

The opening theme of the collection is the idea of 'spectacle', including the circus and bodies traded. The 'traffic in skulls' provides a useful starting point for the idea of bodies, or at least their parts, traded among colonial 'experts'. Turnbull's chapter describes the work of colonial medicine through this postcolonial lens. Colonial exhibition, in the chapter by Yves Le Fur (part of the exhibitionary complex explored elsewhere by Tony Bennett), demonstrates that like medicine, display underlined the way Pacific bodies became objects of desire for white Europeans through their use as 'spectacle'. Obeyesekere's own contribution is a piece about 'the act of cannibalism as a mythic construct' explored through the (fictional) writing of seaman Peter Dillon in the early nineteenth century. Obeyesekere argues that Dillon reveals his own identity in his narrative about cannibals; Dixon and Lyons similarly investigate cannibalism as it was 'seen' and narrativized.

These pieces interest me — as historian — and other chapters in the collection, including the pieces on white women in captivity and the two contributions on film by Hoorn and Creed, show that the direction of post-disciplinary studies are indeed exciting. The work on captivity, and Creed's chapter, brings gender into histories of colonial exchange and encounter, and furthers it (in the case of Creed) in a contemporary postcolonial setting. This is important work that was begun by Ann McGrath some years ago. Hoorn's chapter on documentary interests me for its fresh approach.

Finally, the particular publishing circumstances of this book are worth mentioning. *Body Trade* is a co-publishing venture; it is published by Otago University Press in New Zealand, by Routledge in New York, and by Pluto Press in Australia. This kind of publishing arrangement seems sure to reach a wider audience, and to break through the bind in which much publishing in Australia and New Zealand finds itself. Being seen, purchased and read outside these confines and context is important. It is also attractively presented by Otago University Press. All of this bodes well for future editors of collections: their function is important to scholars, readers and publishers.

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The Waterlily Diary of Jack Atkinson. Edited by Colin Amodeo. Clerestory Press, Christchurch, 2001. 100 pp. NZ price: \$30.00. ISBN 0-9582201-1-5.

COLIN AMODEO bears a notable name in the history of New Zealand shipping. His forebear Captain Frank Amodeo was a master operating out of Auckland (Amodeo Bay on the Coromandel Peninsula is named after him), while Colin himself — preferring the desk to the deck — has written extensively on the subject. The present work fits comfortably within his *oeuvre*, which has a strong Canterbury focus. It presents the diary of Jack Atkinson who, in 1932, with six of his old school chums from Christ's College seeking a spot of adventure, set out on a Pacific Islands cruise in the ageing 66-foot auxiliary ketch, *Waterlily*. Atkinson's father ran a wool-exporting business in Christchurch, and two of his companions were grand-nephews of William Pember Reeves.

Setting out from Lyttelton in March 1932 to the accompaniment of the Christ's College haka, the 'Waterlilies', as the crew styled themselves, planned to follow the south-east trade winds to New Guinea. After a leisurely cruise up the east coast to Russell, their first Pacific stop was at Fiji. There they spent four congenial months sailing around the group as well as enjoying the hospitality of Suva. Indeed, two of the party, the Reeves brothers, left the expedition there.

From Rotuma, at the beginning of September, the *Waterlily* sailed to the rarely visited island of Nuku'fetau in the southern Ellice Islands (now Tuvalu). cursory though it is, Atkinson's 35-page report of their six weeks there has value as being the fullest first-hand account of that island yet to be published. And if sea levels continue to rise it may retain that distinction forever.

Also valuable, especially because of the rarity of such material, is an account of a week-long visit to the island of Funafuti, which was presided over by the redoubtable New Zealand-born administrator/teacher/scholar — and, later, soldier — Donald Gilbert Kennedy. Here, though, the bulk of Atkinson's report is taken up with Kennedy's account of a former resident of Funafuti named Ernest Allen, also a New Zealander. Allen, founder of the Samoa Shipping and Trading Company, had shifted the operating base of his company to Funafuti in 1910 and built up a large plant there. He died in 1925 while Kennedy had come to the group only in 1923, and the two had had little opportunity to see much of each other. Nevertheless, Kennedy regaled Atkinson with a highly coloured story of Allen, associating him with various notable literary figures. Thus, Allen was said to have been an intimate friend of Robert Louis Stevenson (although no other sources mention this); Jack London was said to have written him into the hero of *The Cruise of the Snark* (but that is not a novel, and it has no hero), and Allen is said to have been well acquainted with Louis Becke (although there was scant chance for him to have become so).

For all that Kennedy, presumably gulled by Allen, was an unreliable source for these stories, their literal preservation by Atkinson is not without significance, for they provide a salutary cautionary tale in relation to historical enquiry. They illustrate the inventiveness and errancy inherent in oral tradition, and the dangerous — and currently fashionable — tendency to treat it with too-ready euphemism as 'oral history'. 'I believe' and 'I was told' offer no grounds for saying 'it was'. Certainly, my own detailed and verifiable research into the careers of Allen and Kennedy offers no support for the stories that have now found their way into indelible print.

It is regrettable that the editor did not comment on this part of the text himself, but in fairness it should be said that the data on which to base a critical evaluation of Allen's putative literary hobnobbing was not available to him. On the other hand, he has provided an extensive body of notes explaining and identifying numerous references, and so enhances the value of Atkinson's diary for maritime historians. One is left wondering, though, about the contents, location and availability of the other *Waterlily* diaries.

And how did it all end? With dissension among the crew and the *Waterlily* breaking up, the expedition was abandoned in the Ellice Islands in February 1933. Its members gradually straggled back to New Zealand, largely per courtesy of Ocean Island phosphate ships. Atkinson later took up farming on Banks Peninsula, but died in a motor accident in 1945. His informal description of a youthful folly, though, can be expected to enrich scholarly footnotes.

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Gold: Forgotten Histories and Lost Objects of Australia. Edited by Iain McCalman, Alexander Cook and Andrew Reeves. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001. 344 pp. NZ price: \$35.95. ISBN 0-521-80595-3.

THERE IS no better description of this fascinating examination of Australia's vexed relationship with gold-seeking than that provided by Stuart Macintyre on the dust jacket