

measured opening chapter Bronwyn Dalley addresses this directly. In 'Finding the Common Ground' that links public history, Dalley considers working conditions, money, audiences, types of product, relationships to government and more, and finds diversity and exceptions on every front among those who might nevertheless be considered and would consider themselves public historians. She concludes that the one unifying common feature is perhaps that public historians 'work to the agendas, research priorities or the funding capacity of another party rather than selecting their own research topic' (p. 24). The other, the university historian, by contrast, 'is limited only by her or his imagination in selecting a research topic' (ibid). I wonder about that — as does Dalley herself, who goes on to qualify it heavily. In a world of research assessment exercises, where regular output and the winning of outside research money weighs heavily, fewer university researchers feel this assumed freedom, and even the true 'amateur historian', doing a family history out of love perhaps, is surely influenced by more than simply imagination in choosing a topic.

A simple definition of public history remains elusive, and nor does that seem to matter: this book as a whole gives a good 'feel' for what constitutes public history. Impressive work is being done across a range of fields and in many settings, and in several regards — electronic publishing is an obvious one — public historians lead the way for us all. The book is neither a manifesto for public history, nor a call to arms, but a welcome statement of the coming of age of public history in New Zealand.

DAVID THOMSON

*Massey University – Palmerston North*

*Telling Stories: Indigenous History and Memory in Australia and New Zealand.* Edited by Bain Attwood and Fiona Magowan. Bridgett Williams Books, Wellington, 2001. 269 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 1-877242-23-3.

THE INDIGENOUS HISTORY and memory of the title concerns the stories told by Aborigines and Maori since colonization 'in order to explain their plight to themselves, and so [help] themselves to survive' (xii). According to the editors, such explanations have been ignored in the nation-building narratives written by historians. In bringing these hidden histories to a larger, and often whiter, reading audience, many ethical issues have to be faced, notably about who authors the stories, and who controls the history-writing process. Ultimately, the aim is to have indigenous peoples in charge, but as these essays show, there are many positive forms of collaboration between indigenous communities and outside researchers, who all have to grapple with the pressures and demands brought to bear upon their history writing not only by the process of colonization, but also by their editors, translators and the reading audience.

Basil Sansom, Deborah Bird Rose, Jeremy Beckett, Fiona Magowan and Judith Binney explore the orality of indigenous memories. My favourite essay, by Sansom, reflects upon a lifetime's relationship with Roy Kelly, an Aboriginal leader, and the ways they collaborated in the making of the latter's "'life story thing'". Sansom explores his relationships with Kelly and other Aborigines, self-critically reflecting on his mistakes, and the uncomfortable gaps which sometimes loomed up between his 'whitefella', 'Government man' self, and his Aboriginal friends. Rose presents an Aboriginal English saga by Hobbles Danaiyarri about Captain Cook and the colonization of Australia, explicating the Aboriginal moral principles underlying Danaiyarri's critique of the colonizers' acts, and revealing the saga's hope that white Australian readers will end their oppression of Aboriginal society. Beckett examines the writing of indigenous 'life course narratives', in particular, his own oral history project to record an Aboriginal

friend, Myles Lalor. He unravels the complex relationships, which can develop between the testimonialist, their often non-indigenous interlocutor, the former's indigenous community, and the final (frequently non-indigenous) reading audience. Magowan analyses singing, in particular the crying songs of a senior Djambarrpuynghu woman, Murukin, as a way of remembering ancestors within present day community and country. Binney documents her 'unanticipated trilogy' of books which attempt, through dialogues between historian and Maori men and women, to recover and construct 'the "other" history' — Maori 'people's history' — and to juxtapose these narratives, and their orally recollected memories, alongside the 'European-authored histories' of New Zealand society.

Penny van Toorn, Ann Parsonson, Andrew Erueti and Alan Ward, W.H. Oliver, and Bain Attwood describe particular indigenous writing projects, or official institutions that have transformed the nature of indigenous knowledge or testimony. Van Toorn outlines a series of tactical 'life writing' projects by Aborigines since 1796 in which they attempt to speak out from within the language and literary forms of the colonizer. Parsonson describes how the legal requirements of the nineteenth-century Maori Land Court changed the nature of the traditional knowledge presented by Maori claimants. Erueti and Ward highlight the Land Court's 'quasi-codification of Maori land law' by the early twentieth century, and the gradual breakdown of this through the Waitangi Tribunal claims process which is predicated (in an ideal world) on researchers possessing 'the critical and sceptical approaches of western scholarship' along with 'a strong understanding of Maori culture, its meaning-systems and its dynamics'. Oliver recounts what actually happened when the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* attempted to incorporate a Maori cultural dimension into its work (including writing Maori language biographies). Attwood observes the rise of 'the stolen generation' narrative, and its shift from particular, localized stories grounded in oral testimony and historical research, to an increasingly symbolic and collective story concerned with Aboriginal identity formation, and embracing political calls for national reconciliation.

As a non-indigenous (or Pakeha) historian located within Maori Studies I found many of these essays stimulating. They bring together scholars from both sides of the Tasman who engage in or reflect upon indigenous research. The issues of the authors and their authority in the telling of indigenous people's lives and histories affect every scholar working in this domain. The particular and often practical reflections on history making, and the ways indigenous knowledges have been transformed by colonial processes, complement the more theoretical engagements of indigenous researchers such as Linda Smith (in *Decolonising Methodologies*). If there is a weakness in this collection it is that the editors (despite their best efforts) were not able to secure a more equal dialogue within the book between indigenous and non-indigenous scholars working among and with Aborigines or Maori. That may be a future joint production.

MICHAEL P.J. REILLY

University of Otago