiji, it was US-backed and that US nationals played an essential role. It was instead a Melbourne-based trading, shipping, banking and land sales fraud that failed on all counts, and certainly did not provoke a bloody war with indigenous Fijians. Horne's lack of familiarity with Pacific history also leads him to suggest there was more than one major European town in Samoa, and that many hundreds of French settlers were massacred in a bloody onslaught in the 1878 Kanak rebellion in New Caledonia. There was, indeed, a high death rate, but it was among the Kanaks, with perhaps 1000 deaths. He is unable to decide on the number of indentured labourers in Queensland. In the introduction an exact figure of 61,620 is cited (p.2), but this expands to 120,000 (p.148) and in the chapter on 'Blackbirding' the number is stated to be 48,000, but seven lines later is listed as 60,000 (p.33).

More worrying than these errors is the absence of acknowledgement of historians who have already traversed much of this material. Alert readers will note the journalistic, sensational approach right from the start. Slavery, torture, cannibalism and flogging are mentioned on the opening page, and the three authorities cited on the next page regarding the Queensland *Kanaka* or indentured labour period 1863–1904, are a conference report on recent Pacific Islander migration to Australia, an academic essay on late nineteenth-century Samoan migration and a now discredited and rarely cited 1935 pot-boiler by an Australian journalist. Two chapters are devoted to the labour trade, and Queensland is referred to regularly, but the extensive scholarship produced by Clive Moore, Doug Munro, Ralph Shlomowitz and Adrian Graves over the past 30 years seems to have escaped Horne's gaze. The tactic of citing a single letter in a consular scrapbook concerning labour in Fiji, for example, means Horne has not read, or has deliberately ignored, the scholarship of Lal, France, McNaught, Knapman, Young, Gillion and Scarr in regard to Fiji, while citing as his authorities the amateur historians and popular writers, Gravelle, Derrick and Brown. This goes to ridiculous extremes when a 2007 Fiji National Farmers' Union publication is cited as the authority for the hardships of the Indian indentured labour period which ended in Fiji in 1921. The source is not identified in the text so readers will assume the direct quotes are from the period.

What further weakens the analysis is a reliance on generalizations. The six Australian colonies are treated as a single entity, Fiji and Hawaii are assumed to have had a government in the sense that a nation might declare a national policy, and for reasons not made clear, Hawaii was more 'sophisticated than its Pacific counterparts' and the 'envy of its Pacific neighbours'. This would be suspect journalism, and in an academic text it is damning. I hope my undergraduate students stay well clear of this disappointing attempt to causally link American activity to the nature of nineteenth-century colonialism, and at worst to events at the end of the twentieth century. This book is so riddled with inconsistencies and errors that readers will wonder why the University of Hawaii Press published it, especially considering the two excellent, scholarly books on much the same topic they published at the same time — Tracy Banivanua-Mar's *Violence and Colonial Dialogue: The Australian–Pacific Indentured Labour Trade* and Jeffrey Geiger's *Facing the Pacific: Polynesia and the US Imperial Imagination*. In Horne's approach to what constitutes history, a now lengthening era of post-colonial research, historiographical reflection and the highlighting of islander agency are ignored and Pacific Islanders rarely mentioned.

MAX QUANCHI

Queensland University of Technology

The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific. By Patty O'Brien. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 2006. 347pp. NZ price: \$99.99. ISBN 0-295-98609-3.

BECAUSE SOMETIMES YOU FINISH READING A BOOK REVIEW and realize it has talked more about what a book does not do rather than what it does, I will begin by outlining what this book *is not*. This is not a book about Pacific women, and it is not a book about indigenous Pacific views of the region. It also, despite a short extended bibliography of texts by Pacific women near the end of the second-to-last chapter, is not about how Pacific women write or think about themselves. Instead, this is a book about a *stereotype*, about a mode of representation. It seeks to elaborate and contextualize the range of European reactions to the Pacific through the mobilization of discourses that explicitly pertain to the dual primitivization and sexualization of women's bodies. It can be tricky to produce an historical treatment of a stereotype without merely pointing to 'real' archival work as the proof of the stereotype's opposite, in which case 'real' natives get paraded through a text in order to counter 'fake' natives, and although the book veers a little towards this mode of stereotype-busting, for the most part it manages very well.

Patty O'Brien argues for a thing called 'exotic femininity', which is a conglomerate of many European ideas about women. She points to the development of this exotic femininity in spaces that are temporally (Classical Greece) or geographically (Africa and the Americas) distinct from the Pacific colonial context, and then carefully traces how these ideas were brought into the region. Ideas that white men developed about women in each of these spaces have a cumulative effect until the major European journeys through the Pacific in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, during which these ideas were centred, mobilized, extended and hardened. This idea of 'exotic femininity' enables O'Brien not only to bring together an impressive range of sources and examples from each of those spaces, but also to write in new ways about the stereotype of indigenous women in the Pacific. Identifying the stereotype allows a particular configuration of racialized and gendered relationships to be newly visible in a rather diverse range of situations.

The book is distinguished more by its careful specificities than by its general conceptualization. The overall topic is probably not, in itself, news to most readers: